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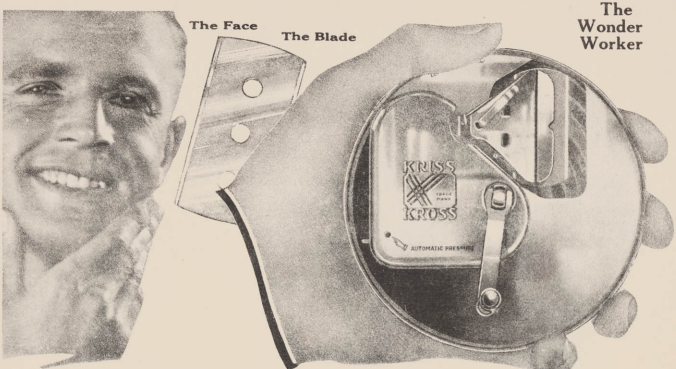
Run Cross Country!
See Contents Page



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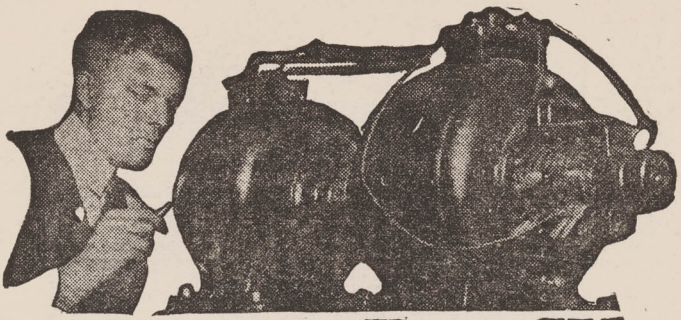

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Sport Story Magazine

On sale the 8th and 22nd of each month

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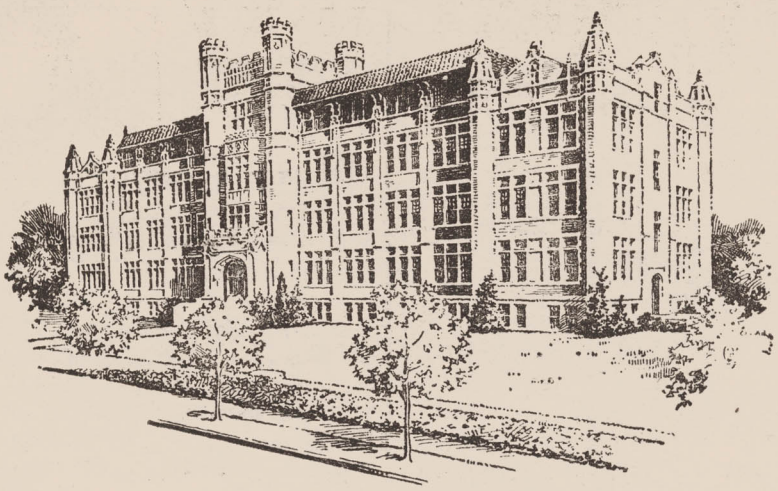

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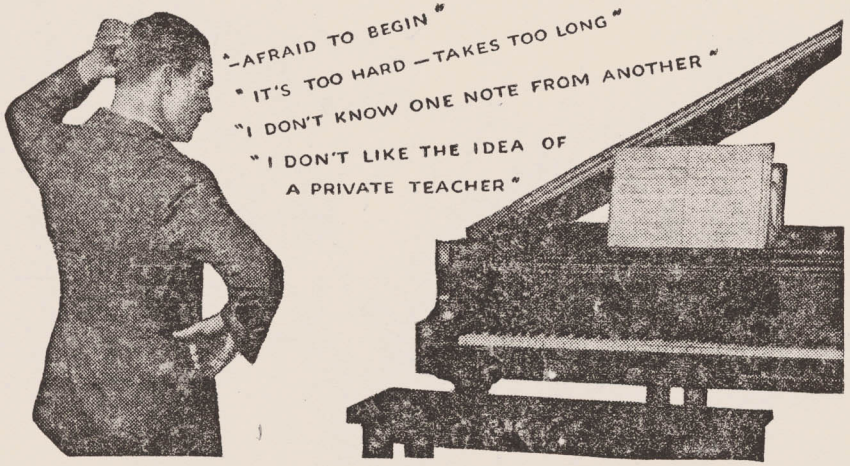

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Borrowed Power

By Jackson Scholz

"Midge" and Don each lacked an essential quality for victory, but together they made a pair of cross-country runners seldom equalled in the Valley championships.

I ALMOST hate to tell you this yarn for fear that you will find certain parts of it hard to believe. You will probably lay it down to the fact that my twenty years of coaching that high strung, temperamental organism known as an athlete has more than likely distorted my imagination. Maybe it has at that. Goodness knows I would not dream of denying it, because I have always maintained that some wealthy person charitably inclined should set aside a fund for the maintenance of a comfortable home for athletic coaches, who have become mentally unbalanced in the pursuit of their duties. At any rate, here are the facts.

In the first place you may find it hard to believe that a school the size of Valley University could get all excited over such a sport as cross-country. I'll admit it doesn't generally happen but this year proves to be the exception for several reasons. In the first place, I had

had the good fortune to turn out three powerful teams over the three preceding years which swept everything before them in the Valley and, as a consequence, trotted home with the Valley championship. This in itself was enough to steam up the student body, but added to this was the fact that one of our alumni, with more money than he knew what to do with, had donated a huge trophy which was to become the permanent property of the school which won it four consecutive times. Needless to say, the thing had rested in our trophy room for the last three years and the student body was now looking to me to win the last and final leg on it. To complicate matters still further, the Beavers, our most devoted rivals in everything pertaining to sports, had developed a flock of harriers, led by Max Stanley, which team the Beavers claimed to be the best cross-country team they had ever turned out. They did not hesitate to announce, of course, that they would win the Valley championship and relieve us of our possession of the trophy.

And on top of all this the school was faced with an almost incredible situation which was something entirely new in my experience. It seems that a certain group of the student body had conceived the idea that we were over-emphasizing athletics, if such a thing is possible. They had organized a society on this basis which impressed me, naturally, as a society of lunatics. Their righteous aim appeared to be to save the school from self-destruction and to eliminate, if possible, the evil of placing too much stress upon athletics. Strange as it may seem the society was actually growing and beginning to make itself felt; but more of this later.

My own prospects for the season were far from bright and I was not inclined to be hysterical over my chances for placing the cross-country trophy in the lap of the student body. I had lost three of my best men through graduation, one through matrimony, and the men I had left could hardly be classified as first-string competitors. I had hoped to pick up some new material at the start of the season, but what material did show up was hardly calculated to make the coach weep with joy. I drafted a couple of middle-distance men from my regular track team, but it is only on rare occasions that a middle-distance man develops into a good hill and dale runner, and this did not seem to be one of the occasions.

The man whom I was forced to place most of my hopes in was Don Baxter. Don was a member of last year's team and one of the finest natural runners I have ever had. He was a big, blond, good-looking chap, standing six feet in his stockings and built in proportion. He had an easy style of running, apparently unlimited power and endurance, but Don unfortunately lacked one of the greatest essentials in a runner. He was too darned good-natured, and too sociably inclined. By that I mean that Don seemed to derive his chief enjoyment out of cross-country running by loafing around with the pack. He seemed to have some particular aversion to running by himself, to getting out in the lead, as I am quite sure he was capable of doing.

I had hardly realized this quality during the previous year because of the fact that Don was always up with the rest of my men and was always able to finish well up in front, provided he was not called upon to sprint. I believe he could have run almost all day at a certain pace, but he was one of those peculiar runners who are unable to uncork a burst of speed.

In our early work-out it became evident that, although Don was unquestionably the best man on my squad, he could not be prevailed upon to go out ahead and set a pace. I raved at him

and bawled him out to no advantage, and my hard-boiled criticism rolled off of his bland good nature as water rolls off the back of a duck. I had never been faced with a similar problem before. Previously I had always been able to sting such a man into action with a few well-chosen words, but Don's good nature seemed to defy all of the persuasive qualities of my vocabulary. There were times during the early part of the season when my blood pressure arose to a point where I feared that I might do something desperate, but Don merely continued to gallop along with the pack like some big friendly pup.

IT was on one of these days, when I had just finished talking myself blue in the face, that I was accosted on the field by a lad whom I had never seen. He was a small, slender, serious-eyed youngster, whom I do not believe would have tipped the scale over one hundred and twenty pounds. His distinguishing characteristic was a shock of flaming, red hair.

"Well, what do you want?" I said gruffly, and I am told that I can be rather disagreeable when I have a grouch.

Rather than intimidate the youngster, however, the tone of my voice seemed to kindle a spark of indignation in his eyes.

"I want to come out for your cross-country team," he said with some spirit, "and you don't have to be so snappy about it."

I accepted the rebuke in the spirit in which it was offered. He reminded me somehow of a bantam rooster. "Sorry, son," I said, "I didn't mean to take out my grouch on you, but this team of mine is beginning to get my goat. You say you'd like to join it? Why?"

"Because," he flushed slightly, "I want to be an athlete."

He eyed me challengingly, as though expecting me to make light of the matter, but, although I must admit I regarded his slight frame with some misgiving, I tried to keep this fact from my expression.

"What's your name?" I demanded.

"Paul Manning."

"Have you ever done any running?"

"No, sir," he admitted.

"Then what makes you think," I asked in some surprise "that you would be good at cross-country?"

"I don't know that I would be good," he admitted frankly, "but I have always wanted to do something in athletics and I have tried everything but track. My size, of course, has always been against me, but my endurance seems to be fairly good and there is always a possibility that I may be able to run."

"Always that chance, and it won't take us a great deal of time to find out. Go into the gym and tell them I sent you in for a running outfit. They'll give you a locker, too. Report back here when you're ready."

The boy hurried off and by the time I had given my squad instructions for their work-out and had sent them jogging off in the direction of the golf course, young Manning was back on the field.

The first unfortunate impression which I received was that of a kitten which had just had the hose turned upon it. His over-sized trunks and jersey hung about him in loose folds, which were accentuated by the skinny length of his arms. I noticed, however, that, despite this handicap the lad bore himself with a certain cocksure confidence that was admirable under the conditions. My second glance showed me that his body was not as skinny as it first appeared to be. It was, as a matter of fact, surprisingly well developed, with an unusual depth of chest and a certain limber wiryness to his legs, which met with my immediate approval.

"Jog across the field," I told him.

He did as I ordered and I experienced another surprise. His knees came up with a clean, natural action that was mighty pleasing to the eye, and those slender wiry legs of his carried his body with a spring and grace that actually caused one to overlook the discrepancies of the track suit. I noted a few improvements I could make in his arm action, and in another moment he was standing once more before me.

