

### Waterloo, the Pennant Winner

#### How Boyle's Team Won Three Straights from Burlington and Copped the Iowa League Bunting in 1907.

[By E. R. Bales in Des Moines Register and Leader.]

With a world's series just completed, which was in every respect the greatest in the history of the national game, establishes as it did new records in every branch of the sport, it is not out of place to call attention to a series staged on the prairies of Iowa not many years since, which, although lacking the glamour that surrounds a world's title, was in many ways more remarkable even than the struggle just completed in Philadelphia.

The stake at issue was only the championship of a class "D" league, but it was fought out as bitterly as though the premier honors of baseball hung in the balance. Slight attention was given it at the time and few outside of the immediate locality in which it was staged realized just what an important niche it might fill in later years in baseball history.

Waterloo, Ia., furnished the background for this great series, the result of which is yet modern history, having occurred on the 10th, 11th and 12th of September, 1907, little more than four years ago. The opposing club represented Burlington. The pennant of the old Iowa League, of which both were then members, since transformed into the Central association, was the stake.

#### Superb Pitching Record.

Measured by pitching standards alone the series easily surpasses any records now in existence and records three successive performance which, taken collectively, probably never will be equaled. In three games played, one of which went into extra innings, not only did the Burlington club fail to get a runner across the home plate, but their combined efforts in twenty-nine innings of play registered but two safe hits off of the Waterloo twirlers.

The record is a marvelous one judged by individual performance or collectively. It created a sensation in the circuit at that time, but was given little publicity in the outside world. The Iowa League that year was made up of Waterloo, Burlington, Oskaloosa, Marshalltown, Ottumwa and Keokuk as the Iowa members and Quincy and Jacksonville in Illinois.

Frank Boyle was manager of the Waterloo club that year, as he has been since up to near the close of the last season, and Ned Egan, now manager of the Ottumwa club, was in charge at Burlington. The two were old rivals for league honors and both ranked among the craftiest generals in minor league baseball.

#### Burlington Team Sluggers.

Burlington was possessed of a hard hitting, fast combination which, under Egan's clever handling, secured an early lead in the race for the gonfalon. Up until long past the middle of the season the race looked all but over with Burlington an easy winner. Boyle, in the meantime, with a practically new team, part of which had been secured in midseason, was plugging along as best he could, winning a majority of the games played, but scarcely enough to overhaul Egan's club far out in the lead.

He was working every minute, however, and in the middle of the season the club began to display some of the evidences of his efforts. Raw material had been transformed into the consummation of a successful manager's ambitions, a baseball machine which moves and thinks in perfect rhythm and with the flaws obliterated through team work.

Just at this stage Boyle perpetrated what his critics stamped as an irretrievable blunder. He traded horses in midstream. Kephan, a hard hitting outfielder, who had made himself extremely popular with the local fans by his clouting ability, was sent to the Three-I league in exchange for Curtis and a cash consideration.

It was a risk deal and threatened for a time to divorce the patronage of the fans. The new outfielder sprang into instant favor, however, on his initial appearance on the Waterloo grounds by slamming the first ball pitched to him over the fence for a circuit drive and the manager's judgment later was vindicated in many ways.

The pitchers were in grand form and immediately after the reconstructed outfield had accustomed itself to the change the team struck its salt and displayed wonderful form throughout the balance of the season.

#### Waterloo Starts Winning Streak.

A winning streak started on its upward climb after Burlington. Progress was slow, however, as Egan's men were going at a rapid pace. Toward the first of September the margin which separated the two leaders was cut down rapidly and it soon became apparent that the fight for the pennant would be a hot one.

Point by point the difference was narrowed until the two contenders stood on nearly equal footing. The season was scheduled to close on September 15 and it became evident that the series of games scheduled between the two teams on the 10th, 11th and 12th of the month would

decide the pennant winner. Each had but one club to meet after that time and a clean sweep of the crucial series meant a practical clinch on the championship.

