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THE SCIENCE *of* BASEBALL

A Text-Book of "Inside" Baseball
Completely Covering Every De-
partment and Phase of Baseball—
How to Play and Coach the Game

By
BYRD DOUGLAS

With Thirty-eight Illustrations



NEW YORK

CHICAGO

SAN FRANCISCO

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“*The Science of Base Ball*”

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JUL 23 '58



WILBERT ROBINSON
Famous Manager of the Brooklyn
"Dodgers", National League

MANY fans throughout the country consider Baseball strictly as a pastime, devoid of any extraordinary science. This book, if read understandingly, should prove to the fan's complete satisfaction that the game they love is one of the most scientific in the realm of sports. It has been a source of pleasure as I have sat on the player's bench and watched a play take place, which thrilled the stand, to know back of most such plays, is an intricate and scientific modus operandi. Although much credit is due a player when he makes a so-called "star play," still more credit is due the game he is playing.

Baseball is our greatest sport because it offers the unexpected thrill at any moment during a game. These thrills are often carefully planned and are only the culmination of team play. All things being equal, the team composed of nine scientific players will beat a team of "stars." The game is coming more and more to be a game of strategy. This Book represents the essence of good baseball from that standpoint.

To the player who thinks he knows baseball thoroughly, I venture to say this Book will prove his ignorance. To the fan who wants to know the reason for any play in the game, this Book will fill the bill. To the amateur player or youngster, the Book can be employed as a text. To the Coach or Manager of experience, it offers opportunity to know more plans and plays and certainly a pleasant evening of reading.

I congratulate its able author.

Wilbert Robinson

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International

JOHN J. McGRAW

JOHN J. McGRAW, known as the "Little Napoleon of Baseball" and famous as the Manager of the New York Giants, is the Dean of Baseball Managers. He has been in Baseball for over thirty years.

THE World War proved conclusively that American men were perhaps the best physically of any other participants.

One of the reasons for this fact can be found in the great love for sports which our boys and girls have shown. This love must be kept burning if our national physical welfare is to be maintained. Baseball is a National Institution and the father of all sports in this country.

In considering Baseball from the financial viewpoint, we are possibly blinded to its other greater values. If Baseball could be played only by professional players, it would not commend itself to a high position in athletics. But, it offers to every boy a safe means of physical development and removes the anxiety of mind generally rising among parents when their sons compete in other forms of sport. The list of casualties in Baseball is practically nothing in comparison to other sports.

I shall always believe that Baseball is a National asset. Is there a boy anywhere who does not like to play? Baseball is a "play" game, but it also develops the boy's mind for it is scientific. In a physical sense, a man can be made only from a boy and a nation can be made only from its men. If Baseball assists in making better boys physically, it is directly helping to make our Nation and in doing so impresses upon all its value as a National sport.

This book, "The Science of Baseball," will help the game and I take pleasure in endorsing it and thereby indirectly assisting in creating a higher national physical fitness.

A large, flowing cursive signature in black ink. The signature reads "John J. McGraw." The "J" is particularly large and stylized, and the "Mc" is written with a dot over the "M".

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INTRODUCTION

By

W. J. CLARKE
Coach, Princeton University

THIS book offers for the first time to baseball enthusiasts, fans, players, coaches and managers, a real "close-up" of the National Sport. Other books have been published in pamphlet form, dealing with separate phases of the game, but in substance they were mere "primers," calculated to serve only the beginner. In offering the present book to the public, Mr. Douglas gives the whole inside workings of the game and treats it in such a way that any player, young or old, can put his hand on the reason for this or that phase of the game. The book, therefore, has an instant appeal.

We of the "old guard," who have watched the game of baseball change during the past decade until now it is hardly recognizable, will find solace in the writing of this book, since it leaves out all the fancy frills of the "new" school, which are generally slip shod and devoid of sane reasoning. On the other hand, the author has carefully inserted all the new "frills" of tried worth and in doing so, has kept abreast of the times.

This book should fill the gradually broadening chasm between the professional player and manager on the one hand, and the public and amateur on the other. Baseball relies upon the public mind. For this reason, if the game is to become more and more complicated, the public mind must be edu-

cated to understand the game as it progresses, otherwise it will suffer the loss of its greatest friend. This book will, therefore, find an appreciative public and should have the support of baseball authorities.

Many managers are having great difficulty in finding competent players. They bemoan

the fact that present day players fail to study the game and when they should know baseball scientifically, they really know it only vaguely. Nothing hurts the game more than this. Baseball is not an ordinary game of chance. It is a game of wits. Mr. Douglas, in his book, explains this very thoroughly and points out the value of playing the game scientifically. For this reason, the book is valuable to the players. I have never seen more careful drawn diagrams and these in themselves are invaluable to a any close student of the game.

It is with great pleasure that I give my endorsement to this book and its author, whom I knew on the Princeton Teams of 1915-1916 as a natural baseball player of proven ability. The book speaks for itself and reflects the baseball knowledge of its author, who gave up his chance of a brilliant professional baseball career for the purpose of following his chosen profession of law.

A real baseball book has arrived!





BYRD DOUGLAS

NOTE—The author of this book is admirably qualified to write about the game of baseball. He starred on two college teams, one in the South and one in the East, viz.: Vanderbilt and Princeton. Although given many opportunities to play professional baseball he chose to coach instead. In five years' time he has never put out a losing team. Last year his team at Vanderbilt won the Southern Intercollegiate Championship. During his playing days he played almost every position on the diamond and was mentioned by many critics as an all-American college player. His methods are original, but extremely practical as indicated by the endorsements his book received before going to press. In all cases where the author knew there were various ways of manipulating the same play with success, he showed his practical baseball sense, by conferring with recognized authorities and then making a choice which seemed to him to be the best. As a result, this book is the ultimate in baseball science.—Editor Wilson Athletic Library.

THE Author fails to remember the time when he was not fascinated by the game of Baseball. From "one-eyed cat" in the back yard to his preparatory school team, thence on two University teams, one in the South and one in the East, all during the Summer months playing semi-professional and professional Baseball as a mere pastime, the writer played the game. The Author early came to understand that the game of Baseball was not only a game, but a game of science, ruled and played according to certain fundamental principles. To understand this science, to appreciate the plays and reasons therefor, and the finesse of the game, became a most delightful and absorbing interest to which the Author has devoted many happy hours. While engaged in Coaching College teams during the past five years, the lectures given to the candidates at "skull" practice were stenographically reported and these lectures carefully embellished and painstakingly reviewed and rewritten, form the nucleus of the book now for the first time offered the public.

It is with great pleasure that thanks can be given here to my friend, Bill Clarke of Princeton, and the other contributors for their untiring assistance in making the book what it is. The book when read completely through, will offer greater benefit to the reader than if read piecemeal.

BYRD DOUGLAS.



CHAPTER I

THE SCIENCE OF PITCHING

I sometimes think as a Coach that the science of pitching or being a successful pitcher, is never fully realized until you get weak pitching. As long as a team goes through a season with relatively good pitching, you never come to appreciate the full value of good pitching. As a player on the ball field, if you will stop and consider the number of games that are lost, you will probably account for it in an entirely different source than in the box; yet, right in the box, and through the manipulation of the pitching and catching departments, you will discover the weakness which could have been corrected before the error was made or defense broke down, and the opposing team won the victory. The entire system of my defense is based on the pitching and catching departments, i. e., an entirely distinct and separate unit. Pitching and catching represent the entire backbone of all the defensive system that I employ. If a team gets good pitching, there is very little said about it unless one or two pitchers on a team make a remarkable record and yet it will account for more victories than all the good batting and fielding that we may have.

What are some of the things that go to make up successful pitching? Let's take them up one by one and analyze them. The first thing that enters into it is whether or not you have the temperament to be a pitcher. It is no easy task to go out and pitch a game of ball. It is one of the hardest jobs that any fellow was ever put to, and it all depends on whether or not a pitcher has the temperament. By temperament, I mean whether or not you can instantaneously meet the demands that are going to be put on you as a pitcher—whether or not, when the crucial time comes, you are going to let an error on shortstop or second base interfere with your pitching, and whether or not, if a pinch hitter is put in to take some other player's place, you are going to let that fact affect your pitching and cause mental hazard and make you lose control and interfere with what you ought to do.

Requirements
of a Good
Pitcher.
Temperament

**Judging a
Batsman and
Value of
Control****Error of
Judgment
Fatal**

Now, another thing, being a good pitcher does not depend on whether or not you have all the speed or all the curves in the world, but whether or not you have a keen judgment of the batter; whether or not you have studied the batter and whether or not you make it a point to cover all the weaknesses that that batter has when he comes to bat, and then are able to control the pitched ball so that you can pitch to the batsman's weakness. I shall illustrate—suppose the first time a man comes to bat he hits a straight ball right over the center of the plate; the next time he comes to bat, you lose sight of the previous ball that you pitched, and you shoot another one right over the center of the plate, and he hits that one. There is your old game, we will say, on "ice." The game is won by the opposing team because of that error of judgment. No first-baseball, no second-baseball, no outfielder, nor anyone else, no coach or catcher in the world can step in and cure that error of judgment, and save that game. That is what you would call a fatal error of judgment on the part of the pitcher. That is a simple illustration. Suppose he hits a ball on the outside corner of the plate, and you put another ball in the same place, and he also hits that one. Just exactly the same thing puts the game on "ice," and no one in the world can help it. There is the value of training yourself as a pitcher never to forget in a game of ball that you have simply got to keep track and tab on everything that happens. If you do not, there is where you are going to lose the ball game, despite any effort on the part of any of the other eight men in the field. That is what I mean by necessary temperament—coolness under fire—to use a worn out expression, when the stands are yelling, and everybody else is crazy, the test is whether or not you will go out there and take your time, and be deliberate and do the right thing. That is the secret of good pitching. At the same time, you must have control, or all your other good qualities will be lost. I don't know of another position on the ball field where a man can use more intelligence, or be more alert than in the box. He saves the game by his quick thinking. Take another example in regard to the catcher's ability to size up a batter. Suppose the catcher goes to sleep and he fails to diagnose what weak-

ness a certain batter has and yet the pitcher sees that weakness. Always remember in a case of that kind to make it known that you are thinking, and make the catcher appreciate the fact that, even though he does not see this fellow's weakness, yet you do see it. /Pitchers and catchers should feel mutually responsible for sizing up the batsmen/

If you are a regular on the squad, and you are pitching your turn in the box, you are some day subject to be called in an emergency to pitch a game when apparently the game is lost. There is an opportunity to show the morale and stuff of which you are made. That is the time of all other times that the coach or manager is going to turn around and look on the bench, and choose that man whom he thinks has the most mettle and the steadiest nerve. Despite the fact that he is handicapped by apparent defeat staring him in the face, a man should pitch to win the game or pitch against a losing proposition and still look good. Any pitcher that pitches against a losing proposition and looks good is a pitcher. In the big leagues, you see fellows kept on the pay-roll for that one purpose, namely, as relief pitchers. Cool under fire, they will not blow up, no matter what happens.

Some of the duties of a pitcher are hard to define. What is a pitcher's pitching duty? We might ask that question, and if there were ninety experienced pitchers in the room, there would be ninety different answers. /A pitcher's fielding duty is to back up all plays from the outfield to third or home bases and cover all that ground between first base and the pitcher's box, and the pitcher's box and third base that he can cover ahead of the first or third basemen or the catcher. If he can beat any of these players to the ball, it is his ball to field.) There are two or three reasons for that, and one of them is that it gives an opportunity to indicate by word of mouth where the pitcher should throw the ball, when they could not do it otherwise, and they are in a better position to know where the ball ought to be thrown than the pitcher is. Under the new system of playing baseball, the catcher is generally recognized as the *guide* for all balls fielded by the pitcher and he should yell out to what base the pitcher ought to throw the ball.

The Fielding
Duty of a
Pitcher

**Fielding
Bunted Balls**

The pitcher must start quick and *get* the ball before he throws it. So many pitchers will try to throw the ball before they really *get* it. Get the ball before you throw it—listen for the catcher to tell you where to throw it, and then throw it without slowing up in your stride. It is absolutely necessary for the pitcher to be ahead of the first baseman and the third baseman in fielding slow hit balls, and the pitcher, in fielding all bunted balls or balls which are dribbles down through the infield, must be on his “toes.” This is absolutely necessary if you want to be a good fielding pitcher.

**Responsi-
bility of
Directing the
Thrown Ball
in Fielding
a Bunt**

Under this system a pitcher will listen to the catcher as to which base he should throw the ball, and once he hears him yell first, second or third base, throw it there. It is the catcher's responsibility and not the pitcher's to direct the play. He will be held to account, not the pitcher, for the pitcher cannot see which base to throw to, but the catcher can. That is why it is so important for a pitcher to field this kind of ball. Suppose a man is on first base, and less than two men are out, and a ball is hit to the pitcher, or he anticipates that the batter is going to bunt the ball, the pitcher should be on the alert, for he knows if the runner is on first, he is going to second. Therefore, if he can possibly field that bunt, he should do it. If he figures that he can get the man on first going to second before the play begins, he says to himself, “The play is second base,” and that should be in his head, and the thought should not have to be put into his head by the catcher. He should take the ball, and remember, under ordinary circumstances, if he fields the ball clean, the play is at second base.

**The Value of
Anticipation**

Now, the speed of the base-runner enters into that play. Therefore, if the catcher figures that the man can beat the throw to second base, he can save the pitcher from making an error by yelling “first base.” The idea is, the pitcher should be anticipating to which base the ball should be thrown. The speed of the batted ball on bunt or hit should regulate the play. The same thing is true if men are on first and second bases. The pitcher should anticipate a bunted ball, and throw to third base, if the opportunity arises, and the thought should not have to be put into his head by the

catcher. A right handed pitcher must be extremely alert in handling a bunted or slowly hit ball between first base and the pitcher's box. This is especially true where there was already a runner on second base.

The time for any pitcher to throw to a base to catch a base-runner off base, is when the batter has put him in a "hole." By in the "hole," I mean one ball and no strikes, two balls and no strikes, three balls and one strike, two balls and one strike. Now, why is that? Because the chances are increased for the batter to hit the ball, since more than likely the pitcher will have to put the next ball over the plate in a hittable position, and if the base-runner is going to do anything at all or going to run on the "hit and run" with the batter, it is going to be when he thinks he is going to get a ball over the plate. Therefore the pitcher wants to keep the runner close to the base when the batter has him in the hole. Remember this right here too, that when the batter has got the pitcher in a hole, that if the "hit and run" play is to be "pulled," by holding your man on first base, you will keep your infielders from being out of position, and the chances will be lowered for making a safe hit and increased for making a double play. Therefore, keep the baserunner or baserunners close to first base and other bases, when the batter has you in a hole.

So many pitchers are *afraid* of the "squeeze" play, and the "hit and run" play. A pitcher can break up the "squeeze" play by himself, provided he anticipates the opposing team using the "squeeze" play. If you think the man on third base is going to use the "squeeze" play, throw the ball close to the batter. Get him away from the plate. If he is a right-handed batter, throw the ball high and close to the batter. That drives him away from the plate, and makes the catcher lean toward the man coming home. If the man is a left-handed batter, throw the ball to the third base side of the plate and you will break it up. The catcher can materially assist in this. If he anticipates anything of that kind being pulled off, he should yell to the pitcher and third baseman, and tell them to look out for the "squeeze" play. Don't make any bones about it. If you are catching, walk out in front of the box and

When to
Throw to a
Base to Hold
a Baserunner

On
The Way to
Break Up
the
"Squeeze"
Play

announce, "Watch out for the 'squeeze' play." Suppose you were a coach, or manager, sitting on the bench, and you heard that remark. Would it not lessen your chances of pulling the "squeeze" play successfully, and as a matter of fact, you would be careful whether you pulled it at all? A pitcher should always take a look at the baserunner on third as he delivers the ball to the batter. This materially helps the pitcher in judging whether or not the "squeeze" play is to be attempted. This is one play considered hard for any team to break up which is a comparatively easy proposition for one man on the team to break up. It is one thing that the pitcher can break up of his own accord. Wherever conditions arise that might indicate the "squeeze" play is to be tried, the pitcher must take his time and be deliberate. Do not get excited.

**The Way to
Break Up
the "Hit
and Run"
Play**

In the twinkling of an eye, sometimes a pitcher will know of his own accord or have a "hunch" that the man at the bat is going to pull the "hit and run" play. Any pitcher has experienced that. The same is true of the catcher. Call it a "hunch" if you want to, that comes over you and makes you feel that the batter is going to pull the "hit and run" play, when nothing has been said about it. Anyway let us say, it is too late for you or the catcher to put the second baseman or the short-stop wise. "What can I do now? I have to do something—I don't want this man to hit the ball,"—a pitcher says to himself. Many a pitcher finds himself in that situation. Here is what you can do. You can throw the next ball high and on the inside. There never was a "hit and run" play pulled off in the world except by accident if the ball is thrown above the batsman's shoulder on the inside of the plate. In a case of that kind, throw the ball high and in close. Of course, if the "hit and run" play signal has been given, and a pitcher is suspicious of it, he should make a public announcement to the rest of the team, "Watch out for the 'hit and run' play." It is obvious that you know what to do. Throw the ball high, and if he hits it, it will be a foul ball, or a high fly and if he fails to hit it, the catcher is still in a throwing position from which he can readily peg to second base to head off the runner. The main thing is to anticipate the play.

On all balls hit to right field with a man on first, the pitcher will back up third base. Remember that. That is simple. On all balls hit to center field, and handled by the center fielder, with a man on first base, the pitcher backs up third base. On all balls hit to left field with a man on first base, the pitcher backs up third. What I mean by that is this—get in the line with the ball. See photo. With a man on second base, on a ball hit to any spot in the outfield, the pitcher backs up home. Remember that. With a man on first base and a man on second base,—a ball hit safely to any part of the field, the pitcher backs up third. Why not back up home? Because the man going home has a very good chance of scoring on a safe hit anyway and the man that you do not want to score is the base runner coming around to third. There is where the pitcher ought to be. With men on second and third base, if a ball is hit to any field, the pitcher backs up home. In order to be of most assistance the pitcher should be at least twenty-five or thirty feet behind the base he is backing up.

Probably the most difficult play from a fielding standpoint that a pitcher must handle is the slow ball hit between first and second bases, just out of the reach of the pitcher, and just in reach of the second baseman. See diagram. By this, I mean the kind of ball which goes in the direction of the place where the second baseman generally plays, but is too slow for him to handle, and too fast for the pitcher to handle and just fast enough for the first baseman to handle, by cutting over in front of the second baseman and provided the pitcher covers first base. See diagram. There are two things that a pitcher should do in this play—first, diagnose the speed of the ball, and if it is slow, field it, but if it gets by let it go—do not run too fast to first base, but judge your speed according to the speed of the ball. Try and be 8 or 10 feet away from the base when the first baseman gets the ball,—at least that distance. As you run towards first base, forget all about the base-runner—remember to cross first base, and keep your eye on the first baseman. Never take your eye

How a
Pitcher Is
to Back Up
An Outfield
Play

How to
Cover First
Base on a
Bunt or
Slowly Hit
Ball

off of him when that kind of ball is hit. The only thing the first baseman must do is to judge the speed of the pitcher in running to first base, and get the ball and toss it so it can be handled by the pitcher. See diagram.

**A Pitcher
Should Not
Necessarily
Be a Weak
Batter**

Every pitcher on a team should cultivate the habit of strong batting. Do not have it said that as a pitcher you are a weak batter. Cultivate in your off hours your ability to bat, but not to the detriment of your pitching.

**A Pitcher
Should Be
An Excellent
Bunter**

I always expect every pitcher to be a crackerjack good bunter,—to be able to bunt the ball with perfect precision. That is something that a pitcher can, and should do. If he cannot bat, then he ought to be a good bunter. There are always going to be opportunities for the pitcher to lay down a bunt and advance men on bases, and then the other players can hit them in. Spend more time on that. Pitchers do not have to be weak batters. One of the strangest fallacies of baseball is the batting weakness of pitchers. They should practice batting as much as other players.

**Faith in
Ability**

Another thing, do not have a sore arm, but have a sore arm rather than a sore head. Do not forget that you have to have faith in your ability to get in the box and pitch. If you do not have faith, you will not be successful. I mean confidence in your ability to pitch, that confidence which tells you, "I can pitch, and I am going to win this game." If the players make bobbles behind you, do not let it make any difference. Do not forget that the man in the box has the hardest task of anybody and he is put to a harder task than any of the other players.

**What Is
Style in
Pitching**

I now wish to take up the proposition of the pitcher's style of pitching. We will take a pitcher like Carl Mays of the New York Americans for example. He will go in a game with his underhand delivery, and pitch for five innings. He will be good, and the opposition will not diagnose his underhand style of pitching, and in the sixth inning some fellow starts to hitting his delivery, and the next man will come to the bat, and he will hit, and before you realize what is going on there will be a regular fusillade of hits. It is because, no doubt, they have diagnosed his underhand style of pitching. To be more specific, take last year in the case of Swan, a little left-handed

**Do Not Be
Mechanical**

pitcher we had at Vanderbilt. He would go good until the sixth or seventh inning. He had a slow breaking ball and he got away with it for a while, but when they commenced to hit him, he did not have anything to change to. Then, inevitably, they would drive him out of the box.

Do not cultivate just one particular style of delivery. There is your cross-fire ball, slow ball and fast ball. To be a successful pitcher, you ought to have all of them in fairly good working order, at least two of them always. One of them, the chances are, you can use at any time with success, and the other two you can use at intervals with success.

Too much cannot be said about the pitcher's delivery to first, second and third base. Do not become so *mechanical* in your delivery that you fail to catch men off of bases. Do not stand in the box and turn around and look at first base twice and then throw the ball to first base. Do not give it away when you are going to throw to a base. If you do, a smart base runner will take advantage of it, and steal everything you have except your shoes. You can get away with that kind of stuff in a "prep" school, but you cannot in college or professional baseball.

In order to hold a man on base, the pitcher must learn to throw to a base in one movement. A pitcher cannot first move his feet or body in one move and then by another move throw the ball to a given base. He should move and throw at the same time. It is bad policy to throw fast balls to catch a man off first base each time you throw there. A good pitcher will often "lob" a ball to first base and then throw a fast ball the next time. In this way, the baserunner often is trapped by the change of pace.

The best way to hold a man on second base is to work on a signal with the short stop. See diagram. The short stop indicates to the pitcher by the nod of his head that he will cover second base. The pitcher remains in his pitching pose until the short stop has time to reach the base. The pitcher should give short stop a start of three strides. In the meantime, the baserunner will not move because the pitcher has not. When the short stop has reached second base, the pitcher turns and throws to second, thus trapping the baserunner. The pitcher in this case leaves it to the discretion of the short stop as to

Pitchers
Should Have
Change of
Pace

Delivery of
Ball to First
Base and
Second Base

The Throw
to First Base
Should Be
Made in One
Move

How to Hold
a Man Close
to Second
Base

when the baserunner is taking too long a lead. The pitcher must not move until the short stop has been given time to reach second base, thus deceiving the baserunner and also avoiding over-throws. The short stop and second baseman must be experts on handling thrown balls while on the run. Study the diagram carefully. The centerfielder should be alert on a play of this kind and back up the over-throw instantly.

**The Pitcher
Is Responsi-
ble for
Batting
Rallies**

Any batting fusillade can be broken up by the pitcher and the catcher—it is solely in their hands. The other seven men on the team cannot do anything if you lose sight of the fact that a particular play is going to come up, and you throw the ball on the wrong side of the plate. There is no player on the team that can patch it up. It is an error and it cannot be cured. On the other hand, fate has decreed that you can do away with such errors of judgment, and you can cure all these defects as a pitcher or catcher, if you are playing the game properly.

**How to Help
Break Up
the Plain
Steal of a
Base**

I should now like to discuss the duties of a pitcher when the baserunner attempts to steal a base. First, let us consider the plain steal, where a man is on first, and he attempts to steal second, or a man on second base tries for third base, or a man on third base tries for home. That is what I mean by a plain steal, where only one baserunner is involved. How can the pitcher assist in breaking up that play? The first thing to be considered is "What is the score?" "What inning is it?" "Has the opposition been running wild on the bases, and taking chances?" "Is the baserunner fast?" There are probably half a dozen things that enter into this proposition of a plain steal before the play even starts. The matter of breaking up a plain steal rests, in great measure, in the hands of the pitcher. True, if the catcher, or second basemen, or any other player feels like the pitcher has momentarily forgotten to anticipate this play or any other play, it is their duty to tell the pitcher about it, but especially I appeal to the catchers to do that by making some remark that will make the pitcher understand. This is why it is essential to anticipate subsequent plays. If the play is anticipated, then the player has it in the palm of his hand, to break up the play in question. First of all, the pitcher should throw the ball in an unhittable position when such a steal is about to be attempted. Especially do I appeal to the catcher to get that

point. When a man starts for any base, the catcher or other infielder yells, "There he goes." It next falls to the duty of the pitcher to pitch the ball so that it is unhittable. By that, I do not mean a ball that is two feet above the batter's head, or two feet to one side or the other of him, but do not throw it so as to enhance the chance of the batter hitting safely. Always remember when the ball is high and wide it gives the catcher a better opportunity to receive the ball and more perfectly execute his peg to a given base. This particular play is entirely different from the one commonly called the "pitch out." It will be recalled that the catcher uses a signal for the "pitch out." If the catcher had signaled for a curve ball the pitcher has a right to cross him if a plain steal by a baserunner is underway, and the catcher should look out. In the play mentioned here the pitcher throws the ball as in the case of the "pitch out," but without any "body" signal being given him by the catcher before the play is undertaken.

The double steal involves the same principle of defense. The double steal can take place with men on first and second, second and third, or first and third bases, just so there are two baserunners on the bases. By its own definition, a double steal means there are two bases to be stolen. Insofar as the pitcher is concerned, the same break for the double steal holds good that held good for the plain steal. There are other duties to be performed by the other infielders and catcher on a steal of that kind which we will take up a little later. The fielders should be more alert to cover their bases quickly, and the pitcher should constantly anticipate such a play arising.

On the steal home the same break is in the pitcher's hand as in the case of the plain steal. The pitcher must keep the ball away from the batter when he hears the catcher or any other infielder say, "There he goes," or if he notices the man on third going to home. If there is a fast man on third base the pitcher should be all the more alert.

Another thing I want to point out to the pitchers, is a play that comes up with a man on third base when the batter is walked. For example, there is already a baserunner on third base. There are two men down and the catcher, let us say, is at the bat. The pitcher walks him. The next man up is the pitcher or another weak batter. Let us suppose the score is

How to Break Up the Double Steal of a Base

Break for the Steal Home

How to Break Up Shrewd Baserunning

tied or the score is close. The catcher who was walked, instead of waiting as usual on first base, starts out as hard as he can toward second. In the meantime, the pitcher is standing there possibly waiting until the batsman gets into his box. What is the pitcher going to do? This play is calculated to worry the pitcher and secondly, to score the man on third who would be left there because the next batsman was a weak hitter. The pitcher under circumstances like this will always watch for just such a play. The catcher should do the same. The pitcher who has the ball, turns around and bluffs a throw to third base, immediately driving the baserunner back to that base. Then he turns and throws to the second baseman to head the runner off there. That is one way to break up the play. Another way is this. Throw the ball immediately to the second baseman and then let him manipulate the play home. Whatever you do, do quickly and with precision. The same kind of proposition arises after the batsman gets into his box where the man on first, instead of waiting until the ball is delivered to the catcher, starts running down to second. Do not let the baserunner take you in—turn and look toward third, and drive that man back, and then throw to the second baseman. The second baseman simply has to be on his toes. If he is not, that man will score, so it is up to you to be quick. That is a delayed steal. Remember when that play can be used. No coach will tell a man to deliberately come off that base if there was a man on second. It is when two men are down, and a weak batter is next in line, the idea being to score a run without any batting effort. That is the idea of that delayed steal. The opposition is trying to get something for nothing.

**Warn Other
Players
When You
Deem It
Necessary**

I want to impress on the pitchers this point—in order to be a great pitcher, try to anticipate what the opposition is going to pull off, and once you anticipate it, do not be afraid to tell the rest of the team what you think is going to come off. If you feel at a given instant that perhaps the infield has “overlooked a bet” on some play that is going to be pulled, do not hesitate to call one of the infielders in and tell him, or if you feel like you have not confidence in your power to know exactly what kind of a ball to throw this or that batter, do not hesitate to call some old player on the field who is reliable,

and say "let's get together on this proposition." That is not a confession that you are afraid of the batter. It is simply playing the game of baseball. It is a desire upon your part to do your utmost to get away with the art of pitching.

In practice, I have tried to tell the pitchers how to keep from giving away the fact of what they are going to do through a movement of the feet, or through a twist of the body. If any pitchers have such weaknesses, the way to cure that is not necessarily on the field, but in their rooms. They can do that by constant practice. These things must be worked out in many ways.

Because there are few excellent fielding pitchers, I wish to point out this helpful play on the bunted ball with a man on first. I think it helps immensely to steady a pitcher. It is this: Where there is a man on first and the opposition has been using the bunt, or sacrifice bunt, to put the man from first base to second base, and especially where some other man than the clean-up man, or some man at the head of the batting order is at the bat, the pitcher instead of trying to keep the batter from bunting the ball, puts the ball over the very center of the plate so good that he simply has to bunt it safely. The pitcher says to himself, "I figure you to bunt, and I believe you are going to bunt. I might be wrong, but I am going to figure you that way." Suppose the batter does bunt the ball. Suppose it is a tie game, or a close one, for this is when the play is most often used. If he bunts the ball, and you have figured him right, you can get the ball quickly and try for a double play. If he is going to bunt, why should the pitcher not try to make him bunt it so well that it will be a double play, instead of taking for granted that if the batter bunts it will put that man down to second? I do not mean to put the ball to one side or the other of the plate. I mean to put the ball in the center of the plate. Let him bunt it. Of course the value of this play comes only when it is "pulled" unexpectedly by the pitcher. If he bunts, he bunts into a double play. If he does not bunt, he has out guessed you. Now think about that play and a pitcher will see that it will work—and nine times out of ten it will work at least once during a game. The pitcher when trying this play should, for obvious reasons, hold the base-

Form of
Delivery Is
Obtained
How?

How to Get
a Double
Play When
the Bunt Is
Expected

runner close to first base. This same play can also be used with a baserunner on second base and no one down, or baserunners on first and second bases and no one down, where the opposition is figuring on a one run lead or tie score.

When to Pass a Batsman

One word before I close about the proposition of when to keep a ball away from a batter who is a dangerous batter. Suppose in a game a man comes up to bat, who has obtained a hit from you once before with a man on base. The game, we will say, is tied. The same man comes to the bat, and if you walk him there is an opportunity for a double play if the next man hits the ball on the ground at all. The question arises whether or not to walk that man. I think it best for a pitcher to figure it this way: Never walk a batter, despite the fact that he has hit you once or twice before in the game, unless the next man up has failed to hit you, or if he has hit you, has not hit you hard. This rule is sound. I mean by that, not whether he has hit safely but has hit hard. On these things of course the manager or coach can signal to the first or third baseman, or to the catcher or to the pitcher to indicate just how he feels about the opposition, but in this book on baseball, what I am trying to teach the reader to do, is when you are left on your own initiative, to be able to play the game with an understanding of what it means. That is why I go into details on these particular things.

Do Not Hesitate to Confide in Your Coach or Manager

Now another thing. If a pitcher feels that he is all right and he goes into the box and is all wrong, he should take the coach into his confidence and tell him; however, it is up to that pitcher to get in shape, and get his arm in condition. Too much cannot be said of a pitcher's ability to be light on his toes when he is pitching. There are things you must calculate on that you cannot get in any way except through practice. That is one of the great arts of pitching, to be in condition so you can anticipate these things, and keep your brain, as well as your body in trim.

Save Your Energy

Many times you have seen a pitcher go into the box, and he would have so much enthusiasm that he would run himself to death back and forth, and every time the catcher would throw a ball he would go in ten feet to meet it, and on the next play, he would go in fifteen feet, and back fifteen feet—he has a little too much energy. That is what I term lost

energy. When you do such things, you lose a fraction of energy and that fraction might be needed later on. Last year, we were playing a game, and the pitcher came to bat with three men on base, and the score was nine to one in our favor. He batted the ball clear through the open hole between centerfield and leftfield. Do you suppose when he got to second he looked toward that ball? There he was pitching a game which he had won, but when he turned third, he was going faster than when he hit first. When he turned third, if I had had a shot gun I would have hit him. Later on he had a sun stroke. There you are. Don't get excited, and make every movement appear as though everything in the world depended upon it. It is the cool, calm, collected man that gets away with the pitching job. Remember, every ball you throw, there is going to be one less ball thrown in the long run, and of all the players, the pitcher needs his energy and strength the most.

There is a certain way for a coach to speak to a pitcher in the box, and indicate through certain familiar movements what is to be done. The pitcher should be keen and alert to look at the bench, and no matter how hard they hit you, you will never be greeted with anything but a smile on the face of a real manager or coach, unless you have pulled a bone-head play.

Let the catchers and pitchers get together, and know each other intimately. At college there were pitchers that I knew on the team as though they were my brothers—to this good day, I hear from them—I know everything that is going on about them. When a pitcher that I was catching lost a game, I felt worse than the pitcher did. It is a real regret when a thing like that happens. The catcher is your best buddy. The players should feel this way about the pitcher—“We have got to support this man—let's stay behind him, and do for him as we never did for anybody else in the world.” That is the spirit that wins. Play the easy going game. If it is found expedient to take you out, walk out with your head up—have the old regret in your heart, but do not show it. I do not mean to come out laughing and all that, but do not walk out of the box looking as though you wish to convey the impression that “this is the first time I was ever knocked

A Pitcher Should Be on the Alert for Assistance

Know the Catcher

out." When you come out, say to yourself, "I had an off day, but the next time I pitch, I will do better." Do not say you are going to win the next game or "eat your shirt"—more than likely you would have to eat it.

How to Keep in Shape and Get Control

Quite a number of young pitchers have come to me with this question, "What can I do to keep in shape and improve my control and in general improve my pitching?" That question is not very difficult to answer in a general way, but it takes careful forethought to answer it in a clear definite manner. I have known pitchers who went so far as to claim during the winter months they threw baseballs at a spot on a wall until they got control. Others say that is too tiring on the arm, and still others will say, that the pitching arm should receive a complete rest after a game, while others always add that a "little warming up after a hard game keeps the arm in shape." The truth is that every pitcher has his own pet way of keeping in shape.

But I still have not answered the question. Really, there is no definite answer except my own "pet theory" answer. I shall offer it here because I have seen it work successfully. During my early coaching days, I recall having read an article by Christy Mathewson in which he stated in so many words that "every time a pitcher throws a ball with 'something' on it, he is going to throw one less ball of the same character and each succeeding ball will have less on it and so it goes ad infinitum." For this reason, I have always told my pitchers when they are warming up to keep their minds from the idea of putting "something on the ball," unless they are warming up two or three days in advance of a game in which they will be used, or just prior to being used in a game—warming up, in other words, to pitch the game. I never permit a pitcher to "warm up" every day and put "something" on the ball, my idea being that when a pitcher does "warm up" he should put "something" on the ball sooner or later, or he does not get the full benefit of a practice and an every day "warm up" of such nature is too much for the average pitcher. It is extremely bad policy for a pitcher to "warm up" half-heartedly. That character of practice does him great harm. I never permit a pitcher to pitch during batting practice, unless he is ready to "put something on the ball." I use pitchers in batting practice

for the purpose of giving the pitcher practice as well as the batter. The best way to get control is to first get your body to co-ordinate itself and harmonize to a sense of direction. Please understand this is not just theory. If you hit a ball in a horizontal plane squarely and permit the bat to go clear around in a circle the ball so hit will continue on a "bee line" as long as it has momentum. It is just as true in the case of a thrown ball. A pitcher must not have a half, or jerky, delivery. His arm must follow through on each delivery with his body acting as a pivot—so coordinated that the delivery is given a sense of direction as the ball leaves the hand. Every pitcher must learn to follow through on every ball he throws. Here then is my answer to the question. A pitcher should work as often as he feels "right," and when he does work he ought to work hard and just like he was in a game. This form of practice should be pursued just as often as a pitcher is required to answer his turn to pitch.

The pitcher who is pitching perfect baseball is the man who is thinking about every play. He is the man who backs up perfectly as well as pitches scientifically to each batter. If it is not your turn to pitch, watch the game just the same. On your off day, you can get a catcher and try to get your curve ball working better. Perhaps you can cultivate the use of a new delivery. All these duties are a part of a pitcher's science. Above all else, do not be temperamental and grouchy, but absorb all the pitching knowledge you can. Be a good listener.

Summary



International

This is a splendid example of proper pitching delivery. Note that the position of the feet makes it easier for the pitcher to cover the right or left fielding territory.

CHAPTER II

THE SCIENCE OF CATCHING

The Science of catching represents a very great portion of the entire science of baseball. For this reason, I shall endeavor to cover the subject in question very fully.

Many baseball authorities have discussed the much mooted question of "What player on a baseball team is the most important?" and it is still undecided. I am not so greatly interested in this discussion as I am in the technique of the various positions, but it appears to me that any comparison I might make leading up to a decision as to the relative importance of this or that position is futile, for the obvious reason that no correct way is left open to decide the question by rules of averages. For example, it is useless to compare the value of a Cobb with the value of a Mathewson. The averages compiled represent two different phases of playing ability. Since it is impossible to render any definite or accurate decision on the question, I am inclined to believe any of the decisions rendered are mere speculations or opinions, based more upon prejudice and personal feeling than anything else. If the question therefore, calls for an opinionated answer, I am frank to say that I would cast my vote for "the catcher as the most important player in a game of baseball."

I admit that the pitcher runs the catcher a very close race in reaching a decision. Nothing is more pleasing to a coach or manager and baseball fans than to watch a brilliant pitcher pitch. There is something glorious in watching a Johnson, Bender, Adams or Bagby. But, if you should ask these satellites what, above all else, helps them most, they would reply, "The science of catching." To bear out this statement, I only point to the many "batteries" that have won fame together. Take for example, Alexander and Killifer, Faber and Schalk, Bagby and O'Neil, Adams and Gibson, Brown and Kling—and I could name over many dozens more. Thus, although we might agree that the pitcher represents the more flashy work and brilliance, the catcher is the "man behind the gun" and unnoticed hero.

The science of catching must be studied carefully by young players. The catcher is the busiest man in a game. He has

The Value
of Good
Catching

Discussion

Catching
Demands
Careful
Study

more chances to be of service and consequently more opportunities to make mistakes. The law of averages cannot represent the true worth of a catcher. It is peculiar to his play that most errors made are of such a character that they frequently lose games. For this same reason, a catcher's errors are generally errors of judgment and cannot be tabulated in averages.

Errors by
Catchers Are
Generally
Vital

When a catcher makes a fielding error it rarely ever accounts for a run, except on close plays at home plate which come but seldom, relatively speaking. On the other hand, if a catcher permits a pitcher to throw a ball low to a batsman who hits low balls, that error of judgment might mean the game. Of course, no fan appreciates the true significance of that error. Then too, the pitcher might have been given another signal and despite that signal lost control and permitted the low ball to be thrown. The point, therefore, I wish to make is that the catcher knows his errors and also the shrewd coach or manager, and they know when a "great catcher arrives," even though the fans fail to realize his worth.

Catcher is
Often
Misjudged

Obviously, if such errors are so difficult to notice, the fans and other players can surmise how intricate the science of catching is and how easy it is to misjudge a catcher. The real catcher is the type that always puts the pitcher and other players on notice before a play arises. It is not his fault if the play then fails, but it is his fault if the play is not anticipated. Think then what a catcher is up against. Here is a great responsibility and if perfect baseball is the order of the day, a catcher certainly must be alert. I would not have the reader get the erroneous impression that a catcher warns every player on every play. That would leave no room for "team brainwork," but it so happens that oftentimes *it is not what a catcher does as what he fails to do that is fatal*. Consequently, any good catcher should, in the absence of any warning on the part of other players, feel that it is his duty to warn his team and continually anticipate plays of the opposition.

The catcher is the center of everything on the defense. He acts like a governing wheel on an engine. He is facing every play. To illustrate, let us suppose the pitcher had failed to back up third base on a "single" to right field with a man on

THE SCIENCE OF CATCHING

first base. The catcher should immediately yell "Cover third." On all bunted balls the catcher should yell to the fielder to which base the ball should be thrown. If a base-runner has taken too long a lead off base, the catcher should warn the pitcher. On dinky fly balls, the catcher should yell who is to take the ball. If a fast man comes to bat, the catcher should warn the infielders. In short, the catcher is the powder in the defensive cannon. Naturally, the other players can keep down the work of a catcher if they use their heads, but in the absence of this "team brainwork," the catcher must assume the responsibility and give the warning, but in such a way as to instill confidence.

