# Arthur Irwin on Squeeze Play The Trick is Not a New One

### Bunts Were Popular in the Olden Days, As Records of Mr. Irwin Show---Gossip.

Attempts to compare present day ball players with the diamond stars of the '80s and '90s have resulted in numerous controversies in baseball circles. This winter the chief theme for argument has hinged on the origin of the "squeeze play," bunting and the hit-and-run method of playing. Persistent claims of some of the latter-day moguls that these tricks were only perfected in recent years and were never played by the oldtimers have brought several of the veterans from under cover to explain matters. Arthur Irwin, who has been identified with baseball for 30 years and who is considered an authority on the national game, maintains that the squeeze play was in operation years ago, altho the play was not known by that term.

The arguments that the squeeze play was something new in the game and that the hit-and-run game was not played until the Baltimore triple champions became famous in the '90s and that the art of bunting belonged to the latter-day players resulted in Irwin making a search of his archives and bringing to the surface some records of the '80s that refute these claims.

Among baseball men who made an assertion recently that the squeeze play was practically a new trick in baseball was George Stallings, the former Buffalo manager. Stallings claimed that the first time he ever saw or heard of the squeeze play being executed was in Montreal in the summer of 1903--four years ago--when Doyle, a player on the Montreal team, turned the trick.

That the squeeze play was popular in 1890, or 13 years previous, is gleaned from the report of the Boston and Brooklyn Brotherhood games in The Boston Globe of April 24 of that year, which offsets Stallings' claim. In this contest the trick was tried twice. The first time it was a failure, while the second time it was worked successfully. The comment on the first trial was as follows:

"Sharp fielding by Ward kept Stovey from scoring in the fourth inning. Stovey led off with a sharp drive to centre and stole second in his patent style. Brouthers was given first on balls. Stovey was on second when Nash hit a line ball. Ward jumped and blocked the ball with one hand and then got it to first in time to get his man. Quinn tried to bunt one so that Stovey could score from third, but Dave Orr was standing in close and took the ball on the fly, and easily made a double play by putting it over to third."

The play went thru without a hitch in the seventh inning, according to this description:

"Brouthers hit one a fierce crack, and it went bounding low to centre and Nash scored. 'Keep it up, Joe,' sang out Coscher Irwin to Quinn, who came to the bat, and the little second baseman cracked one to left for a single and Big Dan went around to third. Irwin bunted and Brouthers made for the plate. Murphy got the ball, but the big first baseman got in his run by a good slide."

The records of Mr. Irwin also show that bunting was an art practised with success as far back as 1884, as the following extracts on games played in that year indicate:

**Boston Fans Laughed at Bunts.**

"Radbourne opened the eighth inning by sending a grounder to Buffinton and retiring at first. Carroll then did a very clever thing. He bunted the ball and beat it in a race along the first base line, while the great gathering roared with laughter. Irwin got one just where he wanted it and sent it on a line in the direction of right field corner."—Boston Herald, July 13, 1884. Providence-Boston game.

**Both Safe on Blocked Ball.**

"In the seventh inning Radbourne got his base on balls. Carroll blocked the ball, causing it to drop near the line, and beat it to the base. Bassett found the ball for one base, Denny for a two-bagger. Gilligan had a long flyout to Hanlon and Radford got a single. The hits and putouts counted for four runs, three of which were earned."—Boston Herald, Aug. 18, 1884. Providence-Detroit game.

**Carroll Beat Out a Bunt.**

"In the eighth inning two men were out, Carroll was the third batsman. He blocked a ball which rolled straight to Phillips (first baseman). The out was so certain that Phillips put forth but little effort to stop the ball. Here was his mistake, for as the ball ran up against his feet and bounded back six or eight feet Carroll dodged in and got the base by swift running."—Boston Herald, Sept. 4, 1884. Providence-Cleveland game.

**Squeeze Play From Second Base.**

"Brouthers was given his base on balls and went to second on Quinn's sacrifice hit. Brouthers was stealing third when Irwin made a pretty bunt. Crane put the ball to first and big Dan scored the first run of the game on the play."—Boston Globe, May 9, 1900. Boston-Brooklyn game.

Mr. Irwin claims that the oldtime stars were masters of all the tricks that are executed by players of the present generation, and backs up his claims with the above-named evidence. In doing this Irwin says he doesn't wish it to be understood that he claims the stars of bygone days were better players than those of the present generation, nor does he admit that the present-day players are any faster than the oldtimers. One point, however, that Irwin is emphatic on is his claim that the winning teams of the past and present generations have been those which have and are proficient in team play, in which these tricks play important parts and assist materially in winning games.