"You have a natural stride, son," I told him, "which I'll admit took me by surprise. You haven't enough speed for a sprinter or a little distance man, but you're plenty loose in the hips and you don't waste much effort when you run. If you have any endurance I probably could use you."

The lad seemed to be well pleased with the idea and I had some difficulty in preventing him from following the rest of the squad.

"Take it easy for the first few days," I advised sternly. "Do just what I tell you to and no more. Do you get me?"

"Yes, sir."

I mapped out an easy work-out for him, which I gradually increased during the next few days. I'll admit that I didn't waste much enthusiasm over him, but he seemed to be standing up to it nicely, and what is more, the rest of the squad seemed to have taken a liking to him as evidenced by the fact that they immediately wished upon him the nickname of "Midget" which was soon shortened to "Midge." It was a week before I sent Midge out with the rest of the boys and on that day something happened which I believed changed the destiny of my squad.

Midge, it seems—as the story was told to me later—allowed his enthusiasm to get the better of him. I had sent the boys out with instructions to cover our entire course, but to take it easy all the way. I had given Midge special instructions to drop out when he became tired and to walk back to the gym by the closest way. Instead, however, of sticking with the pack as I naturally supposed he would do, Midge tore out at a stiff pace, and was soon out ahead by a good margin. The rest of the fellows let him go, realizing that, with his lack of training, he couldn't maintain that speed for any great length of time and would soon peter out.

In a short time, Midge was lost from sight, and as the course was half completed and still the fellows had not overhauled him, they began to wonder whether or not Midge had already become tired and had headed for home upon my instructions.

Our course, at one point, crosses a narrow bridge over a stream which is dignified by the name of the Hinxton River. The path forks just on the other side of the bridge, one branch leading along the edge of the stream, and the other winding upwards through the woods to the top of the hill, and from there paralleled the course of the stream. The route, as all of our fellows know, was by the right-hand path up to the top of the hill, and while on this day they were toiling upward, well bunched, they were halted by a sharp cry from some place down along the river. They stopped, heard the cry repeated and then broken off abruptly. As they stood staring uncertainly at each other, Don Baxter seemed to be the first to grasp the situation.

"Maybe he took the wrong path," he grunted, and the next moment was dashing down the hill regardless of the heavy underbrush which tore at his legs. He headed through the woods directly toward the point where the cry was last heard and shortly came out on the bank of the stream, opposite a deep pool formed at the elbow of the turn. The path at this point was just

at the edge of the water, and, slippery with a carpet of fallen leaves, provided a treacherous footing. Midge, as Don had guessed, being unfamiliar with the course, had taken the wrong path, had slipped upon these leaves and was now struggling helplessly in the cold water of the stream.

It was apparent that he was unable to swim and his ghastly face, contorted with the agong of exhaustion, slipped quietly below the surface as Don dived.

It was a simple matter for the powerful athlete to bring the slim form back to the bank, where they were dragged ashore by the anxious hands of the rest of the squad. Midge, fortunately, was not completely unconscious, and after a short, desperate fight for breath, was soon breathing normally again. When the squad came in bursting with the news, I noticed they were two men short.

"Where are Don and Midge?" I demanded, and then they told me the story I had just repeated to you.

A short time later the two came in, Midge jogging determinedly and Don loafing along protectingly at his shoulder, watching Midge with all the anxiety of a mother hen.

"I tried to make him walk in," Don informed me as soon as they were within speaking distance, "but he insisted on running."

I turned sternly upon Midge,

"What's the idea," I demanded angrily, "I expect my orders to be obeyed, and if you'd done so to-day, you wouldn't have nearly got yourself drowned, and then after that, why didn't you walk in like I told you to?"

Midge held my gaze steadily and I read something in his eyes that caused my heart to sink. There was a stubbornness there in direct opposition to Don's passiveness, but equally difficult to contend with. I read a smoldering, fighting spirit in the gaze of the younger man, a spirit which will listen to no reason but the instinct of the person who possesses it. I had noted this only on a few previous occasions in my athletes, but I recognized it at this time, and, as I said before, my heart sank at the prospect of what I would have to contend with.

"I ran fast because the pace was too slow," Midge said, "and I ran the rest of the way home, because I don't intend to let a little water get my goat."

Well, I bawled him out some more, merely for the sake of discipline, but deep down in my heart I knew that I was going to have trouble with the blind courage of this youngster, which was so out of proportion to his size. Even at that time, however, it struck me as amusing that I should have two such men on the same team—men, who were as much unlike as daylight and dark.

For this reason, it seemed all the more peculiar that such intense friendship should spring up between the two. Don, of course, had saved Midge's life and Midge was thoroughly grateful in his sober, quiet way. Midge admired Don, too, for the things which he himself did not possess. He admired the magnificence of Don's body, his terrific fund of animal strength and endurance. He admired the placidity of larger men, which was so opposed to his own turbulent nature.

And, on the other hand, it was evident that Don had conceived a tremendous fondness for the smaller man whom he had pulled from the water. His attitude, which was almost paternal at times, was blended with a sincere respect for Midge's stubborn aggressiveness. Don was experiencing a powerful protective instinct which Midge, strangely, did not resent. It seems that Don was afraid to let Midge out of his sight again during the daily work-out for fear Midge might get himself into more trouble. Consequently, Don loafed along like a faithful escort, and as you can well imagine this relationship be-

gan to have a definite effect upon my cross-country team.

In the first place, it almost ran the boys to the point of staleness because, as I had feared from the start, I could not break Midge of his bad habit of going to the front and setting the pace. As the time went on the youngster became hard as steel and developed a certain sense of pace which was far in excess of his own ability. This, he could never realize. It never occurred to him that he would be unable to maintain this terrific pace, nor was he ever able to reconcile himself to his own physical limitations.

He would hold the pace, therefore, until he staggered from exhaustion, but it was significant that he always managed to finish somehow, attended by the faithful Don.

Don's running, of course, increased materially, under the inspiration of Midge. The big man needed somebody to pull him out, although he was never extended to his limit; the pair of them always finished, nevertheless, well ahead of the rest of the pack. As the strain of the pace was soon beginning to tell upon the whole squad, I solved the difficulty by allowing Midge to run only three times a week and by allowing him to join the squad on only one of these occasions. In this way, I was able to regulate his work to a reasonable extent and to conserve the limited amount of strength in the frail body. Don, throughout the week, plodded along with the rest of the squad like a lost soul. But when Saturday would come around, I would send the boys over the full six-mile course, and Don was as happy as a St. Bernard dog as he loafed faithfully along behind the grimly running little Midget.

THE strange friendship of these two, of course, was not long in being recognized by the student body who were always anxious to welcome anything out of the ordinary. To find either of the men, it was generally necessary merely to locate one of them, because they were inseparable. That, probably, is the reason why the thing which happened came as a distinct shock not only to me but to the student body as a whole.

Our first dual meet of the season was with the Beavers, and both student bodies were looking forward eagerly to the results of this meet, which would naturally be regarded as a criterion for the Valley championship, the final and deciding meet of the season. We were to meet the Beavers upon their own course, and, considering the showing my squad had made up to the present, I was confident that we could at least hold our own, even though I did not have a man on my team who I believed could hope to beat Max Stanley. The Don and Midget combination had acted as a surprising stimulant for the rest of my squad, and, even though the Beavers claimed to have such a remarkable team, I was confident that my boys would be well up there when the final point score was counted.

It was a couple of days before this meet that Don Baxter paid me a visit. I was sitting on the steps of my porch enjoying one of the last warm days of the year and puffing contentedly away on my after-dinner cigar. I saw a tall, broad figure turn in at my walk, whom I recognized in the dark by his imposing outline.

"Hullo, Don," I said in some surprise, "come up and have a seat and tell me what's on your mind."

"How did you know that anything was on my mind?" he demanded.

"That's my business, son," I told him. "Come on, get it off your chest."

He sat down beside me on the top step.

"Midge and I have busted up," he announced, and I noticed a little catch in his voice.

I sat for some moments in silence, because this was a piece of news much too serious to get excited over. My mind, I am ashamed to say, flashed at once to my own selfish interest and to the manner in which the school and the cross-country squad would be effected by this tragedy. Suddenly it dawned on me how the man at my side must be suffering, so I turned to him and said as gently as possible: "Tell me about it, Don."

The boy sat for some moments trying to adjust his thoughts which from all appearances were rather badly muddled.

"Why, I—I'm not quite sure yet, coach, how it happened," he began. "It all came about so suddenly that we just—well, we just broke up."

"That's evident," I conceded dryly, "but what was the argument about?"

"Athletics."

"Now, we're getting somewhere," I said. "Just what particular phase of athletics did you fight about."

Don's mind seemed to be slowly clearing and his thoughts began to adjust themselves. "Athletics in general, coach," he said, with a certain resentment in his tone. "You probably heard this organization here in school formed for the prevention of over-emphasis in athletics."

"Yes," I exploded, "you don't mean to tell me that Midge is becoming mixed up with that."

Don nodded sorrowfully. "That seems to be about the dope," he said. "Some one has told the little fool the idea that this school would be a finer and better place if the student body attached less importance to athletics. I don't know how they convinced him but he swallowed it whole, and you know yourself that when Midge once gets an idea in his head, it takes about a ton of dynamite to jar it loose, and in the meantime, he is putting his whole soul and body in it."

"I know that only too well," I acknowledged grimly. "So he seems to be taking the matter seriously."

"Plenty seriously" said Don, "but to give the kid credit, I am convinced that he is absolutely sincere about it. Up to the present he has merely regarded it in a broad, general way. I got next to it this evening when I saw him talking seriously with a bird called Beeker, whom I haven't any use for at all, but whom I have heard is heading the movement. When I mentioned the matter later to Midge, he admitted his interest in it, and then tried to convert me. Of course I laughed at him and tried to kid him out of his crazy ideas and then he lost his temper and told me where to go. Well, I'd do it willingly for the little brat, but I figured that he needed to have a bit of sense shaken into him, just at that time, so I grabbed him by the shoulders and rattled his teeth a bit. Somehow or other it didn't seem to appeal to him, because he got good and sore and accused me of being a big bully without a brain in my head and ended up by saying that he was through with me for good."

Don smiled ruefully at the recollection and shrugged his shoulders hopelessly. "So that's that," he added.

I sat in silence, while I watched the smoke of my cigar absorbed by the darkness. I suddenly felt like an old, old man, as I saw the foundations, upon which I had built my squad for that year, crumbling before my eyes. I tried to keep the disappointment and discouragement out of my tone, however, as I laid a hand on Don's shoulder.

"It's a tough break, son," I said, "but not necessarily serious. Midge will undoubtedly snap out of it all right, but in the meantime all we can do is sit tight and hope for the best. Do what you can to patch things up."