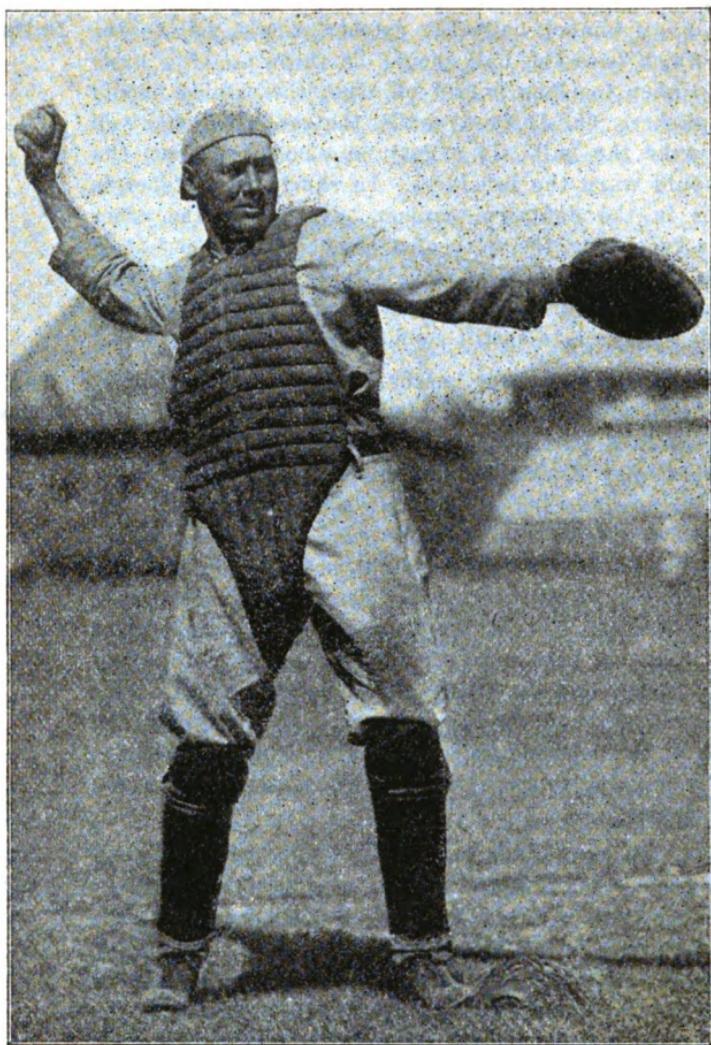
The Catcher
Is the Center
of the
Defense

So many writers who cover baseball science are continually dealing in generalities. In this book, I am very anxious to treat matters in a particular manner, not only for example, relating what play a catcher or pitcher should make under particular circumstances, but why they should make it. *The best way for a catcher to remember when to warn a player about any play arising, is to first look at every base and player before giving the pitcher any signal for the delivery of the ball to the batsman.* This is just as essential as a baserunner remaining upon his base until the pitcher is ready to pitch, thus saving energy and the possibility of being trapped. This is the "how" part of catching science. If a catcher will simply look at the field and fielders and then caution himself—"What play is going to come up?" he will no doubt warn any delinquent fielder.

The Idea of
the Entire
Discussion

To go one step further, let me also give this suggestion. A catcher because of his position is the generalissimo of encouragement in the time of need. In baseball vernacular he is the man supposed to have an abundance of "pep." A catcher, however, who simply "chatters" and yells unmeaning words is not the right species of catcher. His "pep," as well as the "pep" of other fielders should be *constructive*. "Come on, fellows," "ats the boy," and other such remarks are not "pep." They are *useless* sayings. On the other hand, if a catcher should remind the pitcher—"cover first on a bunt"—or caution a short stop, "cover up quickly," then not only is the catcher generating "pep" but that "pep" is playing a great hand in the game.

The Value
of "Pep"



International

FRANK SNYDER, New York Giants—Illustrating the correct stance for a catcher for a "peg" to Second Base. This picture was taken without a mask to show the full view.

THE SCIENCE OF CATCHING

The above paragraph is not "general" or "vague," but "particular" for a catcher now knows not only that he is to make "pep," but he knows how to make it correctly. I often think the reasons why so many baseball writers are considered vague is because they fail to consider the "hows" and "whys." The real reason why so many players fail to make good in baseball is not because they lack natural ability. More often, it is because they fail to study their position. The beginner, if he is a catcher, must start to cultivate the science of catching from the ground up.

I have diverted somewhat from my subject. Let us see what characteristics go to make up a catcher.

The outstanding features that ordinarily would be taken into consideration in determining a good catcher, can be enumerated as follows:

- (1) Weight.
- (2) Speed. (I mean speed in handling his feet behind the bat or what is commonly known as the ability to shift his feet with agility.)
- (3) Excellent throwing arm.
- (4) Ability to instill confidence in a pitcher.
- (5) Judgment in sizing up batters.
- (6) Anticipation of forthcoming plays.
- (7) Aptitude in directing team play.

It can be seen from these factors that go to make up an excellent catcher that all of them have a peculiar significance in creating intricate work for him during the game. I shall take them up separately.

When I state that a catcher should have weight, I mean by that, he should be heavy enough to handle speedy pitchers, strong enough to bear the terrible strain of continually bending up and down behind the plate, and strong enough to withstand the heat and drudgery that goes along with the position. If the reader should go over the list of catchers now playing in college or professional ball, the facts will prove most of them will average well above a hundred and sixty-five pounds in weight and most of them are stocky. They make up what they lack in height by speed in shifting their feet.

A catcher's foot-work is the most important part of his defensive value in-so-far as his assistance to the pitcher is concerned, and in keeping men from stealing bases. It very often happens that a catcher is endowed with an unusually good throwing arm, but because he lacks foot-work, fails to

The Qualities That Make a Good Catcher

Weight

Foot-work

do as well as other catchers in keeping men from stealing bases. I think this feature of a catcher's duties as a general rule, is the one most frequently misunderstood. Personally, I have never observed an exception to the rule that a catcher who fails to shift his feet quickly and correctly is a poor catcher for keeping down stolen bases on the part of the opposition.

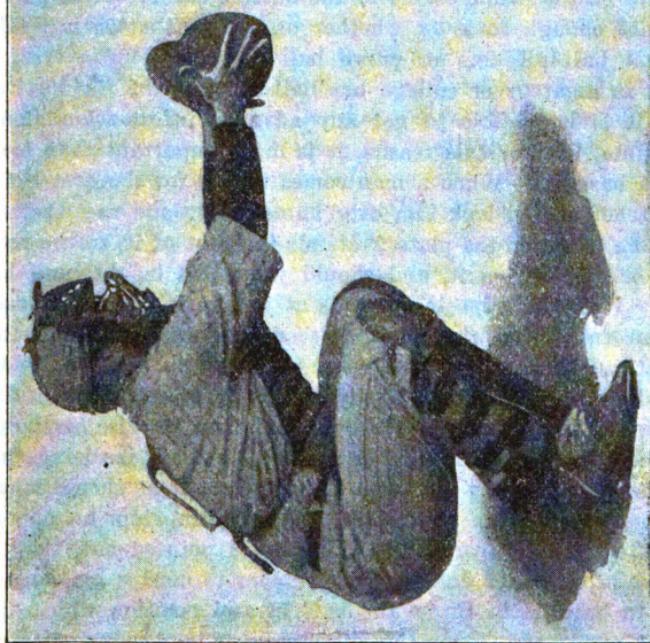
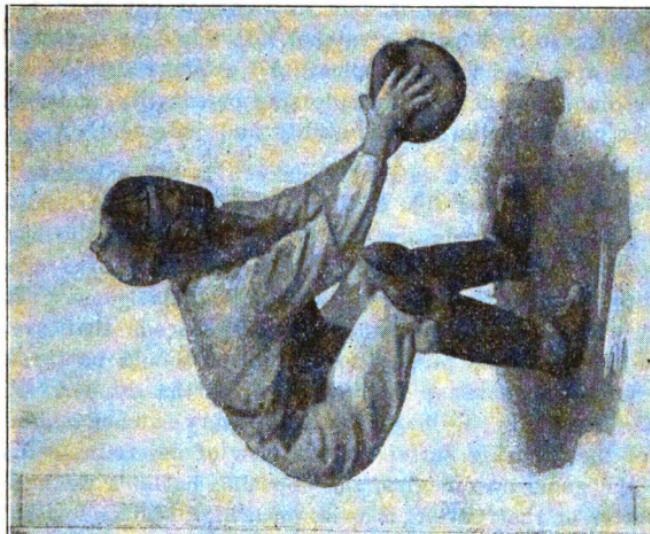
Constant Application Demanded

Thus, it is that a catcher must have good foot-work, as well as a good throwing arm and vice versa. I recommend to all young players and especially those who are just starting out on a collegiate or professional career, that they cultivate the habit in practice of shifting their feet on all thrown balls to them, so as to be in the position to throw the overhand ball, just as though they were getting ready to peg to a base in order to get a baserunner out. Learn to shift the feet and get set for a peg no matter in what position you receive the ball. I have found it absolutely true, that if a habit is formed by a player in practice to do certain things correctly, he will also do them correctly in a game. For this reason, I have inserted photos to show how to practice "shifting of feet." Study them closely. It seems useless for me to state that a catcher in practice should never throw an underhanded ball, since in a game there is hardly any occasion to do so. In fielding bunts to first base, an underhand ball is permissible. *A catcher should never "lob" the ball to a pitcher.* It detracts from the "ginger" of the game and a good baserunner very often will take advantage of it.

Ability to Instill Confidence

We next come to the fourth factor that goes to make up a catcher, namely the ability to instill confidence in the pitcher. It is pertinent for me to remark that this latter quality is probably the most important of any that a catcher must have. In a word, it represents the personality of the catcher to dominate the pitcher to the extent of making the pitcher believe in the catcher's ability to do the right thing as near as humanly possible. What I mean to point out to the reader is that a catcher can never hope to get the proper work out of any pitcher with whom he is unfamiliar, and who has a lack of confidence in his ability. This is one of the fine points in the science of catching and is something that neither coach nor manager can possibly instill in a catcher. They can tell a

THE SCIENCE OF CATCHING



This is an incorrect "stance" for a catcher. Note the flat feet, making it extremely difficult for him to switch from the right and left and get in a throwing position. A catcher should never let his weight be to the rear—always towards the front. Also observe the extended fingers. A catcher should avoid accidents by keeping the hand closed.

A poor catching "stance" on a low ball to the right. Here the catcher instead of shifting his feet has shifted his arms only, with the result that he is in a poor throwing position and if the ball got by he would be unable to suddenly retrieve it.

catcher he ought to have it, but they cannot put it in him. It simply has to be born in a catcher. It would be impossible for me to over-emphasize its value. All catchers should cultivate a strong, good-natured and pleasing personality, and make the other players believe in his ability and judgment.

An Excellent Judge of Batsmen

The fifth factor in a catcher's makeup is his judgment in sizing up batters, and this too, is a most important quality. Although it is not generally understood by the average baseball fan, or amateur player, it is this ability that so often materially assists the pitcher in winning his game. The average fan, for example, would hardly concede that every thrown ball from the pitcher to the batter should be thrown at the batter's weakness on a signal from the catcher. For this same reason in big league baseball, every catcher makes a study of the opposing batters with a view of determining long before the game ever begins, the opposing batter's weakness. This batter or that batter, is weak on a high ball or low ball, or a ball on the inside corner or the outside corner of the plate. It is not enough to know whether or not the batter is weak, for fast ball pitching or curve ball pitching. Of course, I realize in amateur or college baseball at many of the institutions, it is impossible to get any advance information along these lines, but for this reason, it is more important than ever in such baseball. When a man comes to bat for the first time, the catcher should look him over immediately and see whether or not he "crowds the plate," stands in front of it, to the rear of it, or away from it, and should judge his height, and his speed. While an opposing play is at bat during batting practice, carefully note what balls he seemed to be able to hit the hardest and during the game never give him an opportunity to hit a ball to his liking. With all this information carefully compiled in his mind, the catcher should then exercise his judgment, and signal to the pitcher for a given ball, realizing full well the responsibility put upon his shoulders if he should make an error in sizing up the batter, and affording him an opportunity to hit his favorite ball. I think I pointed out, that it was one of the chief duties of the pitcher to master his control so as to be able to throw the ball in any position which the catcher requested. From this discussion, it is clearly indicated that I could not have over-emphasized this one quality that goes

to make up an excellent pitcher. A real coach will never find fault with a player who makes a straight out fielding error during a baseball game, but where the catcher or pitcher continually make errors of judgment of this nature, it is the rightful duty of a coach or manager to find fault.

The sixth factor in the catcher's play is his ability to anticipate forthcoming plays. By this, I mean the ability, when once a play is under way or the opportunity is given for him to make a play, of being bold enough to grasp the situation and take upon his own shoulders the responsibility of going through with it. A good catcher, for example, with a man on first base, will, if the batter bunts, take it upon himself to yell immediately whether the pitcher should throw the bunted ball to second base or first base. If there is a man on second base, and the same play arises it is a part of the catcher's responsibility to yell to the pitcher or any other fielder who might field the ball, which base is the proper base to throw to. On all such plays, in fact, the catcher is the *guide* for the ultimate outcome of the play, and he should remember that it is his responsibility. Where there are baserunners on base, and the pitcher is in doubt what base he should back up, it is the duty of the catcher to remind the pitcher instantly. The truth is simply this: That there are perhaps hundreds of plays of this very nature when it is the duty of the catcher to remind other players of their respective duties. It is also the duty of the catcher to anticipate the "squeeze" play and the "hit and run" play and to be on the alert for any signal the opposing team is to use in either of these plays. It not infrequently happens that a catcher can hear remarks made by an opposing player, coach or manager, instructing the batter to execute some play, in which case the catcher should communicate this information to fellow players. In brief, a catcher must keep his eyes open and his ears peeled for any "tip off."

The seventh factor that goes to make up an excellent catcher is his aptitude in directing team play. By this I mean, since he is the only man on the team facing both infield and outfield, it becomes his duty to direct the defensive work of his team. If the catcher sees an opportunity to get a man off base by a quick snap throw, it is his duty to

Anticipation
of Plays and
Boldness in
Effort to
Offset Same

Aptitude for
Directing
Team Play

The Quick Snap Throw

signal for the "pitch out" to the pitcher and then give the signal to the particular baseman to cover the base, and thus attempt the play. Right here, I would like to say it not infrequently happens that a catcher can, by adroit handling of his opportunities during a ball game, catch many men off base in this way. It is bad policy for a catcher to use the short peg too frequently, since it is a dangerous play, and requires clocklike precision to be successful. The quick snap throw must be handled adroitly if it is to be successful. The play arises if there is a man on first base and no one down and the batter is expecting to bunt. The catcher can give the "pitch out" signal to the pitcher and the signal to the first baseman, who holds his base and the play is then attempted. The play is also used with men on first and second and the batter is expected to bunt. The catcher can try for the man at second. It is bad policy in a case of this kind with a fast man on second base to try for the man on first because a good baserunner on second will make third nine times out of ten, and it also gives the first baseman a long peg across the diamond in most cases. Where there is more than one man on base, always try for the last man on the last base. The reason for this is apparent, since if the play fails, the other baserunner cannot advance anyway, unless the previous runner advances. This play is good when used at the right time. It takes perfect manipulation.

The Short and Long Peg**When to Throw Through to Second and When Not to**

On the short and long peg, which I shall take up in the chapter on the second baseman and shortstop, it is the duty of the catcher to decide before hand whether or not with a man on first and third base, he will bluff his peg through to second base, or will throw through in an effort to get the man on first out on his attempt to steal second base. I have found that in the early innings it is all right, as a general principle, for the catcher to peg through *one* time when this play arises and then if the play arises again in the late innings, he can cross up the opposition by bluffing instead of pegging through. A great deal depends upon the strength of the batter and the score of the game, and if the catcher figures that the next batter is likely to hit the ball, and it is late in the game, he should throw through to second base, unless the *winning or tying run* is on third. On the other

hand, if the next batter is a weak batter, under the same conditions it might be best for the catcher to bluff his peg and take chances on the batter hitting. (For manipulation of bluff peg see later chapter.) The number of outs also enters into the use of this play, since if there is but one man down, the infield can very often find it to their advantage to play for the double play, especially during the early innings. This is especially true where there is a slow man on first base. By doing this, the defense of a team is materially assisted for on all batted balls which would ordinarily go for a hit (like Texas leaguers) the infielders playing back can handle them. It appears to me that the point to be considered most of all in determining whether a catcher should peg through or bluff his peg, depends upon the speed of the baserunner, the arm of the catcher, the strength of the batter, the number of outs and the score. I have also found out from actual experience that under the circumstances arising in a play of this kind, that it is best for the catcher to give a pitch out signal to the pitcher on the first ball pitched, and even if the baserunners do not attempt the play, it very often happens that the catcher by close observation can diagnose what is in their minds by their conduct on base, and can govern his duty accordingly. Please remember that.

In order to be a finished catcher, I also recommend to the younger element the advisability of a catcher backing up first base on a slow hit ball or a mediumly hard hit ball to the second baseman. Where there is no baserunner on base, this will avoid a possible overthrown to first base on a quickly fielded ball by the second baseman. The value of backing up first base by the catcher is easily understood if the reader will stop to consider that the slower a ball is hit to the second baseman, the faster he must get his peg away in order to make the out, and it frequently happens that because he is so rushed the second baseman will throw wildly and the man going to base will not only reach that base, but will continue to second, unless of course the catcher backs up. It is also good policy for a catcher to back up the first baseman on all attempted double plays from short to second to first, or from second to short to first, where he

Use the
Pitchout
Signal.
When?

When a
Catcher
Backs Up
a Play

**Catcher
Needs
Strong Legs**

**The Way to
Handle
"Pop-fly"**

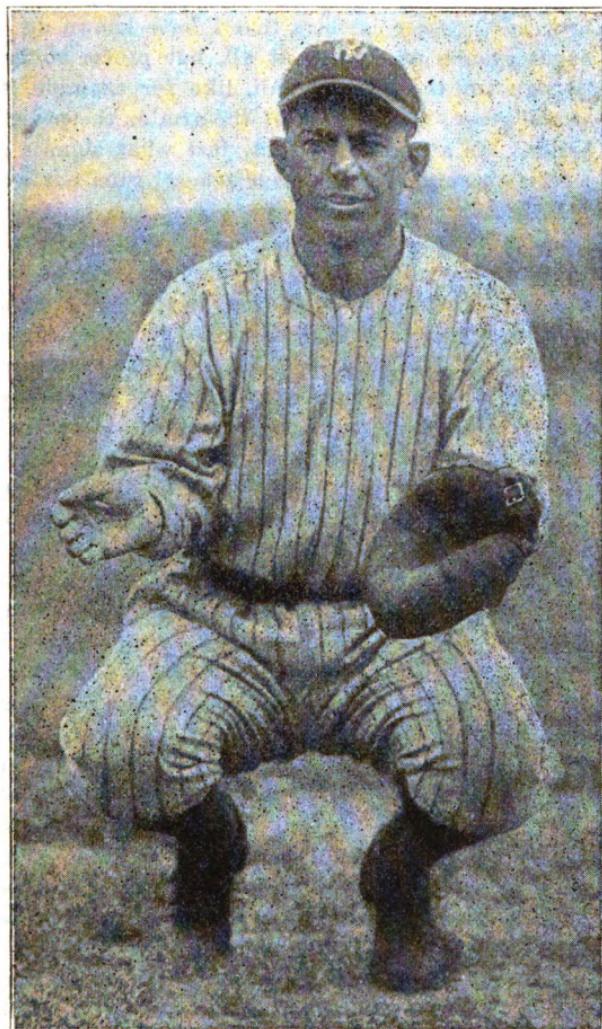
**Balls
Signals
Given by
the Catcher**

sees a sure out at second, because of the same reasons as indicated above. These are the only two instances, as a general principle, in which a catcher is licensed to leave his position behind the bat in order to back up a play.

I should like to mention at this point that one of the outstanding features of a catcher's physique should be a strong pair of legs, for a catcher not only has to bend up and down continually in order to give the pitcher signals, but through a long hard game, it is now seen that he is forced to back up two very difficult plays, provided he plays his position correctly.

Another outstanding feature of a catcher's play is his ability to handle foul balls, which in baseball vernacular are known as "pop-ups." It not infrequently happens that a catcher will get two or three put-outs during a game on these kind of fly balls. I would suggest that the most successful way of handling such balls is for the catcher to remember to get the ball in its flight downward directly in line with his head. In this way, there can be no danger of misjudging the usual "English" on the baseball, and permitting them to fall safely. It is bad policy for a catcher to attempt to catch these balls with the glove far away from his body, or while he is in the act of running, because this particular kind of fly ball invariably is affected by the wind and the "English." Get under the ball by going after the ball quickly. Never take your eyes off the ball in the air.

No doubt many of my readers have heard the remark made that an opposing team often works on signals obtained from the catcher, and a few fans often attribute the down fall of a pitcher to the fact that the opposing team "got wise" to the catcher's signals and knew when the pitcher was to throw a fast ball and when a curve ball. If such a fact really ever exists, it certainly does discount the ability of the catcher, for there is no reason whatsoever for anyone except the pitcher knowing what signals are given, unless the catcher desires to communicate them to his fellow players for the purpose of carrying out team play. Like every other duty that goes to make up a catcher, there is a science to signal giving, and a catcher must work faithfully to perfect the details incident to giving them. Some professional



An excellent pose for a catcher just before giving a signal to the pitcher. In giving the signal the catcher, can, if he uses finger signals, cover the signal by lowering his glove hand to the crotch and using his right hand fingers which are lowered under the glove.

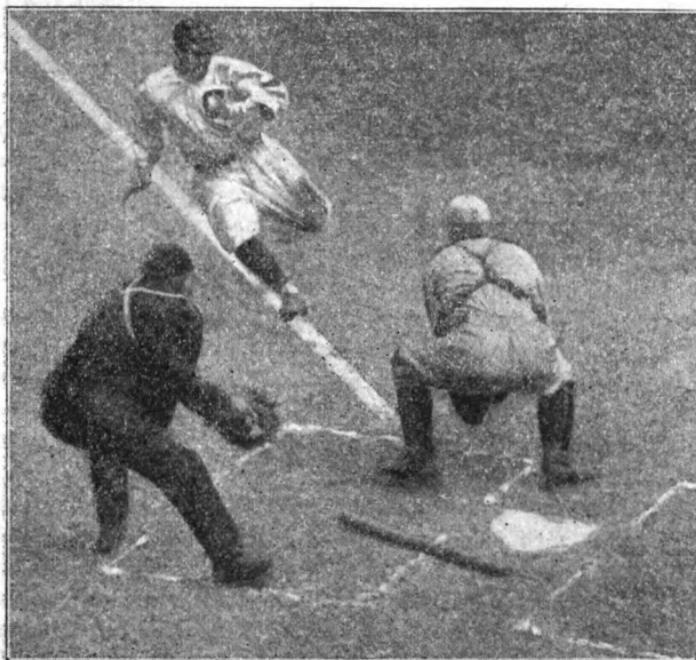
HOFFMAN of the New York Yankees

Change of Signals to Meet Necessary Requirements

catchers use the double digit system—for example, one finger, when followed by three fingers, would mean a fast ball, whereas three fingers followed by one finger would mean a curve ball. Other catchers that I have known do not use the finger system of signals at all, but prefer to have some body sign for the pitched ball, like for example, the position of the glove, the position of the arm or the position of both hands. As a matter of fact, just what signals are used is of relative unimportance, as a general rule, but what really counts is how these signals are given, and by that, I mean the ease and grace of the catcher so as to avoid giving them away to a live awake opposing player, either on base or coaching. For this reason, the best way to give signals is to give them in a squatting posture. If finger signals are used the hand should be well back in the crotch and the glove over it, forming a box effect. In professional baseball, where there is a man on second base directly in line with home plate, many catchers will change their signals which they use with no one on base, so as to avoid any possibility of a man on second base relaying the catcher's signal back to the batter. I have found in amateur or college baseball that this is not always necessary but it is a good idea for a catcher to know how to off-set such things if they should arise.

How to Tag a Runner Coming in Home

I should like to say a few words regarding the manner in which a catcher should tag baserunners sliding into home. First of all, a catcher must realize that he must *get* the ball before he makes any attempt to tag the man and he must keep his eye on the ball for this very reason. It is very bad policy for a short stop, or second baseman or any infielder either on ground balls or thrown balls to permit the balls to *play* them. On the other hand, they should *play* the ball, and then play for the runner coming to their base and this same rule applies to the catcher. There is justice in the remark that a good catcher should have no hesitancy about blocking home plate where a baserunner is sliding into the plate, but by this I do not mean to imply that a catcher should be "dirty" enough to wantonly heel the man coming into the base or injure him by giving him a stiff shoulder or knee. He should stand in such a position as to



International

GARDNER OF CLEVELAND OUT AT PLATE—Sixth game, World's Series, 1920. Illustrating the proper position for a catcher on the slide home.

**When to Yell
for Play at
Second,
When Man
Cannot Be
Caught
Going Home**

make the man coming in home slide perfectly around him in order to be safe. For this same reason, a catcher should stand towards the front of the plate and slightly towards third base, bracing himself in such a way as not to be thrown easily off his balance, so that if the man coming into the base refuses to slide, but runs headlong into him, the catcher will not be injured. In connection with this play, I would like to state that it is the duty of the catcher where a ball is thrown home from the outfield and there are men on base, if he figures the thrown ball will not catch the man going home, he should then yell to the first baseman or third baseman, who should have cut in near the pitcher's box to cut off such peg to second or third base, and "nail" the baserunner who would attempt such base on a ball thrown home. Please remember that such detail play will win many games or save many games, and especially is this the case where a game is close.

**A Catcher
Must Know
the Game**

I know of no position played in baseball which requires more thorough knowledge of the game than the position of catcher. It very often happens during a game that momentarily an infielder on a play demanding baseball knowledge will have the ball in his hands and yet will not know exactly what is best to be done because he has momentarily forgotten the rules of the game. It is in instances like this that the shrewd catcher must arise to meet the emergency, and with boldness assert himself instantly and yell to the player what is best to be done. For example, I recall a play that happened in a Yale-Princeton game a few years ago, where there was a man on first base and the batter struck out and there was also less than two men down. As the batter struck out, the catcher fumbled the ball but recovered it quickly and the man on first started to second and the catcher threw the ball to second base, and could have easily gotten the man out on the peg, but the second baseman, thinking that the play at second was a "forced out," failed to tag the man, and naturally the umpire called him safe. The failure to diagnose instantly this play resulted in a run for the opposing team, and, if I remember correctly, either won the game or tied the score. In this play, the second baseman had made an error of judgment and the

International

GRIFFITH OUT AT PLATE—Brooklyn-Cleveland, second game, World's Series, 1920—showing correct way to tag a man coming home.



catcher had lived up to only a part of his duties, viz: he saw what was up and had made the perfect peg, but he should have instantly yelled to the second baseman as a means of precaution "Tag him out." I think this illustration amply goes to show what I mean by the responsibility vested in the catcher of knowing the rules of the game.

**How to
Assist in
Breaking Up
"Squeeze"
Plays**

I think I have already indicated in my chapter on the pitcher just what was the responsibility of the catcher, when a "squeeze" play is undertaken by an opposing team and I will not go into that again, but in cases of that kind, a catcher can either rise to the supreme heights or fall by the wayside.

**A Catcher
Should Be
on the Go
All the Time**

There is no necessity for a catcher becoming *mechanical* in the way he catches thrown balls from the pitchers. He should be all over the infield adding "pep" to the other fielders and "snapping" the ball around after an out. A catcher should not jump around behind the bat. It unsteadies the pitcher. If a catcher sees that the pitcher is working too fast or is excited he should not necessarily speak to the pitcher about it. There is a better way to handle the situation. The catcher can take more time to give his next signal. This is a valuable hint.

**Catcher
Should
Announce
After Every
Play How
Many Men
Are Out**

I always like to see a catcher take his time when men get on bases. He should announce how many men are out and then deliberately take his time about the plate. There is no need of hurrying. By this I do not mean to be too slow, but take your time and observe what is going on. Good catching along this line is also less observed than anything else on the ball field, but a coach or manager appreciates it more.

**How to
Receive the
Thrown Ball
From the
Pitcher**

Just a word about receiving the pitched balls. A good catcher is the one that gives the pitcher a "hole" or "spot" to throw to. The catcher should be light on his toes, but not "jumpy." When the pitcher winds up to deliver the ball the catcher should get all set, but in such a way as to be able to shift quickly. By "set," I mean in his catching pose. I have pointed out by the accompanying photos what I mean. Never receive a thrown ball in a squatting position, and on all wild pitches, the catcher should keep his "head in the ball," remembering he has on a mask, protector and shin-guards for just such plays. If you select catching, you have selected a hard job.

CHAPTER III

THE SCIENCE OF PLAYING FIRST BASE

The time has long since passed when the only accomplishments of a good first baseman are a good pair of hands, sure feet, long reach and an excellent throwing arm. Not that these accomplishments are now unnecessary, but in the modern game, a first class first baseman must also have the ability to cover a large territory, field bunts and "pop-fly" balls and generally take care of a large portion of duties, which under the old game, were assigned to the catcher, pitcher and second baseman.

One very able baseball critic has said that the modern style of first base play is just as extensive as any other on the infield. He is not very far wrong. About all that a first baseman needed in the old days was height and a pair of "glue" hands—that is, sure fielding hands. He rarely ever fielded a batted ball, chiefly because he played right on top of the base, much on the order of the present day catcher. In the older days his chief object was to get the thrown ball. The present day idea of rendering great assistance to the pitcher was unheard of. This was due to the almost total lack of the bunted ball and the scarcity of left-handed batsmen. With the advent of the "hit and run," sacrifice bunt, "squeeze" and the new idea of the first baseman rendering assistance to the pitcher, an improved style of first base play came into use. No longer can a first baseman be slow, a bad fielder on ground balls or mechanical.

Under my theory, an ideal first baseman can be either right or left-handed. Perhaps a first baseman who throws left-handed is more graceful as a "unit" on the infield, but he has his disadvantage just as much as the right-handed man. Just because it is the one place on the infield where a left-handed man fits in, therefore, does not mean this is a prime requisite.

The typical and no doubt correct theory of a first baseman's physique is that he should be conveniently tall. A man of six feet is better able to handle the position than one of five feet ten inches or less. There are many high thrown

Duties of
First Base-
man Are
Many

In the
"Old Days"

Right
Handed vs.
Left Handed

balls to first base and the "high" man can better handle them. McInnis of Boston, a "stuffy" built man, is an exception to this rule. It must be remembered, however, that a tall man can get very close to the ground, in fact as close as a stocky built man, but a stocky man can stretch so high and no further. All that can be said, therefore, and still be abreast of the times, is that the first baseman should be tall and rangy.

**Should Be
Fast, Grace-
ful and
Shifty**

It is not enough in this day and time for a first baseman to be *sure* on his feet. He must be fast, graceful and shifty. He must be able to shift his feet from one side of the base to the other so naturally that he need not give them a thought when normally the occasion to do so arises. Likewise, he must be able to stretch out his body by the use of his feet and thereby, assist the fielder and save time. This is absolutely imperative on double plays and close plays at his base. See diagrams. All first basemen must learn the fundamental principle of saving the fielder time on thrown balls. In games, this ability, if put into use, will save many a game.

**Thrown
Balls to
First**

No one in the world can tell a first baseman just how to "go after" badly thrown balls to his base. Off hand, I might say that the knack of knowing how to play the thrown ball is a natural gift. There are certain ways of improving yourself along this line, however, but all take practice. First of all, the thrown balls to first base can be divided into:

1. Pickups:
(a) long, (b) short, (c) to the right, (d) to the left.
2. High balls:
(a) directly over head, (b) to the right, (c) to the left.
3. Balls in front of the base on the fly.
4. Balls that pull the first baseman off his base entirely.

I shall discuss all of them separately. But first of all, let me say this. *A first baseman must play the ball and not permit the ball to play him.* Many first basemen make the fatal error of trying to stay on the base despite a badly thrown ball, with the result that it gets away and the runner makes an extra base.

But, to go back to the first classification of thrown balls, namely, pickups. When a ball is seen to be low and will strike on a *long* pickup, the first baseman should play it like any thrown ball that ordinarily carries to his hands. Above all else, keep your eye on the ball and block it. On *short* pickups, try and turn them into very short pickups by "going out" (stretching) for them, or, if you choose, recede across the back of your base and take them on a long pickup, permitting the runner to pass over the base and between you and the first baseline. You will find that constant practice will tell you which play you can best handle. On pickups to the right of the base, it is best to get off your base, get the ball and then touch the base, rather than let the ball get by you. On the other hand, if you can still remain on the base, play these balls just like you would the short and long pickups. The same is true of pickups which come on your left, only you must take care not to get in the way of the baserunner. At all odds get your hands and body in front of the ball.

This latter thought causes me to say this to the first baseman. When you are in the act of fielding a thrown ball, forget all about the runner. Get the ball and then think about him. Do not worry about the runner, let him go until you get the ball and that stands under any conditions.

On high thrown balls directly over your head, go up as high as you can for them with two hands. If you still can not reach it, use one hand. Although two hands are better than one, a first baseman who can use his glove hand well, is licensed to do so. Learn to catch this kind of thrown ball with the glove hand, not to be spectacular, but on the ground that you can reach higher. At any rate, do not be afraid of going after a ball with one hand. If needs be, stop it with your bare hand. On high balls to the right, switch over quickly, leaving the left foot to touch the base and let your hands take care of themselves. But if the ball "pulls you off" the base, do not hesitate to get off and get the ball, then touch the base. On high balls to the left, go out with your left foot leaving the right foot on the base. Try and stay inside the diamond and out of the path of the baserunner. Right here most first basemen get in

Long, Short,
Right and
Left Pickups

High
Thrown
Balls

trouble, so I shall go into detail. First of all, forget the danger of any "run-in" with the runner. Get the ball. If you see that the ball is going to pull you well off the base, get off quickly and get out of the baseline at the same time. Then catch the ball and as the runner passes you, touch him or better still touch the base and instantly look for any other play on the diamond that might demand your attention. Study the photo carefully.

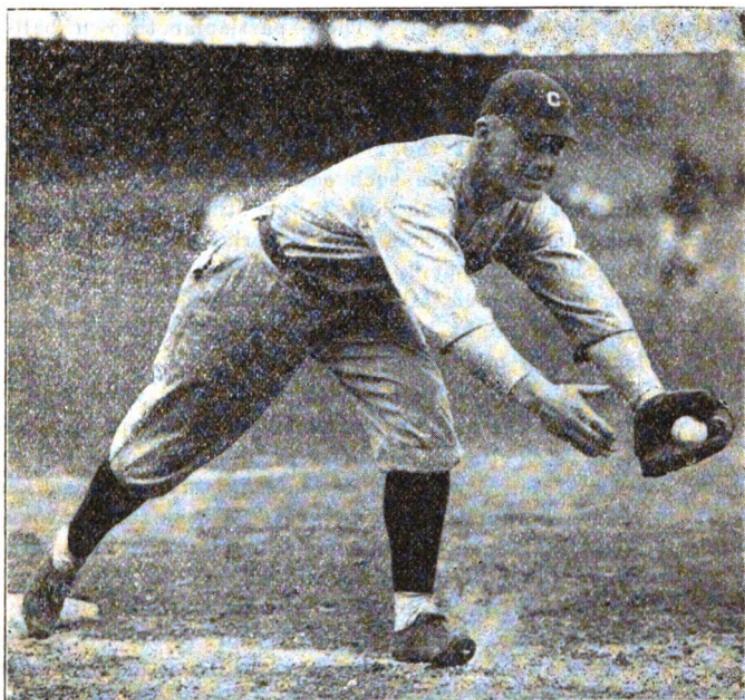
Must Be Alert for Other Plays

This brings up a good point. As first basemen remember, that as long as less than three men are out and you make a play at first base, you *must* be awake and look for other plays. So many first basemen seem to forget they have anything else to do after the runner is out at first base. For example, if the batter bunts with a man on first and is later thrown out, the runner going to second will often try for third if the first baseman goes to sleep. For this reason, the first baseman, after making the out should be on the alert. Also where there are men on second and third and the batter pulls the "squeeze" bunt very often in a pinch, the runner on second will round third base and try to score if the first baseman is not alert. I point out these two simple examples just to prove my point. There are hundreds of other examples I might use.

On thrown balls in front of the first baseman which carry on the fly to him, the first baseman should stretch out as far as he can for them, always remembering to keep his eye on the ball. Most of the balls dropped at first base are because of this. The first baseman should be sure to *reach out* on all balls thrown to him to *complete a double play* and after an *infield fumble*, and under all other conditions where time is valuable.

Plays Which Show Quick Thinking

On balls which come to the first baseman after a bunted ball is fielded and the ball and baserunner are almost in the same line, unless the first baseman has sense enough to go behind the base or in front of it, even before the fielder throws the ball to him, he is likely to have a "run in" or drop the ball. Therefore, on balls thrown to him by the catcher or pitcher, he should stand well inside the diamond and, so to speak, give them a target to throw to. It is on plays of this kind that the first baseman shows his quick



International

GEORGE BURNS, Cleveland "Indians"—This shows how a "run in" between first baseman and batter is likely to occur. In a game the first baseman, if he has time, should leave his base on a ball like the one thrown in this photo, get the ball and then tag the runner.

thinking and craftiness, as well as excellent fielding capacity. When you learn these tricks of the trade, you are nearing real first base play.

Plays Which Pull Baseman Off Base

The fourth and last class of thrown balls which are handled by the first baseman are those which pull him off his base entirely. These particular thrown balls leave no doubt in the first baseman's mind about the fact that he must leave his base. In other words from the moment they leave a fielder's hands, they are known to be so unplayable that the first baseman will do well to handle them at all. When such occasions arise, the first baseman must try his level best to get the ball in the quickest possible time. It makes no material difference how he gets it or blocks it, but he must get it somehow or other. Often a first baseman can "slap" the ball sufficiently to stop its flight. Again he might block it with his bare hand or with his body. The main thing is to stop it.

Going After "Wild Pegs"

If the thrown ball is completely over your head, do not stay near the base and watch it sail over your head and then start retrieving it. Go after it just as soon as you see it is going for a "wild peg." In this way, you can keep the runner or runners from advancing a base further than usual. After making a retrieve on a ball of this kind, figure out where the ball should be thrown and in this way, save a further loss of time. It is always helpful to listen to the pitcher who should "guide" your throw by yelling out, "second base" or "third base." His assistance is particularly valuable when there are runners on base before the ball passed first base. It is always advisable to look around your "foul" territory before the game begins and see how far you can "go" after such balls as "pop flies" and wild throws. This not only applies to the first baseman, but to all other fielders as well.

The question is often asked, "What is a first baseman's duty on bunted balls down the first base line?" This is not a very difficult question to answer. First of all, a first baseman must divide bunted balls into two classes, namely: (1) Where no one is on base and (2) where there is a man on base or runners on bases. I shall take these plays up separately.

First when a bunted ball is bunted down the first base line with no one on base, the first baseman should decide instantly whether he is better able to handle it or whether the pitcher or catcher should handle it. In nine cases out of ten, such balls are fielded either by the pitcher or catcher and it takes a very hard bunted ball to go far enough down the first base line for the first baseman to rightfully handle it. He should not come into the "carpet" or be thrown out of position under normal conditions. Therefore, unless he has every reason to suppose the batter is going to bunt or actually makes a "feint" to do so, he should permit the pitcher or catcher to handle the base. I caution all first basemen to keep alert to just such tricks of the trade, especially when a fast man is at bat or the lead-off man. Be careful not to be fooled by a shrewd left handed batter who would "feint" to bunt and then drive the ball past you while you were running in for the expected bunt. Normally, the pitcher and catcher should handle all such bunts as here discussed and the first baseman should be of assistance later on in handling the quickly thrown ball correctly.

The second type of bunted ball, namely, the one down the first base line with a man on first or runners on bases demands very careful analysis. For example, "A" is on first base and no one down. "B," the batter, bunts down the first base line. Naturally "C," the first baseman, is holding "A" on first base. Under this condition, "C" must leave his base quickly and field the bunted ball if the pitcher or catcher can not do so, and throw to "D," the second baseman, who is covering first base. This play comes up often and a great deal depends on "C" leaving his base quickly and getting the bunt. He should not come in so close to home plate, however, as to give "B" a chance to cross him up completely and drive the ball through him. There is a way of getting off the base quickly and opposite it, and then as the ball is bunted, again start quickly after it. The first baseman really makes two separate and distinct plays on the ball, in order not to be "sucked in."

If, instead of just a man being on first base, there are men on first and second base and no one down and the batter bunts towards first, the first baseman goes through with the

With a Man
On First

With Men on
First and
Second

When No
One Is Out

same play, only in most cases the first baseman will not try to hold the runner on first as closely as he previously would on the first play, due to the man on second. Also, after getting the bunt, the first baseman normally has to elect whether or not to try for the man at third, who has gone there from second, or simply make the out at first. The first baseman should already have judged the speed of the base-runner before the bunt was operated. This requires keen judgment, but is of very great assistance. On plays of this kind, the first baseman must be alert for a "cross up" on the part of the batter and, for this reason, he should always remember the score of the game. If the opposing team is far behind, the bunt play is less imminent, since it is the less correct play.