Relative to the arguments over the superiority of star players, Irwin claims that the game now is turning out hundreds of stars. In ten years from now Keeler, Wagner, Lajoie and other big stars of to-day will be resting on the back shelves of fame, while others are shining in their places, he says. In summing up his views on the changes brought by fleeting time in the ranks of ball players, Irwin lavs this fanciful scene before his mind:

"Twenty-five years hence Larry Lajoie, for instance, one of the biggest stars of to-day, bent and gray, will be watching a ball game somewhere. He will be pointed out to one of the budding stars in the game as 'the great Lajoie of 1908' and who will make a comment something like this:

"'Hush! Where did that old duffer make all of his reputation? The game must have been easy in those days.'"

# A Few Around the Fireside Yarns

### Arrested for Shoving the Queer—Del Mason Easy to Touch---Baseball Gossip.

When the Philadelphia National League team was composed of a set of stars, of which Sam Thompson and big Ed Delehanty were the leading lights, there used to loaf about the Philadelphia park a half-witted fellow, whom everybody called Bill.

It was his duty to take care of the bats, run after foul balls, carry water, and in fact to make himself generally useful around the grounds.

One hot August day, when the St. Louis club was playing the Phillies, the score stood 5 to 4 in the ninth inning, and in the St. Louis chaps' favor.

There were two of the Phillies on the bases, Hallman on second and Larkin on first, with one man out.

Sam Thompson, who had retired from the game in the early part of the contest, by reason of an injury to his ankle, was sitting on the bench, when it came Ed Delehanty's turn to go to the bat.

Arthur Irwin, manager of the Philadelphias, told Delehanty that he would give him a box of cigars if he would drive in Hallman, and Delehanty, who not only wanted to win the cigars, but who also wanted to help his team win the game, started for the home plate on a run.

By some misfortune Bill, the half-witted character, got in Del's way, and Del gave him a push that sent Bill flying down among the bats.

Of course, the foolish chap wasn't hurt, but he set up a holler, which was his usual means for working the ball players for money.

Delehanty, instead of knocking a base hit, sent up a pop fly which was gathered in by the St. Louis catcher, and when the big ball player returned to the bench Sam Thompson said to him:

"I am afraid, Del, if the treasury department officials get next to you that you will be arrested."

"Arrested!" cried Delehanty, as a puzzled expression stole over his face, "and for what?" he asked, as he rubbed his head in a perplexed manner.

"Why, for shoving the queer," retorted Sam as he ducked his head in the direction of the simple-minded Bill.

**Del Mason Easy to "Touch."**

Del Mason, the Jersey City pitcher, who once played in Washington, is one of those dry, ready-witted characters who never lose an opportunity to turn some incident into a jest, writes a Washington storyteller.

Mason is also known among the baseball fraternity as being the easiest proposition in the business to "touch," and, tho it is a fact not generally known, yet baseball players are assailed in every city by people who consider them legitimate prey when it comes to begging money.

Very often it is the old down-and-out player, who gave his coin to the bar-rooms when he was getting the long green in bunches, who tries to get a five-spot off the present day ball player. But generally it is someone who claims to come from your home city.

One day in a Cincinnati hotel a fellow called, and, after handing Del a whole string of hard-luck stuff, he struck him for the kale and got it.

When he was leaving the hotel Mason turned to Miller Huggins and said:

"That fellow reminds me of a carriage cleaner."

"Is that so?" queried Miller, "and in what way?"

"Oh," drawled Mason, in that lazy manner he always has, "because he sponges for a living."

**ABOUT JACK THONEY.**

Says The Toledo News Bee: "There has been a lot of talk about the refusal of Jack Thoney to sign a Boston American contract, and the disaster that will follow the eastern club in case the Toronto outfielder fails to show up on reporting day.

"Wonder if the Boston people got a lemon in Thoney? It is said that Boston paid $8500 for this former A. A. player, and threw in Larry Shafley and Myron Grimshaw. This is about the best proposition ever made to a minor league team, and if Thoney falls down there will be a huge guffaw heard from every corner of baseballdom.

"Toledo fans know Thoney. He used to circle about the leftfield for Indianapolis, and was particularly remembered for his ability to hit the grandstand with the ball whenever he had to make a long throw.

"He was also a 'sucker' on a curve ball, and would run wild on the bases. But he was fast, and had natural ability if nothing else. Since he left this league he has become a left-hand hitter, has put a check rein on his whip, and they do say he uses his gray matter to a surprising extent.

"But Thoney had a lot of faults to overcome, and if he hasn't shown a wonderful improvement over his association form he won't last two months in Boston."

