

# Fun for the Whole Family

## SPARKY WATTS



## By BOODY ROGERS



## VIRGIL

By LEN KLEIS



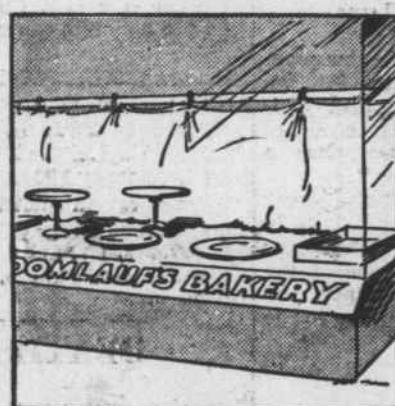
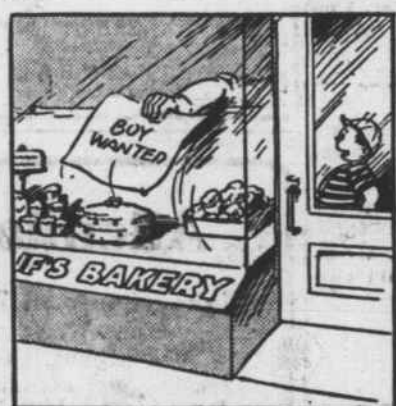
## The MIDDLES

By BOB KARP

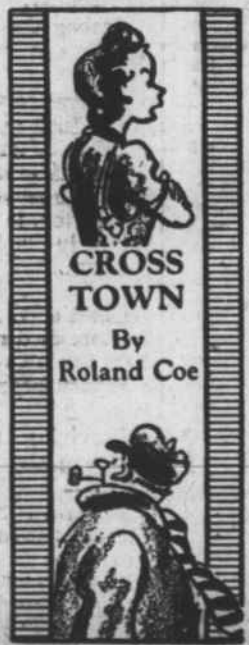


## REG'LAR FELLERS--A Full Career

## By GENE BYRNES



## POP--To the Watery Depths



IT IS generally understood that the postwar boom in sport will be on the amazing side. But it will be an entirely different matter from the sport boom after World War I. It will appeal to a far greater number of actual players but I doubt very much that it will even approach the so-called Golden age that followed the First World War--those years that brought us Babe Ruth, Jack Dempsey, Bobby Jones, Bill Tilden, Bill Johnston, Red Grange, Charlie Paddock, Earl Sande, Rogers Hornsby and many more in almost every line of sport. Babe Ruth had been a star pitcher before. But it was not until after the war that he unwrapped his big mace and began hitting home runs.

I can't see any such stars in sight for some time to come. For this has been a longer and far more punishing war as far as our athletes are concerned. It has arrested the playing careers of far more young stars, such as Bob Feller, Ted Williams, Billy Conn, and so many others who were still short of their prime and peak when called to service.

Here and there among the younger servicemen we'll have a certain number of stars who may come close to the old-time mark--boxers, ball players and football players. But anyone who expects to see a Ruth - Dempsey - Jones - Tilden-Grange - Sande and Hornsby parade is likely to be disappointed.

It could happen, of course. Since almost anything can happen in sport. But it isn't a good bet. The odds are against it. There will be too many of our greatest stars around Pearl Harbor days back in 1941, who will be over the hill physically before they have the chance to return to competitive sport. They will still be good, many of them, but too many of them will have lost their best years.

### Another Type of Boom

The sport boom that will follow this war will be another type. While it may not give the spectators such big names as we have mentioned, so many outstanding stars, it will accomplish something much more important. It will lift the general average of play and skill far higher than it ever was before.

The First World War contributed nothing to the headline mastery of the Golden age. The sport stars of that era had practically no connection with the war in any way. You can ring in Grover Cleveland Alexander, since Old Pete was a star pitcher back around 1911.

But it will be different after this war. Army and navy now have from 12,000,000 to 14,000,000 men in the service. And army and navy have outlined one of the biggest programs for sport ever known, along the line of coaching, training and competitive play.

This big swing in the direction of sport is a vital necessity. Army and navy know this. When the war in Europe is over, there will be millions who can't be rushed home or on to Asia and the Pacific at a day's notice. They will need a vast sporting program to keep them interested in life while waiting for boats and planes to bring them back, or carry them to other theaters of action.

The big weakness of sport in the United States is that we have been too much of a spectator nation--and not enough of a playing nation. This applies to our youngsters and to older men. When 25,000 out of 100,000 18-year-olds are rejected by the draft, something is obviously wrong.

Army and navy now plan to give all these millions a chance to play the games they like with greater skill, even if few of them ever become champions. There can only be one champion, at a time, after all. But there can be a vast improvement in our average skill.

### Postwar Football

There is one knotty, thorny problem that the pro-football league or leagues will soon have to meet. This involves returning servicemen who may have a year or two years of college football left, but who may want to play pro-football, rather than return to campus life.

As the pro rule now works no player can be taken into pro ranks until his class has graduated. This regulation has worked well so far and has drawn the full approval of the colleges and the college coaches.

The war is almost certain to be over in Europe before next fall. That doesn't mean that all football players in army or navy will be released. But many will be, including a few from the Pacific.

Some of these college players will want to return and finish their college course. Others won't. One pro-football angle is this--"If these men don't want to go back to college, why shouldn't we use them?" Others believe the present rule that calls for waiting until their college time is over should be kept as it is or was before the war.

## Housing Project to Attract the Birds

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