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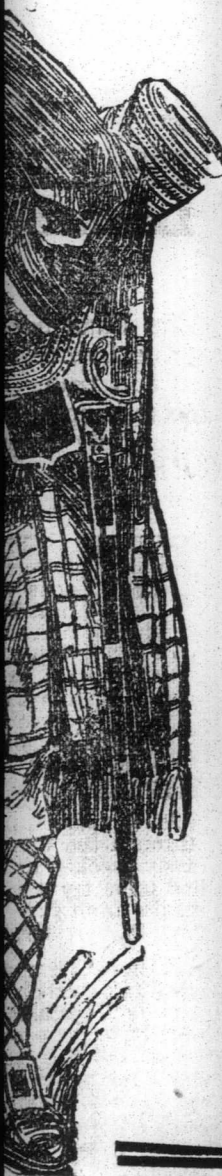
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WORLD'S SERIES
WON BY PITCHERS

Jack Coombs, Brooklyn's Veteran Twirler, Tells Why in His Story HAS BEEN IN FIVE

Relates His Experiences and Contrasts Issues Which Pitchers Must Meet

Jack Coombs, Brooklyn's veteran twirler, has written about his experiences in five world's series struggles under the title of "What I Have Learned from Five World's Series." The article appeared in the November issue of the Baseball Magazine, and in the course of his remarks, Colby Jack makes these comments:

"There are famous players who have passed their whole career without getting close enough to a pennant to know what it looks like. I have been on five winning clubs, which is rather more than my share. "There is something in a world's series game which gets you. In my first game I hit two men and gave eight bases on balls. No matter how bum your own work is somebody else may be a little worse."

"The experienced pitcher knows a good deal better what different batters hit than the newspapermen do. Sometimes the batter hits him, but that isn't necessarily the fault of the system used."

"One thing you can set down as an established fact: The world's series is won or lost right in that old pitching box."

His article in detail follows: Looking Forward to His Sixth Series When the season opened I rather hoped that October would find me lined up once more for the big games. A pennant-winning club usually repeats, and it didn't seem unreasonable to suppose that I would get one more chance in the world's series before I had to quit. But, as things are, another club than ours will have to carry the banner of the National League and I hope they do it more successfully than we did in 1916.

So far as I am concerned, I suppose I have no just complaint. There are famous players who have passed their whole career without getting close enough to a pennant to know what one looks like. Larry Lajoie was one of these. Hal Chase

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is another. I have been on five pennant-winning clubs, which is rather more than my share.

I can well remember my first world's series game. The Athletics were then a young team, rather green, the critics thought. The Cubs were stolid old veterans with the scars of many campaigns and the banners of many hard-won battles. They were the favorites, we the runners-up before the series. I had a very good year and certainly ought to have been used to the idea of facing strong clubs. But there is something in a world's series game which gets you. It got me all right. I hit two men and gave eight bases on balls, but, strangely enough, I won.

The Comforting Part.

That is one comforting thing in baseball. No matter how bum your own work is somebody else may be a little worse, and then you show up well by contrast. But I am not going to take all the blame for my rather indifferent pitching that day. I had been used to pitching entirely to my catcher. The man at bat didn't matter. I looked to see where my catcher was, and pitched accordingly. This particular afternoon, however, Ira Thomas was assigned to catch me. He was a couple of feet taller than my regular catcher, and somehow or other when I looked at him it threw me off balance. I couldn't seem to locate the platter and very nearly threw the game away. But the long bats of Collins and Baker and McInnis got busy and smashed out a victory and they repeated twice more that series, so that when the shouting was all over I found I had won three of the four necessary games. That was my first world's series experience and my best.

When He Beat Matty.

The next year we tackled the Giants, and I was a good deal better pitcher than I had been in the previous attempt. I hooked up with Mathewson in a very good game in which I was fortunate enough to come through. My second try, however, proved disastrous. It was the sixth inning and things were breaking very well. The score was 3 to 1 in our favor. Then somehow or other, I got my spikes tangled up in the rubber and twisted my leg. It was an odd accident. Two of the muscles seemed to be entirely misplaced. After the inning was over the club doctor tried to fix me up. My leg was red where those two muscles had separated, and very painful.

I thought it best to quit them, but Connie said to me, "They're not hitting you, so stick it out a while longer, if you can." I went back in the box, but I couldn't pitch. I couldn't throw a curve. In fact, I could do little but shoot over fast balls, but still they did not seem to hit me. I stuck it out till the tenth inning when they tied it up. Oldring lost a hard-hit ball in the sun and it got away from him for two bases. That let in two runs. He felt badly about it. He came to me and said he was very sorry, but he really did not see the ball at all. I told him not to let it worry him, as I should have quit sooner if I had had any sense. By that time my leg was black and bothered me a good deal. I went home and went to bed and stayed in bed for over two weeks as a result of that curious injury.

Start of a Hard Luck Siege.

I believe I am the only pitcher who was ever injured in a world's series game and my injury was probably one of the most peculiar that has ever happened. Oddly enough it seemed to be the beginning of a lot of hard luck. I got typhoid fever, and when the next world's series rolled around I found myself strapped to a cot in a hospital. It was a great disappointment to me to be on a winning club and not be able to do my share in the big games, but I had been present and had the reports read to me as fast as they came in.

The following season we were again a winner, and this time I was a little better off than the previous year, though not a great deal. I could not pitch, but I could take my place on the bench, and did my share of the coaching.

Last year I pitched what I suppose will be my last world's series game. I was lucky and got credit for the victory. I didn't feel in very good condition that day and when they began to get on to me in the later innings I told Robinson that he had better send a younger pitcher in to save the game.

Differs With the Experts.

One curious thing about the series, perhaps the most curious to a ball player, is the expert articles, so-called, which are written about the big games. Every paper sends its best man to cover the series and, of course, I suppose they have to pose as authorities on baseball. I remember in particular criticism which was directed at certain pitchers for the kind of ball which they used in a pinch.

Take the famous case where Baker broke up a game with a home run. Mathewson was criticized for pitching the kind of ball he used on that occasion to Baker, though why he



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should have been criticized I have never been able to see. He had twice missed my curve ball by nearly a foot. I gave him another, putting all I had on it to still further deceive him and he banded it out for a home run. But that wasn't my fault nor is it generally the fault of the pitcher when a batter connects for a safety.

You cannot pitch no-hit baseball very long in this league and no sensible person expects you to do so. The experienced pitcher knows a good deal better what different batters hit than the newspaper writers

do. He knows a great deal better what he had in mind when he gave the batter the ball he did than anyone else can know. Sometimes the batter hits him, but that isn't any fault of the system employed. I will go on record as saying at least one-half the hits made are made on balls that are either too high or too low or not over the plate at all. What is the pitcher to do, give the batter nothing but strikes?

Won in the Pitching Box. One thing you can set down as an established fact, the world's series

is won or lost right in that old pitching box. It always has been so and it always will be so. Both sides work for a run. They scheme and study how to put that run over. When they succeed they figure they have a big jump on the other team, for the latter will have to score two runs in order to win against that one run advantage. Two runs in a world's series game is quite often a man's sized job, and while they are scoring them, if they do, you are not idle yourself. You are scheming to retain your advantage and if luck

is impartial you have an even chance to do this. Yes, it is what they call the Old Army game, but it is the game to win. It applies to every world's series that I ever heard of and will win or lose the world's championship.

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