

OUR MAIL BOX

*A Department Devoted Exclusively to the Fans
and Their Ideas and Suggestions on
the National Game*

Somewhere in France,
April 25, 1918.

EDITOR BASEBALL MAGAZINE.

Dear Sir: I have read with great pleasure the April number of your interesting magazine and must say it was like meeting a friend from home. I read with interest the letter from my old friend, John Kelleher published in your last number, and it is a source of genuine pride to me, an ex-player, to know that many of my old team-mates have come forward to do their bit in this great fight for liberty and civilization.

The fact that such a large number of the participants of our National game have forsaken their baseball togs to don the uniform of our country is not only evidence of the sterling quality of the men in baseball today, but a sufficient guarantee to insure the ever-increasing popularity of baseball as a sport and pastime of the highest standard of excellence.

Kindly enter my name upon your list of yearly subscribers in order that one more copy may be circulated among the sons of America now on duty in France.

Yours very respectfully,
ELLIOTT E. DENT,
First Lieut. F. A. R. C.
19th F. A., A. E. F.

Chicago, Ill.

EDITOR BASEBALL MAGAZINE.

Dear Sir: Some time ago there appeared in the Chicago Tribune an article in regard to E. Collins not enlisting in the Army.

I have always been an admirer of Collins, but think he has certainly pulled some "old stuff" when he says he didn't enlist because of the fact that he is married and has a child. It has been a standing joke among men to make just such remarks since the war started.

Eddie Collins is known to the Baseball public as one of the wealthiest players in the game, and as one of the many fans who read this article, I cannot see why Collins should be pulling such an alibi for a little publicity.

I am not advocating that Collins or any other wealthy player should enlist, but I do say, if he doesn't want to enlist let him keep it to himself and not be accountable for such foolish statements.

Yours very truly,
JOS. MORAN.
(White Sox Fan)

EDITOR BASEBALL MAGAZINE.

Dear Sir: I have been very much interested in THE BASEBALL MAGAZINE'S articles on better methods for finding out batting records. I have another suggestion to offer.

The present style of batting averages are good in a certain way, but I think that everyone will admit that they do not go far enough. They tell how often a player hits, but not how timely his hits are. My system, while it does not propose to do

away with the old method, advocates another sort of average to be kept along with the present type.

A timely hit is one that figures in a run. It may either drive in a run or score one. Therefore a good average to find out in connection with timely hitting is *percentage of runs responsible for per total times at bat*. In other words it would be the total number of times the batter faces the pitcher divided into the sum of the runs scored and hit in by the batter.

As an example of the value of these averages, last summer, I calculated them in a League of which I was secretary. It was only a very small amateur league with two teams and 30 games so that will take off much of the value attached to this example. I asked many of the players to rate those men who play over ten games in the order in which they considered them good hitters, and with a few exceptions the average rating coincided entirely with the order in which the players finished with regard to *percentage of runs responsible for, per total times at bat*. Incidentally this average rating was entirely different from the ordinary batting average of the players.

Yours truly,
ROBERT MARSHALL.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

MR. F. C. LANE,

Editor of Baseball Magazine.

Dear Sir: I enjoy reading the letter box each issue of BASEBALL MAGAZINE, and have been especially interested in the suggestions, and also the magazine articles regarding a change in the present method of keeping batting records.

Now, while the present system of scoring hits, giving a scratch single equal credit with a home run, is obviously unfair, the fact remains that the majority of fans, myself included, would dislike having the present method discontinued for one reason, *i. e.* former batting records have always been kept under this system and therefore this method is the only basis we have for making a comparison of present-day stars with the old timers. And you'll agree that a great part of the enjoyment of following the game lies in comparing individual stars, past and present, watching the work of new phenoms and rooting for or against any player's chance of breaking a previous batting record.

We know that Cobb is the equal of any of the former stars because his record, kept by the same system and under very similar pitching rules as theirs were, compares with, and in many ways, excels their records. And that is the only reason we do know this.

Accordingly, why not do with batting records what has been done officially with pitching records, not discard the old system, but retain it and add the new one, based upon the comparative values of singles, doubles, etc.

In pitching we know, of course, that

one man, on a tail end team may average less than .500 and still be a great pitcher. Formerly we weren't so certain to know this because his record was known in games won and lost, only, whereas now, we have the additional record of the number of earned runs allowed per game by him. This, of course, is the fairer system, but the fact remains that we are also interested in learning how many games a pitcher wins per season, how many straight wins he collects, etc. For example: Marquard, winning 19 straight games, established a modern record. During that performance he may have fallen below other records for 19 consecutive games in earned runs allowed, but nevertheless, the performance meant a real record to most of us fans regardless of the fact that a great deal of the credit belonged to the Giant team as a whole.

My suggestion is to keep the present system of batting percentages, and add a new one, giving the batters actual credit for the length of their hits. How this would be done, is, of course, a matter for the baseball people to decide, but I believe your basis of values, published sometime ago in *BASEBALL* is a sound one. At any rate, by all means establish a fairer means of keeping the records than at present, but also keep the percentages under the old way, and at the end of each season have both lists officially recorded the same as is now done with pitchers, giving their won and lost percentages and their earned run per game percentages.

