

E. VAN LOAN'S "LITTLE SUNSET"—HARRY VARDON ON GOLF—OTHER SPORTS COMMENT

"I BROKE UP THE ATHLETICS TO PREVENT BASEBALL RUIN," DECLARES CONNIE MACK

When the time had come when some of the players thought of nothing but money, and sooner or later, the team must go to pieces. I thought it all over, and decided that the break had better come right away. I want to say there was no chance for me to hold any of the players I let go. They were responsible for the breaking up of the famous machine, and not the club or its policies.

Famous baseball machines go through a strange process which I cannot clearly explain. The Baltimore Orioles, a wonderful machine of the latter nineties, went to pieces through this strange feeling that crops out in great clubs. Almost all of that famous team came to believe they knew as much as Manager Hanlon, and that they had made him. They also seemed to think that they were ready for managerial positions. As it happened some of them were qualified, but that feeling broke up that team. When any great club goes along for about five years, sweeping everything before it, the feeling that they are the important cogs in the machine crops out in certain players, and then jealousy and dissension arise.

The Cubs went the same road as the Orioles. It was a veteran team, and many of the men began to believe Chance did not know any more about the game than they did, and they came to think that he was not a necessity. The men gradually drifted away, as they were cultivating different ideas. The break naturally had to come when that team spirit disappeared, and so both the Orioles and Cub teams went to pieces fast, just a year or two before their time.

My team was a little different in this respect, as none of the boys seemed to have any ambition to become a manager. That was probably due to the fact that they were younger and had not begun to think about the day when they would no longer be able to play regularly. That is why my team was the greatest of them all. It could have gone on longer than the other famous machines before it, but it was slowly and surely heading toward the same rocks.

I had no warning of the approaching storm, and therefore had not laid my lines as I had in the past. In 1907 we were in the fight right down to the wire—in fact, Detroit did not catch us until the last three weeks of the season, going into first place the day following the famous 17-inning tie game, to be exact. Even though we were up there, I knew we were slipping, and was therefore prepared.

While the fight was hottest I slipped off time and again and got the men that I believed I needed to fill the weak spots. Therefore when the 1908 season started I sent my team of veterans out to get a flying start. I realized they must go off fast if we were to make any sort of a showing, as the Detroit club was young, fast and powerful in all departments. It was only a question of time before we would succumb unless we got a tremendous lead. In the meantime I had gradually been schooling Baker, Collins, Barry, McInnis, Coombs and a few others; though a few of them were not actually with the team at the time. The break came sooner than I had expected, as my veterans could not stand the pace long. But I was ready with my new team. I placed everything on a make-or-break basis with my youngsters, and in this respect we are very much in the same position today, only that I did not have a chance to prepare for the future.

When I first sent Barry, McInnis and Collins into the game the fans laughed, as they all looked like fizzes; but I knew they had the stuff and that it would come out in time. I was forced to pull them out of the game after a time; but I kept them in when they were going at their poorest clip because I knew they would learn something and that they would be ready when I called on them again. A youngster who has started to lose confidence in himself belongs on the bench for a few days, where he can watch the fellow who succeeds him make a few misplays. He sits there and says to himself, 'I have something on that fellow, and I'll show them when I get in there.' And he invariably does show them if he has the stuff in him.

I kept Haas on the mound the other day for the same reason. I have watched this lad work and I knew he had the stuff. Had I pulled him out of the game I might have hurt his confidence. As it was, he learned something every inning he pitched, which will come in handy on his next appearance. It was a game that brought his mistakes clearly before him, and that is why I allowed him to continue. If we had been in the pennant race I would have pulled him out, of course. The next time I use him I will pull him out if he gets a bad start, as he has seen most of his glaring faults and it would hurt him to leave him in too long on his second start. I knew he was not right in the second inning and was really anxious to see how he would act.

Players in the Making
Maine is very much in the same position. I have taken him from the game for the present because he was fast losing confidence in himself. This lad is going to be a grand ball player. He is just at the stage where Collins was when he came to me and looks every bit as good. At present he is not hitting, but he will be a great hitter and a great infielder. He is the only new infielder I have tried to date who will make good. The others do not measure quite up to the mark.

