

# YEAR JUST PASSED ONE OF UNUSUAL INTEREST IN SPORTS

## SUMMARY OF YEAR'S FIGHTS

### PASSING OF JOE GANS THE CHIEF FEATURE OF THE AMERICAN RING IN 1908.

If there is any one thing that can be held up as the chief feature of 1908 in the American ring it is the passing of Joe Gans from the championship. After being a leading factor in his division for a decade and after a career of more than 17 years in the squared circle, the "old master" has at last recognized that years will tell. When battling Nelson knocked him out twice in succession—July 4 and September 9—Gans realized that his hope of regaining the title he had held for years was gone. But he has stepped down from the throne with a record equaled by few in the country. Although many considered him the best man at his weight for years before that date, his first legitimate claim to the title came in 1902, when he knocked out Frank Erne in the first round at Fort Erie. From that time until this season his career was a long record of victories, save only his solitary defeat by Sam Langford and his draw with Joe Walcott—both heavier men, whose work did not mar his title.

In many respects Gans was a high type of a boxer, and under his black skin beats the heart of a gentleman. Had it not been for his love of the dice he might now be a rich man. As it is he has little left.

But even if Gans has stepped out of the direct glare of the limelight he carries with him the esteem of all those who know him. Gans has met them all—the best and the worst in his own and heavier divisions. And as the years passed he held his own with them all. He met the rising generation when his former opponents had stepped down and out. And he won the title at an age far above that at which a man usually hopes to strive for such an honor.

The year 1905 will go down in pugilistic history as one of the most interesting in all the annals of the ring game. Interesting not alone because of the number of fights, but rather for the surprises it developed. Scarcely a month passed that did not contain a surprise party. The short end man at the betting invariably came out to the good.

One title—the middleweight championship—was transferred twice, but, contrary to all customs, it was lost and regained by the same man, Stanley Ketchel. The lightweight crown held for several years by Joe Gans passed into the hands of Battling Nelson, and the Danes' tactics put it out of danger of being transferred again, for he absolutely refused to meet any one until spring.

The featherweight title was picked up by Abe Attell several years ago, and the little Jew has maintained a front rank position ever since, although Owen Moran and Freddie Welsh, the two little Englishmen, today share the right to the premiership in the featherweight class with Attell. Welsh is really a legitimate lightweight. He fought in that division before he came to America, but he is able to get down several pounds under the 133 mark. Owen Moran, who has grown heavier since setting foot in Uncle Sam's domain, is gradually developing into the lightweight class himself, and probably will never again be seen in the ring at 122 pounds.

When Papke and Ketchel first met at Milwaukee the odds were on Ketchel and he won, but the margin of victory was narrow. They were matched again at Los Angeles, and Ketchel was a 2 to 1 favorite. Why, Papke was thought to be so far outclassed that he was never picked as a winner except by his warmest friends. Everybody recoils at the outcome of that battle. Papke beat Ketchel to within an inch of his career. He hammered the Grand Rapids wonder around the ring unmercifully, and so far outclassed him that when they were matched for the third battle Papke was a prohibitive favorite. Instead of Ketchel being outclassed, this time he made Papke look like a selling plaster. The whole pugilistic world was handed one of the biggest surprises in the history of the ring game.

It was reserved for the last week of the year to bring forth its greatest feature, the defeat of Champion Tommy Burns and the advent of the first colored heavyweight champion of the world, an honor now accorded to Jack Johnson.

Aside from this battle, the heavyweight field was lacking in activity of the higher grade, due largely to the paucity of really first-class material. In the middleweight and lightweight division, however, there was plenty of action and good milling. Stanley Ketchel stands forth as the best of the middleweights and even as a prospective opponent of Jack Johnson.

Here is a summary of the principal battles of the year:

#### JANUARY.

January 1—Abe Attell and Owen Moran fought 20-round draw at San Francisco.

January 3—Joe Gans knocked out Bob Blackburn in third round at Baltimore.

January 8—Johnny Coulon defeated "Kid" Murphy at Peoria in 10 rounds.

January 12—Battling Nelson knocked out Jack Clifford in the fifth round at Ogden, Utah.

January 14—Packey McFarland defeated Bert Keyes at Boston in 12 rounds.

January 21—Billy Papke defeated Walter Stanton at Boston in 12 rounds; seconds threw up sponge.

January 23—Packey McFarland outpointed Young Laughtrey at Philadelphia; no decision; six rounds.

January 25—Johnny Coulon defeated "Kid" Murphy at Peoria in 10 rounds.

January 31—Abe Attell stopped Frankie Nell in 12th round at San Francisco.

