

"PLAY BALL!" THE SLOGAN

How Major League Baseball Teams Size Up For Coming Season

By TOMMY CLARK.

THE baseball season of 1910 is with us, and from now until next October political scraps, grafting cases and other things that have been taking up the valuable time of the general public will have to be thrown into the ash heap. More important subjects are to be settled and discussed. They are as follows: What teams will capture the pennant in the National and American leagues? Can Fred Clarke any the Pittsburgh Pirates make it two straight and win another world's championship, or are Frank Chance and his Cubs strong enough to win another flag? Will Johnny McGraw win out this year, or will Clarke Griffith and his band of Cincinnati kids cop the much coveted Gemon? Are Hugh Jennings and the Detroit Tigers good to equal Comiskey's record and make it four straight? Can Connie Mack spring another surprise, or will the Boston Red Sox walk off with the banner?

In sizing up the four leading teams in the National league one finds that the Pittsburgh Pirates are every bit as strong as last year, and if nothing unforeseen happens they will cop again. The Cubs are not as strong as they were in 1908 even though Kling has been reinstated. And another thing is that this great baseball machine is not running as smoothly as it did a few years ago. McGraw has been working hard trying to whip together a pennant combination for the last two years and has corralled several crack youngsters that he hopes will fill up the weak spots on the team. Clarke Griffith and his great band of youngsters will be in the hunt all season. Taken all in all, the fight for the banner should be a good one.

Of course advance dope often goes wrong. The team which looks strongest on paper may not loom up prominently at all when the real battles are being fought on the diamond. Take the Phillies last season, for instance. Nearly every student of the game thought Billy Murray's charges would finish high up in the first division and that they would be fighting for the pennant all the way, with splendid chances of landing the plum. But as matters turned out the Quakers were never very serious contenders after the fourth of July.

Those who profess not to take seriously the Pirates' chances are pointing out that the Pittsburgh team is built up around three men, who are likely to go to pieces almost any time. It is needless to say that the three veterans referred to are Manager Fred Clarke, Hans Wagner and Tommy Leach, all of whom have been on the Pittsburgh team for the last ten years. It is true that these men are all veterans and that sooner or later they must pass from the scene of diamond activities. But the prophets are going a step too far when they declare that this season may see the last of these players. They evidently forget that Leach led the National league run getting in 1909, that Wagner was the leading batsman for the seventh time during his career and that Clarke not only hit well and scored a lot of runs, but that he was the leading outfielder in the older organization.

There is no denying the fact that Clarke, Leach and Wagner form the bulwark of the Pirates' strength. It is a fact, however, that every team depends more on one or two men than on all the others combined. And it is also a fact that dependence on veterans is more warrantable than on youngsters. There are scores of cases on record where young players have broken into fast company under most auspicious circumstances, have shone brilliantly for a single season and then quickly dropped into oblivion.

Of course there is no contention as to the right of Wagner, Clarke and Leach to be called stars. Taken individually they are three of the grandest ball players that ever donned uniforms. Taken collectively they form a trio which has no equal in the game today. Their abilities, considered from any angle, stamp them as indispensable to the Pittsburgh team, and if all three were to disappear from the baseball horizon at the same time it would be a blow to the Pittsburgh team from which it would require years to recover.

Wagner looks good for two or three more years at shortstop. When he has slowed up so that he is not considered speedy enough for that position any longer it is more than likely that he will take to first base, where he will not be required to cover so much ground, but where he will be a tower of strength to the team.

Instead of deteriorating, as some claim, fans who have seen Tommy Leach in action year after year are of the opinion that the little wonder is better today than for many years. The move from the infield to the outfield helped Tommy a lot, and it is a fact that last year he did not suffer at all from the complaint which slowed him up at times in past years. Leach is a wonderful little baseball machine. As for Clarke, his work last season speaks for itself and refutes the assertion that he is going back. He was rated many years ago as the best left fielder in the business, and there is no reason to rate him lower than that at the present time. Although he has been in the game a long time, he plays with the same enthusiasm which marked his work when a youngster. He ranks with the greatest in history without even considering his managerial ability.

