

Boston Nationals Constant Threat To Leaders

BRAVES LACKING ONLY AT THE BAT

With Little More Power There Team on Which Burrus Plays First Be in Fight for First Division

By JOHN B. FOSTER
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St. Petersburg, Fla., April 1.—The Boston Nationals, who shared St. Petersburg as a training ground with the New York Americans give an impression of great power, to which is slowly being added speed and cohesiveness.

The Braves are the personification of energy. Davy Bancroft did that for them. He has been a dynamo to a team that can hardly be reckoned upon as being a pennant winner, but what it will do until after the ninth inning of any ball game is completed will take some high class seer to forecast accurately.

If there were to be a series of games right now, a presumably best chance of a season in which the championship was to be decided, and the Bostonians, not to mention themselves, were one of the clubs of that series, the team playing against Boston might lose a championship against this tireless bunch.

The Braves don't know when to stop when they get going and they keep on digging in whether the game is breaking their way or not. That's why no one can tell what the outcome of any contest is likely to be when they are one of the parties.

A mighty good lieutenant to Bancroft is Gautreau, the Holy Cross second baseman, who is a disciple of the school of Jack Barry. Pretty much all of the good baseball that Gautreau knows, outside of the young man's natural ability, he acquired through the coaching of Barry, who has turned out some mighty good college baseball players at Worcester, Massachusetts. It is only the city or town in the United States, where the playing of college baseball keeps the professionals from getting anywhere. Professional games went begging there while the college games drew as many as 20,000 spectators.

Gautreau in addition to his manual work in the game is one of the soundest kids in the business in backing up and in playing the ball to the right spot. Take Bancroft and Gautreau on a day when both are going well and there is little chance for anything to get through second base unless it has a torpedo behind it for propelling power.

Burrus at first had such a good year last season that it put him in line for this year and at third it is pretty sure that Riconda will be elected to play. It isn't new for Riconda to get into the majors. It is probable this time that he will stick. He is heavier and is batting better, and it was his weakness with the bat that kept him out in other years.

When the Braves were down here last season they played many games and won most of them and they have been repeating that little performance this year with much success. But there is a difference between this year and last. In 1925, each manager after being licked went away and said the Braves were the worst looking team he ever saw. This year when the Braves won the managers didn't say anything about the Bostonians being bad. They talk about the briskness of the team and its rapid fire work on the field and suggest that, if the Braves had a little more power with their bats they would be fighting for first division in the

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These nine baseball pilots are seeking their first major league flag. Some are hopeful this will be their year; others, less optimistic, are content to wait another season or so while they build up their clubs.

Cobb, Fohl, Sisler and Collins represent the American League and Hendricks, Fletcher, Bancroft, Hornsby and McCarthy the National naturally. Cobb, Sisler, Collins, Bancroft are player-pilots. All are infielders but Cobb, McCarthy is the baby member of the group in point of service, having been named manager of the Cubs during the winter. Last year he led Louisville to the confalon in the American Association.

Hornsby gained the managerial job of the St. Louis Cardinals to National this year, although fighting for first division in 1926 won't be the easy task that it was in 1925. Brown has added a barrel of strength to the Boston outfit even if he can't throw. The Braves had no one to go back for four flies last year although their field has all the room in the universe for a centerfielder. This year Brown can go back nearly as far as any ball that is batted his way and he will make the Boston pitchers look a lot better.

There are Welsh and Mann to play the other outfield positions and between them and Bancroft the Braves can hold any team better than the Braves held them a year ago. Benton, Genewich, Cooney, Smith, Ryan, all pitchers of last season, are better than they were, and George Mogridge, with his old left arm is likely to help the Braves when the weather heats up. With Jimmy Johnston and High to fill in for the infield and with a lot of youngsters who look pretty good for infielders some day, it is no wonder that the minor league owners hang around Boston to try to get some of the man-

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high up as second place, while in 1923 Fohl and his Brownies came within a single game of tying the Yankees for the banner. Hornsby, Collins, Sisler and Bancroft all did well last season.

Question Box

Question: Empire calls four balls and batter starts for first base and then the umpire calls "out" on three strikes. What is the runner to be then, safe or out the way and thereby cup their hats and who has authority, umpire or chief of field umpires?

Answer: The runner is out if

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declared out although the umpire says it never reverse this decision unless he has actually missed seeing the ball. The decision always is to be rendered by the Umpire in Chief but he may also receive from the Field Umpires.

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