"I'm sorry, coach," Don said, with a temperamental dignity which I was not aware he possessed, "but the next move

has to come from Midge. I'd do anything in the world for the kid, but I'm pretty peeved at him right now. I'll be darned if I'll play nurse to him anymore."

"Oh, well," I advised, "don't worry about him any more than you have to. You'd better go home now and go to bed."

As he disappeared in the darkness, I sighed wearily and inwardly cursed these high-strung athletes.

THE following afternoon we boarded the train to invade the Beaver territory. The team was in the best of spirits to start out with, but before the end of our journey was reached, it became painfully evident to all the boys that Don and Midge were no longer upon speaking terms. The result was very much as I had feared, because the squad had looked upon the two as natural leaders, and to suddenly find a breach of no small proportions between them had tended to confuse the other members of the team and make them wonder toward whom they should look for leadership in the race. I did what I could to bolster up their morale, but no one knew better than myself that I was fighting a losing battle against the odds far too great for a lone coach to compete against.

I might have appealed to Midge, I suppose, but something told me that I would merely make myself ridiculous in the rôle of peacemaker. I tried, therefore, to appear unaware that any misunderstanding existed, which merely added a note of irony to the farce.

The result was, that I led to the starting line on the following afternoon, a team of which I was by no means proud. Physically every lad was in the pink of condition and to a casual observer, stacked up convincingly against the Beaver squad, but, to a person who knew athletes, the contrast in the two squads was pathetically marked.

The Beavers were nervous, of course, but beneath that nervousness was an undercurrent of self-confidence and poise which showed them to be mentally as well as physically fit.

My squad, on the other hand, were nervous, but with a nervous uncertainty, a lack of definiteness about their movements.

They appeared worried and a trifle scared, and it did not take the Beaver squad long to recognize the symptoms.

The Beaver coach, in particular, regarded my men, first, with amazement, which expression soon turned to one of smug satisfaction. It made me rage and boil inside, but there was nothing to do about it, except to maintain a casual front.

When the race started, the thing which I had expected happened. Midge at once set out as though he had but a mile to run and, before the team had covered the first half mile of the course, Midge was fifty yards to the good. Another of my boys made a half-hearted attempt to follow Midge, but fortunately, realizing the suicide of the pace, dropped back with the rest of the squad, although not before he had expended a lot of valuable energy.

The Beavers, running easily behind their leader, Max Stanley, appeared to regard Midge in some amazement, but, very wisely, made no efforts to close the gap. Stanley was setting a stiff pace of his own, however, and my boys, well bunched, swung along behind.

The Beaver coach and I had meanwhile climbed to a watch tower built on one of the turrets of the gymnasium. We were both equipped with powerful binoculars, and due to the fact that the Beavers' course is laid out over the flat country surrounding the school, we were able to keep the runners within the range of our glasses over almost the entire course.

At the end of the first half mile, they swung into a thick woods which

swallowed the colored jerseys one by one. I trained my glasses upon the point at the farther end of the woods where the runners would emerge and, as I had expected, the red head of Midge Manning appeared far in advance of all the rest. The Beaver squad came out next, still well bunched, with Stanley running easily, slightly in the lead. My boys followed closely upon their heels with the big figure of Don Baxter loping along in their midst. I grunted angrily to myself. Don was up to his old tricks again. He was the logical man to carry my squad along and yet with his apparent craving for companionship, he was allowing a less experienced man to set the pace.

We were able to keep them in sight for another three quarters of a mile, watching them climb fences, labor over plowed land and splash through a shallow stream which meandered carelessly over the course.

By the time they had covered two miles, both teams were pretty well strung out. Midge still maintained his reckless lead, but from that distance it was impossible for me to tell what condition he was in. They disappeared from view at that point, as the coarse swung into a valley formed by two low hills, and the Beaver coach lowered his glasses from his eyes and advised me to do the same.

"The boys are in for about a mile and a half of rough going behind that hill," he explained. "We will be able to pick them up again in about ten minutes."

I watched eagerly at the point indicated, and as the first dot appeared I clapped my glasses once more to my eyes. Sure enough it was Midge, but there was no doubt now but that his stride had slowed down and he was making a belated effort to save his strength. Stanley came next, still running with beautiful precision, and the Beaver coach grunted with satisfaction as he noted that Stanley had closed the gap considerably. Another Beaver appeared, then two of my men, the remaining Beavers and finally the last two of my squad.

Don seemed to be still well within himself, but rather than take out after the flying Stanley, was making an effort to hold his own squad together. Don was running his old, uncertain, languid race, completely lost without some other member of his team to pull him along, and it was easily evident that he had no intention of reassuming his old relationship with Midge.

The result, of course, was inevitable. In another mile, Stanley had overhauled the tired Midge who had killed himself off by the ridiculous pace he had set in the early stages of the race. The little fellow hung stubbornly on for another half mile, after which point he had nothing left but his nerve.

One by one, he was passed by the members of his own squad and the Beaver squad. I noted with a tightening at my throat, that when Don finally pulled abreast of the laboring Midge, he seemed to hesitate uncertainly, then forged grimly ahead.

It probably occurred to Don at that time that he should attempt to overhaul Stanley, but, of course, it was much too late and Stanley finally jogged across the finish line, two hundred yards to the good. Two of his own team-mates came in next, then Don, making a ludicrous attempt to sprint. Two Beavers finished next, then three of my men, tired and weary from the uncertainty of the race and from their attempt to vary their pace with the various members of the two squads.

One hundred yards back was the pathetic figure of Midge Manning. The poor kid was ghastly with fatigue and staggering upon legs which were upheld by the force of his will alone. I turned sadly away but could not escape the comment of the Beaver coach.

"Your squad doesn't look so hot this year," he observed maliciously. "You seem to have a good man, however, in this lad Baxter, if he only knew how to run. He seems to be as fresh as a daisy now, and," he conceded grudgingly, "I wouldn't be surprised, if, under the proper conditions he could give my boy Stanley a race."

I merely grunted acknowledgment. I was much too discouraged to discuss the matter, because even in my most pessimistic moment, I could not believe that my squad could suffer such a crushing defeat. The reason, of course, was evident to me, but it would be a mighty weak alibi so far as anyone else was concerned. Everyone is willing to concede in a general sort of way that such a thing as psychology exists in athletics, but when faced with the definite application of same, they are too apt to smile knowingly and to tell each other that the coach is slipping, that he's lost his grip, that he has lost the knack of conditioning his men.

IT was a nasty mess, and the conditions were not improved much by our return to school. It was a big shock to the student body and even more so because of the fact that they were unable to understand it. It left them groping around in the dark, and the Valley championships—which, by the way, were to be run on our own course—but two weeks off, there was a lot of unpleasant speculation as to what happened to our cross-country team.

Needless to say, as far as the public was concerned, I was unable to throw any light upon the matter. It is an unfortunate fact that trouble seems to pile up in heaps. Added to the sarcastic comments the newspapers were making concerning our sad showing with the Beavers, another suspicion was lifting its ugly head in the columns of the newspapers. I have mentioned before, this organization for the suppression of sports, and because of its utter novelty, the idea suggested itself to the writers of the press for special articles and editorials.

It brought our school into the public eye in an unfortunate sort of way, and when some sports writer suggested in a burst of distorted humor that our defeat at the hands of the Beavers was a deliberate attempt on our part to equalize matters in the Valley conference, it seemed to me that things were being carried to extremes. The rotten part of it was, however, that even though this writer had apparently suggested it merely in the nature of a joke, the idea gained support among other writers who actually commented seriously on the matter. It is incredible and hard to believe, but within a short space of time our athletic department was flooded with letters of protest from alumni and other prominent figures in the State. It was impossible to laugh the thing off, but I was not impressed by its actual seriousness until I was summoned one day by the President of the University.

"Coach," he said without preliminaries, "we've got to kill these vicious insinuations that we are deliberately abetting this society for the suppression of sports. Incredible as it may seem, there are certain people who believe that we are deliberately allowing ourselves to be beaten. You realize, of course, that it is a malevolent insinuation against our sportsmanship, against the spirit of the University as a whole. Something must be done about it."

"I quite agree with you," I said dryly. "Probably you have some suggestions."

"Just one suggestion," said the President, "we must win the Valley championships."

Well, grin and bear that one. I told him, of course, that I would do the best I could, but, with the morale of my squad going from bad to worse and

with Midge and Don behaving more coldly toward each other every day, I had to admit to myself that my hopes were pretty low. I accumulated gray hairs and lost weight during the next two weeks, but it was not until the evening before the college championships that something happened to give me a new lease on life.

I was sitting before a fire in my living room when Don, who now had become a regular visitor, dropped in. He sat for a while dejectedly in a chair, and then by way of conversation said: "That society is having another meeting to-night."

I nodded indifferently, then an idea began to form slowly in my mind. Anything, I figured, was better than to sit by helplessly without doing a thing.

"Do you know where they are meeting?" I asked.

Don glanced at me in some surprise. "Sure," he said, "the lunatics have dinner and hold their meetings afterward in the private dining room down at Long's."

Well, the fact that Long's is one of our popular eating places in town, and the fact that I knew the proprietor quite well, tended to formulate my ideas. "Come on, Don," I said, "we're going down to pay them a visit."

Don grinned in anticipation and reached eagerly for his hat.

"It's a swell idea," he said. "Funny I didn't think of it myself."

After a short conference with Mr. Long, the proprietor of the restaurant, I gained my point and in another moment Don and I had slipped, by way of the kitchen, into a small curtained alcove, just off the private dining room. The meeting was apparently in full swing, and by the excited tone of the voices it became evident that some altercation was in progress. Some one pounded upon the table with a gavel and the chatter finally narrowed down to two voices, one of which I recognized as belonging to Midge. I applied my eye cautiously to a crack in the curtains and noticed that Midge was facing a big, arrogant chap to whom I took an instant dislike. I was pleased to note a certain belligerency in Midge's attitude.

"It seems that Mr. Manning," the big man was saying coldly, "has misinterpreted the purpose of this organization."

"I certainly have," said Midge hotly, "if you mean that I am supposed to go out there to-morrow and deliberately lay down in that race."

"That's exactly what I mean," snapped the chap whose name I later learned was Beeker, "and if you're going to double cross us now, we'll find a way to make things hot for you."

There was a tense silence among the other twenty members in the room, then suddenly something happened with the startling abruptness of an explosion.

Midge's fist shot out with amazing speed and caught Beeker flush on the jaw. The big man staggered back, shook his head like a goaded bull, then gathered himself to leap upon the small figure before him.

That, however, was as far as he got, because the gathering was interrupted by a roar which froze every man to his seat. Don had leaped from his hiding place and with his huge arms swinging at his sides, and his great fists clenched and threatening, he faced the startled group.

