

# THE BASEBALL PLAYERS' FRATERNITY

A Monthly Department Devoted to the Activities  
of the Organized Ball Player

Edited by DAVID L. FULTZ  
*President of the Ball Players' Fraternity*

## What Our Fraternity Really Stands For

WE print herewith an editorial from the "Sporting Life" under the heading "With malice toward none and charity for all" to show how unwise it is to continually look at but one side of a controversy, and how superficial reasoning may cloud the issue and prevent for a time the true facts coming to light.

The major league players, under the advice and leadership of one not actively connected in any capacity with professional base ball, have pursued their so-called fraternity project to the point of permanent organization. That being the case, there is now nothing to do but await either the early death of the new organization from inanition or its development into a power for good or ill—with the chances for ill exceeding the chances for good, in the light of history and the unvarying manifestations of human nature. As illustrating the utter uselessness, from a protective standpoint, of this organization, which enters the field of base ball just when that sport has reached its apogee of splendor, power and prosperity, we can not refrain from citing contemporaneous incidents. Scarcely more than a month ago the National Commission ratified the purchases and drafts of about one hundred players from the various minor leagues, at a cost of nearly a quarter of a million dollars. *Under the new National Agreement each of these players is assured of an appreciable raise in salary*, if given a trial in the major leagues, and no player can be returned to the lowly estate from which he emerged without a fair chance for at least a trial either in a major league or in some higher-class league than the one from which he was drafted. The value of this kind of promotion and

protection can be surmised from the fact that in the major leagues the average salary is at least \$2400 for six or seven months' play, not work. Only a few weeks ago the players in the World's series, divided among themselves over \$147,000—or \$4024 for each of the winning team's players, and \$2566 for each of the losing team's players, exclusive of salaries and expenses—for eight days' play. Is it any wonder that it is a hard matter to make the patrons of the game, whose average income is less than \$1500 for a whole year's work, believe that the player is badly treated, down-trodden, or denied a fair share of the prosperity created by and through the unceasing and intelligent efforts of the builders of organized ball?

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The Editor of "Sporting Life" can honestly say that since 1868 the greatest factors in the upbuilding work were magnates, managers, and writers, and that the player as such has been a negligible quantity in the developing work. He has lacked initiative and originality and his interest in his work has been almost wholly measured by, or confined to, his salary. Furthermore, despite the tremendous improvement in every phase of the presentation of the game the player of today has advanced not at all in proportion in skill, and but little in morale—and that little has not been due to the individual efforts of the players or to any professional pride but to the joint efforts of the National League and American League, the salutary regulations of the National Agreement, the restraining power of the National Commission, and the iron rule of Presidents Johnson, Lynch, the late Harry Pulliam, and the many capable executives in the minor leagues. And despite it all the irresponsible disposition and undisciplined spirit of many players will constantly assert itself, as witness the still too frequent rebellions against umpire

authority, the Fletcher episode, the Detroit strike incident, the willful lapses which have this season thrown two great teams out of their races and have more or less affected every team in the big leagues; and now this organization movement—which, in the last analysis, is a protest against discipline and an established order of things justified by dearly-bought experience, and absolutely essential to honest play and financial stability.

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There is absolutely no other way to control or perpetuate the professional game than through the rules and regulations of organized ball; and that system, arbitrary though it may seem to impractical sentimentalists or visionary theorists, must rule supreme. And we maintain that, no matter if some of the magnates should sympathize with or encourage this player movement—as has been claimed by the lawyer-leader—there can be no safe division of authority with or delegation of power to any body or organization except as now provided for in the National Agreement, within or without the citadel; and for that reason any organization of the subordinate player must, no matter what may be argued or promised to the contrary at the start, eventually become an antagonistic rival to the superior body, and a menace to the dignity, peace and stability of organized ball. The moral of the story of the Arab who permitted the camel to get his nose under the edge of the tent is just as pertinent today as when that significant tale was written thousands of years ago.