Both were in magnificent form and going at top speed with the players keyed up to the highest point in anticipation of the struggle. On the day of the initial game when Egan took his club to Waterloo, accompanied by hundreds of Burlington fans, the percentage column showed Waterloo at .617, one point removed.

It was evident that Egan would rely on Slapnicka, now with the Cubs, "Hetty" Green and McMillan for the slab work, while it was equally certain that Boyle would pin his hopes to Hollenbeck, Gaspar and Harmon, his trio of first string pitchers.

Egan and Rose and Bruggeman for backstops; Babe Towne, now manager of the Sioux City club, and in the year previous to that a member of the world's champion White Sox, at first base; Donovan at second base; Spencer, secured from Cedar Rapids, at third; Berg at shortstop; Daley, sold to Cincinnati the same year, in left field; House, the Indian, in center, and Kennedy in right.

Boyle had Lizette and Searles as catchers; George Clark, now a West-coast league umpire, at first base; Lee Magee, at the present time a utility infielder for the St. Louis Cardinals, at second; George Pennington at third; Joe Wilkes at shortstop; Cruikshank, now with Seattle, in right field; Curtis in center, and Shour in left.

#### Rooters Show Excitement.

Excitement in Waterloo was at the boiling point as the hour for the game approached. Stores were closed and business suspended generally during the time of the game. Citizens equipped themselves with every noise making device extant and made their way to the grounds to root for the home team. The town was baseball mad and no one seemed to care. Burlington also was well represented in the crowded stands.

Ira Harmon, then at the zenith of his career as a pitcher and whose wonderful work was in large measure responsible for the high standing of the club, was Boyle's choice for the slab in the initial game and pitter against him was Slapnicka, Egan's choice.

The Burlington players were retired in order in the first inning and Waterloo, in its half, fell upon Slapnicka's slants and hammered them to every corner of the field, scoring four runs before he was relieved by McMillan. In all Waterloo garnered 17 hits and 11 runs.

Harmon, in the meantime, was performing in marvelous style. Save for four passes issued his work was perfect until the ninth, not a single hit having been made until Babe Towne, with two out in that session, poked out a double that accomplished nothing save the marring of a near no hit game. Burlington never came close to a score.

#### Waterloo Assumes Lead.

The positions of the two clubs now were reversed, Waterloo assuming the lead which it never again relinquished during the season. Interest in the series now reached the acute point throughout the circuit and in other cities where games were scheduled the teams merely went through the motions of playing while they watched the progress of the struggle for the leadership.

Excitement in Waterloo had reached a frenzied condition. Men who had never before given baseball more than passing attention, aroused by the spirit which prevailed, acquired noise making devices and enlisted as rooters for the home team.

Egan, "Foxy Ned," as he is known in his own circuit, had figured that Boyle would use Harmon, his star hurler, in the first game, and rather than pit his own "best bet," Green, against him in what seemed a forlorn hope, he chose a lesser light and trusted to luck to win preferring to save his trump card for another time.

It seemed like good generalship as no team in the league had been able to hit Harmon with any degree of consistency. With one game gone against him, however, and Waterloo in the lead the next game would practically decide the championship. If he lost there was little hope, but if the game was won the two clubs were on even footing again.

#### Green, Egan's Choice.

"Hetty" Green was the natural choice, and there never was a gamer pitcher in shoe leather. He had pitched sensational ball throughout the year and Harmon was the only one who had won more consistently. Even the optimistic Waterloo fans had little hope of winning against him.

Green and Bruggeman was the Burlington battery. A gasp of astonishment went through the stands when Harry Gaspar was announced as Boyle's choice to oppose Egan's wonder. "Duke" Hollenbeck was the popular choice for the battle.

Gaspar was an awkward, raw-boned athlete that had met with indifferent

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success in the Three-Eye league and one or two other minor circuits and was taken on by Boyd for a trial. He had improved wonderfully in his work toward the latter part of the season, but none picked him as a worthy opponent for the Burlington star.