**Duty of
Fielding
Bunts
Belongs to
Pitcher**

Although the first baseman often is forced to field bunts, the duty is really that of the pitcher. A good fielding pitcher will hardly let the opportunity arise for the first baseman to take care of bunts near the first base line. The pitcher should be on top of the bunt first thing. However, the first baseman should know what his duties are and never take it for granted that the pitcher is going to live up to his duties.

If there are three men on base, the first baseman must come in quickly on all bunts toward him. But, if he finds he cannot get to it then he should cover his base. Often, with three men on base, he can make a double play—to home, back to first.

I should also like to warn all first basemen to field bunted balls "surely." The easiest kind of bunted balls are often the trickiest. "Get the ball first" is a good motto. Anticipate either the bunt or the batted ball and try to play it accordingly.

**When
Bunted Balls
Roll Foul**

Just a word about bunted balls which might roll foul. If the bunted ball is almost certain to roll foul and the play seems to indicate the batter has an equal chance to get to first safely, provided you field the ball, then let it roll foul. But if the order of things is reversed, field the ball, because an "out is an out," no matter when made. A first baseman for this reason must know beforehand what chances he is taking.

In tagging men out at first base on a trap throw from the pitcher, it is always best to stand a little in front of the base

towards the pitcher. Do not purposely block your base. On all quick throws from the pitcher, be sure to block the ball at any cost, remembering that an overthrown ball is very costly, since there is no other player available to retrieve the ball. They are in their regular playing positions. An overthrown ball under such conditions often spells defeat. Try and tag the runner gracefully and quickly, and all in one move, but get the ball.

It is always good policy for the first baseman to remind the pitcher to cover first on all hits to right or a bunted or "drag" ball down between first and second. This type of batted ball is a very difficult one to handle and requires harmonious work on the part of the pitcher, first baseman and second baseman. The first baseman should decide whether he is to field the ball or let the ball go to the second baseman. If he is to field the ball, he should go after it quickly and, after getting the ball, toss it accurately to the pitcher, who runs over to cover first base. At all odds, the first baseman must "lead" the pitcher to the ball, or vice versa. That is, he should toss the ball so that the pitcher can get it on the run without losing his pace and before he crosses the bag. The pitcher must judge his speed and the speed of the ball. If there was already a man on first base, the first baseman should, if possible, permit the second baseman to handle all these balls because after the play is made the first baseman is facing the diamond and the pitcher would, if he takes the ball on the run, have his back to the diamond and if the man rounding second base tries for third he will have an awkward play to make, as well as a long peg after a sudden turn, or, perchance, a "run-in" with the batsman. Study this play and what I have said most carefully—also the diagrams.

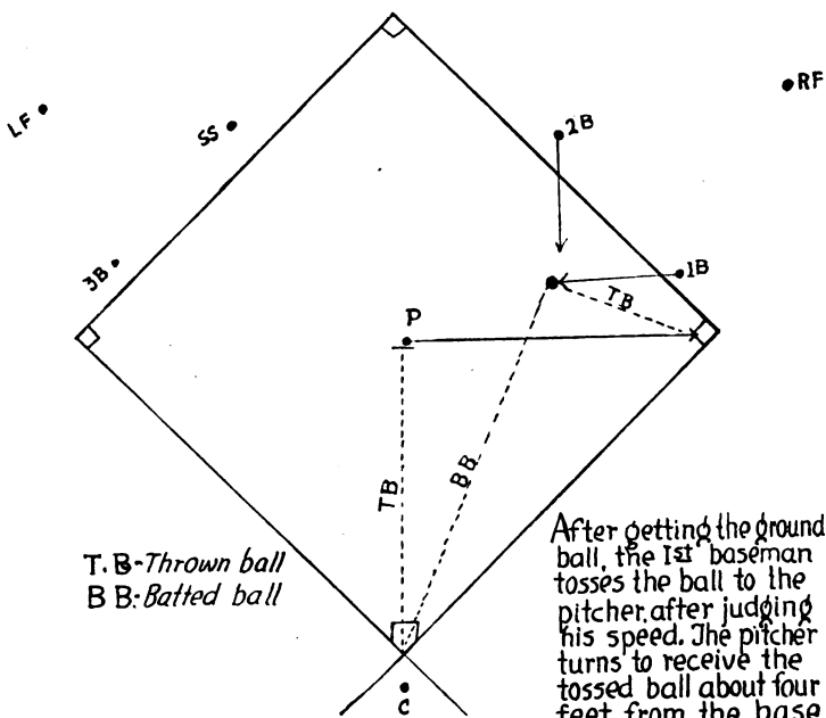
It very often happens that a first baseman can make a play on a hard hit ball to him by throwing to second base and get the runner there. Here again he must think about the speed of the ball and the runner, being careful not to take a chance on permitting an error of judgment to cause both runners to be safe. Here also is the value of anticipating a play clearly shown. The same "modus operandi" is necessary on double plays from the first baseman to second, back to first.

Pitcher and
First Base-
man Must
Work
Together

Plays from
First to
Second Base

CF

BATTED BALL-PITCHER COVERING FIRST BASE



The first baseman is a valuable cog in the infield when relay throws are made to home plate. For example, if a man doubles to right field with a man on first and the relay throw is made to home plate to catch the runner coming home, the first baseman should take a position between first base and home, about midway between the pitcher's box and the first base line, and if the relay throw is too late to get the man going home the first baseman should "cut off" the relayed ball and, if needs be, throw the ball to third to get the batsman-baserunner trying to stretch his hit to a three-bagger. Please study the diagrams in the book. May I also add that the catcher should act as guide on this play and yell out, if the relay throw is too late to get the man at home, thus indicating that the first baseman is to take the ball?

This practically sums up the duties of the first baseman. By all means he should never feel that he can shift his responsibilities. I do not know of another position on the diamond where a player's duties are more clearly defined or limited. He has certain set things to do. Be alert, use your head and speak out freely to your fellow players. The position offers to a graceful and brainy player every opportunity to take a leading part in the game.

First Baseman Valuable Cog in Handling Relay Throws

Summary

CHAPTER IV

THE SCIENCE OF PLAYING SECOND BASE

The Importance of Second Base

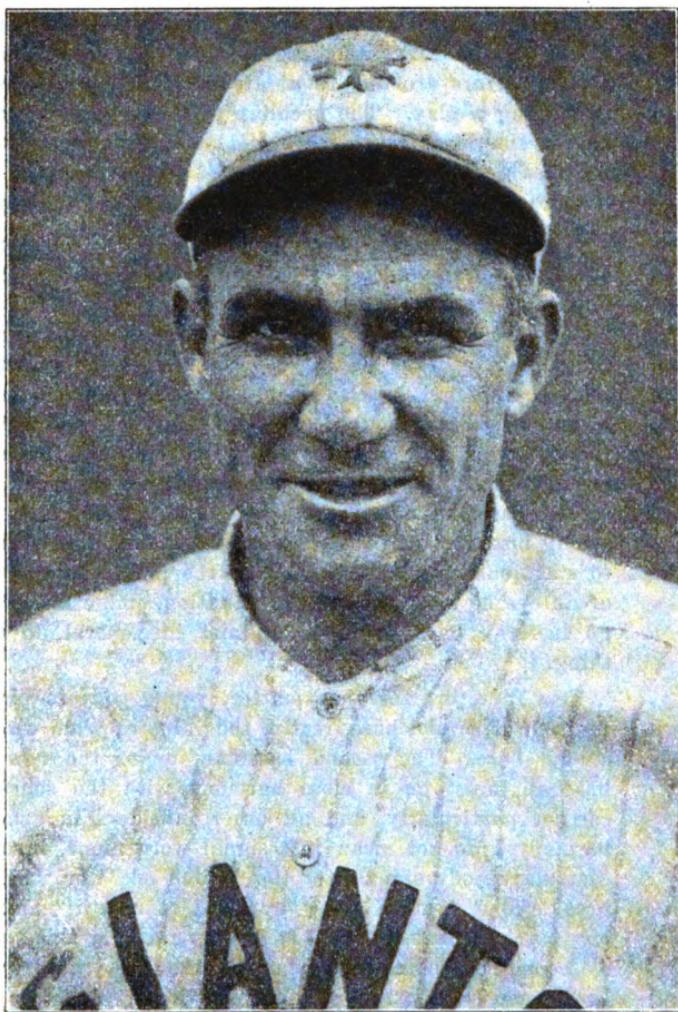
There is one very excellent way of expressing the importance of the science of second base playing, i. e., it is the "keystone position" on the baseball team. It is not enough to say in simple language that second base playing is one of the important positions on a baseball team. That remark implies but a shallow meaning, because all the other positions on a diamond are important. It is now and always has been my contention that second base is one of the *most important* and one of the *most difficult* infield positions to handle.

In the first place, second base is really a "keystone." Whenever a baserunner reaches second base it means he stands ready to score on a safe hit to the outfield at any time during an inning and perhaps he can score on an infield error. This happens any time, just as it did during the 1921 world's series when Peckinpaugh made an error. In the second place, a second baseman, under the new way of playing ball, not only must cover a wide fielding territory both right and left of him, but must also have the knack of tagging baserunners, of quick throwing and, as I shall point out later on, covering other players' positions.

There Is a Scarcity of Second Basemen

There are very few real top-notch second basemen in the game today. Perhaps, with the exception of Johnnie Evers and Eddie Collins, there have been fewer real stars at this position than any other. Evers and Collins between them have practically made second base playing what it is in the modern game. These men enlarged the duties of a second baseman and few men will ever fill their shoes.

As in all other positions on the infield, great care must be exercised by a second baseman to protect his flanks from vulnerable attacks of the offense. For example, it is the duty of a second baseman to handle balls hit far to his right and left. He simply cannot be "glued" to the ground, either on hard hit balls or easy rollers. In either case his main object is to get "ahead" of the batted ball, giving him more time to get set in fielding the ball and then making the play. It has been interesting to me of late years to notice the number

*International*

LARRY DOYLE—For many years Captain and Second Baseman of the New York Giants. Considered by many experts to be the greatest Second Baseman in the world. Voted the most valuable player in the National League and one of the most beloved players who ever played in New York. Larry Doyle assisted the author in writing the chapter on "The Science of Playing Second Base" and "The Science of Playing Shortstop."

of infield errors due to this one curable defect. In fact, it would not be far wrong to estimate that seven out of ten fielding errors are due to a late start and subsequent hurry in making a play. The peculiar part of all this is that it is only a simple defect to cure and yet so many otherwise star players lack the ability to cure it. This point is made all the more effective by a more careful analysis of individual play.

**Second
Baseman
Plays in a
"Pocket"**

A second baseman plays in a "pocket." His territory is valuable to any enemy from many standpoints. His right flank is peculiarly attractive for expert batters with a man on first base and where the first baseman is playing to hold the runner on, thus making a wider target for a fast hit ball through the first baseman's ordinary fielding territory. The second baseman must, in cases of this kind, cover that additional ground, as well as his own. In such cases, if the batsman elects to bunt and the first baseman goes in for it, then the second baseman must cover first base. Here, then, are two strong instances of the necessity of a second baseman's ability to start quickly and be ahead of the play. In the twinkling of an eye he must size up the situation, judge his duty, either go in, stay back or cover up and in general do the right thing.

**Value of
Team Work
at Second
Base**

Few fans, or, for that matter, young players playing the position of second base, realize the value of team work around second base. The second baseman, under the new style of baseball, must be in close harmony with the shortstop and catcher particularly, and all other infielders in general. By harmony I do not mean just signal work alone, involving the customary body signals for the "pitch out" or "hit and run break," but I mean also "by word of mouth" and more or less psychological signals. It is very rare for this reason that a second baseman is a star of the first water when his co-partner, the short stop, is only mediocre. Both are generally stars if either is, because both do and act the same way under many conditions and receive each other's advice on practically every play made. In fact, in many cases where one of these players is involved, the other is joined in with him. Take, for example, the steals, hit and run, force plays and many others. In like manner the catcher is also a co-partner of the second baseman.

**Use of
Verba.
Signals**

Half of all the verbal signals given on the diamond are centered around second base. The clever second baseman is the one who is willing to listen to his other team mates for little tip-offs and who in turn thinks out loud and talks to his other partners if he feels a "hunch" on a certain play. In fact, it is imperative that just such work takes place. In less than a second an opposing play can be wrecked and it often happens that after the pitcher delivers the ball to the batsman that a tip-off properly given and received correctly turns an excellent offensive play into a brilliant double play or out. This is very true in the case of the "hit and run" play, when, instead of being drawn out of position by a right hand batsman, the second baseman remains ready for the batted ball. It often happens that, before the pitcher threw the ball the short stop or the second baseman, as the case may be, had tipped each other off on the play and, instead of leaving his position, he remains to field the batted ball and convert the opposing play into a sure double.

I point out these examples just to show how necessary it is to work together on a baseball diamond, and to think quickly and timely. Second basemen who do these things are very rare and they are the ones who make the most money and get to be real stars.

All infielders should remember that the batter and base-runner are trying to pull the unexpected. Scientific baseball is a game of "unexpected plays." For this reason, my advice to all second basemen is not to get one play "set" so firmly in your mind that you cannot change your intentions. I can recall fifty or sixty times when my "hunch" went wrong and still I got the play and executed the out. The fact that I had expected one thing and another happened did not completely spoil my playing ability, but, I confess, when such things happened I had to hustle to get "by."

I cannot dwell too long on the ability of a second baseman to size up the batsman and baserunner. A second baseman should determine what "speed" the batsman has, his style of batting, whether he hits hard or easy, to what point on the diamond he generally hits and how he has hit the pitcher before. He should also look to the speed of the baserunner as compared to the batter and keep his eyes open for any

**Unexpected
Plays****Second
Baseman
Must Have
Ability to
Size Up
Batsman**

"give away" signals on an expected play. After doing this, the second baseman can move back for a slow batsman or up for a fast one. If the batter hits left handed, he can play over towards first base a little more. If he is a good bunter or loves to drag the ball through the infield, the second baseman can move in. If the baserunner is very fast, the second baseman should judge instantly after the ball is hit whether to try for the out on him or the put out at first base. A lack of judgment in cases of this kind often permits both men to arrive at their respective bases safely. Harbored around such mistakes we find subsequent rallies, and not until a second baseman judges such plays correctly is he playing real baseball.

I have read some of the books purporting to teach players how to play second base correctly and in most of them the authors begin by giving information as to the physical requirements necessary before a player should try to play this base. Such information is useless. A large man can play second base just as well as a small man. About all that are required are brains and a pair of good hands, although a good arm is a great asset.

**Must Have
Good
"Fielding
Hands"**

Just a word about a second baseman's hands. I have already mentioned his brain power. A cracker-jack second baseman must have a good pair of fielding hands, the larger the better. There should be no juggling of the ground ball, for the fraction of a second lost means the loss of an out oftentimes. Close followers of the game will bear me testimony that most double plays are destroyed by "juggling." So, not only on ground balls, but also on short, hard thrown balls, the second baseman must hold on to them. On the plays around second base, either from third to second, short to second, first to second, catcher to second or pitcher to second, the second baseman must hold the ball and get it away quickly or tag the runner. You will recall that I gave such plays as examples of when a second baseman should cover his base and get there ahead of the ball. For obvious reasons, the quicker he gets to the base the less chances he has of fumbling or juggling the thrown ball. So it goes that each step in a second baseman's duty leads to another one.

On the other hand, even all these requirements are not the sum total of a second baseman's duty. Besides them, he must

be adept in catching "pop flies" that would otherwise fall safely between his territory and right field or first base. This is a very important duty. Most managers and coaches require constant practice on such plays. Most errors on such plays are directly attributable to failure to hurry to the obvious dropping point of the fly ball. If you think you can get the ball be sure to "yell," so that other nearby players will not run into you. Go after such balls with confidence and vim.

Especial care should be used by all second basemen when a double play comes on the horizon. All plays that on first appearance show signs of being double plays are not such in the long run. The second baseman must field the ball cleanly in order to obtain a double play, no matter what base he throws to. Then after this he must throw the ball accurately to the proper base so that the fielder can catch it and in most cases get it away from him. A second baseman in trying for a double play should also keep in mind the speed of the base-runner and the batsman. On a slow hit ball with a fast man on base it is hard to get a double play. He should also judge the distance the ball will have to travel when thrown. If it happens to be a ground ball near second base he can "scoop" the ball to the short stop. On the other hand, if it is a ball twenty or thirty feet away, he ought to throw the ball. At any odds, there should be no doubt in his own mind that the ball will beat the runner, for, such being the case, both men are safe and he has pulled an unpardonable bonehead play. For this same reason, the ball must be thrown accurately. Often a second baseman can touch second base and complete the throw to first for a double play. Again he can touch the baserunner out and "peg" to first for the second out. All these plays require judgment and skill. They are perfected through constant practice.

A double play means quick work but not "hasty" work. It is one thing to be quick and another to be "hasty." Do your work quickly but accurately, and make the first man a sure out, otherwise both men are safe. A second baseman should learn to shift his feet when acting as pivot man in a double play. It will save him time to know that his feet are not in the way. On account of double plays and other quick plays, a second baseman should learn to throw to all bases on the

Must Be
Adept in
Catching
"Pop Flies"

Skill
Needed for
Double Play

Quick Work
but Not
"Hasty"



International

These two photos show the correct way to "run down" a base runner who is trapped. The fielders must always remember to drive the runner back to the base he was on before the play arose and then speedily shorten up the distance between the runner and themselves.

infield with accuracy. Before a ball is hit there is no way to tell just where a subsequent out will be made.

Whenever a man is trapped between bases and a second baseman is handling the play, get the ball and run at top speed toward the baserunner and drive him back quickly to the base he left. When he is near the base throw the ball to the fielder or touch him out yourself. Never run a "trapped runner" up and down the base paths. Run him back so near the base from which he came that one play will put him out. By doing this you save time and keep other runners from advancing while the out is being made.

In tagging a man at second, remember to *play the ball first* and then go after the runner. Never block the bases. If you do the baserunner might upset you and the ball will get by you. Get the ball, then the runner. I always preferred to stand a little towards first base and about six inches off the bag towards the pitcher.

One of the plays considered most difficult to handle by second basemen is that of the "short and long peg." I have for this reason inserted a diagram showing just what is required of the second baseman in a play of this kind. There are several things which must be noticed during such plays. First of all, there are two men on base, first and third. Upon the delivery of the pitched ball the men start moving and then the second baseman and shortstop must decide what they are up to. There are three things the baserunners can do.

(1) The man on first can try for second, either on a plain steal or the "hit and run" play, the man on third holding his base.

(2) The man on third can work with the man on first and if the catcher "pegs" through, the man on third is to try for home instantly.

(3) The man on third will wait until the ball goes through to second base or until the man on first is caught in a chase and then start for home.

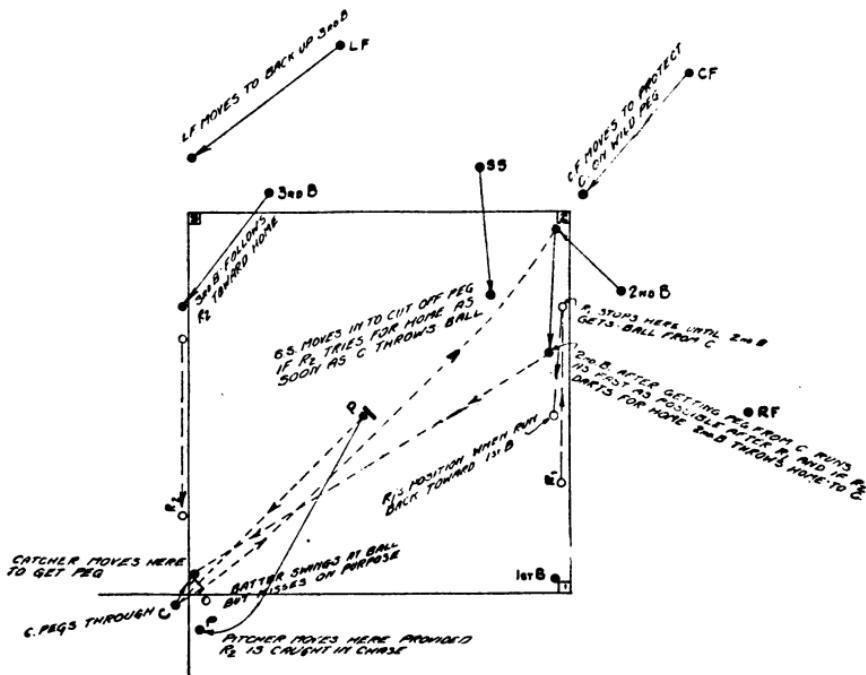
These three plays, really all one play, are very trying and demand close observation. I advise all second basemen to look out for the "hit and run" first of all and if the chances are favorable for its use, tip off the shortstop and let him

When a Baserunner Is Trapped

"The Short and Long Peg"

The Play Used in Connection With a Signal from the Batter

(I) THE SHORT AND LONG PEG - SECOND BASEMAN HANDLES PEG. (CATCHER THROWS THROUGH TO GET RUNNER GOING TO SECOND BASE)



PLAYS AROUND 25 & 2nd B.

cover second, giving you a little longer time to remain in your place. Often no tip-off is necessary, for, on many teams, under such conditions when the "hit and run" is anticipated, the short stop and second baseman cross up the usual procedure and on right hand batsman, the shortstop covers second instead of the second baseman. But this is not a good plan when pursued too often. Just like most things, constant use "wears it out."

On the first play the catcher must peg quickly and with unerring aim just as though he were trying for the baserunner alone going to second. The shortstop or second baseman (as agreed upon) runs up in the path of second to home and ten feet in front of second base. If he sees the man on third is not advancing or has not moved, he permits the catcher's peg to go through unmolested into the hands of the second baseman.

On plays Nos. 2 and 3 the same preliminary steps are taken, but the shortstop or second baseman, as the case might be, cuts off the peg of the catcher in No. 2 and lets it go by in No. 3. The fielder covering second in No. 3 play is thus left to decide for himself what to do with the ball and baserunner. If the baserunner on first base stops near second base, giving the man on third more time to try for home, the second baseman should run after him as fast as he can, all the time driving him back to first. At the same time he should keep his eyes on the man between home and third and if this baserunner "breaks" for home, turn and throw to the catcher. Judgment on this play is absolutely a prime essential. Remember this, if you fail to do the right thing both men are safe and a run has counted. Study the diagrams carefully.

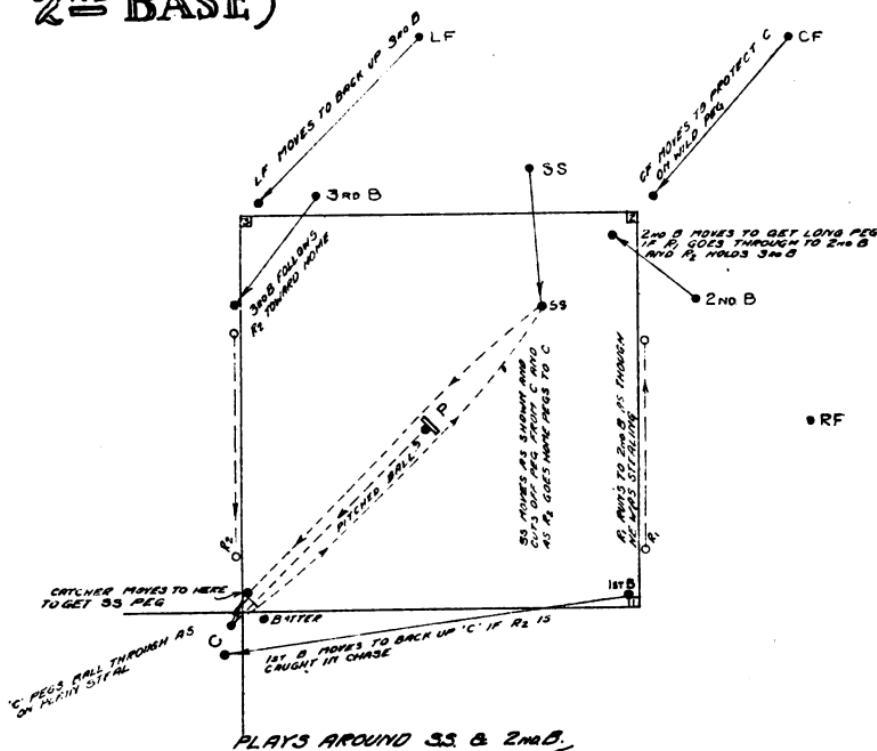
Too much cannot be said concerning the duties of a second baseman in handling relay throws from the outfield. On all balls hit to right field or between right and center fields which go for extra bases, the smart second baseman will go well out into right field and relay the ball from the right fielder or center fielder back to the proper base. On such plays the short stop or first baseman is the "guide" and should yell to the second baseman where the relayed ball should be thrown. This is one play where a second baseman must have a good throwing arm and be accurate in relaying the ball. A fumble of the relay ball will cost a game sometimes. Most of the "hair-

The Play
Used by the
Two Base-
runners and
Without the
Batter

Judgment
Essential

Relay
Throws from
Outfield

**(2) THE SHORT AND LONG PEG.— —
SHORTSTOP TAKES PEG (CATCHER PEGS
THROUGH TO GET RUNNER GOING TO
2ND BASE)**



"raising" outs at third and home, where men are trying to stretch their hits, are due to the perfect handling of the relayed ball.

On all balls hit to left field which go for extra bases the shortstop acts as the relay or pivot man and consequently the second baseman plays the base and acts as "guide." Please study the accompanying diagrams very carefully.

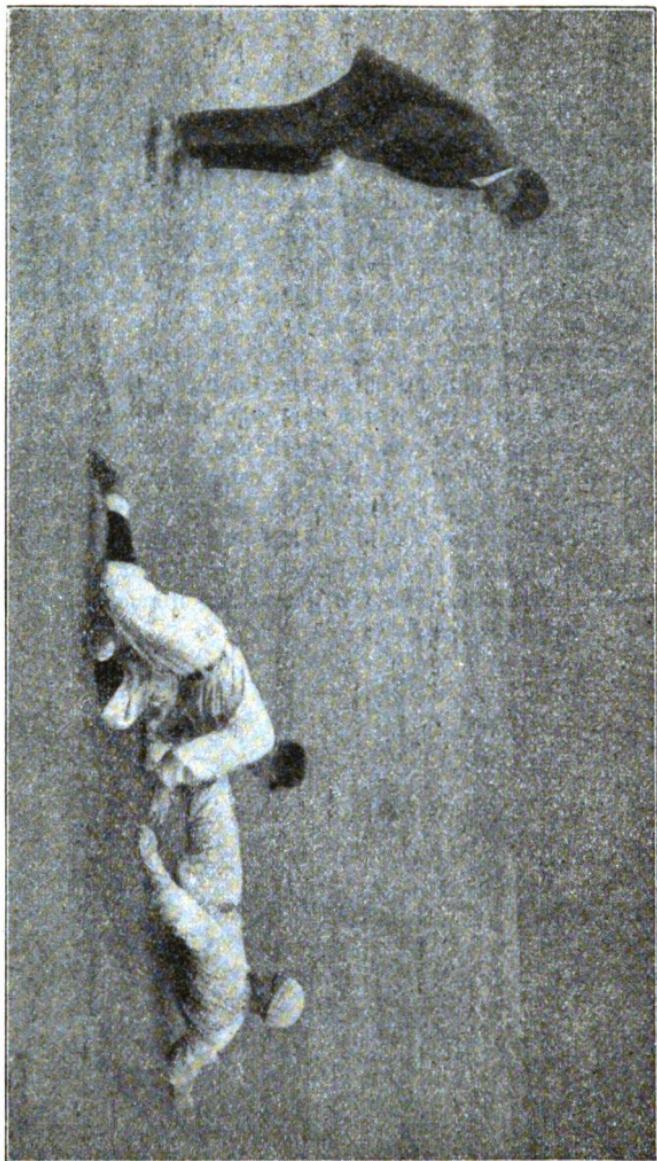
In conclusion, every second baseman ought to be a shrewd tactician. He ought to be a generalissimo in directing team play, but above all else be consistent rather than brilliant. Pay close attention to all that is going on and, instead of holding back, so to speak, make plays go your way. It will help any second baseman if he goes after any and all balls. On the slow, dribbled ball hit down the pocket between first and second do not start in so soon that you will confuse the first baseman and also find you are both unable to make the out, whereas if either of you had let the other have it an out would have resulted, either by you to him or from him to the pitcher. You must judge such hit balls instantly and then yell, "I have it," giving the first baseman plenty of time to cover his base. From the time you get on the diamond until you leave it "play the game."

When
Second
Baseman Is
Guide

Summary

International

Illustrating the "hook slide" and the proper position of the Second Baseman in tagging a runner at second.



**Relative
Importance
of the
Short Stop**

THE SCIENCE OF PLAYING SHORT STOP

The relative importance of the shortstop to any baseball team was acceptably expressed by a certain Big League Manager when he stated, "Give me a real shortstop and I have seventy-five per cent of an efficient infield." The importance of a shortstop is one very good reason why a Manager will pay enormous prices for this player, and why a Coach will spend hours upon hours of careful practice, developing a man for the position. There are few shortstops in the game today who are above the average. Shortstops of the type of Tinker, Bush, Maranville, Barry, Scott, Bancroft, Fletcher and Wagner are few and far between. It is perhaps a toss-up among baseball fans as to which of these notable stars shone the brightest. This book is not a book of individual opinions and therefore, I will not state which one of these players was best in my opinion.

Many happy hours have been spent by baseball fans debating which was the best shortstop and second base combination in the game. It is interesting, as I pointed out in my chapter on second base play, to note that few, if any, shortstops ever reach the throne of stardom without their companion the second baseman. This is ample proof that the shortstop and second baseman are so closely knit together by plays around the infield that one cannot function efficiently without the other. The second baseman, in one sense of the word, is really a left handed shortstop, while the shortstop is a left handed second baseman. With the possible exception of three or four plays around second base, I cannot recall a single play that does not involve both players. Consequently, if the reader would make a careful study of the second baseman's play by putting himself in the shoes of the shortstop who is acting in conjunction with the second baseman, he has perhaps reached a better conclusion as to what the shortstop's duties are, than by reading

**Short Stop
Must Work
With Second
Baseman**

anything I might write. A few helpful suggestions, however, would seem to be in keeping with this chapter.

**Short Stop
Should Not
Try to
"Star"**

First of all, I think the baseball public, as well as some Managers and college Coaches are wrong when they invariably state that such and such a team has a star shortstop. As a matter of fact, few shortstops are stars because of their own ability. The truth is that the science of playing shortstop, if carefully studied, holds out to almost any player from the very beginning the star position on the team. To make myself plain, I mean to say that of all the positions on a team where a man can play the game without purposely being flashy, and yet is flashy despite himself, is the position of shortstop. Take for example, Hans Wagner of the Pittsburgh Club, and known as the "Flying Dutchman." To many players, it seemed that Wagner was all over the infield at the same time. Wagner entered every game with the full intention of backing up every play he could, going after fly balls, watching out for fumbles, directing infield play, and in fact, he was just a rover with wings. Yet one feature that was noticeable about Wagner was that he was never particularly fast on his feet. Let us take for example, the case of Jack Barry of the Philadelphia Athletics. Barry was an exceptional shortstop and was like Wagner, always at the right spot at the right time, and furthermore he always seemed to have the knack of doing the right thing or causing, by his own advice, some other player to do the right thing. Still if we stop to pause and think of Barry's physical makeup, he was not a particular speedy man. The same was true of Arthur Fletcher of the New York Giants. In his palmiest days, Fletcher was a field general and a regular king among expert ground ball players and by big odds, one of the best men on handling thrown balls I ever saw. Yet a careful study of Fletcher's makeup shows that he was not particularly fast on his feet. It seems a worth while suggestion, therefore, to state that the main idea in the science of playing shortstop is to get a man who is endowed with the knack of playing rover on the infield. It is not enough for a shortstop to have a good throwing arm and an exceptional pair of hands, although these are two of the prime essentials of a good shortstop,

but in this day and time, a shortstop must have a genuine knack of anticipating plays, judging speed of ground balls which are hit to him and a cat-like power to observe the minute details of defensive play, which so many players forget when the battle is fought.

A shortstop, however, is no shortstop at all if he cannot cover a large territory on ground balls and short fly balls like "Texas Leaguers," which are hit over his head, toward left field or over toward the third base line. The shortstop should be ready and willing to take the responsibility of fielding any ground balls hit between third base and second base. He should be particularly adroit in handling ground balls hit far over to his right, which the third baseman goes after, but cannot quite reach. He should also be able to go after balls hit almost directly over second base and have an uncanny way of stopping such ground balls with his gloved hand and making a quick recovery, in order to put out the runner.

Shortstop is one position where a player must learn to make ground balls come to him in a "fieldable" way. This is what is generally termed the way a player makes a ball come to him, rather than permitting the ball to play him. It represents the difference between a dependable shortstop and one towards whom the Manager or Coach feels uncertain in a tight pinch. It has become a prime essential that the shortstop should keep his head into the ball, no matter how hard it is batted towards him. A Manager or Coach never feel that a shortstop is to be blamed if he gets in the way of the ball and knocks it down, even though he does not field it. It is this kind of effort that proves that the shortstop is the type that does not care about his fielding average, but puts his honest effort above all else. The man playing shortstop with the view of making a better fielding average than some of his competitors, will eventually wind up on the bench.

No other infielder has as large a territory to cover as has the shortstop. Due to this fact and because he handles more fielding chances than any other player on the team with the exception of the first baseman and catcher, he is given more opportunity to stave off defeat by a quick play, which

**Short Stop
Should
Cover More
Infield Terri-
tory Than
Other
Infielders**

**Play the
Ball—Do
Not Let the
Ball Play
You**

**A Short Stop
Is Often
Called Upon
to Save a
Game**

will defeat the opposition. It is for this reason that a dependable shortstop almost immediately is heralded as a star. From my own standpoint, I have no objection to the flashy type of shortstop, because there must be a certain dash and vigor to the style of play at that position. For example, many shortstops will be especially adept with their gloved hand and after seeing them make a dazzling play or a long stab, the fans will go into ecstasy, but as a matter of fact, the shortstop was fielding the ball in that manner, in order to save time or because he was sure that he could do just as well by playing the ball with one hand as with two. The shortstop had no idea perhaps of making a "grandstand" play.

The "Bluff Peg"

What I have already said in regard to the second baseman bluffing his peg to a given base after a fumbled batted ball, applies to the shortstop as well. For example, with a man on first base and less than two men down where a hard hit ground ball will be fumbled, the shortstop should go after this ball and hurry to bluff his peg and get the man going to first base and turn and snap the ball to second baseman who is covering second base and there the runner who was on first base will be trapped. I especially recommend that all shortstops read the chapter in this book on the "bluff peg." The example I have just pointed out is only one of many. For example, "bluff pegs" can be executed on slow hit ground balls to the shortstop where he had no chance to get the man going to first, but in turn, did the next best thing by bluffing his peg to first base and then throwing the ball to the second baseman who was covering second base.

The Short and Long Peg

I shall not dwell too long on the question of the short and long peg with a man on first and third and where the catcher throws through to second base, because I have fully covered that play in the chapter on the second baseman. Please refer to the diagram which is used to illustrate the play in my chapter on the second baseman. Although this play might seem difficult, it is nevertheless easy, provided the second baseman and shortstop work in harmony as I have suggested in the chapter the second baseman. The shortstop must have the knack of being able to work from

every possible angle in the territory involved. He must also be able to execute his throws very quickly and at the same time accurately. On account of this, constant practice should be given the shortstop until he becomes perfect in the execution of the play. This can be obtained readily in practice. It also teaches the other fielders to cover their positions quickly.

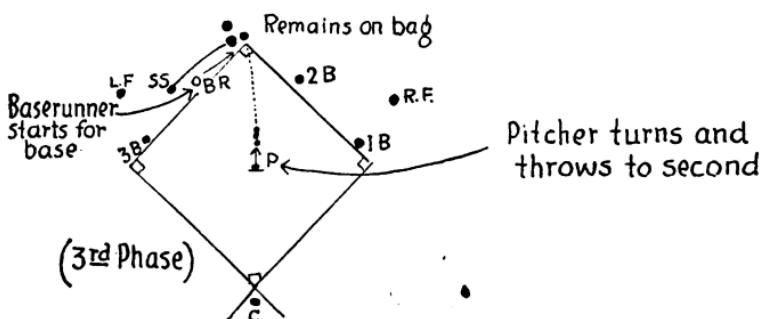
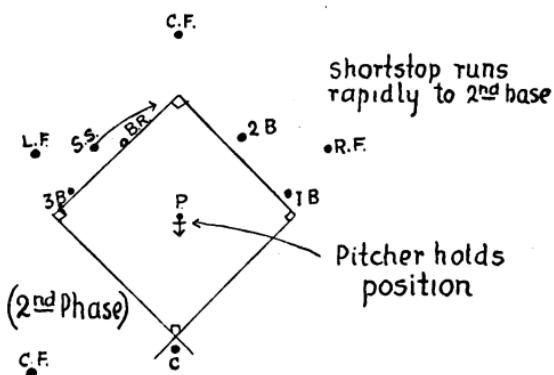
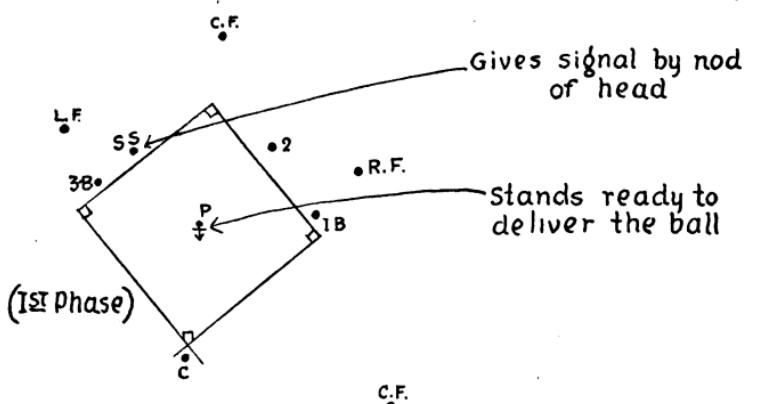
One of the greatest assets that a shortstop can have is that of diagnosing the opposing play. If for example, he figures the "hit and run" play is to be played, he should suggest such a possibility to the second baseman and if the shortstop is ordinarily supposed to cover, he can offset the opposing play by remaining in his usual position. A shortstop should never hesitate to suggest a possible play.

The shortstop must be an excellent man on handling pegs from the catcher to second base and in tagging base runners. He should be especially adroit in holding base runners on second base. There are two kinds of ways under the modern game to do this. Perhaps the best one is the play which the author of this book has noted in the chapter on the pitcher, in which he suggests that the pitcher and shortstop work together with a man on second base who is getting too long a lead, and that the pitcher, upon receiving the signal from the shortstop, then gives the shortstop a start of three strides, and then turns and throws the ball waist high to him at second. If this play is put into operation the shortstop should not give the signal unless the baserunner has a long lead. If he has given the signal he should go with as great speed and as near as possible to second base, so that he will be there in time to receive the ball, thus avoiding a mixup with the baserunner. Please refer to the diagram on this play. In order to keep the runner close to second base with less than two men down and a left handed man at bat, the shortstop can move toward second base and in that way destroy the lead of the baserunner. This can only be done where there is a left handed man at bat. If there is a right handed man at bat, the shortstop must play his regular position and let the second baseman hold the runner on by moving in closer to second base than he ordinarily would do. I have also indicated by diagram other methods used to hold baserunners on second base.

A Short Stop
Must
Anticipate
Opposing
Plays

The Science
of Handling
"Pegs"

THE SHORTSTOP'S SIGNAL TO PITCHER TO CATCH MAN OFF SECOND BASE



One of the chief duties of the shortstop is that of handling relay throws from the outfield. That is to say, with a man or men on bases, the shortstop should go out into the left field in the path of the ball and receive if necessary the relay throw from the left fielder or center fielder and then throw the ball back to the proper base. The guide on this play is the second baseman, who is coming in to cover second base. It is the duty of the second baseman to yell to the shortstop to what base the ball should be thrown. On account of the duties involved in this play the shortstop should have a strong arm and must be able to peg the ball back to the infield accurately.

The Operation
of the
Relay from
the Outfield

It is advisable for a shortstop to practice throwing a ball from any position in his territory to any base on the diamond. Many shortstops are exceedingly accurate in pegging the ball from any position in their territory to second base or first base, but this is not enough. He must be able to throw the ball accurately to third base also. Many games have been lost on wild pegs from the shortstop to third base on a close play by a runner coming from second to third base on an infield play. This is one of the times when a throw must be accurate, because if the ball gets by the third baseman there is no one to back him up as a rule and invariably the runner will score.