I have another man who will come to me later who is the only infielder I know of who will positively be a regular next season. I believe in working on different lines with youngsters, and that is probably why I have had success with them, as I said before. I was caught napping this year, and the men I counted on to fill in when the old machine started slipping are not available now. They will be ready for me next season and I will have another great team. Anybody who considers us out of the running in the future is crazy. I have enough men coming to me before next season to assure me we will be very much in the running for the championship. We will be in much the same position we were back in 1909. With the breaks, we will come close to winning the pennant; but without them we will just go along fighting with the leaders.

I have only to go a few steps farther and I will have a team greater than the one I broke up. We don't look good now, but that is because I was unprepared. I have only to get other players along the lines of McInnis, Collins and Barry when they broke in and I will have my team rounded out. One might say this is a hard job, but it is not as hard as you think. I want to see the qualifications of a player of that type and we will bring the rest out.

Other changes probably will be made, and one player who is now with the team will be placed where he can be used regularly, because we need his strength. He will be a wonderful ballplayer when in the game every day, and I must find a place for him. At present I do not know where that position will be, but he will positively be a regular at the start of next season.

Combination the Keynote
Combination is the keynote to championship ball teams, and I have that combination in view. Several of the men I have in view will not be able to join me until next year, and, for this reason, the present season may be a loss, except in so far as I am laying my lines and developing at a rapid clip. Some of the fans, perhaps, cannot see the improvement clearly, but you can take it from me the only reason we are not up in the running now is because of a combination of unforeseen circumstances, all of which came so suddenly and long before it was time for the team to crack.

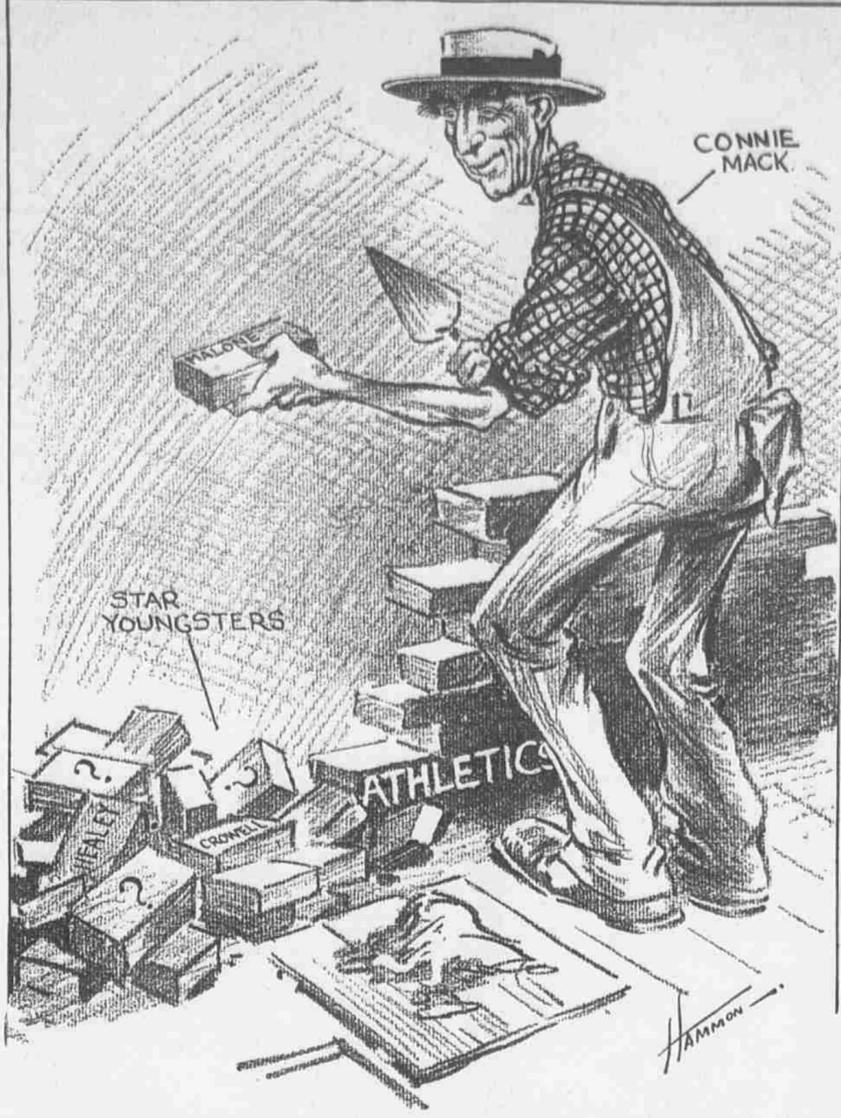
In another year any fair-minded critic or baseball man will admit I was right in taking the step I did and when I did it. I know I am being severely criticized now, but, after all, the public wants a winner, and I will give them one. They might say I broke up a winning team, but I know it was impossible for me to have gone farther with the team under the conditions.

