

PENNANT RACE BRIGHT AS LOCAL TEAMS PREPARE TO OPEN SEASON

Giant and Yankee Clubs Both Favored to Repeat

World Champions Have Gained Defensively, While Huggins's Pitching Staff, Strengthened Considerably, Should Point Way to Another Pennant.

By DANIEL.

Having seen the Giants, Yankees and Dodgers in preparation for the pennant races, which will open on Wednesday, and being cognizant of their particular points of excellence, as well as weakness, their handicaps and their problems, we may be able to give New York fans a fair line on what may be expected this year.

After weighing the questions carefully and appraising the worth of those clubs which appear to be their closest rivals, we believe that the Giants and the Yankees will repeat their pennant winning triumphs of 1921, and that the Dodgers will finish in the first division. We name the Giants, just as we named them last spring, in spite of what many followers of the game regard as their comparatively weak position in pitching, and we are for the Yankees, in spite of their being forced to fight their battle without Babe Ruth and Bob Meusel until May 20.

We believe that the Giants face a slightly easier proposition than do the Yankees. We believe that the opposition which the Giants will get from the Cardinals, whom we pick to finish second, will be quite as formidable as the opposition which the Yankees are likely to get from Cleveland, which is our second best bet in the American League. But the Giants perhaps are better equipped to cope with that opposition through the entire season.

Where Club Has Gained.

Let us go into the Giants' situation in detail. Without question John McGraw has given his club greater defensive power through the acquisition of Heinie Groh. With all due respect to Frank Frisch, we believe that Groh will be a steadier third baseman than the Fordham Flash. Frisch's natural spot is second base, and New York fans are going to see more ground covered around that bag than they ever saw before. We do not want to go on record as saying that Frisch is a finished second sacker, that he knows every trick of playing the keystone that is in the repertoire of Eddie Collins. But Frisch is fast—ever so fast; he is learning fast, and the know how comes to him naturally. He is a keen observer, a thinker, a sensational infielder and yet a steady one in his new position.

And how that lad can hit! To get Groh, McGraw had to upset the balance of the outfield and let Burns go to the Reds. This has not reduced the defensive strength of the Giants, for Shiner and Cunningham are remarkable fielders. It may be a question whether either will hit as hard as did Burns. The new incumbent, Shiners, it will be our question, for he already has made good, may hit much better than Burns, but let us say that he will not. The new power obtained by the presence of Groh, a .330 hitter, in place of Johnny Rawlings, a .275 hitter—will more than make up for any possible disparity between Burns and Shiners on the attack.

Let us analyze the Giants' infield. On first base McGraw has George Kelly, the same old George who did so well with the bat and in the field last season. He's good enough for us. As second base McGraw has Fred Toney, who can pass on for anybody. At shortstop the world champions have Dave Bancroft, a hard hitter, a flash in the field, a resourceful player and a demon when victory means most. We want no better man between second and third. At third there is the great Groh, a third baseman who will make more stops of terrific balls than any other third baseman in the business and who can cover ground in any direction. He has been around quite a few years, has Heinie, but he is a star yet, and a bright one.

New Reserve Strength. Last year McGraw had the sword of Damocles hanging over his head all the time. He had no second reserve in the field. If one of his regulars had been injured Mac would have been in an awful fix. He appreciated that but could do nothing until rather late. McGraw got Hank Schreiber from Indianapolis for an emergency. He also had Howard Berry and Walter Kopf. But this time McGraw has an ideal reserve in the field, a regular in every position, a regular in every position. A few clubs want him badly, but

Huggins Says Yankees Will Retain Pennant

By MILLER HUGGINS.

Manager of the Yankees. WHILE there have been some few discouraging developments since the Yankees won the American League pennant last fall, I can see no reason why they should not retain the championship. True, we will have to do without Bob Meusel until May 20, a serious handicap, perhaps, but not a handicap which a club with the great pitching staff and tremendous power which the Yankees possess should not be able to discount. I respect Cleveland and Washington, but I do not believe that they have it in them to lead us.

The pitching corps of the Yankees is by far the best in the league. I do not think it will require many runs to win for the New Yorks this season, that is, on the average. Mays, Hoyt, Jones, Bush, Harper, O'Doul and the newcomer, Murray, should give the team ample protection in the box. We had a great set of fingers last season, but with the addition of Bush and Jones we have a wonderful staff, the envy of all other managers.

Our infield will hold up its end of the job as well as any other in the league. Pipp has shown that he is even better than he was last spring. Ward is playing a great game around second, while

Leading Pitchers of the Three Local Baseball Clubs



GRIMES (Dodgers). Cadore (Dodgers). Reuther (Dodgers). Hoyt (Yankees). Shawkey (Yankees). Mays (Yankees). Douglas (Giants).

McGraw would not let him go for a good pitcher. Johnny is about 20 per cent, a better ball player than he was when he came to the Giants from the Phillies last season. He is a handy hitter in a pinch and as game a scrapper as they have in the majors. Any infield out of which Rawlings is crowded must be indeed a great one.

McGraw also has a likely youngster in Edwin Hale, a football hero from Mississippi College. Mac says that Hale is not quite ripe there is no telling how great an infielder he may be with a year's schooling on the bench. Just now Hale has a habit of setting himself a bad example, and McGraw would like his hands so that he cannot change their position fast enough to meet an unexpected hop. But he is willing and anxious to learn and he is doing that. He looks as if he ought to be a hitter.

