

LARRY LAJOIE REARMS OF THE DIAMOND

Twenty-one Years in Game but Never on Pennant-Winning Team.

By FRANK O'NEILL.

A cynic, paraphrasing Shakespeare, once said: "There is a divinity which shapes our ends rough, hew them how we will." Larry Lajoie, once king of the second basemen, rounding out his twenty-first season in the major leagues with the shattered Athletics, probably never read that paraphrase, but he expressed the sentiment contained therein when the Mackmen were in this city recently and defeated the Yankees. "I've been up here for a long, long time," said Larry, "but I never have played with a pennant winner. The breaks were always against me. The breaks, indeed, were against the veteran Frenchman, who has so heroically resisted the hand of Time. Always a great player himself—one of the greatest, in fact, who ever trod the diamond, he never has played on a team that won a championship. Other men, mere striplings, have leaped into series, but he labored in the ranks. Larry's dream of empire almost was realized in 1908, when he led the old Naps right down to the last day of the season, fighting a grim battle with the Detroit Tigers, but the Naps lost the deciding game, and the Tigers met the Cubs for the world's championship.

Lajoie played in 157 games. That the Naps finished so well in that race was due largely to the fact that Lajoie had the good fortune to escape injury throughout the season. He took chances on the diamond, playing hard to win at all times, but for some reason or other, he was able to remain in his position throughout the 157 games the team played. His marvellous fielding skill and his hard, timely hitting won many a game. In 1905 the pennant was conceded to the Naps before the season opened, and they dashed away to an early lead, only to be cut down by injuries, and slumped away to fifth place while the Athletics dashed ahead and met the Giants. The year following the Naps went out again, but more men were hurt, and then the White Sox won seventeen consecutive games and proceeded to capture the pennant. So it went with Larry. A member of great teams, he never won.

Now he has come to the end of his career. The trail is narrow and beset with many obstacles. The speed has left his once fleet limbs, his eye has lost the keenness of vision, and grounders are sliding past him now as he once he cut them down with ruthless skill. The throws he beat by a full step to the bag are nipping him at the bag now. Larry is ready to step down to make way for some of the striplings who will succeed him. He is ready to yield his place to boys who were in swaddling clothes when the name of the great Frenchman rang from the lips of their fathers twenty years ago.

The history of baseball never will be complete until a full chapter has been written of the deeds of Lajoie. He always was a player of the highest caliber, most graceful of all fielders, a fielder whose skill often deceived the fans as he made the most difficult plays look easy. No drive was so good as Lajoie's. Larry to cut it down, and he had the ability to move in any direction to make a play. Working to right or left, coming in on the slow bouncers, or slugging back to judge the timing of a wicked bouncer, he was perfection itself.

Above 400 Mark. In twenty years of major league baseball Lajoie boasts the grand batting average of .343. Once he hit well above the 400 mark. That was in 1901, in the first year of the American League's existence, when he played with the Athletics, and he finished with the old Phillies, he tapped the ball for 336.

In 1902, when he was traded to the Cleveland team, he pitched to his liking and bunched it at a .369 clip. Then followed averages of .355 and .381 in 1903 and 1904. In 1904 it was .355, and in 1905, 1911 and 1912 it was .384, .365 and .365. In 1913 the Frenchman piled up his last 300 mark, hitting 335. Lajoie came to the major leagues from the Fall River city league in 1891, and he pitched to his liking and bunched it at a .369 clip. Then followed averages of .355 and .381 in 1903 and 1904. In 1904 it was .355, and in 1905, 1911 and 1912 it was .384, .365 and .365. In 1913 the Frenchman piled up his last 300 mark, hitting 335.

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It was not until 1914 that Larry left the Cleveland team, returning to the Athletics during the season. It was to defend the season of 1915 with the Mackmen, taking the place of Eddie Collins. There he still holds forth, a Mercury shorn of his wings, a Samson shorn of his locks, waiting for the final call of Time.

ONLY FIVE NEW MEN FOR CLEVELAND TEAM

St. Louis, Aug. 19.—Although his team is in seventh place, Manager Miller Huggins of the Cardinals announces that he expects only two new players before the end of the season. What's more, the Cardinals, with one of the weakest clubs St. Louis ever owned, playing in a weak league, has so far obtained only five players with which to strengthen the 1917 outfit.

COMISKEY SATISFIED WITH ROWLAND

Chicago, Aug. 19.—President Comiskey of the White Sox to-day squelched a lot of rumors concerning changes in management for a period extending to the next defeat of the White Sox. "This is the time of year when, if a team has been at the top and retreated for a couple of weeks, the manager extends a helping hand in the management," was part of the comment of the boss of the Sox. "I have the fullest confidence in my team. Rowland will win at the helm as long as the season lasts, pennant or no pennant."

Lo, These Poor Indians, Whose Untutored Bats Are Swatting Many Pitchers in the Slats



Thorpe

Meyers

Bender

Wheat

McGraw Has Ruled Giants for 14 Years

Baltimore Fans Greatly Upset When John J. Deserted Them.

