

While a majority of the lovers of the game look upon batting and base-running as the most interesting features of the contests, there is a not inconsiderable class who take as much pleasure in the exhibition of fine fielding, especially in the subdivision of base-play, which consists in confining the efforts of base-runners to minimum results. It is here that mind plays its most important part, and the fine judgment, which determines the player to send the ball in hand to one point rather than another; the sharp return of the ball, and presence of mind under exciting, trying and critical turns of the game, calls for an admiration from the interested audience, which rivals the enthusiasm created by the display of hard and telling hits, or the dashing efforts of base-runners as they speed from base to base.

THE PLAYER.

The requisites of a model ball-player are, first, that which is necessary for making anything a success, namely, a sincere and earnest liking for the matter in hand. Second, a spirit of unselfishness or self-sacrifice which will cause him to eschew anything in the way of intemperance which might interfere in the slightest degree with his being able on all occasions to give to the public his best services; and third, a club pride which will incline him to sink his individuality in the loyalty, which, if a professional, is due to his employer, or if an amateur, his associates have a right to expect of him. To this disposition must be added, natural ability which the varying demands of the game calls for, a cool and plucky temperament, while accompanying all should be that grace of action or movement which greatly enhances the beauty of the at times difficult and hazardous performances.

CAPTAIN.

With nine such players as above described, there would be little wanting to make further elements necessary; but as this would be expecting too much, it becomes important

that there should be chosen one who, commanding the confidence and respect of his fellow-players, can with judgment develop the best play out of the materials at hand. Such a one should carefully study the individual merit and characteristics of each player, and from carefully scored data and observation be thoroughly posted as to the playing strength of the nine. He should also be a gentleman, and in victory or defeat should command and deserve the respect of all with whom he is brought in contact. He should insist upon a systematic course of practice, as this alone will insure marked success, and while not overlooking carelessness or inefficiency should let his criticisms be as free from the spirit of fault-finding as possible, studying rather how best the play of the nine can be improved in the future, than dwelling on the errors of the past.

The captain of a nine should be selected more with reference to his abilities as a leader and instructor than to his skill as a player. He should be a man of sufficient experience to enable him to act understandingly, quick of perception, up to all the points of the game and prepared to take advantage of circumstances as they arise. He should endeavor to secure proper respect from his men, which can only be obtained by pursuing a straightforward, manly course toward them, both on and off the field. The captain of amateur clubs is usually selected by his fellow-players, but in professional clubs the officers or Board of Directors delegate the authority. Much care should be taken by professional club managers in the selection of a captain for their nine, but when finally decided upon he should be given sufficient authority to enable him to carry out his plans and insure proper obedience from his players. He will undoubtedly make mistakes, but those higher in authority should be slow to make a change, without well-founded reasons, for let a club commence changing its captain and every player in the nine is very apt to take a hand at it before the season is half over.

PLAY IN POSITIONS.

There are certain peculiarities in the different positions that require a special kind of talent, or fitness to play them properly, and the young player should carefully study and determine in his own mind, the position he can play the best, and this should be known as his home position; and a Captain of a nine in assigning positions for his men, will do well to be governed as far as possible by their preferences.

Although a good general player can, as a rule, fill any of the different positions moderately well, each place seems to have an individuality of its own; and we have therefore treated each one separately.

PITCHER.

The position of pitcher, probably, requires a more peculiar talent, and special training, than any of the others. With a thorough command of the ball, the pitcher should have a knowledge of the characteristic strength, or weakness of the batter he is obliged to face. He should also know to what extent he can depend upon the support of his associates in out-generaling the efforts of the other side; and remembering how costly wild pitches and passed balls are, rely more on skill and finesse, than on speed or erratic delivery. A pitcher, more than any other player in the nine, should possess an even, unruffled disposition, and be prepared to receive punishment from the batting side, and also acquiesce in erroneous decisions of the umpire in the way of called balls and strikes, without losing his temper; for, once let the pitcher get thoroughly irritated or worked up, and base hits and runs follow easily.

Should the changes in the playing rules operate as much in favor of the batter as is expected of them, the value of the player occupying this position will depend, to a larger extent than heretofore, on his ability, as a batter, base-runner and general fielder.

The views on curved pitching are given elsewhere.

CATCHER.

The position of catcher is unquestionably the most laborious of all, on account of the great number of chances offered, and the character of same. To render the pitching as effective as possible, the catcher must be willing to accommodate himself to the ideas of the pitcher, and not interfere with his efficiency by expecting or asking him to pitch with special reference to his own comfort or convenience; and when it is remembered how much a pitcher's effectiveness depends on the support and assistance of his catcher, it will be seen how important a point this is.

The special requirement of the catcher's position is accuracy in throwing to bases; for if the efforts of base-runners are confined to those bases which have been reached on hits, only, the chances for reaching the home plate are greatly reduced.