It's the first and last time I ever saw Don Baxter lose his temper, but, as is the case with mild-natured men, slow to arouse, Don dominated those men with a savage intensity that curdled the blood of every one who saw him. I believe there was actual murder in his eyes that night as he snarled his challenge into the astounded faces before him.

"You swine," he gritted. "You dirty, treacherous swine, if any of you touch that kid, I swear to heaven I'll tear

you apart. And what is more, if I ever hear another whisper of your filthy organization, I'll organize this school to ride you out of town on rails."

He waited, glaring savagely, for an answer, but no one seemed willing to pick up the gauntlet tossed in their midst. They were a thoroughly cowed bunch of reformers.

"Come on, Midge," Don said at last, "let's get out of here. I don't even like the smell of these birds."

"We at least agree on that," said Midge, and soon the three of us, unmolested, made our way out into the air. We walked some distance in silence. Midge was the first to speak and his voice, I noted, was a trifle husky.

"Honestly, coach, I didn't realize what sort of an outfit that was. I'm awfully sorry I made an ass of myself."

"Forget it, son, forget it," I said. "Here's where I leave you boys."

I walked a short distance up my own street, but my curiosity forced me to turn. I saw the shadowy form of the two boys going in the opposite direction, and it didn't disappoint me at all to note that Don had one big arm around the narrow shoulders of Midge.

THE school, on the following day, was in a ferment. The town, too, was filled with outsiders and rooters from the nine other schools entered in the championships. As long as I could remember, no Valley cross-country championship had received the publicity that this one was receiving, with the natural result that it was drawing a crowd in proportion.

Our student body, considering what had happened in the past two weeks, was none too hopeful, but they were a loyal bunch, nevertheless, and I was confident that every last one of them would turn out in the hope that some miracle would happen.

Long before the race was scheduled to start, the course was lined with spectators.

Part of the squad was already in the varsity room when I came to the gym. The poor kids were feverish and despondent, for, with their team all shot to pieces, they could see no other outcome than defeat. They blamed the whole thing, of course, upon the misunderstanding between Don and Midge, so you can probably imagine the surprise in store for my squad when Midge and Don finally entered, arm in arm.

There was a moment of dead silence, as the significance of this slowly penetrated the minds of the men. Not a word was said, but I grinned happily to myself as I noted the relaxing of the tension, and the new quality of confidence creeping into the faces of the team. It was as though they had been given a new lease on life, something tangible to lean against, some definite object on which to place their hopes.

They were soon joking and actually laughing among themselves, and I knew with a vast feeling of contentment, that this time I was sending a team on to the course which was mentally as well as physically fit. The transformation was sudden and complete. Midge and Don stuck together like a couple of long-lost brothers, and their own reëstablished unity actually served as a unifying element for the team as a whole.

The fifty runners in their various colored jerseys, presented a colorful sight as they bunched together at the starting line. The only two teams which were conceded a chance to win, were the Beavers and my own squad, although there were several individual runners of brilliance among the other schools. I had dressed my boys in brilliant red jerseys for the purpose of identification, and I was pleased to note that the Beavers were wearing a bright yellow and could also easily be distinguished from the rest at a distance.

At the report of the gun, the mass of runners broke into motion and by the time they had completed the first lap of the quarter-mile track and had swung out the gate, they had begun to string out a bit, although each squad remained intact.

Max Stanley, as I had expected, led the Beavers at once to the front, and my own squad, according to instructions edged into second place.

This condition, however, did not exist for long. I had, as a matter of fact, not expected it to, because I knew there was no power on earth that could keep Midge anywhere but in the lead as long as he was able to move his legs. So I was not surprised, therefore, when I saw the slim figure with the flaming red hair slip determinedly out in front. But this time he was not alone, as on the previous occasion, because the big, smooth, moving bulk of Don Baxter moved easily alongside like a protecting convoy.

Before the first man had left the field, I was already in my small car and after a short detour had taken up a position along the golf course, where I watched the runners spread out over the rolling turf of the links. They were coming toward me and as Midge passed, still in the lead, I noticed the expression of grim determination on his face, contrasted by the bland look of contentment which Don had assumed. The Beaver squad passed me, and then came my other three men. These, I studied with more concern than I had shown the leaders, and grunted with satisfaction as I noticed their expression to be unstrained and confident. Each of them realized that he would never be able to catch up with Don or Midge, but they experienced the satisfying conviction that the other team could find it equally as difficult to catch them. It is comforting knowledge for a squad to know that some of its members are out in front, a knowledge which will impart strength to their legs and give them an incentive to fight until they drop.

When the last runner had swung to the road, I fell in behind, followed them for a quarter of a mile and then abruptly turned off into a seldom used road, which was nothing more than a couple of deep ruts, winding up the side of a steep hill. My radiator was boiling merrily as I reached the top, but I paid no attention to this as I unlimbered my binoculars and picked up the runners far below. There was plenty of other occupants of the hill, some of whom pestered me for information, until I made myself decidedly unpopular by getting hard-boiled about it. I couldn't be bothered.

Midge and Don were still out in the lead, but it was significant that Midge was setting a more sensible pace than he had in the dual meet with the Beavers. He was moving smoothly and Don was having no trouble in keeping up. Another runner, whom I did not recognize, had accepted the challenge and was following on their heels. Back of him, Stanley was leading his squad at a good sensible pace and my other three boys seemed to be still holding their own without any degree of difficulty. The rest of the field was strung out in a long, many-colored line behind, and some of these were already beginning to labor.

The runners disappeared from sight for a few moments as they swung from the road into a narrow lane of trees. As they emerged from this lane I could see their colored jerseys flashing in and out among huge shocks of corn awaiting to be husked. It looked almost like a game of hide and seek during which I was unable to tell the exact position of the runners.

As they left the cornfield and labored over a field of freshly plowed ground, I noticed a strange thing. The distance was rather great, but I could almost

swear that as Midge and Don ran alongside, one of Midge's hands was locked in Don's arm. The heavy going would, of course, be hard for the lighter man, but would scarcely be any impediment for Don's great strength. Was it possible, I demanded of myself, that Midge was actually using some of Don's excess power.

They disappeared over the crest of a hill a short way farther on and dipped down to the valley of the Hinxton River, spanned by the narrow bridge near the spot where Don had first dragged Midge from the water. I waited patiently until the tiny figures appeared at the top of the hill on the other side of the river where they were silhouetted against the sky.

The course, paralleling this ridge was a quarter of a mile, and afforded an excellent and most picturesque view of the race. The figures looked like pygmies, and to the naked eye, scarcely seemed to be moving.

Before the last man disappeared from the ridge, I was again in my car, lunging at break-neck speed down another rocky road which led from the top of the hill. I hurried by way of a previously calculated short cut to a point where the land suddenly dropped away, offering a marvelous panorama of the country beneath. The last mile and a half of the course was visible from this point, and I trained my glasses anxiously on the spot at the base of a hill where the runners would appear.

I waited for a couple of moments with bated breath before the first two figures appeared and then gasped with relief as I noted that they both wore crimson shirts, and the small man in the lead wore a flaming shock of red hair.

Midge and Don! I studied them with all my eyes until I saw with no little concern that the pace had begun to tell upon the smaller man. I cursed worriedly under my breath because the most grueling part of the course was still ahead—the steep rocky trail leading up the side of the great bluff upon which I stood, surrounded by hundreds of tense-faced watchers. Fifty yards behind came a figure in a yellow shirt, which I knew to be Max Stanley. Three more Beavers followed, then two of my men. My last man, and the last Beaver I picked out some time later from the trail of weary runners facing the last punishing mile and a half.

The course up to the base of the hill led through the stubble of wheat fields. Stanley, over this stretch, increased his pace and cut down the distance between my two leaders by about twenty-five yards.

The Hinxton, wide and shallow at this point, flowed along at the base of the bluff. The runners would be forced to wade it, and as Midge and Don flung themselves into the water, I knew that my eyes this time were not mistaken, because Midge hooked his hand into the crook of Don's elbow and was literally towed across the stream. The two lads then forged up the steep slope of the hill, and with my glasses glued to my eyes, conscious of every expression on their faces, I witnessed one of the strangest struggles which ever took place in the history of racing.

The mystery which had always surrounded these two was suddenly clear. The solution flashed into my mind like a bolt of blinding light. I knew now why they were such a splendid team. Each was giving to the other man qualities he himself lacked. It's incredible, but true, and as I watched these lads, I was choked with an emotion which tightened my throat and blurred my eyes to the point where I could no longer use the glasses.

Midge had expended practically all the strength in his slender body. Nothing remained but that flaming, savage spirit, a great unconquerable will.

The boy was actually giving off a force which stimulated the milder char-

acter of Don as electricity is forced into a storage battery. Don, too, was tired, but for the first time in his life he found himself whipped along by a fierce desire to win—a refusal to be beaten.

In return he was pouring out the physical strength of his body to help the man at his side. He squandered his magnificent strength in that last awful climb, as with one hand beneath the arm of Midge he kept the frail youngster upon his feet, at the same time driving his own big body upward with powerful strides of his sturdy legs. The crowd watching the struggle from above, saw something which they will never forget. There was something tremendous in the mutual sacrifice which was suggested in the blazing indomitableness of these two men.

Stanley, coming behind, was performing valiantly, but he, too, was tired, desperately tired, and puzzled as well by the unbelievable behavior of these two men ahead.

A hasty computation of the relative positions of our squad, showed me that we would need the first two places to win.

It seemed impossible that Midge and Don could last that last half mile, but they staggered over the top of the hill and set out grimly for their goal, between the shouting, screaming lines of maniacs which lined the course all the way to the gym.

I was in my car again, following them home by a road parallel to the course.

They were no longer touching each other now, but still that uncanny relationship existed. Their eyes were glazed and their legs moved by instinct, but still I was conscious of that strange exchange of forces. Midge was in some unexplainable way receiving strength from Don's magnificent body while Don's great heart was sustained in its duties by the indomitable courage which pulsated from the smaller man like current from a dynamo.

Stanley was still twenty-five yards behind, fighting with a courage that only a great competitor can show, but the lad on that day was fighting something greater than he had ever fought before, a combination of forces beyond any one's power to understand.

That last half mile was a nightmare, as the three valiant youngsters poured their strength and courage into those last awful yards. They seemed to be submerged in the sea of sound which rose from the frantic throats of the spectators. and actually seemed to beat against the skies above.

I was at the finish line when my two boys staggered across, side by side. I saw Don catch the unconscious form of Midge in his arms and lay him gently on the grass. Other willing hands administered to Stanley.

As I bent over my two brave boys with a constricted throat and blurred eyes, I was interrupted by a touch on the shoulder. It was the president of the university, violently blowing his nose to conceal his emotion.