John McGraw took charge of the Giants in July, 1902, after flying the American League coop and returning to the National League fold. Incidentally, that is a day of bitter memories for Baltimore, as the fans of that city hold McGraw responsible for the fact that the Maryland metropolis is a minor league town, although larger than several cities in the big show.

McGraw, who was popular in Baltimore as a veteran of the pennant-winning Orioles of the National League, was placed in charge of the Baltimore American League club in 1901. Almost from the first McGraw was fighting the old Phillies, he tapped the ball for 336.

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THE SPORTLIGHT by Grantland Rice

Lines to Edward S. Plank. Has no one told you Walsh was through? That Miner Brown had drifted by? That even Matty's day was due With shadows epen athwart the sky?

Has no one whispered in your ear That you who have long since passed the prime That yields to one and all the cheer, Stopped by the ancient master, Time?

Or when Time called you from the mob, And beckoned to you in the game, Were you too busy on the job To get the signal when it came?

How many youngsters have you seen Rise up and shine, and fade away? How many veterans career From lofty heights that knew their sway?

Altrock and Chesbro—Walsh and Brown, Waddell and Wood—where are they now? And yet to-day the laurel crown Still presses on your clammy brow?

Drift on, Old Top, and hold the track That echoes with resounding cheers; With Fate and Time both driven back I hope you last for ninety years!

We will probably know quite a bit more about the status of the American League race by the time Col. Fielder Jones and cast evocate Boston. This series should be what is technically known as the tip-off.

Here is another sprightly conundrum to grapple with—If the Braves have a club batting average of .228 in the National League, what will it be if tossed in against Ruth, Shore, Mays and Leonard?

Brooklyn's Test. As for Brooklyn's pennant outlook, here it is in bulk for those who do not esteem unwieldy details: Eleven games in a row from Sept. 1 to Sept. 12, away from home, against Philadelphia, New York and Boston. This fortnight tells the story.

"I only know of one pitcher," says Andy Coakley, "who had so much stuff he could buzz it waist high over the middle of the plate—and then turn the batsman upside down. His name was Rube Waddell."

The East will go out after the tennis and golf championships on friendly soil. But beating Johnston, Gardner and Evans is no light task even if you entice or inveigle them into the sun parlor of your own home.

One Answer. Here is one answer to the so-called amazing mystery of the Browns—a pair of pretty good catchers; at least

GEORGE STALLINGS AND HIS BONEHEADS Many humorous stories are told about George Stallings and his "boneheads." The best one was when George was managing the Yanks, when they played on the old Hilltop grounds. Ray Dement was then with the team, and a Yank was on third, with two out. Ray turned to the big chief for advice, and asked: "Shall I try to bring him in with a long fly, Mr. Stallings?" "You better fly into the clubhouse," said the irate George, "or I'll massacre you."

Then there is the more recent story about an incident during the Braves' pennant drive in 1914. "Now, if Gowdy gets on 'bonehead' will hit for the pitcher," said George. Gowdy got one and every Boston reserve ran out and grabbed a stick. If we recall right, he had cash receipts at home of over \$280,000, of which the visiting clubs got about one-fourth.

four first class pitchers; a strong infield and a fine outfield—the punch and the speed. This, plus Fielder Jones.

Erin Responds. "The Irish no longer rule the old game."—Exchange. As Old Pat Erin scanned this line He looked a trifle dazed; He pondered on the dope a bit With eyeballs slightly glazed; And then he straightway went and got The dope book from the shelf, And as he turned from page to page He murmured to himself:

"Pat Moran and Carrigan And John McGraw and Mack; Donovan and Callahan Leading the attack; Maybe laurel wreaths no more Crown the Irish row, But who is up there showing all Those Swedes and Germans how!"

"The White Sox have the best team on paper." Quite so, but unfortunately, they quit playing on paper around the 12th of April. And so many things can happen off paper between April and October.

Maxims of the Nineteenth Hole. My son, there is a double art in the brief games that we call Golf and Life. One is learning how to play safely beyond all traps. The other is learning how to play safely when the first art goeth astray.

Tennis and golf championships have never known tournaments any more open than the two to come in August and September. There was a day when you could pick one or two men from the field and forget the others. Now in both games there are four or five who may drop even the champions at a moment's notice. There has been a great extension of skill, and this extension is sure to grow so that some five or six years from now the battle for a golf or tennis championship will be among at least a dozen entries in each sport—and a nip and tuck battle at that.

We understand that Fred Welsh is in fine shape for his fight with White. Does this mean that White will have no chance at all to catch Freddie, even in twenty rounds?

Daubert's loss is a hard blow to Brooklyn, or may be, but suppose some of these teams had suffered what the Yanks have known since late July?

Where other clubs were unable to beat Plank, the Browns discovered a sure system of trimming the south-paw by making five errors back of him at critical moments. There's always a way if you look for it hard enough and long enough.