He proved his worth, however, in the greatest pitcher's battle ever staged in the Iowa league, and one of the most desperate in baseball history. Through ten feverish innings the teams fought without a run. Both realized that a lone tally meant victory and probably the league pennant. But two hits had been registered off of Green and Gaspar had not yielded a single safety.

#### Winning Run in Eleventh.

In the eleventh Burlington batters were retired in consecutive order and in the same round Green weakened. He passed Pennington and Clark in succession and filled the bases by hitting Magee. On an infield hit Pennington slid across the plate with the winning run. Gaspar was given an ovation. It was a richly deserved compliment. He had worked through eleven full innings without the semblance of a hit being recorded against him.

Egan's chances were now almost hopeless, but he did not give up. McMillan had worked on the second day previous, but he sent him back in an effort to take the one remaining game. The players were desperate. With a great hitting aggregation they had twice been shut out without a run and secured but one hit in two games.

"Duke" Hollenbeck got his chance in the third game. He at that time was scarcely more than a recruit, and was working his second year in organized baseball, but had already shown promise of becoming one of the best southpaws in the business. He had been signed a year before by Boyle for a trial on the recommendation of Mike Dwyer of Oelwein, a former catcher with Comiskey when the White Sox boss was at St. Paul.

#### Purchased by Rouke.

He had made such a remarkable showing for a youngster that Bill Rouke of the Omaha Western league club has already completed negotiations for his purchase. None of his friends even dared hope, however, that he would be able to even approach the wonderful record made in the two previous games. Both performances had been phenomenal and it was beyond belief that either could be duplicated.

Hollenbeck went into the fray, however chock full of confidence and in perfect condition. He had everything that a pitcher ever possessed—curves, speed and control and a wonderful change of pace which he utilized with marked effect. The Burlington sluggers were equally as helpless as in the two previous games.

Only three men reached first base during the game and none of these came close to the counting station. But five balls were hit outside the diamond and these were easy chances for the outfielders. Bruggeman secured the only base hit of the game for Burlington. The game ended with the score 4 to 0 in favor of Waterloo, closing the series with three shutout games and but two hits registered against three pitchers.

Of the three pitchers that figured in the great series, Ira Harmon never returned to form. He developed a sore arm at the start of the next season, and although carried on the payroll throughout the year, was practically useless to Boyle. The next season witnessed his retirement from the game.

Hollenbeck went to Omaha at the start of the season of 1908 and remained with that club for three years in the Western league. Waterloo had secured a berth in the Three-I league in the meantime, and at the start of last season Boyle repurchased his former star. He made a wonderful showing on his old stamping ground

and at one time was reported to have been purchased by the Chicago Cubs. The option was not exercised, however, and with the ousting of Waterloo from the Three-I league he will probably go to one of the other clubs in that circuit next year when the players are distributed.

Harry Gaspar remained with Waterloo the next year and met with wonderful success winning almost every game he pitched. That fall he was sold by Boyle to the Cincinnati club of the National league and has been one of the mainstays of that team since.

Following is shown the detailed score of the three games:

First Game.		AB. R. H. P. O. A. E.					
Waterloo							
Curtis, lf	5	1	3	3	0	0	0
Shour, rf	4	2	2	6	0	0	0
Cruikshank, cf	5	3	3	1	0	0	0
Lizette, c	4	1	3	1	0	0	0
Wilkes, ss	4	0	2	0	1	0	0
Pennington, 3b	4	1	4	3	0	0	0
Clark, 1b	3	2	2	6	1	0	0
Magee, 2b	2	0	3	1	0	0	0
Harmon, p	4	1	3	1	0	0	0
Totals	35	11	27	7	0	0	0
Burlington							
Daley, lf	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Berg, ss	3	0	3	1	0	0	0
House, cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kennedy, rf	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
Towne, 1b	4	0	1	0	0	0	0
Donovan, 2b	4	0	4	3	0	0	0
Rose, c	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Bruggeman, p	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
Spencer, 3b	2	0	1	3	0	0	0
Slapnicka, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
McMillan, p	3	0	1	3	0	0	0
Totals	26	0	1	24	10	1	0