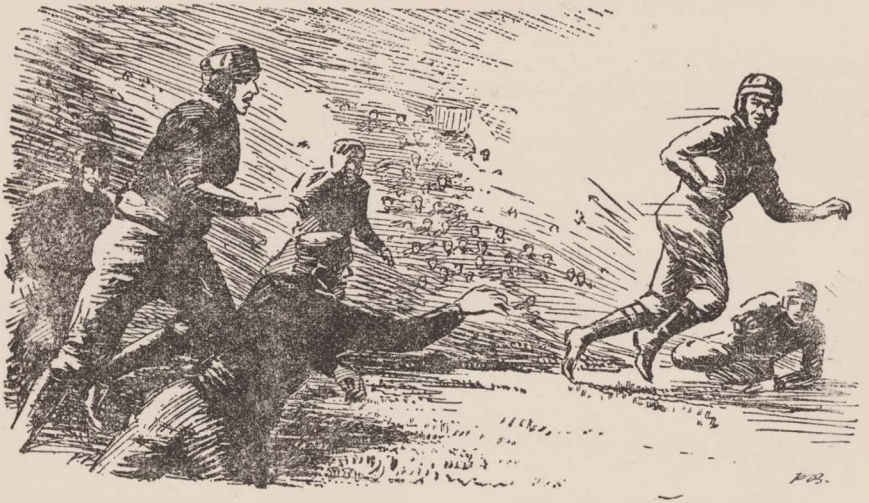
"Coach," he said, "I want to thank you. You have saved the university from a very embarrassing situation."

I turned and glared at him for a moment.

"Saved them," I choked, "be yourself, will you. I had nothing to do with it."

Hooley's Unmentionables

By Robert H. H. Nichols



Beanville University fought a losing game against the Indians until they started using a tropic team for a tropic day.

HERE, boy, two ice-cream cones. E-e-e-yow! Just look at that bare-legged boy run with the ball. E-e-e-yow! Make a touchdown, you Florida alligator! Whoopee! Down with Harvard! Down in front there! Down with everybody!"

I guess that was Bennie yowling like the little mucker he is. It was an early season football game. I had taken Bennie to watch that bare-legged Florida team try and beat Harvard, and now I had plenty to be ashamed of. Though I never studied to be a bond salesman, at Harvard, I am a gentleman for all of that omission, and I know it isn't right to yell "down with Harvard" at any of their football spectacles. It makes the graduate manager sore, then he boosts the price of tickets to keep you out, and you have to buy two bonds instead of only one before you can get a seat behind some post at the Harvard and Yale annual classic.

This was a late September football game, it being one of those years in which the calendar is unfair to fair undergraduates, and so makes them start two weeks earlier or something. It was as hot as an equinox spent on the equator. The heat made that Florida giant tired as he crossed Harvard's thirty-yard stripe, and so Harvard's one-hundred-and-forty-five-pound quarter back sat him down so he could rest up a bit before he made that touchdown. Right at that point the summer football comedy began.

The Florida man fumbled, and this was in the days when fumbles were still golden opportunities and not just something dead for the coaches, the referee and the umpires to argue about where the ball had really died. Harvard's

two-hundred-and-ten-pound half back scooped it up and proceeded irresistibly. Shortly he met up with an immovable body in the shape of three huge Florida line men. The crash sent the ball shooting up in the air like a fungo fly. When it came down it nestled in a Florida man's arms. The poor silly had turned around one too many times waiting for the ball to come down and so was headed for his own goal line when he got underway. Three Florida men tackled that straying brother on the spot. They hit him as though he was a wolf in goat's clothing or something. He got square on them for that by letting go of the ball again. A Harvard man now grabbed it because he figured it must be their turn again. On account of the honest sweat that nearly blinded him after running up and down the field three times following this one play, he couldn't remember which of two goal lines he was supposed to run for.

But Harvard football men are noted for quick thinking. Of course he should run exactly opposite to the way that Florida man had been running. That's how come he started for a touchdown on his own goal line. All this time that Florida center had been circling around and around the field trying to get in on that play some place, but he couldn't catch up with it. He saw that Harvard man coming with the ball and did his duty. He threw that boy outside just ten yards too soon to let him score a touchdown for Florida.

"Summer football," yelled Bennie at me. "That's what that was. It's too hot for football. Nobody can play football in such weather, hey?"

"Why, yes, they can," I protested. "I've seen teams that were better on a hot day than any other."

"What? On a hot day? How come?"

"It depends on the climate they were brought up in," I explained. "Now one time at Beanville University——"

"How the mere mention of that place pains me," sighed Bennie. "I suppose it's an animal story, but never mind. Go on." So I did.

"Get away from me, Hooley, you psychoanalyzing lobster, or every day in every way I'll sock you one better and better."

I guess that was the "Flea," our star quarter back acting awfully rude or something to Algernon Hooley. Hooley was a very thin, spindly, bespectacled gadget who had a wild desire to uplift the football team in a psychological manner. He thought football could be vastly improved by his scientific methods. He had also convinced Dan Weatherspoon, the unseen power at Beanville University, that it could be. So now we were afflicted with Algernon's chatter.

His gab was making the Flea awfully mad, for he wasn't sold on psychology, due to the fact that a double F was the highest mark he had ever received in any of those courses. The Flea just never could seem to remember that out of every ten thousand hombres, one was destined to be a murderer, five bankers, eighty per cent die homeless, and ten per cent without friends, or relatives.

"You psycho guys give me a deep pain," the Flea broadcasted further. "If your figures are so good why can't you tell just which guy in every ten thousand is going to be an unpopular millionaire. You are just a bunch of high brow fortune tellers, that's what. Tie a tin can on yourself and depart quickly, Algernon. The fact that you were the best fourth assistant substitute quarter back Spinksburg High ever had doesn't mean a thing in my young life, see?

"But every time the Spinksburg coach took my advice we won," insisted Hooley. "Every time he did not, Spinksburg lost."

"Do you know what I am going to do, Hooley, old scout?" said the Flea

sunnily. "I am going to give you complete charge of the 'Unmentionables.' If they get as good as the varsity, due to your brilliant coaching, why, maybe I will let them play in a game some time. You may start right out by talking over your theories with Matsi Togo. He won't know any better than to listen to you. He's too polite not to, anyway."

"But old Dan said——"

"That doesn't count. I am captain of the football team and also part of the undergraduate coaching staff that is such a noble experiment. You go on and play ball with the scrubs. I only wish that your father hadn't told you he'd yank you out of college if he caught you playing football again. I'd make you quarter back of the Unmentionables and iron you permanently into the dirt, you dog-gone dizzy pest you."

"Very well," replied Algernon stiffly, and with a haughty air of "so you have spurned my proffered assistance, but you shall rue it anon, aha!" or something. "I will teach my newer and modern craftsmanship to the scrubs, and particularly to the Unmentionables. I will build up a team there that will soon show you just how correct I am in gridiron diagnosis."

"Well, go right along and start it, you cracked crock," howled the Flea. "One of them will probably get sore and take you apart just to see where the extra wheel is located, but I can stand that easy."

Algernon strolled off huffily. He sure was a peculiar gadget. He was nutty about football and he was built for nothing more rugged than playing the violin or a typewriter. For all of that he had spent twelve minutes of play, divided among four games, in his senior year at Spinksburg High and had won all four games by unorthodox maneuvers at critical times. But he had paid a wicked price for victory. In those twelve minutes he had gathered as injuries, one busted nose, four cracked ribs, a new set of front teeth, a cracked wrist and a broken leg. No wonder his fond father had said football was *verboten* for Hooley. But then we'd have gladly told him so anyway, so the father's reservation didn't amount to much. Now, these psychology courses Algernon was taking had made him think he was the greatest football expert on earth.

However, Algernon, for all of his poor physique, did know football, and he had an uncanny memory for plays and weaknesses of other teams. There was method in the Flea's apparent madness in placing him in charge of the Unmentionables. As every one knows, there is always one team of scrubs trained to attack in the plays and formations used by prospective opponents in order to give the varsity good practice in breaking them up. In most colleges they consist of football players who are ineligible for the varsity, and so they are generally called the "Ineligibles." But all of our scrubs were eligible, so we had facetiously dubbed the team in question the Unmentionables.

Algernon got into football togs and got to work. He was a master at the work we had set him to and no mistake about it. If you called for Danhurst to meet you, the Unmentionables were nothing else but. If you asked them to act like Harvard, Hooley had those birds howling for pink tea between the halves. He gave you the plays and the atmosphere both.

"Maybe Hooley is destined to be a great moving-picture director?" the Flea remarked the third or fourth day after we began earnest training.

"I beg pardon, sir," Matsi Togo accosted the Flea just then. Matsi Togo was a Japanese student who was just polite enough to be the exact opposite of the tough-acting Flea. He was a good quarter back, though, and didn't telegraph his plays to the opposition. It was a shame that he was so darned polite. Football isn't exactly a game for

polite people. Still, we were glad that Matsi Togo was with us. If the Flea ever got cracked up, Matsi would do.

"What is it now, Togo, you zigzagging butterfly?" the Flea asked amiably. Togo had wound up the afternoon for the Unmentionables by dodging through the varsity secondary for a touchdown. The Flea had made a deadly tackle, but it was only Togo's lazy little shadow that he killed.

"I desire to apologize to the honorable varsity quarter back for what I, Matsi Togo, propose to think in the immediate future. Mr. Hooley, he says that should ignoble substitute quarter back crave to arise in his profession he should constantly repeat the words of the following tendency. That is to become better I must continually think that I am better and better, and this I must think each day."

"Reduced to simple sentences, Togo, I gather that Hooley has suggested that you begin in every way every day to become better and better, eh?"

"Yes," agreed Togo, "that is precisely it. But question of importance now arises. I grow better and better every day, that is true. Soon, due to this tendency not to become worse, I am better than varsity quarter back now is. That is most uncomfortable position for insignificant substitute to be in. Therefore I humbly request varsity quarter back that he also become better and better."

"You leave that to me, Togo, old top. I will do that very thing. And the sooner you become more better the more worse it will be for our worthy opponents."

Togo departed quite evidently much relieved. He was much too polite to try and cop the Flea's berth as regular quarter back. Now he felt that he could safely go about the business of becoming a better quarter back in every way every day because the Flea had admitted a like ambition.

"What the deuce are you mumbling to yourself, Don Estrada?" I asked two days later during scrimmage with the Unmentionables. "And what's that crazy Arab with you mumbling every time he throws me for a loss?"

"Señor Hooley, he say that the right way to grow in football is that I recite while I play it, 'every day in every way perhaps I am better, who knows.' I think that is it. Well, who knows, perhaps I am with practice? And when I am not, why that does not count anyway."