We are not in a very good position now, but I have everything in pretty good shape to start. I am running my baseball school in the mornings in the hope of finding some young star in a hurry. I have several good prospects, but will know more about them when I return home and arrange some games for them with the best outside independent teams. I will also be able to look the field over pretty well. It is a great chance for the boys.

Some people say: "Why doesn't Connie Mack go out and get some good minor leaguers?" but I don't work on those lines. Except in some very rare instances, players of the higher-class minor leagues do not appeal to me, because I have my own ideas of how to develop players. That we have had success in the past, I think, is due to the fact that we handle them differently. I want youngsters with the qualifications, and, when I see them, I will bring them out myself.

This is really the happiest period of my life. I am broke financially, but full of ambition. It is like starting all over again for me, and I love baseball and love to build up teams. I have done it once and will do it again. It is a new experience for me, after the terrific strain I have been under for seven years. It is to the ambition of my life to turn out this new combination—and I will do it. The critics say I was benefited by circumstances and that the material is no longer available in the independent and collegiate field. Time will tell that story.

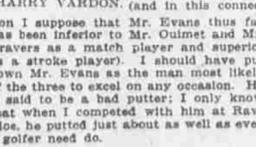
THE CONSTRUCTIVE WIZARD



CHICK EVANS IS WITHOUT AN EQUAL IN AMATEUR GOLF RANKS, DECLARES HARRY VARDON

Use of Half-iron Shot Distinguishes Very Good From Fairly Good Golfer, Says the British Champion—Evans' Play Is Contrasted With That of Francis Ouimet and Jerome Travers—Handicapping System Explained.

By HARRY VARDON
Golf Champion of Great Britain.
On the academic side of golf, no subject is more interesting than that of handicapping, and I have been improving a spare half hour by studying the list of ratings of leading American amateurs issued by the United States Golf Association.



I must confess to a feeling of surprise at finding Mr. Charles Evans, Jr. reckoned a stroke worse than either Mr. Francis Ouimet or Mr. Jerome D. Travers as a match player and superior as a stroke player. I should have put down Mr. Evans as the man most likely of the three to excel on any occasion. He is said to be a bad putter; I only know that when I competed with him at Ray Lake, he putted just about as well as ever a golfer need do.

that gives the greatest measure of satisfaction is that under which the handicaps are allotted for stroke rounds and in match play. The man with the shorter allowance gives his rival three-quarters of the difference between their stroke-play handicaps.

After all, it is founded on a sound premise. Figures are said to be capable of proving anything, but when a golfer has engaged in a fair number of stroke rounds, his scores surely may be accepted in most cases as useful evidence of his form. In medal play the inferior golfer is calculated to need a longer start than in match play, for the simple reason that he is more likely than his superior to suffer a bad hole. When he loses a hole in the match game, it matters nothing how many strokes he takes to it; he is no worse off for expending four shots in a bunker than for missing an 18-inch putt for a half. But in medal play every stroke counts against him; consequently, it is only reasonable that there should be a diminution of his allowance in a match.

In England during the last few years attempts have been made to popularize the idea of giving and receiving the full allowance of strokes against him. This scheme was a match player and superior as a stroke player. I should have put down Mr. Evans as the man most likely of the three to excel on any occasion. He is said to be a bad putter; I only know that when I competed with him at Ray Lake, he putted just about as well as ever a golfer need do.

