

FORT WORTH OUT TO BEAT WORLD

Has Four Consecutive Championships Tucked Into Its Belt and Is Now After Baltimore's Record.

By JOHN B. FOSTER
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Fort Worth, Texas, March 20—There's a long and historic trail winding between here and New Orleans. It's the trail of the Fort Worth Baseball Club, which licked everything it its own league for the fourth time in a row and then journeyed down to New Orleans with a trainload of big hatted fans to paralyze the New Orleans Club for the Dixie championship.

It was that trail which the writer followed all of a long day to drop down in this city of Texas champions, where Jake Atz, the McGraw of the minor leagues, bids fair before he is finished the baseball life to equal the minor league for managing. Give him time, that's all.

The Fort Worth team began to put on the medals as kings of the plans when Paul Lagrave, owner of the Fort Worth Club, got well set in the game. It was a little slow at the start, but once he got under headway, there hasn't been enough sand in the state to stop him in his wild quest for pennants. In 1919 Lagrave got into the final with Shreveport. The Louisiana outfit licked him in the play off, but not again. In 1920 he won, then in 1921, 1922 and 1923. And now the other Texas league clubs are sitting up nights trying to figure out some way to head him off from a fifth victory.

But Lagrave is nursing ambition to equal the record of Baltimore for consecutive championships. "We'll have to play ball to do it," he concedes. "You've got to fight in this league. The boys play ball because they like it, and they'll battle any team for a nine inning finish. If we win that five pennants in a row, we'll take on Baltimore anytime they say the word."

Time was when Dallas was the biggest peacock in the Texas peacock alley, and Waco, too, once bottle up pennants like a pop factory working over time. But neither of them ever did what Fort Worth has done—win four in a row. And neither ever slapped the Southern Association so hard. Mobile managed to win the Dixie title once for the Southern Association but that was because Fort Worth was bungled up.

The Fort Worth team has had to work hard to keep up with the city which has grown wonderfully, expanding miles since the days when the first big league teams were wont to stop here for exhibition games. Then Fort Worth was only in the Texas League outfit. Now it is the high roller of the frontier.

Jake Atz figures on his fifth championship this year with the calm assurance of a man who knows what he wants and how to go about getting it. He has had to make his team over, but like a good, resourceful manager, that doesn't worry him. He knows what the championship job is. He can take a tile here and a tile there and cement them together into a real ball playing club.

"We've just simply got to go over to the Southern Association and give those fellows another lesson in baseball," says Jake. "If the American Association and the International want to come out here we will take them on, too. Our little old baseball of the plains is second to none these days, and maybe the big leagues would like to sample some of it. They don't come this way to practice any more. Of course I'm not saying anything, but we young champions are a hard lot to beat. Maybe that's why they don't come—but I'm not saying so."

A youngster named Cantrell may have a good deal to do with Fort Worth's success this season. He is from Lehigh, Oklahoma. Last season he would pitch all the amateurs of his part of the country into submission, so Fort Worth took him on, and it looks as if Fort Worth would keep him.

Makes you think of Ed Walsh in size and style, this Cantrell. Nice easy action with speed. He doesn't use a splitter, but he uses a head, inexperienced as he is in the professional game, and he is full of pluck. Runners on the bases don't worry him. That is his cue to take the batter in hand.

Fort Worth has shown enough so far this spring to make it certain that she will do some hitting this year, and gloom is due to sit heavily on some of the Texas League pitchers when the Panther Giants clout the ball.

Kraft, who was one of the big stickers of the Texas circuit in 1923, already seems to be in mid-season batting form. The writer says him lay one on a line to the fence—one of those ten foot high drives that never float, but cut the air like a buzz saw going through a stick of soft pine.

FIGHT NEGRO ILLITERACY

Philadelphia, March 20.—(By the Consolidated Press.)—Leading negroes here have been enlisted to cooperate with the local chamber of commerce and other bodies to fight against negro illiteracy. This has resulted from the recent heavy increase in negro population.

PHONE 114
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FOR THE GAME'S SAKE

BY LAWRENCE PERRY

Copyright, 1924, by The Advance
New York, March 20—Wide discussion has followed the recommendation of Prof. C. L. Hare, of Alabama Poly (Auburn) that after a term of years—say 1928—the duties of all paid coaches in the Southern Conference be confined to the development of athletics for the entire student body. Teams engaging in intercollegiate contests shall be coached by students alone.

In the South the suggestion has met both with favor and with opposition among the members of the executive committee of the Conference to whom it was submitted at a recent meeting in Atlanta. What eventually will come of it may not be said. There is, however, reason to believe that it will not die before it has revealed signs of sturdy life, if then.

Prof. Hare's views are sound enough. He would have the highly paid, highly specialized coaches devote their time to improving physique and knowledge of games among students generally, giving them a love of sport and teaching them to play it as well as they can. He would relieve them of their work of concentrating on the task of developing the utmost skill in from a dozen to twenty young men who have shown high qualifications for one sport.

In such case, as Prof. Hare points out, they would no longer be at the mercy of alumni and others who appraise an athletic instructor's value upon the basis of the success or failure of a varsity team. Under the Hare plan the coach would lead a peaceful, stable, unstrained existence and his functions as a teacher would relate themselves to those of any faculty member.