In commenting upon this article, we wish to say at the outset, that we have always disclaimed any intention of dealing with the salary question, "with the possible exception of requesting that the young player who is brought from a minor league shall be paid at least as much as he has been getting." We mention this again, as our opponents continue to inject this question into the controversy, insist that for this reason alone we are organized, and then having shown the excellent financial condition of the player, the uselessness of the Fraternity, to their minds, follows as a natural consequence.

Though conceding that many of the players are doing well financially, lest some of our readers may think they are gobbling up all the cream, we wish to touch upon a few of the statements made in the editorial.

As an evidence of the "uselessness" of our Fraternity, it is stated that one hundred players were recently drafted and purchased from various minor leagues, and that each one of these players is as-

sured of "an appreciable raise in salary if given a trial in the major leagues." It further states that these players were purchased at the approximate cost of \$250,000.00, about \$2500 per man. Salary? No. \$2500 given by the magnate to the club owning the player just for the privilege of doing business with him. Please remember the figure, for we wish to speak of it later. Now after reading the editorial you thought the National Agreement guaranteed a minor league player going to the majors, an increase in salary, didn't you? Of course you did; the article said so, and this publication should be thoroughly familiar with baseball legislation. But your impression was wrong—that was just a little joke, just one of those "clouds." Now here's what the National Agreement *does* say, and the *only* thing it says on the subject.

"Art 8, Sec. I.—Provided, further, that the term of the first contract with a Major League Club and a drafted or purchased player shall be for 45 days, and such player's salary shall not be over 25% in excess of that paid him by the Minor League Club from which he was secured."

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As much as we hate to say it, this looks somewhat insincere to us; how a prohibition against paying a player more than a certain figure, can be worked into an injunction to pay him at least a certain amount is hard to see. This is called an "assurance!"—how would you like to have such an "assurance" of getting your next meal! As a matter of fact there were players in one of the big leagues last year who didn't get as much salary per month as they got in the Blue Grass League of Kentucky, a class "D" league, the year before. That's an example of this benign legislation. What good does it do these men that the players in the World's Series got \$147,000.00! The good fortune of these stars is only another "cloud" used to screen the unfair condition of some of the other players. "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn."

The editorial says the patron of the game, after comparing his average salary of less than \$1500.00 per year, with each player's share of the World's Series bonus, will be hard to convince that the latter is badly treated. The patron is not quite so gullible as to take the World

Series participant as an example of the average player; but if he is, perhaps he will take the New York and Boston managements as examples of the average owner. The players got \$147,000.00, so the editorial says, but it doesn't tell us how much the owners got. Why? Well, we leave that to you. The owners got \$294,177.70 plus \$49,083.60 which latter sum went to the National Commission to be used in defraying the business end of the enterprise, and which, under the laws of political economy, must be charged against the capitalistic end of the industry. Almost enough, as we figure it, to pay expenses for the entire season—most of the season's proceeds, *velvet*. Now perhaps Mr. "Patron" *does* think that the players in the series got too much money, but he doesn't think that they got too large a *proportion*. And perhaps if Mr. "Patron" is an investor and has had to scrape along with from 2 to 6% on his money, he thinks that the magnate who often draws 100% on his, is in pretty soft.

To compare the big leaguer's salary with the average patron's is absolutely illogical and only another "cloud." There are several millions of "patrons" in this country and about 300 big league ball players, why *should* there be a comparison? If you wish to compare the average salary of all the professional players in the United States with this \$1500 standard, the equation will be freed from its callow absurdity. But when you do this you must be prepared to find that the patron's salary will look like a king's ransom.