As regards the half iron-shot, which more than any other is the stroke that distinguishes the very good golfer from the ordinarily good one, I would say that Mr. Evans has no equal among American amateurs. He hits the ball with that incisiveness which means so much; he keeps the swing compact, and he makes the ball stop quickly on alighting. It is possible that the professional is prone to be too faithful in his respect for what he calls orthodox, and that the methods of Mr. Ouimet and Mr. Travers are quite so. It is the style of the last named that appeals to me as being bound to triumph in the end.

That the United States Golf Association must know a great deal better than anybody in England the form of the leading players under its jurisdiction, I realize to the full. I have set down these remarks purely from the point of view of a student of methods, divorced entirely from considerations as to who wins competitions and who suffers defeat in such events.

Truly is the work of a handicapping committee very difficult, and one is duly appreciative of the circumstances that it has to judge by hard facts rather than by the most plausible of fancies. Handicapping at golf is crowded with anomalies; it is an essential part of the game's constitution, but there seems to be little chance of its ever being placed on a wholly satisfactory basis. A professional hears accounts of many matches contested by the members of the club to which he is attached, and incidentally of a thousand other rounds, and so far as he is able to judge, the system

which much depends on the faculty for coming to the right decision at the right moment. Naturally it is more valuable to be able to take a stroke when you like than to have to use it at a fixed hole where perhaps you may not want it; and I would say that, roughly speaking, the best basis for bisques is to give half the number of strokes that one would concede if the starts had to be taken at prescribed holes. Thus if in the ordinary way one could give four strokes one might concede two bisques. Where the ordinary allowance is very large it is generally reasonable to give in bisques rather more than half the number.

If I were, receiving bisques, I should make the most of them at the start and try to obtain an early lead of several holes. It is a lot for anybody to try and regain three or four holes in the last 10 or 12 of a round. Many people keep their bisques too long, and finally have to squander two or three in order to save one hole near the finish.

HANDICAPPING THAT IS FUN.
Where two players do not know one another's form and want to be sure of a good game, the best idea that I know is for the side which wins a hole to give a stroke at the next so that the handicap is arranged as the round proceeds and in accordance with its developments. This scheme may be something of a freak, but it is surprising how exciting a round it produces. When you have gained a lead of one hole, the great thing is to struggle to win the next hole so as to become two up; if you can do that, you are in a very strong position. Time after time, however, you are prevented from achieving that purpose; the necessity of giving a stroke immediately after winning a hole has a way of affording the other man just the chance that he needs. It is an artificial manner of stimulating excitement, but it is good fun.

Fancy matches, however, have to be approached a little warily. I remember a game that I contested when I was professional at Santon, in Yorkshire. A player came to me one day and offered to take a stroke a hole all the way round so long as I would give him, in addition, as many bisques coming home as I stood holes up (if any) at the turn. Truth to tell, I had reason to think that, if necessary, I might be able to give him two strokes a hole, and the challenge was promptly accepted.

There was a good deal of money on the match, and I set about the task to such purpose that, at the turn, I was eight up. Then it dawned upon me that, coming home I had to give him eight bisques as well as a stroke a hole. I lost; it was a real sell. But when we engaged in a return match on similar terms I took care to be only two up at the turn, and then I won.

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This is the fourth of a series of articles on golf that Mr. Vardon, the British champion, is writing especially for the Evening Ledger. The fifth article will appear next Saturday.

"LITTLE SUNSET"

The Redemption of Bergstrom and What Happened to the Apaches When Little Sunset Got Busy for the Team. And a Secret No One Told.

By CHARLES E. VAN LOAN
The world's most famous writer of baseball fiction

"Berk" Jones signs with the Apaches, a major league team. As baggage, he brings his red-headed son, John Wesley Jones. When his wife died Jones promised never to remarry. He is a youngster who has lived on baseball diamonds almost all his life.

"Little Sunset" is the name given to the club. Gus Bergstrom, the manager, has been of the league, makes a chum of him. "Little Sunset" learns to swear and to understand baseball from inside.

