

THE OMAHA SUNDAY BEE

OMAHA, SUNDAY, JANUARY 2, 1910.

JUDGMENTS

THE wise ones insist there is more than passing gossip in the rumor of a players' strike in the National league as a reply to the magnates' action in raising the game schedule from 154 to 158, without any organized advance in salaries to correspond. Such a thing certainly would be unnatural. A man, of course, gets paid, ordinarily, according to the work he does; some by the quality and most by the quantity. But at all events the quantitative factor enters into consideration. A magnate, in discussing this rumor, takes refuge behind the argument that a great many of the players are not in a position to strike, for, he asserts, they are signed up for next year and in many cases for a year or two beyond. He overlooks the point, however, that they signed before the proposition of 158 games was brought up and it is open to argument whether, if they refused to play under these contracts in 1910, they would be violating any agreement. There is ample room for questioning if the majority of players would have signed the same contracts had they known or been advised that a schedule of 158 games was to be adopted. The lengthened schedule means many more double-headers and, as it was last year, the various clubs engaged in some twenty of these performances, which, to say the least, are decidedly unpopular with players. The magnates have adopted the lengthened schedule, why? For the simple purpose of increasing their incomes. Why not, then, be willing to share their enlarged profits with their men? A players' strike would certainly be revolutionary at this time, when the status of base ball is none too settled at best, when the American association is only awaiting the opportunity of the expiration of its contract to invade major league territory and other elements are disturbed. If the players should take it into their heads that their only recourse lay in a strike we might have some lively doings. But the conservative opinion will be against the idea of the strike. The interests at stake are too great. The magnates, should they find themselves confronted by such an alternative, would discover some middle ground between them and the extreme of a base ball war.

The owners of the Chicago Cubs have just bought the Philadelphia National's park. What for? Messrs. Murphy and Vogel will make themselves ridiculous if they persist in denying the fact that the ownership of the two teams is identical. The base ball public will not be as readily reconciled to this entering wedge of syndicate base ball as it has been ready to believe the fact of its existence. No specious pleading will be sufficient to convince people who support the game that the same can be preserved in its original form as a clean sport under the system which Messrs. Murphy et al. have thus instituted. It is one of the worst misfortunes that could befall base ball, this very Philadelphia deal. Already one of the effects—and by no means of the most vicious character—is suggesting itself in the proposed advance of outfielder Davis, and even some of the Cubs' outcasts. Making one team strong at the expense of another will, if carried far enough, prove disastrous. It cannot fail to work mischief in any form. The fundamental principle of any game and particularly base ball lies in the spirit of honest rivalry and even justice. Base ball will go the route of the "old and honorable game of wrestling" if the moment it lets down its bars to hip-podroming.

In the matter of spiking Joe Tinker—who is qualified to speak—lays the burden of the blame on the baseman. He insists that basemen should know their base runners and give them all the right-of-way to which they are entitled. He admits Ty Cobb, who has spiked many men, slides hard and insists that for this reason he should be given the path. But Joe says Frank Chance slides harder than any other man in the business and yet never spikes anybody because all the players know him and clear the track when they see him coming. Too bad Bill Dahlen Tinker gives the palm for being the best slider in the game. Tinker probably is talking sense and is simply voicing the fact that magnates who after scanning the situation decided they could not abandon the spikes.

The suggestion that the magnates save the good things they are saying of President-elect Lynch until along in the season is a wise one. There is no sort of doubt of Tom Lynch's ability to administer the duties of president of the National league wisely and well, but there is much doubt that certain magnates will rest contented if he adheres rigidly to this simple policy. Things in the old organization can be restored to normal condition if the men who are now showering praises on the new president will be as zealous to support him honestly during the playing season.

Kid Eberfeld is out with a solemn declaration that he is going to Washington with the determination of helping McAleer with a winning team. Moreover the Tobacco Kid's great grandson, that Stallings, sold him to the senator or say him, he says, playing with a tallender has no terrors. But if they get many like the Kid and keep them doing their best they won't be tallenders long.

With the bright outlook for the Western league this year, the next thing to be sought is a strong staff of umpires. We will not be able to get back Mullin, the young man who has been picked up by the National, nor can we hope to improve much on him. We still have Handsome Jack Haskett and for one winter, will do but the chances are we shall need at least three or four more as good.