With best wishes for the continued success of your admirable and fair publication, I am, Sincerely yours,

GEORGE B. BYRNE.

Plainfield, N. J.

EDITOR *BASEBALL MAGAZINE*:

In looking over a recent issue of your esteemed Magazine, I found several writers loud in their praise for McGraw, Hendricks, etc., but everyone of them forgot the King of them all, Connie Mack, the man that developed more players, than any other man in the business. The man that knows more baseball, inside and out, than the rest put together. Praise for McGraw, but not a word for Connie except in ridicule and contempt. One-horse sport writers on one-horse papers ridicule Mack and consider his team as a joke. Perhaps it is, but is it his fault? He lost more young stars than any other Major League manager in the draft, but he is not making a fuss about it like others. He lost Noyes, Witt, Grover, Bates, Johnson, and others, players that would look good on any club.

To see McGraw at a game recalls one of the old slave masters with a whip in his hand. Connie however, sits on the bench with his legs crossed, only moving when he sends a signal out to the team. He does not buzz around like McGraw, who acts like an 1808 flivver running on Cod Liver Oil. The place for McGraw is in the Trenches to gas the Boches.

Another thing Connie has a city that will not support a winning team as they should and McGraw can thank his stars that Mack did not land in N. Y. in 1901, instead of Philadelphia. Where would the Giants picked up star team have compared with Connie's home made stars?

McGraw has been given the credit for developing Schupp, but where does Uncle Robbie come in? How many times was John going to tie the can to Schupp as he did to Schauer but for Robbie?

Yours truly,
FRANK LYNN.



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Philadelphia, Pa.

EDITOR BASEBALL MAGAZINE :

DEAR MR. LANE:

The March issue of THE BASEBALL MAGAZINE was very good, in fact they seem to get better every issue. Wm. Jarolimek's and Ava Taucher's letters were O. K. But a Giant Fannette's letter was very funny. Perhaps she forgets one summer day in Philly a few years ago when John McGraw and his bunch of rowdys broke all Marathon records getting to the station to get away from Philly. They claim John Evers and his Boston Braves are rowdys.

You never see John Evers or George Stallings smashing umpires in the jaw.

Players like Chet Thomas are doing all they possibly can to kill the game. By refusing to go to the Athletics where he was traded he proves he is not in the game for sport. I heartily commend Connie's action in getting rid of his stars. There was one thing lacking and that was PEP. Just watch us go this year, if Grover was on second base we could predict something for he was the only pepery player on the team and he had the stuff believe me.

Wishing your magazine the brightest success, I remain,

A. FAN.

Spokane, Wash.

MR. EDITOR AND FELLOW BUGS :

As a self-appointed member of that rabid and highly dangerous society known as fandom I would like to declare myself in favor of a more frequent issue of this only medium, through which we get the straight stuff hot off the bat, but let's be a booster, anyway.

I think there was real human interest in Jake Daubert's contribution to the October number. I hope those "One Out" birds he refers to were all presented with a marked copy. I think there is nothing so disgusting and repulsive to a true fan as a knocker of the home team, they give me the feeling described very ably in "Reveries of a Bleacher Bug" (a recent issue). I also want to lease the whole darn stand myself, and lamp the game alone.

Up to this summer I have not been a regular subscriber, although I have eaten your dope off and on for the last three years. Maybe I'm asking for something you have already given, but an article by Big Six on his work at Cincy ought to bat way over .300 in this league. Matty ranks with Fielder Jones. Hyrus as a player-writer. But what started this raving was the letter of a certain bug in the September number which showed the strength of a team lined up of players with names of four letters: Cobb, Ruth, Roth, Mays, Bush, Vitt, Groh, Pipp, Kopf and Cady being the general run of the same. He seemed obsessed with the idea that this team could beat most anything else in a walk. This letter started me lining up a team composed of seven letters, names centered around Speaker and Jackson and going further along this line I think the fans will agree that said four-letter name players are not in a class by themselves.

Look at this:

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FIVE-LETTER
NAMES
MANAGER FIELDER
JONES

Outfield
Rousch
Felsch
Cruise
Hooper

Infielders
Holke
or
Chase, 1b
Barry, 2b
Baker, 3b
Scott, ss
Olson, utility
Outfield

Pitchers
Schupp
Watson
Sallee
Benton
Cadore
Catchers
Schalk
Schang

Burns
Kauff
Milar
Lewis
Pitchers

SEVEN-LETTER
NAMES
MAG'R ROWLAND
Infielders

Toney
Bagby
Groom
Faber
Tyler
Catchers

McInnis, 1b
Collins, 2b
Gardner, 3b
Hornsby, ss
Cutshaw, utility
Outfield

Agnew
Henry

Speaker
Jackson
Cravath
Leibold

SIX-LETTER
NAMES
MANAGER MCGRAW

Pitchers

Infielders
Sisler, 1b
Herzog, 2b
Foster, 3b
Weaver, ss
Dustin, utility

Johnson
Cicotte
Meadows
Russell
Perritt
Catchers
McCarty
Spencer

If you can pick a winner here including
that four-letter team you're some dopester.
Yours,

L. TAYLOR.



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