

THE GAME OF BASE - BALL IN MERRIE ENGLAND

By JAMES L. HUGHES

HOW can one ever appreciate a "one to nothing" game of baseball again, after seeing 141 runs made in a single innings? In a single innings, remember—one hundred and forty-one runs!

"Baseball, Liverpool Championship; Marsh Lane versus Booth St. James." This was the glowing headline that caught the eye of a disconsolate fan who a week before had left New York with a shadow on his heart because he was to see no more baseball during 1908.

Marsh Lane went first to bat, and before the side retired they had scored 141 runs in a little over an hour. Great is English baseball in scores!

The game is not American baseball, however. The Englishman does not accept a ready-made game. He needed a game that could be finished in two hours instead of two or three days. He needed a substitute for cricket because only a very limited number of men can find time to play or to see cricket. The American game, baseball, had the merit of getting finished quickly, and with brevity as his dominant ideal he made a new game. He needed a game of fine scores, however, in which favourite players could reach double figures. Then he believed that to be a game of real value baseball should possess some of the characteristic elements of cricket, the game that through the centuries has fixed itself in his mind as the king of games. So he planned a new game which is a combination of baseball and cricket. It is reasonable to call it baseball because there are bases to which the players must run.

The diamond is laid out as in America, with this exception, the fourth base is fixed fifteen feet to the left of the plate or "batter's crease," as it is called in England. The bases are fixed not by bags but by poles three and a half feet long, which have a spike on one end to fasten them in the ground. A runner frequently carries the base pole with him when he reaches it, as he may over-run any of the bases provided that he turns to the right after passing it. The pitcher's crease is nine feet long and two feet wide, so that he may take a short run before delivering the ball. He must keep well within his crease. The pitcher is called the "bowler" because he must deliver the ball underhand. Notwithstanding

this restriction the three bowlers I saw work pitched very swift balls. The catcher wears no mask because the ball is slightly smaller and lighter than the American ball, and he stands about six feet behind the batter. He is the only player who wears gloves. He wears a pair of very lightly padded gloves.

There are eleven players on a side, who are placed as follows: the battery—bowler and catcher—three basemen, and two sets of outfielders—one behind the batter and the other in the usual American position. The centre fielder behind the catcher is called the backstop. There is no shortstop. The necessity for the outfielders behind the batter arises from the fact that the English batter has no restrictions placed on him. There are no "foul lines." He is free to hit the ball anywhere. Many of the best hits are made by simply touching the ball and changing its direction. Englishmen generally criticise American baseball because "fouls" or "leg hits" do not count. Leg hits and all kind of hits that are not caught count in England. This is one of the reasons why large scores are made. But there are other reasons. Every man must be put out before the side is out, and when two "bad balls" are pitched to a batter the umpire raises his hand and the scorers count a run. The chief reason for large scores is that each base counts a run. A two-base hit scores two runs, a three-base hit three runs, and a "homer" four runs. A hitter who makes a one, two, or three-base hit may afterwards be put out on bases, but his runs count according to the base he reaches before the ball is fielded in.

One batter on the Marsh Lane team scored twenty-eight runs! As the players are put out they cease to bat, so that the batters soon become reduced in number. When there are less than three batters left they have great difficulty in scoring any more runs, because they must average at least two bases for each hit or else there will be no one to come to bat, in which case the catcher simply touches the batter's crease with the ball and the side is out.

There are two umpires, one for balls and one for bases. Both umpires stand within the diamond. Two "bad" balls count a run, and two good balls that are not hit put the batter out. The batter's crease is about two and a half feet wide. A good

ball must go over the crease above the batter's knee and below the top of his head. The batter has only one chance to try to hit the ball. If he offers to hit or bunt the ball and fails he is almost certainly out, because he must run and in nearly every case he is out at first. When the catcher catches a ball at which the batter offers, the batter rarely tries to run as he knows his case is hopeless. In such cases the catcher simply touches the batter with the ball. If the batter is hit by a ball at which he does not offer, the ball is merely counted a bad ball. If he is hit by a ball at which he offers, he is out. If a batted ball hits a batter he is out.

The bat is shaped like a small cricket bat. One side is almost flat, and the other is bevelled so that it has really two sides meeting in the centre. The bevelled side, if it meets the ball, changes its direction and sends it to the backfield. The backfield hits or slips are very effective. If at the end of the first innings one side is forty or more runs in advance of the other, the weaker side has to follow on, as in cricket matches. Two innings count a match. If the weaker side does not make as many runs in two innings as the stronger side made in one, the stronger side does not play its second innings.