**The Roman Forum.**

The Forum Romanum, the first that was erected in Rome, served equally for the purposes of trade and all public meetings, as well as for the administration of justice by the consuls and other Roman magistrates. Later on, when the fora numbered some eighteen or twenty, they were divided into two classes, some for public meetings and the proceedings of the law courts, and others for the various requirements of trade. The Roman forum corresponded to the agora, or market-place, of the Greeks, and no Roman city was without this important centre of judicial, political and commercial life.

## BASEBALL NEWS AND GOSSIP

### Doings of the Various League Players Here and There.

Bobby Keefe, the New York American recruit, who pitched for Montreal last season, will make his third start with the Yankees next season. Keefe is wintering at Folsom, Cal. Recently a friend stopped him on the street and asked him:

"Bobby, how do you like the American League?"

"I don't know," replied Keefe, "for I never saw a game. I was always warming up behind the grandstand until I went to Montreal."

The New York Giants will play exhibition games in Toledo on April 7 and 8. That city is the home of Bresnahan, Merkle and Beecher of the Giants.

Mal Eason, manager of the Lawrence (Mass.) Club, wants the Brooklyn Club to send young Findlayson, the Brooklyn semi-professional, to that city for a season's work. Findlayson's work against the Dodgers last fall, however, impressed Ebbets, and he will instruct Donovan to look the youngster over carefully during the training season.

The Boston American League Club has released Kroh, a young pitcher, to the Johnstown Club.

Cecil Ferguson, last year a pitcher for the New York Giants, who figured in the recent trade to the Boston Nations, will coach the baseball team of Rose Polytechnic Institute of Terre Haute, Ind., next spring.

Scanlon, the Brooklyn pitcher, has lost thirty pounds in weight as a result of an operation for appendicitis six weeks ago. Scanlon, however, is confident that he will be strong enough to accompany the Superbas on the spring training trip to Florida.

Clark Griffith has not given up hopes of signing Hillebrand, the former Princeton star, for the New York Americans. Hillebrand, at present, is ranching in South Dakota.

President Comiskey of the Chicago White Sox, announces that he has decided to play Fred Parent at shortstop and switch George Davis, the veteran, over to second base.

Frank Gatins, the former Newark captain, has signed a contract to play with New Orleans again next season.

It has been figured out that Cy Young, the veteran pitcher of the Boston Americans, in the last 10 years has struck out 1879 batsmen, an average of 3.46 a game, and has given 561 bases on balls, an average of 1.03. Young is more than 40 years old, it is said, but he is still a powerful man physically and last year pitched in 43 games.

Jeff Overall, pitcher of the Chicago Nationals, will join the ranks of benedicts on Feb. 27. His bride will be a Chicago young woman. Overall yesterday signed a three years' contract with the Cubs.

Managers Billy Murray and Connie Mack are unable to agree on dates for the spring series of games between the Phillies and Athletics, to be played in Philadelphia before the opening of the season. Murray wants a series of five games, while Mack thinks that nothing less than nine games will do to settle the championship of the Quaker City.

Captain Frank Chance of the Chicago Cubs is suffering from neuritis in his left foot, and may be compelled to undergo an operation before the season begins.

Just five players in the American League took part in every game played by their club during the season of 1907, three of whom were first basemen and two outfielders. Donahue of Chicago played more games than any other man in the American League, taking part in 157; Tom Jones held down first in 155 games for St. Louis, and Rossman in 153 games for Detroit. Stone played 155 in the outfield for the Browns, and Ganley performed in 154 for Washington.

Tommy Leach of Pittsburg is another ball player who refuses to sign a contract, and is holding out for a bigger salary. Altho the Pirate management offered him a slight increase over last season, Leach entertains the opinion that his work last season entitles him to a bigger raise.

President John I. Taylor of the Boston Red Sox is having difficulty in getting his outfielders in line for next season. On top of Jack Thoney's refusal to sign a contract, Harry Gessler, the former Newark player, who Taylor purchased from Columbus, is discontented over the terms offered by Taylor.

Charley McCafferty, who was released by Newark last season, is trying to land a job with some Southern League team for next season. McCafferty is spending the winter at his home in Bloomington, Ill., where he is interested in a haberdashery.

Fred Glade of the New York Americans insists that when a ball player has to work in a spring series and fall series as well as the season it makes him tire fo the game.

Red Ames, the Ohio boy, must deliver the goods in large chunks this year for the Giants, to be in the race. McGraw is depending on Ames to have the best year of his career.

It's hard to beat the Cleveland crowd. Each year they have been picked to win the pennant, and each year they have failed. This year no one is doping them to win. So all the scribes of Cleveland town are pointing to this fact with joy, saying: "Now that nobody expects Larry to win, maybe we'll have a chance."

"I think that there's going to be a real race in the National League next season," said Jimmy Sheckard of the Chicago Nationals, recently.

