

# News of the Sporting World at Home and Abroad

## CLARK GRIFFITH'S BASEBALL TALK.

Interesting Discussion of the Evolution of the Curved Ball.

FIFTEEN YEARS IN THE GAME.

He Derides Art of Pitching Into Three Stages—"Drop," the "Curve" and The "Fresh."

Clark Griffith, manager of the Yankees, and the old-time Chicago diamond idol, when asked recently for a talk on the evolution of the curved ball, gave what is probably the most thorough and comprehensive chapter of baseball history ever offered the public. He goes back for about fifteen years, and during that time many of the most famous pitchers ever known have come and gone.

The "Hoosier Cyclone," Amos Rusie, the speediest pitcher who ever turned a ball, flashed on the baseball world, sparked with meteoric brilliancy for ten years, and his spark did not even more suddenly than it appeared. Buffalo, John Clarkson, Keefe, Welch, Garvin and other pitching cracks of nearly a decade ago have occupied the center of the baseball stage during Griffith's career, have made their little bow and retired, some by reason of age, some from loss of their pitching arms and some from other causes.

Griffith has always been a pitcher, and one of the very best, simply because he was a brainy player, and used his head as well as the physical ability with which he was so eminently supplied. Griffith has lasted as a pitcher as long as he has, which is much longer than the general run of twirlers, because he has used his brain.

When he first became known as a pitcher he used the drop ball, the delivery that has sent so many of the top-notch pitchers to the stable for good. The New York manager has been, and is a close student of the pitching end of the game. His arm gave out on account of the straining snap necessary to give the deceiving drop to his ball, and he laid off nearly three years. During that time, however, he nursed his injured "wing," studied new and less wrenching deliveries, and when he had acquired what he was after, he entered the baseball field for the second time and reached the top almost at a bound.

Griffith puts the pitching during the last 15 years into three distinct and separate stages, viz: The drop stage, the curve stage and the fresh stage.

The latter is the present stage and includes the "spit ball," the "raise," the "fade away," the "incurve" and general mixing 'em up. In explanation of this Griffith said: "During the drop stage such pitchers as Buffington, Haddock, Ramsey, John Clarkson and others became famous as exponents of the drop, which caused as much of a sensation and puzzle to the spectators at the time as the spit ball of Chesbro did last year. Every pitcher tried to acquire the delivery, some succeeded, but many more did not, and the latter can consider themselves lucky."

"The delivery required a snap to the arm and wrist that put every pitcher who followed it up out of business sooner or later. Buffington was obliged to retire when he should have been at his best."

"Haddock succumbed in short order, as did Ramsey. The latter was allowed enough to quit using the ball in the nick of time, went south, where the climate is warmer, and managed to last in a minor league up to this day, but he never would be successful in the big leagues. Other pitchers who continued to use the drop fell by the wayside and either gave up pitching altogether or took up other playing positions."

"Then," continued Griffith, "came the curve ball stage. The ball was curved years before this, but the pitchers previous to this time had used the tearing, wearing snap to give the ball the required twist, which was necessary to cause the ball to break. Rusie was the first and best exponent of the new style of curving. He had a natural delivery, a round arm swing, and did not snap the ball. He merely reeled the sphere off his fingers, and even with his easy, graceful motion he could get more of a break to his ball than any pitcher I ever saw. He could get a terrific speed with his delivery also. More, in fact, than any pitcher before."

"Rusie's strong right arm did not get back on him from his pitching, but from other causes. If Rusie had taken proper care of himself he would have been pitching yet. There were three great twirlers who by close study of that pitcher's methods, and I consider Rusie next to Chesbro the best pitcher who ever wore spikes, became nearly as great as Amos."

"By continual and constant use of the curve Rusie gradually got so they could hit it, and then pitchers were obliged to dig up some new delivery. Change of pace was tried, although that did not work, for Keefe had a most deceptive slow ball."

