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Up to the Minute

NEWS AND VIEWS ON SPORTS

Local :: Provincial
World in General

At What Ages Do Champions Excel

"Don't you think it might be of interest some time to give the various ages at which champions excel? What, for example, is the winning age at baseball, or fighting, or golf?"

The only way to work out an answer here would be to give the greatest years known by certain stars and then sum up the average, which might prove something or nothing at all.

Cobb's Star Year
Ty Cobb's star year was in 1911, when he smashed all records with 48 hits, 147 runs and a grand batting average of .420.

This was the banner year of Ty's career, and in 1911 he was just 25 years old. He has been great enough before and since, but the fact remains that the age of 25 produced his greatest triumph—a triumph he will hardly repeat, now that he is turning 30.

When it is remembered that only one of two batsmen each year ever make as many as 200 hits, Cobb's mark of 248 for one year can be a trifle better appreciated.

Matty's Best Year
It is a trifle harder to pick out any one year of the 16 and call it Mathewson's greatest season, but 1905 looks to have something on them all.

In 1905 Matty, out of 40 games, won 31 and lost but 9; and that same season he shut out the Athletics three times in three world series starts—a record that has never been touched.

Matty in 1905 was just 25 years old. Like unto Cobb, he reached the crest at this age.

Walsh and Speaker
The greatest year Ed Walsh ever had was in 1908, when he worked in 86 games, won 40, lost 15 and saved several others for other pitchers.

A record of 40 victories is an unusual achievement—one that only Chesboro has beaten in the American league. In 1908 Walsh was 26 years old, just one year beyond the banner age of Mathewson and Cobb.

Tris Speaker's best year was last season, 1916, when Tris had been in the game longer than any of the others before reaching his height.

Tris at 29 proved to have a shade on Cobb at 30—enough of a shade to break up Ty's 10-year drive.

Other Stars
Hans Wagner's best batting average and one of his great years was established in 1900, when the big Dutchman was just 26 years old. Hans batted .380 that season, the best mark he has ever known. So he qualifies with Ed Walsh at the 26-year-old mark.

Nineteen hundred and one was the top year for Larry Lajole, when the Frenchman amassed the astounding average of .422. As he was born in 1875, he, too, was just 26 years old when he reached the top of the peak.

The Younger Mark
Twenty-five and 26 seems to be the

star ages so far, but Rube Marquard and Joe Wood bring the limit down. The tall Rube was just 23 when, in 1912, he won 19 straight and spun the Giants far into the lead.

Joe Wood was also just 23 the same year, when out of 25 games he won 23 and lost but 5, setting a new American league record.

Walter Johnson, however, qualifies with Wagner, Lajole and Walsh. He was just 25 in 1913, when he won 36 and lost but 7 games, for the best year of his life.

Apparently, then, in baseball, 25 and 26 are the years where most stars attain the summit of their greatness.

As baseball is the only game where figures are kept to show exactly what work each man has accomplished each year, this is the only game that can be used as a fair test.

In golf, hick Evans was around 26 when he won the amateur and open championships this last year. On the other hand, Omelet beat Vardon and Ray when he was 20. Traversa won his first championship when he was 18, and Walter J. Travis never played golf before he was 35 and was, therefore, past 40 when he won the British open.

In boxing or fighting the best ages seem to be around 25 or 26, just as in baseball. However, there have been champions, and many of them, well beyond 30. But in the main, most champions reached their peaks of punch greatness well before 30.

Pittsbums and Johnson were champions long after they had passed 30, and Jess Willard will never look upon 30 again, although he may use a Lick telescope for the job.

So, for the last word in achievement in such games as baseball, boxing and tennis, the winning age isn't far away from 25. Beyond 26 or 27 greatness may still exist, but for the average it is at least a lesser greatness.

It would be hard to find greater samples than Cobb, Mathewson, Walsh, Wagner, Lajole and Johnson—six of the most famous names in the inning history of the game. Four did their greatest work at 26; the other two at 25. This may not be the answer to the original query, but at least it is about as close as we can shoot with the ammunition at hand.

Champion Billiardist is Beaten in Boston

Boston.—Edward F. Gardner, of New York, amateur national billiard champion at 18.2 ball line, was defeated in the title tournament here by Ledyard Blake, of San Diego, Cal. The youthful westerner scored 400 points to Gardner's 315.