Like all big universities, Beanville had students from all over the world. They were an enthusiastic bunch and insisted on learning American sports as well as other branches of the college curriculum. Don Estrada, for instance, was a big Spaniard who had openly expressed dreams of starting a brand new sport when he got back to Spain after graduation. It was to be more interesting than bull fighting or football. He was going to toss eleven tough hombres who didn't care a hang into an arena with eleven tough bulls who didn't care that much. The Arabian, who also played on the Unmentionables, was continually trying to dope out some way to play football on horseback.

"I say, my good fellow," a little cockney Englishman hailed me the following afternoon. "The coach of this bally football team now, where is he at now, what?"

"The football coach of this year is divided into four parts," I informed. "You are now speaking to the most important one quarter of that hydra. But don't tell me that you crave to play football?"

"Oh, no, really, no, not at all. A deucedly silly sport, I'm sure. I am Prince Alabastine's man, you know, what? He wishes to learn this silly American game. All rot, you know, what? But I can do nothing. I am his man, you know. I say, you must let

him play football now. It says in your college catalogue that students are allowed to play football. Arrange that please and send the bill to me, what?"

A beturbaned affair showed up at that moment.

"His highness," the cockney informed me.

His highness was six feet two inches high all right. He was plenty wide enough to be football material. He was a Hindu prince who had matriculated at Beanville the year before.

"I understand it is a rough sport," old "Alabaster," as the student body called him, explained in a sighing voice. "I regret that I did not take it up in my freshman year. My countrymen love rough sports, really. If this sport is as rough as I hear it is, it is my duty to learn the game thoroughly that I may teach my people what of it when I return to India. My scholastic standing is such that——"

I just cut him short. "Hey, Hooley!" I yelled. "Here's another nation wants to be admitted to your Unmentionables. He's even got a servant to put on his football pants for him and maybe carry the ball. Try and kill him. If he lives through your efforts, why——"

"Ah, indeed!" murmured Prince Alabastine, a hungry and interested gleam lighting up his black eyes. "I see this will be a wonderful game. Let us start something at once."

"Delighted to meet you, prince," panted Hooley, dashing up. "Say, you are just what I'm looking for as right guard. It's all very simple. It's an easy game; you can tell by the people now playing it. Why, that wisecracker you were just now talking to can play it. Think of it. Almost incredible. Just listen to me and do what I say, and——" They departed to plant old Alabaster on the right side of the Unmentionables' line.

They hadn't any more than got started when "Cowboy" Jones was aware that two young Chinamen had been following him around, waiting for a good chance to say hello or something. "Well, what do you canary birds want?" Cowboy snapped irritably.

"This." They handed over a bulletin that we had posted a few days before for all good men and true to for Heaven's sake report for football P. D. Q. We were having a tough time finding a line. "We wish to play this game. In China there is none such yet. But when we go back perhaps we can teach them that, too, yes?"

"If you live through the terrible experience," growled Cowboy. "Hooley, here are two foreign eggs for the Unmentionables. Come here and get them."

"Ah, capital, capital," exclaimed Algernon Hooley, rubbing his eyes. "I can tell just from sizing you up that you will make two brilliant ends. Just what I'm looking for. Come with me."

"Gee!" crabbed Cowboy Jones a few days later. "I don't mind getting dumped by that big Egyptian every time I try his side of the line, but what is it that danged fool mutters every time I hit him, or rather, he hits me, for a loss?" The Egyptian was another big foreigner that Hooley had known at a glance was a natural born left guard. We asked him what kind of an Egyptian hymn he was singing while he played.

"Not a hymn," he insisted. "Merely a good luck, motto, Mr. Hooley, he gives me. I recite it always like this: 'Every day, every way, better and better I am'!"

"Not a darned one of Hooley's men have old Coué's formula right, but they sure do seem to get better and better just from yelling their own version of it," laughed the Flea.

"Talk about Oberlander's famous battle yell, 'ten thousand Swedes jumped out of weeds,'" remarked "Whitey." "But, say, those Unmentionables are getting awfully hard to stop."

"Unmentionables?" I croaked. "That is the original tower of Babel, and Hooley is making them a tower of strength. Yousouff, that Turk we were thinking of grabbing for the wrestling team, is playing right tackle now. We ought to call them the League of Nations. There aren't many nations who haven't got a representative aboard. And as for stopping them? Say, they're stopping us."

"This wasn't a football day, that's what," the Flea alibied. The Unmentionables had scored two touchdowns on us that very day, and the nearest we had gotten to their goal line was the thirty-yard mark.

"No, it was those two Chinamen they've got at ends," Cowboy grunted. "They seemed to be everywhere. They aren't very big, but they're as tough as a pair of coolie stevedores. They sat me down, politely, that is true, but terribly often and most awfully firm."

"It was the hot weather," insisted the Flea. "Not good football weather at all." It was drawing to the end of September and we were having some real dog days for sure.

Next day as if to prove his statement, it being a raw, cool day, the varsity wrecked the Unmentionables to the tune of thirty-four to nothing. The following day was sweltering again. The best we could get with those dumb swabs was a tie. That ended the scrimmaging before the first game of the season, however, so we had no more of Hooley's experiment for the time being.

We had to play the heavy Army team for a starter. It was a game that had us worried, for the Army is always long on reserves and never fails to have a heavy, strong line. Our line was green almost from end to end, and the part that wasn't was almost as bad. The saving part of the situation was our experienced backfield which consisted of Cowboy Jones, full back; Whitey, and myself, as the two half backs; and the Flea as quarter back. We were also the undergraduate coaches, having an arrangement that I ran the works whenever completely conscious.

It was not mere accident that we were called the "Four Galloping Sea Serpents." In the first place we had played as a unit on bluejacket teams in the navy for a few years. Then coming to Beanville University together after the war we began again as a unit. Playing some of the best teams in the country had failed to wreck us as yet. Still, no matter how good a backfield is, if the line isn't strong, the former has considerable difficulty in functioning.

We did our functioning early in the Army game while the line was still fresh. Forward passing down the field, three passes coupled with two end runs netted a touchdown. After shifting about the field a bit a trick play allowed Cowboy to make the Army ten-yard line after a great forty-yard run through a broken field. Two shots at tackle and a lateral pass, something not often used then, put the ball over for another. But shortly the Army held for downs and got the ball. Their line immediately went to work on us.

We backfield men did all the tackling from the very outset. The whole Beanville line was simply tipped over by the Army forwards on each play and the backs smashed over the line of scrimmage into our secondary defense. It was typical Army football, a game of attrition. When an Army lineman weakened, in came another. *Biff, bang, smash!* Three yards through our tackle, two at center, four at guard, five around end. First down. Then once more: center buck for three yards, split tackle for eight, first down. Five through left guard, two more through him on the next play, a crack at the same hole for eleven more. The left guard is then carted away, wondering how come locomotives are allowed to play in Army uniforms.

Army's first forward pass of the game is grounded. Never mind. They just crack the Beanville center for five yards, then hit him again for six. First down. The center is carried away, for he is now a mere inanimate object cluttering up the scrimmage line. If they stepped on him once more they might kill the poor boy. Touchdown! The point after touchdown is also kicked. Back and start all over again. Half ended? Never mind, there is another one coming. Beanville still leads by a score of fourteen to seven, but any one can see that it won't be long now.

BEANVILLE takes the kick-off. A desperate forward pass put the ball on Army's eighteen-yard line. Two shots at the Army ends lost four yards. A forward pass was knocked down. I dropped back and kicked a field goal. At least that would make the Army play for two touchdowns to win.

In no time they were after us again. Now it was seven yards at guard, ten more at center, fifteen around end, twenty-five on a forward pass, three at guard, eight at tackle, fourteen on a trick play and touchdown. On the next play the extra point after touchdown is rung up and the score is now Army, fourteen; Beanville, seventeen.

We got possession of the ball on a fumble, held it as long as we could and kicked. By a superhuman effort we held for downs at midfield and the third quarter ended with us there. We made a first down, then killed time on three more plays to kick outside on the Army three-yard line. The Army took no chances on exchange of kicks. Once more they began a relentless steam-rolling march. Without a single forward pass they marched down the field making first downs with monotonous regularity on two and three plays through the line. There was no holding them, worse, if we did, there wasn't any chance of scoring, for us famous gallopers in the back field weren't any more than able to stand up by now, due to the pounding we had taken.

A beautiful forward was caught for a touchdown, but an Army man was off side on the play so the ball went back. The man who had thrown it got peeved at this and smashed through our center for a first down. We held, for a wonder, on the twenty-five yard line and after killing time for three plays, each of which lost a yard, kicked back again. Back the Army came smashing and hammering, over the thirty-yard line, now on the twenty, now the ten. Only five minutes to play. Cowboy, Whitey, the Flea, and I prepared to die in our tracks. The Army was going to gamble on a win. It was touchdown or nothing. Four yards through center on the first play. It took all four of us to stop that Army back. The next play netted them two yards at tackle. It was four yards to go in two downs. The play came tearing through center without a signal being called. That Army line hit the four of us and the back field jumped over the top of the pile. The Flea was out cold on this scoring play. I signaled for Matsi Togo to come out and take his place.

The Army kicked the extra point and the score was now twenty-one to seventeen in their favor. We kicked off to them and the ball went outside on Army's seven-yard line. They nearly caught us flat-footed by punting back on the first down—did catch us all but Togo. The ball came whistling down field to plunk smack into the alert little Jap's arms. He was off, slanting across the field like a runaway jack rabbit. Four line men took a shot at him and made big holes in thin air. He reversed and gave five more Army men what looked like easy tackles of empty space. A half back managed to hit him, but only knocked him four feet in the air and couldn't seem to gather him in when he came down. Every one of

those Army men took at least one shot at Togo and some took two. It was a record for team misses. Togo didn't stop running until he hit their goal line, and he crossed it standing up. His run was about three hundred yards long the way he did it, sometimes eight or ten yards toward his own goal line to dodge an Army tackler. As for interference, we were still twenty yards from catching up when Togo scored. There were a few more plays in this game, but they were unnecessary. The little Japanese quarter back had turned the tide of victory on this one play. The end of the game saw the score Beanville University, twenty-three; Army, twenty-one.

Little Matsi Togo, not a pound over one hundred and thirty-five pounds, took his place in the Beanville Hall of Fame. Of course we went right to work on Matsi to make him the regular understudy for the Flea. He learned all of the Flea's tricks and had plenty of his own, but he never seemed to be able to get going, except when we had him running old Algernon Hooley's Unmentionables. Once he got the reins on that miscellaneous collection of irresponsibles hailing from ten or twelve different equatorial nations he began to feel right at home. If it was a nice sunny day, Togo and "The League of Nations" would give the varsity a royal licking, but if a chilly breeze blew, it seemed as though those birds just lost all interest in football and became downright terrible. So we never knew whether to bring them up to the varsity or let them ride where they were, and the net result was that they just remained in status quo you might say. They seemed much happier so.