Remember that the big leaguer is a development of years of continual practice, that he is the expert, the masterpiece selected from thousands and thousands of players in this country because of his finished skill, his fighting spirit and his mental alertness. Now if you wish to make a comparison of his salary which has a logical foundation, take any industry of about the same financial importance as the baseball business; select from that industry 300 of the most proficient technical men, the experts upon whom the technical end of the business hinges, the leaders in their profession, and use their salaries as a stand-

ard—what do you find? Why the player's salary looks like the price of a lollipop; and this too, without making any allowance for the personal equation which is sure a big element of value in any public artist.

You remember the editorial said that this season minor league ball players were selling at \$2500 a piece. They were a little higher than usual, the meat market is going up! Why? Well, they are scarce, there aren't many for sale. If you want a \$1500 clerk, pay 30c for an ad. and the next morning you will have a dozen. But a ball player will cost you \$2500. Would you expect to pay him the same salary you pay the other fellow?

The editorial attributes the upbuilding of the game almost entirely to the magnates, managers and writers and says the player has been a "negligible quantity"; that he has lacked "initiation and originality;" that his interest has been almost wholly mercenary; that he has developed disproportionately in "skill" and very little in "morals." Yes, we presume Ban Johnson made the first fall-away slide, that Tom Lynch nailed Horace Fogel when he tried the first delayed steal, that Charlie Murphy and Barney Dreyfuss worked the first Squeeze play and that Garry Herrmann threw the first spit ball. My friends, no matter who is responsible for the wonderful equipment of our ball parks or the stable condition of the baseball organism, to the player and the manager who has graduated from the player's ranks, and to these men alone, is due the technical development of this game which is the most skillful, the most scientific, requires the most intelligence, the most accuracy, the most uniform physical development of any game the human race has ever imagined. And we do not believe such a game could have been developed by a lot of incompetents such as the editor would have us believe the ball player is.

The accusation that the player has improved very little in morale and that that little is due to the influence of the National and American Leagues, etc., is too ridiculously unfair to need any recognition. We cannot help but feel that these attempts to malign and stultify the player,

to hold him up to public obloquy, to disparage not only his ability but his character, may be doing the game a great deal of harm. If the fan could be made to believe that the player was of the calibre the "Sporting Life" depicts, we dare say he would not be half so eager to attend the games.

That ninety per cent of the players who presumably know their need, have allied themselves with the Fraternity and that several of the magnates are in favor of the organization, is of no importance whatever in the minds of our opponent; the Fraternity is still utterly useless and is a protest against discipline! Yes, a protest against discipline much the same as is the Balkan Alliance. Too much discipline and all directed at the other fellow becomes somewhat irksome.

The anecdote of the Arab's camel is exceedingly pertinent to this discussion and we are very glad to have it introduced, as it shows clearly the light in which the player is sometimes held—as a beast of burden; answering to the goad; shunted here and there; seldom consulted; always doing its master's bidding; dumbly, blindly, rebelliously sometimes, but doing it nevertheless. But when we consider that the player is a real human being with guaranteed constitutional rights, the picturesque fable from the desert, while it may retain its picturesqueness, loses all semblance of logical force.

This country is no oligarchy, the caste system has never existed here, feudalism likewise has been tabooed. Why then should the player be considered a different genus from the magnate! Is he to have no voice in the laws under

which he earns his livelihood! Are those laws to be made, construed and enforced by the faction whose financial interest is opposed to his and is he not to have even the opportunity to appeal to the law of the land! Not a check, not a safeguard; absolutely at the mercy of the other fellow.

To subvert these principles, our forefathers held the Boston Tea Party. That the governed should have a voice in the government, and that the law-maker should be answerable to him for whom the law is made, are the first principles of Americanism. That absolute and unsupervised power cannot with safety be lodged in any faction, is a bitter lesson learned by nations when the world was yet in swaddling clothes. How then do we hear these theories upheld in this enlightened age of the Pujo Investigation, the Fourteenth Amendment and the Bull Moose?