It will be a question well worthy the closest study and attention, as to how the catcher should play his position, now that the foul bound rule has been abolished; that is, whether he should constantly play up under the bat, or only do so when bases are occupied.

A season's play will probably be required to settle the matter definitely.

FIRST BASEMAN.

The position of first base is probably the easiest to fill, the majority of the chances simply requiring skill in holding thrown balls. The opportunities for assistances are but few, but when they do occur, are generally important, and are called for when on an infield play base runners attempt to steal bases.

It has lately been thought that first basemen have been allowed to play the base with too much ease and that they should be required to use greater exertions in confining the effects of bad throws to minimum results.

The doing away with the foul bound catch will lessen the labors of this base some what and enable the basemen to assume the additional responsibilities just treated of.

SECOND BASEMAN.

Of the several infield positions that of second base is the most important; as, well guarded, the chance of a baserunner holding first base being able to score are greatly diminished; but once let second base be securely held and a sharp base hit or an outfield error, generally lets the base runner tally. It therefore becomes important, that the player guarding this base should possess the ability to hold the swiftest thrown balls, and instantly be able to determine the proper point, to which he in turn must next send the ball.

The position affords many opportunities for making double plays, while the tendency of batters to send the ball more to the right has increased from season to season the number of chances offered for acceptance.

THIRD BASEMAN.

While third base may not be regarded as important as second, yet the duties of the position are hardly less arduous, or difficult; errors when made by this baseman are generally of a serious character, especially when the base is held by a baserunner, who is thus given an opportunity to score, the great desideratum of one-half of the game.

The difficulty of the position comes from the nature of the chances given; the balls coming hot and sharp from the bat, while the distance to first base requires in throwing more than ordinary accuracy.

The third baseman has also the care of the foul territory in his neighborhood, in guarding which he should never lose sight of the privilege the occupant of a base has of running on a foul catch.

SHORT STOP.

While the short stop is relieved from the special care of a base bag except when left-handed batters occupy the home plate, he has the duty imposed of guarding any that may be left temporarily uncovered by the regular baseman,

though he may be as a player, his honesty above suspicion and practical in every way, yet to give general satisfaction there seems to be required a phase of character, if not genius, which is rare to be met with.

Thoroughly independent and decided, he should yet be willing promptly to reverse any decision given hastily, or under a misapprehension of the facts or rules; always dignified himself, he should command the respect of all, and supported by the hearty co-operation of captains and managers, he should rigorously reprove and punish all those manifestations of lagging or tardiness which are so trying to the patience of the audience, and see to it that the sport goes forward with that life and spirit which is such an enjoyable feature of the game.

CLUB UNIFORM.

The opinion seems gaining ground that a neat and tasteful uniform is a matter of some import, and that the aesthetic tastes of the audiences have a right to be considered, consequently all ill-fitting, gaudy, or otherwise distasteful costumes should be tabooed, and the design as well as the make should be carefully considered, and entrusted to the care of competent dealers. The most convenient, appropriate and handsome uniform is plain white relieved by some bright color, the individuality of the club being marked in some simple way.

THE SCORE.

Probably no feature of the game exhibits greater evidences of development than the score. From the simple record of outs and runs a system has grown up which, with its many symbols, is to the uninitiated simply incomprehensible. This difficult arrangement has been evolved on account of the necessities of the professional manager, who found it important to possess data from which to judge of the comparative abilities of players whose services he was desirous of securing; second, in view of the concern taken in the performances of professional clubs when away from home, which made the reports of their efforts inter-

and of backing up all the infield positions. He should also, when necessary, assist the outfield in returning the ball to the diamond—in fact, has the joint duties and labors of the in and out fielder. This position offers a greater opportunity for a player to display head work or judgment in backing up bases and saving wild throws than any other place in the field, and a player, to fill this position to the highest perfection, should allow the mind to play an important part. With one or more men on the bases, it is almost impossible for a ball to be hit without some intelligent and prompt movement being required of the short stop in the way of backing up, and we would urge all players who would succeed in this position to make a study of this feature. The high reputation enjoyed by some of the leading short stops of the country illustrates how important the position is when conscientiously played, and their assiduous efforts in going for balls that seem out of reach can well be imitated by every player who wishes to be esteemed for faithful and reliable service.

FIELDERS.

The requisites for an outfielder are, a trained faculty or judgment which will enable him to gauge correctly the velocity and direction of the ball when raised in the air, expertness in holding the ball when it has come into his hands, and the ability to send it promptly and accurately to that point which the particular stage of the game makes important and desirable. The player should also effectually back up the bases, and actively co-operate with his fellow fielders in getting the ball in play as soon as possible.

Should the coming season witness the fine display of batting anticipated, the play of the outfield will increase in interest and importance, and we look forward to exhibitions of those fine running catches and admirable long throws which used to occur so frequently in the earlier days of the game.

