

Baseball's Greatest Player--- Cobb

By W. W. EDGAR

If you were asked to select an all-time all-star baseball team, whom would you name for the honor?

This is the question that has been asked every member of the Baseball Writers Association of America with the hope that the stellar team could be named, officially, at the baseball centennial dinner in Washington, D.C. in July.

For a fellow who has been viewing the action in the major leagues for most part of a half century this is a somewhat difficult chore because of the hundreds of players—good and bad—he has seen in baseball's passing parade.

But through the mist of years comes again the sight of a select few cavorting in their usual style of flashing spikes, thunderous hitting, lightning-like pitching and a competitive spirit unmatched by any of the modern day athletes.

FROM THIS GROUP a vote was cast for the following players who helped make of the game the national pastime:

OUTFIELDER—
Ty Cobb—Tigers
Babe Ruth—Yankees
Tris Speaker—Indians
FIRST BASE—Lou Gehrig, Yankees
SECOND BASE—Charlie Gehringer, Tigers
SHORTSTOP—Honus Wagner, Pirates
THIRD BASE—George Kell, Tigers
CATCHER—Mickey Cochrane, Tigers
RIGHT-HANDED PITCHER—Walter Johnson, Senators
LEFT-HANDED PITCHER—Lefty Grove, Athletics
GREATEST PLAYER—Ty Cobb, Tigers
GREATEST MANAGER—Miller Huggins, Yankees

Fortunately, these old eyes have seen all of

the nominees in action—a privilege few of the modern day baseball writers can boast. True, some of the mental pictures are a bit hazy, but who could forget the likes of Honus Wagner, owner of the greatest bowlegs—a baseball, killing off hit after hit in the old 1885 ball park in Philadelphia when he appeared there with the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Or who could forget Cobb and his flashing spikes; Speaker, the old gray eagle in pursuit of a ball hit far into the outfield—or the booming bat of Babe Ruth and the sight of him circling the bases on those spindly legs.

Over the years there have been many outstanding outfielders. There were fellows like "Wahoo" Sam Crawford, Davey Jones and Harry Heilmann, of the Tigers; Earle Combs of the Yankees; Ted Williams of the Red Sox; Amos Strunk and Al Simmons, of the Athletics; Joe DiMaggio, of the Yankees; and "Sholess"

Joe Jackson, of the White Sox.

But when you sit and study them in retrospect, the famed trio of Cobb, Ruth and Speaker comes out at the top of the list.

IN SELECTING Lou Gehrig at first base, one had to pass over such outstanding stars as Hal Chase, of the Chicago Cubs; George Sisler, of the St. Louis Browns; Jimmy Foxx and Stuffy McInnis, of the Athletics; and Lu Blue, the old Tiger first sacker whom many claim was the most graceful fielder ever to play the bag; Stan Musial, the modern day great of the St. Louis Cardinals; and Bill Terry of the Giants.

But again, teamed with Ruth, Gehrig is the choice because of his all-around ability at the bag, his devastating punch at the plate and his ruggedness that enabled him to play 2,130 consecutive games before illness ended his string in Detroit.

Second base always has been the bugaboo for those who attempt to select all-star teams. They have difficulty making a choice from the ranks of Eddie Collins, of the White Sox and Athletics; Johnny Evers, of the old Chicago Cubs; Frankie Frisch, of the Giants and Cardinals; Rogers Hornsby, of the Cards; Nap Lajoie, of the Cleveland Indians; Bucky Harris, of the Senators; and Charlie Gehringer, of the Tigers.

Shaking off the fear that one might be accused of provincialism, the vote must go to Gehringer, claimed to be the most graceful ball player of all time.

A flawless fielder, he was often taken for granted. As a result his star never shone as brightly as it should, but the records tell his story. He had a lifetime batting average over .300, batted well over .350 in all-star competition, and was a flawless fielder.

Some have claimed that Nap Lajoie, the old Cleveland Indian, was his peer. But the fact remains that Gehringer, matched him in all departments and did it in the day of the lively ball.

At shortstop one comes upon such luminaries as Jack Barry, of Connie Mack's famous \$100,000 infield; Frankie Crosetti, of the Yankees; Joe Cronin, of the Boston Red Sox who now is president of the American League; Joe Tinker of the old Chicago Cubs double play combination of Tinker to Evers to Chance; Donie Bush and Billy Rogell, of the Tigers; and Honus Wagner, of the Pirates.