#### FEBRUARY.

February 4—Rudolph Unholz out-

pointed Battling Nelson at Los Angeles; no decision; 10 rounds.

February 10—Tommy Burns knocked out Jack Palmer in fourth round at London.

February 20—Johnny Coulon knocked out "Cooney" Kelly in ninth round at Peoria.

February 21—Packey McFarland defeated Freddie Welsh at Milwaukee; 16 rounds.

February 22—Stanley Ketchel, in the first round, knocked out Mike (Twin) Sullivan at San Francisco.

#### MARCH.

March 3—Jimmy Britt outpointed Battling Nelson at Los Angeles; no decision; 10 rounds.

March 13—Johnny Coulon defeated "Young Terry" McGovern at Los Angeles; 10 rounds.

March 14—"Cyclone Johnny" Thompson defeated Johnny Murphy at San Francisco; sheriff stopped fight in eighth round.

March 16—Billy Papke defeated Hugo Kelly at Milwaukee in 10 rounds.

March 17—Tommy Burns defeated Jim Roche in the first round at Dublin, Ireland.

March 17—Marvin Hart defeated John Willie in four rounds at Hot Springs, Ark.; foul.

March 31—Battling Nelson and Abe Attell fought 15-round draw at San Francisco.

#### APRIL.

April 1—Joe Gans knocked out "Spike" Hobson in third round at Philadelphia.

April 11—Packey McFarland knocked out Jimmy Britt in sixth round at San Francisco.

April 15—Tommy Burns knocked out "Jewey" Smith at Paris in fifth round.

April 29—Johnny Coulon defeated Tommy Scully at Waukegan in ninth round; police stopped bout.

April 30—Abe Attell knocked out Tommy Sullivan in fourth round at San Francisco.

#### MAY.

May 9—Stanley Ketchel knocked out Jack (Twin) Sullivan in 20th round at San Francisco.

May 14—Joe Gans defeated Rudolph Unholz in 11th round at San Francisco; police stopped bout.

#### JUNE.

June 4—Stanley Ketchel defeated Billy Papke at Milwaukee; 10 rounds.

June 16—Jack O'Brien outpointed Jack Blackburn at Philadelphia; no decision; six rounds.

June 12—Tommy Burns knocked out Bill Squires at Neuilly, France, in the eighth round.

#### JULY.

July 4—Packey McFarland and Freddie Welsh fought 25-round draw at Los Angeles.

July 4—Battling Nelson knocked out Joe Gans in 17 rounds at San Francisco.

July 23—Tommy Burns defeated Rudolph Unholz at Boston; 12 rounds.

July 21—Stanley Ketchel knocked out Hugo Kelly in third round at San Francisco.

#### AUGUST.

August 6—Johnny Coulon knocked out "Young Joe Gans" in sixth round at Waukegan.

August 7—Packey McFarland defeated Phil Brock in seventh round at Los Angeles; referee stopped fight.

August 18—Stanley Ketchel stopped Joe Thomas in two rounds in San Francisco.

#### SEPTEMBER.

September 2—Tommy Burns knocked out Bill Lang in sixth round at Melbourne.

September 7—Billy Papke knocked out Stanley Ketchel in the 12th round at Los Angeles.

September 7—Abe Attell and Owen Moran fought a 23-round draw at San Francisco.

September 9—Battling Nelson, in the 21st round, knocked out Joe Gans at San Francisco.

September 21—Johnny Coulon knocked out Terry Edwards in fourth round at Milwaukee.

September 20—Owen Moran defeated Eddie Hanlon at San Francisco in 20 rounds.

#### OCTOBER.

October 5—Johnny Coulon and "Yankee" Swartz fought six rounds at Philadelphia; no decision.

October 16—"Kid" McCoy and Jim Stewart fought six rounds at New York; no decision.

October 21—Packey McFarland outpointed Leach Cross at New York; no decision; six rounds.

October 29—"Cyclone Johnny" Thompson stopped Rudolph Unholz in 11th round at San Francisco; police stopped fight.

#### NOVEMBER.

November 2—Jimmy Britt defeated Johnny Summers at London; 10 rounds.

November 2—Johnny Coulon outpointed "Young" O'Leary at New York; no decision; six rounds.

November 15—Packey McFarland outpointed Tommy Murphy at New York; no decision; six rounds.

November 25—Freddie Welsh outpointed Abe Attell at Los Angeles; no decision; 15 rounds.

November 26—Stanley Ketchel knocked out Billy Papke in 11th round at San Francisco.

#### DECEMBER.

December 8—Jim Driscoll knocked out Charley Griffin in 11th round at Boston.

