

# CALLING BALLS IN THE OLD DAYS BESS CITY WINS

## BATTER CALLED FOR HIGH OR LOW

And if Pitcher Failed to Deliver What Was Asked for Three Times Batter Took Base.

By JOHN B. FOSTER  
(Copyright 1925 by The Advance)  
The baseball season of 1925 will be the 75th season of the National League. Its commemoration of this anniversary, which will be fittingly commemorated during the coming season by the league and its founders and how they banded together to organize it; the first season of the league; the 12 greatest players; the 12 greatest managers; the five leading pitchers; the six most successful batters; the greatest games; the early championships and the development of the rule.

It was an odd sort of a rule that they had by which the umpire called balls in the old days. It read: "All balls delivered to the bat which are sent in over the strike zone, or on the ground in better—head, or on the ground in front of the home base, or on the side opposite to that on which the batsman strikes from, or which hit the striker while he is standing in his proper position, or which are sent within a foot of his person, shall be considered unfair balls, and every such unfair ball shall be called in the order of its delivery. After the first ball has been delivered, the first ball to each striker alone to be accepted." If the pitcher repeatedly failed to deliver a fair ball to the striker the umpire was notified to call one ball and if the pitcher persisted in such action—it will be noted that the rules made it appear that the pitcher might be a country cousin—the umpire was instructed to call two and three balls. If three balls were called the striker could go to first without being put out. No unfair ball was called on the first ball delivered. The reason for this was in the fact that the pitcher was supposed to have one chance to get the range between home plate and the place from which he let the ball go.

The fair balls were those which were delivered to the bat, "high" or "low" as the batsman called for them, and which were not delivered by an overhand throw or by a round arm throw as in cricket. If the ball was delivered by the pitcher to the striker and accidentally hit the bat of the striker it was a dead ball. There are fouls in these days but most of them are merely.

When the striker took his position he was compelled to stand astride the line of home base and one foot away from the base. If he infringed upon the conditions of the rule the umpire could call a foul strike and if three foul strikes were called the striker was out. The men, who stood at the plate in those days with their bats over their shoulders, had to watch pretty carefully to see that they were astride of the line of home plate. The practice of pounding home plate with the bat, which continues to this day, was largely the result of the striker in the old times making sure that he was properly lined up opposite the plate and that he would not be likely to step over the imaginary line when he swung at the ball. There were more rulings on foul strikes than there was on unfair balls, to tell the truth, because every umpire was determined that the striker should not gain any advantage over the pitcher who had to work hard with his underhand delivery against the big fellows who lined up against him.

The striker could call for either high or low ball. The former was from the waist to the shoulder and the latter between the knee and the waist. Three strikes were out on the bound, as well as on the fly. No strike was called upon the first ball delivered unless the striker swung at the ball. Here was one of the oddest of provisions in the strike rule: "No strike shall be called when the ball is struck at for the purpose of wilfully striking out." Imagine a player of these days walking to the bat to strike out with malice aforethought. The striker was privileged to use his own private bat exclusively, and the rules said that no other player should have the right to use such a bat unless it was by the permission of the owner of the bat. In the old times bats were just as precious as they are now.

### RENAULT OUTPOINTS ROPER OF ROANOKE

Omaha, Jan. 31.—Jack Renault, the Canadian heavyweight champion, decisively outpointed Captain Bob Roper, Roanoke, Virginia, in a ten round bout here last night.

### FINN WINS DESPITE HANDICAP OF COLD

New York, Jan. 31.—Paavo Nurmi had little trouble in defeating four countrymen in a special 1-8 race at Morriside Athletic Club games last night but set the slowest race of his American invasion. The race was run in five minutes and 19.25 seconds, 20 seconds slower than the record. Nurmi was handicapped with a cold.

### DEMPEY QUALIFIES QUIT RING PROMISE

Los Angeles, Jan. 31.—Jack Dempsey, the world's champion heavyweight boxer, has qualified for retirement from the ring with this statement that he would probably quit fighting about May 29.

### SPORTS QUESTION BOX

If you have some question to ask about baseball, football, boxing or any other amateur or professional sport—If you want a rule interpreted—If you want to know anything about a play or player—Write to John B. Foster, on Baseball; Lawrence Perry, on Amateur Sports, and Fair Play, on Boxing and other professional sports. All are special correspondents of The Advance, 814 World Building, New York.

Question—In your opinion who was the harder pitcher, John L. Sullivan, Bob Fitzsimmons or Jack Dempsey?  
Answer—As a personal opinion, Fitzsimmons.

Question—What inter-sectional New Year Day games were played besides California-Penn and Notre Dame-Stanford?  
Answer—Hawaii University beat Colorado University at Honolulu and West Va. Wesleyan beat Southern Methodist at Dallas, Texas.

Question—I like boxing and every night I box with friends. I have not good eyesight and want you, but you should go at once, my eyes in shape?  
Answer—You should go at once to a doctor who knows about eyes, and oculist. He will help you, but you should go at once.

Question—Why do the teams go South to train and not wait for the weather to become warm in the North?  
Answer—They go South in order that they may begin to play as well as possible on the first day of the season. If they waited to play until the weather became settled in the north most of the year would not be very attractive. Players get out of condition in the winter and muscles must be warmed up again.