Be Able to
Throw from
Any Position

In making an effort for a double play, a shortstop should remember that where no time can be lost in getting off his peg, nevertheless his peg must be accurate. A good coach or manager is continually reminding the shortstop that if the first out of a double play is missed, then both men are safe on the play. It is likewise true that a shortstop must be accurate in diagnosing the position of a double play. That is to say if the shortstop tries for a double play and his peg arrives late at the base, both men are safe. For this same reason, it is very essential that a shortstop as well as a second baseman must be efficient in pegging thrown balls on the run and in covering their bases quickly. The shortstop, in fact, who fails to cover his base quickly is not only destroying his team chances but is detrimental to quick thinking infielders who desire to make the play at second base or the base which he is supposed to cover on the play. This phase of the shortstop's

The Double
Play

play is what is meant by being ahead of the ball or ahead of the play at all times. Constant practice will make such a play come to a shortstop as a matter of knack.

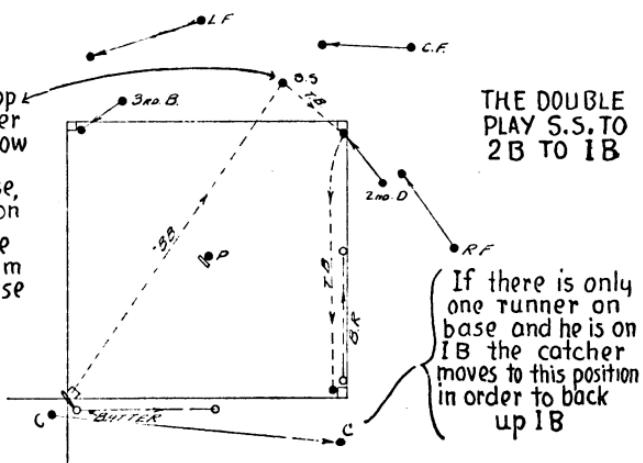
The duties of a shortstop on a double play which arises first at second base are twofold. For example, he is responsible in one part of the double play for fielding ground balls accurately and in turn throwing it accurately or tossing it accurately to the second baseman, who in turn throws the ball to a subsequent base for the second out. On the other hand, it often falls to the duty of the shortstop to be the pivot man and to receive a thrown ball from another infielder and in turn throw it to a subsequent base for another out. In the first play, the shortstop must judge accurately of his position at the time he fields the ball and if he is near second base, he should toss it to the second baseman with a scooping motion, but if he is over twenty feet away from second base or over towards the third base side of his territory, then he should throw the ball as quickly and as accurately as possible to the second baseman. Please study the diagram which I have inserted to indicate the point I make here. Where the shortstop is acting as pivot man in a double play, he should learn to be on second base ahead of the thrown ball and get the ball from the infielder as quickly as possible and throw it to a subsequent base. The shortstop, in order to do this efficiently, must have good foot-work and avoid a run-in with the player coming in to second base. If the shortstop sees that a subsequent play cannot be made after putting the runner out at second base, it is often wise for him to hold the ball rather than to attempt a further play because if he is hurried or off balance, a wild peg will be the result. I would not have the reader understand that double plays which the shortstop enters into are only centered around second base. Such is not the case. Very often it happens that the shortstop is the originator of a double play. For example, on a ground ball to the shortstop with a man on first and second base, the shortstop will very often find it better to try for the double play from third to first base. *The main idea, however, that the shortstop must get is to be fast and accurate and if the double play arises, he should have already judged the speed of the baserunner and batsman.*

The Short Stop Acts as the Pivot Man

THE DOUBLE PLAY AROUND SECOND BASE

(1)

The shortstop should either toss or throw the ball to the 2nd base, depending on the distance between him and the base

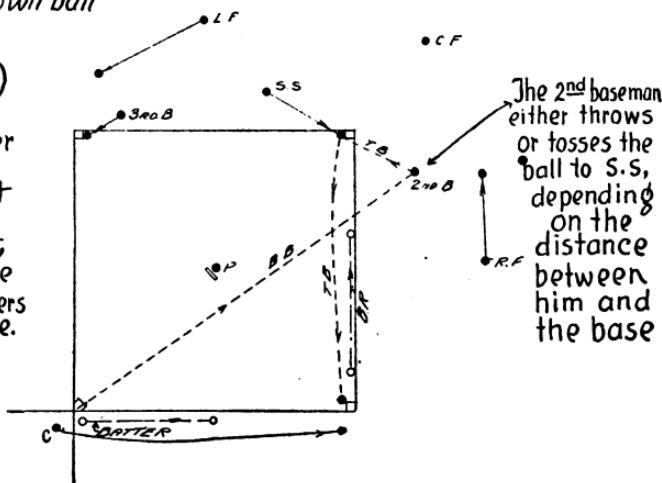


B.B.-Batted ball

T. B.-Thrown ball

(2)

Remember to make the first man a sure out, otherwise both runners are safe.



**Go After
Everything**

The shortstop, since he does play the position which gives him a long range about the infield, should take advantage of every opportunity to handle the difficult chances as well as the easy ones. There are many batted balls which the shortstop alone could field in the area between third baseman and the pitcher. Anyone familiar with baseball knows that there is an alleyway between these two players and although the pitcher and third baseman are supposed to get most of the slow hit ground balls in that area, the shortstop can come in quickly and get these balls on the hop and keep other fielders from being thrown off their balance or drawn from their bases. The shortstop should make up his mind quickly on such ground balls, and if he goes after them, go after them with vengeance, and if he should permit the other infielders to take them, then it is the duty of the shortstop to cover the uncovered base. Most shortstops will find it to their advantage to play closer in on the diamond when there is a left handed man at bat. If there are three men on base and less than two men down and the infield is drawn in close the shortstop can play back in his territory a little more than usual with a right handed man at bat than he could with a left handed man at bat. Small pieces of advice of this kind, if properly pursued, will make a world of difference in a shortstop's play.

**The Science
of Short
Stop Signals**

Since the shortstop is the most natural infielder to give the signals to the outfield which are given by the catcher to the pitcher, he should be, at all times, capable of giving such signals gracefully and with the least possible chance of detection. These signals can be worked out by the shortstop with the advice of the coach or manager.

**Physical
Makeup**

Much has been said by some baseball authorities about the physical requirements that go to make a shortstop. Some claim that a short, stocky man is better able to handle the position. I see no valid reason for any such assertion. The main idea is that the man should be especially fast on his feet, when it comes to changing pace. That is to say he should be able to change his direction without changing his speed. Few large men can do this, but I do not wish to imply that some large men cannot do it. A shortstop should have a wonderful pair of hands and a good throwing arm, and have plenty of nerve to go after ground balls and a happy knack of using either

hand if needs be to stop the flight of a ball. If, after these accomplishments, he can learn to diagnose balls quickly and accurately and in general be the leader on the team, it is all the better.

In conclusion, not only is the shortstop's position one of extreme value on a baseball team, but it is one of the hardest to play efficiently. Yet the reward of the shortstop provided he is efficient, is certainly commensurate with the hardships he undergoes. A shortstop must feel that he can succeed at his position. Many youngsters are born with the natural ability to play the position, but they fail merely because they lack confidence. The proper psychology for a shortstop to follow is if he misses one play or makes an error, it is all in the game and then he should go after the next chance with added enthusiasm. The position of the shortstop implies a certain knack of fielding ground balls and other duties I have pointed out. Poor shortstops can lose more games for a baseball club than any other player but an excellent shortstop can often save more games than the rest of the eight players put together.

Summary

CHAPTER VI

THE SCIENCE OF PLAYING THIRD BASE

Discussion

In relative importance, few people are willing to admit that the third baseman is as valuable, from every standpoint of team play, as the shortstop and second baseman, but in this, I disagree, and I am convinced that a real good third baseman on a college or professional baseball team will, in the long run, if he plays his position correctly, win or save as many games as any other infielder on the team. No other player on the infield gets as many hard hit balls to field as the third baseman, and with the possible exception of the shortstop, no other infielder has as many difficult throws to make as the third baseman.

Fielding Duties

He not only must be able to field hard hit balls, but he must be an expert in handling bunts, and balls which are dribbled down to him and unless he fields them cleanly, means that the batter will get to first base safely. I think I can say, in all truth, that the variety of balls which are batted to the third baseman, is much greater than to any other fielder on the team. Frequently, in one inning we will see a right handed batter knock a ball to the third baseman a mile a minute. The next batter will hit a slow dribby ball just fair by a few inches and the next batter might put a bunt down the third base line. I simply give this illustration to show that the ground balls hit toward third are most difficult to handle of any.

I also think it wise to point out while I am discussing third base play, that on thrown balls to the third baseman, most generally an error or fumble will result in a score for the opposing team, and for this reason, a third baseman must be peculiarly able to handle hard thrown balls to him, either from the infield or the outfield. He should realize that in playing third base, even if he cannot get the ball and tag the man, at the same time he must block the ball and keep it from getting by him in order to save his team a score. Under no circumstances should a third baseman permit the ball to play him. He must play the ball. What I have said in regard to the shortstop getting to his base in time to cover

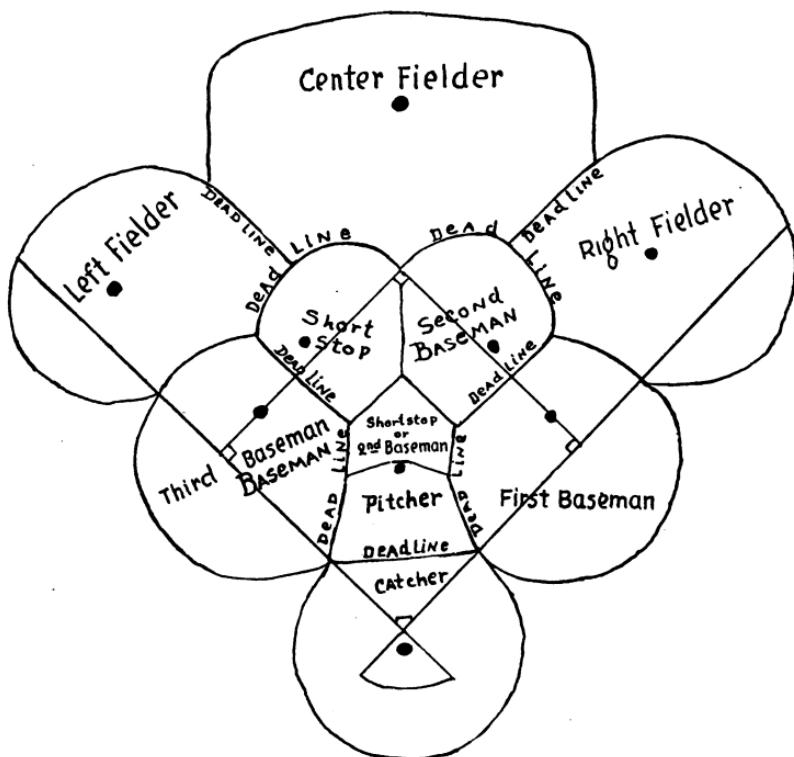


DIAGRAM TO SHOW TERRITORY OF VARIOUS PLAYERS

on all thrown balls, applies to the third baseman as well, and for this reason, an awkward man or a slow man on third base cannot fulfill the position. A third baseman must, in order to keep apace with the rest of the infield and the team's defensive play, have an exceptionally good arm, and be able to cut the ball loose to a given base very quickly because as a general rule a thrown ball from the third baseman has a farther distance to travel.

**Ability to
Cover Large
Territory**

Any coach or manager, who knows baseball, will admit that the type of third baseman most desired is the type that can cover territory on both sides of his body, and who is willing to go after everything within reaching distance without any fear of his fielding average. I have just stated that this was one of the predominating good qualities of an excellent shortstop.

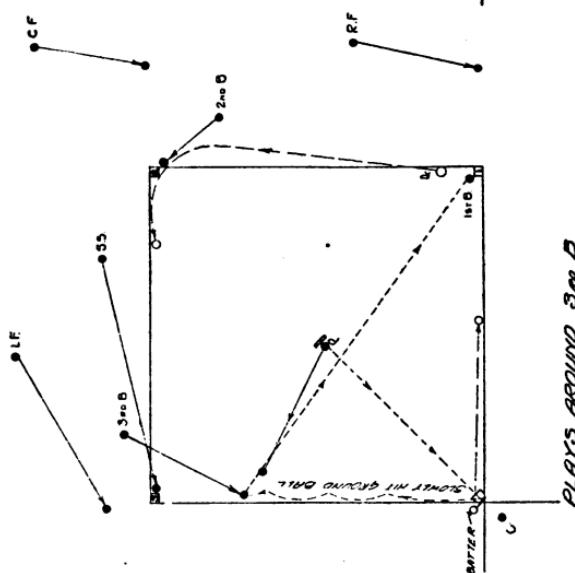
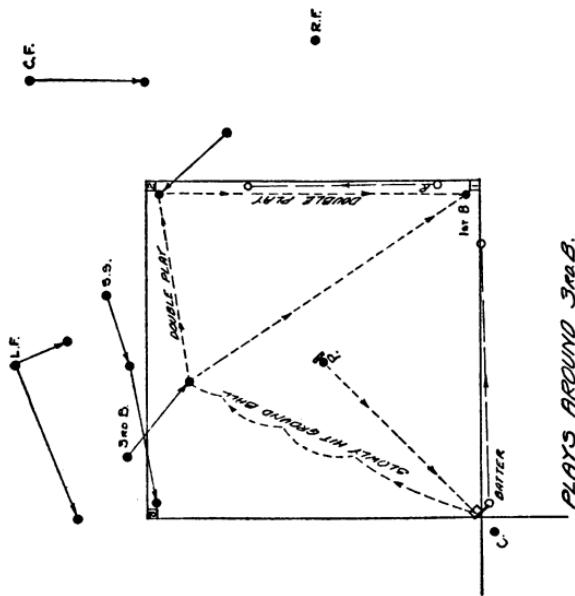
**Ability to
Diagnose
Batters**

A third baseman must keep tab on the batting order, and play for the fast batters and the slow batters. He should be strictly heads up when there appears an opportunity for a bunted ball. On the other hand, he should be keen enough not to be "sucked in" by a tricky batter on an attempted bunted ball and thus let the batter cross him up by knocking a fast ball through him. It is also especially to be desired that on all bunted balls which can be handled either by a third baseman or a pitcher, that the third baseman should try for the bunt and figure out if it is advisable to throw the ball to first base or second base. On all such plays, the third baseman must return to his base quickly and be alert for a play there.

**Ability to
Diagnose
Baserunners**

I desire, also, to call attention to the point that a third baseman should continually watch the man on second base, and never be caught flat footed, if the baserunner on second attempts to steal third. All that is necessary to break up such a steal is for the third baseman to yell out to the catcher to watch out for a steal, and in this way, put fear into the heart of the baserunner on second, and nine times out of ten, if he is contemplating stealing third base, he will refrain from doing so. This is a good example of what I call "anticipating a play."

I would suggest as a means of better fielding that the third baseman play closer to third base in college or professional



A "Hint"

baseball than he was accustomed to play elsewhere, because more of the balls hit to third base will be hit near the third base line. This style was adopted by Heine Groh, with great success. On left handed batters he could shift his position farther from the third base line if he so desired. If a speedy right hand pitcher is pitching, left handed batters are more liable to hit ground balls close to third base and consequently, the third baseman should move closer to the base.

In fielding bunts, any third baseman will find it will be to his advantage to anticipate the bunt, if possible, and play accordingly, but at all times, he should keep his eye on the batter and if he perceives any effort or movement on the part of the batter, he should run in and field the bunt.

What I have already said about bluff throws on a fumbled ball by either the second baseman or shortstop, applies to third baseman and wherever the ball is knocked down but not fielded cleanly, if the third baseman will bluff a peg to first base then turn quickly and throw to the base to which another baserunner is running, nine times out of ten, the latter baserunner will be trapped on the snap throw. It is obvious in a case of this kind, that a coach or any other player on the team cannot remind the man fielding the ball to bluff his peg, since it would give the baserunner who is advancing, a tip off of what was going to happen. The play must be in the fielder's mind beforehand. In all cases of this kind it is imperative that other fielders cover their bases quickly.

Another play which falls upon the shoulders of the third baseman to assist in breaking up, is the "squeeze" play, and I think that a few words to explain the third baseman's part in this play would not be amiss. In my chapter on pitching, I undertook to show that the pitcher was solely responsible for breaking up the "squeeze" play upon final analysis, but I mentioned the fact that a shrewd third baseman or catcher could materially assist the pitcher by reminding him of the possibility of such a play arising. I cannot too strongly impress upon the minds of both the third baseman and pitcher this point, viz: That the "squeeze" play is only effective when the opposition catches the defense of its opponents off guard. If the opportunity in a game arises for the "squeeze" play, and by this I mean if there is a man on third base and

How to Field Bunts**"Bluff Throws"****Assistance in Breaking Up the "Squeeze" Play**

the score is close and a weak batter is at bat, and one man down and the opposing pitcher is going good, then the third baseman should remind the pitcher of the possibility of the play, despite the fact that the pitcher might have also been thinking of the play just the same. The effect of this reminder on the part of the third baseman does not act as a complete block to the "squeeze" play, since if the pitcher fails to throw the ball to the batter in an unbuntable way, and the batter, therefore bunts the ball, no third baseman in the world can get the man going home. The only possible means left open to the third baseman in a case of this kind, in order to break up the "squeeze" is to follow the baserunner on third in home, and field the ball as quickly as possible. Taking it for granted that where the "squeeze" play is pulled with a man on third and second, that the man on third scores, despite the efforts of the third baseman, I caution the third baseman to remember to keep his head up, and watch the man previously on second base as he rounds third so that this man, too, will not score on the play.

A third baseman, unlike most of the other infielders, does not have very much work to do in the way of backing up plays. This is especially significant, in view of what I have previously said concerning a third baseman in handling thrown balls to third base accurately so that a baserunner going to that base will not score. In other words, a third baseman should at all times, cover his base and very few cases arise where he can leave his base for the purpose of backing up any other base or assisting other fielders. I wish to call attention to one particular time, however, when it is advisable for a third baseman to leave his base, viz: on a safe hit to leftfield with a man on second base. See diagram. In this case, it is obvious that the man on second when the batter obtains a hit to the leftfield, will make third base regardless, and in such cases when the ball hit to the leftfielder is thrown back to home in order to catch the man from second going home, there should be some one playing mid-way between third and home in order to cut off the peg from the outfield, if it is found that the peg will be too late to catch the man going home. If the peg is cut off by the third baseman in a case of this kind, it very often happens that he can peg to second base in time to get

Few Instances
Where a
Third Baseman Backs
Up a Play
With Man
On Second

Hit to Left
Field

THE ART OF BACKING UP

T.B. - Throw ball

B.B. - Batted ball

B.R. - Base runner

THIRD BASEMAN MOVES TO
HERE TO CUT OFF PEG FROM
L.F. IF THROW IS TOO LATE TO
GET MAN GOING HOME

FIRST BASEMAN MOVES TO
HERE TO GET PEG FROM
R.F. IF THROW IS TOO LATE TO
GET MAN GOING HOME

Position of pitcher on ball hit
to L.F., C.F. or R.F. with man on 2nd B.

• I — position L.F.

• II — " C.F.

• III — " R.F.

Position of pitcher on ball hit to L.F. or R.F. with man on 1st B.,
2nd and 3rd bases or 1st 2nd and 3rd bases - same as above

the man who made the safe hit as he attempts to gain second base.

It is important that a third baseman be efficient in handling short foul flies in and about third base, and between third base and home, and for this reason, he should constantly practice on catching them. Where, however, a ball is hit, like a Texas leaguer, over third base, it is better for him to permit the shortstop to field it if possible, since the shortstop would be facing the infield when he caught the ball, whereas the third baseman would have his back turned. On all such plays the shortstop and third baseman must work together.

It is most advisable for a third baseman to be taught to look at the player's bench frequently, in order to give the coach or manager the opportunity to give instructions on certain plays, which are bound to arise during any ball game. I think it is obvious in this discussion of third base play, that the reader can surmise that it would be difficult to emphasize any one feature of third base play, which is more important than the other.

A third baseman really represents a "jack of all trades" and his duties combine in part, many of the duties of the other infielders. Good third basemen come few and far between. It takes a man with a good pair of hands to play third base. Preferably, he should be fast but above everything, he must have the unfaltering nerve to go after hard hit ground balls, knocking them down, even if he does not field them perfectly, and a good arm. Steadiness rather than brilliance sums up third base play.

Ability to
Handle
Infield or
Foul Fly
Balls

Keep in
Touch With
Coach or
Manager

Summary

CHAPTER VII

THE SCIENCE OF PLAYING THE OUTFIELD

Outfielders Should Be as Strong On Defense as They Are Offense

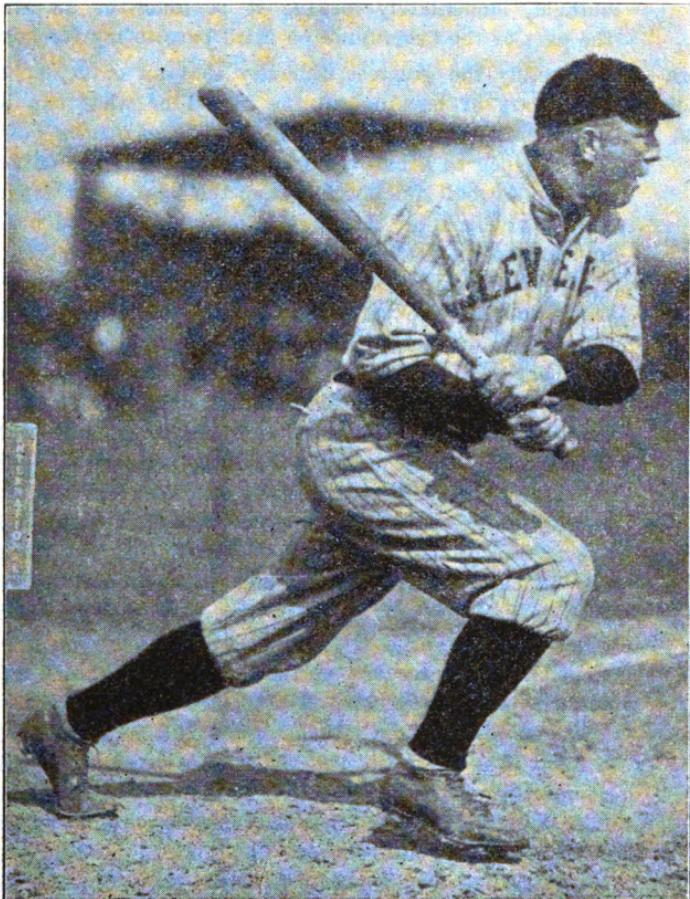
We now go from the infield positions to the outfield positions, and I might say in the beginning that despite so much comment to the contrary, I believe that the defensive element that enters into outfield playing is to be desired quite as much as the batting element. It is very seldom that we hear of the technical side of the defensive work of outfield play. On the other hand, we are continually reminded of the batting strength of certain outfielders, with the result that we lose sight of the stellar work of the exceptionally good defensive outfielder. Instead, we praise the heavy slugger who breaks up ball games with his bludgeon. To a close student of baseball, this defensive work of the outfield represents the most important phase in many games. I shall treat this side of outfield play in this chapter.

The Importance of Knowing the Defensive Outfield Plays

If an ideal outfield was to be obtained by a major league manager or by any college coach, I believe the men would combine both defensive potentiality and batting strength. It is not difficult from the standpoint of a coach or manager to obtain men for an outfield who can judge fly balls accurately, since I believe that any man by continual practice can become an exceptional judge of a fly ball, although I must admit that many men seem to be endowed with a certain knack to begin with, and it only takes a little polish for them to reach perfection along this line. It is not enough, as the game is played today, for an outfielder to be fleet of foot and an accurate judge of a fly ball or a good batter, but he must, as the game is now played, have a wonderful throwing arm and know the *inside details* of defensive outfield play and it is the inside details of outfield play that I shall cover.

Dispense With Care and Grace When Men Are On Base

To begin with, all outfielders, while men are on base, should dispense with their customary ease and grace in catching fly balls with their hands below their shoulders and palms upward and instead, they should catch fly balls in such cases with their arms in a throwing position, thus saving a loss of time in getting the ball away to the base to which they are required to throw the ball. This, of course, is particularly true where

*International*

"TRIS" SPEAKER, twelve years in baseball and still going strong—One of the few natural hitters in the American League, finds no ball too hard to hit, as can be seen by his record of the least number of strike outs in a season. His batting average for the twelve years that he has been in the big league has been around .350. His fielding is a finished product of the game.

there is a man on third base and a fly ball is hit to short outfield, immediately making it possible for an attempt on the part of the baserunner on third base to try for home.

**Outfielders
Must Back
Up Infield**

Possibly the greatest difficulty that an outfielder confronts is the art of backing up the infield or what can be better termed, keeping always *in the line of the thrown ball*, so that where a peg to a base gets by the infielder, the outfielder can recover the ball quickly and keep the baserunner from advancing. For example: If there is a man on second base and he appears to be getting a long lead and the catcher gives the "pitch out" signal to the pitcher, and the pitcher "pitches out" so that the catcher can make an attempt to get the baserunner on second, and when the throw is executed it gets by the second baseman, the centerfielder should be alert and on his toes and recover this pass ball quickly, and thus save the catcher from an error and an advance on the part of the baserunner. Consequently, the first action that pertains to the art of backing up from the outfielder's standpoint, is to keep "heads up" where there are men on bases, and where the possibility is open for the execution of a thrown ball by any infielder to another infielder to keep in the line of the thrown ball by moving with the play, and thus making a quick recovery or overthrow. Any outfielder must remember that unless he reaches perfection in this branch of outfield play, he can never hope to become a par excellent outfielder. For example: Let us say that there is a man on first base and a fly ball is hit to the leftfielder. He catches the ball and of course throws the ball to the shortstop, who is covering second base. To many, the other outfielders would have nothing to do on this play, since there is but a slight possibility that such a thrown ball would get by both the shortstop and the second baseman on the return, but there is a possibility that just this very thing will happen. Therefore, it should be taken care of, and the rightfielder should, as I have pointed out, keep in line with the ball and move in behind the second baseman and thus shatter any possibility of the ball going wild and the baserunner advancing. The same identical play arises where there is a man on first base and a fly ball is hit to the rightfield, in which case the leftfielder should get in line with the play, and back up second base. To show how far

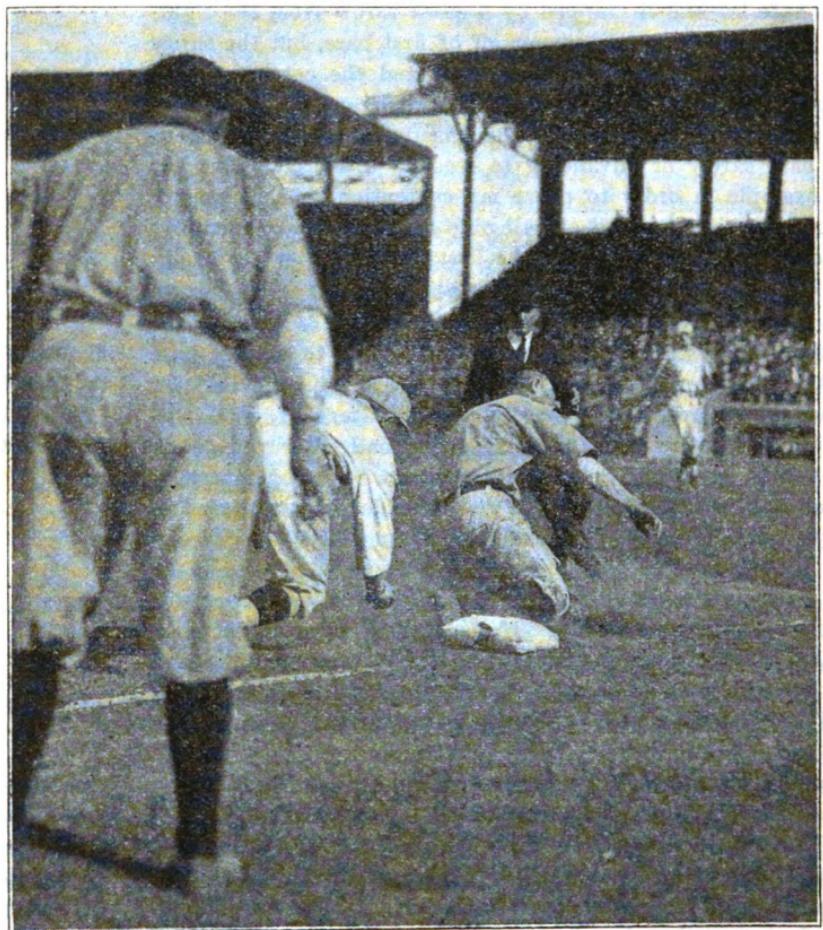
this backing up business goes, and how perfectly it can finally be worked out, let us say that in the case of where the man on first base feels that the fly ball hit to the rightfielder is going for a safe hit and is trapped by a quick throw from the rightfielder to double the baserunner off of first base, but the throw goes wild, it is here that the pitcher and the catcher should enter into the play, and back up the first baseman, thus avoiding the merest possibility of the baserunner getting back to first base safely or advancing to second. I merely point out this example in order to prove my contention that no matter what play arises in baseball, all nine men have an opportunity of being in on the play. If the best outfielders are carefully watched, it will be found that they shift on every ball thrown by a fielder. They seem to have a *catlike* way of being alert.

All outfielders should learn to throw the ball to a given base quickly and accurately and in most cases, hop the ball in, rather than throw it on the fly. One feature of good out-fielding is to know what to do with the ball after you get it and this is especially true where time can be saved in trying for an out at the base nearest the outfielder in preference to the base farther away. For example, where a man is on second base and the batter gets a safe hit, the outfielder should be able to tell immediately whether it is advisable to peg for home or peg to second base. If the man is going to score on the peg home, despite a perfect peg, it is obvious that the best thing to do is to save the possibility of the man who hits safely getting to second base when he could have been held on first base.

Any man who has played in the outfield notices the difficulty arising in deciding which outfielder is to catch fly balls hit in territory which can be termed mutual. This difficulty is frequently brought home when fly balls drop safe in the outfield when either of the outfielders could have caught the ball if they had not thought the outfielder opposite them was to catch it. It would be surprising to the average fan to know the number of games lost by such fly balls going for safe hits, due to the indecision of the outfielders. The best and simplest way to destroy this indecision is for the outfielders to work together, and when both arrive within reach of the fly ball, remember that the man who yells first "I have it"

Know What to Do With Ball After You Get It

No Excuse for "Easy" Fly Balls Dropping Safely



International

TY COBB sliding into third. Ty is the one nearest approach to absolute baseball perfection. In batting, base-running, fielding and throwing he stands pre-eminently the greatest player of all time.

is to take the ball and the other outfielder is to give him the right-of-way. If outfielders will only remember this cardinal point, there will be no difficulty on fly balls of this kind.

It is not only necessary for outfielders to know and observe the fundamental rules of backing up the infield, but it is just as important for them to back up each other. For example: Where a base hit goes between two outfielders, and one gets in front of the ball first, it immediately falls upon the outfielder behind the man about to field the ball to back him up so that, if the ball gets by the first outfielder, the second outfielder can make a quick recovery and hold the base-runner to as few bases as possible. There should never be any indecision on plays of this kind.

It oftentimes happens with a man on third base and less than two men down, that a *foul* fly ball is hit to either the right or leftfielder. In such cases, the left and rightfielders should judge of the favorable or unfavorable chances of the man on third base scoring on the peg home, and if the score is close and the circumstances unfavorable, they should let the ball drop foul, unless, of course, the run on third would be of no value in deciding the ultimate outcome of the game. It will help an outfielder to know the score and the batting ability of the man at bat and also of the man following the man at bat. Thus if the "head of the batting order" was up the outfielder under all circumstances ought to get the ball for an out, except in cases where the winning or tying run is on third base. The outfielder should also figure how many men are on base and if he catches the foul fly, it often happens he can keep other runners from advancing a base, especially when the run on third is not the tying or winning run. Generally speaking, however, the question of whether to catch the foul fly or let it go depends upon the inning played and whether the outfielder is in pegging distance of home plate.

It is not always best for outfielders to attempt "shoestring" catches with men on base, except where the score is unusually close and the winning run is on base. Even under such circumstances, unless an outfielder figures that he has an equal chance of getting his hands on the ball, he ought to play the ball for a safe hit rather than take the chance of the batted ball

**Outfielders
Must Back
Up Each
Other**

**The Foul
Fly With a
Man On
Third Base**

**Be Careful
of "Shoe-
string"
Catches**

getting by him and rolling for an extra base hit. This feature of outfield play is highly important, and when once perfected, is bound to show that the outfield is above the average.

It would take books upon books to write all of the science pertaining to outfield play, but before I conclude, I must point out that any outfielder, before he can become a star in his position, must know something about the operation of the relay throw on extra base hits. See diagram. In my chapter on the shortstop and second baseman, I pointed out their duties and I mentioned the fact that it was seldom that baseball fans appreciated the value of accurate work in this connection. No doubt the reader recalls many games where the stands went wild because of some close play made at second or third or home base on a relay thrown from the outfield to the infield. It is in such close plays that the perfection of the relay throw comes into full view. An outfielder, consequently, must judge instantly upon recovering the ball on an extra base hit, whether or not he should attempt to throw the ball directly to the base in question or relay the ball to the shortstop or second baseman, who has gone out to meet the relay throw. It must be remembered also that if the ball is relayed to the pivot man, second baseman or shortstop, it is quite as important for the outfielder to throw the ball to him and with great speed as it is for him to throw direct to a base. It very often happens that this speed and accuracy represents the difference between the umpire calling a man safe or calling him out.

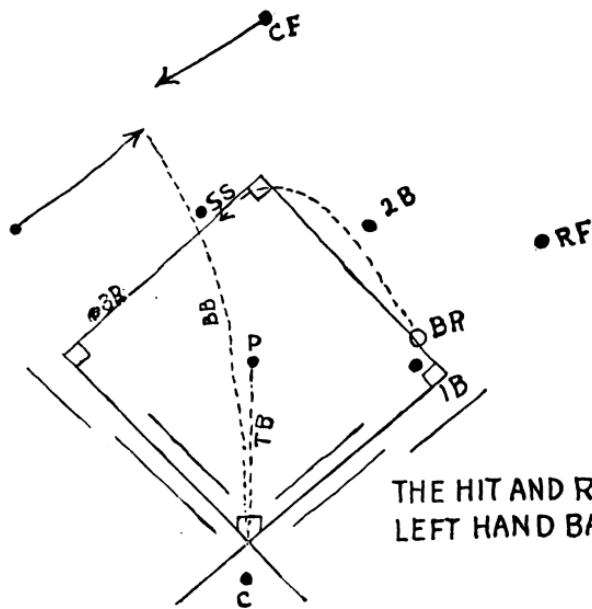
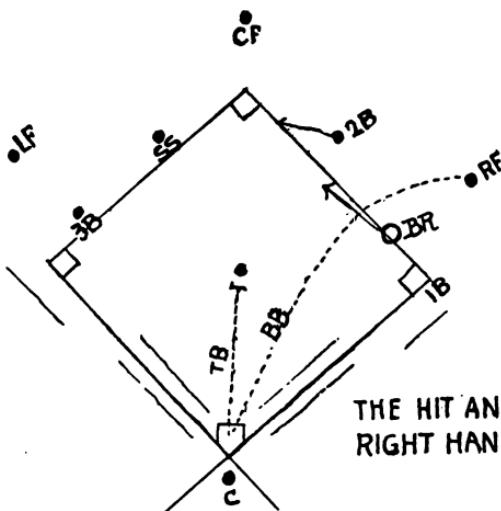
**Play for
Each Bats-
man**

An outfielder should observe each and every batter that comes to the plate and he should take cognizance of whether or not the pitcher is in the "hole" or has the batter in the "hole" and thus keep himself in readiness for the prospective batted ball. All outfielders, by knowing the signals given by the catcher to the pitcher for the thrown ball, will play a better outfield. The catcher's signal is easily observed by the shortstop, who in turn can give the signal to the outfield by some body movement in a casual way.

**Signal
Work by
Short Stop**

Summary

There is a great deal more to outfield play than the mere fielding of fly balls and heavy batting. Please study carefully all the diagrams. Remember that a fatal error in failing to back up a play properly or moving quickly is just as much



to be deplored as if a batter fails to hit safely at a crucial moment of the game. So many players, even those in the major leagues, fail to realize the "inside" baseball that goes along with the outfield position. It is significant that many outfielders perform their duties unusually well until a crucial moment arrives and then they fall down on the job. The fans might not notice the flaw but the coach or manager can tell instantly. "Tris" Speaker is often noticed playing clear up on the infield. He is "in" on everything. All great outfielders refuse to be left out on a play. They get "in" on everything.

An outfielder should, upon coming on the field, notice the way the wind blows and the diamond. In warming up practice, he ought to judge how accurately ground balls bounce. In general, he should instructively know any little detail that later on might help him during the particular game at hand.

**"Bluff
Peg" One
of Most
Difficult
Plays**

CHAPTER VIII THE "BLUFF PEG"

I have spoken frequently throughout this book of the "bluff peg" and since it is so very important to infield play in general I will discuss the various steps in its manipulation and give a few sidelights into when it is best used. The "bluff peg" looks easy to put into execution, but as a matter of fact, it is one of the most difficult and technical plays known to baseball. To prove the truth of this assertion, I have noticed that in the college baseball season of 1921, I observed only two bluff pegs work successfully and in watching minor and major league games during the past decade I have seen but a score or more manipulated. It has occurred to me that almost every time the "bluff peg" is executed, it has failed to work, not because the play was essentially wrong, but more because the player who put it into use failed to make a perfect bluff.

The "bluff peg" becomes a useless play unless it is perfectly executed and no doubt this is one very good reason why it is not used more frequently. It is also the one play in the game that must be pulled under the most perfect strategic conditions and without any "give away" to the opposition. Unless the bluff peg is tried under such conditions, the timely moment ceases to exist and the opportunity is lost and then it is pure boneheadedness to try the play at all for it will be a failure.

Although it is highly important or rather imperative for the particular fielder expecting to execute the "bluff peg" to grasp the opportunity presented him for pulling the play, it is just as important for the player opposite him (by this I mean the fielder covering the base to which the baserunner is proceeding) to be alert enough to cover his base quickly and work in perfect harmony. Thus, although only one man can start the perfect "bluff peg" play, it takes two or more to put it into final execution.

Perhaps the most frequently used "bluff peg" is the peg operated by the catcher with a man on first and a man on third base. If the man on first starts for second base, it is poor baseball for the catcher to hold the baseball and per-

**Must Have
Perfect
Conditions**

**The Most
Frequently
Used "Bluff
Peg"**

mit the baserunner to steal second without any struggle, consequently, the catcher will either peg through to second base or he will use the "bluff peg" and attempt to fool the man on third base and then catch the man off third. I shall not discuss here just which play is the most advisable since I have already done so in my chapter on "The Catcher." In this chapter, I only desire to tell what constitutes a "bluff peg."

**Naturalness
of Move-
ment a
Requisite**

First of all, it is imperative for the fielder operating the play to remember that the more perfect his bluff is, the more certain he is of catching the baserunner asleep. The sum and substance of all "bluff pegs" is simply tricking the baserunner into believing that the ball is to be thrown to some other base than the one to which he is going and if a baserunner believes this, it is but natural that he will overrun the base to which he is advancing leaving open the opportunity for a quick snap throw and a quick tag for an out. The bluff peg is ruined if the fielder draws back to peg and makes a half way follow through and looks at the runner out of the corner of his eye. It is obvious that any baserunner with average intelligence would see what was to take place and hold his base and the ultimate outcome would be that the man on first stole second and the man on third would give the catcher a big laugh. This is exactly why I state that the man who first starts the "bluff peg" must be very natural in his movement, in fact so natural that the man running bases believes the ball is on its way to another base. Many players hurry their "bluff pegs" and refuse to act naturally under advantageous conditions for the play and by their own tenseness indicate just what they are going to do.

**Must
Anticipate
Opportunities**

I always found it of material value to me to let my arm follow my eyes when I pulled the "bluff peg." That is to say, if a player will keep his eyes glued to the base, other than the one to which he really expects to throw, his movement will be more deceptive and certainly more natural. This is what I mean by "follow through." Any player who desires to perfect his "bluff peg" must always anticipate opportunities which might arise for the bluff. He should forget all about the baserunner who is to be trapped

and for the time being, permit the opposing players to think he is about to make a fool of himself by trying an impossible play or better still, a play different from the one finally executed. It not infrequently happens that a shortstop fumbles a hard hit ground ball with a man on first base and then remains in a haze after retrieving the ball. Suppose for example, that such a thing did happen and the shortstop makes a quick recovery of the fumbled ball, there still remains the golden opportunity of trying the "bluff peg"—the one play which might save him an error, for it is reasonable to suppose that the man advancing to second base will not slide but stand up and if the shortstop makes a perfect bluff peg to first base, the man going to second will doubtless overrun second base. Here then is the timely moment. The shortstop traps the ball, then bluffs his peg to first base, and the second baseman (the second cog in the manipulation of the play) covers second base and the runner is tagged out. This is a simple example of the "bluff peg." The beauty about the play is that the harder the ball is hit and the greater seem the chances for the man to reach first, the greater is the opportunity for the successful "bluff peg" in a case like this. This play can be executed with equal success by either a second baseman or third baseman, pitcher or catcher (the latter two in handling bunted balls), on fumbled ground balls. Still another feature that is well worth noting is that the play can be made with two men on base or three men on base or one man on base, or under any conditions where there has been a fumbled ball and a quick recovery. It is always more opportune to have the "bluff peg" executed by a fielder behind the baserunner.

