

SPORTING GOSSIP OF THE WEEK

We were there.

Omaha's base ball team has now occupied every position in the Western league pennant race, from last to first, and triumphed simply through playing ball. It is certain that no more brilliant finish was ever made by a team, and it is almost as certain that no more popular victory was ever won. All around the circuit it is conceded that the team finally pushed to the front, and that Omaha honestly deserves victory. Bill Rourke is popular with the people in the Western league towns outside of Omaha, and he is surely the idol of the fans at home. Therefore all who have watched the race will be glad if the victory comes to Omaha. It has been a heart-breaking finish, and the gait struck by the Omaha team has proven too swift for the others who were possibilities. Denver and Colorado Springs were played off their feet and out of the race on the Omaha grounds, and now admit that the game they met here was a little bit faster than they could go. It has been steady base ball from first to last that has won for the Rourke family, and the wisdom of the plan adopted by Papa Bill has been vindicated.

The best part of the pennant race is that the results will not be finally determined until the last man is out in the last inning of the second game that is to be played today. The season will wind up this afternoon, and Omaha will play a double-header with St. Joseph on the Vinton street grounds. These games are just as important as any that have been played, and any of the dubious ones who think the St. Joseph team has not been playing ball during its stay in Omaha is invited to look over the scores. Omaha has had to fight just as hard all week to defeat St. Joseph as it did to beat Denver and Colorado Springs, and the closing games of the season are sure to be of the most interesting sort. And it is due to the home team that the fans gather in full force and by their presence show that they appreciate the gallant struggle that has ended by pushing Omaha's colors to the front. It will be a most appropriate testimonial to all the park with a crowd that will lay the famous Kansas City game in second place. Let's go out and make it necessary to have "ground rules" again. It has been fifteen years since Omaha finished first in a league race, and the supporters of the game here should show that they are alive to this fact.

That game on Tuesday will long dwell in the memory of each of the 2,500 fans who braved the cold wind to see it. It was one of the most magnificent exhibitions of perfect ball on the part of Omaha that was ever seen. Colorado Springs played splendid ball, but the fast and aggressive tactics of the Omahans made the Springs team look like it was standing still. Here's an example: In the eighth inning Blake, for the Springs, hit a ball against the left field fence. Gonding, who is not a fast runner, got three bases on a similar hit, but Blake, who is speedy, was held at second by Thiel's quick return of the ball. The next man up hit to the right field fence and Blake tore for home. Carter threw to Howard and Howard to Gonding, and Blake was caught ten feet from the plate. It was as fast a piece of fielding as was ever seen and perfect execution. In the ninth inning four hits were ripped off by the Springs bunch, and only one man got home. It is just such fielding as that that has made the Omaha team a terror to its opponents. On the attack Omaha was as determined. Villenian pitched a splendid game, but was squarely beaten, for Omaha had driven in the two runs needed to win before Kahl took his unfortunate balloon ascension in the seventh, when he threw the ball away twice and allowed Omaha to score four times. It would take a big book to tell all about the pretty and dashing work of the home team on that occasion. But that is the sort of ball playing that has won the pennant for Omaha. Before the team left for its last western trip Tom Fleming said no team in the league could beat Omaha, for the team work had been developed to perfection and every man was in the game to the end.

Probably enough has been said about the muddle into which President Sexton plunged the fans by sending out a record of games for the season that did not agree with records kept by others. It is not yet explained how he reached his conclusions.

but the explanation will doubtless be forthcoming in due season. The Bee's record contains every game played by each club during the season, as determined by the score or the umpire's decision, and as such, is absolutely correct. This ought to end all disputes about the standing of the teams. Some of the eccentric members of the home rosters' organization have laid wagers against Omaha's winning, some of them being that the team would not finish better than third. These gentlemen are welcome to all the consolation either of the standing tables will afford them.

To show just how fast the team has been playing since the second week in July, when the season turned into its second half, The Bee has prepared the following table, which shows the individual performance of each member of the team in the field and at the bat since July 10. It includes the games up to Friday, September 23.

BATTING AVERAGES				
	A.B.	R.	H.	Ave.
Howard	228	32	111	.328
Carter	276	46	89	.283
Welch	214	28	58	.271
Freese	222	32	52	.234
Gonding	222	29	62	.287
Thomas	200	14	40	.200
Dolan	231	35	70	.303
Schlipke	221	42	11	.153
Peister	96	5	10	.104
Quick	66	5	10	.152
Companion	10	0	1	.100

Figures are given here only for those players who were with the team on July 10. Sanders and Thiel have joined the team since, so there is no chance to compare their work, as it is recorded in the table that shows the records for the season. On July 10 the team batting average was .249 and the team fielding average was .360. Now these figures have been raised to .354 and .348 respectively. In the meantime the team averages for the eighty-two games played since July 10 up to last Friday night are .267 and .366. Just how good this may be determined by a comparison with the big leagues. One week ago Pittsburgh led the National league in both team fielding and batting, the figures being .353 and .355, while New York leads the American in batting with .352 and Chicago in fielding with .354. That surely makes the Omaha record look good, doesn't it? And of the eighty-two games mentioned Omaha has won fifty-four, a percentage of .659. Cheer up, we'll have that flag yet.

