SPORTS AS THE EXPERTS SEE THEM

Horse Performs Remarkable Jumping Feat

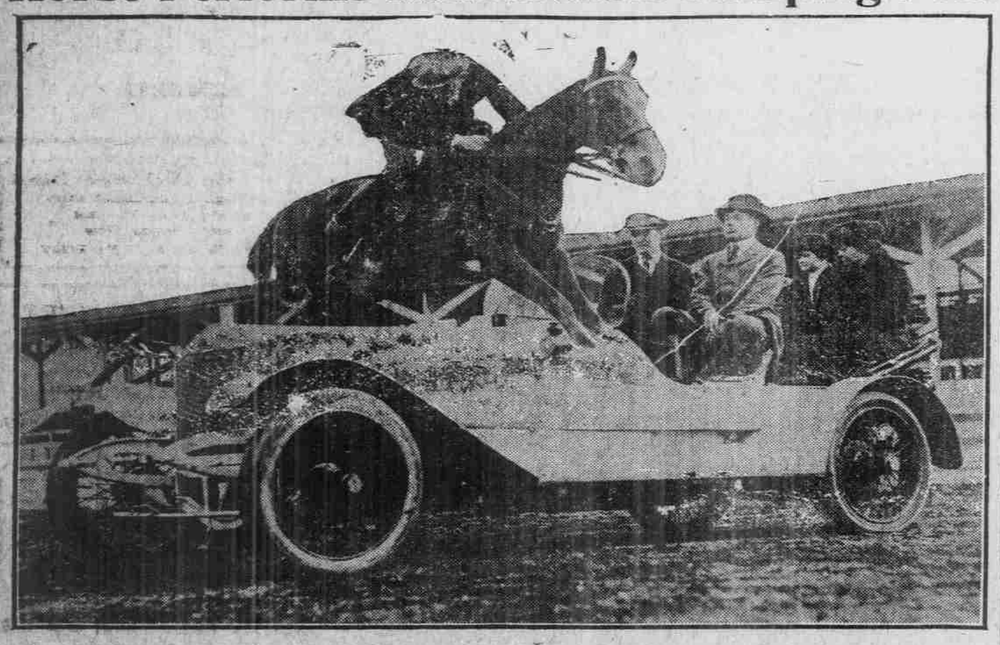

Photo by American Press Association.

The equestrian stunt shown in the above picture was performed recently in Washington. It shows Ralph Coffin on his eight-year-old mount, Rabbit, jumping over the motorcar. Mr. Coffin, who is a prominent member of the Washington Riding and Hunt club in Washington, took his horse over the hood of the machine.

PHELON GIVES A TIP TO MANAGERS.

BILL PHELON tells a story which might be of interest to a lot of managers. Bill says it is very seldom that a slow runner can be trained into a sprinter, and yet this happened to a member of the Cincinnati team named Porter. The young man could hit, but couldn't run. He was given a trial in the spring, and then sent back to the minors. He placed himself in the care of a trainer and last season developed into a wonderful sprinter, stealing seventy-one bases in 129 games. Expert Willie Weart, after reading this story, tells the following one on Connie Mack:

Last year Connie Mack tried out a number of players at third base. None of them looked any better or as good as a lad named Leary from the University of Pittsburgh. Leary proved to be a fine fielder, and he could hit fairly well. Unfortunately for Leary he couldn't run. He appeared to be glued to the batsman's box, and Connie sent him down to Richmond for a time. Connie was greatly disappointed. He had been told by Leary that he was a fast runner. One day Manager Mack said to Leary:

"I thought you told me you could run?"

"That's the thing that has been worrying me most, Mr. Mack," replied Leary. "I told you I could run, and I meant it. At the University of Pittsburgh I was considered the second fastest runner in the college, but I can see that there is a difference in running in baseball and in football."

"I guess you are right," quietly remarked Connie. "Instead of a sprinter you are a mile runner."

AMATEUR STAR TELLS TYPE OF PLAYER TO BEAT HOPPE.

BILLIARD experts are still trying to figure out some way of preventing Willie Hoppe from gathering all the prizes offered in balk line billiard tournaments. In the recent tournament held in New York the champion disarranged the handicap system under which he played against the pick of the players of the country.

With Hoppe rising victorious over the handicaps conceded to his opponents, billiard followers are now discussing what manner of player can defeat the champion. The question was discussed recently at the Liederkranz club in New York by men who take an active interest in billiards. One of the party was J. Ferdinand Poggenburg, who holds the American emblem of international championship at 18.2 balk line. His version of the consensus is:

"First.—We will have to find an intelligent young man who is in love with billiards and comprehends the principles involved in the science of the game.

