

The New Signals

Manager McZogg Receives Some Unique Suggestions from His Players

MANAGER McZOGG: Look here, fellows—we've got to get up a new set of signs. All new, d'ya understand? Battery signs, baserunning, inside stuff, everything. Gotta have 'em all fresh for the season. Get me?

CATCHER WHARKE: Aw, what's the matter with the signs we used last year? Them was a nice set of signals. Easy to understand, and—

MGR. McZOGG: Exactly. Easy to understand. Yep. Most of the time the other geezers understood 'em before we did. That's just what was the trouble. We gotta get 'em all new, and fix 'em up so nobody but ourselves can comprehend 'em.

CATCHER STINGO: Sounds good, Chief. Lissen to me—I got some swell idea.

MGR. McZOGG: Better can it for use when you're caught 'tween bases in August. Aw, well, go ahead—what is it?

CATCHER STINGO: I thought this out all by myself, Chief. Y'see, when I was a kid at school, I could always wiggle my ears. Can do it yet. Well, why not have ear-signals? See—when I waggle my ears forward, it means a fast one with a big hop on it. And when I waggle them backward, it means a curve. And for a fadeaway, I let them lay still.

MGR. McZOGG: Very nice. But tell me one thing—are your ears big enough to stick out behind the side-pads of a mask, so the pitcher can see them?

CATCHER STINGO: I never thought of that. Me, I got nice little ears like a girl. But Wharke here has ears like a jassack, and they could be seen a mile away—

CATCHER WHARKE: Something tells me that I'm going to let this right go in half a minute, and—

MGR. McZOGG: Restrain yourself, restrain yourself. What is it, Kitzy?

PITCHER KITZMILLEE: Why not let the pitcher do the signaling, and let him use a little camouflage?

MGR. McZOGG: Is there a mahogany-craniumed miscreant in either league that hasn't pulled "camouflage" already? Next guy I hear use that word, him and me goes to the floor, no holts barred. I'll forgive you Kitzy, 'cause you don't, know nothing anyway. Go ahead—what's your idea?

PITCHER KITZMILLEE: Why not signal with a belt-buckle? The pitcher can keep the buckle right in the center of his waist-band for a straight fast one, move it to the left hip for a curve, and to the right hip for a slow twister?

MGR. McZOGG: And if the belt slips, what then?

PITCHER KITZMILLEE: Then the batter won't know what on earth is coming up, and—

MGR. McZOGG: The Oompa team of the C. D. and P. Q.

League asked me about a pitcher this morning. There will be a train outa here at 4:22. You will be on that train.

SPEEDER DASHWAY: Say, boss, why not some new signs for the baserunning? Now, when I'm on first, like I most usually am—

PITCHER SIZZEM: Yes, when a blind umpire gives you a base on balls—

SPEEDER DASHWAY: I never had no average of .053 on no season, nohow. Anyhow, when I'm on first, and it's a question of whether to work the hit and run, or the sacrifice, or the straight steal, let me give the sign. When I slap the first baseman on the shoulder, sorta familiar, as if I'd known him a long time, let that be the sign for the hit and run. And when I kick up a cloud of dust with my right foot, let that be the sign for a sacrifice. But if I shove my head forward, and set both hands on my knees, that means I'm going to steal second, and I want the hitter to let the next one go by.

MGR. McZOGG: But what if the count is two and three at the time?

SPEEDER DASHWAY: It won't be. I never wait that long before I try for the next base.

MGR. McZOGG: Yes. I know it. That's why there was so many double plays turned on us last summer.

CATCHER WHARKE: I got something brand new, General.

MGR. McZOGG: What is it? That suit of clothes?

CATCHER WHARKE: Naw. If you knew how to dress you'd get a suit like 'em, and then you wouldn't look like somepin the cat dragged in. This is a scheme to fool 'em with cigarettes.

MGR. McZOGG: How? Lend 'em the smokes and poison 'em?

CATCHER WHARKE: Naw. Lissen. The catcher can smoke a cigarette, see. And he can use the smoke for signals, d'ja catch on? One puff means a curve, two puffs means a straight fast one, and three puffs means one over the outside corner—that is, if a righthander is pitching.

MGR. McZOGG: But how about a cock-eye? What's your signal for him?

CATCHER WHARKE: Lefthanders ain't got no right to live. Let them invent their own signs, and then let nobody pay no attention to 'em.

LEFTY WHIZZUM (the star southpaw): I can lick you, anyway, you—!

MGR. McZOGG: Split 'em out, somebody! Ain't it funny we can't have none of these skull-talks without an argument coming up?

CURTAIN.

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