

Why the Game Is an Honest One.

Willie Keeler Tells How to Hit.

# BASEBALL

HOW TO PROMOTE INTEREST IN THE GAME.

Possibly the younger generation of baseball enthusiasts seldom if ever gives the matter any serious consideration, but those who have followed the fortunes of America's national game for a decade believe firmly in the thorough honesty of the game. There is no other professional sport in the world today in which there has been less actual scandal. Over 20 years ago the poolrooms and gamblers began to tinkle the game with the usual result. There were a few questionable games, a sudden investigation by the club owners, and there has not been any real dis-



**N. E. YOUNG.**  
[President National League of Baseball Clubs.]  
honesty in professional baseball since. A handful of ball players was blacklisted, and they are blacklisted yet. Heroic measures were needed, the club owners had the nerve to apply the remedy and few sensible men have ever questioned the honesty of baseball since then.

Baseball is a game necessarily free from gambling. It is too uncertain for the professional gambler, and the sport catches and retains its votaries on its own merits. It does not need a betting side issue to make it attractive; local pride does that. Then, the foundation of the sport is of the sort to stimulate honest endeavor. A player's salary depends upon the work that he does and a club's income on the sort of ball its team is playing. In such a great army there are, of course, some men who would descend to tricky subterfuge if they thought it would pay; but they soon find that dishonesty does not pay and they naturally walk in the ranks of the righteous, just because it pays the best in the end. Petty politics should not be allowed to enter into the game, and the further the club owners keep away from petty tactics the better off they will be.

There is a man at the head of the affairs of the National league whose sterling honesty and painstaking methods have endeared him to every honest club owner in the land and to every veteran enthusiast. There has never been a question of "Uncle Nick" Young's thorough honesty and impartiality. Outside of "Pop" Chadwick, he is the dean of the profession. There has been some talk of "Uncle Nick" retiring from the game and Charles H. Ebbets being elected to take his place. A better man could not be selected, but Ebbets himself would regret Young's retirement from the presidency, as would every other earnest supporter of the game. Ebbets is interested in politics in Brooklyn and he does not need Young's shoes, and I don't believe that he has any such ambitions.

It is a study to watch little Willie Keeler handle a bat. Keeler is not much bigger than Terry McGovern, but how he can hit the ball! I never saw Keeler "fight" the ball, as most youngsters do when they get anxious and chase after wide, high and low ones. He simply stands at the plate patiently and waits until the kind of ball comes over that he wants and then he swats it on the "trade mark."

"The eye plays the most important part in a scientific hitter's makeup," said Keeler the other day. "The only time that I ever get nervous on a ball field is when I see a young player walk to the plate, grasp the bat at the extreme tip and then swish it through the air as if he expected to whack the ball into the next county. If I feel an interest in that youngster I generally make it a point to see him after the game and give him a little advice. I tell him to grasp the bat lightly, just as a good bicycle rider takes hold of his handle bars or an expert billiardist grasps his cue. The best way to hold the bat is not unlike Vardon and Taylor, the English golf importations, grasp their golf sticks, several inches away from the extreme end. None of the great hitters of today makes wild lunges—you can't do it and keep your eye on the ball. Scientific hitting is really tapping. You can get all the force that you need that way and when the ball strikes the elastic piece of hickory, and strikes it plump and squarely, it has got to go. If the pitchers of today lobbed up the ball it would be different, but they don't. It generally comes at the batsman as if it were shot out of a canon. Stop swinging at the ball, young men, if

you want to become scientific hitters, and use the wrist movement. Make the pitcher put the ball over the plate and if you have a good eye the rest is easy. The old saying that great batters are born is all rot. If a player has the right sort of thinking machine and uses it properly, it is just as easy for him to become a great hitter as it is for him to excel in the other departments of the game. The reason why the pitchers are generally such poor batsmen is that they are generally pretty well exhausted when their turn comes at the bat. At the same time they know the tricks of the trade better than do the other players."

I am not in favor of adding a further handicap to the pitchers, as has been suggested in some quarters. The work of the average twirler is hard enough as it is, and I do not think that anything will be gained by placing him farther away from the batsmen. The games as played today are all right. Close scores and finely played contests have marked most of the games this year, and it would be foolish to tinker further with the lines as laid down. Neither do I think that the same of the game, John T. Brush, is serious when he says that the National league circuit of next year will consist of 12 clubs. Leave the present circuit of eight clubs as it is and try to reorganize the old American Association. There is plenty of good territory and with the two organizations working in harmony that old spirit of rivalry would be encouraged and the final games would be just as interesting as are those in the spring.

Then that post season series between the leaders of each served to keep the interest at a high point until the snow dew. I have favored this plan for years, and am convinced that it is the only sensible solution of the professional baseball problem in this country.

