

WOLGAST NEARLY GOES OUT

Short Bout with Willie Ritchie Almost Ends Him.

WEAK FROM RECENT OPERATION

Parting with His Appendix Puts the Champion in Bad Way and May Leave Him Easy Picking for Some One.

By W. W. NAUGHTON.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 25.—All that Willie Ritchie, the San Francisco lightweight champion in the way of prestige is due, directly or indirectly, to Champion Ad Wolgast. It was through Wolgast being taken down with appendicitis that Ritchie was sent for in a hurry to box Freddie Welsh at Los Angeles. Prior to that time Willie was a plain, ordinary four-round specialist at the Friday night shows in this city.

As Wolgast's underdog he performed so well against Welsh that his star began to ascend. He went east and against manded matches. He did so well that he came to be looked upon as a good, serviceable lightweight.

There is scarcely any need to recall how Ritchie acquitted himself in his recent short bout with Wolgast. He did so extremely well that those who witnessed the bout considered Wolgast a lucky toy to escape with his laurels intact.

When anything sensational like that occurs people at a distance are disinclined to give full weight to the glowing accounts that emanate from the seat of the disturbance. Allowance is made for a very common human error, namely, a tendency to exaggerate the merits of the under dog. In a fight crowd particularly, the hope of witnessing the unexpected ways the emotions, and to attach wrong values is akin to traveling the lines of least resistance.

In this particular instance, however, the fact remains that a champion of the world had a remarkably close call.

The thing to be avoided is the making of a wrong analysis of Wolgast's showing, that is so far as it appears to indicate of suggest a permanent loss of fighting strength or talent. Wolgast was evidently distressed after a seemingly light bumping match with Ritchie, so much so that the chances are his work during the remainder of the bout was influenced. Wolgast said that the wrench revived an old injury to his back, sustained in a contest some years ago.

A great many when they heard this murmured "that's all fiddle-sticks." The operation he underwent has left a weak spot and that is why he hurt himself when he slid up on Ritchie's shoulders. A year ago he would not have minded a little bump like that. His ruggedness is impaired and his championship days are over.

As still insists, however, that it was his back that was twisted, and says there was nothing at any stage of the contest to remind him that he had ever been knifed for appendicitis.

It may be as he says, and in any case there is no harm in waiting for further light on the subject. If it was merely a twist of the back that Wolgast suffered from, he would soon be in harness again. If it was some physical flaw traceable to his operation, he can expect to hear of some of his ring contracts being canceled. Whatever it was, it must be said that Wolgast was ill-advised in getting back into harness so soon.

In the aftermath of the Ritchie affair great stress was laid upon Wolgast's deficiencies in the boxing line. He certainly showed poor judgment, both of distance and direction, but a good deal might be said in extenuation of the most pertinent arguments. The most pertinent argument is that Wolgast did not give and take well in his practice sparring before the bout.

The idea that possessed his manager and himself was that the question of acclimating was the main issue. The thing to be proved was whether the Wolgast midriff could stand rough usage and Wolgast's sparring partners were under orders to slam away at poor Ad's stomach region without stint.

While they were doing so Wolgast was in a measure a lay figure. He seemed satisfied with the knowledge that body smashes did not faze him. In view of the fact that he had not boxed any for six months he should have fought back more in his training camp instead of being content to pose as a human punching bag. Had he done so he might have found the range more easily while he was embroiled with Ritchie.

Ritchie, by the way, does not think that Wolgast is a backslider by any means. Willie entertains a very lively recollection of the first knockdown he suffered at Wolgast's hands—or rather at Wolgast's left hand—and is satisfied moreover that Wolgast, in addition to being a cruel hitter, is lewdly fast and shifty.

An apparent shortage on Wolgast's part Ritchie attributes to insufficient lapses of time since the operation and insufficient training. Willie has no means of knowing what is passing in Wolgast's mind in regard to future ring engagements, but is satisfied that if Wolgast meets Joe Rivers and is properly trained for the encounter, Rivers will be a badly beaten lightweight when the contest is over.

Illinois Students Get Ball Fields

CHICAGO, May 25.—In accordance with its policy to supply opportunities for athletic exercise for all Illinois students, the Illinois Athletic association has rented a 10-acre plot of ground and has laid out six base ball diamonds, which are ready for immediate use. This acquisition is in addition to the land adjoining the Illinois Central tracks, which was purchased at a cost of \$25,000 and which will be ready at the opening of the football season next fall. It will be used as a field for all class, club or organization teams.