The crowd in the bleachers expresses itself as strongly as in America. The visiting players were the Marsh Lane club. They were forcibly informed first that they would be ignominiously beaten; later that the umpires were determined to give them the game, and finally that they would be beaten in a great variety of ways next year. The many modifications of language, and tone, and gesture with which the "fans" indicated their opinions of the visiting team were novel and most interesting. One of the distinct features of the game was the way the fans on the bleachers coached the home team. Whenever a hit was made the runner was urged by one class to try to make an extra base or "run," and warned by the more careful ones not to do it. This difference of view led to many violent discussions among the friends of the home team, and in two cases to real fights, one of which had to be stopped by the police. The Marsh Lane team were easy victors, but the Booth "fans" have no doubt about what will happen to Marsh Lane next year.

The Newest City in the West

By F. MACLURE SCLANDERS

SASKATOON possesses an ineffable charm peculiarly its own. Within the first hour of his arrival, the stranger is obsessed by it. Nor does this charm arise merely from the responsive joy of the heart in those things of beauty which so delight the eye—not from the glorious freeness of the prairie, nor from the pure, tender breath of its wandering winds; not from the strange, quiet softness of the summer sky, nor from the river winding at its own sweet will between wooded banks—winding through the very heart of a picture which beautifully gives the lie to popular conceptions of a prairie town. No, this singular charm is not of these things. It is something deeper, subtler, more wonderful; it is the all-pervading Spirit of Prosperity. It permeates the whole community. Its influence outcrops continually—even in the common acts of the simplest citizens.

The record of the city of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, is typical of the rapidity of modern development under favourable circumstances. Only a few short years ago, Saskatoon could very literally be classed with water-tank towns. A few rough shacks; a couple or so of glorified barns called "hotels," and a wobbly single line of sparsely patronised railway, run in a style sufficiently easy-going to supply excellent material for a comic opera. Such was Saskatoon, a few years ago; but it is very much otherwise to-day. It is no longer a joke, but a splendid, go-ahead, modern city with a population now in the neighbourhood of 7,000, and increasing apace.

The whole secret of this remarkable development lies in where Saskatoon is, and what she has.

From any reliable map, it will be seen that the city is located right in the centre of Western Canada. Not only is Saskatoon right in the centre of the West, but she is in the very heart of what is generally admitted to be the largest and most productive wheat territory extant. And, wheat is what she has; it is the source of her progress and development. In the light of the foregoing, the phenomenal railway facilities which any recent map will show, would seem to follow as a natural consequence.

Three great trunk lines have selected Saskatoon as a central divisional point. The Canadian Pacific Railway has purchased 960 acres for their round-houses, shops and yards, which, when fully operating, will involve a pay roll of about \$200,000 per month. The Grand Trunk Pacific Company has purchased over 1,000 acres for similar purposes. Both of these companies have just completed their bridges over the river to Saskatoon. The third company, the Canadian Northern, is the only one operating previous to this year. In addition, there are several branch roads now under construction, and in the near future, there will be nine different outlets by rail from Saskatoon. It has four bridges, three of which were building at one time. This latter fact tells its own plain tale of the process of transformation from shacktown to city.

Already, Saskatoon boasts several important industries, while quite a number of large wholesalers are already established or have sites secured. In these days of keen competition, it is necessary that supplier should be as conveniently close to their markets as possible. Canada is a land of great

distances. The railway freight bill may easily exceed the cost of establishment expenses. If a wholesaler can possibly reduce the freight bill to a rock-bottom minimum, he is likely to do so as soon as he can. With three main lines into Saskatoon, it follows that rates for distributing are very favourable. And the vast and splendid territory tributary to Saskatoon is by no means overlooked by manufacturers and wholesalers. As a great central distributing centre, the destiny of the city will be swiftly great. At the present time, since the completion of the G. T. P. and C. P. R., there have been quite a number of important eastern firms visiting Saskatoon with a view to securing sites for establishment.

One thing might be said in conclusion: As a proposition, Saskatoon requires no hysterical exaggeration. It is a solid, sterling proposition, and one which will be obvious to any intelligent person. In this line, it is interesting to note that in 1905, the assessment of the city amounted to \$750,000; in 1906, \$2,500,000, and in 1907, to about \$6,000,000. This is a nutshell indication of development. And it is a substantial development. Real estate values have suffered nothing of that wild, unintelligent inflation which has characterised a good many other centres in the West which had not possessed a quarter of Saskatoon's tangible recommendations. The dearest property in Saskatoon is not worth more to-day than \$350 to \$400 per front foot. This property is, of course, in the very best sites on the main street.