THE UMPIRE.

One of the necessary adjuncts of the game, and yet the most difficult to obtain in perfection is a good umpire, skilled

esting; and third, by the practice which obtains among many interested witnesses of preserving a full and detailed record of the game as it progresses.

These considerations caused the League to take official cognizance of the matter, and the definitions, suggestions, and instructions governing the proper scoring of the game will be found under Rule VIII of the playing rules given elsewhere. In 1877 Messrs. A. G. Spalding & Brothers, of Chicago, published a system invented by them, and it has had the most remarkable success ever recorded for a like enterprise, and was adopted by nearly all the Leagues and other club scorers of the country. The merit of the device lies in the fact that it requires less than one-third of the symbols of the old systems, and can be learned perfectly in one game. The leading idea is that the position of a dot or letter gives it a different value, and the whole is so simple that it is approved as soon as seen. On the next page appears an engraving of a section of a page of the new system:

Sections of Spalding's New Design Score Book.

Umpire.		P.	U.	R.	P.	A.	E.
US.	at	5	4	3	2	1	0
		1	0	0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0	0	0
PLAYERS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

In the upper left hand square indicates the bases made on the hit. In the upper right hand square mark "How Put Out" or "Left on Base." In the center square indicates the run. Small dots or number in the lower left hand square shows the "Times Reached 1st Base." In the lower right hand square mark the number of the "Out in the inning."

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1871, by A. G. Spalding & Co. in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

HOW TO LAY OUT A BALL FIELD.

The dimensions of a ball field are sufficiently settled by the rules as far as the infield is concerned, and it becomes an easy matter to lay one out if the following simple directions are followed: Select a spot for the home base at least ninety feet from the edge of the ground, and, if possible, facing in some other direction than West. Having taken the general direction of second base, measure 127 feet four inches in that direction, and you will have second base. Then take a cord 180 feet in length and ascertain its middle by doubling it; fasten one end at home and another at second base and extend it to the right; the middle will be the position for first base; then extend to the left, and the middle point will be where third base should be. Most grounds are laid out with reference to getting the smoothest and best turfed portions for an infield. Of course turf is desirable but not at all necessary, and it is certain that even and well-made loam is more favorable to scientific displays than rough turf.

PLAYERS' AVERAGES.

In presenting the averages of the League and non-League players separately, we have been governed by the consideration that for purposes of comparison in batting the players should have been exposed to the skill and finesse of the same pitchers, while in fielding the positions vary so much as to the difficulties attending each that the skill of one player can only satisfactorily be compared with another who has played in the same position. In the case of the League we have the necessary data, all the figures having been furnished by its secretary, N. B. Young, whose tables for the previous years of 1877 and 1876 have also been used for comparative purposes. But in the case of non-League clubs, while we have been able to get the official records in most cases, in others we have had to depend upon press reports, which, while probably sufficiently correct for all practical purposes, are more of a local than general interest. Where a player's record of more than one position has been given, we have taken that one in which he was engaged the greatest number of games.

OFFICIAL AVERAGES OF LEAGUE PLAYERS FOR 1878, 1877, 1876.