"All Connie needs is time." We know some people who can give him enough of that to last ten years.

EXPECTS THE FRENCH TO ADOPT BASEBALL "Had it not been for the outbreak of the war," said John McGraw recently, "I believe that the French people would have taken up baseball very strongly. The citizens in Paris were quite enthusiastic when we visited that city on the trip around the world, and we would have drawn an immense throng but for a cold, heavy rain which fell all that day."

Art Fromme Going Bad. Vernon, Col., Aug. 19.—Vernon officials are considering the advisability of "suspending" Art Fromme. Art did not look good in his last appearance, having lost a lot off the edge of his delivery, and doubtless will benefit by a rest. However, the reason given for his proposed suspension is a bad rib.

Alexander Now in Full Swing for Flag Race

Pat Moran's Prodigy on Way to Heights Beyond All Pitchers.

If the Phillies of Pat Moran again win the National League championship, then Grover Cleveland Alexander will have to be rated as the greatest pitcher of all the present day crop. For it is Alex who is the real backbone of Moran's fingering corps. What's more, since July when he shut out the Cards, 1 to 0, Alex has won ten games and lost only two, a winning percentage of .833.

In the same time, the Phillies have annexed twenty-eight box scores and lost thirteen, a mark of .638. This shows that Alex has been credited with more than one-third of the victories, while his defeats total less than one-sixth.

That's not the most wonderful part of his work, though. In his last 109 innings he has been scored upon but nine times, an average of 51 runs per nine round battle. Which is some fingering. Seven of his contests during this period have been shutouts. There's no twirler in captivity to-day who can boast of a like record.

The last defeat for Alex came at the hands of the Cardinals, who beat him August 5, 2 to 0, with "Mule" Watson, the rookie right-hander, on the hill. Since that victory Watson has been beaten by the Giants and Pirates, Alex, on the other hand, has come back with three shutouts, two against the Reds and one against the Cardinals.

Since that stretch Alex had one bad game, that against the Cubs, July 29, when he was knocked off the hill after allowing four runs in seven innings. His record since July 7:

Table with columns: Date, Opponent, R, H, In., Dec. W, L.

Table with columns: Club, Games, Atts., R., H., R.H., In., Avg.

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Cobb Gaining on Speaker McCarty Takes a Tumble

Detroit Star Adds Seven Points to His Batting Average. Brooklyn Catcher Drops to Third Place in the National League.

It begins at last to look as if Tris Speaker has occasion to worry some over baseball's batting honors, which he has usurped most of the season. That habitual champion of champions, Tyrus Raymond Cobb, is closing fast on the idol of Cleveland through the stretch run. At the rate of gain he made last week Ty has every reason to hope that he may overhaul Tris before October.

This fell off only one point in the week from .300 to .299, but Ty picked up seven points, boosting a .349 average to .356. That made a gain of seven points, and Tris now leads by only .033. The race for premier batting honors is fast becoming a three-cornered one, with Joe Jackson, of the White Sox, a real menace to Tris and Ty. Shoeless Joe kept pace with the Georgian Peach last week. He is still only three points away, with fine .333.

The reform of the Yankees is shown in the statistics. Charley Mullen, pinch hitter extraordinary, is now fourth among American League sluggers, with a grand average of .307. Huggie High still hits with the 300 mark—a .296, to be exact. The Yankees stand fourth in club fielding, but sixth in team batting—a further testimonial, if one were needed, to the excellence of Wild Bill Donovan's pitching.

Following are the averages for all players who have batted .200 or better in fifteen or more games up to and including August 17:

Table with columns: Player and club, G., A., R., H., R.H., In., Avg.

The role of understudy to Jake Daubert through a week has proven raincoat to an aspirations. Let McCarty may have had toward a batting crown. In seven days the Dodger backstop tumbled from an exalted .393 clip to a commendable .325. This drop of 68 points leaves Lew third in the list.

Daubert once more is the virtual pacesetter, with .326, though Duguey the sub-infielder of the champion Phillies, is technically in the van, with a .323. Duguey has been at bat only eighteen times all season. Daubert has taken part in 96 games and has 122 hits to show, against Duguey's six.

Davey Robertson, of the Giants, has fallen away 12 points, from .285 to .223. He holds fourth position. Chase and Wagner are tied for fifth at .217. Robertson is McGraw's only .200 hitter. The next best Grand batter is Fletcher, far down, with .285. Herzog is hitting .275, Burns .270 and Doyle and Kauf .264 each.

Brooklyn leads in club batting, with a fine .262. Cincinnati stands second, with .250, one point in front of the Giants. The Braves are last, with only .226 to show as a team, while Philadelphia is fourth, at .247. In club fielding Boston shows the way. Philadelphia is second, while New York and Brooklyn are tied for third place.

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AMERICAN LEAGUE PITCHING RECORDS

Table with columns: Pitcher and club, Games, Won, Lost, Avg.

NATIONAL LEAGUE PITCHING RECORDS