Pa has about decided to pass up Dany Drenner Durbin, whom he could have got for this year. Your father is right in casting about for better pitchers who can go the nine-inning route without taking a half-hitch in their next-week's vitality. With such a staff last season Omaha would have clinched the flag.

Water Camp is a wise man, but his wisdom has about run the gamut in trying to convince people that foot ball needs no reforming. People know better, though they may be the crudest kind of Jaymen as compared with the sapient Mr. Camp.

St. Joe will be in the difficult role of the prodigal son on trial—getting the fatted calf, if he makes good? It's not up to father so much as it is to the bad company that lured the erring one away.

Three prominent leagues will open the season of 1910 with new presidents—the National with Lynch, American association with Chivington and the Three-Eye with Torrey.

If St. Joe can only dig up old Pop Elyer maybe it will be sure of success.

Now for Pa's concrete stands.

BOOSTING ODDS NOT IN FAVOR

Florida Frowns on the Bookmakers' Old Methods.

PLUNGER AND BOOKIES TOGETHER

It Became an Evil on New York Tracks Before the Angew-Hart Law Went into Effect.

NEW YORK, Jan. 1.—Bookmakers operating at Jacksonville, have been notified that the practice of "boosting" or "plugging" prices, which has been common at the race tracks in the United States and Canada, is strictly prohibited and that the persons violating the new order will be fined. This reform, if backed by sincere motive, is expected to do racing in Florida a lot of good. In future, therefore, the Jacksonville layers will be compelled to take at least \$100 on a 2½ to 1 shot, \$50 on a 5 to 1 shot, and \$20 on a horse quoted at 10 to 1. In other words the bookmakers cannot refuse to accept wagers at the odds they have chalked on their slates if they do not want a play on a certain horse, no price must be quoted.

The "plugging" of prices became a great evil in the former betting rings on the New York tracks before the passage of the Angew-Hart measure. Leaders about the respective meetings of the horses in each race established the market. They wrote down the odds in accordance with their own calculations and more than 300 layers copied them. Enjoying such an advantage, it was not at all strange that the bookmakers became unscrupulous and proceeded to manipulate the prices for the benefit of themselves and some of the big bettors, who were their clients.

If a plunger had a good thing and wanted to secure a fat price, at the same time concealing his play, he would go to one of these bookmakers and handed him a commission to be placed on a certain horse. The bookmaker making the prices that were promptly copied by his business rivals, seldom failed to quote a higher price against the client's horse than was warranted and then, as the quotation appeared on 300 slates, his agents hurried about the ring getting the commission down in small pieces. Meanwhile this bookmaker refused to accept any wagers on the horse himself.

In many instances it developed that the bookmaker anxious to profit by the plunger's information, placed a solid wager at top price for himself first and then got his client's money down at the best odds obtainable. One of the biggest layers on the metropolitan tracks worked this game so incessantly that in due time the other chalkers became wary of his prices and avoided him altogether. His method was well illustrated the day James R. Keene's Syonby made his first appearance as a two-year-old. The great Melton colt had been kept so well under cover that he was generally underestimated by the professional clockers. It was known that he was a high class youngster, but his real worth was a well kept secret.

The debut of Syonby took place at Brighton Beach. A mob surrounded the ring's price maker, waiting for the first chalk marks. The crafty-layer, backed by several big bettors, put up "even money" against the Keene colt, and the quotation was carried at top speed to the other layers. In the twinkling of an eye the big operators were offering 300 bookmakers in the main ring all the money they were willing to accept on Syonby, until the price was rubbed to 4 to 5. At this price there was another heavy play, until 5 to 5 was offered on all sides.

The original price maker, however, did not weaken on his "even money" proposition for the excellent reason that he refused every big wager that came his way, though he kept the quotation on his slate and held it up where all could see it. "Finally a news business man who was not a regular at the track came along, and seeing "even money" on this chalker's slate said: "I'll bet you fifty on Syonby." "Don't want it!" growled the ring's price maker. "Go away from here! You're blocking the crowd!" "But you've got even money on your slate!" persisted the western man. "If you don't want my bet why don't you rub out the price?" "Stop annoying me or I'll have you detected!" yelled the bookmaker, whereupon a fight seemed imminent. Publicly caused a cessation of these methods for a time, but the bookmaker soon resumed on the old line.