I should not like for the reader to get the impression that the "bluff peg" can only arise after a fumbled ball. Such is not the case at all. For example, in the play mentioned above, the shortstop or second baseman, where the ball was hit to him, could have made the identical play on a slowly hit ground ball, which was so slow that he could not have thrown the man out at first base. The minute he sees that he cannot get the batter going to first base or the man going to second base, he could still bluff the ball to first

Making the
"Bluff Peg"
On Slowly
Hit Ground
Ball

base and then snap the ball to the second baseman and try for the runner who might overrun the base. The shortstop should figure this way—"Even if the man is not trapped still I can attempt the play for I have everything to gain and nothing to lose." If the shortstop sees he cannot get the man at first he should do the next best thing. I speak of the shortstop, but the same principle applies to all infielders under the same condition. Let me point out this simple illustration. There is a man on first base and a man on second base and no one down. The batter bunts the ball to the pitcher who fumbles the ball temporarily, but immediately recovers, but too late to catch the man going to first base. The next best thing he can do is to attempt the "bluff peg" to first base and then trap the baserunner rounding third base.

**Some Uses
of the
"Bluff Peg"**

It will be noted that in each instance which I have pointed out the "bluff peg" is employed only when the baserunner who is to be trapped is advancing to a base under full headway and the possibilities are against his sliding into the given base. It is obvious the "bluff peg" should only be attempted under this condition, where baserunners are advancing or the offense, if they are playing good baseball, should be advancing. On the other hand, the "bluff peg" can be used under other conditions. For example, let us say that a man is on second base and the batsman hits a hard grounder to the shortstop who fumbles but makes a quick recovery, but too late to get the man going to first base. Nevertheless, the shortstop goes through with a perfect "bluff peg" to first base and then traps the runner rounding third base. Many of my readers would be surprised to know that this "bluff peg" works with marked success. This play, like all the others, is made easier if the ground ball is hit harder or in a more disadvantageous position for a fielder to handle.

Summary

I could cite many other examples to illustrate the use of the "bluff peg." Almost any fielder of experience should cultivate the habit of thinking about bluff pegging on fumbled balls when there are men on base. The technique of the play requires practice and the aim of all fielders who desire to use the play successfully should be to bluff realis-

tically enough to fool the baserunner. A good baserunner will never be trapped by a "bluff peg" if he too, anticipates the play. Quick thinking on the part of the baserunner and sideline coaches is a sure defense to all "bluff pegs." As I said before, however, the fielder employing the "bluff peg" has everything to gain and nothing to lose, provided his judgment is keen enough to know when to try it and when not to after fumbling a ground ball or handling a slow hit ground ball.

CHAPTER IX

THE SCIENCE OF DEFENSIVE SIGNALS

Discussion

There are many advantages to a system of signals calculated to help the defense of a team. By this I mean signals used by fielders themselves and between themselves and between coach and fielders while a team is in the field. The simple reason of all defensive signals is this—each player at one time or another sees what he thinks is a good opportunity to catch the offense off guard by some quick and well executed defensive play, in which play he will take part, but unless he can secretly communicate with another player the play cannot be properly executed and in fact will amount to nothing at all. This is the reason then for defensive, or if you choose fielder's signals. These signals might be worked out by a coach in practice or even supplied to meet a particular offense before the game, but as a rule in a game such signals when given arise in the minds of fielders. Thus it is that such signals are the hardest from which to get results. On the other hand, I am frank to admit that when a brainy fellow puts such signals into execution and succeeds in carrying out his plans—the result obtained is the highest type of baseball. Often as a "fan" I have watched an Archer, Kling, Schalk, Evers and others pull such signals and see them succeed while I stood aghast at the perfect manipulation. Let me also say this. Such signals and their resultant plays require very earnest and thorough practice as well as clever headwork and harmonious team work. Any pitcher can tell how hard it is to catch a man off second base under any condition, but he will also admit that a cracker jack shortstop who times his signal work and foot work is a great help in putting such a play into execution. See diagram. This is just one instance of bona fide signal work on the defense. We all hear of the great fielding of Speaker and wonder how he does it. One instant he is in close catching a "grass cutter" and the next back against the wall. The truth is he plays the curve, the fast ball and the slow one and furthermore he gets every signal the catcher gives to the pitcher. This is simply another example of the use of defensive signals. I could illustrate my point

with hundreds of examples, but it suffices to say that no team, regardless of its batting and fielding strength, can climb the ladder to a championship without the use of defensive signals, whether such signals are body signals or oral tip offs.

I should like to impress indelibly upon the minds of the reader that a coach or manager should not be forced to give defensive signals. Their job should be complete when the team takes the field. This, of course, is not true of the offensive signals in which work a coach or manager is the central figure. But in defensive signal work, the burden of giving the signals rests entirely upon the particular fielder whose duty compels him to try for a play. The coach or manager can only supply the "headwork" in practice. It is therefore, obvious that such signals when given, require skill and the unusual ability to seize or grasp in the twinkling of an eye any offensive weakness in the opposing team. I am continually reminding my team to study the situation of defense by analyzing or better still by anticipating the opposing offense. What I mean can be illustrated in a simple manner. Any player who is a close student of the game knows that a batter is more liable to pull the "hit and run" play when he has the pitcher in the hole, than he is under less promising conditions. A player who is well coached is given still other pointers for the hit and run, etc. Thus if the fielder will say to himself: "If I were at bat instead of the fellow there now, I would figure on pulling something," and immediately thereafter start in to break up the play by tipping off his team mates, half of all signal work on the defense would be solved. The truth is, not over two men in a hundred are quick witted enough to do this, no matter how simple it appears in black and white. A coach or manager often cannot take time to flash a tip-off around to his team for he might have his mind on another phase of the game. Again I say, all he can do is tell them when to expect the plays on defense and it remains for the players to put over a "break" for them. I think it would be wrong for a coach or manager to have such an extended system of defensive signals that no room would be left open for headwork on the part of the players.

It is the
Duty of a
Player to
Give De-
fensive
Signals

I am ever mindful that part of a coach's or manager's duty is to develop mind and body as well as win games.

I have thought over the various ways of presenting the subject in this present chapter and have concluded that it is best to take up the work of each player separately. I, of course, will not indulge in a discussion of just when the signals ought to be used, since that matter properly falls into the chapters dealing with each of the several fielders. I shall only give in detail the signals on the defense which are used by various fielders.

THE CATCHER

The Catcher's Signals

A catcher should carry in his repertoire the following signals:

- Fast ball—to pitcher and to shortstop.
- 2. Slow ball—to pitcher and to shortstop.
- 3. Curve ball—to pitcher and to shortstop.
- 4. Pitchout—to pitcher and to shortstop.
- 5. Peg to first by catcher on pitchout ball.
- 6. Peg to second by catcher on pitchout ball.
- 7. Peg to third by catcher on pitchout ball.
- 1A Fast ball—to pitcher and shortstop with man on second.
- 1B Slow ball—to pitcher and shortstop with man on second.
- 1C Curve ball—to pitcher and shortstop with man on second.

This gives the catcher a total of 10 signals which he uses. I might say that the catcher's signals should not be given by one finger, two fingers, etc., since it leaves too much room for mistake. Some movement of the hand or glove is best, recalling of course, that the shortstop is getting the signals and flashing them to the outfielders who can play the fast ball, the curve, etc., thus helping carry out a perfect system of defense. The signals 1A, 1B and 1C are used to indicate to the pitcher certain thrown balls wanted by the catcher just as 1, 2 and 3 are used, the only difference being that 1A, etc., are used when a baserunner occupies second and might look for the catcher's signal. I am aware that such methods are not often used in college baseball but I have



O'NEIL, of Cleveland, is here shown in a characteristic pose. This stance is an excellent one when there is a man on base because the catcher can shift his feet very easily.

**When to
Use Signals
5, 6 and 7**

seen several college teams get wise to a catcher's signals in just that way and proceed to drive the pitcher out of the lot.

The signals 5, 6 and 7 are necessary under certain conditions. Particularly are they useful when a catcher or baseman are permitting a runner to get a big lead only to be caught off his base by a quick snap peg on a pitch out signal to the pitcher. All catchers should have the signals 5, 6 and 7 acknowledged back to them by the particular baseman who is to handle the peg. For example, after signal 5 is given, the first baseman should "kick up" some dirt with his feet. The catcher then knows he has caught the signal.

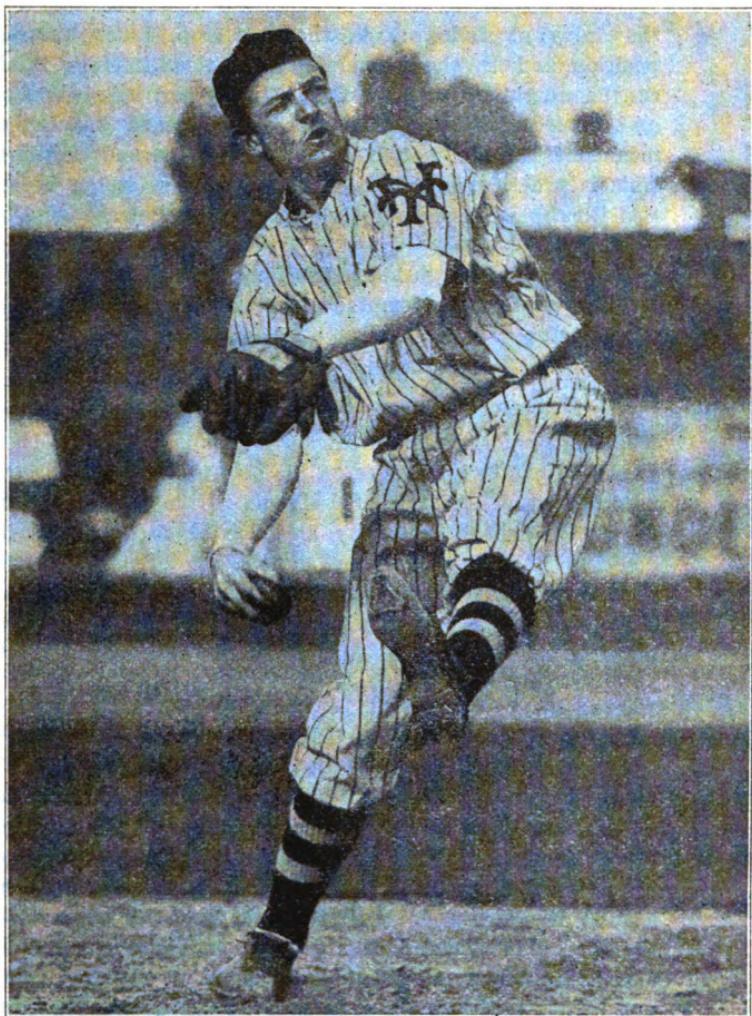
**The
"Pitchout"
Signal**

The signal 4, or pitch out, is quite the best and yet the worse one used by a catcher. A catcher who gets in the habit of using the pitch out on every occasion can cause the pitcher to get in a hole. At the same time, it comes in handy. Recall how the pitch out signal helps break up the "squeeze" and "hit and run" plays and the steals. The truth is, a catcher must not be afraid to use the pitch out and yet he must not make it a habit. A great deal depends upon who is pitching, etc. In big league ball, the pitch out is seldom used because the pitcher rarely ever grooves a ball, but it is used with deadly effect when it is used at all by a smart catcher. A catcher can indicate by his gloved hand whether he wants a high or low, inside or outside ball. No signal is necessary. See the accompanying diagram illustrating various methods of giving all the signals referred to in this part of the chapter.

THE PITCHER

**Signal Work
of Pitcher**

The pitcher has no signals to give but *many to catch*. He has all the catchers' signals to catch; the shortstop's signals to peg to second to catch a runner there and the third baseman's signal to throw to first when a coach or manager works the play by that method. I never have used a tip-off signal to the pitcher to throw to first base and I believe such a signal is almost useless. Of course, a third baseman can see first base plainly and transmit a signal to the pitcher to throw to that base, but it rarely succeeds, in fact not as frequently as when the pitcher works the throw on his own initiative. It is highly important, however, for the shortstop to give a signal to the pitcher to throw to second base. I coach my team on



International

CHRISTY MATHEWSON, beloved as baseball's most brilliant pitcher. Mathewson had wonderful control and a "Fadeaway" ball which was most difficult to diagnose. Mathewson has done more for clean baseball than any other player. He is here shown in full windup—a study in body rhythm.

that play as follows: A, the shortstop, takes his regular position and B, the runner, gets his lead. If A thinks B can be caught by a throw from the pitcher, he gives a signal and immediately thereafter darts for second base. In the meantime, the pitcher pauses and then turns and throws to A. This is practical baseball signal work. Try it out sometime. See illustration accompanying chapter on Science of Playing Shortstop.

A pitcher, although not giving any signals, must know them all and join in the attempted plays to the extent of his ability.

FIRST BASEMAN

The Signal Work of the First Baseman

No signals are given except the "acknowledging signal" to the catcher of a quick snap peg on a pitchout indicated by No. 5 in my paragraph on catcher's signals. The first baseman when the player's bench is on his side of the field, also transmits the coach or manager's signals to the rest of the infield to play in close for a play at home or to play back for a double. This is one of the signals on defense that can be given by a coach or manager to a team in the field. Another similar signal is manipulated by third baseman when the player's bench is on the third base side of the field.

SECOND BASEMAN AND SHORTSTOP

Discussion

These two positions are so much alike that it has often been said that men who play the positions opposite each other get to look alike. I had a youngster once ask me in midseason, "Coach, ain't you never going to bawl out anybody except short and second?" I told him that I never expected to quit doing so until they realized what team-work meant around the keystone. I have never seen any team succeed that had a bonehead shortstop or second baseman, and let us also add catcher. Somehow a coach relies upon perfection at these three positions for a defense. More games are won and lost at second base than anywhere else. Take Sam White or Sammy Reid at Princeton, Evers and Tinker of the Cubs, Hornsby of the Cardinals, Maranville at Boston, Fletcher of the Giants, or Sewell of Alabama and Cleveland, give them to a team and "presto" the team is made over into a great defensive machine. But I must not dwell too long on this "hobby" of mine. It is sufficient to say that a shortstop,

second baseman and catcher of A-1 class represent one-half of the entire potentiality of the defense. I say this after considering the value of a Mathewson, Johnson or Brown, or in college baseball of George Sisler, a very wonderful pitcher as well as a first baseman.

Strange to say, neither the second baseman nor shortstop give any body defensive signals except of a minor nature. The shortstop of course signals to the pitcher on an attempt to catch a man at second. He also gives to the outfield all thrown ball signals of the catcher to the pitcher, such signals only being of two kinds—A, fast or slow ball and B, curve ball. It is not necessary to give a separate signal for the slow ball. He can transmit these to the outfield by pawing with his right foot for A and left foot for B, or by some other less obvious way. Outside of these signals neither a shortstop nor second baseman gives a body signal.

The question is often raised—"Do not the shortstop and second baseman have signals to break up the 'hit and run' or the delayed or double steal, etc.?" To this question, I can answer yes and no, and still be correct. As a matter of fact, if any signals are given, they are mere tip-offs by word of mouth which for the lack of a better name, must be termed signals. If the opposition shows, for example, that a right hand batter is to "pull" the "hit and run" (remember the ball is to be batted if possible through the customary place where the second baseman plays), the shortstop will tell the second baseman to "watch out" or "I will cover" and that is all that is necessary to perfect the break since there is a common understanding between the two men. So it is with a double steal between men on first and third. Perhaps it has been decided by the coach or manager that the shortstop is to take the long peg from the catcher since he has the strongest arm and that the second baseman will come in close for the short peg. Before the play comes off the shortstop or second baseman will yell, "I've got the long peg" or "I'll handle the short peg," and again that covers the break and the defense is thus perfected.

Of course, such word of mouth sayings are signals in a way but still they are not transmitted to other players by any movement. In fact, what they amount to is a common understanding between two brainy players who are working together

Signals to
the Outfield

"Word of
Mouth"
Signals or
"Tipoffs"

Must Work
Together

like gears. Short and second very often will have verbal signals they themselves understand, but which are unknown to the coach or manager. All the coach or manager cares about is that his "break for a play" is properly executed and for one, I commend the rule to others who handle young players to let them work out their own verbal signals around second base. At other bases, it is different because the players are too far apart for such signals.

THIRD BASE

No signals are given by a third baseman unless a coach adopts the plan of having the third baseman give the signal to a pitcher to throw to first base, to catch a baserunner off that base, which I do not recommend. I have mentioned this before. A third baseman should at all times, with a runner on third, be in position to acknowledge No. 7 signal from the catcher on a quick snap throw to catch the runner off third. He should get the coach or manager's signal for the infield to play in or back, as the case might be.

OUTFIELDERS

Discussion

Many fans and quite a few coaches and managers never believe an outfielder has any signals even in perfect baseball play. I contend that a par excellent outfielder, although not giving any signals, has at least four signals to watch for, namely, catcher's signals No. 5, 6, 7 and 4 (the pitchout). For example, if there is a runner on third and one on first and the catcher decided to peg the ball through to second base instead of bluffing and throwing to third, he will first use signal No. 4, the pitchout, followed by No. 6. In this case, the centerfielder should catch the signal and back up second base. There is no uncertainty about what is going to take place. The same is true when the catcher gives No. 4 followed by No. 7, which indicates if he pegs the ball on the play, it will be to third base, hence the leftfielder should draw in line with the play. He knows what is to take place. Thus it is, after No. 4 followed by No. 5, the rightfielder moves in to back up first. Please understand I am not dealing now with impractical ideas. Some might think a pitchout signal cannot be seen by an outfielder. I say that a body signal

can be seen by an outfielder provided he is looking for it. As I said before, I am aware that any first class fielder will ordinarily back up plays of the kind just mentioned. That is not the point I make. I say that an outfielder working by signal on such plays will back up quicker and often this is the margin of victory. Furthermore, I know that the plan outlined is practical because I have used it and in two instances I recall my team brought home the bacon by quick retrieving and resultant peg by an outfielder who backed up on a play "messed up" by a catcher. I have contended and still contend that all nine players when in the field have something concrete and definite to do. Perhaps it is backing up a play or simply yelling out the proper thing for another "buddie" to do that helps, but that is something that must be done.

All outfielders should also *play* the batter by watching the shortstop transmit the battery signals as before indicated. All this helps.

THE COACH OR MANAGER'S DEFENSE SIGNALS

A coach or manager can give only two signals to fielders of any importance.

1. A signal to the catcher for a pitchout.
2. (a) A signal to the first baseman or third baseman for the infield to play in close for a play at home or (b) back for a double play.

I have found the pitchout signal is a good one and is handy where a coach believes a "squeeze" or "hit and run" play is going to be pulled and the catcher has not given the pitchout signal. I use this as a material break for the two master plays, where it becomes absolutely necessary. The catcher is taught to look at the bench with men on base.

The signals under "2" are given with the understanding that the opposition will know of them. I often use my hands to beckon the players in or out. The signal does not require camouflaging. I think this covers the coach's signals on defense.

Coach or
Manager
Has Two
Defensive
Signals

Signal No. 1

Signal No. 2

IN GENERAL

I have given a few pointers about defensive signals in particular, and now I shall sum up by giving a few general tips.

Responsibility for Giving Verbal Signals

The value of verbal signs has already been given in part in my analysis of the signals used on the defense by the shortstop and second baseman. Besides all these signals, there is still another variety. They are verbal signals between various players in anticipation of certain plays. We might call this variety "tips." A first baseman or any other baseman or catcher not fielding the ball should at all times "shout out" what base a bunted ball can be thrown to with the greatest defensive value. The main thing is that so many, otherwise good players, keep their thoughts to themselves although they could materially assist in defensive play by "yelling out" what should be done. Such players lack initiative. The reverse is particularly a distinguishing quality of good minor and big league baseball playing. Inexperienced players for some reason, do not care to take responsibility. All players should remember that a fielder fielding a ball is apt to overlook an opening that any other player sees in a minute, and in such cases, he should "yell out," and thus assist the fielder. On fly balls either to the infield or outfield and on relay throws, especially, bunts, close plays, any player not in the play should "yell out," being mindful that his advice, when given correctly, will materially aid his team, and when wrong, might mean disaster. A manager or coach cannot do this. A player should be sure he is right and then yell. A coach or manager should designate a man to "yell out" on all fly balls in the infield or on "Texas leaguers" where a fielder is forced to run with his back to the play. In this way, for example, the team gets to know the particular player's voice and will listen to him.

One Man Should "Yell Out"

These verbal signals are highly important. They are a great portion of defensive signal work. I cannot close without pointing out one example I know of, in which this kind of signal work played an important part. I had taught my team to score two men on the squeeze. A was on third, B on second. C made a beautiful bunt and A was across the plate in a jiffy. B had caught C's signal and he was rounding

Summary

third when the catcher threw to first to get C. B kept on running and C slid into first about the time B was twenty-five feet from home. The opposing catcher began yelling and so did all the rest of the fielders and the first baseman became rattled and B scored before the first baseman came to. It is best to let one man yell out.

So, in conclusion, I say again what I said when I started out on my chapter upon the subject of signal work. It is the essential or core of that brand of baseball which carries a team to the top.

CHAPTER X

THE SCIENCE OF BATTING

IN GENERAL

Discussion

The reader who has taken time to read the introductory chapters to this book already knows that batting, or the batters, plus the baserunners, represent the offense in the game. The fielding of players is the sole defensive potentiality. Mathematically speaking, therefore, the ordinary game of baseball, provided it was or could be played perfectly, would never end in victory or defeat, since the offense would be counterbalanced by the defense. Thus, when a game of baseball is won or lost, it is due, not to "fate or luck," but to some weakness either in batting, fielding or baserunning. I had to put this idea in my book somewhere and I decided to insert it here at the beginning for it represents my major premise in succeeding argument. Baseball is interesting because it is so perfectly balanced. It is just as spectacular to watch a star fielder perform as it is a star batter and just as much credit is due a team that wins by fielding as a team that carves a victory by batting. The main idea, however, that I want to convey is that "luck and fate" as applied by fans in general, have very little if anything to do with the margin of victory in a baseball game. But, to get back to my subject, namely, batting or the batter.

Value of Good Batting

The batter represents one-half of the offense and one-third of the game of baseball. It is not necessary for me to give further reasons why any player should strive to perfect himself in this phase of the game. I admit that a coach or manager, under ordinary circumstances, will make room for a good batter on his team if that batter can field or run bases in a fairly average way. No other phase of the game, as a rule, is so shy of strength and a coach or manager must have good batsmen if he is to win games.

Most fans, managers and coaches firmly believe in the old saying that "batters are born, not made." In many respects there is more truth than poetry in this remark. Off-hand I rather uphold this doctrine if we can speak of such matters with reference to baseball. On the other hand, I am positive



International
“BABE” RUTH, “the Colossal Son of Swat”—This photo explains several reasons why Ruth made 59 home runs during the 1921 season. Notice the “follow through.” Ruth has almost turned around in his footsteps. While Ruth has succeeded with this batting stance it is not adaptable to all players.

**Don't Be
Just the
Average
Batter**

that a fair batter, the fellow who can normally bat at an average around 250 per cent will, if he tries hard enough and has the proper coaching, increase his average to 280 per cent or higher. A batter who is born with the inherent ability to bat 300 per cent needs but little coaching to keep in that select class, but by proper work and coaching, he can learn to bat at 350 per cent just as well. The truth is, that a player can reach a certain maximum batting ability by hard practice, but either through lack of practice or proper coaching, most players never realize what their maximum ability is. What a pity it is, for example, to see a man who could have a maximum batting percentage of 280 per cent, continually remain at 250 per cent, simply because he will not devote time and energy to curing a few defects or adding a few pointers to his ability given him by the coach or manager. It is even a greater calamity to see a star batter remain "just a star" when by earnest effort and indulgence of a coach or manager, he could be almost a super star. This then is the keynote of a coach or manager's duty—to improve batters, not make them. It is likewise the duty of a batter to improve his ability by listening to the coach or manager. But how many amateurs or professionals strive to do all these things?

**Coach or
Manager's
Viewpoint
of the Batter**

In baseball vernacular, a batter is any player who takes his position in the batter's box in his regular turn. This definition might be a good one for the rule books, but to a coach or manager, it is absolutely too vague. Such a definition is general classification of players, merely to distinguish one from another, but to a coach or manager, a batter means not a mere player whose duty is to take his turn at bat. A coach or manager really looks upon a batter from three angles. First, is the batter a reliable batter? Second, has he a batter's sense of duty? Third, is he a good batter, a born batter? Any batter who can be considered in the light of all three attainments is, according to my humble opinion, a real star on the offense. Perhaps it would be wise to discuss each of these three viewpoints.

**The Reliable
Batter**

In the first place, when can a batter be termed a reliable batsman? In simple words, only after he has learned the ability to size up the situation of the team for which he is playing; give and receive signals gracefully; work to get the

pitcher in the hole; and above all else, remain cool under fire and confident he will do that which he sets out to do. The hardest of these accomplishments to master are no doubt the first and last. This is especially true of the young college ball player. The grace so necessary to all batters who would give signals perfectly and also the ability to get a pitcher in the hole, can be learned by constant practice. But the ability to size up an offensive situation is extremely difficult even for a coach or manager on the bench, not to mention a batter. I have never been certain that coolness under fire and confidence can be inculcated into a player. It is more a gift that is natural to him.

There are many helpful suggestions which will aid a player in becoming a reliable batter. If a player is to size up a situation accurately, he ought to do it calmly and before he goes to the plate. If the style of play changes after he goes to bat, he should not become excited but deliberately walk out of the batsman's box and decide upon a new plan of attack if needs be. By all means, a batter should never attempt any signal or purposely attempt to hit any ball unless he has a reason for doing so. This holds true when there are no men on base. If for example, he should hit the first ball pitched after the coach or manager told him the opposing pitcher was wise to his procedure, he would be committing an error of judgment. Conversely, he would show his ability to size up a situation on the offense if he hit the first ball pitched while the opposing pitcher was grooving the first ball pitched. So many batters go into the batter's box with a shaky feeling and weak heart with the result that their normal efficiency is lowered. Coolness under fire is the reverse of this feeling. It is more than confidence—it is a licensed over-confidence.

A batter can aid his ability to size up a situation by confidence of the right kind. He should place himself in the attitude of getting the most for his money while at bat. I do not mean he should be unnecessarily "smart alecky," but he can feel "cock-sure" down deep in his heart. For example, if he is going to hit straight away, by which I mean hit without giving any signal to a baserunner, he should let all other things leave his head. If he has given the signal for the "hit and run" he should feel the play is going to

Helpful Suggestions

What Is Confidence?

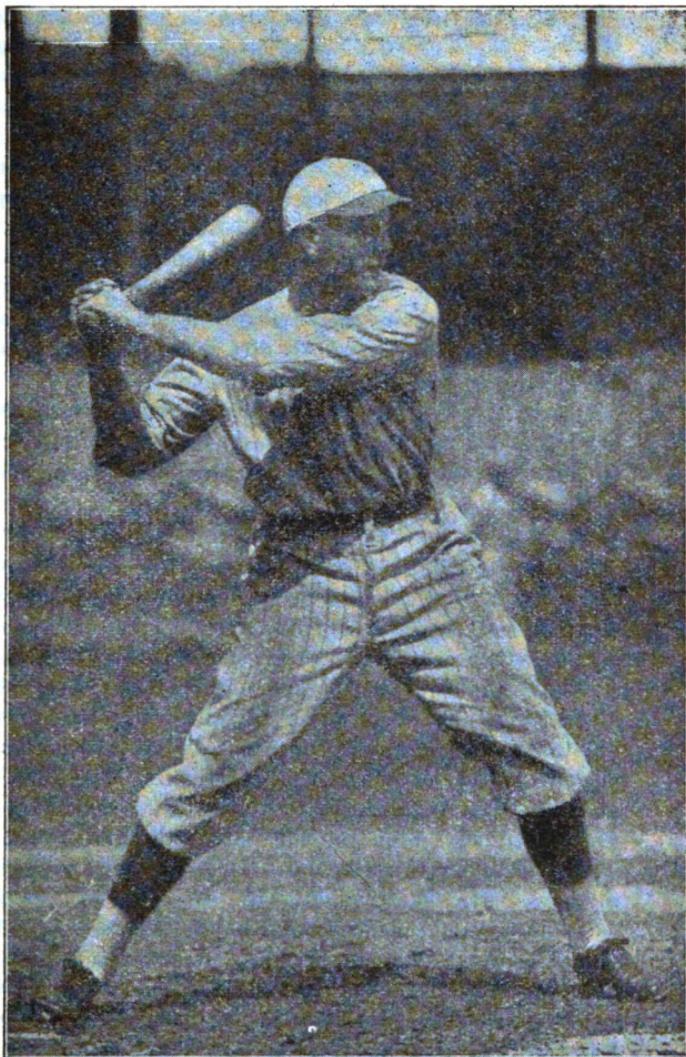
succeed. The psychological effect should be reassuring. When a psychological moment comes up in a game, the batter's psychology must be strong enough to overcome any timidity. Thus the reliable batter is not essentially the best batter on the team, but the one who, day in and day out, can be depended upon by a coach to react and meet the occasion quickly. He is not always the hardest hitter on the team. A man can be a reliable "bunter" as well as a reliable batter.

Batsman's Sense of Duty

So we come to the next thing a good batsman is required to have. Has he a batsman's sense of duty? By this I mean the power to put into operation a coach or manager's theory. I do not mean the ability always to make the theory succeed. This would be asking too much of any batsman. But has he the sense of the coach or manager's theory of offense? Will he be capable of at least carrying out his part of the theory? For example, a coach or manager gives the signal for the "hit and run" and the batter transmits the signal to the baserunner. Now then, will the batter sense the situation and actually try to hit the ball at the right spot and thus avoid the double play, or will he swing simply because a signal has been given and trust to luck? Please understand me when I say that this latter kind of batter, even though he might hit 300 per cent during a season, is in actual team play a liability. The sad part of it is that a coach or manager cannot tell the difference, except after much lost time and worry. The batter knows, believe me! This is what I mean by a sense of duty. No batter can be considered a good batter until he realizes that theory will only succeed provided he puts every ounce of energy behind his part of it. It is not only necessary for a batter to hope he can do this or that, he must be certain in his own mind that he *can* do it and then prepare to do it.

Inherent Strength of a Batter

Last of all comes the coach or manager's idea of the inherent strength of a batter. Is he a 250 per cent or 300 per cent hitter? Very often a coach will try a play with a three-hundred hitter that he would not consider if a 250 per cent hitter was at the bat. It is obvious that chance of success is lessened by a weak hitter at the bat when hitting is the last offensive left to employ. But a player should not become discouraged because he is not as strong potentially as another player on his team. Some weak hitters who have the ability to



International

EMIL (IRISH) MEUSEL, New York Giants—This player is one of the most brilliant youngsters in the game. His batting pose is almost perfect. Notice the "whip" to the bat, the straight right knee, the back in the ball and the firm grip.

size up a situation, etc., are better in the pinch than strong hitters. A good batter, whether weak or strong as a hitter, is always cultivating the essential elements which improve his all-around ability. The worst batter on the team can be a three-hundred hitter if he does not continually improve his other qualities as a batter. He is more to be blamed than the batter who is born not blessed with "hitting" strength. If there is one thing that alone will improve a player's batting strength, it is devotion to this form of practice. To be a really *good* batter in the eyes of a coach or manager, is to be very near the best player on the team. Confidence, coolness and craft, and not always nature's gift, make the best batters from the general offensive viewpoint.

I have given a general outline of what constitutes good batting and in succeeding chapters, the subject will be treated from a more special or particular viewpoint.

HOW TO DIAGNOSE PITCHING

**What Is
Meant by
"Diagnose"**

In the preceding chapter, I have tried to outline some of the qualities that tend to make a reliable batsman from the viewpoint of a coach or manager. There are many other qualities that a batter should possess before he can be considered a top-notch batter and one of them is the ability to diagnose pitching. The word "diagnose" by its own meaning implies a scientific study or a careful discrimination on the part of the batter and this is exactly the meaning I wish to give it. If a batter goes to the bat in a game of baseball with his mind set on the idea of "killing the ball," he is more than likely to strike out. Thus, although I do not mean to detract from determination on the part of the batter, I have reached the conclusion that unless this form of determination is directed along proper lines, it will result in a batter's loss of potentiality. The story of the strong-hearted Casey is well known and needs no further explanation to prove the fallacy of any man thinking he can "kill the ball" and bat consistently.

Discussion

Any good batter, when he goes to bat or even before, will remind himself that the opposing pitcher will do his very best to pitch to his weakness, will recall what kind of a ball he hit before, will carefully note how he stands at the plate and what

number he holds in the batting order, what kind of a batter he is in a pinch, is he fast or slow, what tip-off, if any, did the coach or manager give him on this particular batter and many other surmises. The truth is, the batter must always remember that a smart pitcher is trying perhaps harder than he is and the pitcher has the help of a catcher, all of which makes the odds in favor of the pitcher. But a batter, provided of course, he is crafty, is not so seriously handicapped after all. This is the point where the ability to diagnose pitching comes into play.

Time after time I have seen pitchers lose games after they had almost won them. I mean games where the other players on the team were not to blame but where all at once, a regular avalanche of safe hits would "put the game on ice." As a rule, the reason for this can be attributed to diagnosing the pitcher's pitching rather than the pitcher growing stale or losing control, etc. I have also seen pitcher's pitching effective until the eighth or ninth inning, and then a fast man who could bunt readily would beat out a bunt, then the next man would bunt until finally the pitcher would be driven to cover, simply because the opposing batters had diagnosed his pitching or rather his pitching weakness—they had his "goat." Possibly many of my readers have seen an opposing pitcher "blow up" as soon as a couple of men got on base and worried him a little by getting a fairly long lead. Why is this? Simply because the baserunners had diagnosed the pitcher's weakness. I could proceed to give many more examples like those mentioned above, which illustrate my point, but I feel sure the real meaning of "diagnose" is fully understood when I apply it to a batter and pitcher.

Unlike other qualities which I have said go to make up reliable batters, this quality of diagnosis can be taught by a coach or manager. The much touted psychology which belongs, according to so many theorists, to the average batter stands very little chance of materializing, provided a coach or manager can teach his men to diagnose opposing pitching. It should not be essential for a coach or manager to tell a batter that the pitcher is "wild" and "wait him out." This is part of the batter's duties and to more

**Study the
Pitcher's
Weakness**

**"Diagnos-
ing" Can
Be Taught**

**Learn to
Hit a
Pitcher's
Favorite
Delivery**

experienced players proves the "green" batter on a team. Possibly the best illustration of how diagnosis of pitching will help the ordinary batter is obtained by noting the frequent games where the "star" pitcher of the opposing team has been defeated. I am speaking now of baseball in general. I think every pitcher will agree with me that he has one kind of delivery and one kind of ball which can be considered his favorite. So often this is true that each pitcher has "hobbies" and the result is that the catcher signals for this ball frequently. I have counted the number of balls a pitcher throws in a game very often and after the game, I can tell almost exactly what he thinks is his best bet. Very often during a game and in the late innings, I try to help the batters by giving them this information and thus aid their own diagnosis. For example: The only reason possible why a pitcher can use a "round house out" effectively against a team is attributable to the batters going to bat with the idea of "killing the ball" or failing to diagnose this form of pitching first and then "laying" for that particular ball. In a subsequent game the same kind of pitching would be slaughtered.

**Anticipate
the Thrown
Ball**

Every batter of any experience whatever, knows that if he properly anticipates the kind of ball a pitcher is going to throw him, it is easier for him to get a safe hit. It is also better to have some inkling of what variety of delivery the pitcher is using, when he throws certain balls. Very often a pitcher will use an underhanded delivery for his curve ball and a side arm delivery for his fast ball and an overhand delivery for his drop ball. The extent to which a diagnosis aids any particular player in cases of this kind, depends entirely upon his correctness of diagnosis. It cannot be stated in a mathematical way. For example, let us take for granted that the batter has given the signal for the "hit and run." As the pitcher winds up to deliver the ball to the plate, the batter sees that he is using that form of delivery customary when he throws a curve ball. With this tip-off clearly fixed in his mind, the batter, provided the diagnosis was correct, will find it easier to hit the ball. I might also point out that it is not easy for a pitcher to change his style of delivery in one game and the amount

of credit or assurance given to such a diagnosis on the part of the batter is consequently not far fetched. This is why any coach or manager will agree that a pitcher is more effective if he can use the same delivery for each ball pitched, but how many pitchers can do this?

I sometimes believe that when a batter gets the reputation of being a dangerous hitter when men are on bases it is a clear imputation that he is a corking good diagnostician of pitching and pitching weakness. To be called a dangerous hitter in the pinches does not mean that the batter has not weakness, but that he covers up this or that weakness, by playing the weakness of the pitcher. In this connection, I might say that I do not think all diagnosing is a form of guessing. To say that would be incorrect and unmindful of the craft among certain batters. For example, there is not very much guessing on the part of the batter if he takes it for granted that the pitcher is going to throw him a straight ball with the count of one strike and three balls. But the subject of "hitting in the hole," as the latter is called, will be discussed in a later chapter.

I find it very difficult to express in language just what value the batter can get from diagnosing pitching. Briefly, it is one way of completely annihilating mechanical pitching. Against a team composed of men who are quick to observe his peculiarities and idiosyncrasies, a pitcher's chance of winning is greatly reduced. A good baserunner can steal a hundred bases on the pitcher who has a set way of looking at first base and then turning and throwing home. If he follows this set way of doing things, he will lose his game against a brainy bunch of ball players. The movements of a pitcher's feet should be closely scrutinized and his wrist movement watched if a batter desires to be a diagnostician.

In conclusion, a coach or manager, as well as players, should make a complete study of the pitcher, not at one time during the game but all the time the game lasts. It helps batting.

HITTING STRAIGHT AWAY

By "hitting straight away," I mean that form of hitting in which the batter relies entirely upon his own ability and

Acquire
Reputation
of Being a
Dangerous
Batter

Summary

**What Is
"Hitting
Straight
Away?"**

has no duty to perform with respect to a baserunner, except of course, to score such men by a safe hit. Such form of hitting is easily distinguished from the "hit and run," the "squeeze" or the plain "sacrifice bunt," because in those instances, a batter endeavors to assist a baserunner by some particular kind of hit and even goes so far as to signal to the baserunner in two of them, that he can expect assistance. The only thought which a batter should have in his mind when "hitting straight away" is the thought of hitting safely and he leaves the rest of the play to the baserunner. Thus, if there is a man on second base and two men out, a batter will "hit straight away" or in other words, he hits only with the one purpose in mind—to score the man on second base. The first man up in each inning "hits straight away," and any other batter who comes to bat with no one on base is said to "hit straight away" because his sole responsibility is to hit safely and he is unencumbered by any signals, etc.

**Batter Un-
encumbered
by Signals**

Naturally, this style of hitting presents the most ideal condition under which a batter can face a pitcher. Consequently, under such conditions, more is expected of the batter. It is under such conditions that a man at bat should diagnose the form of pitching he is facing, even more than ever, since the value of a safe hit reaches its maximum under such conditions. Most generally, a coach or manager feels or has a "hunch" that the batter will stand a much better chance of hitting safely if he is sent to the bat unencumbered by any signals. Any batter, therefore, who goes to bat unencumbered by signals or orders from the coach to "pull" something is said to be "hitting straight away" and under such conditions, he should be very careful to "pick" the ball he chooses to hit and bring into use every conceivable form of diagnosis he can. Incidentally, the more correct his diagnosis becomes, the more safe hits he will obtain and the harder will be such hits. A correct diagnosis when "hitting straight away" often accounts for the difference between a single and a three-bagger. "Hitting straight away" offers a golden opportunity for a brainy batter to knock the "cover off the ball," because he has every opportunity to size up the pitcher and

to make a thorough diagnosis. Most batters who fail to fatten their averages when "hitting straight away" will hardly ever do so under less ideal conditions."