After looking over all of them in retrospect, the sight of that graceful bow-legged Dutchman, Wagner, comes through clear and our vote goes to him.

Third base is equally difficult when one is confronted with Frank Baker, the original Home Run King of the old Athletics; Jumping Joe Dugan, of the Yankees; Pie Traynor, of the Pittsburgh Pirates, and George Kell, of the Tigers.

For years Traynor was looked upon as the peer of all third sackers—until the late E. A. Batholer, long time sports editor of the Detroit Free Press, who had seen them all, convinced us that Kell was the top third baseman of all time. And so our vote goes to him.

CHOICE OF A CATCHER was not too difficult even though there have been many fine receivers through the years.

Such fellows as Bill Dickey, of the Yankees; Wally Schang and Ossie Schreck of the old Athletics; Gabby Street, of the Senators; Hank Gowdy, of the Reds and Dodgers; and Yogi Berra, of the Yankees, did yeoman work on the way to stardom.

But, in the final analysis, none matched the playing ability, leadership qualities and fiery competitive spirit of Mickey Cochrane. It was "Black Mike" who led the Athletics to their best years and later took over a sixth place Tiger team and drove it to league pennants in 1934 and 1935 and a world championship in the latter year.

Fellows like "Rube" Waddell, of the Athletics; Christy Mathewson, of the Giants who pitched three shutouts in a World Series; Rube Marquard of the Giants; Grover Cleveland Alexander, of the Phillies and Cardinals; Tommy Bridges and Schoolboy Rowe and Wild Bill Donovan of the Tigers, along with such fellows as Sandy Koufax, of the Dodgers; and Bob Feller, of the Indians make the choice of a righthanded and lefthanded pitcher rather difficult.

Yet, we'll pass them over for Walter Johnson, of the Washington Senators, and Robert Moses (Lefty) Grove, of the Athletics.

Johnson toiled for years with a downtrodden Washington team, yet always had a winning season. He easily is the best righthander of all time. And there is no question that Lefty Grove was the fastest, hardest throwing southpaw ever developed in baseball.

George Moriarty, the veteran umpire, gave the greatest insight to Grove's ability when he confided:

"When Grove is pitching, you umpire by sound—you never see the ball."

THAT ROUNDS OUT the team with the exception of the manager where battle lines have been drawn for leaders like John J. (Muggsy) McGraw, of the Giants; Connie Mack, of the Athletics; George Stallings of the Braves; Joe McCarthy, of the Yankees; and Red Sox; and Little Miller Huggins, of the Cardinals and Yankees.

Usually, the choice is between McCarthy and Huggins and so it is this time with the final vote going to Huggins. This little mite of a fellow built the Yankee team that carried McCarthy to greatness. He harnessed the many personalities into a winning combination and that alone earned him the honor.

As for the greatest player of all time, there is no question. It is Ty Cobb all the way, with the thought that there never will be another like him.

A fierce competitor, good fielder, good hitter and a flash on the bases, he had everything.

Too bad they didn't ask to name the all-time club owner.

This would have been another case where there would be no question about the choice.

It would be Frank J. Navin, owner of the Tigers in the first half of the century. Shrewd in business and the judgment of talent, he was an ideal owner and respected most highly in the highest councils of the game.



By W. W. EDGAR

For the second year in a row teen-age bowlers from Country Lanes in Farmington have dominated the Michigan Youth Bowling Association championships at Thunderbird Lanes.

Captained by Ray Ponke, the major boys paced a field of 46 teams with a handicap score of 3049 that gave them a winning margin of 16 pins over the Holiday Lanes team of Lansing.

Other members of the team were Gary Dorocher, Steve Laine, Mike Phillips and Rick Diehr. They combined their efforts for an actual pin count of 2476 and with a handicap of 573 pins forged to the front. The Lansing team had an actual count of 2322 with a handicap of 711 for a 3033.

The only other team in the metropolitan area to put a dent in the outstate domination was the St. Gabriel major girls team of the Beacon Recreation Alpena teams won both the prep girls and Peanutt girls classes and was the only city that captured more than one title. The junior girls title went to the squad from Paul Bunyan Lanes in Charlevoix.

All boys titles beyond the major class were shared by out-

state cities.

SELECTION OF THE YBA all-state teams ran into a snarl this week when nine boys tied in points for the junior team, inasmuch as the team is limited to five members and no provision had been made for a tie. The selections are being delayed until some formula satisfactory to all concerned can be worked out.