DETROIT, Mich., May 25.—Offers from Hugh Jennings, Connie Mack and several other base ball managers have already been received by George H. Sisler, the University of Michigan freshman, who struck out sixteen men consecutively in a recent game.

The promoter has declined all of the offers, although all were flattering enough to a college student. Sisler will continue at the university, taking his full course, and even declares that he will not enter professional base ball after being graduated.

Where the Fans Sit. The seating capacity at each major league park this year is roughly estimated as follows: National league; New York, 25,600; Brooklyn, Washington park, 16,800; Boston, 2,000; Philadelphia, 20,000; Chicago, 20,000; Cincinnati, 25,000; Pittsburgh, 25,000; St. Louis, 22,000. American league; New York, 18,000; Boston, 17,000; Philadelphia, 16,000; Washington, 12,000; Chicago, 22,000; St. Louis, 20,000.

"Gabby" Street Becomes Some Catcher

BY W. J. MACBETH.

NEW YORK, May 25.—Manager Harry Wolverton, of the Highlanders, pulled a mighty fine stroke of business, when he landed catcher Street from the Washington club. Scuffers were inclined to disagree with such a statement, especially when the veteran backdrop got away to a bad start this spring. But, somehow, since Ed Sweeney came to terms with the Highland management a change for the better has come over the only seasoned receiver with the Crag men up to the time of Sweeney's appearance on the scene.

Sweeney was just the tonic necessary for Street's greatest good. Far be it from any intent to intimate that Street had loafed, while the club was at his tender mercy. He was a sick man all spring—so sick that he often should have been in bed, when he was sporting the chest protector and the mitt. He had just commenced to find himself, when Sweeney bobbed up. But probably he would not have found himself quickly, but for his rival veteran's return.

They tell us that competition is the soul of trade. The same holds good in athletic endeavor, especially so in the professional ranks. Fortunate indeed, is the big league manager, who is well stocked with capable substitutes. Look at McGraw's Giants. He's out there because his secondstring men are practically as valuable as his recognized regulars. And, fully appreciating that fact, can you for a minute imagine one of the veterans letting down an iota from his topmost speed? He dare not. His best work alone stands between him and the job. These substitutes are a proper kind of a prod—only one of the Giant regulars would play with a broken leg if he could, rather than give ground to his underdog.

Thus it is with "Gabby" Street. Until Sweeney came he had no worries. He was the main "guy," the whole note. The world was at his feet as it were. Street is no longer young and you cannot blame him for favoring himself as much as possible until he had rounded into tip-top physical form. But what a change when Sweeney hove in view! No longer any nursing of the sore pinkie; no longer any sparing of the "charley-horse." The shadow of the younger man fell between "Gabby" and "his sinners."

Street will help Sweeney every bit as much as Sweeney will benefit Street. They are two of the finest catchers in the American league. Sweeney was the class of the circuit in 1910. There was no better catcher anywhere in 1911 than Street. Rheumatism put him out of commission in 1910. Last year he was almost himself again. Now he is traveling as well as at any time in his career. And with Sweeney at his coat tails all the time he'll have to keep on traveling.

Sweeney and Street should easily prove the greatest catching combination in the big show. Each is strapping big fellow, capable of catching practically the entire schedule of games. If fortunate enough to escape injury, Street can hold any pitcher. For years he teamed with Walter Johnson, who packs the fastest ball of the age. He has also had lots of experience with apitball receiving. Sweeney is the only catcher in the country who can properly handle Russell Ford's freak delivery. The pair worked together, since they were kids in the "bushes." They are so familiar with each other, that often this star battery works without signs.

The season promises to develop a great fight in friendly rivalry between Street and Sweeney and the harder they tussle the better off will they and the club be. Sweeney had one slight advantage in the fact that he will be assigned with Russell Ford, the pitching star. Yet Street has a qualification that offsets this, at least.

Street is the greatest catcher of the age on a high lift. He never muffs one. Anything that he has time to get under he can hold, whether it be a tall fly to the infield or a towering top catch near the stand. He sets himself right under the ball, holding his glove over his head. And anything that hits his mitt sticks, you may bet on that.

Street was the first man that ever caught a ball thrown from the top of Washington's monument. "How did you do it?" I asked him last spring. "Why easy enough," he replied. "I just planted myself under it like I would under a foul and let it sing right down at me. All I had to do was to get the old mitt between it and my beard."