At this point, I would like to divert a little from the main topic in order to discuss further the margin of difference between just any form of hitting and hitting by diagnosing the pitcher. I do not desire to mislead any young ball player into believing that at any time while he is at bat, he should fail to note or diagnose the pitching he faces. When I speak of "hitting straight away," "hitting in the hole," the "hit and run" or the "squeeze," I speak of them as particular entities in relationship to batting in general, but when I use the word "diagnose," it is always used with the same meaning and applies to batting in general as well as to particular styles of hitting. Please permit me to overemphasize the value of diagnosis if possible. It is the one essential to all batting and although occasions arise which call for different styles of batting, if the batter consistently conforms to a practical scheme of diagnosis, a coach or manager need never worry as a general rule. Such batters nine times out of ten will not do the wrong thing at the wrong time.

Discussion

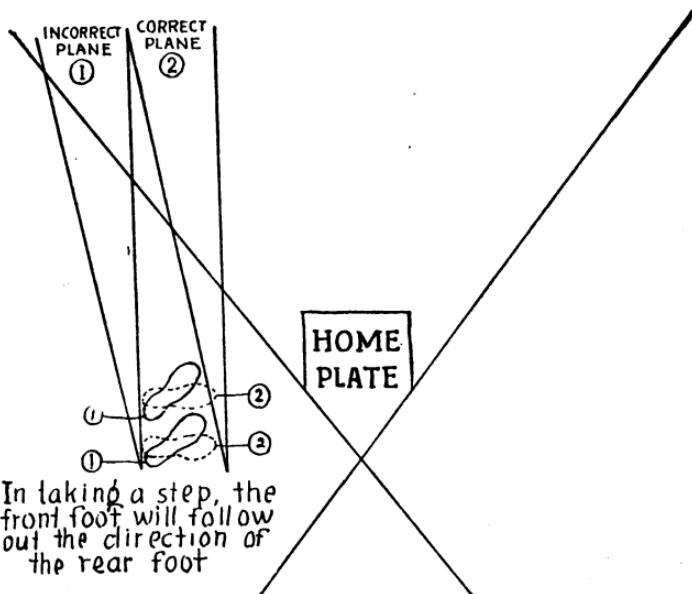
Now let us proceed to a discussion of "hitting in the hole."

HITTING IN THE HOLE

Before I begin writing on the subject of "hitting in the hole," I think it would be wise to call attention to the wide diversity of opinion on this subject. I merely want to give the theory behind such hitting and it is then a question for the coach or manager to decide whether it is advisable. Personally, I believe "hitting in the hole" is of material assistance to the average batter and I coach my teams to pursue it as much as possible. "Hitting in the hole" means that if a batter gets the pitcher in a "hole" or on the defense in respect to "called balls and strikes," he will hit the next ball pitched and not wait further. A pitcher is said to be in the "hole" or on the defense when the "count" on the batter is two balls and one strike, two balls and no strikes, three balls and one strike, one ball and no strike. I do not say that a pitcher is in the "hole"

Discussion

HOW TO CORRECT "STEPPING IN THE BUCKET" *or* STEPPING AWAY FROM THE PLATE



It is only natural that a batter will step in the same direction his feet are turned. His weight will follow the direction.

Number ① feet are shown turned at an angle to home. Number ② are perpendicular to the plate. A batsman approaching the plate in ① position will automatically step in plane ① and away from the plate. The farther the feet are turned in toward home plate, the more difficult it is for the weight to be thrown away from the bat.

when the count on the batter is three balls and no strikes, for then, the pitcher is facing a catastrophe, not a mere "hole."

A coach or manager who teaches his men to hit when the pitcher is in the "hole" as I have just pointed out above, relies upon the theory that a batter under such conditions will be thrown a straight ball or what is called a "groove" ball and thereby his chances of hitting safely and hitting safely harder make up for or offset the theory that the pitcher might have walked the batter. On the other hand, it is very difficult for a batter who has been accustomed to "hitting in the hole," to refrain from striking at bad balls, since of course, he is set to hit the next ball pitched. I contend, however, that the chances of a batter swinging at bad balls under such conditions are not great enough to offset the advantage he obtains by knowing almost beyond doubt that the pitcher is going to deliver a "groove" ball. My knowledge of the average player leads me to believe that a batter can train himself to let a bad ball go by under such conditions, much easier than is often expected. Anyone will admit, however, that if a batter refuses to accept such a golden opportunity for an ideally delivered straight ball, he might not get another. Very often "hitting in the hole" accounts for victory when under other conditions, it would not have come about. For this reason, the batter should try to get the pitcher in the hole at all times.

The theory of "hitting in the hole" does not carry with it the idea of usage under conditions not generally flattering. For example, a batter is not doing the correct thing by "hitting in the hole," when a pitcher is known to be wild and has frequently given bases on balls during a game. A lead off man or any other batter who is the first man up in an inning should not generally "hit in the hole." It is obvious that his duty compels him to get on base if he possibly can and a walk will serve the purpose just as much as a hit. On the other hand when there are men on bases, a batter should "hit in the hole" if he is going to hit at all since a walk will not as a rule score men.

Under any circumstances, a batter will find much comfort in the knowledge that he has the pitcher in the "hole" and

Value of
"Hitting in
the Hole"

Conditions
Must Be
Flattering

**Will Power
Necessary**

especially is such a time advantageous for pulling the "hit and run," because the batter then is almost sure to get a hittable ball if not a "groove" ball. *It is imperative that a batter, even when he knows the pitcher has good control, to remind himself that if a bad ball is thrown him while "hitting in the hole," he will let it go by, unless, of course, he has given a signal to the baserunner on the "squeeze" or "hit and run."* Once a batter can maintain this exercise of will power, the coach or manager feels safe in using this method of "hitting in the hole." If a batter can get a pitcher in the hole to the extent of making him throw a "groove" ball, literally speaking, the batter then has no weakness—certainly not a "groove" ball weakness. Please give thought to the previous sentence, which according to my way of thinking, is a very excellent reason for "hitting in the hole."

**Rise to the
Occasion**

There is no particular way in which a batter can get a pitcher in the hole, but every batter knows that such occasions arise during a game of ball and every coach or manager hates to see his pitcher in that fix but loves to see his batters "bean" the ball on the offense under such conditions. But one way that a batter can help to get a pitcher in the "hole" is by a constant application of a keen batting eye and ability to let bad balls be called balls rather than strike at them. It is obvious, if the batter compels the pitcher to exert his best control, the greater will be the chances of getting him in the hole. This appears to be twisted, but it isn't at all. Every batter knows that sometime during a game he will have the opportunity to face the pitcher when the pitcher is on the defense and if the batter has made up his mind that the time is ripe for him to hit the ball or even to pull the "hit and run" he should not let such an opportunity go by.

Summary

I think one of the most deplorable features of batting from the player's standpoint, is the lack of confidence. One of the very best cures for a batting slump rests in the ability to get the pitcher in the hole and then lay back on the fast straight ball which the batter knows is almost sure to come. But I will talk about such matters in a later chapter. I can truthfully state, however, that when my team

gets in a rut and everything gets to looking badly, I always offer to the team the tempting bait of hitting straight away while the pitcher is in the hole and many times it has worked completely. I dare say two-thirds of all extra base hits can be attributed to the batter getting the pitcher in the "hole" and then hitting.

THE "LEAD OFF" MAN AND HIS DUTIES

Any player of any experience whatsoever knows what I mean when I speak of the "lead off" man. But I include under the general heading of "leadoff" man, the first man up in any inning, consequently we have a total of nine "lead off" men during a full nine inning game. On the other hand, I think it wise to divide the two kinds of "lead off" men into two separate discussions, viz: the lead off man or the man who heads the batting order of the team and the "lead off" man in each inning. In some instances, what I say regarding each kind of "lead off" man will apply to both.

First I will discuss briefly the "lead off" man who heads the batting list. No team can win a game of baseball that did not get men on bases. This is, in fact, the prime object of any offense. The first man in the batting order of a team is looked to by the coach as the best player he has for getting on bases, either by a walk, by being hit, by speed or by safe hitting. A close analysis therefore, of the accomplishments desired in a "lead off" man reveals the fact he must through necessity, be one of the most reliable batters on the team, keeping in mind just what I mean by the usage of the word reliable. Personally, the problem of selecting the best lead off man in a baseball squad is just about as difficult as anything I run across as a coach. First of all, this batter must be fast, an expert diagnostician, crafty, good on signals and a fair hitter. How many men combine all these qualities? I can answer my own question by saying that not one in five hundred. Some men will be fast enough and brainy enough, but they simply cannot get on bases. Others will lack confidence and ability to wait out a pitcher.

Two Kinds
of "Lead-
off" Men

The Man
Who Heads
the Batting
List

**Sole Duty
to Get
On Base**

A good "lead-off" man should cultivate the habit of waiting out a pitcher, of crowding the plate, confidence and a batting eye. He should above all else feel that he will get on base by some "hook or crook," he knows not what. At times he should feel he can hit the first ball pitched and hit it safely. At times he ought to bunt and feel as though he will beat it out. In short, he should do all in his power to completely disorganize the pitcher and the opposing defense by using crafty methods and catching the defense off guard. "Patience" should be his middle name if needs be. His sole duty toward the team as he steps to bat at the beginning of the game is to *get on base*, no matter what happens. This takes nerve.

**Size and
Style of
Hitting**

A great many coaches and managers prefer small men in stature for "lead-off" men and I must confess I lean toward the same preference, but there are many good lead-off men who are nearer the average size. I think it is true that a pitcher finds it more difficult to pitch to a small sized man. For the same identical reason, I prefer a left handed batter and then, too, a portsider can travel to first base faster. Strictly speaking, however, there is no set rule as to size and style of hitting in the choice of a good "lead-off" man.

**Every Batter
Should
Cultivate
Qualities**

The kind of "lead-off" man which I would like to discuss now is the "lead-off" man who becomes such by reason of a constant change of the batting order in a team during a game. In this way, the first man up in each inning can be considered a "lead-off" man. This is one reason why every batter on a team should realize and cultivate those qualities which stamp a "lead-off" man. It is obvious that sometime during the game or games, each man on the team is sure to become a "lead-off" man and when such occasions arise, he should not be found wanting. When such occasions do arise, it befalls the duty of the particular batter to diagnose the pitching from the same angle as does the original "lead-off" man on the team. As the game progresses, we often hear the opposition say, "Get the first man up." They know full well what it means to have one man disposed of to begin the inning. To combat such zealousness, the first man up should increase his determination and zeal, craft and cunning, diagnosis and discrimination. As in the case with the original "lead-off" man, he has one duty—to get on base by some "hook or crook."

I should also like to call attention to this fact. No "lead-off" man should go to the bat out of breath or unprepared. If necessary, he should take time to get his breath and get fixed for his turn at bat. He should observe, and for that matter so should all other batters, how the opposing infield and outfield are stationed and take advantage of any prima facie weakness. But above all else, he should select good balls to hit and remember that to get on base is his chief and sole object—no matter how.

Should Go
to the Bat
Prepared

THE "CLEANUP" MAN AND HIS DUTIES

We now come to a discussion of that batter on a team who is known as the "cleanup" man. In baseball language, this is the fellow that is counted upon to hit the ball more frequently and harder with men on base than other batters. His position in the batting order is established as No. 4, in which position he more frequently has the opportunity to score men. This is best explained by reason of the fact that if any one of the first three batters in the batting order get on base it gives the "cleanup" man a chance to score him, and if none of these men get on base the "cleanup" man is the first man up in the next inning and can start off the offense in good shape. Since the "cleanup" man is approximately the batter holding the middle of the batting order, it is very seldom he fails to get an opportunity to score men. As a coach I have wondered sometimes at the uncanny way in which it always comes about that the "cleanup" man comes to bat at an opportune time. All things considered, therefore, I feel I am correct in saying that this position is the most important in the hitting offense of a baseball team, although the "leadoff" man runs the "cleanup" man a very close second.

The "Clean Up" Man's Position in the Batting Order

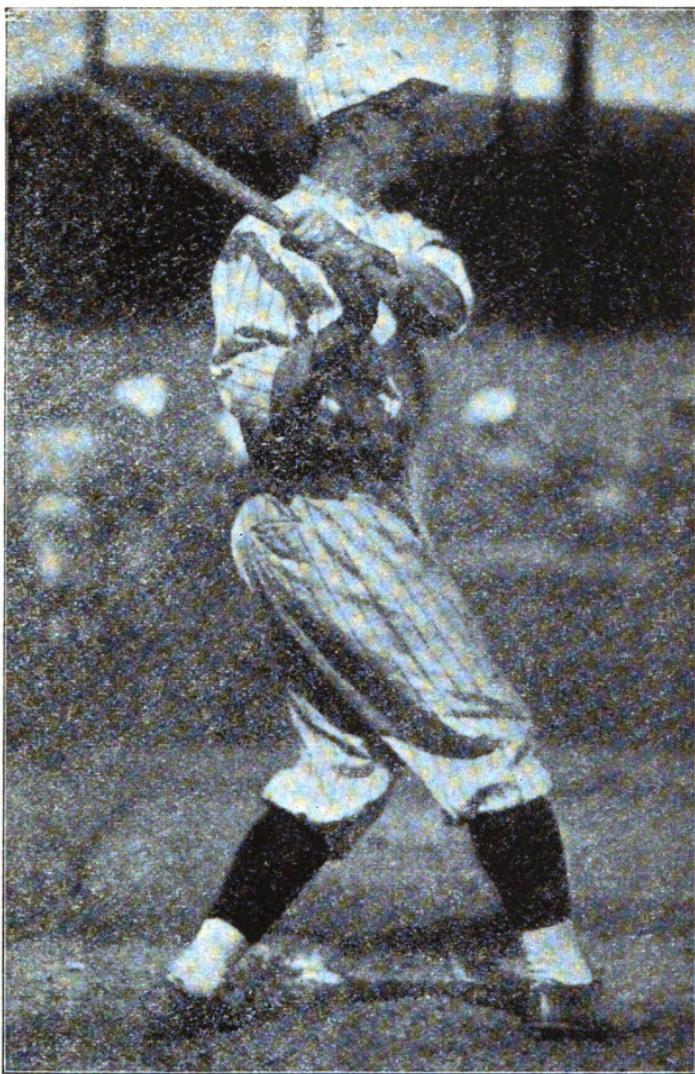
If a coach or manager could pick his ideal for a "cleanup" man or batter, I believe most of them would pick the batter who had the knack or ability to hit the ball very hard, was a good batter in the pinches, an expert diagnostician and fast in getting down to first base. In short, a coach would like for this batter to have all the accomplishments of a "leadoff" man with the added ability to hit the ball unusually hard. The language which I here use to describe my ideal "cleanup"

The Ideal
"Clean Up"
Man

man, when studied closely, will automatically disclose some of the duties required of such a batsman.

**"Casey"
Type of
Player a
Liability**

It is generally understood among the fans and more inexperienced players that the batsman who holds the position of "cleanup" man on a team invariably should be the type of batter that either strikes out or hits a home run. To such misguided fans and players, please permit me to state that such a batter is most undesirable, not only in the position mentioned, but on any team. This Casey type of ball player, the fellow who would strut to the bat with an idea of knocking the cover off the ball, is a liability to a team, and such a batsman represents just the reverse of an ideal "cleanup" man. I do not mean to say that credit to a certain extent must not be given a hard hitter when seeking to find the best man for the position, but I would place much greater emphasis upon the ability of a batter to hit oftener rather than harder. The name of "cleanup" man is not given the batter hitting in fourth position because he hits home runs, but because he hits when hits will "clean up" the bases. Please get my point. To illustrate my last remark regarding this highly important question, I might point to the fact that, although Babe Ruth occupies the "cleanup" position in batting order of the New York Yanks and actually gets home runs galore, I would not classify him as being an ideal "cleanup" man, unless he got his twenty-five or more home runs a year. Without taking away any of the just glory that belongs to such an able player, I must confess if Ruth did not average one home run to every three games, which he did last year, I think he would be the worst "cleanup" man in the big leagues, speaking from a purely technical viewpoint. He lacks speed and when he is not going good looks like he loses his ability to diagnose pitching. Thus, if Ruth fell down on his home runs, I would not give him the position of "cleanup" man if I were doing the choosing, because he is not fast and if he does not "knock the cover off the ball" he generally strikes out. Of course, in professional baseball, he is told to hit for home runs because each one means more attendance, and I have no doubt that if Ruth was playing an ordinary game of ball he would shorten his swing after two called strikes.



International

FRANK BAKER, New York Yankees—The well known "Home Run" Baker, although generally considered almost perfect in batting stance, is here shown in an off moment pursuing a faulty pose. Note the bent rear left knee, the choppy swing and strained elbows and wrists.

**Must Be
Cool and
Calculating**

It becomes the duty of every "cleanup" man to be cool and calculating while at bat. He it is who, more than other players, is called upon to score men at crucial times. It behooves him to get the pitcher in the hole if possible and then hit. For this reason he must be a good judge of balls and strikes. Above all else, he must be able to hit the ball and not strike out and thus at least make the defense work to get him out. It is obvious that a "cleanup" man who is fast, really fast, can be used to good advantage by a coach or manager. This type of batter, a hard hitter in the pinches and fast on his feet, offers a double threat to the defense. Thus, if he fails to hit safely but instead hits an infield ball, the defense knows they must hurry to get him out, and then again the coach or manager can frequently pull the unexpected and let such a batter bunt, when the defense thinks he is going to hit. It is also obvious that a coach or manager will have more opportunities to pull the "hit and run" and "squeeze" with such a batsman at the bat in a crucial moment of the game.

Summary

In concluding this little discussion, please let me again emphasize the absolute necessity of every batter knowing the fundamental qualities of the various kinds of batters I have mentioned in this chapter. Remember that every man on a team at some time during a game or games of baseball occupies the position of "leadoff" man or "cleanup" man. When I discuss the qualities that go to make up ideal "leadoff" men and "cleanup" men, I speak in the particular sense only because I am forced to do so, but every batter must know such qualities in order to meet the situations arising when he finds the batting order twisted around and he becomes in actual fact for the time being either kind of batter. If a coach or manager can get his team to fully realize what I have just said I dare say his team's batting strength will be increased. Players who get the gist of what I have just written will be above the average batters, even though lacking in inherent batting strength.

THE PINCH HITTER

The importance of a "pinch hitter" in the ordinary baseball game is clearly indicated by the frequent use made of

them in the modern game. Hardly a game of big league baseball is played but what a manager uses a "pinch hitter" and in college baseball, any coach will take advantage of some psychological moment and insert this type of batsman in the game. I have asked many professional managers as well as college coaches just why it always seemed that an opposing team would appear nervous or excited when a "pinch hitter" is placed in the game, and the general opinion has been given me that it was because of the psychology or newness of threat which usually accompanies the advent of such a batter into the game. To many younger players, I might explain further by saying that this so-called "psychology" or "newness of threat" is not caused by the actual presence of the "pinch hitter," but more by the conditions precedent to his advent into the game. Ordinarily speaking, an opposing pitcher does not look upon the "pinch hitter" as potentially stronger than any other batter, but under certain extraordinary conditions, the threat of such a batter, who as a rule is believed to be stronger than the batter whose place he takes, causes the pitcher to feel that he must be more deliberate and careful and for just such unnatural feeling, a "pinch hitter" of ability will rise to the emergency and get on base or get a safe hit and win the game or start a rally. Thus, the question of just what type of batter is best suited for use as a "pinch hitter" is almost answered. *He must be the type of batter who has the happy faculty of diagnosing, not only the opposing style of pitching, but the psychology of the situation and what to do, in such a situation.*

It has been my good fortune to witness several games in which the quite remarkable "pinch hitter," Eddie Murphy of the Chicago White Sox, distinguished himself and during one of these games, I had the unusual pleasure of sitting beside one of the most prominent baseball coaches in our country and we both agreed that Murphy was by far the best "pinch hitter" in the game today. A close analysis of this great player who has a batting average of about 330% as a "pinch hitter" reveals the following facts as to his character: First, he is a patient batter. By that I mean he does not go about his business in a hurry to have it over

Importance
of the
"Pinch
Hitter"

An Analysis
of Eddie
Murphy

with. The crowd might be wild and all that, but Murphy is going to wait for the "good" ball to hit at. Second, he is confident. By this I mean he feels sincere in his belief that he will get on base by some means. Third, he watches every move made by the opposing players and he hears everything they say to each other. Fourth, he is an expert diagnostician. Fifth, he has nerves of steel, which is essential under any trying conditions in a ball game. Sixth, he has kept track of all the plays during a game and he has studied the various pitchers he faces, so that when he enters the game, he is up to date on such matters. Seventh, he is considered a fine judge of a pitched ball. Eighth, he is keen to pull the unexpected. Ninth, he is fast on his feet. Tenth, he is willing to get a safe hit or a base on balls and he does not "kill the ball."

**Every
Batter
Sometimes a
"Pinch
Hitter"**

I know of no better way for a young ball player to become a good "pinch hitter" than by studying those masters of the game who are kept on the pay roll because of their ability along this line. The truth of the whole matter is simply this. In a way every batter on a team at sometime or other becomes a "pinch hitter" just as every batter becomes a "lead off" man and a "clean up" man. To that particular class of players who are kept on the bench because their teammates are better fielders, etc., rather than better batters, I can truthfully say if they will apply themselves to the art of "pinch hitting" they will be of a material value to their team. I have always contended that no baseball team is complete unless a coach or manager has a "pinch hitter" on his team who can be called into service at the psychological moment and counted upon to create a menace to a team about to "blow up." It is not always the case, but generally true, that confidence and coolness and a good eye make a good "pinch hitter" which he is later coached in the minor details.

**When to
Insert the
"Pinch
Hitter"**

Anyone well versed in the technical side of baseball, will agree that it is wrong to promiscuously remove a batter during a game and insert a "pinch hitter." A wise coach or manager will not do so unless the psychological moment arrives and unless the man who is called upon to act as a "pinch hitter" has more than an even chance of doing

better than the regular batter who is removed from the game. This is the science of such play or the theory to be followed. Of course, most "pinch hitters" get their chance when a pitcher has been driven from the box or a batter on the regular nine has been woefully weak at the bat, but this is not always true. It has always been my policy to use a "pinch hitter" only when I see the opportunity has arisen by which the game can be won by his advent into the game. In other words, I am ever mindful that if the game continues I will weaken my team defensively, if I place a "pinch hitter" in the game. This stands to reason since if the "pinch hitter" was as good defensively as the player whose place he takes, the "pinch hitter" would be in the game regularly. I know of no more trying situation a coach or manager has to face than the one of deciding if a "pinch hitter" can be used to good advantage. Of course, I mean in offensive tactics.

CHAPTER XI

THE TWO MASTER OFFENSIVE PLAYS

**Definition of
the Three
Most Im-
portant
Offensive
Plays**

In continuing my discussion of baseball offense, it is pertinent at the very beginning to point out and explain the two most valuable, as well as the most frequently used, offensive plays in baseball's category. The plays in question are "bunts," "squeeze" bunts and "hit and run," and when I mention the "bunt" ball I include the plain bunt and sacrifice bunt.

Discussion

It is useless for me to explain the fundamental principles of bunting to the readers of this book, who, I presume, have developed to the point where they understand this play, consequently I shall not give any data as to how to stand at the plate or hold the bat in attempting the bunt, but shall take it for granted that this information is already known. What I shall attempt to do is to explain the use of the bunt from an offensive standpoint and try and give some information as to when the bunted ball is best to be used in the game. The same applies, of course, to the "hit and run" play. I have given accompanying diagrams to show how a batter should stand at the bat in order to bunt the ball. Examine the diagram closely.

**The "Double
Threat"**

It was remarked to me not long ago by a major league manager that the star batters of the major leagues would lose from fifty to a hundred points on their batting averages if the plain bunt could not be employed by them as an offensive threat. This would seem unreasonable to one who is not familiar with the technique of batting. To the close student of the game, however, this statement appears very reasonable, and it is a joy to any manager or coach to have on his team the type of batter who, by quick thinking and a general survey of the opposing infield, can offer the double threat of bunting the ball under advantageous conditions or crossing from the bunted ball back to the hit and thus throw the opposition off their feet. What I mean to say in plain language is that the batter most valuable to the team is the type who, by reason of his speed, as well as his batting ability, can offer at all times the double threat of hitting the ball hard or bunting the ball safely.

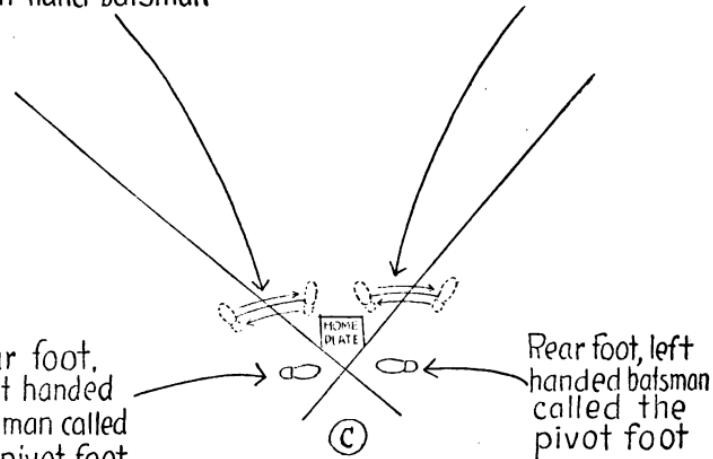
THE BUNT

Arc in which the front foot moves in bunting the ball in case of right hand batsman

Rear foot, right handed batsman called the pivot foot. Never move this foot.

Arc in which the front foot moves in bunting the ball in case of left handed batsman

Rear foot, left handed batsman called the pivot foot



The expert bunter always pivots on his rear foot, leaving his front foot free to move quickly to the right or left, also keep the arms and wrists free and keep the bat on a plane with the pitched ball, trying at the same time to let the ball hit the bat at the center of percussion

**Certain Men
in Lineup
Must Be
Able to Bunt
Perfectly**

There are at least three men in the batting order of any team that must be able to bunt the ball with clocklike precision if their team is to play winning ball. Of course, I do not want the reader to infer from this statement that all men on a baseball team should not be able to bunt with equal precision, but the *leadoff man*, the *second man in the batting order* and the *pitcher* carry the brunt of the bunting offense and they must know this style of play to perfection. The leadoff man in particular should cultivate the habit of operating the bunt play and thereby put into use, not only the threat of hitting the ball hard and "waiting out" the pitcher, but of making the opposing infield stand up under the strain of fielding the bunted ball accurately and quickly. It is bad policy, however, for the leadoff man to overwork the bunt ball offense, but he should at all times carry in his mind the fact that he is put at the head of the batting order because of his speed and ability to bunt the ball and judge accurately balls and strikes.

**The Leadoff
Man**

The reason why I mention the fact that the second man in the batting order should be exceptionally good in bunting the ball is because, in the first stages of the game, the sacrifice bunt is so frequently used to advance the first man in the batting order, provided he gets on base. If the second man in the batting order is an exceptionally good batter, as well as an exceptionally good bunter, it is obvious that a coach or manager can cross the opposing defense by the use of the "hit and run" play in order not to overwork the bunt play.

**The Plain
Bunt**

The plain bunt, as distinguished from the sacrifice bunt, makes it absolutely imperative that the man who bunts the ball for the sole purpose of getting on base himself, rather than advancing a baserunner, should be able to execute the bunt perfectly, and it stands to reason that the more perfect the bunt is the more perfect it must be handled, if the defense is to put out the runner before he reaches his base. Some of the most opportune times for the operation of the plain bunt are as follows: On the first ball pitched in the first inning, before the opposing team has obtained its bearing; late in the game, where the batter has failed to hit the opposing pitcher with any degree of certainty and where the opposing team is not expecting a bunt play; with two men

down and a good bunter at bat; where the man at the bat has taken a terrific cut at the ball and missed,—he can come back with the bunt and oftentimes catch the infield off guard; where there is a man on second base and one man down and a fast man at the bat, by bunting the ball correctly down the third base line the batter will often catch the third baseman asleep, since he has to cover third base if the man on second goes to that base. In all of these cases which I have just pointed out, which represent but part of the total opportunities, it is in the batter's discretion to determine whether or not the infield has sized up the possibility of the bunt play, and if they have, naturally the "bunt" play should not be used. I simply give these possibilities as a few of the many that arise during a ball game and in order to show how effectively the "bunt" play can be used as an offensive weapon.

There has been much discussion concerning the relative use of the bunt play as compared with the possibility of an easy out, when the "bunt" play is not executed properly. By this I mean that many managers and coaches hold to the opinion that there is more possibility of the batter being thrown out on the bunted ball than there is of the batter arriving at his base safely. No doubt this opinion is true, if we do not take into consideration the very pertinent point I have just made, viz.: that the batter employs this play only when he believes the opposing infield is *not expecting it*. This being the case, the chances of his reaching first base are greatly increased, since it requires that the bunted ball must be fielded hurriedly and the infielder must make a perfect peg. In the old days the bunt was looked upon with scorn, but it has come to stay.

I should like to impress upon the minds of all my readers that the art of bunting a ball is a great science from a baseball standpoint, and no batter can ever hope to become a perfect bunter who would bunt bad balls, or try to *get away from the plate too hurriedly*. I should also like to impress upon all players the necessity of bunting the ball they choose perfectly the first time, since the offensive potentiality of the "bunt" play is lost unless the "bunt" is executed on the first attempt, and this is particularly true where the bunt play being used by a batter in order to get on base himself, rather

Bunt Must
Be Tried at
Opportune
Time

Do Not
Bunt Bad
Balls

than advancing a man on base. I hope this point is clearly understood, since it is one of the basic principles that operates to make the "bunt" play successful.

**The
Sacrifice
Bunt**

I now go from the plain bunt to the sacrifice bunt, both plays in their inception being operated from a technical viewpoint in identically the same manner, the only difference being that, in the execution of the plain bunt, the batter figures to *get on base himself*, while in the sacrifice bunt his sole idea is to *advance the baserunner*. It is absolutely necessary for the batter to remind himself, even more than in the case of the plain bunt, that the secret of the sacrifice bunt is to *remain at the plate and bunt the ball safely*. The sacrifice bunter should absolutely forget any desire to reach first base safely and he should only remember that he must bunt the ball perfectly and thus advance the baserunner and not bunt into a double play. A good batter will never bunt bad balls, even in the case of the plain bunt. To bunt bad balls means to increase the chances of an easy out by a "pop-up" fly.

**No Signal
Necessary**

In coaching or managing a team, I have never used a "bunt" signal in order to advance a man by the sacrifice bunt from first base to second base or with men on first and second bases to advance both runners. Of course, I mean where there is no one down. The fact remains that in such cases the baserunner should be expecting the batter to bunt, and will get a good lead off of the base so as to assist in offsetting the possibilities of a double play. He should not get so far off of first base that the pitcher can catch him off and, as I pointed out in my chapter on pitching, this is one of the very times when a shrewd pitcher will endeavor to hold the man on first base. The batter who is about to employ the sacrifice bunt should also realize the possibility within the pitcher's grasp of making the batter bunt so perfectly that the ball will go directly into the hands of a waiting infielder and thus, even though the bunted ball under ordinary circumstances would be considered perfectly executed, a double play would be the result. All of these things must be taken into consideration by the batter in the manipulation of the sacrifice bunt and is indicative of the perfection required in the manipulation of the play.

**Baserunner
Must Assist
the Batter**

In coaching or managing a team, I have never used a "bunt" signal in order to advance a man by the sacrifice bunt from first base to second base or with men on first and second bases to advance both runners. Of course, I mean where there is no one down. The fact remains that in such cases the baserunner should be expecting the batter to bunt, and will get a good lead off of the base so as to assist in offsetting the possibilities of a double play. He should not get so far off of first base that the pitcher can catch him off and, as I pointed out in my chapter on pitching, this is one of the very times when a shrewd pitcher will endeavor to hold the man on first base. The batter who is about to employ the sacrifice bunt should also realize the possibility within the pitcher's grasp of making the batter bunt so perfectly that the ball will go directly into the hands of a waiting infielder and thus, even though the bunted ball under ordinary circumstances would be considered perfectly executed, a double play would be the result. All of these things must be taken into consideration by the batter in the manipulation of the sacrifice bunt and is indicative of the perfection required in the manipulation of the play.

The sacrifice bunt is most always employed as an offensive play when there is no one down. It is obvious that the reason for this is because, with one or two men out, even if the sacrifice bunt is executed perfectly and the baserunner is advanced, it leaves but one opportunity for the man to score on a base hit, whereas, with no one down, the team still has two chances of scoring the baserunner on a hit.

Some managers and coaches employ a signal for the sacrifice bunt with a man on first base for the sole purpose of advancing the baserunner, not only to second base from first base, but from first base all the way around to third base, but I hold to the theory that no such signal is necessary, since the baserunner should be expecting the sacrifice bunt, and if the batter bunts the ball toward third base, and the third baseman throws to first base, but fails to return to third base quickly, the baserunner going to second base can watch for the opportunity and make third if the opportunity is given him. This is one concrete example of the value of good baserunning. This is about all there is to this style of play, but I should remind the baserunners that such a play can be executed only infrequently and, under most circumstances, it is dangerous.

The sacrifice bunt should never be used by any team except where the game is close and every run counts. The only way to win a ball game when a heavy score is against you, let us say four or five runs, is to hit the ball and take the chances as a natural result. I have found in modern baseball if the opposing team has a one or two run lead through the fourth inning, it is sometimes advisable to continue the use of the sacrifice bunt up through this inning, especially where a team is getting men on bases frequently and the batters are hitting the ball solidly. But, after the fourth inning, if this style of play has not been effective, it is best to revert from the sacrifice bunt back to the plain style of hitting, continually reminding the team to run the bases conservatively and taking but few chances. It is only right for me to say that the sacrifice bunt is distinctively and peculiarly fitted to meet the demands of a close game, although much damage can be done by using an attempted sacrifice bunt purposely, and then crossing the opposition by coming back with "hit and run" play. This latter threat when worked properly by a shrewd

Sacrifice
Use With
No One Out

Use of the
Signal to
Advance
Baserunner
Two Bases
Instead of
One

The Sacrifice
Bunt Valu-
able in
Close Games

coach or manager will account for many runs in a ball game.

In the use of the plain bunt and sacrifice bunt it is not advisable to tell the batter he must bunt the ball for sure down the third base line or the first base line. I always leave this to the discretion of the batter and it really makes very little difference in the long run which base line he bunts down. Personally, I think it is just as hard for the fielders to handle the ball either way. I am favorable, somewhat, to the general rule of putting the bunt down the third base line.

**The
"Squeeze"
Play**

We now come to the "squeeze" play, which in many instances is a real life saver to a team in a close game. The "squeeze" play is really nothing more than a sacrifice bunt which, instead of advancing a baserunner from first to second base or from second to third base, advances a baserunner on third base to home base. There are many things which must be taken into consideration, provided the "squeeze" play is to be executed properly, and it is necessary for me to point these out before proceeding further in the discussion of the play.

**When to
Use the
"Squeeze"
Play**

In the first place, the "squeeze" play is worked by a signal from the batter to the baserunners, and I would have the reader note particularly that I say from the batter to the baserunners, because it very often happens that two men instead of one can score on the "squeeze" bunt. I shall take up in another chapter the signal part of the play, that is, from the technical side, but it is only necessary for me to state that the signal is given and used. A smart coach or manager will rarely ever use the "squeeze" play when there are three men on bases, since the chances of its "going through" are materially decreased by reason of the fact that if the ball is thrown to the catcher ahead of the baserunner the catcher does not have to touch the baserunner out, but can make a double play by throwing the ball to first base after standing on home. I have also found that it is inadvisable to use the "squeeze" play more than once during a game, although many times where the batter has given the "squeeze" signal to the baserunner and, instead of bunting the ball fair, bunts it foul, it is all right to come back with the same signal again, and in such cases very often the opposition, thinking that the "squeeze" play will not be used again,

are caught off of their guard, with the result that the play works to perfection. As a general rule, it is poor policy to operate the "squeeze" play with a man on third base, or men on first, second and third bases, or second and third bases and no one down. In such a case, it is obvious that the offense has three chances of scoring a run, either by error, by sacrifice fly, or safe hit, and all of these chances apply to three separate batters. To use the play under such circumstances would be poor baseball, and this is especially true if there is a reasonably good batter at the bat, since a safe hit will score two runs, where the "squeeze" play might score but one as a general rule.

Thus I arrive at the conclusion that the "squeeze" play is best used only through dire necessity or where a team is so far ahead that the runner on third is the tying or winning run and a weak batter at bat. I do not mean to say by this that it is inadvisable for a heavy batter to pull the "squeeze" play, since it is obvious that the opposition might be expecting this heavy batter to hit the ball as usual and he can cross them up by the use of the "squeeze" play. Another thing that enters into the success of the "squeeze" play and possibly the most decisive factor in its execution is whether or not the opposition is expecting a play. If they are, then it would be suicide to attempt the play with a pitcher of any intelligence in the box, since he has the batter in the palm of his hand and can destroy any chances of success. As for me, personally, I like to use the "squeeze" play best in a tight game and in the late innings with a good bunter at the bat and only after I have tried every other means of scoring and they have all failed. After all is said, this is the governing factor in the use of the "squeeze" play.

The batter must thoroughly understand that he must give the signal plainly, but not so that the opposition can diagnose the play, the man on base or the men on bases must have their heads up and, as the pitcher winds up, start for home or for the next base. The man on third must not get too early a start or the pitcher will see that that the play is on and put the ball to the catcher in an unbuntable way and an easy out will result. The batter must try to bunt the ball. He should

Squeeze Play Last Resort

Batter Must Give Signal Plainly

not think of bunting the ball to get himself on base. The sole object is to score the runner on third.

I have now covered the plain bunt, the sacrifice bunt and the "squeeze" play, and these three offensive plays, taken as one, represent the first of the master plays and can all be included under the general heading of the bunt play. I am now going to take up the "hit and run" play, and, because this play is so generally misunderstood, I am going to discuss it from the bottom up.

Discussion of "Hit and Run" Play

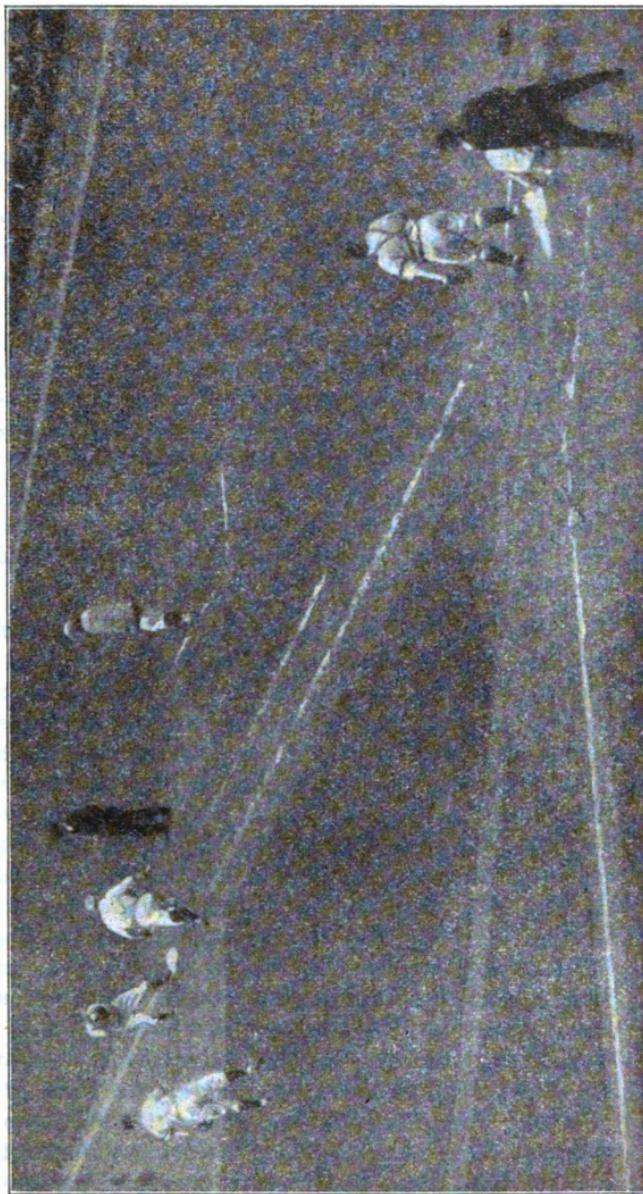
The "hit and run" play is a chance play which is used on the offense under exceptional circumstances to obtain something for nothing. This play involves signal work on the part of the batter and the baserunner and, as in the "bunt" play, perfect manipulation, provided success is to be obtained. It is hardly possible to discuss this play without bringing into prominence the batter, the baserunner, the second baseman and shortstop. Thus it is the play can be called a chance play, for it is really seen that the offense, composed of two players, is face to face with the defense, composed of two men, and it is either a question of the two offensive players out-guessing the two defensive players, or vice versa, provided the "hit and run" play succeeds or fails. I would not have the reader get the idea that the "hit and run" play from its inception as an offensive play is entirely guesswork, for it certainly is not, but what I do mean to imply is that if the defense plays the game entirely correct the play has but little chance to succeed.

What Is the "Hit and Run" Play?

