

The Language of Baseball

[Being a glossary of terms peculiar to the great game of baseball—all of them understood by the faithful fans; some of them comprehended but dimly by the man who sees an occasional game; and none of them in the least intelligible to that small number of negligible human creatures who have never known the fierce exultation that sweeps over the soul when the home team wins in the ninth with two men out.]

"UMPS"—Chap in navy blue who bosses the game and sasses the sassy players. An expert dodger of pop bottles.

"Play ball"—The declaration of war.

"Bonehead"—Player who commits a sin either of omission or commission on the field. If he doesn't know he is one the fans tell him.

"Inside ball"—The use of brains and brawn in conjunction.

"Error"—Failure to make a play perfectly, sometimes described as muff, bobble, fumble and fizzle.

"Fanned"—Player's failure to hit the ball in three chances.

"Strike"—When pitcher delivers ball over the plate and between batter's knees and shoulder. Players and umpires often differ as to what constitutes a strike.

"Stealing a base"—Base runner starts with pitcher's wind-up and beats catcher's throw to baseman. Sometimes called "pilfering (or purloining) a sack."

"Leading off"—Base runner leaves base a few yards in order to get start for advance to another base. Occasionally he's caught napping.

"Tipping signals"—Crime of which each team accuses the other. Mostly talk in the sporting pages.

"Stealing home"—Base runner covers the 90 feet between third base and home plate before pitcher can throw to catcher in order to nab runner. Not a frequent feat.

"Double steal"—Two base runners by signal start to steal a base at same time.

"Single"—A safe hit on which the runner cannot safely pass first base.

"Double"—Hit on which runner makes two bases.

"Triple"—Smash good for three sacks.

"Home run"—A long hit for the circuit—the ambition of every player when he comes to bat with the bases full. Called "homer," "circuit drive," "fence buster," and other endearing terms.

"Line drive"—A long, low, fast hit, generally just over the infielders' heads.

"Sacrifice fly"—Long fly to outfield, which, though caught, enables runner to advance a base ahead of the throw-in from the field.

"Died at first"—Cancel the crepe order. Just means that the batter was thrown out at first base.

"Sliding"—Trick of players to prevent basemen from touching them with the ball when trying to steal.

"Double play"—When two base runners are put out on one play.

"Triple play"—Three base runners retired on one play. Generally done when fly is unexpectedly caught, with two base runners having started for home plate. Play seldom seen.

"Cutting the corners"—Trick of pitchers in shooting the ball just over the corners of the plate. Takes good control to do it.

"Smoke"—Speed of pitcher's delivery. Ask players who have been hit behind the ear by an inshoot about "smoke."

"Southpaw"—A left-handed pitcher.

"Clout dispenser"—Pitcher, otherwise

known as heaver, twirler, mound artist and pellet pusher.

"Spitball"—Pitcher puts saliva on ball to throw this curve, and result is that batter generally hits pop fly.

"Inshoot"—Pitched ball that curves in toward batter when nearing the plate.

"Outshoot"—Pitched ball that curves outward.

"Floater"—Pitched ball that is thrown with motion suggesting speed, but which "floats" slowly to the batter. Hard to hit.

"Drop"—Pitched ball that takes decided drop approaching the plate. Sometimes called "fadeaway."

"Hop"—Pitched ball that has a slight jump upward as it nears the batter. Few can control it.

"Outguessing the batter"—What the pitcher is always trying to do—to give the batter the unexpected kind of ball.

"Change of pace"—Pitcher's trick of changing quickly from slow to speedy delivery, and vice versa.

"Mixing them up"—Skilful pitcher varies his style, using all his assortment of curves and shoots and floaters.

"Walk"—Four balls given to batter, entitles him to walk to first base. Called also pass, stroll, parade, free transportation, etc.

"Forced run"—When bases are full if pitcher passes batter, man on third is entitled to score. Then pitcher is "yanked out" in majority of cases.

"Hugging the sacks"—Base runners afraid to take lead off bases when catcher has sure and strong throwing arm.

"Slugger"—Batter who hits hard and generally for extra bases.

"Keystone sack"—Second base; half-way home.

"Dangerous corner"—Third base, the nearest home.

"Foul tip"—The cause of the catcher having false teeth before he took to wearing a mask.

"Hold-out"—Player who wants more money and refuses to sign contract until he is strapped and has to.

"Kill the umpire"—The cry of the crowd when the home team loses.

"Box score"—A mysterious mass of figures and letters, studied and committed to memory by rabid fans. Also cursed by the compositors.

"Coaching"—Vaudeville entertainment thrown in by some players and managers to please fans.

"Warming up"—Pitchers practise before the game so they can start with supple muscles and good speed.

"Runs"—The counters that win championships.

"Jinx"—Hoodoo, hard luck. Ball players are very superstitious.

"Scratch hit"—The nearest thing to an out. Generally comes in the ninth inning of an otherwise no-hit game.

W. F. W.

Proof.—She—"So you are sure that your new play will be a success?"

He—"Positive; why, even the manager blushed when he read it."—New York Globe.

The Limit.—"I've spent all my money, my race horse is lame, my wife has eloped with my jockey. What more can happen, I wonder?"

"Your wife can come back."—Fliegende Blaetter.

Delaying Unhappiness.—Sillius—"Do you believe in long engagements?"

Cynicus—"Sure. The longer a man is engaged the less time he has to be married."—Philadelphia Record.

Comic
Songs

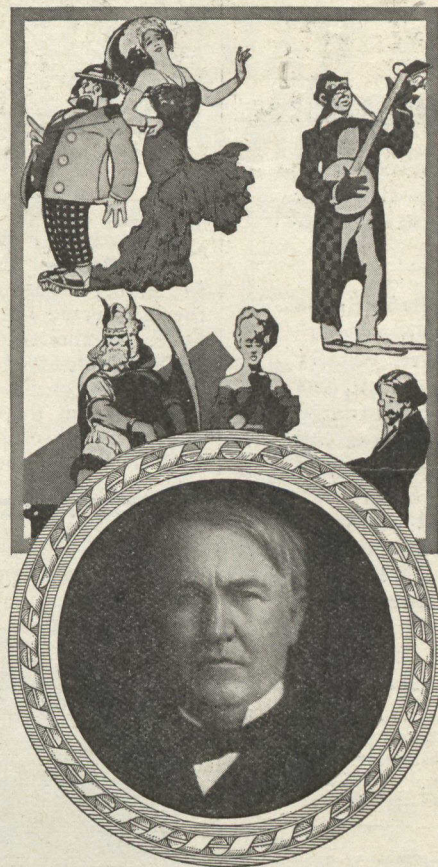
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