December 11—Abe Attell and Ad Wolcott fought a 10-round draw at Los Angeles.

December 15—Billy Papke and Hugo Kelly fought 25-round draw at Los Angeles.

Dec. 26—Jack Johnson defeated Tommy Burns in 14th round at Sydney, New South Wales; decision; police stopped fight.

## BASEBALL CLIMAXES OF YEAR

### SIX WEEKS OF HAIR-RAISING DIAMOND EVENTS ESTABLISH CLOSE RACE RECORD.

The 33d year of organized baseball will be remembered by American citizens of 1908 as long as they live, and will stand out vividly in the game's history as long as it is read.

For the first time in its history the United States was treated to the phenomenal spectacle of a national campaign for the election of the highest officials, waiting patiently until a couple of campaigns for strips of bunting worth intrinsically 140 apiece were finished before the citizens would take their usual interest in politics. This extraordinary situation, which was a matter of comment from coast to coast, could be brought about only by extraordinary circumstances, and that is a feeble adjective to apply to the baseball campaigns of 1908.

#### Closest Finishes in History.

Nothing like the interest created by the finish fights in the National and American leagues has been recorded in previous years. No National league team ever won a pennant more brilliantly than did the Chicago Cubs, who were compelled to stake everything on the result of a single game twice within the space of five days—once when they met and defeated Pittsburgh in the final game of the schedule, and again when they were hauled across a thousand miles and triumphed over New York in the famous battle of October 3, risking their lives at the hands of a frenzied, hostile mob which had been led to believe the Giants were being robbed of the pennant.

No American league team ever lost a pennant more brilliantly than did the Chicago White Sox, who were counted out of the race absolutely five days before the season closed in the west, yet fought so gamely that they met Detroit on the last day of their schedule with an even chance to win the championship, only to lose it in a way that broke more hearts than their own.

The campaigns in both major leagues were so close that it was impossible to pick even a probable winner out of three different clubs in the National league one week before the finish, nor from four different clubs in the American league the same distance from the wire. Chicago, New York and Pittsburgh finished so closely bunched that the Cubs were victors by the narrowest possible margin, while Giants and Pirates ended in a dead lock for second place.

#### World's Series Anti-Climax.

With these two grueling races finished, the world's series proved an anti-climax, particularly as it brought together Cubs and Tigers, who had met the year before in the most one-sided series ever played for the highest honors. The verdict of the year before was repeated in every particular except that Detroit scored one victory in five games instead of having to be content with one drawn game in five as in the previous season.

Only in the matter of shutout games was the National league's 1908 campaign statistically remarkable. There were 163 whitewashes inflicted by the National league pitchers last season, which topped the best previous record in that particular by nine games. Thirty-nine of these blanks were won by 1 to 0 scores, there were 51 extra inning contests, of which the longest went 17 innings, there being three battles of those dimensions.

#### IN THE THEATERS

"The Land of Nod," an extravaganza which contains about as much enjoyable entertainment as it is possible to crowd into one show, will be seen at Union theater next Tuesday, January 5. Besides having everything which goes to make up a high class musical comedy, it exhibits an equipment of scenery, costumes, electrical and other effects, and stage embellishments such as are rarely seen outside of the big Broadway theaters in New York. In all of its vast details, this production reflects the widest range of possibilities in the furnishing of strictly up-to-date spectacle. The scenes are not only massive and beautiful, but they are so far removed from anything hitherto devised that their novelty occasions surprise. The domain of "King of Hearts," with its house of cards, its Peppercorn river, its candy bridges, its mammoth mansions, trees and the palace of "The Sandman" showing such conceits of furnishing as have never been dreamed of except in this particular case, expose a series of pictures of the most gorgeous and, at the same time, unique description. It is all a dream—the dream of a child, "Bonnie," who, at the opening of the first act falls asleep under a rose bush in her mother's garden. A resourceful, poetic mind conceived these scenes, and fancy reached the climax of beauty in the meditations which brought them forth. With striking consistency the old personages who inhabit this mysterious realm have been evolved and placed in reasonable juxtaposition to it, thus consummating a complete, coherent whole. While "The Land of Nod" is exceptionally attractive to children, it possesses all of the elements which are thoroughly enjoyed by an adult. The comedy is bright and genuinely good, the music is of the popular "catchy" kind, and the presenting company, which numbers 75 or more, is made up of comedians, singers, dancers and choristers who possess qualifications of the highest order of capability. Among the principals who made distinct hits in last season's cast, and who return this time are Mr. Knox Wilson and Miss Grace Drew. "The Land of Nod" should, and probably will be, witnessed by as many people

as can be crowded into the theater, and early application for seats should be made when the sale opens.