Valuable as are Clarke, Wagner and Leach, even aside from them the Pittsburgh team in 1910 will shape up as well as any other in the league. This trio comprises the only real old players on the team except Phillippi and Leever, who are not likely to be used to any great extent. Pittsburgh will have three comparatively young infielders in Miller, Byrne and either Sharpe or Flynn. Byrne should be better than last year, for he will start the season with the team, whereas in 1909 he did not break in with the Pirates until late in the summer and had only a short time in which to acclimatize himself to the Pirates' style of play. Clarke is up against the same problem he faced last spring, that of choosing a first baseman. But it is not likely that the Pirates will be any worse off in that position than they were in 1909, even though neither of

the present candidates comes quite up to expectations.

It is true that Clarke must choose between Flynn and Sharpe, but both men look good, and it may be only a question of picking the better one.

Clarke is not worrying about first base. He evidently figures that if the Pirates could win a pennant with Abstein covering the initial sack they can do it with either Flynn or Sharpe.

There is nothing to worry about in the catching department with George Gibson, that fend for work, as the headliner and three good substitutes.

The pitching department will assuredly be no poorer than last season, and it should be stronger. One veteran at least will be among the missing. Vic Willis has been sold to St. Louis. Clarke intends to place much dependence on his young heavies.

Adams, Frock and Brandon should do even better than last year when

league bunting. Other tribulations trailed astern the club, and this year Chance is out to rule the bunch with a rod of cast iron in order to retrieve the lost laurels.

Looking over the New York Nationals as now composed and studying their personnel, it begins to look like the one big "if" club of the National league. It has more uncertainties, more possibilities, more chances to spring surprises or to get it in the neck than any other outfit in the eight, and a delightful veil of "ifs" and "buts" already hides its future. If all the "ifs," or even half of them turn out right it will be hard to stop the Giants in their crush for the pennant. If the "ifs" go the other way the Giants are likely to be the footballs of fortune and the Patrys of the second division.

A lot of people are figuring on where the Cincinnati Reds will finish this season. One thing is certain, and that

much of a figure in the championship race.

The American League.

On paper and judging from the way its lineup now compares with that of any given competitor the Detroit Tigers really ought to make it four straight this season. The great batting team which Jennings rules ought to make a fair time affair and shatter the records, inasmuch as it has all the other outfits buffaloed one way or another. Boston's Red Sox may hit as hard as the Tigers, but will not combine the hits to equal purpose, nor can the Boston pitchers be depended on. The Chicago White Sox will outpitch and outfield the Tigers, but cannot bat against them, and thus it goes all down the line. Detroit has something on all the bunch. Given an even break of luck, therefore, what is to stop the Tigers from raking in a fourth

pennant by so huge a margin that the race would have been a joke. The Tiger catchers are only ordinary, and should they retrograde a little further the team would be in heavy seas indeed.

Jennings corralled a young catcher named Casey, who is being given a trial and one who is alleged to be the real goods as a backstop, one of the quick thinking and quick working kind. Two or three young pitchers have been showing splendid form, and the addition of even one first class pitcher to the Tiger team would make a big percentage of difference in its horoscope.

Taken as a general proposition, it looks like another Tiger flag, but then there's always a chance, and the American league has furnished many wonderful surprises.

Cleveland, considered a dangerous contender for the pennant at the start

land a job on the Nap infield. The outfield looks mighty strong on paper, with Joe Birmingham, Elmer Flick, Lord and Krueger, the latter of Columbus, all hunting for places.

Jack O'Connor, the new manager of the St. Louis Browns, has made strong efforts to weed out some of the war-horses of former days, and O'Connor sees more than a fleeting chance at the pennant.

Powell, Felty, Howell, Bailey and Graham represent the veteran pitchers. Bill Abstein, former pirate, will play first base, and Stone, Hoffman and Griggs are the likely guys for the garden berths, although Demmitt, secured from the Yankees, is touted a veritable whale.