## THE GREAT TOM JENKINS.



This is one of the favorite holds of the wrestler, Tom Jenkins, who aspires to take the title as champion from Fred Gotch. That the two will soon meet in a decisive contest seems certain.

that he pitched with the same motion, but Tim's great effectiveness with that ball seemed to have died with his retirement. Anyway, very few pitchers had it down as pat as he. But the bat- tery soon got on to the change of pace, and that brought pitching up to the last stage, 'the fresh,' the spit ball and others.

"This spit ball is a wonder. It is revolutionizing the game. There are lots of players trying to get it, including southpaw slingers, and when the latter accumulate it the left-handed batters will take to the tall timber. Chesbro is the only pitcher I ever saw who can use it day in and day out and retain control of it. Why, the only wild pitch Chesbro made with the spit ball last season was that last game of the year, when his wild pitch lost the Yankee championship."

"Just think of it! That spit ball of

Chesbro's pulled us up to the top and the same ball lost us the pennant. There has been much said about the spit ball delivery ruining pitchers' arms, but it will never put Chesbro out of business, for he does not snap his arm or wrist in his delivery. He had a natural delivery, the same as Rusie had for his curve, and can last for years."

I asked Griffith if a right-hand pitcher could give an incurve, mentioning the fact that McGinnity once told me that it could not be done. Griffith replied: "Garvin can curve the ball in or out and his incurve is just as evident as his out. I once saw Garvin strike out Anson four times in succession in one game."

Pitcher Al Orth, who was present, backed up Griffith's statement of Garvin's ability to give the in-break to the ball.

## BOXERS CAN FIGHT IN ALASKA.

Every Salt Lake fight fan remembers Biddy Bishop, the man who brought out Aurelio Herrera, the hard punching Mexican. Biddy has had a rather stormy voyage on the pugilistic sea since he "thru-sawagled" M. E. Mulvey of this city in the Herrera-Downey fiasco.

Now, Biddy is seeking new fields. He is going to Alaska. Recently he received a communication instructing him to arrange matches to take place at Dawson, Skagway, Whitehorse and Fairbanks and the young manager is looking about to select the best material in the light and middleweight classes. The first big matches to take place in the far north will be held on the queen's birthday, May 24, and the season will close with another big contest on Dominion day, Aug. 17. Sandwiched in between these dates will be the big Fourth of July celebration, which is a big day at all the camps, and on the 13th of June is when the union miners have their big time and a fight on either of these dates will draw the money. It is estimated that a fight on

either of these four dates will draw at least a \$10,000 house. Last summer Bishop took Billy Woods to Alaska and the pair cleared up everything in sight. Bishop says that it takes a fellow one season to learn the ropes in that country and this time he figures that he will be able to come out of the dog camps with a fat purse.

"It's the greatest country I have ever been to," says Bishop, "and I will surely make the trip again if I have to send east to get the fighters to go along with me. Joe McDonald tells me that Nick Hurley is still in Dawson and that he is as big a favorite this season as he was last. McDonald wants me to bring in a good man to pit against Hurley, and he says I can get all kinds of betting and that we will draw a big house. I think either Twin Sullivan, Dave Barry or Billy Woods would be the man to match against Hurley in Dawson. Then they have a lightweight in there who fights at 135 and I want to get some good boy to meet him. I thought at first that Young Corbett would be the fellow to tackle him, but I think it would be best to get some one who could weigh perhaps 135, and I may send and get Charley Neary or Buddy Ryan."

## How a Man Didn't Win \$250,000.

There is not much "plunging" on horse races in Salt Lake, and therefore we do not often hear of many big winnings or great losses, but here is a story from Hot Springs about the hard luck of one Jack Holmes, who stood to win \$225,000 but—didn't get the money. The Hot Springs writer says:

Jack had missed more \$10,000 and \$20,000 coup-then I have at \$5 and \$10 winnings, but about the best he tells is of a race in New Orleans when, after he and his friends had bet enough to win \$225,000, his horse lost the race because he actually cut off half his hoof 29 yards from the wire when 10 lengths

to the good and was beaten standing with the disgraced member hanging to the leg.