While we have dwelt somewhat at length upon these attempts to cloud the issue and to malign the player, and while we resent very strongly all unfair attempts to hold the player up to public ridicule, we do not believe that the rank and file of the magnates, even though they have at times received pretty tough deals at the hands of some of the players, look upon them in any such light. A closer intimacy with the player has taught the magnates that he compares not unfavorably with the average young man; and we have for some time held a far greater hope of getting justice from the magnates than from some of the other well-meaning but over-zealous supporters of organized baseball.

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### COMMENTS FROM THE PRESS

*From the Mail, November 7, 1912.*

#### "WITH THE PLAYERS."

"It is a noteworthy fact that, taken in the whole, the players have been vastly more of a credit to their game than the average of club owners. There are many high types at the head of ball clubs, but we are now speaking of the average run. And any sane movement which the Players' Association makes toward uplifting the game will meet with the, sweeping approval of the public, no matter what the upper mandarins have to say about it."

*From the New York Sun.*

#### "A CHARGE OF TRICKERY."

"Please respect Waiver B. in the case of Player So and Sol! This message was sent to all clubs in one of the Class AA leagues recently and caused much speculation until it was explained that 'Waiver B' was a secret agreement among the club owners by which they consented to have a player in their circuit banished to a bush league to satisfy personal spite. Facts are at hand to prove that a certain well known player was subjected to this boycott, but was finally retained and sold to a club that suddenly concluded that 'Waiver B' was both arbitrary and illegal. The player was preparing to bring a criminal action charging conspiracy when he received his release. How many leagues operating under the Na-

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tional Agreement have a 'Waiver B' understanding?"

*From the Sporting Life.*

### "THE DELEHANTY CASE."

"Another answer to unfounded allegations made by Davy Fultz as spokesman for the Base-Ball Players' Frat.

Detroit, Mich., Nov. 27th. Pres. Dave Fultz, of the Base-Ball Players' Fraternity, the new body organized to right the wrongs of the down-trodden ball player, failed to inform himself of the facts before he cited the case of Jim Delehanty to prove that the ball tossers are forever getting the worst of it from the flint hearted magnates. \* \* \* Here is how Delehanty was handed the worst of it by Pres. Navin."

This is only another "cloud" and another evidence of misstatements made by our opponents. While the writer has discussed the Delehanty case, he has never made any statements concerning it, for the very good reason that he never knew the facts. All statements made for the press have been typewritten and copies carefully preserved, so there isn't a chance to put anything like this over.

Perhaps Delehanty did get the worst of it, but if he did, we wish to go on record as saying that we do not believe  
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it was done at the instigation of Pres. Navin. Mr. Navin is not of that stripe, and we are glad of this opportunity to express our confidence in him.

## The Bresnahan Case

THE Bresnahan case was presented to the Board of Directors of the National League at its annual meeting held in the City of New York recently, and, although we have no inside information, judging from the newspaper reports the status of this case is as follows:

The Board spent most of the first day deciding whether or not it had jurisdiction; it then consented to allow the parties to submit the matter to arbitration. The parties could not decide upon the arbitrators, and so reported to the Board. The Board however, took no action, and we believe postponed the matter until the February meeting.

Why the Board should have been uncertain of its jurisdiction is rather hard to see, in view of the action taken a few days before in the Fogel matter, when it outlined its powers in the following resolution:

"Whereas, the jurisdiction of this league to pass judgment upon the charges just disposed of has been brought in question, therefore, be it resolved, that this league is not a body of limited powers whose authority is restricted by the powers expressly enumerated in its constitution. As a voluntary association of the representatives of organized professional base ball we have the same unlimited powers that appertain to individual men and associations of men. Whenever the representative of any club falls short of those high principles which should be the standard of all modern business men and sportsmen, it becomes the privilege and duty of this league to say to the clubs composing it and to the general public that such person will not be admitted to its councils. We do not say to the clubs who shall represent them in the meetings of this league, but we do reserve the right to say who shall not represent them, when the person so excluded shall be proven to be unfit to discharge the high duties developing upon him in our deliberations."