#### "FANTANA"

The Salt Lake Tribune has the following to say concerning the production of "Fantana" by the San Francisco Opera company, which is to be one of the early attractions of the new year at the Union theater:

"They are all singing and whistling this song this morning. 'If You Ask Me Why I Love You.' They heard it at the Colonial Sunday night, and not only that, but they heard a bright, sparkling, Japanese-American musical comedy, 'Fantana' sung. They saw beautiful stage settings, pretty girls, handsome costumes and Teddy Webb. The large chorus is a strong one, and it can and does sing. So does Evelyn Frances Kellogg, who was seen here last in the 'Gingerbread Man.' As Fantana she sings sweetly. So does her maid, Jessie, a character that is admirably portrayed by Amy Leicester, who can likewise act. Then there is Mabel Hilliard, as Mme. Anita, and Clara Merck as Elsie Sturtevant, and they can sing. Then, too, there are Vassar girls and cadets and leaders of the younger set, and geishas and maids and valets and Japanese men, and they are all in 'Fantana. And

in New York and meeting with good success. Walter Le Roy, well known in vaudeville throughout the country, is appearing this season in a sketch by George Cohan, entitled 'Hogan's Millions.'

Blanche Ring is said to be the only comic opera star today who never wears jewelry on the stage. She thinks that the public is tired of seeing bejeweled singers.

Miss Rega Russell, said to be one of the most beautiful girls in America, is a member of the special company which W. E. Gorman has on tour this season in a production of Goethe's 'Faust.'

Since E. H. Sothern became a star he has played not less than 37 different roles. Six of them are Shakespearean, five tragic and the others vary between comedy and romantic parts.

The new play by Eugene Walter, author of 'Paid in Full,' and 'The Wolf,' which David Belasco is soon to produce, with Francis Starr in the leading part is called 'The Eastest Way,' and is now in rehearsal.

The cast of 'Nan of the Vaudeville,' a play that will soon be produced for the first time at Brunswick, N. J., has been announced. Catherine Brown will be the leading woman and John Milton the leading man. Corse Payton's annual Shakespearean production was presented in New



THE FAMOUS MADCAP BALLET WITH "THE LAND OF NOD."

this large chorus is in reality a picture chorus.

"There are three acts in this sprightly musical comedy, and each one is worth the price of admission. And in each act there are some pretty solos and the strong chorus. The stage settings are beautiful, especially those in the second and third acts, which represent the exterior palace and residence of Marquis Kito, Nagasaki, Japan and on the yacht 'Japanica,' homeward bound.

"In the third act is where Teddy Webb gets in some exceptionally clever work. His take off on the illustrated picture song, on the strong man, and the rapid landscape artist, are unusually good. Indeed, the last act is perhaps the best of the three, for it is in this that most of the catchy music is sung, and it is the last song that is sung that everybody is humming or whistling as they leave the playhouse.

"In all there are 27 musical numbers and all are pleasing. But you should see 'Fantana,' hear the music, and you will be pleased as well as the big audience which crowded the playhouse on Sunday night. It is one continuous laugh set to music; it is the big girl show."

York the other day in the form of "Roméo and Juliet." Minna Phillips was the Juliet and scored a big personal success. Louis L. Hall was cast for Romeo.

Frank P. Cotter, who for several seasons was manager for Stuart Robson and William H. Crane, and was one of the best-known men among the theatrical managers, died in New York the other day at the age of 60 years.

A minister in Chicago recently preached a sermon on the oft-quoted line in "Checkers," "Gee, ain't it hell to be poor!" He maintained that the sentiment was true and that it is almost as much a man's duty in so far as he may do so honorably to escape living in such a place on earth as to avoid a like habitation in the next world.

Some American students recently discovered rich deposits of coal in Shantung province, China, and have sought permission of the government to develop them.

#### PLAYS AND PLAYERS

"The Devil," with George Arliss in the title role is still drawing capacity houses in New York.

William Gillette is meeting with unusual success in the star part of "Samson," now playing in New York.

"A Gentleman From Mississippi" was recently performed for the hundredth time in the same house in New York.

Blanche Walsh will make an extensive tour of the south this season, appearing in her new play, entitled "The Test."

Blanche Ring, who is with Joe Weber this season, has been guaranteed by her contract that she will star next season.

Miss Eleanor Robson is said to have a wonderful part in "Vera," the Medium," with which she is now on a successful tour.

R. G. Knowles, known as the man who popularized American humor on the American stage, is now playing

at the Union Theater. Minna Phillips was the Juliet and scored a big personal success. Louis L. Hall was cast for Romeo.

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