

FIRST SACKERS IN GREAT DEMAND

Several Big Teams Not After Crack Initial Bag Holder.

PITTSBURG COULD USE ONE

Pirates seem to be up against it for Man Who Answers All Requirements—Chicago White Sox and Boston Nationals Are in Same Boat.

Good first basemen have the cash this season. Several major league teams are all to the lead without them, and you can't extract one of the big ones from his present employers for any money. Among the clubs that need a first bagger are New York and Pittsburgh, and there are others.

While the New Yorks have the professional first basemen and some other young ones, the team is desperately up against it. Fred Tenney, once one of the greatest players that ever stepped on the first bagman's shoes.



RED GRAY, NEW YORK AMERICANS' CRACK FIRST SACKER.

is about through. Merkle has been missing on the station for two years or so, but he has not even yet shown that he cannot with the masters of the job.

Brooklyn has big Tim Jordan, who is all O. K. when right, but his knees are bothering him. Still, the Superbas have a good utility leaguer named Daubert. Paul, all boss, is not a chicker, having first base for many years, but he is not to have the goods and to be ready to follow them.

The Boston Nationals don't even know yet just what they will do for a first base man and are crying aloud for one. They need a lot of other players on that Boston team, but they surely do need a first bagger.

The Orioles and very leader Frank Chance of Chicago isn't why on first base, though. He is all there himself.

Chicago is all right. Dick Hobbs is the real whopping kid and can play the base besides. Philadelphia is fairly well off with Brunsfield.

The champion Pirates are in trouble. They need their first bagger, and now they don't know whether Ryan, the man they are trying out, will do or will prove a sliver. The St. Louis Nationals are all to the good, for Eddie Konosky is a star both on the bag and at whacking the leather on the heavy pedal.

The New York Americans are all right, for Hal Chase is right to the mouth of the playing powers. Boston's Red Sox are well off with Jake Stahl. The big boy can cover the bag superbly and seems to be getting better all the time as a slugger. Connie Mack still relies on Harry Davis, a most artistic and capable player, but one who is beginning to grow old.

McAber, at Washington, is perplexed. Bob Unglaub is a pretty good first basemen, but is also useful in other places, and Jimmy would be delighted to land a fresh and ambitious juvenile.

Omaha's two great first basemen, Ibsell and Donohue, are both gone now, and he is trying to train a new star from a bunch of candidates, with only problematical success. At Cleveland McGuffee, although owning a good first basemen, Stovall, has put Lajoie on the base so that Turner can work on second.

The champion Detroit Tigers are worried, inasmuch as Tom Jones is showing up and getting a little nation. Managers would be glad to hear from a lively kid with first base ability.

St. Louis will try a National league second, Abston, and may make good with him—or may fail. O'Connor wouldn't mind having a sturdy youngster in reserve.

Great chances for young first basemen these days if there were only a few such to be found.

KLAUS TO MEET PAPKE

Pittsburgh and "Illinois Thunderbolt" Will Travel Over Long Route May 14.

With the understanding that the winner will be watched to meet Stanley Ketchel for the middleweight championship of the world, Frank Klaus of Pittsburgh and Billy Papke of Kewanee, Ill., will exchange jabs and opponents before Jimmy Coffey's club at Colma, Cal., May 14, in a battle that will be practically to a finish, as the men have agreed to battle forty-five rounds.

The coming meeting between Papke and Klaus will be their second, but the previous bout was merely a trial spin, as neither man could show what he possessed in a six round journey. In that bout, however, neither gave the Pittsburgh an even break, with the one-time conqueror of Ketchel, and friends of the new contender for the middleweight crown are inclined to believe that he has a good chance to defeat Papke and get a meeting with Ketchel over a longer route.

Klaus never has been asked to go more than ten rounds, and for that



BILLY PAPKE, THE "ILLINOIS THUNDERBOLT"

reason it is a matter of conjecture whether he will be able to stand the grind of a battle over his derby route. Most of his work has been confined to the six round game around Pittsburgh. As yet he has not shown the public that he possesses the ability to assimilate the grueling administered to the campaigners in the vicinity of the Golden state.