No matter what the horse's name nor the date, Jack can and will supply any inquirer with both if a stamp is enclosed; but on the occasion his friends had the greatest killing ever planned. The horse was ready to start, the soft spot was at hand when commissions aggregating many thousands were sent out to poolrooms. The horse opened at twenty, but when the poolroom players had been given time to get down their coin, Jack and his friends started down the line in the ring with pockets bulging with money. Betting ten and twenty with every lover they passed, they walked up and down the ring and up and down again until the horse had been sent to even at post time. Then, when the bell rang, they were begging the bookies to take it, for they thought they had a 1 to 10 shot.

If Johnny Jones was the name of the horse Jack says the race was run like this: "They're off to a good break, all well in line. In a few jumps Maggie Jenkins shows in front with Killem Fast a neck back and Johnnie Jones third, running easy. They go along with the boy on Johnny splitting his mouth holding him behind the leaders, for he has instructions to win, but not to show the horse up too much, and the race is at six furlongs. At the half the three are running in front with the Killem trick a head to the good, Maggie Jenkins second, a length in front of Johnny."

Then they come around the far turn and on the three-quarter pole. At this place they stand Maggie first, a half length; Killem second, by a neck, and Johnny third, a length in front of the next baby. Just then the boy on Johnny makes his move and at the turn into the stretch Johnny Jones is flying away four lengths in front, with Maggie second and some other skate third. Down the straightaway Johnny simply waits and we all saw ourselves doing magnificent stunts, when, at the 50-yard post the boy tried easing up his mount. Johnny has a long, gangling gait and would not stop easy.

"The boy wants to let him down, and so 20 yards out jerks him up suddenly. This causes him to lose his gait entirely. As he does so he throws out a hind foot and simply cuts in half the lead in front, and we see our bright

hopes dissipated without a possible excuse. As the boy is in on the killing, he naturally gets down and sheds tears, but what's the use?"

## TENNIS LEAGUE FORMED.

Teams Will Enter Journey Between Utah, Wyoming, Idaho and Colorado.

A tennis league, composed of teams representing Utah, Idaho, Colorado and Wyoming, is in course of formation. The initial steps were taken during the week at a meeting held at the Commercial club, and there is little doubt that the plans will be carried out. It has been decided to arrange a series of games between the four states, and an association has been formed. Samuel Newhouse has been chosen president of the Utah association, with Capt. Frank Morrow of Fort Douglas, vice president, and Dorsey Ash, secretary and treasurer. Several new clubs are in progress of organization in the city, and the sport is to be boomed.

It is probable that the interstate games will not begin until August, but in the meantime local tournaments will be the order, and the winners will represent the state in the championship tournament.

All the details, and the schedule will be worked out in the near future.

## AUTOMOBILES ARE COMING.

Salt Lakers May See Them in Big Race Across the Continent.

Salt Lakers may have an opportunity of witnessing part of a big go-as-you-please automobile race across the continent this summer.

During the week we received a report that the Louis and Clark expedition is organizing a race, or endurance test from the Atlantic coast to Portland.

It is planned to have the run start some time in June, with the eastern cars leaving from New York. The nature of the prizes or how they will be awarded, has yet to be decided.

Judging from the preliminary outlines, the run will be a go-as-you-please affair. The drivers may pick out their own route and go as fast or as slow as they please.

It takes five days for a traveler to go from the Atlantic states to Portland. One automobile made the trip from New York to San Francisco last summer in a little less than 32 days. With the improvements made in motor vehicles, since that time, it is confidently expected that the time consumed by the more successful contestants in the cross-continent automobile race will be less than a month. The distance by the shortest route is about 5,000 miles.

Most of the eastern contestants will center at Chicago, and the different routes are advised from the latter place. The southern route, by way of Des Moines, or some other Iowa point, would take the automobilists to Spokane, Wash., thence to the Santa Fe coast through southern Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona. From southern California the way would lead up the coast through San Bernardino and Los Angeles, through the San Joaquin valley to San Francisco. Thence to Portland, following the coast, the route would be easy.