Rose batted for Bruggeman in fifth; McMillan for Slapnicka in first. Score by innings: Waterloo 4 0 0 5 1 1 0 0 x—11 Burlington 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0—0 Summary—Runs earned, Waterloo 8; two base hits, Curtis 2, Shour, Cruikshank, Pennington, Towne; bases on balls, off Harmon, 4; off Slapnicka, 1; passed ball, Bruggeman. Struck out, by Harmon 3; by Slapnicka, 1, by McMillan, 2; stolen bases Cruikshank, Wilkes, Pennington, Clark, Berg, Harmon; sacrifice hits, Magee 2, Lizette, Time, 1:45. Umpires, Eckman and Hoffman. Attendance 1,720.

Second Game.		AB. R. H. P. O. A. E.					
Waterloo							
Curtis, cf	4	0	1	5	0	0	0
Shour, lf	3	0	1	1	0	0	0
Cruikshank, rf	4	0	1	0	0	0	0
Lizette, c	4	0	5	0	1	0	0
Wilkes, ss	4	0	2	0	0	0	0
Pennington, 3b	3	1	0	3	4	0	0
Clark, 1b	3	0	13	0	0	0	0
Magee, 2b	3	0	2	5	1	0	0
Gaspar, p	4	0	1	3	0	0	0
Totals	32	1	23	13	2	0	0
Burlington							
Daley, lf	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
Berg, ss	3	0	0	2	1	0	0
House, cf	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Kennedy, rf	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Towne, 1b	3	0	9	3	0	0	0
Spencer, 3b	4	0	3	3	0	0	0
Donovan, 2b	4	0	2	2	0	0	0
Bruggeman, c	3	0	9	0	0	0	0
Green, p	4	0	2	2	0	0	0
Totals	31	0	30	12	2	0	0

None out when winning run was made. Score by innings: Burlington 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0—0 Waterloo 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0—1 Summary—Bases on balls, by Green 2, by Gaspar 2; struck out, by Gaspar 5, by Green 8; stolen base, Pennington; sacrifice hits, Shour, Berg, House, Time of game, 2:00. Attendance, 2,207. Umpires, Huffman and Eckman.

Third Game.		AB. R. H. P. O. A. E.					
Waterloo							
Curtis, cf	3	0	1	2	0	0	0
Shour, lf	4	0	3	0	0	0	0
Cruikshank, rf	4	0	3	0	0	0	0
Lizette, c	2	0	6	0	0	0	0
Wilkes, ss	3	1	1	3	0	0	0
Pennington, 3b	3	1	0	1	0	0	0
Clark, 1b	4	1	2	13	0	0	0
Magee, 2b	2	1	2	4	0	0	0
Hollenbeck, p	2	0	2	0	3	1	0
Totals	27	4	10	27	11	1	0
Burlington							
Daley, lf	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Rose, lf	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
Berg, ss	4	0	1	4	0	0	0
House, cf	4	0	3	1	0	0	0
Kennedy, rf	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Towne, 1b	2	0	7	1	1	0	0
Spencer, 3b	3	0	1	2	0	0	0
Slapnicka, 2b	2	0	2	1	0	0	0
Bruggeman, c	3	0	1	7	1	0	0
McMillan, p	2	0	0	4	0	0	0
Totals	26	0	1	24	14	1	0

Rose took Daley's place in the third inning. The score by innings: Waterloo 0 1 0 0 0 0 1 2 x—4 Burlington 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0—0 Summary—Earned runs, Waterloo 2; two base hits, Clark, Magee; bases on balls, by Hollenbeck 1, by McMillan 2; struck out, by Hollenbeck 5; sacrifice hits, Curtis, Lizette, Magee, Towne, McMillan. Time of game 1:25. Umpires, Eckman and Hoffman. Attendance, 1,900.

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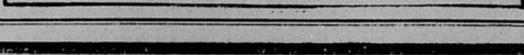
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