

Baseball Review, 1913



If the varsity baseball team had donated all the 1913 season games to her opponents in advance, many of the so-called "Baseball Critics" would not have been surprised. Prospects for a winning nine were far from bright to the Illinois Fans who had been accustomed to cheer championship teams year after year. Captain Watts with the veterans, Fletcher, Prindiville, Phelps, Rowe and Thomas were on hand to uphold the honors for the Illini, but nevertheless Coach Huff, the mentor of 1000% baseball teams, knew that many holes must be patched up before the opening of the Conference schedule.

The call for candidates brought out the usual number of aspirants, but a dearth of real baseball material was more or less evident. Trainer "Wee Willie" McGill employed his "Big League" experience specializing on the twirlers and with the veterans, Captain Watts, Prindiville and Thomas heading the list, and the new recruits, Hess and Larson, the Illini seemed to have a winning bunch of slab artists. A set of capable infielders and reliable batters caused Coach "G" no little anxiety although the fans knew that the most renowned Baseball Teacher would spring a surprise in these departments of the team.

What men will make the "Southern Trip" was the prevailing query. Coach Huff was in the dark as to the ability of the recruits until the several out-door practices gave him a chance to size up the candidates before the team left for the invasion of "Dixie." The Easter vacation tour was far from disastrous as was predicted by many observers. The first real out-door game for the Illini was dropped to the



RED SOX AT UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

University of Mississippi by a 3 to 1 score. Although in mid-season form, the following day, Mississippi A. & M. College was downed with fast fielding and several three baggers from Nevin's mighty stick. The second game of the Starkville series ended with a 7 to 7 tie, notwithstanding the spectacular work of Cogdall, the midget second sacker for Illinois. After defeating the University of Alabama in a snappy close game by the score of 2 to 1 the team hailed northward again, in rather hopeful and confident spirits.

The much heralded Boston Red Sox invaded the Illinois camp shortly after the trip in the "Sunny South." Coach Huff's aggregation began to display considerable improvement and were entertaining the ambition to embarrass Jake Stahl's Champs before their many Illini admirers. "Smoky" Wood, by fanning twelve of the brave varsity batters in succession, lead the Red Sox to a 10 to 0 victory, in which "Jake" rapped three singles as in the "Days of Yore." Although Larson's remarkable twirling allowed the Champs but 6 safe bingles the better batting of the Illini could not save them from a second defeat of 2 to 0, at the hands of Jake's mighty warriors.

The Varsity opened the Conference schedule on Illinois Field with a victory of 9 to 5 over the Hoosier nine in a weird and ragged game. "Curly" Larson pitched fine ball but was poorly supported at times. Phelps triple with three men on bases clinched the game for Illinois. The Orange and Blue won their second conference game from Iowa, 6 to 1. The Varsity showed "Old time Illinois style" and the Hawkeyes were at the complete mercy of Thomas' masterful pitching.



"G" HUFF AND JAKE STAHL

The next victory for the Illini came by a 5 to 3 score over the "Razorbacks." East fielding by "G's" pupils and the excellent twirling of Hess were too much for the Arkansas team. In this game Illinois distinguished herself by making a fast triple play, the first ever seen on the local diamond.

Northwestern was the next invader of the Illinois camp and in a hard fought tussle carried away a 4 to 3 victory for the first time in twelve years. After downing Purdue at Lafayette in a swat-fest 9 to 1 in which Captain Watts pitched stellar ball, the Orange and Blue secured revenge on the Purple a week later by trouncing them by the score of 5 to 2.

The trip to Iowa City added another conquest for the Illinois aggregation. In a tight game, which was rescued by Captain Watts in the tenth inning, the Hawkeyes were defeated 4 to 3. Phelps' stick work featured for the Varsity.

The next baseball news of interest to the Illini Fans was the northern journey to Minneapolis. In a lop-sided game the Sucker Team walloped Minneapolis to the tune of 12 to 3. Heavy hitting and fast base running were responsible for the slaughter. The Varsity was charitable however with her Conference Opponents to drop the second game in the "Northland" to Wisconsin by an 8 to 4 count.