Papke has all the necessary experience after years of hard work in California, and this probably more than any one thing will win for him. Some will argue that "youth will be served," with the youth on Klaus' side, but one can deny that Papke is still a young man in years, with the added advantage of being a clean life. Giving Klaus all due credit, it looks from here as though Mr. Klaus had been rather hazy in his handling with a bruiser of the Papke type, and for his folly he may pay the penalty if the dope runs to form. However, the short ender in the betting goes to the dispersers as getting just recently in the Volquist-Nelson fight, and the same thing may happen again. But until after the fight Papke will have to be considered the best chance.

OVERALL ANXIOUS TO CATCH

One of Cuba's Star Twirlers Hops For Chance Being Bat.

Orval Overall, the Chicago National's great pitcher, wants to become a backstop. He overweighs this idea, but he is anxious to be a backstop. Manager Chance for an opportunity to work behind the bat this season.

During his college days at the University of California, Overall had some experience as a catcher, and his ambition is said to date from those days. He and Nick Williams, now with the



ORVAL OVERALL, CUBA'S GREAT PITCHER.

San Francisco club of the Pacific Coast league, composed an interchangeable battery that is the despair of all the other "rah-rah" nine and half the professional clubs on the coast.

Overall never misses an opportunity to don a big mitt in practice and never is so happy as when receiving the speedy slants of Mordca Brown. Although Chance turned down the application without consideration, Overall declared that when his usual days as a pitcher were over it would be the mitt that made for him.

STORIES OF THE DIAMOND.

Flucker Says Intuition Is Needed For Success In Baseball.

FAST THINKING WHAT COUNTS

Brooklyn's Star "Outspun" Twirlers Points Out Why Many Players Succumb or Fall When They Get Trial In Fast Company.

No. 5. BY NAP RUCKER.

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A young pitcher may come into the big leagues from a minor club with a great record. He may have good curves, fair control and great speed. Many people are under the impression that this is all that is needed to keep the crowd in fast company. This is not so, however. The youngster may possess all these qualities and yet not be fit to fast company, and he will quickly get back to his club in shame. It is the little things that count, the ones that the crowd in the bleachers for pitchers, but are few. A pitcher must know how to mind when a "strong" pitcher that he must learn to use his hand. He must be able to make a quick decision as to when to throw a ball when the crowd is all up to the next batter. This little act will serve to make the crowd keep on the jump, and knowing just what is going to happen.

Another important point for a young twirler to master is in covering first



NAP RUCKER, BROOKLYN NATIONALS' STAR PITCHER.

base on every ball hit to the right of first base, whether it be a fly ball. And few pitchers are ever over to cover the bag. A pitcher who is in the habit of running over to cover first base whenever a ball is hit to the right of first base is of great value to a team in every game played.

The matter of learning to cover the initial sack on the pitcher is key. All the twirler must do when delivering the ball is to slightly incline his body in the direction of first corner, and in the swing with the ball he get a fairly good start in the desired direction.

Every now and then the fans read of "bonuses" in baseball. The reason for this is that they do not possess a subconscious mind. Many times there are pitchers on the diamond who do not know exactly what to do. Hands and feet must be ready to act with the mind. Many pitchers call this instinct, but it is nothing else, however, than the inner mind. In this advanced day of the game ball players must think and do so rapidly. They must also possess an inner mind. Could a manager have on his team nine such men he would come close to owning a pennant winning team.

How many times have you read about the wonderful curves that some young pitcher has, and just as soon as the season lengthens how little do you hear of him? A pitcher with front ball and curve does not last very long in the big leagues.

In the first place, throwing that kind of ball all the time is so hard on the muscles of the arm that one cannot stand the strain very long, and secondly, in time the batters are bound to get wise to curves and then bat them all over the diamond.

My advice to young men who aspire to success as pitchers is to learn how to throw a straight ball with meriting accuracy, either very fast, very slow or halfway between, as the occasion demands.

I've found that my most effective ball is a high, swift, straight shot, cutting the inside corner of the plate. Of course this should be varied occasionally with a slow tosser, and in a tight place a curve or a slow drop will do no harm. Just make it a point to see how many batters make a safe hit off a ball that comes in swift on the level and close to the shoulder.

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