The record of the players for the season, up to and including the game of Friday, is:

BATTING AVERAGES				
	A.B.	R.	H.	Ave.
Howard	294	40	136	.313
Thiel	124	18	32	.266
Freese	163	27	49	.295
Dolan	215	33	108	.302
Thiel	241	32	54	.224
Carter	351	51	146	.288
Thomas	242	17	146	.261
Gonding	402	48	109	.271
Schlipke	329	64	118	.223
Sanders	64	9	12	.188
Brown	163	15	29	.178
Quick	70	5	11	.157
Peister	112	10	15	.134
Companion	60	8	7	.133

FIELDING AVERAGES				
	O.	A.	E.	Ave.
Gonding	618	125	15	.756
Thiel	91	17	3	.973
Thomas	1,480	80	53	.962
Sanders	5	54	3	.952
Brown	77	14	2	.963
Carter	234	29	14	.949
Peister	8	71	4	.962
Quick	3	60	3	.960
Companion	2	62	4	.948
Howard	208	350	40	.948
Welch	73	18	8	.912
Freese	248	34	30	.904
Dolan	221	284	29	.910
Schlipke	150	22	20	.886

Totals... 3,788 1,736 306 5,826 .948 .948

The coming week is for horsemen. Three hundred of the best horses in the country

and Beau Brummel Charles De Gorme Gray were on exhibition in the Auditorium. Who could want anything better? Horses are horses and Dr. Gray is Dr. Gray. Without the one the other would be lonesome and the public disappointed. The horse show has set the members of the Omaha Driving club huzzling, and they have reached the conclusion that there are at least 150 horses in the city which would make a very pretty showing on the race track. What they are trying to do is to get these 150 racing, and plans are being made for next spring to hitch forty and fifty horses will start in an afternoon.

"The great excuse," said one member, "which we hear when trying to get a fellow to enter his horse for a race, is that horse racing does not pay. Of course it does not. Nobody expects it to. But does automobile racing or golfing or yachting pay?" Here is the solving of the whole question. Horse racing is a sport, but it is so long been associated with men who go into the game for monetary gain that the average horse owner has reached the conclusion that horse racing is a business and those that enter it must do so with an idea of making money. Those who intend to take it up for money making purposes had better not if they wish to properly enjoy the sport. All that the club wants are men who love horses and perhaps have some of their own, to put his horse on the track. He will get the worth of his money in fun.

The smaller towns in the state are just completing their racing season, and from Tekamah, Beatrice, Blair and Fremont come reports of the most successful racing season that the circuit has ever had. Eight to ten horses entered in every race and the prizes ranged from \$100 to \$200 a race. In fact, so successful has been the racing that the Nebraska circuit is reckoned on a higher plane than that of Iowa and Illinois. Omaha, the greatest city in the state, has not taken a hand in this success. It has stood alone, but now the sporting men of the city are asked to come forward with their horses and money and make this city the best racing city in the western empire.

With horse racing goes the industry of breeding horses. The enthusiastic way in which the people in the state have caught onto the game has led many persons, among them being men like Louis Brannan, W. R. Cryall and Clark Coates, to go in for breeding better and more horses in the state. There is no reason why Nebraska should not raise as good horses as any state in the union. It has water as pure as can be found in Kentucky. It has a larger variety of grasses than any other state, and best of all, it has an exceedingly clear atmosphere. Those who have taken up breeding have made a success of it, as can be seen by the large number of Nebraska bred horses that are winning right and left in the east.

It seems hard to convince outsiders that there are horses in Omaha which will rank with the best. The horses which in this city are reckoned as average animals would in a great many places be classed among the tip-toppers. Here is one at random: Allie Chantwood, a chestnut mare, pacer, owned by Secretary Carr of the Omaha Driving club; she was sired by Chantwood, he by Wilkes Naxwood, he by Nutwood, he by Belmont, and so on till Nutwood, his pedigree reaches back to Hambleton X. Dam by Nellie Burt, who has the blood of Lady McMillan, etc. She has not been driven much, but did half a mile in a matinee in 1:15. And then by the by, she is a Nebraska product being bred on Maywood farm at Aurora, Neb. This single instance shows the kind of horses that Omaha horsemen possess. There are others. Refina, Tom Dennison's mare, has also a strain of the Wilkes blood in her, and Coney holds the record of a mile in 1:02.

