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## MONUMENTS

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# In The World Of Sport

## PLAYERS SHOULD NEVER SLIDE TO FIRST BASE Tests Prove Best Policy is to Reach Initial Sack Standing Up.

Why does a baseball player slide to first base when trying to beat a close play? Because he thinks he can hit the bag quicker that way than by going across standing up. That fallacy was exploded years ago by actual test but the younger generation of players either has forgotten it or never knew it, and the practice of sliding into first base is growing with each new relay of recruits to the majors. Even some of the older players, who ought to know better, are catching the disease.

Way back before the present century began there was considerable agitation in favor of letting baserunners overrun second as well as first without incurring liability to be put out for it. The object was to increase the baserunning by improving a man's chances of stealing second. It was argued and actually demonstrated by stop-watch tests, that a runner had to slow up a fraction of a second to make a slide either head first or feet first. The reason was never clearly given, but some asserted it was because the runner had to break his stride to make the slide, and others that he lost some of his bodily momentum.

At any rate, the tests showed the fastest possible way to get from one base to another was to stand up, run at top speed all the way, and overrun the bag. But it was decided against permitting runners to do that by going to second base because of the different conditions. At first base it is not necessary to touch the runner, but only to beat him to that cushion with the ball, while at the other three bases it is necessary to tag the runner, as everyone knows.

Under these conditions it really is an advantage for a runner to slide instead of going in standing up. Frequently when the ball beats a runner to second, third or home, he can avoid being touched by sliding away from the guardian of the base and making it necessary to tag his spikes or his shins, whereas if he went in standing up he would present a much larger target for the baseman to touch.

Consequently the movement to permit overrunning second base was sidetracked as a favor to foxy baserunners with the ability to slip around opponents, although at a cost of a fraction of a second in their speed.

There is no such advantage in the slide to first base, however, and the player who hits the dirt merely increases the chances of being beaten by the ball. It is quite possible that the players' habit of sliding to other bases on all close plays, so as to make it as hard as possible to tag them, is responsible for the growing practice of handicapping themselves at first base. Instinctively when a runner going to first sees the play will be close he makes up his mind to slide, the same as at any other base.

It has cost many a runner a life which he might have gained by sprinting across the base at top speed. Many decisions at first are by the wink of an eyelash, consequently the loss of a small part of a second is enough to turn the scale. Also the umpire sometimes is confused by the slide and makes the wrong decision because he expects the runner to flash past the bag instead of sliding.

### Tom Longboat Again.

Tom Longboat, famed Indian Marathon runner, has joined the United States transport service. Longboat is a full blooded Ojibwa-Indian. He has already seen service in the war, and has been wounded.

Soon after the European war broke out Longboat enlisted in the Queen Victoria Grenadiers and fought in the first drive on the Somme front. He was struck by a piece of shrapnel and was laid up in a hospital for eight months. After his convalescence he returned to the United States and spent some time on the Mexican border, teaching the boys training there at the time the finer points of the running game.

The positions of Speaker and Cobb are exactly reversed from what they were a year ago today. At this time in 1916 Speaker was batting .385 and Cobb .350. Today Cobb is .385 and Speaker .350.

## VETERAN RUNNER WINS MARATHON

Clarence De Mar, Boston, who represented America in the Marathon race at the last Olympic games, was the winner of the modified marathon at the athletic games of the Scotch Caledonian Club Saturday. De Mar covered the distance of 13 1/2 miles in one hour, 31 minutes, 35 seconds. Carl Lunder of Quincy, finished second, Arthur Roth, of Boston, third, and Victor McAuley, the Canadian, who won the event last year was fourth.

## CHICAGO CUBS BUY YOUNGSTER FROM PORTLAND

Charles Hollocher, of the Portland club, who has been purchased by the Chicago Cubs, has been playing professional ball for three seasons, Keokuk, in 1915 and Rock Island in 1916 having been the teams he played with prior to joining the Cubs. He is a St. Louis boy and will not qualify as a voter until June 1, 1918.

Hollocher never has played anywhere else than at short field during his professional career. He is a left-handed hitter, weighs 158 pounds, and stands 5 feet 7 1/2 inches high. Each season Hollocher has played ball he has improved in his work. His batting and fielding averages with Keokuk two years ago were .229 and .932. With Rock Island last year they were .289 and .960. In the two seasons Hollocher spent in the Central association and Three Eyes league he took part in 213 games, batted 789 times, scored 85 runs, made 202 hits, stole 32 bases, laid down or raised 44 sacrifices, drew 69 passes, struck out 59 times, had 440 putouts, assisted 560 times, and committed 64 misplays. Hollocher's long hit output consisted of 24 doubles and 11 triples.

Naturally Portland fans think the new Cub will do as well in fast company as the other former Portland shortstops—Roger Peckinpaugh, of the Yankees, Ivan Olson of the Superbas, and Dave Bancroft, of the Phillies.

## BIG LEAGUE NINES PLAY IN FRANCE

Wealthy Baseball Fan Agrees to Pay Expenses of Two Teams.

A wealthy baseball enthusiast has volunteered to finance the undertaking of Clark Griffith, of the Washington Americans, to take two teams of major league baseball players to France for a series of games behind the lines for the entertainment of the American soldiers and their allies. Mr. Griffith said to-night that he would submit the project to Secretaries Baker and Daniels.