After the defeat by the Badgers, the Orange and Blue nine retaliated by trampling the Madison tribe 9 to 0 before the usually large Interscholastic crowd. Captain Watts was at the helm for the Illinois ball machine which exhibited superb playing and hit like veterans. Coach Huff's proteges presented the Maroons with the second Interscholastic game only after many thrills. Notwithstanding the pair of home runs by the reliable Fletcher, the veteran Illini backstop, the varsity could not snatch a victory from their old-time rivals.

The five seniors Captain Watts, Fletcher, Prindiville, Nevins and Kay ended their baseball careers on Illinois Field by the defeat of Purdue in a speedy contest. Although "G" worked three Illinois pitchers the Boiler-makers were at no time dangerous and the varsity annexed their last victory of the season by the safe margin of 6 to 3.

In the final game for the Illini, Baumgartner, the Chicago artist, proved the victor for the Maroon team. Captain Watts with the typical Illinois spirit and clever twirling lead his team into the "Battle Royal." After a thrilling twelve-inning contest, replete with spectacular situations, Chicago triumphed 2 to 1, thus clinching the Conference Flag. Any baseball fan will admit that it was not a disgrace to lose such a battle. Thus closed the 1913 baseball season with all loyal Illini as proud as ever of Coach Huff's men who struggled consistently in true sportsmanlike spirit to bring honor to their Alma Mater.

T. A. FRITCHEY.

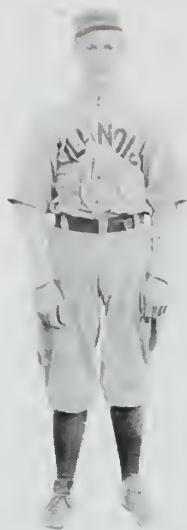
ATHLETICS



STAMM CONNECTS
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CAPTAIN CLAUDE HARRISON WATTS

"Snorky" as he is better known to his teammates, played his last season of Illini baseball. As a captain he was good; he knew the game much better than most of his men, and played it every minute with all his heart and soul to win. He was undoubtedly one of the best twirlers in the Conference. It was not due to his pitching that Chicago won the last game of the season by a score of two to one, but to the poor hitting of his tribe. Time and again he succeeded in cutting off the Maroons only to see his own men fall before a pitcher who was on the verge of going to pieces. "Snorky" will always be remembered by his teammates as a true sportsman.



JOHN CARNE PHELPS

"Butts" Phelps is our captain for next year and we are all looking once more for a real old Illinois baseball season. Judging from the reports of the games, he did not play any better than he did the first season, but those who were on the bleachers knew that he was playing the game with more head-work. He was stealing bases oftener and with better results; his slides were more perfectly executed; now and then one could see him get away with a placed hit. If he begins the season next year with the same desire to improve his playing, he should have no difficulty in leading his team to victory.



CHARLES HARRISON FLETCHER

"Judge" Fletcher. What Illinois man who is interested in athletics did not know, and what is more, like the Judge? He was a fighter and played the game to the limit. He was never beaten until the last out was made and even then he always felt sure that we could beat them if we were to play them again. A truer sportsman never walked on Illinois Field. While playing the Mississippi A. and M. on the Easter trip, the umpire left for his decision a long drive which fell close to the foul line, and he declared it fair which cost Illinois a losing score, but not a victory. We all hope that when the Judge does have to set on the bench it will be because he knows the game.



ARTHUR SEYMOUR NEVINS

"Art" Nevins was the find of the 1913 squad. For two years he had plugged along as a scrub and was even dropped from these squads before the seasons were over. But last season he climbed into his berth at third before the team went south and he remained there the rest of the year. His fielding at times was a sensation, and many times has he stepped to the plate when a hit was needed and hopped on a live one for a couple of bases. His arm was good and often it cut off the batter at first when the umpire was on the point of making favorable decision. The Illini fans all regret that "Art" did not have the opportunity to make good before his last season.