The "hit and run" play is used to advance a baserunner or baserunners two bases instead of one base on a safe hit by the batter hitting the pitched ball through the identical spot where the shortstop or second baseman is accustomed to cover but which they fail to do, thinking the baserunner is trying to steal second base. A right handed batter, in order to live up to his part of the play, must drive the ball through the second baseman's position, since the second baseman is supposed to cover second base where a baserunner on first base attempts a theft of second base, if a right handed batter is at bat. A left handed batter, for identically the same reason, will attempt to bat the ball through the shortstop on the "hit and run" play. A close study of the diagram on page 87 will indicate exactly what the author means by this.

International

This photo shows the final phase of the squeeze play. Note the runner who has slipped across the plate.



**Try the
"Hit and
Run" in
Practice**

The younger generation of baseball players should hold in mind the absolute necessity of these features of the "hit and run" play, and they should also remember that it is probably the most difficult part of the play. For this very reason, during baseball practice on off days, I continually remind right handed batters to hit the ball every now and then through second base, and vice versa, I tell the left handed batters to hit through short. I have also found that this mode of practice will greatly assist in destroying the weakness so many times manifested in young players and commonly called "dead" right field or "dead" left field hitters. There is another advantage to this form of practice in batting, which is that it cures the weakness of a batter in refusing to hit balls on the outside corner of the plate. I have found by constant practice that those batters who have this weakness can ultimately be taught to hit a ball as hard to right field as to left, and even when the "hit and run" play is not being used, it greatly increases a team's efficiency to have batters who, by hitting "straight away," are liable to hit to all points of the diamond.

**The Separate
Phases of
the Play**

I think the best way to discuss the "hit and run" play is to point out the successive phases that go to make it up, and then, by putting them together, the reader will get a better knowledge of its real value. The first phase of the "hit and run" play is the signal from the batter to the baserunner. The batter should give this signal plainly, for the simple reason that he will, no doubt, hit into a double play if the signal is not caught by the baserunner. On the other hand, it is the duty of the baserunner to catch the batter's signal, and this is why it is very necessary that all baserunners remain on base until the pitcher is ready to pitch. The second phase of this play is the start of the baserunner as soon as the pitcher delivers the ball to the catcher. The baserunner should be oblivious to the ultimate result obtained, and he should, consequently, in so far as he is concerned, try to get to second base as though he was attempting a plain steal of that base. His sole purpose should be to make the shortstop or second baseman cover second base, thus leaving the opportunity open for the third phase of the play. The third phase of this play is instantly obvious after obtaining the first two phases and,

in brief, represents the batted ball hit by the batter through the fielder's position covering second base. The batter, once the signal is given, should remember that he must attempt to hit the ball, even if it is high or low or wide or close, since it is his duty to assist the baserunner in obtaining second base as much as possible. The batsman should also realize that he should do his best to bat the ball through the proper place, thus to avoid a double play. The fourth phase of the play is really an aftermath to the other three, and if the "hit and run" play is successful it then becomes the duty of the baserunner, and the batsman as well, to keep their "heads up" and make as many bases on the hit as possible, thus putting into final execution the ultimate aim of the "hit and run" play at its inception. I dare say there is no play known to baseball offense that is so detrimental to the defense as the "hit and run" play when it is worked successfully. Strictly speaking, however, the "hit and run" play is a dangerous play, and a coach or manager will find it very difficult to attempt unless the batter and baserunner are crafty and fast, and certainly not clumsy in manipulating the details incident to it.

I shall now speak of some of the opportunities arising during a game when the "hit and run" play can best be used to advantage. First, the "hit and run" play is never used during a close game in the early innings when there is no one down, provided good baseball is the order of the day. The chances of a double play are too great. On the other hand, late in the game where the score is close and a team has been employing the sacrifice bunt with regularity to advance a baserunner from first to second base, it is not bad baseball for a coach or manager to cross up the defense by using the "hit and run" play with no one down. This is especially true where an exceptionally hard hitter is at bat and a fast man is on base. I would not, even under these favorable circumstances, advise the use of the "hit and run" play, unless the batter had the pitcher in the hole, i. e., where the pitcher finds it necessary to put the ball over the plate. By the word necessary I mean when the batter has the pitcher two balls and one strike, two balls and no strike, one ball and no strike, three balls and one strike. While we are speaking of having the pitcher "in the hole," I deem it advisable for me to state that, no matter what opportunity

When to
Use the
"Hit and
Run" Play

might present itself for the use of the "hit and run" play, it is very poor baseball, in my judgment, to put the play on, unless this condition is at hand, except on the first ball pitched to a batsman. As I related in my chapter on pitching, this feature of the theory behind the "hit and run" proves conclusively that the pitcher has it in the palms of his hands to watch for the "hit and run" play, and when the batter has him in the hole, he should hold the man on base as closely as possible, and thus, if he must throw a hittable ball to the batsman, he will increase the chances of the batsman hitting into a double play. In my chapter dealing with second baseman and shortstop, I also pointed out that, under these conditions, these two players should anticipate the "hit and run" play and operate accordingly.

Best Opportunity for the "Hit and Run"

The best opportunity which presents itself for the "hit and run" play is with one man down and a man on first base or a man on first base and third base and the other necessary conditions favorable, such as the batter having the pitcher in the hole, etc. Although this play is most frequently used with only a man on first base and one down, it can be used with equal success with a man on third base also, since the man on third is not interested chiefly in the ultimate outcome of the play, and he is not forced to leave his base unless the play is successful. For this reason, the man on third base need not pay any attention to the signal of the batter for the "hit and run" play to the man on first base.

Score and Inning Should Be Considered

I should like to remind the reader that the "hit and run" play, by reason of the fact that it is a chance play, should not be attempted under less favorable conditions than those already pointed out, but if a team is in the lead, and by that I mean substantially in the lead, it is natural that this lead can be taken as a favorable circumstance, and for this reason the play is more often pulled by the team in the lead. I believe I stated in a previous chapter that when a team is behind there is very little excuse for taking chances on running bases wildly, and the same thing applies to the use of the "hit and run" play. For this very excellent reason the score of the game and the inning must be taken into consideration by the coach or manager in deciding upon the use of the "hit and run" play.

CHAPTER XII

THE DRAG PLAY

Provided a batter has reached any degree of efficiency, the drag play can be put into operation, but not otherwise. This play is used with unusual effectiveness by such sterling batters as Ty Cobb, Rabbit Moranville, Scoops Carey and George Sisler, and although it has never been termed to the best of my knowledge a "drag" play, yet it must be given a distinctive name in order to distinguish it from the "bunt" play. To many thousands of baseball fans, this play looks exactly like a "bunt" play, although the ball is hit with more velocity and gets a harder roll. It is best used by a left handed batter because a left handed batter can get a much better start from home plate to first base than a right handed batter can. Nevertheless, a fast right handed batter can use the play, provided of course, he is skilled in the art of placing the batted ball or the "drag" ball in the right pocket of the infield. Ty Cobb used this play against speedy pitchers with unusual success and many a time I have watched him come to bat the first two times in a game and go hitless and then on his third or fourth trip to the plate, use the "drag" play in order to get on base safely. It is impossible for any batter to keep his batting stride in good shape all through a season, and there are days when a sterling batter finds himself off stride. By this I mean, in the baseball vernacular, he "hasn't got his eye on the ball." It is in such cases as this that the drag play can be used.

If the "drag" play is to be operated successfully, the batter should attempt to bat the ball or better still, push it or tap it in the pocket between the pitcher and first baseman or the pitcher and third baseman, more preferably between the pitcher and first baseman, the idea being to tap the ball just hard enough for it to be out of reach of the pitcher, and on the ground and just too slow for the second baseman to come in and get it and throw the batter out at first. If the "drag" play is put into operation by the batter tapping the ball in the pocket between the pitcher and the third

The "Drag"
Play Distinguised
from the
"Bunt"

Where to
Place the
Ball

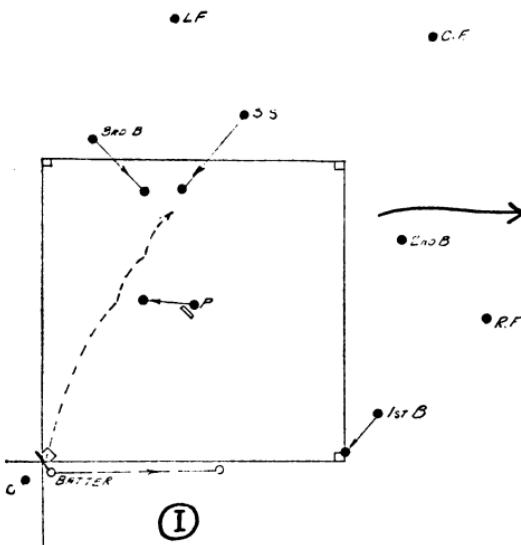
baseman, it should be just fast enough to be out of the reach of the pitcher, and just slow enough to be too slow for the shortstop to handle; the ball is a go-between a hard hit ball and a "bunt."

**Batter
Must Be
Fast**

It is absolutely necessary in a play of this kind, for the batter to be fast and watch his opportunity. To offset this play, the first and third basemen can, by quick thinking and alertness, cut across and field the ball, and thus get the man at first without difficulty, provided when the first baseman fields the ball, the pitcher covers first base. There is not much to this play other than it is a good play for the efficient batter to use if he is also efficient in placing the ball. The greatest advantage of the play comes from attempting it at an opportune time and when the opposing infielders are off guard.

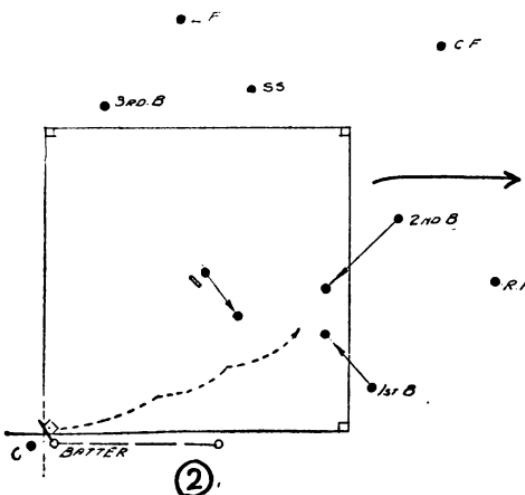
THE DRAG BALL

(1)



The drag ball between pitcher's box and 3rd base. The ball is hit by the batsman just hard enough to be out of reach of the pitcher and just slow enough to be out of reach of the 3rd baseman and short-stop. The ball is not bunted. The batter takes a half or push swing

(1)



(2)

The drag ball between pitcher's box and first base. The ball is hit by the batsman just hard enough to be out of reach of the pitcher and just slow enough to be out of reach of the 2nd baseman and 1st baseman

(2)

CHAPTER XIII

HOW TO COME OUT OF A BATTING SLUMP

It is not infrequently happens that during a playing season, some member of a baseball team will find himself in what is commonly known as a "batting slump." A player will go through many games, hitting in rare form and then all of a sudden, he will lose his drive and apparently is unable to hit the easiest kind of pitching. In such cases, the same player who has been hitting hard balls will begin to hit "pop-ups" to the infield or easy ground balls and where before he had hit straight ball pitching and curve ball pitching, he suddenly finds that he cannot hit any pitching. Under such circumstances, it is very likely that the man will lose confidence in his own ability and unless fortified by the constant cheerful words of a coach or manager, will be ruined for good or at least for a long period of time. To this particular class of batters, I can only say that a great deal depends upon their ability to overcome the mortification of a slump. It is just as natural for a good batter to have a slump, as it is for a duck to take to water, and in devoting a chapter of this book to this subject, I do so because I believe that any man can cure himself of a batting slump who has the morale to take such matters for granted, and continue to play the best he knows how, being continually reminded that the slump will disappear almost as quickly as it arrives. If the batting slump continues, I have found that if a batter will walk into the ball, rather than take his natural stride at the bat, it will force him to keep his eye on the ball more closely, and result in hard hit balls instead of weak ones. If this does not work, the batter can crowd the plate or stand back from the plate or go through any other changes which occur to him while playing. All of these things materially assist the batter in getting out of the slump but they are far from being the one thing which will help most, viz.: to work to get the pitcher in the hole on all occasions possible and once he has the pitcher in the hole, hit the ball that he figures to come

across the plate—in other words, a batter in a slump should learn to hit the pitcher when the pitcher is in the “hole.” From a coaching standpoint, I can truthfully say that the personality of a coach or manager will materially benefit the batter in a slump and where a player has been batting consistently, a sudden removal from the game because the player has slumped, is liable to portray a coach’s or manager’s lack of confidence in the player and ruin him.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SCIENCE OF RUNNING BASES

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The Value of Baserunning

Running bases constitutes one of the main factors in the national game. In simple language, it is one of the three sciences of the baseball game. It is indeed seldom that a championship club reaches its goal minus a definite program of running bases. Big league managers and coaches go into a frenzy over the inability of their players to grasp the intricate side of the "steal," playing safe and taking chances when on base. In the days when the famous Athletics were considered the best team in this country, they ranked as the finest base runners. Individually, Ty Cobb in his palmiest days, received his greatest applause after he stole second or went from first to third on an infield out. More World Series have been lost through "boneheaded" base running than any other one phase of the game. It is either a question of a player being glued to the base when a chance should have been taken, or taking a chance when a sure out would be the result, that loses the game. The fact of the matter is this—in base running, there is no middle ground. The player is either to take the chance or not to take it.

Attitude of the Baserunner

The instant a batter becomes a baserunner, his entire mental attitude should change with respect to his part in the game. A player must always remember that a base runner is the offense in the game, just as much as the batter. To "run wild" on the bases, as most managers call reckless-baserunning, when the play is to run the bases safely, is to destroy your team's offense. This is doubly true when your team is ahead as well as behind.

It is Necess- ary to Get a Quick Start and Be Alert

How many times do we see men thrown out at second base on an attempted sacrifice with no one down! Here is one of the fundamental plays of the game that often goes wrong. True, in a great majority of these cases, the batter either fails to bunt or bunts directly into the hands of the pitcher or catcher or third or first. But, even at that, the

baserunner if he had been alert or properly started, e.g. the most cases have avoided the out at second or a double). If the average baseball player will stop and look at the baserunner on first at the same instant the batter bunts the ball, he will see that nine times out of ten, the runner has not begun to run at the proper time and is looking at the batter to see the bunt for himself before running, or if he has not done this, he will see the runner get under way a slight distance, then deliberately slow up and look at the plate. If he has not committed this wrong, perhaps he has permitted himself to be driven back toward first base on some "queer" movement of the pitcher. I simply give this example as one of many that could be given.

A baserunner should develop the faculty of diagnosing any play. He should think to himself what he should do under certain conditions. The same idea predominates in every phase of the game—out-figuring the opposition. But, since a baserunner is the chief offense except batting, it is doubly important for him to be alert and *keep alive* this offense.

It is a mistaken idea that a good baserunner must be extremely fast. Ty Cobb, Milan, "Scoop" Carey and others are nimble and shifty, but not the fastest men in baseball. They have developed a certain crafty "modus operandi." By this I mean they have the knack of developing "worry" among the opposition when they get on base. Each are excellent diagnosticians. They study the pitcher, the catcher, the distance a ball is hit, they know their own capabilities, how far they can take a lead off base, etc. Better still, they create the impression that a slip in the opposition will be used to advantage. I do not mean to say that speed is not desired in all baserunning, but I do place a certain premium upon craftiness, for the excellent baserunner must have both speed and craft and I would rather have craft than speed.

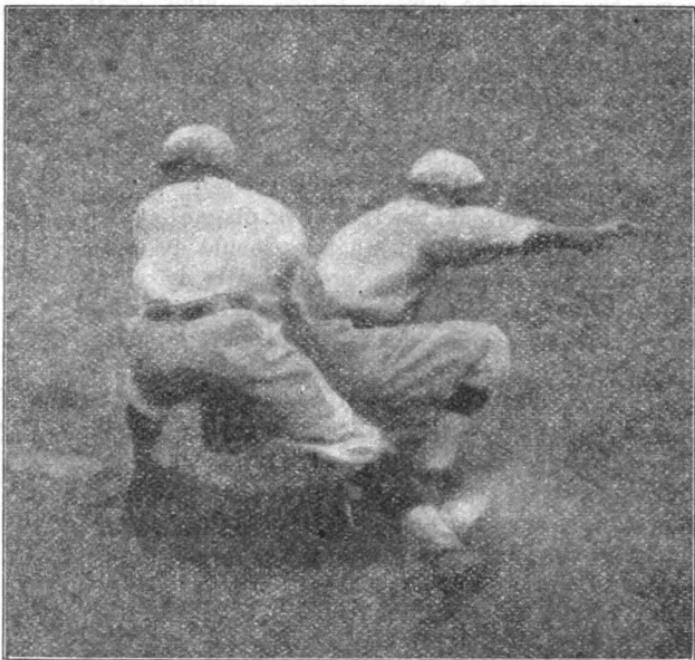
If a player is to become an efficient baserunner, he must take an initiative, but not be unmindful of a "slip-up" in his plans. I once saw an excellent third baseman save his team from defeat by a bluff throw on a ground ball. It happened this way: "A was on second. B, the batter, hit a dinky ground ball toward C, who played third. C fielded the ball but fumbled. By the time C recovered the fumble,

Mind Must
Diagnose
Play Quickly

Speed vs.
Craftiness

Value of
Taking
Initiative

INSIDE BASEBALL



International

This photo shows how easy it is for a man to break his leg if he is not adept at sliding into a base. It is just as dangerous to the fielder as to the baserunner when a player cannot slide into a base.

he was near the third base line. Instead of throwing the ball to first (he figured he could not beat the batter), he bluffed to first and turned around and touched out "A" five feet off third to which base he had come on the play. "A" was not alert and had not figured ahead of time. A very excellent idea for all baseball players to follow is this. Keep the initiative, which is so imperative to baserunning by alertness, rather than by taking chances. You must have confidence, for confidence makes alertness.

From my experience in coaching college teams and from my own playing experience, I doubt if there are two players out of every ten that really "run" bases. Most all players either play too safe or take too many chances when they become baserunners. It would be foolish to lay down rules to cover the science of baserunning. It cannot be done. I shall not even try such a foolish thing. I can say this, however, that a team that prides itself upon being efficient in baserunning and masters this great art, will give any team a great game, provided of course, they can come anywhere near holding their own in hitting and fielding. To be *efficient* means that an opportunity is not to be missed to *get all there is out of a play*.

Have you ever stopped to consider how many men are caught off bases? This is pure and simple bonehead baserunning. Think what it means to be one run behind, a man on second and no one out and the "boob" gets caught off second and yells to the coachee, "Why didn't you tell me?" Invariably, the batter always gets the hit that would have tied the score. A play of this kind is what makes a coach or manager wear out his pants on the bench. In this connection, I want to add that the only way to "start" to run bases is to "stop" on a base and remain there until the pitcher gets in his box. What does this do? First, you cannot be "sucked in" on a hidden ball stunt or nipped off by some "smart" fielder; second, you can get your signal; and third, you can hesitate long enough to figure out a play if needs be. The first thought that should flash through a baserunner's head is this,—"what next?" Will it be the "hit and run?" If it is, then I must go through and if it works I need not slide at second; I will

Good
Baserunners
Come Few
and Far
Between

No Excuse
for Men to
Be Caught
Off Base

listen to the coacher, perhaps I can make third, etc., etc.''

No matter what base a baserunner gets to, stay "put" until the pitcher gets on the slab. This rule should never be violated.

Where Two or More Men Are On Base

A great deal of judgment is required by a baserunner who is running behind another baserunner. It is inexcusable to permit him to advance while you stay on your base. Suppose, for example, "A" is on second base and you are on first base. "A" attempts to steal third at an inopportune time. You should attempt second. Maybe "A" did wrong, but once he undertook the play, you follow through. You can help cover up "A's" bonehead or wrong play by doing the right thing. Most of the difficulty arising from running bases behind another baserunner can be cured by closely watching the ball in play as well as the runner ahead.

We hear a great deal about the "double steal," the "delayed steal," the "plain steal" and the "steal home." The "plain steal" is the one of chief interest since it is used oftener. The "steal home" is bad baseball, although spectacular. College men should leave it alone. I shall attempt to give an idea of how these "steals" are operated and then what the "break" or "block" to each one constitutes.

THE STEAL HOME

The Break for the Steal Home

The "break" for the "steal home" is manipulated by the pitcher. The "steal" can never be worked if the pitcher thinks about such a play being attempted. The third baseman should also be alert. The instant the man on third starts for home, the pitcher should throw the ball deliberately off the home base and high toward the third base side of the plate. Ordinarily the ball should travel at the batter if he is a right hand hitter. If the batter hits from the port side, the pitcher should throw the ball well away and to the left of home base. This drives the batter out of the box and the catcher can still handle the ball and tag his man. The third baseman, when he sees the runner start for home, should yell, "There he goes," thus giving the pitcher added help in diagnosing the play.

THE PLAIN STEAL

It is wrong to steal a base when the theft, if successful, will not materially benefit your team. A coach or manager must remember this. This is the first doctrine to follow. This is why I say the time to play safe is when your team is far behind. To begin with, the odds are against a "plain steal." If your team comes along to the fifth inning and is five runs behind it is wrong for a baserunner to attempt a steal of second base while on first unless you know the catcher is a poor thrower, etc. In this case, even if the man stole second and later scored you still have accomplished very little. On the other hand, if the baserunner is thrown out, you have nullified your hope of offense. There would be but one thing to do,—wait for some base hits. On the other hand, it is imperative that a baserunner under these conditions, should be alert on pass balls, overthrows or fumbles, either in the infield or outfield. In this way you can work to a maximum offense. You would be falling into the hands of the defense if you took a wild chase under this condition and was later thrown out. When your team is behind, it is the opportune time to be alert to the carelessness of a winning team's over-confidence, but not to play into its hands. The more men on base the greater becomes the chance for a single or double to put you back in the running. When behind, a baserunner as well as the batter, should be instructed to play the game safe. It is no time to play the "hit and run," etc. Of course, the closeness of the score would in certain cases change the style of baserunning. If only one run behind and the fifth inning, the degree of safety would be diminished. A "plain steal" of third with two men down is poor baserunning. The man will score on safe hit. In a close game and a fast baserunner on second who can and does get a big lead he might attempt third base with one man down, putting him in line for a sacrifice fly as well as safe hit. But even this is extremely dangerous. A manager or coach should watch his business carefully on that play.

In sending a man to second base on a steal, three things must govern if sound baseball is pursued. First, is the

The Plain
Steal
Discussed

Baserunning
When the
Team Is
Behind

**The Plain
Steal—
First to
Second**

man on first a good baserunner and will he get his lead? Two essential things. Second, the score of the game and the inning. Third, is the batter reasonably sure to hit (that is, has he been hitting in the particular game), and score the man from second. Of course, it is bad baseball to send a man down to second with none out, so the plain steal generally comes with one down or two down, most always two are out.

**The
Baserunner
On Third
Base**

If a man is on third base he should become very careful of his next move. I have always said more games are lost by baserunners getting in "dutch" on third base than any other base. It is "rotten" baseball for a runner to get caught between third and home when there is one out or none out. Speaking frankly, if there is none out and I had a man on third, I would order him to stay there under any circumstances, except where a ball goes for a safe hit or rolls to the outfield through error or is completely bungled by an infielder. My reasons for this are because the runner would score on a plain error or on a clean hit or a sacrifice fly. To permit him to attempt home on a ground ball hit in the infield is most always disastrous. With one man down, the baserunner is taught to get a somewhat longer lead and to increase his risk with especial reference to the velocity with which the ball is hit as compared with his own speed. A baserunner on third should double his usual precaution as to getting home, especially where the score is close. After every pitch he should return to his base, like all the other baserunners. To be caught off third by a pitcher is inexcusable. Start with his wind-up, even when a "squeeze" play is on. A baserunner on third should be alert on all outfield flies. He should judge their distance while standing on his base. A man on third should stand on foul ground when not on the base. He will thus avoid being put out by a batted ball.

THE DOUBLE STEAL

**The Double
Steal**

The "double steal" can be manipulated by baserunners on second and first or third and first. Rarely ever any other way. When worked by runners on *second* and *first*, the man on second attempts third and at the same instant the man on first attempts second. In this case everything depends on the

lead and the craftiness of the baserunner. The baserunner in this case, as in all others, should be careful not to give himself away. This play is often worked where one run would tie or two would win and there are less than two men down and the opposing pitcher is going good. If the man on third is thrown out it still leaves another man in line to score from second. The play is often pulled early in the game, and I know of nothing that so completely throws the defense into frenzy. There should be a right handed batter at bat, thus impeding the catcher. This play is also used, although seldom, with two down and a pitcher at bat or some other weak batter, and when one run will tie or win the game. In this double steal the baserunners start on the delivery of the ball by the pitcher to the catcher.

The "break" for this double steal rests entirely in the catcher and pitcher. A good catcher should continually remind the third baseman to be on his toes and the pitcher to "take a look at second." If the man on second is getting a long lead, the catcher should bluff him back. The catcher's alertness will offset the baserunners' intent. A remark by the catcher when said loud enough to be heard and to the effect, "Watch out for a double steal," will make the man on second very cautious of any attempt to try a steal. The "break" to this play is best operated before it starts. But, if the play is under way, the catcher should indicate to the pitcher instantly that he wanted a ball on the third base side of the plate. This drives the batter away and makes it possible to flag the runner going to third. Third should cover his base immediately. The quicker he gets set for the play the better.

If there is a double steal perpetrated between baserunners on first and third it is highly necessary for the man on first to get a good lead and keep on his toes. He should start for second directly after the pitcher has thrown to the catcher. Once under way, he should run hurriedly toward second. He should go as near second base as possible without being put out. The man on third should not be off his base more than five feet when the play starts, certainly not far enough to be caught by a snap throw or a bluff. If the catcher throws the ball to either the second baseman or shortstop the baserunner who was on first and has gone as far toward second

With One
Man Out

With Two
Men Out

The Break

Double Steal
With a Man
On First
and Third

as possible without being touched out, should stop and get in a chase. When the baserunner on third sees that the ball is as far from home plate as possible, for example, very near second base, he should "break" for home and never slacken up. The result, if successful, is that a run has scored and another possible run is on second. Care in this play is demanded. It is one often used. This double steal is usually worked with two men down and a weak batter at the bat. It is one of the hardest steals in baseball to break up. See diagram accompanying the paragraph on the "short and long peg."

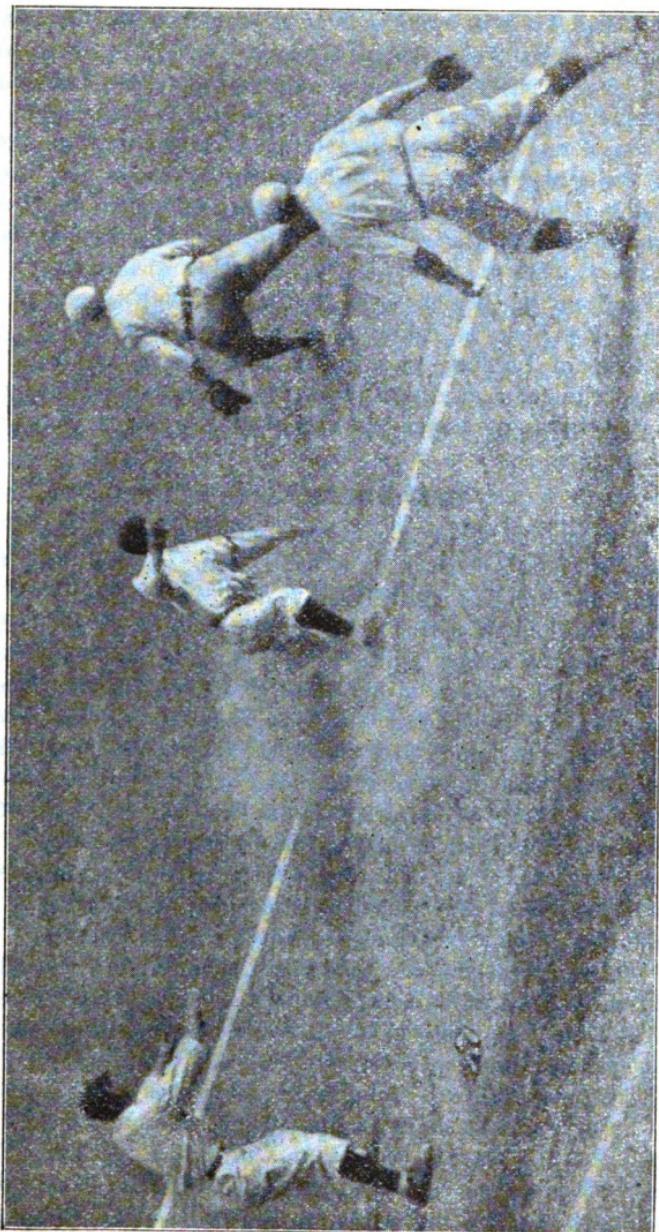
The Break

The "break" for this double steal is obvious but very difficult. The catcher should not hold the ball, so he throws the ball to the shortstop or second baseman. One has come in close behind the pitcher's box, the other plays second base. The fielder receiving the ball takes a look at third and, of course, if the man on third has not started, the fielder playing in close lets the ball go through. The fielder who ultimately handles the ball starts for the baserunner and drives him back to first base hurriedly and without stopping. The fielder who played in close, always watching third base, at the instant he sees the baserunner on third make for home, yells to the fielder with the ball, who then throws home to get his man. To work successfully against this play, it is imperative that the catcher make a good peg to second and that the fielder receiving the ball does not waste time driving back the baserunner who was on first base back to the base so as to shorten the ultimate peg home, and that the fielder who is watching third keeps awake and is not afraid to yell when the man on third is going home and will assume the responsibility.

Another "break" to this steal is operated by the catcher alone. He bluffs to second and then attempts to catch the man on third. Often this will work unless the baserunner on third holds his base. The work of this phase of the catcher's position and the correct time to peg through and bluff will be taken up in a later chapter.

**Another
Double Steal**

There is still another way to work the double steal. With a man on first and a man on third base, the man on first attempts second base. He goes through to second or as near second base as he can without being tagged out. If

*International*

This photo is a good one to study. First, the runner has not "come into" the base properly. Second, the pitcher who is backing up is not far enough behind the base to back it up and if the ball had passed the third baseman, the pitcher would not have been able to handle it either.

he is caught in a "chase" by a peg from the catcher, the man on third should be across home plate. In other words, the man on third takes a chance (a dangerous one) on the catcher throwing the ball through. It is imperative that the man on third should not stop. This play is dangerous but unless the catcher bluffs his "peg" there is no "break" to the play. It is a battle of wits. A coach or manager can use it with his team in the lead and two men down and a poor hitter at bat and where during the early part of the game a catcher has been pegging through to second base. The play here is different from the other double steal. Instead of holding third until the baserunner gets in a chase the man on third starts for home immediately and simply takes a chance on the catcher going through with his peg.

THE DELAYED STEAL

The Delayed Steal

The delayed steal is manipulated in somewhat the same fashion, but not as a rule by a man on first and third, although really it can all be termed under a general rule a double delayed steal. If a man is on first or second, and the opposing catcher gets to lobbing the ball back to the pitcher, the man on either base or men on both bases can watch their opportunity and the minute the ball leaves the catcher's hand, break for the next base. Often the third baseman or second baseman will be out of position and the steal will work, thanks to the laziness of the catcher and the fielder in question at any given base.

The "break" for this form of delayed steal rests solely in the hands of the pitcher and catcher. Both must be alert and yell at various times, "Watch for the steal." Once the steal is attempted the pitcher should give the catcher the same kind of ball as indicated in the "break" for the steal home. A delayed steal when successful reflects upon the pitcher and catcher.

Another Delayed Steal

The delayed steal can also be attempted in this manner. A baserunner on first or second or runners on both first and second. One or the other will get a big lead off the base after the pitcher has delivered the ball. The catcher, seeing the lead, will often make a mistake and throw through to the base occupied by the runner, who in the meantime

darts for the next base. Often the fielder goes to sleep and, thanks to that fact and a big lead, the runner gets a clean steal, or both do, as the case might be.

The break for this steal is identical with the break for the delayed steal indicated directly above. A catcher can offset a long lead of any baserunner by walking out in the diamond and making a correct bluff throw at the runner before he throws the ball. This will generally bring out the intention of the baserunners.

There is a form of delayed steal used with a man on first base and a man on third base as follows: With two men down and the next batter a weak hitter. The batter who has walked or been hit by the pitcher will walk casually toward first base and as he nears that base make for second without stopping at all on first base. If the pitcher has the ball and does not think what he is doing or becomes unmindful of the man on third, he will generally throw the ball to a fielder covering second. If he does throw the ball there, the man on third darts for home without any delay. As a rule, he will beat the throw to the plate and the man on first will have stolen second on the play when the fielder tries to catch the man going home.

The "break" for this play rests squarely up to the pitcher. He should watch for the play. If attempted, he should look immediately toward third and, if possible, drive the man back to third base. If he can get him by a quick throw he should do so and the third baseman should, under all circumstances like this, play his base by being on it. If the pitcher drives the baserunner back to third then he can throw to second and the man on third will not have obtained a long enough lead to score directly. The pitcher also should feel at liberty to turn immediately toward second and bluff a throw there, which misleads the man on third, then turn and throw home for an easy out on the baserunner going home.

SUMMARY

To every one of these steals there is a sure "break." The catcher or pitcher can destroy all of them, and thus it goes to show that a baserunner must watch his opportunity care-

The Break

Another Form of Delayed Steal

The Pitcher's Duty When This Delayed Steal Is Tried

**All Batters
Should**

fully. When you attempt to run bases, know beforehand what reason you have for it.

**Round First
Base, After
Ball Hit to
Outfield**

I cannot close this chapter without calling attention to the fact that a batter on all balls hit to the outfield should round first base and keep the ball in front of him. He should be alert for fumbles.

**Slide Only
When
Necessary**

A baserunner should know how to slide but he should not slide unless necessary. A baserunner should stand up if he can rightfully do so; it might mean a lot in a case of fumble.

**Do Not Cut
Bases**

Never cut bases. "Touch every base." If a runner faces the ball all the time he will never be caught.

**What to Do
When a
Baserunner
Is Trapped**

Learn to slide on both sides. Never go in head first. Once you get the right distance, the distance you think you are entitled to safely take, stay there and do not let the pitcher drive you back unless he throws the ball to the base.

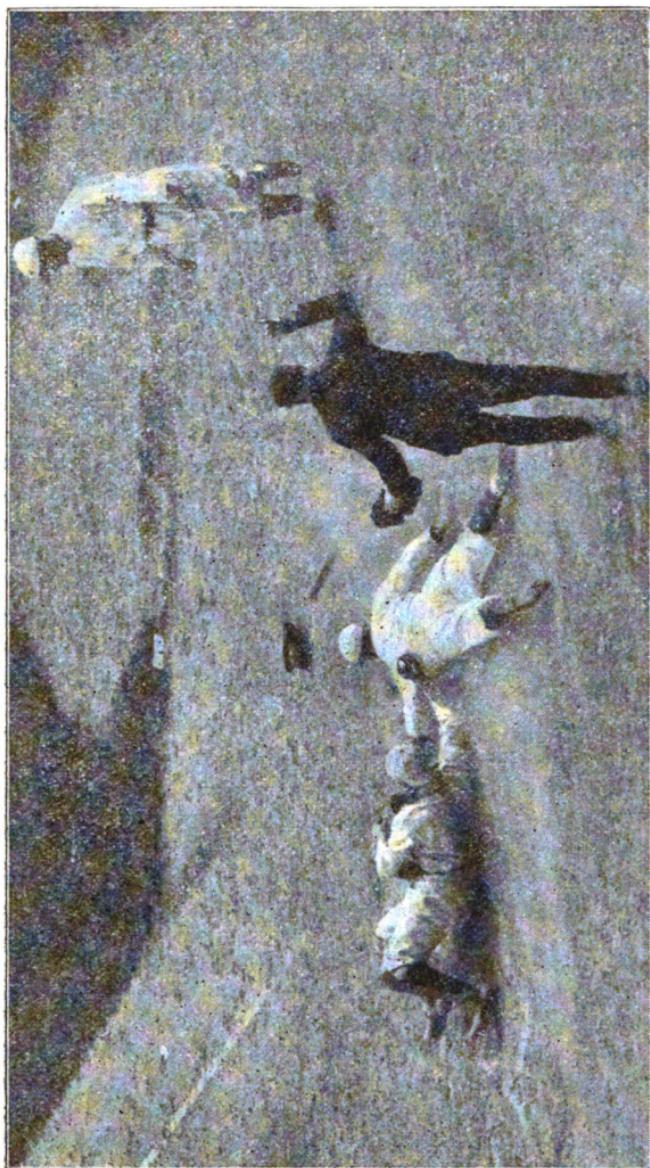
If by any chance a baserunner is trapped between bases he must be taught to use the utmost precaution to "cover up" as much as possible. If by any chance he is trapped from third going to home on a batted ball he should avoid being tagged out as long as possible in order to permit other baserunners to advance as far as they can. Vice versa, all other baserunners should try to advance as far as they can when a baserunner other than themselves is trapped. The governing rule is to go as far as you can in order to offset a possible or very probable out. There should be no hesitation, since smart fielders will try to tag the trapped runner in the quickest possible time. The break for this play is not difficult. The man with the ball should drive the baserunner back to his base quickly and then toss to the fielder. There is no use for him to run the baserunner up and down the base line.

**The
Baserunner's
Duty On All
Extra Base
Hits**

On all extra base hits it immediately falls upon the baserunner to watch the course of the ball and judge its distance. He should listen to the coacher, who ordinarily assumes responsibility for sending the baserunner ahead or stopping him when his back is to the ball. I might add that good sideline coaches are almost a necessity, not because they are so valuable to the system of baserunning that is employed by a team, but because they steady baserunners. The ability

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CHASE OUT AT PLATE—This photo is inserted to show how easy it is to be thrown off your balance in a close play. Note the old time trick of Chase in trying to retouch the plate.



**Lead Off
the Base**

to coach baserunners and insert "pep" and zeal in their operations is greatly to be desired.

A baserunner on first, under ordinary circumstances, should get a longer lead off first against right handed pitchers than left handed ones. In returning to base on a close play, a baserunner should always slide on the off side of the base. He ought not to touch the base with his hands or run over to it in a crouched position. This shows a lack of training and polish. He should not kick up dust and give vent to other foolish cavortings. Just when he is acting "smart" is the time he will be caught. It is his business to keep his eyes glued on the ball.

**Baserunners
Must Watch
for Signals**

When a baserunner looks for the signal from the batter he should do it deliberately enough for the batter to see that he has caught it, but do not "pose the look."

**Watch
"Bluff
Pegs"**

To briefly summarize, a baserunner should be taught to forget everything except baserunning when he becomes a baserunner. He ought to watch bluff throws and get a comfortable lead and not be driven back to his base unnecessarily and thrown off his balance or guard.

The "squeeze," "hit and run" and other plays requiring signals will be treated in a later chapter. This chapter deals only with baserunning commenced by baserunners themselves.

CHAPTER XV

THE USE OF SIGNALS

THE FIRST PHASE

For Baserunners

It is not always true that the plays which bring victory to a baseball team are the ones worked out beforehand, but it is very probable that a good majority of victories are gained in this manner. Too frequently, the average baseball fan will erroneously discount a winning team's play by charging the margin of victory to "luck or fate." I state this because I think it is unjust to inside baseball, while the "crab" will either through malice aforethought or his own boneheadedness discount such style of play.

"Luck and
Fate"

In a former chapter, I have attempted to give the genuine theory behind one of the arts of baseball, namely, baserunning. It now seems proper to give the means by which this theory can be put into actual practice. I might add that the practical side of baserunning is found only in the baserunner, that is, his mind, his legs, his slides, etc., all else must be considered theory, or better still, the means to end. To illustrate, an automobile has its practical parts, an engine, differential, carburetor, etc., but the "theory" or, let us say, brains, is represented by the man at the wheel. He alone regulates the speed, the proper time to advance the spark, etc. So it is in baserunning. The coach or manager is the brains, the signal work is the throttle and the runner is the engine. It is obvious that all three must work in harmony if baserunning perfection or the offense of a team is to work smoothly.

The
Theoretical
and Practical
Side of
Baserunning

Under this style of play, one might reasonably ask, is the baserunner not to use his head and is he just an engine? In reply, I can state truthfully that when a baserunning play is attempted the baserunner simply carries out the brains of the coach, thus he is an engine, but when the play is actually in operation, then he assumes and should shoulder the responsibility for carrying out the play and this requires brains. Here then, is the secret of all good signal work. To begin with, in so far as the baserunner is concerned, it is a mechanical

The
Baserunner
Must Use
His Brains

operation, but later during the second stage it becomes a mental operation. Each phase is mutually dependent upon the other.

Signals Are a Part of Inside Baseball

Signal work is a part of inside baseball and it seems useless for me to dwell longer upon its importance. The coach or manager who chooses the correct play is not always successful because signals are mussed up and the play ruined. This is one of the greatest calamities in team play. Any coach or manager of experience knows how difficult it is to get a team to play an entire game without missing a signal. *Signal work should be one of the routine drills at every practice*, until they are perfected.