If official approval is given volunteer players will be sought with a view to getting the best of the front series strated as soon as possible after the season closes here. A condition of the offer is that Walter Johnson, the Washington pitcher, be one of those selected for the trip.

### Cobb's Speed.

Cobb has now been travelling at heading speed for a matter of thirteen campaigns. He was supposed to be at the point where the slowing up process arrives. No one figures that a ball player could hold the pace he has maintained for so many campaigns.

But a day or two ago the test was made. Cobb hammered a drive to left centre in the polo grounds, which is only three-base-hit territory for the average player. Only the fastest of the sprinters can turn this into a home run against fast fielding. The ball was fielded back perfectly, and at top speed, yet Cobb was over the plate and two strides on his way to the bench when the throw got home. He couldn't have been a stride faster ten years ago.

Ira Thomas, former catcher for the Philadelphia Athletics, denied that he was considering an offer to succeed Miller Huggins as manager of the St. Louis National.

The Giants are the worst hated team in baseball. Every city in the National league greets the New York team with all the vocal animosity at their command.

## FORMER PITCHERS STAR OUTFIELDERS

Robertson, Kauff and Roush Began Baseball Careers on Mound.

Three of the National League's best outfielders today started out as pitchers. Eddie Roush, of the Reds, the National League's batting leader, signed with the Evansville club in 1912 as a pitcher, but was soon switched to the outfield and has remained there ever since.

Davey Robertson, of the Giants might have been one of the sport's greatest pitchers today had it not been for an injury he received playing football. It was while he was a member of the North Carolina A. and M. college in 1911 that he was injured about the shoulder. Robertson continued to pitch until he joined the Giants when McGraw decided Robertson was not capable of pitching in the big league and he eventually drifted to Mobile, where he starred in the outfield.

Benny Kauff, centrefielder for McGraw, pitched and played the outfield for Parkersburg in 1910, and went through the season of 1912 as a pitcher for Brockton, Mass. Benny says he always wanted to be a pitcher from the time he left the coal mines in Ohio to make his fortune in the grand old game, but soon found out that he could advance faster as a fielder, and took up his place in the outer garden.

It is a coincidence, perhaps, that along with Robertson and Kauff, George Burns, the third member of the Giant outfield, aspired to be a pitcher, but was utilized in the minor leagues as a catcher with Utica in 1909 and shifted to the outfield by that club the following year.

Dave Griffith, team mate of Eddie Roush, pitched minor league baseball for four years, starting in 1909 with New Bedford. He took up outfielding in 1913. Sam Rice, now an outfielder with the Washington club, pitched for Petersburg in 1914 and went to Washington as a pitcher.

## OMAR KHAYYAM QUITE A KIDDER

Great Race-Horse Looks and Acts Like Cow When Loafing in Stall.

Since Omar Khayyam won the Kenner so impressively some folk are changing their opinion on the question of supremacy between the Vau horse and Hourless. It will be an interesting contest if it ever takes place, and the question of favorite is in doubt, though it is generally conceded that at a mile Hourless would be the choice. But over that distance Omar Khayyam would have the most admirers. That the latter is a nice horse is positive. He has a liking for any kind of going or any distance. His disposition is superb. He is what can be well and truthfully termed "an old-fashioned horse." His trainer, Dick Carman, says he will do anything he is asked.

"Just a loafer and a fooler—that's what he is," says Carman. "He will hang around until you call on him, and then he picks his way through his field and goes to the front. He never worries about anything, and after leading a horse he is just as likely to run beside him for a while, as if in conversation. But just shake him up and show him there is danger around him and he bursts off and is soon out of all trouble. He seems to have supreme confidence in his ability, and this gives him that indolent, don't care sort of disposition. In the stable he is like an old cow, and when shipping he simply gets into his stall and is comfortable in a minute. The strangest part of his disposition is the fact that he will work just as fast as he is asked to, and all alone. Just chuck to him and he will run a quarter in 23 seconds and keep on at a rapid gait unless checked. Yet in races he likes to be surrounded by company. In my opinion Omar Khayyam is one of those wonderful horses one sees only in a generation."

President Ban Pohnson, of the American League, is now in Boston to assist the Boston Club to eliminate the gambling element from the games at Fenway Park.

The Cleveland Indians are going great guns just now and the fans of that city are of the opinion that Lee Fohl will finish with his team on top of the heap.

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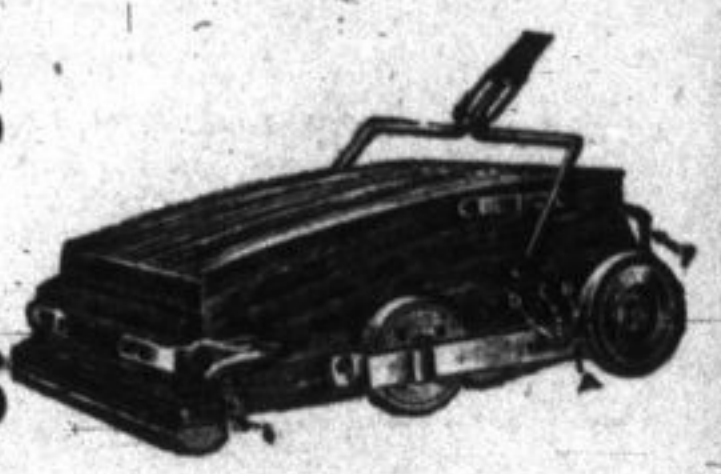
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