THE next game was an easy one for us, played on a chilly October day, and Beanville won it, thirty-five to three, without much effort. It was the next game that had us worried, however. We were conditioning this green line of ours carefully. Our real objective was the last two games of the season and we wanted to win them. But here in the third game was perhaps the toughest game on our whole schedule. This contest was with none other than the famous Taskella Indians. We prayed for a cool day and got what we didn't want, a hot, sticky, muggy day, which is the despair of all football coaches and the undoing of many a good team.

The crowd sweltered in the stadium as the two teams took the field. The huge Indian line looked as though it could stand the heat if any football team could. Our new line was not in tip-top condition by any means. We hadn't dared to point for this game. The Indians won the toss and elected to receive. It was a good idea. Taking the ball on their own three-yard line, they marched steadily up the field for a touchdown. It was just a question of seven big Indians sitting on seven Beanville line men while the backs went tearing by or something. Cowboy, Whitey, the Flea, and I had our hands full stopping them.

We weren't much better at standing excessive heat than our line was, and we were doing practically all of the defensive work. And it was defensive work and no mistake. Those Indians just insisted on keeping that ball all through the first half. When the second half started with every line man we had on the bench, having been in at least once, the score was twenty-one to nothing against us. It looked like curtains for Beanville. Practically every Indian runner tackled had been tackled by us four back-field men. If we ever did get the ball now we were entirely too near to being all done to break away for our usual brilliant running attack.

The half opened up with the Indians staging another terrific assault at our line. It was melting before the heavy Indians like butter under a midday sun. I noticed glumly that the Indian line

was now pretty tired, too. They didn't like hot football weather any more than we did, they just happened to be in better condition, that was the answer. But what good did it do me to note that they were tired? It was increasingly evident that a strong fresh line would be able to tramp all over them in these last two quarters even as they had over us in the first two, but we had nothing left to throw at them. While I was pondering this fact, an Indian back came tearing through for a long gain. I got him, but his interference stepped on my countenance and other tender places during the process. When I waked up they were supporting me off the field, and our stands were giving me a cheer, though just what for was hard to determine. I was all through, but still conscious. I would automatically coach from the side lines.

On the very next play the Flea was buried under half a ton of Indians on our six-yard line. He was groggy when he was extricated. There was nothing to do but pull him. Might as well let Matsi Togo get in a little practice. I sent him in to replace the Flea. Matsi signalized his entry by smearing the next Indian play for a two-yard loss. Meanwhile, watching Matsi do it had given me one of those sudden inspirations of the sort that made me the greatest undergraduate coach ever inflicted upon a suffering team. My eye scanned the bench. I needed a new fresh line. I didn't have one, or, or—well, why not? It was hot weather. I gave a surreptitious signal to Matsi to have some one collapse for time out. The right guard was tickled to death to do so. Then I grabbed Hooley, standing there in football togs with the Unmentionables huddled around him. Incidentally they were the only football players on the field actually wearing blankets.

"Those boys of yours, what's their scholastic standing? Are they all eligible? Tell me quick," I snapped.

"Those foreigners? Say, they are real students. Most of them are honor men. They know what college is all about. Which one do you want?"

"All of them. This is a hot day, and those boys come from hot countries. They can stand the pace on a hot day like this. Send them in, and remember, I want an offense and nothing else."

Hooley gasped. "You're right. Why didn't I think of that? Say, Yale beat those Injuns last week and my crowd are simply nutty about the Yale plays because they're so dog-gone rough. Let them use the Yale plays—and say. They are used to me coaching them. You'd better——"

"Anything. Even that to win. It's your golden opportunity. Get them out there, psychology and all."

"The big day is here, gang," yelled Hooley. "Get out there and eat them up. Yale plays and nothing else. Tell Matsi that."

"Every day in every way, we are better and better!" that crowd of miscellaneous nations chanted as they eagerly took the field. The crowd in the great stadium sat stunned. Nothing like this had ever been seen on an American gridiron before. Reporters hurriedly came and asked me to spell all the trick names for them as the Unmentionables streamed out. I give them here with their nicknames and nationalities:

Togo, Matsi Togo, quarter back, Japanese; Don, Don Estrada, right half, Spanish; Ali Baba, Ali Ben Adam, left half, Arabian; Toots, Tootuhammegand, full back, Hawaiian; Siki, Jeanne Sarki, center, Morrocan; Alabaster, Prince Alabastine, right guard, Hindu; Bow Wow, Kur Yousouff, right tackle, Turk; Tank, Tankatumen, left guard, Egyptian; Moe, En Mordalay, left tackle, Siamese; Sooey, Soy Lee Wing, right end, Chinese; Oolong, Sing Hoy Long, left end, Chinese.

They swept out on the field as though this was one of the most invigorating days they had ever seen. In fact, a

couple of them swung their arms about as though they had got slightly chilled sitting idle in that ninety-degree temperature, with nothing but an extra blanket over them. The referee scratched his bald spot and accepted them. The red men took one look at them and prepared to scalp all four continents represented. The fact that the four different shades that go to make up mankind were facing them on this one team, didn't mean a thing to our aborigines.

"Signals!" shouted the Indian quarter back, preparing for a score. "Ninety-one, two, twenty-seven, four, three, two, one."

Smash! There on the field lay a surprised Indian line. On top of them sat a fresh and determined Beanville line for the first time that day. Two speeding Chinamen, holding down the Beanville end berths, hit the Indian runner just as he tucked the ball under his arm. It popped into the waiting hands of Don Estrada as he hurled himself over the prostrate Indian line. He was away like a flash. In the short space of time it takes to run the length of the field he had rung up a touchdown. The Beanville stands went crazy. Matsi Togo kicked the extra point.

The Indians kicked off. Togo went through the whole field with beautiful interference to their forty-five-yard line. On the next play, Sing Hoy Long took a forward pass and wasn't dropped until he hit the Indians' ten-yard line. The Beanville Unmentionables were lined up at the whistle. As it blew, Togo slapped his hands smartly, the ball was passed to Don Estrada and he hit the Indian line like an express train adrift on a down grade. He knocked all three Indian backs kicking while Togo dumped their quarter and scored. As he kicked the extra point the score had become fourteen to twenty with Beanville still behind.

The Indians in the stands were now crazy again. They were yelling for the touchdown that would surely make their lead safe. Beanville's line promptly smeared the first play for a four-yard loss. The two teams lined up again. It was a trick play and caught the Unmentionables flat-footed. The Indian runner got through the scrimmage line with a man in front for interference. It looked like a sure touchdown. On the one-yard line the interferer dived for Togo, missed him, and Togo slapped the runner down on the six-inch stripe. That saved things temporarily.

Quickly the Indians lined up and tried to batter through center for the necessary six inches. After the pile of bodies had been unravelled, it was found that the Indians had lost a good three inches on the play. They lined up for another smash. It was merely a trick. The quarter back grabbed the ball and raced back to toss a forward. He shot it—it was going to go—it was a score. No! A flashing yellow hand had reached up and knocked the ball down. It was Beanville's ball on her nine-inch line.

Don Estrada carried the ball out four yards. Ali Baba crashed left tackle for New Indians came rushing in. They were going to batter down this Beanville line with overwhelming reserves. But this team of ten nations inured from babyhood to hot weather, simply outsweated them. For a few plays the Indians drove them back, steadily but surely, but lost men at every yard in doing it. After making three first downs against this Beanville stonewall, they were all in again. It was now well into the fourth quarter, and the Indians had the ball on Beanville's thirty-yard line. Here the Unmentionables rallied and held for downs.

Togo had the ball again, and that was just what he craved. The fourth quarter was quickly fading, but his line was still strong. He opened up another tremendous march down the field. Virtually dying in their tracks the Indians fought to hold them. Don Estrada

smashed through right tackle for five yards. Ali Baba crashed left tackle for three more. Toots, the huge full back, tore through center for seven yards and a first down. Oolong, the Chinese left end, took a forward pass for twelve yards and another first down. Toots smashed holes in the center three successive times for another first down. Ali Baba skirted right end for sixteen more. Don Estrada cracked the same end for four. They plunged and bucked past midfield like so many maniacs. The spirit of American football had suddenly gripped these foreign students and whipped them into a wild frenzy. It had ceased to be merely an interesting sport. It was a grim life and death tussle which they were duty bound to win for their college.

Smash! Crash! Thud! Crash! The march continued, through center, around end. Battering through everything the Indians had to offer, these four shades of skin continued their inexorable progress down the field. Thirty-five-yard line, but only three minutes now left to play. The Indians were stiffening desperately. Their stands were praying for them to hold. The Beanville stands were shouting for the Unmentionables to mow them down. Would the Unmentionables be able to make the goal in time?

One more play. Ali Baba, twisting and squirming like a dancing dervish, made a first down on the Indians' fifteen-yard line. A little over two minutes and a half left to play. Togo took the ball on a trick play and fell. Two Indians crashed him onto the dirt as he tried to get up and get clear. He lay there very still on the Indians' twenty-two-yard line.

The Indians were in a frenzy of joy. There was only two more minutes to play. That demon Japanese quarter back of Beanville's who had been running riot was out cold. He was being carried to the side lines with a broken leg. That iron team of his that didn't seem to mind the terrific heat would surely go to pieces now. It was all over.

Over on the Beanville side lines Cowboy, Whitey, the Flea, and I felt sick as we saw the chances of victory go so suddenly aglimmering. "What to do for a quarter back?" I muttered, hastily looking over the available substitutes. I motioned to one in despair.

"Here! Stop that!" a voice snapped at my elbow. "I am still running those Unmentionables. I have a quarter back selected." That was that dumb egg of an Algernon Hooley asserting himself again.

"Produce him," I howled. "What have you got better than that one?"

"The best one in this college," growled Hooley. To our dismay he grabbed a loose headguard and slipped it on.

"Come back here, you dizzy numskull," we yelled. "You'll get killed and your father will take you out of college besides."

"He can go to blazes—and you birds with him," Algernon yelled back. The next moment he was reporting to the referee—a scarecrow in football togs if ever there was one.

Two minutes to play, and the next play was wasted so that Hooley could get a chance to talk to the Unmentionables. One minute and a half, they were in huddle a bare second. Then Hooley dropping well back began to shout.

"Every day!" The team suddenly spread out in an open formation.

"Every way!" shouted Hooley again. There was another rapid shift. It seemed that the line now consisted of sets of twos. The back field was well back.