"It gave me quite a jolt, I can tell you. Scientists at the time figured out the energy necessary to stop the pill. I transformed from a lemon into a peach; how Markie, an obscure substitute, during the Tenney days, was retained and when he did get his chance developed rapidly into a crack first baseman. It was under McGraw that Herzog came into prominent notice, and he schooled Crandall until that pitcher became the steady, dependable workman he is. Mathewson became famous under McGraw. Arthur Wilson, substitute catcher, is good enough to be a first string catcher on any team not having a Meyers.

All of which goes to show that McGraw has made his own team. Connie Mack has demonstrated no less ability in his handling and developing of men. Cona, Strunk, Collins, Baker, Barry, McInnes, Thomas, Lapp, Bender and Oldring are stars who reached their zenith under Mack. The Athletic genius showed that he was that when he found the proper place for McInnes, as clever a managerial stroke as base ball pitcher. Thomas didn't know how good a pitcher he was until Mack showed him, and Rube Oldring thought infolding was his forte until Mack made an outfielder of him. Dan Murphy didn't strike his real gait until Mack shifted him from second base to the outfield.

Coincident with the growth of base ball in a measure helping that growth, has a great deal of this faculty of managers of so handling a man as to make a star out of him in the position he already was playing—teaching him things and making him realize his own worth; or fitting him into some other position for which he was naturally better suited, but didn't know it. 'Tis a combination of knowledge of base ball and human nature on the part of managers which has done much in supplying the demand for required quality in modern base ball.

A Case in Point. A case in point is that of young Foster of the Washington team. It remained for Clark Griffith to discover that Foster's true position was third base, not shortstop, where he had met with indifferent success, and unless Foster is a flash in the pan, a morning glory, he has just found his meter, and that through a shrewd manager. To Cobb was always an outfielder, but Hugh Jennings helped him to find out what a rich prize he really is. Bush, Stanga, Willett and Gainer are stars who have come to their full effluence under Jennings. Hal Chase, great player that he always has been, might become still greater were the right manager to come along, though Wolverton may be that man.

It took Griffith to discover that the best place for Emmond of the Reds was at shortstop, and in Zelder Jimmy Callahan seems to have made a fairly good second baseman into a really good first baseman. The case of Jack Miller of the Pittsburghs, prompted by Manager Clark, is analogous. Frank Sales made a great first baseman out of Fred Tenney, once a catcher, and there are numerous other cases. A great manager, Seale. He had much to do with the building up of the Cubs, though Frank Chance, under whom Schulte, Tinker, Evers, Hofman, Brown, Kling and Zimmerman attained their greatest fame, also did a great deal.

Chief Meyers was a lumbering chap and just an ordinary catcher when he first cast his fortunes with McGraw and was considered something of a joke. But McGraw saw before anybody else that Meyers not only had the making of a first-class catcher, but was a wonderful natural hitter. Meyers at first was weak on foul flies, but now he is not only good on them, but the most valuable backstop in base ball today.

Snodgrass a Run-Getter. It is well known how Snodgrass was made into an outfielder, and a helpful run-getting factor, from a catcher; how Marquard, under McGraw's tutelage, when everybody else was condemning him, was



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But at this one particular spot it is a virtue of the highest order. On the calmest summer day the grounds on the hill will be fanned by some sort of breeze that swirls and sweeps about the grandstand in tantalizing fashion. Whenever the wind freshens up then the fun begins. It's a treat to watch visiting catchers after fouls in a semi-gale. If they get within ten feet of where the ball lights they pat themselves on the back. The foul territory behind the batting box at the hilltop is the toughest proposition in base ball of a windy day.

"Wind-jammer" Street is in a class by himself on windy days at American league park. This alone stamps him as one of the most valuable backstops New York has ever had. But his ability does not end there. He's mighty good all-round workman, and Sweeney will have the time of his life beating this old bird to premier catching honors. It's going to be a great fight between them. Probably it will take more than this season to decide the issue definitely.

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FLYNN IS GETTING IN TRIM

Pueblo Fireman in Active Training for Go with Jack Johnson.

LAS VEGAS BIG BATTLEGROUND

White Pug, Vanquished Five Years Ago by the Colored Champion, is Now Seeking for Revenge.

NEW YORK, May 25.—Jack Johnson and Jim Flynn having started active training for their championship battle, scheduled for July 4 at Las Vegas, N. M., close followers of things flat are unable to solve the riddle of this bout. Unless it is to be in memoriam of the Johnson-Jeffries fight of two years ago there appears to be no rhyme or reason for the contest from a financial, sentimental or pugilistic standpoint.