"Second.—Such a young man must be industrious and practice diligently.

"Third.—He must acquire execution corresponding to that of Hoppe.

"Fourth.—He must have a good physique and keep himself in perfect physical condition, as Hoppe does.

"Finally, he must be as temperate in every respect as Hoppe is."

NORTHERN LEAGUE TO RESUME OPERATIONS.

THE Northern league will resume operations as a six club league next summer. Duluth, Minn.; Superior, Wis.; Virginia, Minn.; Fargo, N. D.; Winnipeg, Man., and Fort William will be on the circuit.

Modern Heavies Bigger Than Boxers of Olden Times

WHILE some uncertainty existed as to just when and where Jess Willard would defend his heavyweight title during 1916, there appeared to be very little doubt that the champion will be seen in one or more battles during the coming twelve months. There is also some question as to which of the challengers for the title will be accorded chances to meet Willard in the ring.

If height, strength and youth were the only qualifications necessary to insure their possessor the right to meet the champion in the squared circle, Willard's prospects for a busy season would be extremely bright. Notwithstanding the enormous proportions of the present champion, he is not the only giant in his class, for the heavyweight field today consists of bigger men than ever before in the history of the ring. Willard stands 6 feet 6 inches and weighs close to 240 pounds when in condition.

In the older days of pugilism he would have towered above the average heavyweight like a Goliath among pygmies. Such is not the case now, however, for there are several candidates for the title who, physically at least, class with Willard in many respects. Lee Bodie, one of the latest aspirants for ring honors, stands 6 feet 6½ inches; Fred Fulton is 6 feet 4½ inches tall, Cowler 6 feet 3½ inches, Weinert 6 feet 2½ inches, Coffey 6 feet 1½ inches, Moran 6 feet 1 inch, Harry Wills, the negro heavy, 6 feet 2 inches; Georges Carpentier, now serving in the French army, 5 feet 11½ inches, while Gunboat Smith is the smallest of the group, being but 5 feet 11 inches.

Among the older school of heavyweights Jeffries and Corbett alone approached in height the big men who today are fighting in the same class. Jeffries stood 6 feet 1½ inches when at the top of his ring career. Corbett measured 6 feet 1 inch when he defeated Sullivan, who was but 5 feet 10½ inches. Jack Johnson was one-half inch over 6 feet, Fitzsimmons one-quarter inch under 6 feet, while Sharkey, Choynski and Tommy Burns were all under 5 feet 10 inches.

FANS WILL WATCH TINKER AND JONES

TINKER. JONES.

THE playing of the St. Louis Browns and the Chicago Nationals will be closely watched by the fans in both circuits this season. Manager Jones is out with the statement that the Browns are sure winnters, and Tinker also states that his club is sure to land the National league gonfalon.

Girls Show Skill In Pushball Contest

During the recent outdoor winter sport carnival in St. Paul one of the features was a pushball game between the boys and girls. Much to the surprise of every one the girls show much more skill and courage than the male sex and were awarded the honors in the contest.

TED LEWIS KNOWS HOW TO GET THE MONEY

GERSHON MENDELOFF, who is Ted Lewis in the fight guides, has made $18,000 in thirteen fights. The largest single sum paid him was $1,960, for his bout with Kayo Brennan at Buffalo. For meeting Ritchie he received $1,760.

Lewis is entitled to what he gets. Beginning with his bout with Kid Graves, Lewis was matched to battle ten times in about thirty-two days, winding up Feb. 17. His most important engagement will take place in New York, with Willie Ritchie on the receiving committee.

At an average of $1,300 per fight, which is Lewis' record for his recent appearances, he will have taken in $13,000 for about thirty days of work.

In that time it is doubtful if he is knocked down, or even receives a black eye. He will have undergone no exhausting strain and received no dangerous punches if his past record spells anything.

And yet Gibbons has the nerve to bar his sons from the easiest money and the easiest life—for a clever man—to be found in the entire sporting world.

Again, Mike, we refer you to Jess Willard, whose bit has now risen to $45,000 for thirty minutes' effort, or to your own experience with Mike Gibbons and McFarland.

THE following anecdote is related for the benefit of Clevelanders who might want to buy the Indian franchise, as it may illustrate how some of them will try to run the ball club.

Charley Herzog, manager of the Cincinnati Reds, is the author. He told it during a fanning bee of managers, players and scribes at the recent peace session at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York.