ANOTHER HIGH HONOR came to Michigan bowlers during the past week when the Women's Bowling Congress announced that the women's state tournament with more than 3,000 entries was the largest in the country.

"This is the best news we have had in a long time," Marge Stroks, women's state secretary, remarked when the announcement was received. "We have been working a long time to build up our tournament and it is a real satisfaction to know that we finally landed on top."

In other years Michigan trails California and New York. Entries in those areas dropped a bit, but the surges of Michigan entries reached its highest point with more than 3,000 teams.



KEEP TITLE AT HOME: Last year the major boys team at Country Lanes in Farmington won its division title in the Michigan YBA championship tourney. This year, with several new faces in the lineup, Country Lanes won again. They

It Was Just 50 Years Ago Sports Started Golden Age

By W. W. EDGAR

It went by almost unnoticed, but July Fourth was an important anniversary in the world of sports.

It was July Fourth, 1919—just 50 years ago—that Jack Dempsey, known then as the Manassa Mauler, knocked out big Jess Willard, on the banks of the Maumee in Toledo, Ohio, to usher in the Golden Age of Sport.

part of a decade a hunt had been on for a "white hope" who could defeat Jack Johnson, the giant Negro who had fallen into disrepute. Finally Jess Willard, the big Kansas Giant, did the trick in Havana, Cuba, in a finish that left much to be desired.

As a result Willard wasn't too popular and it wasn't until the combination of Jack Dempsey and Jack Kearns teamed with "Tex" Rickard to put new life into the fight game and make the public sports conscious.

With the crowning of Dempsey as the world heavyweight champion, the flood gates were opened and every sport on the calendar embarked on what turned out to be their greatest decade.

JUST ABOUT the time Dempsey ascended the throne the Boston Red Sox sold a rookie pitcher named Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees, and started an entirely new era in baseball. The Babe left the pitcher's mound, went to the outfield, and became the "Home Run King" of baseball—an honor that may be his for all time.

He was the cornerstone on which the Yankee dynasty was built and all baseball pruned through the years.

Ironically, two young golfers—Walter Hagen of Rochester, N. Y. and Bobby Jones, of Atlanta Ga.—came on the scene at about the same time to dominate the ancient Scotch game and revolutionize the sport.

No fighter since the passing of old John L. Sullivan, captured the fancy of the public as Dempsey did as he went on to bring about the first "million dollar gate in night history."

Two years after whipping Willard, Dempsey fought Georges Carpentier, the Orichid of France, in a new stadium built just for that fight in Boyles Thirty Acres in New Jersey and set the first "million dollar" gate as was written into the record.

HIS FAMED BATTLES with Luis Angel Firpo and the two losing battles with Gene Tunney—one in Philadelphia and one in Chicago—were epics that haven't been equalled in drama or gate receipts since.

Dempsey came along at the right time. For the better

the momentum gained in the decade from 1920 through 1930 carried over and really hit the metropolitan area in 1935 when it boosted the leaders in all sports and Detroit became known as "The City of Champions."

Here a partial list of the champs who boasted in that big year:

The Tigers beat the Chicago Cubs to win the world baseball title.

The Detroit Lions dominated the National Football League and beat the Chicago Bears.

The Detroit Red Wings raced away with the National Hockey League title.

Car Wood, with his Miss America, won the Harmsworth trophy and the world speedboat racing championship.

The "grand slam" was winning both the Amateur and open championships in the United States and Great Britain in the same year. It never was done before or since.

IN THE MIDDLE of the decade word came from the campus of the University of Illinois in Urbana that a young redhead named Grange was causing a lot of eye-brow lifting with his ability to run. He proved to be anything but a flash when he scored four touchdowns in 10 minutes against Michigan in the game that dedicated the Illinois stadium.

Ohio Trotter Is Winner

Little Master, a seven-year-old from Victory Key Inc., in Findlay, Ohio, came storming down the stretch to capture the \$18,550 Michigan Trotting Derby Wednesday at Northville Downs before a crowd of 4,489.

It was a tight finish that found Little Master hitting the wire a half length in front of the Canadian steed in 2:04.3 with Oak Grove, a seven-year-old from Oak Park, Mich., taking third.

The 18th renewal of the traditional stake found Third Edition taking the lead on the first turn and holding it all the way to the final furlong where Little Master trotted past.

Oak Grove, who broke gall early, was closing fast and just missed getting the second place.

Titan, second half of the Right stable entry that was handled by Chris Borring of Adrian, was fourth and Blue Water Goldy took down fifth money.

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By MARVIN KEMP

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