Let us go into the outfield. McGraw has two standbys—Ross Young, a great right fielder and a great hitter, and Earl Meusel, a man whose slight shortcomings as a fielder are more than compensated for by his terrific hitting. Meusel has been going great guns and we predict for him the greatest season of his career.

Shiners a Ball Hawk. Now for the much discussed Shiners. He is a tuxedo young man who broke into baseball from Marquette University with Indianapolis in 1920. He is a right handed hitter, a ball hawk, a flash on the bases, altogether one of the finds of the year. We look for him to be a sensation. He stole 55 bases in the American Association last year and when he reported at San Antonio showed that he had done his great natural ability rather than any finished style. McGraw and Huggins Jennings have taught him a lot. He hit .342 last year and should be a 300 man in the National League.

Cunningham gives the Giants a first class spare hand in the outfield. He is fast and can hit, too. Then there is a young Giant by the name of the Boone, a natural hitter who was bought from New Orleans, where he hit .339 and led the Southern League. Boone is a left handed hitter who makes them swing on a line. He is a raw fielder, but McGraw will use him in pinches against right handers. Stengel also will be on deck.

Should Overcome Handicap. Now let us consider the situation on New York's American League club. Miller Huggins just now is confronted with a variety of problems, but none of these appears to be formidable enough to prevent the retention of the league championship. Huggins must devise some system whereby the absence of Ruth and Meusel until May 20 will not build an insurmountable barrier. On any other club this situation without question would be a disaster. But the Yankees seem to possess sufficient inherent power and resilience to come through anyway.

A. A. U. TO CONTROL GIRLS' ATHLETICS

Indications at Conference That National Body Will Soon Be in Charge.

Are girl athletes good sports? Will they in competition on the field treat their opponents with sportsmanlike courtesy? These questions were brought out yesterday in a meeting of amateur sport officials, who assembled at the Hotel McAlpin to discuss with representatives of the Amateur Athletic Union the question of standardization and regulation of field and track athletics for girls, in preparation for their competition in the 1928 Olympic games.

Numerous Requests Received. Numerous requests have come in from clubs in the A. A. U. asking that girls' events be put on field day programs. There is a great demand. I agree that the women of America should be put upon the same physical basis as the women of other countries. We don't want to let the girls be ahead of us. He called upon his audience for a show of hands. "Is there any one opposed?"

Question of Health. Randall Warden, director of physical education in the Newark (N. J.) schools, called attention to an investigation of the health of circled athletes. It was discovered that they were not muscle bound. They have as healthy children as any women. It seems to me that we are something in this country to make our women more vigorous. The girls are keenly interested. Let us help them to grow into healthy women."

Princeton Freshmen Win. Special Dispatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD. Princeton, April 8.—While Dinmore held the men's championship helplessly today, the Princeton freshmen hit Stazel hard and won handily, 8 to 0. The contest lasted but seven innings under an agreement beforehand, and the yearlings scored in victory, 4 to 0. The contest was a surprise, but the features of the game were the fine twirling of Dinmore, who struck out seven, and a long triple by Stout.

Harvard Twelve Losses. Cambridge, Mass., April 8.—Boston Lacrosse Club, helping Harvard to open its lacrosse season, defeated the Crimson this afternoon 7 goals to 4. The visitors were composed of former Harvard players and gave the present Crimson stars a dose of surprise. Butstefener scored four of the visitors' goals, while Cole made three of Harvard's four.

Robbie Sure His Team Will Be in the Fight

By WILBERT ROBINSON, Manager of the Dodgers.

I HEAR that there is a misguided tendency abroad to regard the Dodgers as sure also runs in the National League race. I do not want to go on record as claiming anything, but I do not want to predict anything in baseball. But I do want to outline the Dodgers' position in the Brooklyn club of ours is going to give many another team a lot of grief. We may not win the flag, but we will be right in the thick of the fight.

We have a fine outfield. I do not have to go into that. Wheat, Myers, Tom Griffith, Ed Nelson, Bert Griffith and Hood, Myers is in great shape. I intend to use Bert Griffith quite a bit against left handers in place of Tom Griffith. I think the Dodgers as they stand will raise old Ned in our league. They look faster and more resourceful than last season. They have the pitchers, they will fight, they can hit. We are willing to concede nothing to anybody, and maybe we will spring a little surprise. Brooklyn fans will find it an interesting time to watch.

Hagen Wins at Hot Springs. Athletics Crush Phillies in Spring Series Opener

Special Dispatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD. WHITE SULPHUR SPRING, W. Va., April 8.—Playing fine golf throughout, Walter Hagen won the second open golf tournament here today with a total of 284 for the seventy-two holes. The scores:

Table with columns for player names and scores. Includes names like Walter Hagen, Johnny Farrell, Quaker Ridge, N. J., and scores for various rounds.

McGraw Is Satisfied, but Makes No Claims

By JOHN J. MCGRAW, Manager of the Giants.

I AM satisfied with the team that I will put into the coming pennant race. Of course my lineup will be somewhat weakened if Frisch is unable to get into harness soon, but with every body on the job I say I am satisfied. My older pitchers are not at all concerned. They are getting going. My infield certainly exhibits considerable strength. It is comprised of four unusually fast men, both as fielders and on the bases, and all of them should be able to acquire themselves well at the bat.

Table with columns for Athletics and Phillies statistics, including batting averages, runs, hits, and errors for various players.