Hughy Duffy should make a good manager for Chicago, but the outfield of the White Sox is weak, the infield doubtful, while the batteries are excellent. He will have an entirely new

this season, and the bunch when once under way is about the hardest string to beat in the American league. There's Chief Bender, Eddie Plank, Harry Krause, Jimmy Dykert, Cy Moxgan and Jack Coombs to start with. In Friene, the youngster picked up on the coast, Mack claims to have discovered another star who will shine even more brightly than his find of last year, the eminent Mr. Krause.

In the other departments the Mack men will probably remain the same as last year, for it seems improbable that any of the newcomers can cop the positions held in 1909 by Harry Davis, Baker, Eddie Collins, Barry and Dan Murphy. Hard hitting Danny looks to be a safe bet for right field work, while Oldring and Hartzel will almost hold their places.

Pat Donovan and his Boston Red Sox are bound to make things warm for their rivals this season. Pat thinks so well of his charges that he will not make any changes in the lineup of last season. All during the 1909 campaign the speed boys were in the thick of the fight, and the former manager of the Brooklyn is sure that the team will improve over last year's performances. Jimmy McAleer, late of St. Louis and now head of the Washington troupe, announces that with Tabasco Eberfeld at the wheel the oracles of the national pastime will see something better than a basement position for the Senators in 1910.

WHERE OLD STARS SHONE.

Many Brilliant Players Were In Cleveland and Baltimore Teams.

Back in the old days Baltimore and Cleveland had the greatest ball teams, and, while it was never the good fortune of the aggregation from the Ohio town to annex a pennant, yet this team was in the thickest of every fight and forced the old Orioles to set the hottest pace to finish in front.

It is therefore not strange that two such teams should have furnished many of the most brilliant baseball leaders the game can boast of today.

For instance, there are McGraw, a recognized wizard at the art of handling a ball team; Hughy Jennings and Joe Kelley, three of the men who were foremost during the days of the old Baltimore team. Then there are Wilbert Robinson and Bill Clarke of the same team, both of whom have shown managerial ability. Jack Doyle was another who proved himself a leader.

The Cleveland team also furnished its share. Patay Tebeau rose from the ranks. George Davis, who was one of his helpers, has managed with success in the majors. Chief Zimmer also had a trial. Ed McKean was a successful minor league manager when his major league days were over. Jimmy McAleer has held the reins of a ball team in hand for eight years, and Jack O'Connor, another of the old Clevelanders, is to have his first trial this year at St. Louis.

It gives a fairly good idea of the strength of these old teams when most of the players on them have shown themselves clever enough to be real leaders even in these days of up to date baseball.

There is no doubt that baseball has advanced, but it is questionable whether the players of today are as a class as intelligent as they were in those days.

HOME RUN BUNT.

Unique Play That Was Pulled Off In Southern League Game.

The Southern league furnishes a story of a home run bunt that won a game. It seems that there was a man on first and that the batter was instructed to lay down a bunt. He put a roller toward third, the first baseman was drawn in, and the second baseman covered first. The third baseman threw to first. Everybody saw the ball on the way. It hit the baseman's glove and disappeared. When the hunt for the ball began the first runner was hugging second, while the batter overran first and stumbled and fell out in right field.

He quickly got up, retouched first, ran to second and persuaded the other man to run ahead of him home with the winning run. Everybody thought the ball was lost in the grass, and finally it was found in right field. How it got there was a mystery until the man who hit the bunt explained. It appears that the ball bounced from the second baseman's glove and bounded up under the runner's arm as he sprinted past the bag. The runner closed his arm down tight, kept on running, gave a stage fall out in right field and dropped the ball.

QUAINT AND ODD BASEBALL RULES.

Old baseball rules when perused by up to date fans read almost like Joe Miller's Joke Book. Here are a few culled from an old rule book of the National league back in 1882:

No manager, captain or player shall address the audience.

The fee and expenses of the umpire shall be paid by the visiting club.

No player shall be allowed a substitute in running the bases.