Thus, having called attention to the broad scope of signal work, I now invite the reader's attention to the fundamental rules governing the use of signals to further baserunning.

Verbal Signals of No Value

To begin with, I shall accept as sound reasoning this fact: No signals by word of mouth are practical in baserunning. Often the noise at a baseball game is so intense that an oral signal cannot be heard. Again, the misunderstandings which take place as a result of such signals, palliate against them being successful. The coach or manager, therefore, who would desire extreme caution against the opposition obtaining his team's signals and also maximum efficiency, will use some form of *body movement* for signals. By this is meant a bowing of the head, the lifting of a leg, the brush of the forehead, the crossed arms, etc. These movements are all natural and most certainly operate against detection, since when the coach or manager does not give a signal by them, he can and often does go through them all. Such movements when used as signals, can be followed easily by all baserunners and easily "read" with less chance of misunderstanding. It is entirely within the province of the coach or manager to devise his own signals. The fewer movements the better.

The Best Kind of Signals to Use

Signals Must Be Given Distinctly

Although I will not dwell at length on the subject of how to give signals since this is a simple matter for any experienced coach or manager to work out, I must point out that signals must be given as *distinctly* as they are quickly. In other words, safety should not be overruled by quickness. A coach or manager must know what he wants and then give the correct signal and if the play is wrong, he should assume all of the

blame. A good tree never springs from a bad seed, and so it is with baserunning. The play must be started correctly. I have found that the best time to give signals is directly after the baserunner gets to his base and just before the catcher is giving his signals to the pitcher. This is, as you recall from a study of my previous chapter, one reason why all baserunners should remain on their base until the pitcher gets on the slab and is ready to pitch.

In all my coaching experience, I have used but one main signal and two "augment" signals to further baserunning. On first glance, this would seem ridiculous, but I am now going to prove how easy this is to do. In the first place, there is one general steal, although there are three particular forms of the steal. To illustrate: No matter what base is stolen or how many, we all call it a "steal." Now the base might have been stolen by a double steal or delayed steal. Hence we have the one fundamental "steal" and two particular steals.

No matter, therefore, what kind of steal I might desire to undertake in actual play, I must give the fundamental steal signal to begin with and then augment this by another signal if I want a double steal or delayed steal. Unless I do augment the general steal signal by another signal it means I want just the plain general steal. In question: If a man was on first base and two down and I wanted him to try to steal second base (no one on base except this man) I would give the plain general signal, let us say, "cross my legs," this would mean he was to steal second by the plain steal method. But if I wanted him to steal second by using a delayed steal method, then I would "cross my legs" and then "raise my right foot," the two signals together meaning the delayed steal. Of course, the signals here used are obvious.

Thus it is, that I say I am only forced to use one general signal and two other signals to indicate any kind of baserunner I might care to use. For the further explanation of this theory, I will give examples: I shall use for the general plain steal signal, the "crossing of my legs"; for the delayed steal, the "crossing of my legs," followed by "raising my right foot"; and for the double steal, "crossing of my legs," followed by "raising my left foot."

How Many Signals to Use? (1)
Main Signal.
(2) Augment Signal

The Use of Signals Illustrated

The Method

<i>Coach Wants Runner</i>		<i>Method</i>	<i>Signal</i>
<i>Man or Men on</i>	<i>or Runners to Steal</i>		
First base	Second	Plain steal	Crossed legs
First base and second base	Second and third	Plain steal	Crossed legs
First base and second base	Second and third	Delayed steal	Cross legs and raise right foot
First base and second base	Second and third	Double steal	Cross legs and raise left foot
First base and second base	Man on first to steal second and man on third to hold his base	Plain steal	Cross legs
First base and third base	Man on first to steal second and man on third to go home	Delayed steal	Cross legs and raise right foot
First base and third base	Man on first to steal second and man on third to go home	Double steal	Cross legs and raise left foot
Second	Third	Plain steal	Cross legs
Second	Third	Delayed steal	Cross legs and raise right foot
Second	Third	Double steal	Cross legs and raise left foot
Third	Home	Plain	Cross legs
(No delayed or double steal with only a man on third)			
First, second and third		steal	
First, second and third	All to advance a base by a.....	Plain steal	Cross legs
First, second and third	All to advance a base by an at- tempted	Delayed steal	Cross legs and raise right foot
First, second and third	All to advance a base by an at- tempted	Double steal	Cross legs and raise left foot

have never used any signal to "break" a signal already given to a baserunner. When a signal is flashed it means the play is to be tried on the next ball pitched. I see no reason for indicating by a signal that the steal is to be tried on the second or third ball. It is just as well to wait until before the second or third ball is to be pitched. If a steal is interfered with by a foul ball being hit by a batter, the steal is off unless the signal is given again. This is a good method to follow because it practically destroys any misunderstanding.

Before closing this chapter, I should like to say that all the signal work mentioned here is used when and only when the batter is batting straight away and the master plays of offense, as I term the "hit and run" and "squeeze" are not employed. The real coach or manager, however, can obviously understand how he can work these signals to good advantage when the batter is not "pulling" anything. I always get the batter to look at the bench and catch the signal just the same as the baserunner, thus if he can help out in the play he will do so. This is especially true when a plain general steal signal is given and he can at least swing at the ball and legitimately impede the catcher to that extent.

A coach or manager can also help out a "bonehead" runner by watching the signal work of his team. For example, I had a man named Jones on my team and in the seventh inning of a rather weird game, he had gone to third on a beautiful hit. We were far in the lead and I told Smith, the next batter, to "squeeze him home on the second ball pitched." Smith carried out my orders and gave the "squeeze" signal. The coacher on third and Jones, too, had gone to sleep and missed the signal, I presume because Smith was an excellent hitter and they thought I would let him hit "straight away," but I determined to cross the opposing team. I was confident Jones had failed to get the batter's signal but he happened to look at me. When he did this, I gave him the plain steal signal and he broke for home on the next ball pitched. Smith made a perfect bunt and Jones scored. When he came to the bench, he was blaming Smith for not getting out of the way and bunting. The reader can imagine what I told him. But the play had been saved and the public, of course, never knew the difference.

When Signal
Is Given,
Play Under-
taken on
Next Ball
Pitched

Do Not
Confuse
These Signals
With the
"Squeeze"
and "Hit
and Run"

Batter Must
Be in On
Play

Coach or
Manager, by
Use of
Signals, Can
Cover Up
Bonehead
Plays

In teaching signals I have found the "mock" signal drill excellent. That is, place the baserunners on base and let them get the signals from you just as if a real game was in progress. I have found that blackboard work is also a good method. Generally speaking, signal work is fascinating to any young player. Certainly if it was not, the drudgery of perfected signal work would be hard to overcome. It is the essence of inside baseball and certainly most important for that reason.

An exceptionally good eastern coach once told me that a man who could get signals quickly and use his head in putting them into execution was the most valuable type of ball player, provided, of course, he was a fair hitter and good fielder. Personally, I cannot recall that I ever knew a successful ball player who was a "dunce" when it came to getting signals. For a ball player to "smear" signals is like a layman trying to run a car without using his brains or eyes.

THE SECOND PHASE

On Offense—The Batter's Signals

Discussion

From previous chapters, we now know that the signal, whatever it might be, must be given distinctly as well as quickly; that the baserunner must get the signal quickly and understand its meaning and that the baserunner must use his head once the play is undertaken. When these three qualities of signal work are learned, most generally a team is working efficiently. With this in mind, I will dispense with further technicalities.

In this chapter, I am going to speak of the signals used to further the master offensive plays, viz: the "hit and run" and the "squeeze." I shall not explain these plays or the proper time to use them in this chapter, since they have already been studied in another chapter. I will talk only upon the signals necessary to effectively put them in operation.

A baseball coach or manager should have a signal for each of the two plays. Such signals are given by the batter while at the bat upon the advice of the coach or manager. A coach or manager who is closely watching the trend of events in a game should know the proper time to "pull" such plays better than his pupil. I adopt the policy of having the next batter up stand near enough to the player's bench to get a verbal signal indicating just what play, if any, seems best to pull.

Signals for the "Hit and Run" and "Squeeze"

Four Signals Necessary for Coach or Manager

For example, while A is at bat, B, the next batter up, can stand midway between the bench and home plate and then I can tell him before he goes to bat, what signal I want him to flash to the baserunner. To many, this might seem complicated, but as a matter of fact, it is the only sure way to put into execution a play thought out by a coach or manager at the proper time. It is not difficult to work two sets of signals in this way.

To illustrate, let me give this example: A is at bat with one man down. A gets a base on balls. B, the next batter, is standing midway between the home plate and the bench. The score will permit an attempted "hit and run" play. As B goes to the bat or turns to drop his extra bat and faces the bench, I yell "Come on, Bill" (or some other nickname), and he knows that the nickname means I want him to try the "hit and run." Whether it will be tried on the first, second or third ball pitched, depends entirely on B, who has been told when is the best time to pull such a play. When he goes to bat, he will give the "hit and run" signal to A on first, let us say, by carrying the bat in his right hand before he enters the box on the second ball pitched. A gets the signal and goes through with the play. Suppose B fouled the ball! The play would be off, unless he gave the signal again. If by any chance, I wanted B to switch from the "hit and run" to a "squeeze" and there had been a man on third, I would give the *switch signal*, which might be simply folding my hands. If I give *no signal* at all, then he would know I wanted him to try the "hit and run" again. This switch signal remains the same. If I did not want him to try either the "hit and run" or "squeeze," then I would give him the "block signal," by putting my right hand on my right knee. For example, if I had indicated to B when he went to bat that I wanted him to use the "squeeze" and he had fouled the ball, thus destroying the attempt first to be tried, I would fold my hands and this would mean he was to next attempt the "hit and run." If I gave no signal at all, he would come back with the "squeeze" or bunt signal, and if I gave him the block signal, he would attempt to get a safe hit and not work any signal to the baserunner.

To Illustrate Signal Work

Two Signals for the Batter and Baserunner

The "Switch" Signal

The "Block" Signal

There are only six signals to be used in these two master plays. One signal to the next batter up for the "hit and run," like the nickname; one signal from the batter to the baserunner for the "hit and run"; one signal for the "squeeze," like the use of the last name; a signal from the batter to the baserunner for the "squeeze" and "block" signal and switch signal used by the coach or manager to change from one play to the other, or do away entirely with an attempted play.

**Block Signal
Forbids the
Batter to
Give Any
Subsequent
Signal**

It is absolutely necessary to have a "block" signal which tells the batter that he must not give any signal to the baserunner. This signal, which I have mentioned above, simply gives the batter to understand that he will not give any signal whatsoever or repeat any signal he might have previously given. For example, let us say the batter has given the "hit and run" signal and failed. The coach or manager sees or thinks that the play has changed and it should not be used again. Then use the complete block signal. This means he will not repeat it. The fact is this: Very often the opposition will change its style instantly and the coach or manager notices the change, but perhaps the batter does not. I have used the "block" directly after giving the verbal signal and just as the batter walked in the box, simply indicating the speed with which a play can change. Very often, too, a coach or manager has a hunch that a play already given will go wrong and will want to change it instantly, hence the great advantage of a complete block signal. The batter by stepping out of the box instantly, conveys the news to the baserunner.

This signal gives us a total of six to be used on the offense.

I have found that verbal signals from the coach or manager to the next batter are serviceable. No matter how much noise is being made a batter can hear such signals from such close distance if he has been taught to listen for them. Of course, the signal from the batter to the baserunner must be some "movement" or "body" signal.

Anything I might have said about signals given by a coach to baserunners to indicate a steal applies to the batter giving them to a baserunner. This is why it is practical for a batter to give such signals before going into the batter's box. If he

**The Batter
Must Give
Signal as He
Goes Into
the Box**

pursues my advice he would give his signals *casually* but plainly. A batter must not appear "muscle bound" in giving signals, and by all means he should not look at the runner. He can rub his bat, doff his cap, pick up dirt and a few other things, and yet if the signal for a given play was the carrying of the bat into the box with his right hand not mislead a baserunner.

Signal work requires grace and confidence. So many ball players get excited because they have given a signal for a play which depends upon their own work. Of all times to be confident of ability, the time you are at bat and when signals are given, offer the best opportunity.

Again I say that the baserunner must keep alert and get the batter's signals. A layman would think that four signals used by the batter and the four used by the coach to runners as indicated in my last chapter, would distract the batter's and baserunner's mind from "good baseball." Such is not the case. Perhaps during a game only two or three occasions arise where signals can be given, but they must be caught when given, if a team is to work efficiently as a whole.

Constant practice of signals makes all signal work easy. Once a coach or manager can get their team to grasp the whole art or ease and grace of signal work, the players catch and give them as a matter of fact and in a graceful and intelligent way.

Grace and
Confidence

No Room
for
Confusion

Constant
Practice

CHAPTER XVI

HOW TO COACH AND A FEW HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

In a previous chapter, I stated that coaching was a profession and gave my reasons for so stating. In this chapter, I shall talk more about how to put into use that profession in the endeavor to assist any of my readers who might become coaches. The first requirement of all coaching is some definite system by which a coach can get the most results in the shortest possible time. It is the result that counts in coaching and all coaches should hold this idea in mind from the start. It is not so much how you get results as do you get them. If a coach had no set rules by which he conducts practice and plays the game, he will never reach the pinnacle of success. Few, if any coaches will admit that they have any system, but just the same, if they should give advice they would place great emphasis on some "concerted action and stalwart defense" and this represents in an indirect way "system," although not expressed in the same way. Although neither team nor school is interested primarily in how you accomplish success, a coach must be, if he is on solid ground and proposes to have a winning team from one season to another. A coach should remember that after all is said and done, this is the thing that means so much to him, viz: Success from year to year. Thus, any man of coaching experience dotes on his achievements from year to year and in the long run will tell off on himself and admit that he had a system that carried him through. For example, when Yale plays Harvard, Yale is not only playing nine men representing Harvard, but the entire Harvard system. The same is true of track, football or basketball. This idea had until recent years manifested itself only in the larger institutions, but I think it is realized generally all over the country among coaches at the present writing. We find the same "system" in big business and no one can deny its worth after careful consideration and experience. To have a good system means to have good teams.

Let us look carefully into the matter of what system is best various systems which are used at the present time in collegiate

baseball. I am taking collegiate baseball as a standard for all to adopt. I would like to say a few words about amateur baseball. I am sincere in the belief that any real aggregation of college ball players under proper guidance, can stand their own against the best amateur teams in America. This is coming to be more and more the case because of the higher development of college athletics and the coaching behind them. If we start out by speaking of the Harvard system, I can say that of late years, Harvard has been turning out some very fine baseball teams. The 1921 team and the 1920 team were both the best teams among the Big Three. Harvard plays a conservative game at all times. Princeton under my good friend, Bill Clarke, has turned out perhaps the best college teams in the east, taken over a stretch of ten years. Princeton's style of coaching is fundamentally correct. During the days of Sam White and others, Princeton played a dashing game and got away with it. Yale, until Lauder came to New Haven, lacked the finesse that should go along with major college coaching. Of late, Yale teams have seemed to grow stale just on the advent of her big games. In the west, such teams as Michigan, under Carl Lundgren, and Illinois, Indiana and Minnesota have turned out excellent ball teams. They play ball from the time they put their feet on the ground. I sometimes think they combine conservatism and dash in equal proportion and form a happy medium in their style of play. In the south, few college teams have had the value of expert coaching during the past ten years. Georgia, Vanderbilt, Mississippi A. & M., Tulane, Georgia Tech. and Tennessee have always subordinated baseball to football until the last few years. The result has been most pathetic from a coaching standpoint. These large southern colleges have come to rely upon the natural talent among their athletes to carry them through and much to their surprise, baseball has not been a very great success. I look for much improvement now with such men as Doc White, Phil Lynch, Stegeman, Tannehill, Clay and Donohue taking a decided stand for better baseball. Alabama has always turned out consistently good teams. In the far west, California has come to the front rapidly. Their tour of 1920, during which they played many teams in the east, showed the west was keeping apace of the times. In 1921

Vanderbilt toured the east and made a remarkable record for team play, etc.

The point is that before a man can become a coach, he must work out his own system. He can take his former college system and work out a better one or a worse one, as the case may be, but he must do something on his own initiative and assume full responsibility.

I recall very vividly what was said about me when I took up fall baseball practice at Vanderbilt. I think the college authorities thought I was crazy. The point was that I knew the only way to have a baseball team for the following year was to start early. Bill Clarke at Princeton does the same thing. Fall baseball is not anything new and it is bound to help a coach who labors under the handicap of having to build up a complete new team. I recommend it to all coaches who find themselves short of experienced men. Some of the best baseball weather we have comes in the early fall during the months of September and October. Fall practice does not interfere with football for the simple reason that a coach of baseball should and always does make allowances for the player who not only is a good baseball man, but a football man, too. The object of such fall practice is to get out all the new men in college who do not play football, but do play baseball, and these are the men a coach wants to look over. As a rule, class teams can be formed and the fundamental principles of baseball can be taught, making it much easier for the coach when spring comes along and he has his hands full. The freshmen at college always benefit materially from fall practice. A coach must always hold in mind that it is a long jump from a prep school to college. Few men who enter college know the real meaning of the "hit and run" play or the intricate ways and means of backing up a play. It is during fall practice that such fundamental plays can be taught and taught in a most thorough manner. I always get any of my old players to assist me in teaching the newcomers how such things work. This not only is of benefit to a coach, but it lures the older men into the practice and causes them to realize their responsibility. There is still another advantage in fall practice which I wish to mention. A coach can experiment with some of his old players and often find a better place for

them to play. One of the best changes I ever made was the direct result of close observation during fall practice. I had a fellow who came out for shortstop. He looked very good at the position and during the spring, I played him there for a time. He suddenly became very erratic and I had to take him out of the game. I always felt, however, that he was too valuable to leave on the bench, so when it came time for fall practice, I changed him about to several positions, and finally found out he was a "cracker-jack" good first baseman. I needed a first baseman badly, and he filled the gap and really had a big share in putting over a winning season. This is just one instance.

Fall practice always assists a coach in knowing his men and familiarizes the men with the coach. I remember one spring when I called practice I did not see a single strange face on the field and I knew most of the men well enough to address them intimately. Any coach will vouch for the statement that this is a big help. Fall practice also materially assists a coach in selecting his varsity team without undue haste. It is very difficult under the most favorable circumstances, for a coach to decide upon a team where there are a large number of candidates out for the same position. This requires the very finest judgment if no mistakes are to be made. If a coach makes a wrong decision and a player turns out to be a fizzle, then a coach has not only hurt the team's chances, but has wasted a large amount of time, which could have otherwise been given a player who would not have been a disappointment. This, then, is another advantage of a fall practice, even though it lasts but three or four weeks.

I might add that the selection of a team constitutes the most difficult part of a coach's duties. He finds that he must make a selection. Unless he has old men back, he is in a very trying situation, and one which he must face with great care. He must remember that the flashiest player in the early part of practice is not always the best player later on. Yet he must play the men who are showing the class. The question arises, "What is best for me to do?" In order to cope with such situations, I invariably endeavor to form two teams, either one of which can be termed varsity caliber. I doubt seriously if any coach who knows his business can do better than to

select two full teams after matters have adjusted themselves. It might be very difficult for a coach to select 12 or 15 men who are the best in the large early squad, but he can certainly select the best *thirty*, and this is a rough estimate I always make when I am selecting a baseball squad. For obvious reasons, it is best to minimize a squad as much as possible, but on the other hand, it is wise for a coach to have a large enough squad to leave him room for final selection. It also helps to keep up competition and enthusiasm for developing a good scrub team. I shall take up the scrub team later on.

My last year of coaching, I had about 105 men trying for the team. I knew all of them by previous contact—thanks to fall practice. Almost everybody asked me how I was to weed them out. I used the simple process of elimination. I watched them all carefully and let them weed themselves. That is to say, I let them show everything they had and then I issued the first out in the squad. I cut off about thirty the first shot, and then competition did the rest. They simply worked like a house afire, each man doing his best. I always make it a cardinal principle, however, never to cut any battery men, i. e., pitchers and catchers. In college baseball such candidates are too scarce and they are needed most. After two weeks more, I made another reduction in the squad and this left forty-five still out. In another two weeks, I took off ten more and I had my final squad and then I began to dish out some inside baseball. In all, my early season spring practice takes about seven weeks and it is during this seven weeks that I am busiest. I watch every single point about a man, his general disposition and temperament, his love of the game, his natural ability and his sense and physical makeup.

I have never offended any boy yet by cutting him from the squad. I try and let them know it is best for baseball at their Alma Mater, but at the same time, I never sentimentalize. For obvious reasons, a boy who would have a coach sympathize with him is not the type that a coach desires.

The system I use in order to get my players hardened is rather novel, so I am told, and I shall give it here for what it is worth to my readers. First of all, a coach should never fail to watch the movements which a player makes during the early season. If a fellow has a sore arm, a trained eye catches

it immediately, and if the man has not told me about it, I always "crawl" him for it. I tell them all to let me know such things. When a man reaches the age to enter college, they are supposed to know their physical makeup. To start off, I tell them they are not "babies" and must watch themselves. For three weeks, I never give them a baseball on the diamond. They toss the ball to each other at short range, but never any farther. During this time, I generally start off practice inside the gymnasium with a few setting up exercises, particular emphasis being placed on those that loosen up the back and arm and leg muscles. If there is a physical director anywhere around, I call him into use and after about fifteen minutes of this I make all the outfielders form a circle and all the infielders form another one and the battery men another, and then I give them three medicine balls to the circle. They pass these over their heads, to their sides, under their legs and change directions. After this, they are all told to take off their heavy sweaters and then I give them a few baseballs and let them toss them to each other from about thirty feet distance. The outfielders work as a unit, the infielders as another one and the battery men still another. After this form of practice, I have a few bunting games started outside the "gym." Then they all run around the track for a lap or so, and we call it a day. This form of practice goes on daily until I am convinced the men can stand harder work. Then I increase the baseball part a little day by day, but I always start out with the setting up exercises.

Experience has taught me that pitchers and catchers are the most likely to show up with sore arms. Consequently, never work them until rather late and certainly never before they are prespiring freely. When we reach the time for batting practice, I always work a pitcher for only ten minutes a day until late in the season. The next day they absolutely do nothing. I always work a catcher for a complete round of batting practice and then he gives way to another man. He does nothing on the following day. I have some pictures to indicate how I teach my catchers the proper way to "peg" and use their feet. I also have in the book, pictures indicating how I teach pitchers to follow through and the proper delivery to the bat and to bases.

By reason of the fact that battery men are the ones who are less nimble than others I spend a great deal of time on them. I begin working with them from the first day out. They have separate and distinct things they are required to do, while the infielders and outfielders are elsewhere. I take them off and talk to them. I "buddy" with them and put in some hard licks on how this is to be done or that. I learn to know their temperaments and judge of their ability to work in the box, not alone from the angle of just pitching but along the lines of *coolness under fire*. If there appears to be and loafing, I simply call the player off and tell him he must cut it out or get out. The time to "kid" and loaf is off the field. In this way, I do away with any "tomfoolery" that always springs up in the early season.

In early season, it is so difficult to coordinate the affairs of a big squad that a coach often feels he is not developing his team fast enough. For this reason, I generally try to weed out the infield first and then the outfield. The first two weeks outdoors I spend on the infield. They have batting practice and fielding practice, while the outfielders chase balls and do other things. I always let the outfield come in for a few minutes of batting practice before the day is over, so that the infield will not get too far advanced for them, but I give the infield preference along these lines. After batting practice, the infield has a round of fielding. Right here, I might suggest that during the early season, a coach must watch carefully to avoid hitting to them too sharply. He plays a very great part in this form of practice, not only in the early season, but later on. When the infield candidates take the field, I let one complete infield go a round and then another. This keeps up from day to day. Gradually then I get a seasoned bunch together. I look them all over very carefully, especially with a view of determining what they will amount to under future coaching. *I never pass up a man with an excellent pair of hands.* They come too few and far between in college baseball. I have always contended that a man with a good pair of hands on the infield is the ideal type for a coach to work with, provided, of course, that he can bat at all and has a fair amount of baseball sense. It is the type I am inclined to look for and represents to me the first principle upon which to base

future hopes. This type is particularly sought in baseball for third base and shortstop. I also look out for the speedy man. The fellow who is not flashy but has a fair amount of speed when it comes to running is to be watched carefully. I really never pay much heed to batting ability until the first games arrive, because almost any player with any amount of ability or enough to make a college team, can hit straight ball pitching. What I do notice very carefully is how a man walks up to the bat and how he steps at the ball. This, of course, is necessary if a man is to later develop into a good curve ball batter. For this very same reason, I always take time to instruct the men as to how to wade into a ball and how to keep their weight in front of it. After giving all these pointers, I let them follow their own inclinations, knowing full well that if they have the natural ability or knack, they will continue to show enough improvement to warrant further and special attention.

Many readers of this book will find that they are not blessed with ideal conditions for rounding out a baseball team. Many, therefore, will believe I have given a fair theory but they will ask, "How can that theory apply to me?" The truth is, that what I have said is not theory at all. Even if a coach cannot put all of my "dope" into practice, he can work out of it, on a small or large bases, a system applicable to his own needs. What I would have him do, is to get a "system," realizing full well what a calamity awaits him if he fails to do so.

A coach must pay attention to his scrub team. A varsity team is greatly handicapped when a coach cannot give them daily competition. Not only is a scrub team of decided advantage to a coach for competitive reasons, but it also gives him a means to teach the promising players the game. My scrub team always plays games with various schools. Every now and then they "rise up and smite" the varsity and invariably this helps. If a coach is in the business from year to year, the scrub team will mean more and more to him over a long period. A system which fails to take into consideration future plans is a rank failure. A scrub team is part of the "future plans."

It is not enough for a coach to be well versed in the rules of the game. He must know how to teach them and apply

them. He must know the "tricks of the trade" and pull them. I recall one example of this, which always impressed me. A certain coach had sent a scout down to watch a certain college team play a series of three games. Upon returning the scout told his friends that the —— team had a catcher who always pegged through to second with a man on third and first, when the man on first tried for second. The coach who received this news thereupon told his players about it and they were instructed on the play to "run home from third quicker than usual," believing full well that they could score on the play. When the teams met later on, the coach of the —— team had instructed his catcher to "cross up" or "mix up" the play and instead of always pegging through to "bluff his peg" and in a crucial ninth inning rally the catcher did so and the man on third was caught flat-footed. I happened to know that the coach of —— team never knew that a scout was watching his team, but he did notice that his catcher and team were using the "peg through" too often and for this reason only, he had reminded his catcher to "bluff peg" occasionally. This is what I mean by a coach applying his knowledge at the right time.

Since a coach is the "supreme boss" of all, he surveys, he should exert every care to protect his team from bad ground rules, etc. If his team is wronged, he ought to "stand pat" until it is corrected. Many games are lost before they are even played because of some ruling which an opposing coach "puts over" whereby his team gets all the benefit. Be sure to make a careful study of the umpire and in a clean manner, tell him you want a square deal. I do not mean to be the "kicking type" of coach, but get what you are entitled to.

It has been my experience that a team must play 20 per cent better ball away from home than they do at home to win. If my team is playing away, I always get on the field in time to have a half hour batting practice and fifteen minutes fielding practice. From the time my team gets on the field, I start looking around to see what ground rules I wish to propose. By all means a coach should never act hastily or excitedly. He should appear carefree and calm. Before going out, I have told my players who is to pitch in batting and who is to catch. The warming up practice should be run

off in a business-like way. I also remind the catcher and pitcher to look over the opposing batters in an endeavor to find any weakness they might have. When the opposing team takes the field for fielding practice, I tell my team to "look 'em over." Perhaps the catcher is seen to have a poor arm. Perhaps the third baseman is weak on ground balls. All of these "tips" are of value when they are not overdone. I also watch the opposing pitcher warm up. If he is known to be wild I remind my players. If he has a reputation of a "curve ball" pitcher, I caution them to take their time and try to hit the ball squarely or work to get him "in the hole" and hit the straight ball. In fact, if I know anything about him at all, I remind my players.

When a "star" pitcher is in the box against us, I always tell the team to beat this fellow more than ever. I try and make them realize that he is the real "big" thing we are after. As a general rule, this spurs them on. A "star" pitcher generally gets waited out by my team. I always try to get him in a hole and then tell my players to "cut loose." Often a coach can throw a so-called "star" pitcher completely off his balance by seizing the first flaw in his work and using it. But I never have permitted any team I ever coached to harass an opposing pitcher by talking to him or in any other way violating the rules of the game. The first secret of all success in baseball is to "play the game on the square."

In regard to batting practice, just before the game, I always make the pitcher deliver straight balls. The idea is to get the player's eyes on the ball. Several times I have kept pitchers on the squad for the sole purpose of pitching in batting practice, because they had good control. This is an important item.

In my five years of coaching experience, I have never yet left the players' bench, except to talk to the umpire about some unjust ruling. A coach who "runs around," or is walking up and down the players' bench causes the players to get nervous. Once the game has started, a coach ought to sit down and "observe" everything.

Quite an important feature in a game of ball from the coaching standpoint is "side-line coaches." For my own part, I always try to have experienced men on the side lines, particularly at third base. These coachers are indispensable.

Older men on the squad should be chosen. They should talk to the baserunner only. They must know when to tell a baserunner to "stop" and when to "run," and caution them to watch out for signals.

If I should let the "cat out of the bag" about my own coaching system, I would dwell on "skull practice." "Skull practice" is inside blackboard work calculated to teach the players baseball. Every night in the early season, from seven to eight, all the candidates for the team assemble for this form of practice. Here I "open up" and cover the ground—all the way from catcher to the outfield and back to the "bluff peg." In other words, I give all the candidates orally what I have written in this book. I have found that more inside baseball can be taught at "skull practice" than on the field. After we have gone over the ground and I am convinced the players "grasp" the real meaning of the game, this form of practice is left off. I recommend it to any coach.

These are some of the training rules I give out to my team and which they follow:

1. Cut out cigarettes. Two pipes a day only.
2. Get eight hours of sleep.
3. Get up early in the morning.
4. Get out to practice early.
5. Eat regularly. Do not eat pies and other sweets.
6. On the field, work.
7. Do not make alibies.
8. Do not talk baseball to outsiders.
9. Keep up in your studies.
10. Be loyal to your Alma Mater, coach and players.

Before closing, I wish to remind a coach about putting in players and taking them out during a game of baseball. Never take out a man unless you have a very definite reason for doing so. One bad inning is not the whole game. One bad play on the part of a fielder is not so bad when analyzed. Your own playing experience ought to teach you that no player is perfect. You should attempt to be as loyal to your players as they are to you. As a coach, you will make many mistakes and as players, so will they. If the case at hand, however, shows that

some real good will result from a change in the lineup, make the necessary change without fear or favor. Teach your players to see that such changes are a part of the game. Great care along this line is necessary in handling youngsters.

Like unto the man who could not write at all, but was a good talker, I feel if I could talk to my readers, I might explain better. But I trust this chapter, so dear to my own heart, will assist other coaches to meet certain obstacles arising in their coaching duties.

CHAPTER XVII

COACHING AS A PROFESSION

I should like for all of my readers to understand from the very beginning that the science of coaching or managing a baseball team, when properly undertaken, is a profession, just as much so as teaching, practicing medicine or law. To succeed in any profession, a man must have a certain amount of personality, but in that of coaching, whether or not in football, baseball or track, a coach must have more than ordinary personality. He must know the men under him to the extent of being a welcomed guest at any place where they are talking, eating or sleeping; in short, he must be able to sense their dispositions and curb their faults when they will work to the detriment of the team. Few of my readers can appreciate what this means in the way of personality. Personally I have always held to the belief that a coach who knows his men best, will, all other things being equal, succeed without difficulty, while I doubt seriously if a "distant" coach will even get in the race no matter what caliber men he has under him. No coach, if he has the proper personality, can lower himself in the eyes of his players if he associates intimately with them, the old idea to the contrary notwithstanding. In all the years I have been coaching, I can truthfully state I knew all the men under me better than any other men in college knew them. I have had them to ask me to do a thousand different things. One youngster even had me meet his father in order to persuade him over to the son's way of looking at a matter. I believe now after looking back that one of the best thoughts I obtained from coaching came from my intimate association with the boys under me. That thought I recommend to any man going into the coaching game and it can amply be put this way—"You cannot lead men unless you live up to everything you require of them." If you fail to do this, then your congenial disposition and knowledge of the game will not benefit you in the least.

By personality, I do not necessarily mean a tendency to be overly affable and congenial on the field. I refer to personality as that indefinable something which goes along with a coach

after the game is over or before the game has started. I always tried to let my team understand that a baseball game was a business and on the field, I was a fairly staunch disciplinarian, that is to say, I demanded absolute obedience. I obtained this obedience, however, by teaching my men in a pleasant manner that discipline was necessary if we were to win. I always reminded them that I was one of them, "if they let me be," and then explained that what I meant was, they had to let me have my day on the field, and then I would let them have their day off the field. One fellow remarked that I was terribly inhuman on the field, but just as terrible human off the field. He did not miss expressing my idea of a coach's personality very far in making this statement. The first thing then that enters into the science of coaching is personality.

There are two other things which I would like to mention before going further. These are the coach's responsibility and his confidence. Coaching is a one man proposition. This is true of every branch of athletics. No coach should consent to his responsibility being divided and the right coach will not permit such a thing to take place. If you are a coach, be the whole coach and nothing else. By this, I mean to say that a coach should always have the prerogative to name his assistants. It should be obvious that if the team loses, the coach will get all the blame. This being the case, he should protect himself, and those employing him should want to protect him from having a divided responsibility when it comes to framing the policy of the team. The old adage "too many cooks spoil the broth" certainly applies where there are several coaches and the head coach has not named his own assistants, whom he knows will put into execution his own ideas. This, then, in a general way is what I mean by responsibility in regard to coaching. Still another idea can be gleaned from this one. If a coach is worth a "hurrah," he will have his own system of doing things. If, for example, he came from Harvard, he would have the Harvard system, or if he came from Princeton, the Princeton system. If the men over him chose to employ him, they ought to know he will endeavor to have his particular system. It is quite unfair to handicap him by wanting to have with him a corps of other assistants who are from a different system. For example, McGraw of the New York

Giants has a system all his own. Do you suppose for a moment he would bring under him another manager who played the game from an entirely different angle? There is only one answer. When McGraw employed Hughie Jennings of the Detroit Tigers in 1921, people who did not know, said he was doing wrong and that New York would have a big rumpus in camp. As a matter of fact, McGraw and Jennings played on the same team in the late nineties and both are of the same school. I might add that, personally, I would not give a "rap" for a coach who did not have a system or hoped to have one all his own. If he knows the game then the next step is to build up his own system. This involves another pertinent feature in a coach's makeup, which I shall now discuss.

When I speak of a coach's confidence, I mean his ability to instill confidence through his own confidence. Of all the many detrimental things in baseball, the one which is causing more trouble at the present time is lack of confidence. Of all men in a game of baseball, the coach should have the proper amount of confidence. If the coach lacks confidence either in himself or in his players, he is hopelessly lost. In the first place, a coach must have enough confidence to believe he can work out his own system. Many times he is placed entirely on his responsibility and in the twinkling of an eye, he must decide what is to be done. A coach must remember that this is where he does most of his work. This is the place where his system, if he has one, should rise to meet the emergency. If his system does not rise to meet the emergency, then he is at fault. The right kind of a system never has to meet any emergency half way. Such emergencies are met a long time before the game has ever started, if the system is correct. For example, if a pitcher is going badly, it is not just a question with the coach if it is the proper time to take him out, but also whether or not the following batsmen are right or left handed batters and many other things. No one move in a baseball system is enough and a coach must learn to make long extended moves which are moves calculated to serve his team best in the long run. Now, then, confidence plays an important part in the system of things. A coach's confidence should never give in to public sentiment, unless that sentiment is in the right and the coach must have the confidence

to act as judge. I recall an exaggerated case that was quite funny and yet peculiarly annoying to me. My team had played the home team on the first day and about the seventh inning of the second game, we again started in mauling their pitchers. The opposing coach began to walk in front of the bench and wring his hands in desperation, because his star pitcher was going badly. He then sought the advice of the captain of his team and several players and finally "yanked" the pitcher and put in a left handed man. By next batsman was a right handed batter and the two following were also. The result was a complete failure for this particular coach's team. I knew when he began to seek advice, he was under-confident. I tell all my readers once and for all, do your own thinking in the hour of distress. That is part of your job. To do anything else, shows your lack of confidence and soon you will see it reflected in your team. Because of my belief in this particular respect, many of my best friends often said I was "cold and a regular stone face on the field." They were simply mistaken and any member of my teams can vouchsafe for my denial. I was not over-confident, but I was confident enough to appreciate my responsibility on the field and if I did wrong, then after the game was over, I was the first one to admit it. This brings up another point. It is very bad policy for any coach to be so "cocksure" of himself that he will not listen to others off the field. Some of the most helpful suggestions I ever received came from men who sought me after the game and opened my eyes to certain details of the game, which I had missed. I also think it is wise for a coach to take his players into his confidence and by his personality get from them certain things. This is one excellent reason why I say it never lowers a coach's dignity to be very friendly with his men. A coach with the proper personality need never worry about his dignity.

A coach is not only a father to his boys, but he is likewise brother, friend, adviser, diplomat, leader, philosopher, sentimentalist, in short, if he is the right kind of a coach—the whole "gosh darn show." If the team is losing, the coach must keep up the morale. If a star player is going badly, he must use all his ability to put him on his feet. If the players get sore at one another, he must intercede. Right here, I wish

to say that a coach should not stand for any soreheadedness. The same applies to a manager. In fact, the only difference between a coach and manager is a question of finances, and the style of men under each. If a coach is a coach, then he should be the coach from beginning to end. A coach should never show his gloom. In one season, I lost seven straight games by one run. My hair almost fell out, but I turned philosopher and simply went ahead with the work of the team. Each day I went out with some more makeup enthusiasm. It was the most difficult task I ever had. Finally, we won a game and then I had my day.

A coach should never disappoint his team by giving out a lot of hypocritical dope. By all means, he should never prophesy victory. I never saw a prophet-coach in my life that succeeded.

I have made it a standing rule that no civilians can come near me during a game or during a practice. I have also made it a rule never to permit any player to be late at practice. I tell them not to come out at all, rather than come out late. My reason for this is because a late player never gets anywhere and nine times out of ten, he will be begging to take liberties or attempt to take them. I only compliment players after they have won. I never do so during a game because it takes their mind off the game. I never "crawl" a player for making a bonehead play during a game. I generally take him out if I think it is liable to happen again during the same game. I never "crawl" a player for making a bona fide error. I realize that all players will do that sometimes. I always take a man out of the game if he shows anger in an unwarranted way. Such players must learn a lesson and that is the best way to teach them.

I know of no other profession that is a source of greater joy than that of coaching. It is a real privilege to be a guide to the athletics in a college or prep school. There is something everlasting fascinating about it all. To be able to teach this or that boy how to better handle himself is a privilege. To instill in them confidence and good character is a joy. A coach holds a wonderful position with respect to college life. Often he is the greatest moral force in the school. If he is not, then he ought to strive to be. Coaching is more and more coming to be a great moral force in the lives of the boys who will

grow to be the future rulers of our country. This one feature of the profession challenges any man who is to become a coach or who has been a coach, and the challenge must be met face to face. A coach must accept his responsibility not only on the field, but likewise off of it. Besides his work on the field, he should enter into his other duties with a full realization of what it means to shape the lives of students and players who should be his ardent admirers.

BOONE, N. Y. Giants' at bat. Notice the free, easy swing and the follow through. Note also that the left knee is bent. No doubt when the bat struck the ball this knee was straight as indicated by the "follow through." Read explanation in book. Note also the position of the catcher. His glove should be turned upward instead of down.

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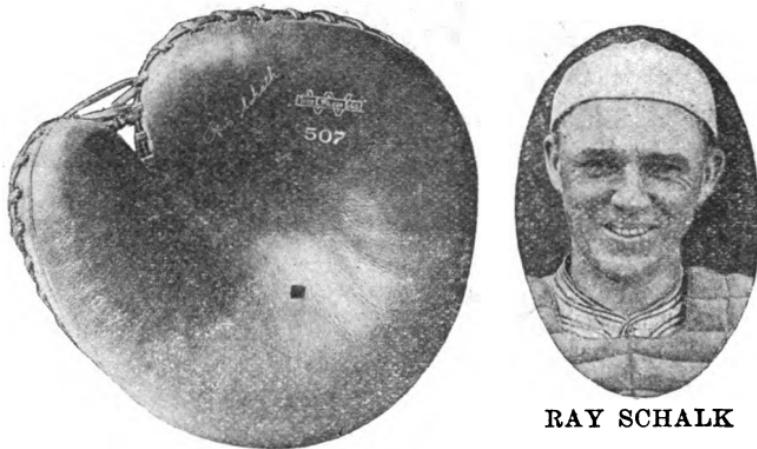
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