The visitors during the Ak-Sar-Ben will miss much if they do not attend the matinees to be held at the Sprague street driving tracks on October 6. At least three paces, one trotting and two running races have been arranged to come off and the best horseflesh in the city will compete.

If the Omaha Driving club succeeds in getting the horsemen in the city to join them there is a good prospect of having a different and better track, with club house, pavilion, etc., in the near future.

W. C. Sherwood, former golf professional of the Omaha Field club, now professional at the St. Louis Country club, is to play A. Christie an eighteen-hole match for \$300 a side at the Field club links this afternoon. Both the men are about the best that can be found in the western country and the match has created quite a deal of interest. Christie has done the come in seventy-four, which is eleven below bogey. Sherwood played Gilbert Nichols in St. Louis a few days ago and lost by the narrow score of 2 up and 1 up in two matches of eighteen holes each.

The first big bags in this season's shooting have been brought home by J. A. Kuhn and N. B. Updike, who got over 150 birds between them, mostly teal and red head pintails. The two were around Schickley, Neb., and report that shooting there cannot be described in mere words. A pure albino of the blue-winged teal genus is on exhibition in Townsend's gun store. This rare bird was killed at McPaul, Ia., by R. Baldwin. Letters from the sandhills say that chickens there are plentiful, and as the lakes are full, good duck shooting is expected when the flight starts. Dr. Frank Owen while at Lake Madison caught a seven and a quarter-pound large-mouthed black bass. Captain Keller of Fort Crook brought down sixteen jack snipe in his neighborhood in a morning's shoot.

The Omaha Bowling league opened its series of games last week with the result that the Omahods, Omahans and Drexels are tied for first place. The Omahods, who were pitted against the Waverlys, did things to last year's champions that made them feel like amateurs. For the team holding the trophy to lose three games straight, right smack out of the box, is not pleasant. The Omahans handed the Black Kats the same dose as did the Omahods to the Waverlys and the Drexels beat the Krug Pakers two out of three games. The highest score up to the present time was made by C. M. Zarp of the Omahans with 81 to his credit, next comes Ojeda of the Omahods with 87, and then E. Neale with 68. Play will continue five days in the week till the eighty-one games are played out. Numerous cash prizes are offered for those that do strange and wonderful things in the way of knocking down pins.

The large number of cricketers that turned out last Sunday for a practice match at the Field club has given hope to the men who are trying to boost up a cricket club in this city. This morning another practice game will be played and an Omaha eleven will go to Sioux City on October 1. As was expected most of the men were stale through lack of practice, but they soon got on to the swing of the thing and started to try and place the balls in the club house. The game attracted some of the tennis players, who have in them the makings of fine cricketers with a little practice. Apart from the bunch of raw material stood many old players who did things to the bowling of the dubs. Vaughan opened the fun by nailing to square leg. Break or no break, a ball to leg with him means one to the boundary. What the Omaha team really wants is better batting. It's hardly worth the candle to make a half century and then allow the opposing team 100 by poor fielding. Quick, sharp,

snappy work in the field is half the game and the cricketers can take a lesson or two from the base ball games in this respect.

The open fall golf tournament of the Glen View club of Chicago will start Wednesday, September 23, and will last till the following Saturday. The club offers three cups and three medals for the winners and runners up. The qualifying round of the Glen View cup will start at 1 o'clock and the sixteen lowest scores will be allowed to compete for the cup. The next sixteen lowest scores will be allowed to enter for the directors' cup, and the sixteen lowest in the first round of the Glen View cup and directors' cup will be paired and continue in match play for the fellowship cup.

George Dunbar, representing the Franklin Automobile company of Syracuse, N. Y., was in Omaha last week, the guest of H. E. Fredrickson. Mrs. H. E. Fredrickson enjoyed the quiet of the country several days this week, making up a party who participated in a long automobile country run. L. E. Glinkin of Randolph, Neb., spent several days in the city last week looking over automobiles. After deciding on a Rambler he drove home in his new machine. A jolly crowd of enthusiastic automobilists left the garage of H. E. Fredrickson early Tuesday morning, bound for Chicago. The party was made up of Mr. and Mrs. Frank McGinn, Mr. Clayton Lavery of Butte, Mont., who is Mrs. McGinn's brother, and Mr. McIntyre, an eastern gentleman. The trip will be made in Mr. McGinn's Winton touring car and the party will be absent two or three weeks, it being the intention to spend some time in Chicago and vicinity.

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