

THE PUBLIC FORUM

Editor, WINNETKA TALK:

The writer has witnessed many of the baseball games played on the Skokie grounds this year, and feels impelled to write in praise of the exceptionally good team now representing Winnetka, it being a rare occasion when they lose.

In Peter Lucchesi and Russell Bartz—both born right here in Winnetka—the local team possesses a battery rarely excelled by a purely amateur organization. Lucchesi is a pitcher of far above the ordinary skill and judgment, gives few bases on balls, fields his position well, is never discouraged by the adverse luck of the game or by the bobbles or blunders of his teammates, and he finishes a game as strongly as he starts it. He and Bartz are frequently compelled to shoulder the whole load of the game, yet the writer has never seen them lose their tempers, or quarrel with the umpire or members of the opposing nine, the latter a silly practice.

Lucchesi's team-mates are of more than average ability. Carpenter, at third base and Waidler at shortstop are particularly good. Knox, at first base, makes seemingly impossible stops of the wild heaves of his team-mates, and Dahl, at second base, is steady and sure. The outfielders are not by any means as good as their infield mates, too many high flies being over-run or under-run, and apparently no attention being paid to the velocity or direction of the wind. Improvement could be had here.

The team batting is more than good, and, with the pitching, is chiefly responsible for the winning of the games. Each player seems to have a couple of base-hits tucked up his sleeve, and as batsmen the men are always dangerous. This is fine, as the best fielding nine in the United States cannot win without good batting. The base-running, taken as a whole, seems to the writer to lack snap and daring, and some persistent practice at hook-slides would materially add to the bases stolen. Again, when two men are out, desperate chances should be taken on the running lines. The team is weak here.

Coaching base-runners is an art, and should not be entrusted to dumb-wits or sleepy-heads. The signals should be given by signs and not by word of mouth, as the noise of the crowd often drowns the latter. Let the same coacher always coach in the same position (first base, or third) and make the runners obey him. Many a perfectly good three-base hit has been turned into a put-out at home because a runner conceitedly refused to obey a coacher's orders to halt at third.

The writer has witnessed with keen pleasure the umpiring of Messrs. William Gorman and Frank Scrimgeour. Good umpires are as rare as good pitchers. Gorman and Scrimgeour are skilled and strictly impartial, the latter virtue being rare in amateur umpires. Deliver me from an umpire who "Likes to see the home team win".

It is a mystery why these Winnetka games are not drawing a bigger crowd, as the playing is exceptionally good, the grounds convenient and the admission fee whatever you wish to drop into the hat which the smiling Mr. Martin Thorsen circulates during the seventh inning. Perhaps the games lack newspaper advertising.

As an ex-captain of an old-time Winnetka ball club, the writer feels that he is in a position to judge as to the relative merits of Winnetka players and teams of today and forty years ago—but why start an argument?

Respectfully,

CARLTON PROUTY,

Right fielder of Winnetka Base Ball club, 1878 to 1890.

Miss Ruby Papenthien of Milwaukee, niece of Mr. and Mrs. Emil Olsen, 1000 Vine st., was a week-end guest at the Olsen home recently.

Miss Flora Carson of New York, who has been the guest of Miss Louisa Greeley, has gone with her hostess on a motor trip to Cincinnati, O.

Mrs. William Dow Harvey has returned to her home on the Indian Hill Golf Club grounds after a weeks' outing at Ephraim, Wis.

Mrs. Hubert Howard and her family returned recently to their home at 643 Walden road from Minocqua, Wis., where they spent three weeks.

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