## BOSTON RED SOX MAY GET CHANCE

### If Todt Develops Class at First and Prothro Third Gives Team Confidence Lee Fohl May Nose Out.

By JOHN B. FOSTER  
(Copyright 1925 by The Advance)  
New York, Jan. 31.—The Boston Red Sox should stand up to the weed rack this coming season with any of their contemporaries—provided Lee Fohl succeeds in making a fast first baseman out of Todt. And Fohl has a chance of achieving that, for Todt is not bad by any means. A fast first baseman would speed the Red Sox in field up by ten to fifteen per cent. Wambagans on second base in 1924, while not hitting much, was covering as much ground as any second baseman in the circuit, with the possible exception of Collins. Lee at shortstop never had a chance to show half what he can do last season, because of illness; and the third base corner was plugged—not filled—and the plug kept dropping out all the time. This year Prothro, who started with Washington in 1924 and was sent back to Memphis at his own request, will start with Boston and stay right where he is until Fohl manages to get some one better. There is a little tale about Prothro that is worth reciting. Last spring, down in Tampa where the Washingtons were training, the team appeared to be a much better ball team than Grubb had taken to that part of the United States before. The players were full of snap and pep and there was much debate as to what had come over them. Almost everybody came to the conclusion that it was partly because of the optimistic and self-confident smile with which Walter Johnson went about his work and partly because Prothro at third base was not letting much get by him, and was smacking the ball when hits were needed. Prothro certainly fed the Washingtons with more confidence than they had possessed in a long time because when Bluge could not play the Washington infield had felt uneasy.

If he can produce the same sort of mental uplift at Boston it will make a difference in the American League, for if Boston can win ten more games than in 1924 the Red Sox may settle the supremacy of the league.

### GREB OUTPOINTS JIMMY DELANEY

St. Paul, Jan. 31.—Harry Greb, world's middleweight champion, outpointed Jimmy Delaney, St. Paul light heavyweight, in 10 rounds last night.

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## Sunday School Teacher Lead Boys To Victory

### College Quintet in Indiana Have Had Same Coach Since Days Before They Entered High School—Whole State Is Basketball Mad

By LAWRENCE PERRY  
(Copyright 1925 by The Advance)  
New York, Jan. 31.—Basketball fever of the state of Indiana representing colleges not members of the Western conference are now in the midst of their annual cleanup of Big Ten court teams. Indiana for years seemed to have the literary market cornered. Now the Hoosier commonwealth is gaining similar distinction in the sport of tap, bounce and pass. This far this season quintets of Indiana Colleges have succeeded in defeating more than half the teams of the Western Conference. Each year since the war the carnage has grown greater so that now the race in the Indiana Conference has a more important aspect from the standpoint of championship rating than the Big Ten race. Yet the standard of basketball in the larger conference is really high grade.

Preparatory school athletics in Indiana are controlled by the Indiana High School Athletic Association, an organization of high school principals, governed by a board of control elected annually by the principals at the State Teachers convention. It has jurisdiction over all sports, but its strongest suit is basketball. In March the tournament is held in which the 800 odd members of the organization each enter a squad of eight varsity members in the state championship competition. The tournament is held at the state fair grounds at Indianapolis and it attracts thousands of spectators who carry municipal and regional rivalry to the limit of vocal enthusiasm. It is estimated that 20,000 will watch each decisive game of the tournament in March—and there are 15 games in the final play offs.

Since Thanksgiving every Friday has been characterized by approximately 400 high school games throughout the state and they are all preliminary to the final championship tests. Indiana is basketball mad and therein is perhaps contained the answer to the proficiency of her final championship tests.

Then, Wabash, in turn, nosed out Butler and at last accounts had lost but one game, a one point thriller, to Wisconsin. Indiana State Normal has beaten the powerful University of Indiana five and Franklin College, defeated but once in three years has already beaten Purdue and Wisconsin, a team that is never weak. Notre Dame has beaten Northwestern, Vanderbilt came up out of the South and bowed to Butler, Franklin, Wabash and DePaul. Indiana has turned back Kentucky and Mercer, as in 1921, has had no luck in the Hoosier State.

What is behind it all? In trying to answer this, the Franklin College Five might be subjected to analysis. The men who comprise this five today were all members of the same Sunday School class in Franklin as boys. Their teacher was Ernest Wagner. As basket ball has long been Hoosierdom's favorite indoor sport—it annually outshines the radio, the Klan, writing novels and talking politics—this Sunday School class organized a little basketball team. Wagner helped them.

When the boys went into the high school he was still with them. They won three Indiana high school championships in succession, an interscholastic record in the state.

When they entered Franklin College Quintet in Indiana Have Had Same Coach Since Days Before They Entered High School—Whole State Is Basketball Mad

Elizabeth City defeated Chowan in both games of the double header at the High School gym Friday night before the largest crowd of spectators seen at a basketball game here since the championship games of 1923. The girls won 26 to 12 and the boys took their game to the tune of 12 to 10.

The girl cagers gave a brilliant exhibition of clean snappy basketball. In the first part of the game the teams seemed evenly matched, and the scoring was about even. But even before the first half was ended, the Elizabeth City cagers began to show superiority in shooting and passing and when the whistle blew for the first half the score was 12 to 7.

Determined to make good the advantage gained the local girls went back strong in the second half, gradually increasing the lead over the opponents until at the end of the game they had piled up a score that more than doubled that which was marked up for the visiting sextette.

Featuring for Chowan was Grace Bunch, who was responsible for the entire 12 points made by the visitors. For the home team Belle Miller won special praise not only for the four points scored from the field, but for the accuracy and deliberation with which she caged the ball from the foul line. Her record shows six goals out of 7 shots in the first half, and two out of five trials in the second half, making a total of 12 points scored during the game. The local guards as well as forwards came in for a hearty applause, since they were on the alert at every stage of the game, ready to pass the ball out of the final championship tests.

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## A DOUBLE HEADER

### Chowan High School Defeated in Both Games on Home Court Friday Night and Home Town Boys Hope Their Jinx Is Routed

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E. City	Position	Chowan	Position
Ballard	forward	R. Bunch	guard
Jones	center	W. Bunch	forward
Sanders	guard	C. Ward	forward
Harris		F. Ward	guard

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By Charles McManus