

INDOOR BASEBALL.

**Spool Players and Diamond Sheet
Make Rainy Day Pastime.**

To find a way to play baseball at home has long been the ambition of every patriotic American boy.

Any boy who can shoot a marble can play indoor baseball. The "field" should be a bed or large table, with pillows or a pile of books or boxes for a "back stop." An old sheet with a diagram of the diamond in chalk or ink should be spread upon bed or table, the diamond at one end and the outfield at the other, as on real grounds. The bases should be two feet apart, marked by round spots the size of a silver quarter, and the pitcher's box should be a foot from the home plate, the latter being a postage stamp. The pitchers' and batsmen's boxes should be marked as well as the foul lines.

The players are spools—just ordinary sewing silk or thread spools—and they are all selected for their ability to roll straight. The name of each player is written on a slip of paper pasted on his head. The nines secured, the ball and bat are all that remain to be found. The former is a marble of medium size. The latter is a round lead pencil, not sharpened. The team in the field are all placed in their accustomed positions as in the actual game, except that the three basemen remain on the bases instead of "playing off." The operator or "manager" of the field team stands beside the table nearest first base, and, reaching his arm over that position, places his right hand beside his spool pitcher, the marble in the hand. The manager of the team at bat, putting one of his men in the batsmen's box at home plate, stands on the other side of the field from his opponent and places his right hand, grasping the bat, in front of his player.

Then the game begins and the actual rules are followed closely. A third boy may act as umpire, or the two managers can agree easily enough in decisions, for few will be found uncomfortably close or uncertain. The batsman cannot judge the ball well, because the pitcher is so near that he is allowed to strike at each delivery. A cigar box is laid on its bottom directly behind the catcher. If the marble hits the broad side of this box when pitched a "strike" is called. If it shoots over or beside the box it is a "ball." Four "balls," as in the real game, entitle the batsman to his base.

There are no "foul strikes" in spool baseball, but when a ball touches the bat and rolls foul the fielder nearest the point where it stops is rolled from his position toward it, and if he touches it the batsman is "out." A fair hit that knocks over a fielder is an "out" if the fielder rolls further from the plate than does the ball and it scores as a "fly caught." When a fair hit is met by no fielder or when it strikes one and goes beyond him the one nearest where it stops is rolled toward it, and if he touches it it is an out. Should he miss, however, the batsman is rolled from home plate toward first base, and, hitting the baseman there, is declared "safe" and may roll for second, third and home in order.

The field team waits to move until the runner has tried, and if he fails at any base the ball is thrown from where it

stopped toward the baseman missed. Should the ball then hit the latter the runner is out. Should it not hit the runner has again to roll from where he stopped toward the baseman, and if he fail again the ball is thrown from its place, and so on until the man is either safe or out. Once safe on first base the runner remains there until the next ball other than a foul has been delivered. Then he may try to steal the next base under the same rules as applied to his reaching first, but he may take but one base, of course, on such a run. Should a hit be made when a runner is on first base the ball may be fielded to second base immediately to force him out, as in the real game, and this may often develop a true double play if the batter fails to get to first.

For a throw to home base the catcher is brought up from behind the bat and placed upon the plate. In the case of a hit off the field (that is, the bed or table) the ball is brought back to the point over which it passed on going off and the nearest fielder has his chance to run for it as if it were a real "hit to the fence."

By the Office Boy.

dogon why cant I reed 2day
and not be Bothurd in this way
I wonder when they think I find
odd moments tew Improve my mind

its johanny run and Johnny jump
and here yung feller Get a hump
this aint no Boys job that they gave
tew me they need a good strong slave

now theres the Boss dont dew a thing
but Keep yours truly on the wing
hes only Hired here truth tew speak
tew See I urn three bucks per week

gwhizz the way of life is ruff
And men is maid of lazy stuff
they lay around like rocks and Logs
and wurk the Offis boys like dogs

an hour ago I started out
tew Reed about kit carson scout
But what with Being bothurd so
my progress is But painful slow

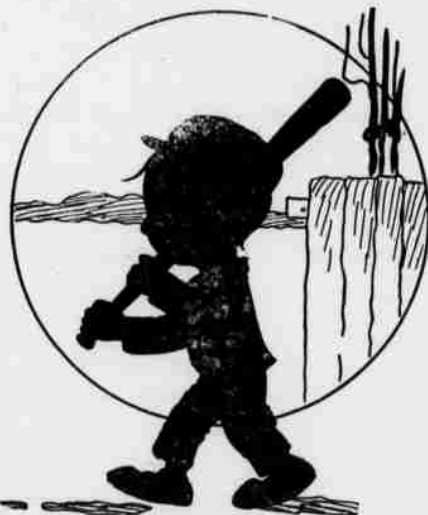
just When he is about tew slay
sum injun I am torn away
by rite which I hearby dispute
Tew shute sum copy up the Chute

there aint no Simpathy thats sure
round Hereabouts with litterchure
And boys pore soles must bear the brunt
of work and grow up Ignarunt

—The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Conundrums.

What animals are like Cain?
Those that are branded.
When are diamonds and horses alike?
When mounted.



"STRIKE—ONE!"

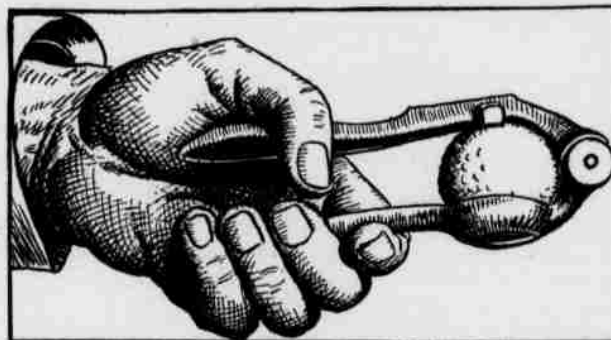
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