The idea that Jim Flynn can defeat Jack Johnson at any stage of a forty-five round battle with the negro champion half trying is too preposterous to spend time analyzing. There is nothing in the ring career of the Pueblo fireman that points to him as a worthy antagonist for the Galveston glove gladiator. Five years ago Johnson knocked out Flynn in the eleventh round of a bout held at San Francisco in which the present title holder burlesqued for ten rounds and then administered a quick finish when he became tired of his own acting.

One Contest for Flynn.

Since that date Flynn has won but one contest worthy of even passing notice, and that was the knockout of Al Kaufman in the tenth round of the match at Kansas City about a year ago. Some six months later Al Palmer repeated the trick in five rounds in this city, while Flynn was unable to stop Carl Morris, an absolute ring novice, in ten rounds. Not long since Luther McCarty finished Morris in six rounds at Springfield, Mo. Johnson has not engaged in a ring battle since his victory at Reno just two years ago, figuring from the date of the proposed Las Vegas conflict. Nevertheless those who know Johnson's ability with the gloves cannot conceive of the big negro having gone back so far that Flynn can figure as a possible victor in the coming engagement.

Regardless of the great disparagement in the ability of the two pugilists, principals and promoters are leisurely preparing to migrate to Las Vegas for what they term a bout for the heavyweight championship of the world. Flynn has instructed all his followers to get a bet down on him and is reported to have received \$30,000 for his share of the moving pictures of the battle. Johnson has gathered several of the men who helped him to train for Jeffries, including Marty Curtler and Walter Monahan, who he used to take delight in walloping all over the ring when there was a fair sized crowd of spectators at either Sea Rock pavilion, San Francisco, or Rick's resort at Reno.

Many for Johnson Party.

Incidentally the Johnson party will include two cooks, a piano player, two ragtime singers and an automobile driver who delights in turning corners with three wheels of the car at least a foot off the ground. A glance at the personnel of Johnson's party assures those who saw him training for Jeffries that the big negro does not intend to devote the entire twenty-four hours of each day to fitting himself physically for the great struggle with Flynn.

Promoter Jack Curley has announced that the range of prices for the battle will run from admission at \$5 a head to ringside seats at \$25 each. According to Curley's original plans the arena was to seat 30,000 spectators, although pugilistic devotees have been unable to figure out where 30 per cent of that attendance could be secured from. When this was brought to the attention of the promoter it was explained that any deficit in gate receipts would be more than balanced by the enormous revenue from the moving pictures. It is hard to conceive of any large sums being derived from the films should Johnson fight to form and dispose of Flynn within the first ten rounds of the battle.

Reason for the Fight.

Should it happen, however, that Flynn for business reasons or otherwise, administers a knockout blow to the negro then the moving pictures of the Pueblo fireman restoring the fighting prestige of the white race would prove to be a bonanza. Some shrewd followers of pugilism have been so kind as to say that this was the real reason for the fight, although Johnson has indignantly denied that there is any truth in these cruel reports. He states that he considers Flynn the best heavyweight pugilist in the world today next to himself, and that he is meeting the white man because the public demanded the match. Just where this part of the public is located Johnson failed to explain.

Among eastern pugilistic adherents the main interest in the affair is the reason for the meeting of Johnson and Flynn. These men are unable to figure the fight as a financial success and are inclined to believe that there is some hidden angle upon which the principals and promoters are counting to reimburse them for their alleged outlay of some thousands of dollars. As one close observer put it recently in discussing the fight: "There's a nigger in the wood pile all right, but I guess we won't know who or what he is until after July 4."

In the meantime, James J. Jeffries is keeping carefully under cover at his home near Los Angeles. The only report interest to the public was a statement made a short time ago that he was preparing for a four months' hunting and shooting trip through the wilds of Alaska.

"I have written to England, suggesting that for the occasion at least our way of forming the body be adapted and I'm awaiting the reply. It would be as easy matter to ether take Olympic time as a criterion, or to appoint an international committee for the purpose of classifying all the entrants, ascertaining how many beats will be necessary, and then placing first, one of the headlines in every beat; next, one of the second string men in each, and so on. It is the only method that is absolutely fair and conclusive in results."

The principal event which Americans will take part in, if the trip is taken, is the 100-yard championship of England, to be held in the 75-foot pool of the Osborn bath at Manchester, on July 28. This race ranks as a world's classic, and in years not featured by international meets is attended by swimmers of all nations, who aspire to the title of supremacy. The program includes carnivals at London, Liverpool, West-Super-Mer, Sheffield, Leeds, and such well known swimming centers. Negotiations are also under way for a competitive tour of Germany after the English trip.