On the other hand, were the captain of a team and a duly constituted board of students to train and develop the varsity outfits they

would have the benefit that comes of using their brains to constructive ends while the players would be playing for their alma mater solely instead of as now in part for their alma mater and perhaps in larger part for their coach's reputation.

So in a general way run Prof. Hare's views and any person who keeps in touch with current trends of university sports will be the last to say that they warrant light consideration.

Primarily, if there is one thing that our urge for specialization does more than another it is to exalt the gifted few at the expense of the average many. For example our best golfers, tennis players, oarsmen and the like can probably beat the world but if you took a thousand Americans and pitted them against a thousand Englishmen in the various sports played in common by the two countries the chances are we would make a very humiliating showing. In fact it is practically certain we would.

In England every boy is taught and taught well, and not by a coach as a rule either, but by older persons who are proficient in the various sports. They swim, row, play golf, tennis, football. Under our university system a comparatively few specialists are picked for the varsity teams and even in the intramural sports the premium is all upon victory. The qualified man—not, to be sure, of varsity calibre, but still qualified—is selected for the instrumental teams and, as a consequence the great bulk of the students are still out of it.

Sports for all, played with due regard for form and all technicalities under the tutelage of competent instructors—this, as the writer sees it, is Prof. Hare's aim. And a mighty sane and significant aim it is.

BASEBALL QUESTION BOX

If you have some question to ask about baseball—

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If you want to know anything about a play or player—

Write to John B. Foster, the man who helped make the rules under which the game is played today. If you want a personal reply enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise your question will be answered in this column.

Address: John B. Foster, special baseball correspondent of The Daily Advance, 811 World Building, New York.

Question—Shortstop throws wide to first base and the baseman reaches out to get the ball. He catches it with his gloved hand but he touches the batter who was coming down the line with his bare hand. He does not touch the base. Is the batter out?

Answer—In this case, no. It is too evident that the batter is not touched by the ball.

Question—Strikes are on the batter. Catcher fumbles the third strike and the ball rolls behind him and is lost in the grass. The batter continues on his way and is half way to second base when the umpire calls him back to first, saying it was a passed ball. Could the umpire do that?

Answer—Not legally unless there was a ground rule.

Question—Batter pops an easy

foul behind the plate and the catcher muffs the ball. Is it right to charge him with an error even if the batter does not get to first base afterward?

Answer—Give him an error. The batter's life is prolonged if an easy foul is muffed.

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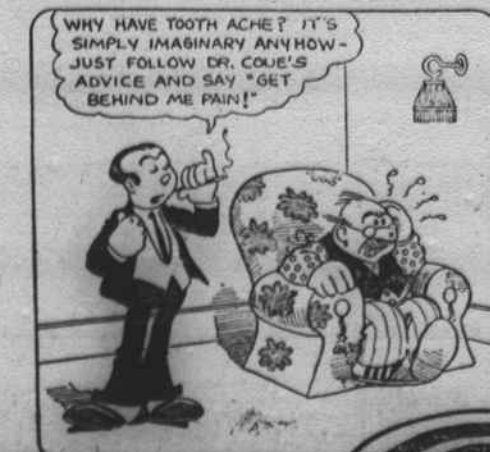
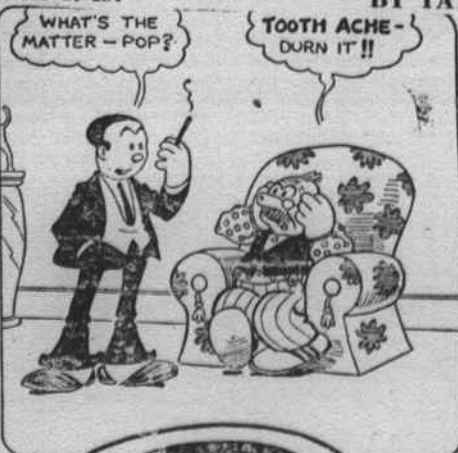
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Bad Enough As It Is!

BY TAYLOR



MAY BE BLUFFING OR JUST IRRITATED

Either Way Firpo Will Probably Not Leave Ring Until He Loses His Punch or Makes His Pile.

By FAIR PLAY

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New York, Mar. 20—Luis Firpo's announcement of his retirement from the ring might be accepted as part and parcel of Dempsey's conflicting statements of late. Nobody believes that the Argentine will not fight again. In short it looks as if Kearns, Firpo and Rickard were all playing poker and not letting the public see what cards they hold.

Or Firpo's statement may have been due to irritability over the necessity of working a lot of fat off him before he comes to the United States. Luis' most enjoyable task is putting fat on. Taking it off afflicts him grievously. Just now everyone who has seen him says he is in no shape to meet any good fighter. Probably not until he feels the necessity of more money (Continued on Page Eight)



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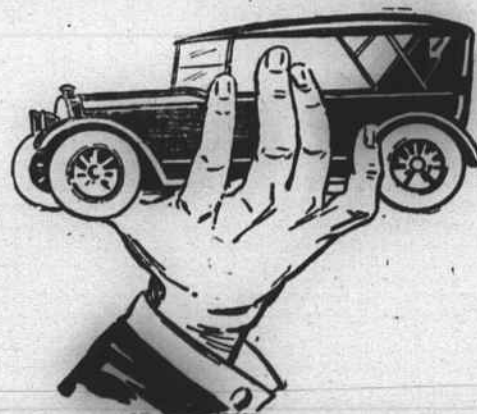
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