Charley Ebbets, owner of the Brooklyn club, has a telephone between his private box and the bench, and Herzog avers that the following is typical of what happens ten minutes before every home game:

Ting-a-ling. Ting-a-ling.

Manager Wilbert Robinson answers phone.

Robinson talking: "Yes, Mr. Ebbets, this is Robinson.

"Who am I going to pitch today? Well, I had planned to use Smith. The Reds are none too good against a southpaw, you know.

"Coombs? No, I had not intended to use him.

"You see, Coombs pitched Tuesday and finished a game for Rucker yesterday.

"Yes, I know, but Smith has not pitched since Sunday, and he needs to be worked every fourth day to be good.

(To Coombs) "Get busy and warm up. You're going to pitch today."

PRESIDENT HAUGHTON of the Boston Braves has told his newspaper friends in Boston that he is no longer going to pursue his Harvard tactics so far as conservatism is concerned in the matter of publicity. In football he contends it does not do for a coach to talk at all for the papers, but in baseball, in which the public is entitled to all the news, it is different, and Haughton has promised to be very liberal in furnishing information concerning the Braves.

George Stallings, by the way, made the following statement regarding the team the other day:

"I have a hard fighting, game lot of players," he said. "I wouldn't have room for a player who isn't game. They play with all that is in them and always will while I have anything to do with the club. They will take every clean advantage to win and will go the limit in that respect. So far as I am concerned I would rather have a player of lesser ability who is thoroughly game than to have a player of greater ability who is lacking in gameness. When we traveled through the west last season we were known as a club with one-third ability and two-thirds nerve and fighting power. This season I intend to have a club that is two-thirds ability and one-third otherwise."

SPEAKING about multimillionaires and those who dabble high in the financial league, Mike Gibbons, St. Paul's "phantom" fighter, set a record for pay when he met Young Ahearn recently. Gibbons received $8,466.55 as his share, and his time of working for this amount was ninety seconds. Gibbons' pay from the promoters was $85 per second. How much would he have earned with the gloves if he worked an entire year?

The answer is $2,687,904,000, and Mike says he will not allow his boys to follow the path of their father!

TO earn $14,100 in eleven races on the grand circuit without winning a race or finishing first in any heat was the remarkable record made by the bay stallion Worthy Prince, 2:11¼, by Prince McKinney, dam Nell Worthy, by Axworthy, 2:15½, under the careful handling of Walter Cox of Dover, N. H. during the season just ended.

This seven-year-old horse has shown ability to trot in 2:05 or better.

DISCIPLINE WILL BE BRAVES' WATCHWORD

Photo by American Press Association.

PERCY HAUGHTON. GEORGE STALLINGS.

DISCIPLINE is likely to be the watchword of the Boston National league baseball club under the direction of the new president, Percy D. Haughton, during the coming season. Haughton as a Harvard baseball and football player and later coach of the eleven, has always been a strong advocate of strict obedience to training rules and the playing code of whatever game he was interested in.

While it is not to be expected that Haughton will insist that the players of the Boston Braves will be held to the same degree of accountability that prevails in college football circles, it is certain that the new president of the club will insist upon an observance of all the rules recently laid down by former President Gaffney in his letter to the players and may even go further. With Haughton as president and George Stallings as manager it would appear as though the players of the Boston club will have to make baseball playing strictly a business proposition in 1916 or learn that a new regime prevails in the game.

Pitcher Has Always Got Better of Batter

THE pitcher is the central figure in the game of baseball. He is monarch of all he surveys, though his eye might fall on his manager on the bench or his captain behind him. His strength is the strength of the team, and on him, more than any other one player, depends the success of his side. His mortal enemy is the batter, and ever since the game shaped itself into its present form they have been bitter opponents.

Not the least interesting incident of baseball history is this conflict between these two most important factors of the national pastime. To equalize their strength has been the object and end of much legislation from the early days to the present time. However, history will demonstrate that the pitcher has invariably acquired the ascendancy over the batter by overcoming all obstacles placed in his way. The pitching distance was successively increased from forty-five feet in 1858 to sixty and one-half feet in 1915. His liberty of movement has been restricted and he must now actually stand still, whereas only a few years ago he was allowed to jump around at will. Yet the question of equality between the pitcher and the batter is still a debatable one.

Before 1858 the pitcher evidently had no higher rank than any of the other players. In fact, every player was a "thrower," the word "pitcher" not coming into common use until 1858. If he became tired or weak, his place was taken by another player, and there was no such thing as a "regular" thrower.