WINNERS OF PROMINENT STAKES DURING 1909.

Table listing winners of prominent stakes during 1909, including Burns handicap, California Derby, Kentucky Derby, etc.

The American turf was severely scorched at a local track several years ago by "hunching" the price against a supposed "dead one." Whether he got the double cross or not will never be known. A certain stake winner was entered in a selling race and the night before the trainer met the plunger at Sheepshead Bay. "Will your horse win tomorrow?" queried the plunger, who was looking at the time.

"That I can't say!" replied the trainer, who was mixed up with several well known operators, who usually wagged their money away from the track. "You see he was just a bit lame after a work out yesterday and I am just starting him as an experiment. If so and so is as good as they say he is, he will beat my horse easily. In fact, I don't see how I can win under the circumstances. If you are going to lay my horse you might put a bet on the other one for me!"

Believing he had an ace in the hole, the plunger bookmaker kept the information to himself, and when the market opened on the race next day the stake winner was quoted at 7 to 5 and the so and so horse was at 10 to 1. The plunger boosted the price against the latter, at the same time refusing to take a bet on him, and sent out his runners to get down 5,000 with the other layers, who had followed his example. When this money had been placed the plunger bookmaker plugged the price against the stake winner and cried out:

"Come on, boys! Here's 5 to 5 against the favorite! All you want of it!" The wise money came in a flood, but the bookmaker never turned a hair. He took in nearly \$200 on the stake winner, who was said to have been lame two days before, and when the horses went to the post he stood to lose \$5,000 on the so and so horse and nearly \$15,000 on the favorite. He got up into the grand stand just in time to see the stake winner get home by a nose, while the agonized horse in the place both jockeys whipping all the way down the homestretch. A day later he learned that the trainer's gambling friends had won nearly \$30,000 from two extensive pool room operators in this city and had since cleaned up handsomely in the west.

Another celebrated bookmaker was trimmed several years ago in a similar manner, though hard luck had a great deal to do with his losses. He was interested in a prominent stable which owned a famous sprinter. The horse was entered in a selling event one day and the stable connections, knowing that the price would be small, hatched a trick that had been fine if successful. The horse was taken out early in the morning for a short exercise gallop in the presence of a regiment of clockers and trainers. His legs were encased in tightly wound bandages and after a breeze down the stretch he seemed to be the best sprinter in the place. Offered to sell him to anybody who was anywhere. They placed nearly \$12,000 for him before the other layers got into the ownership of the colt, whereupon there was a panic.

The race started and the sprinter sailed out in front. He was leading by several lengths when he reached the head of the stretch, but in the next instant his legs hung in his stride, stopped as if shot and hobbled down to the judges' stand on three legs. His lameness was the real thing.

THE OMAHA BEE'S DIRECTORY OF AUTOMOBILES AND ACCESSORIES

Advertisement for Mitchell's Coit Automobile Co., BOWSER TANKS AND PUMPS, The CHASE AIR COOLED AUTO, Stearns MOTOR CAR, W. L. Huffman & Co., BRUSH RUNABOUT, Detroit-Electric, Wood's Electric, H. E. Fredrickson Automobile Co., Deright Automobile Co., Henry H. Van Brunt, "MURPHY DID IT" Auto, MARMON, SWEET-EDWARDS AUTO CO., Standard Automobile Co., Nebraska Buick Auto Company, INTER-STATE.

BIND BALL PLAYERS FOR YEAR

Game Has Grown to Be a Sport for All the Year Around.

CONTRACTS FOR TWELVE MONTHS

Receipts of the Big Leagues Have Doubled During the Last Six Years, According to Secretaries' Reports.

NEW YORK, Jan. 1.—Base ball as a business and as a sport has attained such importance that it can no longer be called a summer pastime. The game is played in the United States ten months out of twelve. During the off-season the traffic in players is most brisk and the interests involved are vastly greater than ten years ago. That is demonstrated by Secretary Heyder's financial report at the last annual meeting, when figures proved that the gate receipts in the eight National league cities last season were twice as much as in 1901, the first year that the National and American leagues worked together under the peace agreement. And it was a big game six years ago.

One of the things that serves to demonstrate the development of the great sport is the recent talk of playing players under contracts that will bind them for a year, instead of six or seven months, as is now the case. Star ball players are now regarded as prominent theatrical headliners. The concern that pay them fancy salaries, oppose the winter ball business, which cheapens the game and the players.