The middle route, which has been taken by one daring chaffeur, is more difficult in some respects than the southern, but is shorter. The route would lead from Chicago across Illinois, and Indiana into Iowa; thence to Omaha, Neb.; thence to Salt Lake City, across the mountains into California, and thence north into Oregon, of which is a matter of question, would lead northwest from Omaha, across Nebraska, the Dakotas, Idaho and Washington, going thence south to Portland. This would include some of the most magnificent mountain scenery in the world.

## "PENNY" GOSSIP.

Pans here don't care whether Butte is a "penny" or not, just so we have baseball. Play ball!

If this fine weather keeps up we will have baseball and track and most sports that we expect. Ball tossers and sprinters are already hard at work preparing for coming events.

Joe Walcott, can fight as an amateur under Boston's new boxing laws, as he has never taken any money for scrapping. It was always withheld for faking.

The Cincinnati Enquirer says racing at Ascot park is "draggy." This is a new one, but we welcome it as a shift from "lame," "featureless," "tiresome," "uneventful," etc.

There is a chance that the Chicago National team, which is now in California, will stop off here for a couple of exhibition games. It is up to Manager Kelly to get the local team in shape for the games if he wants them. It would be a good drawing card, and help the local team out some.

Teddy Murphy, the boy manager, lost only 10 days as the director of the fortunes of Benny Vanger. Benny has been accustomed to a swell brand of press work, and Teddy wasn't making good.

The appointment of Frank Schefski as representative of the N. C. A. in this territory is a popular one. Schefski has had a great deal of experience in the big race game and understands it from beginning to end. He will have much to do if the race track is built at Ogden, and there are four race meets a week.

Base hits and runs cut more figure with Manager Johnny McGraw than with any other manager. McGraw is not without diplomacy on occasion. Just after a close game one day, which his team had lost, McGraw approached the umpire and asked:

"Mr. Umpire, what would happen to me if I should call an umpire an incompetent robber?"

"You would be fined," was the umpire's response.

"And what would happen to me if I merely thought the umpire an incompetent robber?"

"Why, nothing could be done to you then," replied the umpire.

"Well, let it go at that," said McGraw.

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## CHAMPION FLY-CASTER.



Reuben C. Leonard holds the championship for fly-casting, a title that he captured at the Sportsman's show in New York. Fly-casting is a sport in which there are few experts, but is something that deeply interests every sportsman.

## STATE TRACK MEET.

Arrangements Now Going on for the Annual Events.

Preparations are rapidly going on for the annual high school state track meet to take place in May, and Manager George Riser of the University is a very busy man these days. The meet is to be under the direction of the "Varsity," and Ogden and Park City have expressed a willingness to join with the local teams.

## NORWEGIAN SKEE INFANTRYMEN.

The cut illustrates the use to which the Scandinavian soldiers put the peculiar form of snowshoe known as the skee. Its successful employment requires an immense amount of practice; but, once acquired, it is an extremely effective agent in the winter maneuvers. In case of retreat from an army



not skilled in the use of the skee it would prove to be an admirable resource. No body of ordinary foot soldiers could keep within sight of a fleeing enemy mounted on skis. Eight miles an hour or seventy miles a day is no unusual record for a skilled Norwegian or Swedish infantryman on skis. If the Russians in Manchuria had anticipated a winter campaign they would have done well to learn to skee, since this swift method of escape would have saved them many a serious disaster.

## A CURIOUS PRISON.

The little structure herewith illustrated is probably the tiniest penal institution in the world. It is in the island of Sark, the smallest of the Channel group. Small as it is, it is roomy enough for Sark, whose inhabitants very seldom



get into difficulty with the authorities. There are so few arrests in the island that it is almost a distinction to occupy the jail. The last prisoner was a woman, and a crowd of her sympathizing neighbors went with her and camped about the place until she was released. She had been accused of purloining a handkerchief, but the charge was disproved, and she was escorted home in triumph by her friends.