The misfortunes which have come upon Harry Weldon of Cincinnati and Joe Campbell of Philadelphia touched the heart of every baseball scribe in the country. It seems a shame that men like this, who have done so much for the game, should be compelled to ask their personal friends for subscriptions in their declining years. Few of the veteran writers of the game in New York are now seen at the contests. Chadwick is seen occasionally at Washington park. Pete Donohue, O. P. Caylor, and Bill Norr are dead, three of the brightest minds that ever pushed a quill. John Mandigo loves the game, but seldom gets to see one. Ed. Plummer is in England,



**CHARLES H. EBBETS.**  
[President Brooklyn Baseball Club.]  
following general sports and interested in an inn. George Taylor is never seen at a game, and the brothers June and Will Rankin only occasionally. John Foster, George Tiddens, Bill Hanna, Joe Vila and Abe Yeager are the regulars today. Jim Kennedy has joined the ranks of the promoters and his name is associated with the prizefights and cycle races.

**G. E. STACKHOUSE.**  
**Parlor Golf.**  
Parlor golf is the latest game in England. The entire 18 holes may be played in one room and drives of 200 yards have been made. Champion Taylor and Baird recently played a game. Baird won, making the round in 80 strokes. The teeing ground was an ordinary mat over a green Turkish carpet. The length of the drives is recorded by a machine, to which the golf ball is attached by a string. The player strikes the ball, and the force of the drive is recorded. The chief defect is that there are no bunkers, and slicing or pulling has no effect on a drive.

**Improved Goal Posts.**  
E. Manley, a graduate of Harvard, has invented a goal post for use in football which will prevent injuries to players that have resulted in the past from the pressure of the goal posts on the goal line. The new posts are designed to be set back of the line and have arms which extend over the line. The goal crossbar rests on these arms directly over the line. With these posts in use scrimmages near the line will result in no injury to the players.

## THE FOOTBALL FIELD.

Reform System Recently Inaugurated at Yale.

WALTER CAMP CHIEF ADVISER.

McBride Will Be Head Coach, With a Very Strong Lot of Graduates to Help Him—Some Details of the New Plan.

Football will soon be in full swing again. So soon as September comes around golf, tennis and baseball give way to this virile sport, in the colleges especially.

Particular interest just now centers on Yale, owing to the reform movement in regard to athletics inaugurated there. The many rocks and pitfalls that the sons of Eli have fallen into during the last few seasons has caused a thorough change to be made in athletic matters, and football is to have first trial of the new order of things.

Malcolm L. McBride, captain of the Yale football team of 1896, will be head coach of the Yale eleven next fall. His chief adviser in the work of developing Yale's team will be Walter Camp. McBride's active assistants in the coaching will be Frank A. Hinkey, captain in 1894 and 1895; Frank Butterworth, '95, the famous full back of his day and W. T. Bull, '88, who had charge of the kicking department of football at Yale last season.

There will, of course, be other old players to assist in the coaching, but these will be the most conspicuous and most prominent coaches. Mr. Camp does not expect to take any active part in the coaching. He will, however, keep in closer touch with the game



than he has for the past five seasons, and will resume his old role of chief adviser to the team.

This is the most formidable array of coaches that Yale has ever selected long in advance for the development of a team.

The return of Mr. Camp to his old role of counsel and adviser to the team will in a large measure help out McBride. Mr. Camp will be able to constantly advise McBride and to keep him on the right track. Although McBride played football all through his college course, and was captain last season, he is nevertheless a green and inexperienced man in the business of coaching. Thrown upon his own resources, he would undoubtedly have to go through the same sort of an experience that Rodgers had last season.

It will be remembered that Mr. Camp formally retired from an active connection with Yale athletics five years ago. Since then he has not done any active coaching and has kept clear of the responsibility which he formerly shouldered. The reason of his retirement was due to the fact that he did not have time for the work.

Last June a scheme was formulated by the graduates to get Mr. Camp back into Yale athletics. After various plans had been tried and all had failed owing to Mr. Camp's refusal to give up his business and accept a position at Yale as athletic supervisor, an entirely new scheme was hit upon. It was decided to consolidate all of the athletic organizations and to place the management of these organizations under the direction of one man. This man was to be paid for his work and Mr. Camp was chosen to fill the place.

The duties of this new position, in addition to looking after the finances of all of Yale's athletic organizations, include those of a counselor, so to speak. The undergraduate captains and managers are no longer all powerful and able to do anything and everything without consulting any one. Mr. Camp in this role has, therefore, become available once more to the football team.

In the days when he was considered the responsible head of Yale football he was always the counselor rather than the head coach of the team. He seldom went to the field to watch the practice, but every evening the captain of the team and those who had been coaching on that particular day used to meet at Mr. Camp's house and talk things over. It was in these councils around his own fireplace that Mr. Camp did his work for football at Yale.

The greatest significance of Mr. Camp's return to football at Yale is that it will mean a remodeling of Yale's style of offensive play. This is what the younger element at Yale has been hoping for. The undergraduates realized last fall when it was too late that Yale's style of offensive play was fatally weak. The undergraduates therefore demanded that some experienced man be placed in charge of the coaching this fall who could introduce more up to date methods and put Yale in possession of a style of play that would place Yale on an even footing with rivals.

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