He demands a share in the post-season money, because he hasn't missed a game. Gus Bergstrom decides to go into real estate. He is finally persuaded to play and reports for the flag-raising.

The Swede signs well but automatically. With the Apaches are in a run of bad luck and struggling for a place in the league. "Little Sunset" is sold. Bergstrom receives a business letter and decides to go home. Ordered to die, he is resentful and commits a terrible error, letting in two runs.

He then refuses to play and goes to his leading man, who is a renegade and also by the defeat of his team.

Gus did not sleep well that night; he blamed it on the excessive heat. He recalled scraps of conversation he had had during the day. Every man had expressed regret; none had congratulated him on his move. He thought of the disgraceful score by which the old club had been beaten and of John Wesley's fall-out to write a message which should explain matters. It was a long, miserable night.

Bergstrom was up at sunrise. He was to be a business man now. He started to be a piece of property some distance outside the town. The liverman who rented him a rig remarked that it was going to be a very warm day.

"You don't have to put on a uniform and run around in the sun." The farmer who owned the property recognized Bergstrom, and thereafter could talk nothing but baseball. He spoke of Bergstrom's retirement as one mentioning a national calamity. Gus decided the property did not suit him, and hurried back to town, where he had an appointment to take lunch with the president and secretary of the land company. These men began to talk batting averages and Gus looked at his watch. Gus fidgeted and squirmed, but there was no escape for him.

"I bet you'd beat Potts last season," said the secretary. "Let's see, when you quit the other day you must have been hitting him by about 20 points. And they're giving a fine diamond medal for the highest batting average this season. It's a dirty shame to toss off that medal; you ought to have it."

"He don't know he's alive!" A few minutes later the door opened softly, and Gus Bergstrom poked his big blond head into the room. John Wesley gasped, and rose among the pillows. His face was pale, but his eyes shot fire.



"Gus read the headlines." "Maybe," admitted Gus. "Yes—I guess that's right, kid." "There's only one way you can square yourself!" announced John Wesley. "What time is it by that gold watch and chain?"

"Half-past two," said Gus. "Get my pants!" said John Wesley grimly. "But you can't get up!" protested Bergstrom. "You're sick!" "I was sick," said John Wesley, feeling around under the bed for his shoes, "but I'm all right now. Get them pants and ring for an automobile. We ain't got much time!"

"It was 3 o'clock, and the Apaches were grouped in the locker room. A few of the late ones were lying there asleep. There was a dearth of light conversation. A stranger entering the place would have looked about him for the casket containing the remains of the dear departed.

Pete Carr entered with a telegram in his hand. "Myers couldn't find him," he said. "I knew it wasn't any use." "Aw, come on!" said the Sea Cow. "Let's get out there and beat these guys to death! For Heaven's sake, a little pepper today! Heads up, everybody!" There was no answering chorus. The Apaches had lost heart.

Two figures appeared in the doorway. First came a small, red-headed boy, whose knees wobbled under him, his eyes brilliant with triumph. Behind him came a big, square figure which shut out the sunlight.

"Here's your Swede!" said John Wesley. Gus Bergstrom walked over and held out his hand to Pete Carr. "Gimme the key to my locker!" said he. "The Apaches won their pennant that season. The papers said that Bergstrom's hitting did it, but the men on the team thought they knew better than that. They presented a diamond medal to the one to whom they gave the credit, and he took it with him when he went to the 'swell boarding school on the Hudson.' The Apaches never knew that they were mistaken, for a Swede is always an uncommunicative man."

Charles E. Van Loan's next story, "A Rain Check," will begin in the Evening Ledger on Tuesday.

EVENING LEDGER MOVIES—ISN'T IT NICE TO SEE 'EM PLAY TWICE FOR ONE MEASLEY PRICE?

HOW DYA LIKE MY NEW BAW-THING SOOT? I HOPE IT IS O.K. I WILL NOW SWIM ACROSS THE CHANNEL THISSIS HARD WOIK! BUT WORTH IT ALL. I'M NEARLY THERE. YO-HO BOYS! BAWL GROUND DUBBLE HEADER TO DAY