PLAYER.	CLUB IN 1878.	BATTING.			FIELDING.					
		1878.	1877.	1876.	1878.	1877.	1876.			
		Rank. Percentage of base hits per times at bat.	Rank. Percentage of base hits per times at bat.	Rank. Percentage of base hits per times at bat.	Percentage of chances accepted.	Percentage of chances accepted.	Percentage of chances accepted.			
Delampla.....	Milwaukee.....	1	350	.....	835	.....	.....	
Hines.....	Providence.....	2	351	24	252	9	330	837	833	917
St. L.....	Chicago.....	3	348	6	321	23	279	857	964	983
Shaffer.....	Indianapolis.....	4	344	10	290	.....	.....	844	810	.....
Amos.....	Chicago.....	5	336	4	338	1	342	815	872	850
Ferguson.....	Chicago.....	6	334	31	236	27	264	881	887	828
Pike.....	Cincinnati.....	7	331	7	311	11	314	816	838	868
Hightam.....	Providence.....	8	316	.....	10	305	.....	808	.....	877
Peters.....	Milwaukee.....	9	311	8	298	3	348	857	888	932
Brown.....	Providence.....	10	310	22	254	51	207	879	883	758
Dickens.....	Cincinnati.....	11	309	.....	.....	.....	.....	871	.....	.....
White, J. L.....	Cincinnati.....	12	308	3	388	8	335	906	904	791
Gorham.....	Cincinnati.....	13	303	10	290	38	257	896	874	944
York.....	Providence.....	14	302	28	250	58	249	867	866	899
Hatchings.....	Chicago.....	15	298	54	229	49	211	782	892	758
James.....	Cincinnati.....	16	297	6	329	21	279	893	875	887
Clegg.....	Indianapolis.....	17	296	11	286	15	297	832	860	783
McVey.....	Cincinnati.....	18	293	8	322	4	345	813	847	908
Larkin.....	Chicago.....	19	289	36	237	.....	.....	848	891	.....
Kelly.....	Cincinnati.....	20	281	.....	.....	.....	.....	755	.....	.....
O'Rourke.....	Boston.....	21	274	3	350	12	312	863	829	886
Poley.....	Milwaukee.....	22	271	30	206	43	206	903	849	779
Hankinson.....	Chicago.....	23	268	.....	.....	.....	.....	870	.....	.....
Alison.....	Providence.....	24	267	41	176	31	206	802	832	844
Caesidy.....	Chicago.....	25	261	2	362	28	271	798	734	1,000
Burdock.....	Boston.....	26	260	29	240	35	249	917	905	898
Leonard.....	Boston.....	27	258	18	280	22	277	770	912	919
Nolan.....	Indianapolis.....	27	258	.....	.....	.....	.....	748	.....	.....
Sullivan.....	Cincinnati.....	28	255	.....	.....	.....	.....	874	.....	.....
Manning.....	Boston.....	29	254	4	341	20	257	752	827	708
Hallinan.....	Chicago.....	29	254	17	261	22	277	789	862	764
Carey.....	Providence.....	30	251	25	251	14	301	866	834	882
Mitchell.....	Cincinnati.....	31	250	.....	.....	.....	.....	804	.....	.....
Goodman.....	Milwaukee.....	32	246	.....	.....	.....	.....	943	.....	.....
Barnett.....	Milwaukee.....	32	240	.....	.....	.....	.....	709	.....	.....
Warnor.....	Indianapolis.....	33	243	.....	.....	.....	.....	900	.....	.....
Merrill.....	Boston.....	34	240	13	272	29	250	857	822	857
Reagan.....	Chicago.....	35	233	19	250	25	277	834	802	887
Mirman.....	Providence.....	35	233	16	292	23	276	938	800	829
Redman.....	Milwaukee.....	36	229	.....	.....	.....	.....	781	.....	.....
Flint.....	Indianapolis.....	37	228	802
Boston.....	Boston.....	38	228	9	290	18	298	888	800	918

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		1878.	1877.	1876.	1878.	1877.	1876.			
		Rank. Percentage of base hits per times at bat.	Rank. Percentage of base hits per times at bat.	Rank. Percentage of base hits per times at bat.	Percentage of chances accepted.	Percentage of chances accepted.	Percentage of chances accepted.			
Wright.....	Boston.....	39	224	21	265	19	291	847	894	886
Williamson.....	Indianapolis.....	40	223	.....	.....	.....	.....	850	.....	.....
McKelvey.....	Indianapolis.....	41	222	.....	.....	.....	.....	817	.....	.....
McClislan.....	Chicago.....	42	221	.....	.....	.....	.....	892	.....	.....
Geer.....	Cincinnati.....	43	219	.....	.....	.....	.....	850	.....	.....
Quest.....	Indianapolis.....	44	218	.....	.....	.....	.....	850	.....	.....
Cramer.....	Milwaukee.....	44	212	.....	.....	.....	.....	879	.....	.....
Buyer.....	Boston.....	45	212	35	228	57	194	841	813	784
Boyd.....	Boston.....	46	211	30	212	41	274	842	870	821
Golden.....	Milwaukee.....	47	208	.....	.....	.....	.....	801	.....	.....
Hague.....	Providence.....	48	207	27	243	28	203	918	816	751
Wenver.....	Milwaukee.....	49	206	.....	.....	.....	.....	877	.....	.....
Ward.....	Providence.....	50	203	.....	.....	.....	.....	814	.....	.....
Morgan.....	Milwaukee.....	51	199	.....	.....	.....	.....	799	.....	.....
Holbert.....	Milwaukee.....	52	184	.....	.....	.....	.....	818	.....	.....
Nichols.....	Providence.....	53	183	44	127	.....	.....	862	854	.....
Brewer.....	Providence.....	54	178	.....	54	202	.....	858	.....	864
Hosly.....	Indianapolis.....	55	177	.....	.....	.....	.....	888	.....	.....
Croft.....	Indianapolis.....	56	162	37	219	.....	.....	962	903	.....
Powers.....	Chicago.....	57	161	.....	.....	.....	.....	793	.....	.....
Wheeler.....	Providence.....	58	148	.....	.....	.....	.....	834	.....	.....
McCormick.....	Indianapolis.....	59	143	.....	.....	.....	.....	808	.....	.....
White, W. H.....	Cincinnati.....	60	144	.....	.....	.....	.....	869	.....	.....
Nelson.....	Indianapolis.....	61	136	.....	.....	.....	.....	831	.....	.....