Jerry Freeman, the first baseman secured last fall by the Washington American from Minneapolis, is a real hard luck player. In the summer of 1904 Freeman had his right ankle broken; in 1905 his left ankle was broken; in 1906 he had the wrist of his right hand broken; in December Freeman suffered with blood poison in the right hand, and last month had blood poison in the right foot.

The Detroits are taking no chances on Matty McIntyre's leg being all right, for the Staten Island boy wanted to sign for two seasons and the Tiger management proffered him only a one-year agreement.

It is hard to keep the two Crosses—Monte and Lave—from working for the same interests. They played together with the Athletics for four seasons and the coming campaign each man will work as manager for George Tebeau, Montford handling the Kansas City Club and Lafayette the Denver Club.

The New York State League has fixed a monthly salary limit of $2600 for teams, and will pay its umpires a monthly salary of $240. The season will open on May 7.

The Philadelphia National League Club released outright Parkins and Wagner, both being recruits from the Albany team of the New York State League.

Manager Jim McGuire of the Boston Americans will also act in the capacity of captain of the Red Sox next season. Unglaub held the latter job last year.


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30 ACRES—NORTHUMBERLAND—ON lake shore, near Colborne; black loam; 4 acres cherries, pears and plums, full bearing; ten acres young apple orchard, choice winter varieties; well watered, good fences, nice frame house and barns; possession this spring, if desired; five thousand.

36 ACRES—ADJOINING TOWN OF Peterborough, in A1 condition for market gardening; nice young orchard; town water, new wire fences; new six-roomed frame house, stone cellar; good barn and outbuildings; twenty-six hundred; early possession.

100 ACRES—DARLINGTON, NORTH of Bowmanville; dark clay loam; ten acres bush, forty pasture, balance in crop, three acres orchard; good water and fences; good size frame house, stone cellar; large bank barn, carriage house, piggery and hennery, plenty stabling; forty-five hundred; good title, easy terms.

100 ACRES—INNISFIL TOWNSHIP, within two and half miles of depot; clay loam, all cultivated, well watered and fenced; frame house, small stables; low price, easy terms; twenty-eight hundred; exchange for city house.

115 ACRES—VICTORIA, BEST FARM in the county; must be seen to be appreciated; close to school, postoffice and cheese factory; rich clay loam; hundred cultivated, balance bush and pasture; no hills; small orchard, excellent water, woven-wire fences; lovely large brick house, two large bank barns, carriage house, piggery and hennery; stabling for sixty head, with cement floors; matched lumber; water in front of each beast; silo, power windmill; a model farm; nine thousand; would take house in Toronto or Peterboro in part pay.

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## VON DER AHE IS BROKE.

### Great Baseball Character Files Petition in Bankruptcy.

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 8.—"Der Poss President" threw up his hands to-day and admitted himself broke. Chris Von der Ahe, once the owner of a team that won four championships in a row in the American Association, and by winning a world's championship in a series with Anson's famous Chicago team established the caliber of American Association ball, filed a petition in voluntary bankruptcy. Against liabilities of $27,865, Chris has assets of only $200.

Many of the largest debts are legacies from the days when he was a magnate. Chris, a famous character, whose butchery of the queen's English and curious acts won him renown all over the country, was proprietor of the St. Louis Browns, from the organization of the American Association.

For all his ignorance of the mother tongue, he knew how to pick ball players, or, at least, how to hire the men who could do it for him, and the "Browns," as he called them, were for years invincible.

On the team that won the world's championship he had Pitchers Carruthers, Foutz and Hudson, Catcher Bushong, First Baseman Comiskey, now the wealthy owner of the Chicago American League team; Second Baseman Robinson, Third Baseman Latham, the greatest humorist the game ever produced; Shortstop Gleason (not the Kid), and in the outfield Curt Welch and the great hitter, Tip O'Neil.

Until the baseball war, resulting from the birth of the Players' League, Von der Ahe made money, but in the struggle between the National League and the outlaws the famous team was broken up and its members scattered all over the country. Chris held on until 1898, then he passed out of the big league baseball for all time.

Various of his ventures failed, his habit of endorsing other men's paper cost him more money, and finally all that he had was a little saloon.

During a recent severe attack of pneumonia, that sapped the veteran's strength, he lost what little cash remained to him.

There is already talk of a big benefit to be tendered by St. Louis sportsmen in connection with those who had business relations with Von der Ahe during the days of his baseball power.

### Die dat Age of 107.

NESBITT, Man., Feb. 7.—(Special.)—The death occurred yesterday of Mrs. Argue at the age of 107 years. She was one of the oldest persons in the Dominion. Deceased has been living five miles south of here with her daughter, Mrs. C. Miller, who is 80 years old.


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