Many prominent thespians place themselves under contract to managers and draw salary whether they work or not. The twelve month's ball contract is bound to come. It will simply be bar to curb players during the winter months. Players will be allowed to go anywhere and to put in the off seasons as they see fit just so they do not play any base ball. Salaries will be arranged so that an athlete can draw his annual stipend in twelve monthly payments or get it all in six months.

SWEEPING BILLIARD DEFT OUT

De Oro Tries to Show that He Means Business.

NEW YORK, Jan. 1.—Alfredo De Oro, champion of the world at three cushion billiards, issued a sweeping challenge the other day. The deft was directed at the entire outfit of ball game professionals, some of whom have been quoted recently as making light of De Oro's supremacy.

"I will play Hoppe, Slosson, Sutton, Cline, Demarest, Cutler or Morningstar at three-cushions for \$2,000 a side, under any conditions and at any number of points they may suggest," was De Oro's challenge. Willie Hoppe, whose published intent to capture both the 181 and 182 ball game and the three-cushion championship as well, caused De Oro's outburst, said in reply that he was not a three-cushion player and did not propose to become one. Morningstar also declined the issue on the same grounds.

"The games are almost as distinctly different as ball-bills and pool," said Hoppe. "I appreciate De Oro's mastery of the game. It is unlikely that I could make a good match with him after a year's practice."

Minor league players do not figure in this scheme for the lesser lights are not considered valuable enough to be bound with such restrictions. But the day is not far off, when roving bands of major leaguers will be denied the privilege of collecting shekels from the yokels, who nowadays always roar about the lack of class in such exhibitions. The risk of injury in exhibition games is another thing that is causing club owners to discuss the twelve month contract seriously. In California recently, Catcher Bliss broke his right ankle sliding to base and will hardly be able to play all next season. Other players, who have failed to take a rest between seasons and who dubbed along in Cuba or Japan have suffered from their excess of industry.

Tom Lynch Will Try to Change

Umpire Rules

New President Will Ask that Matter of Umpires Be Carefully Looked After.

NEW YORK, Jan. 1.—Some very important base ball legislation dealing with the question of umpires will be put through at the next session of the National league moguls in February. President Tom Lynch has decided that the umpire end of the game needs overhauling, and he's going to do the overhauling. Heretofore attention has centered on the doings of the players. The judges of play have received little consideration, no one deeming them and their work important enough to take up the time of the magnates in session. The umpire is to be the big thing the coming season.

Lynch's idea is to find out just where the game can be improved from an umpire's standpoint, and then ask the magnates to enact base ball laws governing one or more suggestions on reforms that he will make. In this manner Lynch hopes to lessen the protests of umpires' rulings, which were an common last season. With the reforms that Lynch has in mind in effect, the umpire will know just where he stands and how far he can go. It will be a case of the umpires running the game, and not the magnates.

Tim Hurst is naturally pleased at the election of Tom Lynch as National league president. "All they need now," says Tim, "is to elect another umpire as vice president of the league." Tim and Lynch worked together for years and they ought to know each other well. Tim says Lynch will have all the magnates calling him Mr. Lynch in short order, and he'll be president with a capital P. Tim tells a story of Lynch that shows the honesty of the man.

"Years ago," says Hurst, "Lynch, Bob Emalle and I combined to strike for more money. Uncle Nick Young, then boss of the National league, turned down all our requests. He would hand out the argument that he couldn't raise our salaries because this club had lost money, and so had that one. Well, we threatened to hold out even after the season opened.

"One day Lynch received a letter from Uncle Nick telling him that his salary would be raised \$100, but not to say anything to Emalle or me. Here's where Lynch's character came to the surface. Instead of putting the letter under his belt he promptly mailed it to me. In the course of a few days I got a similar letter from President Young and before the season opened we all got out advance."

"Will Lynch be a real president?" Tim asked his own question. "Well, I hate to think of anybody going to him and looking for a shade the best of it."

The Bee for all the sporting news.

Auto Records Made During Past Year.

Table showing auto records made during the past year, including distance, time, driver, car, and place for various events like Quarter-mile, Five miles, etc.

Advertisement for Quaker Maid Rye, featuring an image of a bottle and text describing the whiskey's quality and availability.