FRANCIS JOSEPH PRINDEVILLE

"Sod" Prindeville played his last game of ball for Illinois this season, and if there was ever a man who wanted to do one thing and had to do the other it was he. "Sod" came to college as a pitcher and it was no idle ambition, for he knew how to pitch, but the difficulty came with his arm which would not respond to his efforts. Along about the fourth or fifth inning he would have to retire from the pitcher's box to first base. Anyone can see how disappointing this must have been to him and how it must have detracted his interest from the game thus preventing him from doing himself justice.



CHARLES KAY

Whoever thought that a little fat boy like Charlie Kay could play Varsity ball, but he did and he sometimes made a very snappy game of it. He was a worker from the start, and if every man tried as hard as Charlie did, there certainly would be a well organized club on Illinois Field. It was too bad that he did not get a chance to show his stuff before his senior year because with a little experience he would be a much better ball player. An actual game made him a trifle nervous and prevented him from playing his best.





LAMBERT, L. LARSON

"Lottie" Larson, as the boys called him, was a drafted pitcher from the 1914 class team. All spring he shadowed "Wee Willie" following out each and every instruction earnestly. Then came his opportunity. It was on the southern trip in a game with Alabama and he made good; his berth on the Varsity was secure. In the series with the Boston Americans when he held them to two runs and a few scattered hits, he proved that he was a comer and even though his success seemed to stop with those two games, the Illini tribe was not discouraged because they felt that with a season's experience he will be a great help to this year's Varsity. We are all looking for big things from "Lottie" in his Senior year.

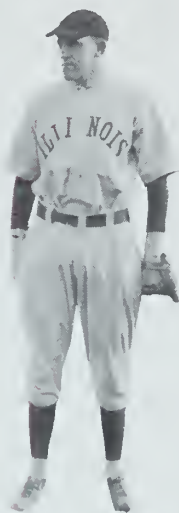
EARL RAY SUTER

Suter took his first fling at Varsity baseball this season. He came from the sophomore team of last spring where he gathered together all the honors of that league, and is a fine example of the old saying that it is never too late to make good. He is fast on his feet, and had he not been handicapped with two sprained ankles which would not get well, he would have made many more fans sit up and take notice. At times he played a very snappy game and as a hitter he was among the best, his little short quick jabs putting the ball just outside of the fielder's reach. Suter has one more year to play and we are all looking for big things from him.



ROBERT ELLSWORTH THOMAS

"String" Thomas, as he is known throughout the campus, is a second year pitcher. His strong point seems to be in pulling games out of the fire after some other pitcher has been knocked out of the box. But when he had to pitch a whole game he did not have so much success. Still "String" showed a marked improvement over his first year's work which we all remember as being good, and we are looking for him to play his stellar role on the 1914 squad.



HARRY FRANK COGDALL

"Slip" is Harry's official title and he fills the bill admirably; for he is without doubt one of the smallest men that has ever worn an Illini base ball suit. But we all know that size does not make a great deal of difference with ball playing, and what he lacks in size he makes up in "pep." He never failed to cover his regular territory and often he went even farther. He tried to get everything and sometimes he even fooled himself. It certainly was a hard blow to the team when he was taken down with the appendicitis, and it also cut short a very successful ball season for one individual, but "Slip" has two more years to play; so we are looking for an old time Illinois ball player before he gets out of college.



JOHN MEAD SILKMAN

One man on the 1913 squad was drafted from the Freshman team of the year before and from the foot ball team last fall; Johnny Silkman. His regular position was in the out field, but there were times when it was necessary for him to fill in at second base and short stop; which he did well. His hitting was good and often timely. One time in particular while playing at Iowa City the score was tied at the end of the ninth inning making it necessary for extra inning. "Johnny" came to bat with a man on second and two out. He delivered his little single and the game was over. We are looking for big things from him next season.

IRA RUSH

"Ira" came from the 1915 Freshman team where he played the out field until he met with that severe accident which we thought for a long time had ruined a good ball player, but he recovered and last season he played a good game at short stop. He was probably the most erratic player on the squad, one day playing a good game and the next day he would look poor. As a hitter he was much the same way. But "Ira" has one more year to play and we hope that he will loose that one bad quality by next season and play his best ball.



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