In 1858, when the New England and middle states' promoters adopted uniform rules, the paragraph relating to the pitcher was vague and undefined, simply stating that "the ball must be pitched and not thrown for the bat." It was understood, however, that the pitcher "was not to step beyond a line fifteen yards from home base and four yards in length." These were the first restrictions put on the pitchers and marked the beginning of the interminable war between him and the batter.

The first pitcher's "box" was introduced in 1863. It was evident that the pitcher was rapidly getting the upper hand of the batter, and the rulemakers deemed it proper to go to the assistance of the latter.

This was a radical innovation which caused the bankruptcy of a lot of pitchers who had already gained an individuality. In fact, old records show that only two of them, George Zettlein and J. D. McBride, "retained their standing position in pitching."

It was not until 1867 that the pitcher was released from this "cramped position, as experience showed that it was a detriment to the game and prolonged the contest to unreasonable lengths." In 1867 the box was enlarged to 6 by 4 feet and two years later to 6 by 6 feet, the pitcher having the privilege of taking as many steps as he desired. Then for the first time the pitcher's "points" were introduced—that is, "two fixed iron plates," one in the center of the front line and one in the center of the rear line. This was done to give the umpire a clearer view of the limits of the box.

As in 1863 the introduction of the box gave the game the word "boxman" for pitcher, so these points in 1867 originated the expression "occupied the pitcher's points," both terms being used even now where there is no box and points are unknown.

In 1872 two more "iron plates" were added to the box, one in each corner of the front line, but no change was made in the size of the box nor in the distance between the pitcher and the batter. In 1876, the first year of the National league, the only change in the box required that "each corner of the square shall be marked by a flat iron plate or stone six inches square, fixed in the ground even with the surface."

The box was let alone until 1879, when the pitcher, or some of them, was curbed in his style of delivery and made more polite to the batter by being compelled to turn his face to his adversary. The pitcher had acquired the habit of hiding both the ball and his face while in the act of delivery. The new rule demanded that "the pitcher, when taking his position to deliver the ball, must face the batsman and shall not while delivering the ball turn his back on the striker." So, for the first time, the enemies were legally obliged to squarely face each other. At the same time the box was contracted to a space four feet in front and rear and six feet on the sides.

In 1881, for the first time since 1858, the pitching distance was increased. Perhaps the face to face obligation, if not a burning question, was burning to the countenances of the bitter rivals, and, to avoid a conflagration, the pitcher was moved five feet further away from the batter. It was an honest and frank acknowledgment of the predominance of the pitcher over the batter. Several high toned boxmen fell by the wayside in consequence of this change, which entailed the strenuous labor of tossing the ball a distance of fifty feet instead of forty-five. The box retained its dimensions of 6 by 4 feet.

The pitcher was given the greatest freedom in 1884 in the National league, which abolished the rule requiring him to deliver the ball with his hand passing below his shoulder. He was now allowed to throw the ball in any style below or above his shoulder, take as many steps as he pleased and play high jinks with the poor batter generally. The American association fell in line the following year, and now all over the country the pitcher was in his element.

But he received a sudden and severe check in 1887, when, under the domination of the joint rules committee, the box was cut down to four feet wide and five and one-half feet long, and he was compelled to keep one foot on the rear line and forbidden to take more than one step in delivering the ball. It was also enacted that he "shall hold the ball, before delivery, fairly in front of his body and in sight of the umpire. In 1879, as was noted, the pitcher was not allowed to hide his face from the batter, and now, in 1887, he was not allowed to hide the ball.

The new rule was a great handicap to the pitchers, many of whom had to quit the game. To make matters harder for the poor pitcher, he had to send four good balls over the plate before a batter could be called out on strikes, and every time he sent a man to base on balls it was scored as a base hit against him. In spite of all seemingly insurmountable obstacles, he gradually regained his ascendancy over the batter and finally conquered him as he had done many times before.

This last conquest led to the greatest change in the history of the pitching department. In 1893 the box, along with the "points," was entirely eliminated from the game and the pitching distance increased ten and one-half feet, from fifty feet to sixty and one-half feet. Instead of a box, a white rubber plate twelve inches long and four inches wide was fixed in the ground even with the surface, and the pitcher had to keep one foot in contact with this rubber in the act of delivering the ball. Two years later, in 1895, the rubber was made 25 by 6 inches, and so it remains today. The pitcher's "lines" were done away with, and the pitcher's "boundary" took their place.

CHARLEY HERZOG ONLY PLAYING MANAGER

Photo by American Press Association.

IT now appears as if the playing managers in the big leagues are a thing of the past. When the gong sounds for the start of the 1916 campaign the only playing leader in either league will be Charley Herzog of the Cincinnati Nationals.