These principles are exceedingly commendable, but if they are applicable to one magnate, why not to all; if they are good for Horace Fogel, why not for Mrs. Britton? Does it depend altogether upon whose ox is gored?

This method of "running with the hare and tarrying with the hounds," is not calculated to build up in the minds of the players a greater confidence toward the magnates. We are exceedingly sorry that the Board saw fit to handle the matter in this manner, as we had fully expected, judging from the personnel of the Board, that Bresnahan would receive justice at its hands. The situation was a somewhat tense one and presented a good opportunity for fearless men to do a man's job, but they were not there with the "punch." It is of course, very gallant of them to allow the St. Louis Club to wield her hatchet with impunity, but it is pretty tough on Bresnahan who is absolutely at sea regarding his position under baseball law.

Though Bresnahan might take this case to the National Commission in an informal way, as an application to enforce a right, if he submitted the matter to this body for a decision upon the merits, or, as the law terms it, "an arbitration and award," according to the terms of his contract, he would be bound by the National Commission's decision. While we have little doubt that that decision would be in Bresnahan's favor even though two of the members of this Commission are on the National League Board, to advise him to take this step would be foolish advice for any attorney to give, and we do not believe that his attorneys will advise such action. Bresnahan is therefore forced either to go to law or to await the pleasure of the Board of Directors. We cannot help but feel that this Board will ultimately realize the equivocal light in which it is placing organized baseball and also the unfair position in which Bresnahan has been put, and will yet force the St. Louis Club to make some adjustment which will be satisfactory to the player.

Dec. 7, 1912.

The National Commission,  
24 Wiggins Block,  
Cincinnati, O.

Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Base-Ball Players' Fraternity, an organization composed of players from the National and American Leagues of Professional Base-Ball Clubs, we wish to place before you a matter which we think of suf-

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ficient importance to justify its being brought to your attention.

From time to time during the past, as you gentlemen well know, there have been numerous occasions upon which the players, during the performance of their duties on the field, have been subjected to insulting and abusive language addressed to them by spectators. The occurrences have not only had a harmful effect upon the mental condition of the players, but have disgusted many of the better class of "fans" to whom this cheap, vulgar language is exceedingly offensive. It would therefore seem as though some determined effort to minimize this kind of thing, would not be out of place.

We appreciate the difficulty of such an undertaking and also the fact that the spectator is entitled to a certain latitude in the expression of his feelings, but we feel that when he exceeds this latitude, the interest of not only the player, but of the fair minded public demands that all reasonable efforts be made to put a stop to such offenses.

It may seem advisable to you gentlemen to pass legislation that will render it obligatory upon every team to adopt such safeguards as will most effectively do away with the evil in question. This we think can best be accomplished by posting suitable signs in conspicuous places; by properly policing the stands with attendants who are made to realize that they are there for a purpose; by giving the umpire supervision over these attendants; and by vesting in the umpire a more complete jurisdiction over, and holding him responsible as far as practical for, the action of all persons within the enclosure.

It is the effort of our organization, as far as possible, to do away with all rowdiness on the field, and as we believe that rowdiness in the stands is often a potent factor in causing trouble on the field, we trust you will cooperate with us in our endeavor, and will accept these suggestions as evidence of a sincere desire on our part to lessen the friction where the player is concerned and to make baseball a more wholesome and a more attractive game to the better classes of the sportloving public.

Very respectfully,

BASE-BALL PLAYERS' FRATERNITY,

By

DAVID L. FULTZ,

President Baseball Players Fraternity.

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### Their Destination

"I have always been interested," said little Jinks, "in the valuation of waste. Now, where do you suppose all these burst tires go to in the end?"

"I don't know," said the genial philosopher, "but if they go where most people consign 'em there must be a terrible smell of rubber in the hereafter."—Tit-Bits.