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## SPORTING GOSSIP OF LOCAL INTEREST

No Doubt Now That We Will Have Good Baseball This Season.

## IT WILL BE INDEPENDENT.

Nothing Heard from "Spider" Welch With Reference to Match With Danford.

Independent baseball! Pacific National league with six clubs, each having sound backing. The league composed of Salt Lake, Ogden, Boise, Butte, Helena and Spokane.

That is what it looks like at this writing, and there are no indications that any material changes will be made. For a time the outlook was anything but bright, so far as Butte was concerned, but at the secure the support of Williams of Spokane, but failed miserably. Williams expressed a determination to stand for independent baseball. McCloskey's only objection to managing the Butte team was with reference to Lucas. He wanted the latter to have his old position, and set Butte on its feet. The directors would not stand for this, and McCloskey said he would consider.

All the cities mentioned, with the exception of Helena, can almost certainly be relied upon to enter the league, and as Helena was quite anxious to join hands with the others a short time ago, it is confidently expected that the city will get in line.

The advantages of independent baseball have already been seen. A number of good men who had positions in eastern teams, and who wanted to come west but could not do so because they were unable to secure their release, have written to managers of the different teams, offering to come here. In this way we should be able to get some of the best ball players in the country.

Manager Kelly is not saying very much these days, but he is saving word, and getting things in shape for the opening of the season. So, it can be depended upon that we will have baseball. If Butte and Helena back out, then the other cities will go ahead with a few club leagues.

It was expected that before this something definite would have been heard from "Spider" Welch with reference to the proposed bout with Bert Danford. It is still believed that the San Francisco pugilist will have a little advantage in weight. Welch is regarded as a "comer" on the coast in the heavy lightweight division of the game. The least weight he will now do is 25 pounds at 3 o'clock on the afternoon of the bout. Danford can get into fine fettle at 140 or 142, so there would not be much difference in their weight.

In the event Welch can not come here, or does not want to come, a match between Danford and Tommy Markham is being talked of by local fight fans. Markham has been quite popular here, and many believe that he would have defeated Clifford in their match had he been in good condition. He proved his gameness by going against the California man on three days' notice.

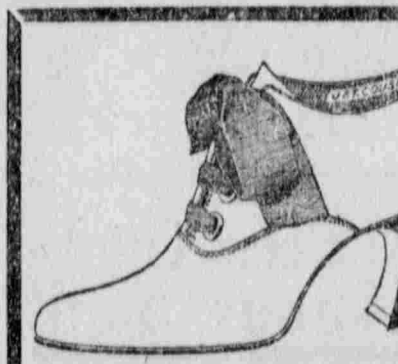
## NO WONDER.

Farmer Jason—Did you hear as how Josh Medders is suing his wife for divorce? Farmer Hunking—Gosh! not! What grounds has he got? Farmer Jason—Cretely. She insisted on his eating 'er same kind of grub she give 'er summer boarders!—Jude.

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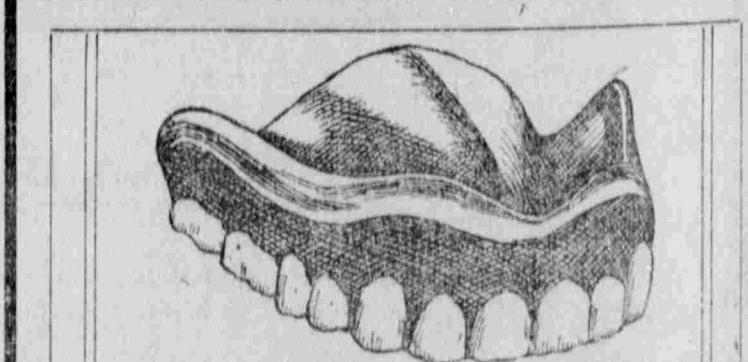
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