When seven "balls" have been called by the umpire the batsman shall take one base, providing he does so on the run.

The batsman shall be called out if a foul ball be caught before touching ground or after touching ground but once.

The batsman, on taking his position, must call for a "high ball," a "low ball" or a "fair ball."

When two strikes have been called, should the batter not strike at the next good ball the umpire shall warn him by calling "good ball." Should he strike and fail to hit the ball or strike and fail to hit the next good ball three strikes must be called.

ONLY ONE CURE.

Patient—Doctor, I frequently experience a hissing sound in my ears. What would you advise me to do?

Doctor—What is your occupation?

Patient—I'm an actor.

Doctor—Then I'd advise you to get some other kind of occupation.



Manager of the World's Champions and His Famous Stars.

given regular work, and it is likely that they will be called upon often the coming season. Then, with Maddox, Camnitz, Powell, Lefield, Phillippi and Leever and one or two others to fall back upon, the Pirates will have a staff which should hold its own with anything in the league.

No matter from what angle a person views the Pittsburgh bunch the team looks distinctly formidable. In fact, the team is strong enough to repeat this season.

Hard luck pursued the Chicago Cubs throughout the early stages of the 1909 training grind and league race commencing this year. Chance is determined to guard against any and all branches of the athletic kinks. Had Kling joined the club, or had Johnny Evers appeared for the initial scraps, or had "Big Ed" Reubach reported at the tap of the gong in winning shape, or had Miner Brown kept the early kinks out of his salary wing, Chance's men would have almost romped in with their fourth straight National

championship and, as usual, receiving their regular belting from the National league flag winners a few days later?

Nevertheless and notwithstanding, as the English announcer had it, there is a chance that the Tigers may come a lovely cropper. The breakup, if it comes at all, will probably be among the infielders, and there is quite a chance that the Detroit infield may prove a hollow shell, and then again it may not.

The Detroit pitchers are a fairly good set who won because of the great batting behind them. They are not the sort of pitchers who can gallantly carry a team on their hurling skill, the way the White Sox slabmen have often had to do, but are men who would founder if the batting support should ever weaken.

The Tigers have won without great fortune, including George Stovall, the demon; Larry Lajoie, Terry Turner, Neal Ball, Bill Bradley and Ferring. Ira Nichols, the comer bagged in a deal with the Athletics, is out to make

of last season, again presents a strong front this year, and with Deacon James McGuire at the helm the Naps can be counted on to set a dizzy pace throughout the season. Some mighty changes have been wrought in the makeup of the club, but in Addie Joss, Cy Young, Heine Berger and Fred Falkenberg the club has the nucleus of a strong pitching staff. Little is known of the real ability of the young slabmen, although Manager McGuire touts them all comers, and the list includes Messrs. Gregg, Harkness, Mitchell, Boyce, Linke and Doane.

"Nig" Clarke, Harry Bemis and Easterly will do the backstopping, according to present plans, with Higgins the outsider.

On the Nap infield many of the old guard will strive for continued good fortune, including George Stovall, the demon; Larry Lajoie, Terry Turner, Neal Ball, Bill Bradley and Ferring. Ira Nichols, the comer bagged in a deal with the Athletics, is out to make

infield, with the possible exception of Purdie. Their pitchers should show up strong, but if they have the same outfield they had last year there is only a chance that it will be weaker.

George Stallings of the New Yorks is pinning all his hopes to Lou Criger this year, and the former sparring partner of the only original Hiram Young, seventh wonder of the pitching firmament, should do a lot of yeoman work with the pitching corps. Chase, Gardner, Laporte, Knight and Austin all have been around the circuit several times as wearers of the New York uniform and will continue the fight for permanent jobs. Hemphill, Engle and "Birdie" Cree are slated to hold their jobs as out gardeners. Stallings has five catchers, eight infielders and six outfielders. Of the pitchers many are old timers, including Doyle, Brockett, Manning, Quinn, Warhop and Hughes, while Vaughn and Glade are highly touted.

Connie Mack has announced that he will hold on to all the veteran pitchers