The Persistent and judicious Use of Newspaper Advertising is the Road to Business Success.

STANFORD ENTERS REGATTA

Will Compete in Intercollegiate Affair on Hudson.

TO LEAVE CALIFORNIA JUNE 8

Will Then Have Sixteen Days Left for Crew to Practice and Get Used to Their New Shell.

NEW YORK, May 25.—Stanford university's varsity crew, champions of the Pacific coast, will leave Palo Alto, Calif., on June 8, and arrive June 12 in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., where they will compete in the intercollegiate regatta on the Hudson on June 23.

Mortimer Bogue, chairman of the stewards of the intercollegiate regatta, recently received word from Stanford announcing that the athletic board had gratefully accepted the invitation to participate at the Poughkeepsie classic.

Commencement exercises are held at Stanford during the first week in June. The schedule will allow the senior oarsmen to receive their diplomas and the undergraduate rowers to witness the closing of colleges before they depart.

Arriving at Poughkeepsie on June 19 they will have about two weeks in which to train. Inasmuch as the squad is still eating at a training table at college, and is keeping in the pink of condition, they need only time to become accustomed to their new English hull shell, which will be tried out here, and the decreased buoyancy afforded by the fresh water of the Hudson at that point.

Necessary Money Raised. The necessary funds have already been raised among the students at Stanford to defray the expenses of the squad on the long transcontinental journey.

Departing from Oakland, across the bay from San Francisco, on Saturday, June 8, the crew will arrive in Chicago on Tuesday, June 11, and in New York city on June 12. A day of rest at Gotham, for the men to get their "land legs" is allowed, with the run up to Poughkeepsie on Thursday morning.

About sixteen days will be left for the crew to practice and get used to their new shell and to rowing in the brackish, almost fresh water of the Hudson at that point. The men row in an estuary of San Francisco bay at home, in water as salty as brine. The difference in the buoyancy of the water and the consequent variance in the boat's freeboard make an appreciable difference in handling a sweep.

Just how large a squad will be carried east has not yet been decided, but at least a dozen men will be taken, eight oarsmen, a coxswain, coach and two substitutes. Three more men will be added to the party if funds permit. It will cost \$2,000 for a squad of fifteen men to make the round trip, as nearly as can be figured. The railroad fare alone is \$150, with \$40 for berths and \$30 for meals en route. This totals \$220 a man. The fifteen would thus require \$3,300 for transportation alone. At this expense of nearly three weeks' living at Poughkeepsie, with training table, and handling, probable repairs and alterations to the boat, its freight back to California and miscellaneous details and \$1,700 is quickly dissipated.

Confident ever since the Pacific coast intercollegiate rowing season ended last month that they would come east to Poughkeepsie this summer, the men never broke training, even after defeating the Universities of California and Washington. They are now at Redwood City, where they will remain until they depart for the east next month.

WOMEN'S GOLF TOURNEY AT PHILADELPHIA JUNE 3

NEW YORK, May 25.—The conditions to govern this year's annual championship of the Women's Eastern Golf association will be the Philadelphia Philadelphia Cricket club, June 1, 4 and 5, have been announced. The championship competition will be fifty-four holes, medal play, eighteen holes the forenoon of each day, beginning at 10 o'clock. Entries will close with the secretary at the club at 5 p. m. on Saturday, June 1.

The play for the Griscom cup will follow on the remaining three days of the week. The Griscom cup competition between Boston, New York and Philadelphia associations will be fifteen single matches, to be played in the morning, and six foursomes in the afternoon.

To Increase the Attendance at the base ball games played in the Guthrie park of the Oklahoma State League a unique scheme has been devised, and hereafter instructors in the Eastern Golf association. They will explain to any one not understanding the game all of its fine points. The plan, it is believed, will materially increase the attendance of women at the games. The instructors to be employed will include both men and women.

Protects the Players. Declaring that base ball players must be protected from rowdy tactics sometimes resorted to by fans, Judge W. L. McNamara in court, at Keokuk, Ia., gave Harry Maytag a thirty-day sentence for assaulting First Baseman "Rocky" Walters of the Muscatine club. The affair occurred at the hotel after the game.

Changes at Topoka. Dale Gear has given his Kaws a shake-up. He has released Pitcher Al Leak outright, sent the Indian Smith to Manhattan, in the Central Kansas league, and signed Dolan, an infielder who was with Green Bay last year and went from there to Los Angeles.

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