Nathan Hall, of Boston, won from Julius Klingner, of New York, 400 to 245. Eleven more contests will be played before the winner is decided.

In defeating the five times champion, Blake averaged 8.849 points an inning, while Gardner's scoring was limited to an average of 6.3048. The youngster, playing in his first championship tournament, started with an 11, but fell off somewhat until the thirteenth inning. Then he started a series of shots which in three innings added 68 to his score and at the twentieth inning led his opponent 145 to 66. He had high runs of 31, 30 and 30.

Gardner's game gradually improved and he worked up to the highest run of the contest in the forty-second inning, when he made a run of 36. Blake, however, ran off the balls with a consistency that gave him success in the forty-ninth inning.

WILLISTON, FRESHMAN, BROKE SWIMMING RECORD
Chicago.—What is claimed today as a world's record for under-water swimming was made at the University of Chicago by Samuel Williston, a freshman, who swam 324 feet in Barlett gymnasium tank. The previous mark was 320 feet. In breaking the record, however, young Williston had a narrow escape, as he sank just as he crossed the finish line. He was pulled out unconscious and it required more than two minutes to revive him.

The event was a feature in connection with a dual meet between the University of Wisconsin and the University of Chicago, which was won by the latter, 39 to 29.

FOR LATE SPORTS
SEE NEWS PAGE

CHASE WAS AS GREAT AS COBB WAS LAST YEAR

Boston.—"In my opinion," says George Stallings, "Hal Chase was as great a player as Ty Cobb last season. I know that this is a broad statement. Nevertheless, I believe it is true."

"I have never seen any man play better ball than Chase did for Cincinnati. The pity of it is that Hal could have played that way every year if he cared to, and wouldn't."

"He had to play or get out of the big leagues last year. He was really on probation with Cincinnati. The result was that he led the National league in batting and his defensive work in the outfield and at first base was a revelation to National leaguers who were not familiar with his ability."

"I am afraid that Cincinnati has made a mistake in giving Chase a two-year contract, as I understand they have done. He must have some incentive to make him play. When he knows he is secure beyond one season he lets up in his work."

"If they had given him a contract just for 1917 he would have led the league again. Now I am fearful of a relapse to habits of old. I will be sorry to see it, for I like to see a great player give the game all he has."

EXPECT 5,000,000 CARS WILL BE IN OPERATION IN 1919
In the recent automobile show number of Collier's the following from an article by Edward M. Woodley shows the immense growth of the auto and what its possibilities are:

So rapidly are the automobiles of the pleasure type being made today that the point of saturation is in sight. What then? At the present time the

estimated number of automobiles in use is 3,500,000. By July of 1919 there will be 5,000,000 cars in operation, and some manufacturers consider this to be the saturation point.

Others place it at 6,000,000 cars, or even higher, but at all events it will not be more than four or five years before all the people who have automobiles who are expected to buy them.

On January 1, 1916, there was one automobile to every 44 people in the United States, while the number of people who had incomes above \$1,000 was 5,525,000.

Yet see that when the number of cars in use reaches the latter figures every man with an income of \$1,000 or more will be the joyful owner of an automobile. This, of course, is theoretical, for in reality many people with higher incomes will still be walking while tens of thousands with smaller pocketbooks will have cars.

A large number of farmers and others are running automobiles today on less than an annual income of \$1,000. To the farmer in many sections a car is a necessity. Probably one-half the automobiles sold today are bought by farmers.

Now how will the saturation point really affect the manufacturer? What does the saturation point actually mean?

It means that when this point is attained the sales must come, first, from renewals to replace worn-out cars, and these ought to equal the present annual production, estimated at 1,200,000 cars.

The average life of an automobile is placed at five years. Second, it means that as soon as one saturation point is attained one will be just ahead, and that perhaps 200,000 a year will go to supply the increased population.

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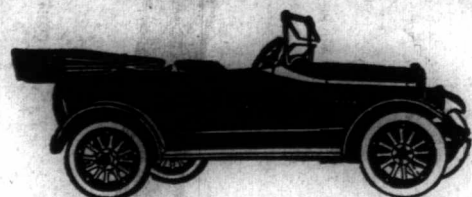
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