"Better!" yelled Hooley as they paused a bare fraction of a second. The ball came straight and true to him. What followed was a masterpiece of prearranged strategy. The whole left side of the line came out to run interference for him as Hooley slanted off suddenly to

the right. The right side of the line let the left side of the Indian line come through and the three backs and part of Beanville's left side flattened them as they came. Hooley went over and passed them with some of his left side linemen still ahead of him and all of the right side. The Indians' secondary was smashed out as fast as they came up by these men. It was two flying ends who caught and hit Hooley on the Indians' two-yard line. But they never stopped him. Like a great battering-ram, Ali Baba, following closely in his wake, butted into the pile and with a mighty heave hurled the five or six hundred pounds of humanity far over the goal line. Hooley's forward progress had not been checked. The touchdown scored. The score was tied.

Hooley was white and shaky as he quickly lined the Unmentionables up again for the try at an extra point. He held his right arm queerly, there was an ugly red smear beneath his nose guard. But he prepared to kick the extra point for all of that, with Don Estrada kneeling to hold the ball.

The whistle blew. The ball was snapped. Ali Baba caught it. He turned and threw it far over to the left and over the goal line. Under the ball a racing end ducked, shot up long, capable yellow fingers and plucked the pigskin down. The extra point after touchdown was won, scored with a forward pass from scrimmage. As the ball was booted for another kick-off the timer's gun was heard. Beanville's Unmentionables had come off victorious with a score of twenty-one to twenty, the first strictly hot-day team I ever saw.

IT was less than half an hour later, and we four varsity back-field men were grouped around Hooley's cot in the infirmary. He had a broken arm of course. He sure was brittle porcelain. In the next cot was Matsi Togo who had acquired a broken leg in becoming famous. An agitated individual came in unannounced. As I saw Hooley's face pale, I knew that this must be the stern parent. It was.

"Son, you've been playing football again. Son, I saw you playing it. What was it I said I'd do if you ever played again?"

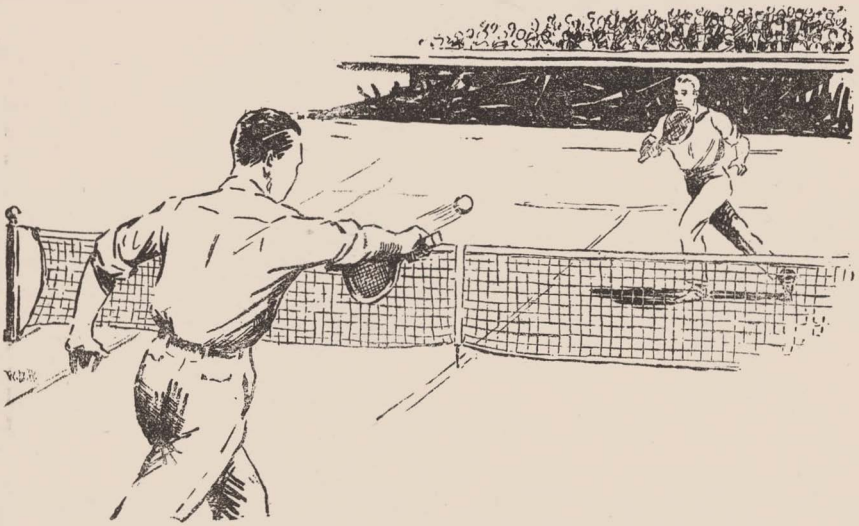
Hooley's lips were dry. He wet them and then said huskily:

"Why you said you'd yank me out of college, dad. Go ahead and yank."

"Consider yourself yanked, reinstated and readmitted, my boy. I'm proud of you." He placed a reassuring hand on Algernon's good one. The rest of us slipped away from there and left them alone, while Matsi Togo turned his head away so that Algernon would never know he had seen the tears in our hero's eyes. The Japanese are awfully polite about the little things that really count.

One Gentleman's Game

By Ralph Henry Barbour



Jerry Leeds had the intolerance of youth, but he succumbed to the gallantry of his expected opponent and played the game as a sportsman should.

MR. LEEDS, forty-six, militantly youthful, sipped his coffee and read the stock market news. Jerry, nineteen, life-wearied, gulped chilled orange juice and perused the sports page. Mrs. Leeds seldom came down to breakfast, but had she been at the table this late June morning she would undoubtedly have given her attention to the steamship sailings.

Jerry peered over the top of his paper, his good-looking, tanned countenance showing faint annoyance. "Dad," he asked, "what do you know about the Chandler Cup?"

Mr. Leeds wooed his thoughts from the stock market with an obvious effort. "The Chandler Cup? I know that it was lost, found again and is being put up next month by the Winding Brook Club."

"Well, but what's its romantic history? How did it get lost? I never heard of it before."

"There was quite a lot in the papers along in November, but I believe you told me once that you hadn't time for the papers in college. 'Romantic history,' you say? Well, curious, anyway. The Chandler Cup went up first in—let's see—yes, 1913. Loring Brattle got his name on it that year. Then Peterson won it the next time. Brattle got his second leg in 1915. I saw that match. Peterson was runner-up. It went five sets. In 1916 a fellow named Hendrix won—Brattle was off at a training camp, I think—and was, of course, given custody of the cup. Then the war came along and there were no tournaments held for a couple of years. When they were started again the cup

couldn't be found. It appeared that Hendrix had been killed in France and that his widow had moved away, no one knew where. So Winding Brook put up a new trophy—two, I fancy, during the next eight or nine years. Then, early last winter, the cup turned up again. Mrs. Hendrix had run across it among some things that had been stored after her husband's death. He had gone off to training camp before it was time to return the thing and she had forgotten it. You say there's something about it in there?"

"Quite a lot, sir. Care to read it? That chap Brattle is staging a comeback, it seems."

"Brattle? Incredible! Why the man's at least forty!"

"Forty-two, if this is correct." The paper crossed the table, and Mr. Leeds read the half-column story.

"Well, well," he mused. "Old Loring Brattle! By Jove, the chap's plucky. Of course he hasn't a chance in the world to win that last leg and get the cup, but I like his grit. A very handsome gesture, eh?"

"If you like, sir. Rather theatrical, I'd say, and a bit silly."

"Theatrical! Silly? What's silly about it? Why shouldn't he have another try at it if he wants to?"

"Oh, quite all right, dad. Only I've heard you say a hundred times that a man's game starts downhill after he's thirty, and this chap's forty-two. No reason why a man of his age shouldn't amuse himself with tennis, but entering a tournament—well, seems to me he's acting the silly goat, sir."

Mr. Leeds frowned. "Not at all, not at all! Brattle can't play the game he once did, of course, but that doesn't mean that he's out of tennis. In his time he was awfully good. He had about the nicest backhand I ever saw, and I've seen them all, including Pell's. And he had plenty more. He had strategy and finesse; in short, brains. He used his head, Jerry. And if you youngsters think he's going to be easy you're mistaken. The man who meets him has got to be smart!"

"Ever play Mr. Brattle, sir?"

"Twice. Southampton in—yes, 1906. West Side the next year. He put me out of the second round each time." Mr. Leeds' tone became wistful. "Loring Brattle was one chap I always wanted to beat. And I never did."

"He must have been awfully good, sir," murmured Jerry.

"Well, he was never ranked among the first ten, of course, but he was harder to win from than some who were." Mr. Leeds impaled his pince-nez on the index finger of his right hand and regarded them thoughtfully. This talk of Loring Brattle had brought the old days very near, the old days of glorious competition and, alas, blighted hopes. He had been in his time a great tennis player in everything save performance. In the brave days when Larned and Whitman, Wright and Ward had held their sway he had fought determinedly to win his way into the company of the elect, and he had failed. He had been with them but never of them. He had played the best of them—he could give you dates and scores from a remarkable memory—but seldom in tournaments, although year after year his name had appeared in the brackets at Longwood and Chestnut Hill, Newport and the Pier; wherever, in fact, white balls flew above turf or gravel. But he knew the game; few better in theory; and for all of ten years he had patiently and unceasingly—and at last proudly—implanted his knowledge in his son.

He had had an apt pupil, for Jerry surely must have inherited the elder's passion for the game. The boy took to it as a duck to water, and, being supplied with both the physical and mental essentials of a tennis player, he progressed surprisingly. At sixteen he had

been invincible on the home court and Number One amongst the juniors at the Suttondale Tennis Club. At preparatory school he had captured most of the honors, had eventually captained his team and now, at college, was continuing his triumphal advance. Two days before he had reached the semi-finals at Westchester, yielding there to a flashy collegian from the Coast. Jerry's success was as the breath of life to his father who was seeing his own earlier hopes about to be realized, if only by proxy.

"I fancy I'll enter for the singles at Winding Brook, dad," said Jerry in the tone of one to whom nothing much matters.

"Eh?" ejaculated his father. "My dear fellow, why on earth?"

Jerry shrugged gracefully. "Well, I'll be through at Merion the last of the week, and the Seabright thing doesn't start until July thirtieth. That leaves me at rather a loose end, sir. This Eastern Counties Tournament at Winding Brook begins the sixteenth. It would sort of fill in, eh?"

"But Winding Brook! Rather like barnstorming, isn't it? All right for mug-hunters, of course, but for you it——"

"Fact is, sir, mug-hunting's rather what I have in mind. It's this Chandler Cup. It sort of appeals. Has a history, as the chap there says. It's a bit out of the ordinary. Interesting. Rather an aristocrat among trophies, if you see what I mean. I'd sort of like to get my name on it, sir."

"Yes, of course. Certainly it stands for more than the run of 'em. Only thing is, son, you're not likely to find any one very good. Oh, perhaps a couple of low rankers, but the rest distinctly third class, I fancy."

"This fellow Brattle, of course."

"Yes, Brattle. But he's not likely to give you much of a game, Jerry. The paper says he hasn't been in a tournament since the war, and you know what that means. And then, his age. Yes, and seems to me I read that he got pretty well shot up over there. Came back a major, I believe, with a lot of decorations and minus a rib or something. No, I'm afraid you can't count on much opposition there."

"Dare say I can get some of the chaps at Merion to go along. Blinky and Steve Bishop and Dick Somers. They're not above a bit of slumming now and then. Well, I'd better go up and see about packing my bags. See you Saturday evening, dad."

HE found Winding Brook not such a dump, after all, when he arrived three weeks later. The courts were excellent, the clubhouse comfortable and, while there promised to be a dearth of social or tennis acquaintances, the folks who thronged the verandas and corridors that Monday morning were presumably respectable, moderately smart and probably representative of local aristocracy. Jerry and "Blinky" Bancroft received guest cards and were put up. Somers and Bishop, Jerry's other recruits lodged at the inn, half a mile distant. The tournament had brought a large if not important gathering of players. Some of the names were familiar to Jerry, but most were not. There were two seeded entries in the singles, Randal and Bosworth, respectively seventeenth and twentieth in last year's ranking. Not seeded, but favored with a bye in the lower bracket, was Loring Brattle. Since Jerry was in the upper bracket his chance of meeting Brattle was, short of a miracle, nil, and he had, he now realized, nursed an unsuspected desire to show Mr. Brattle, preferably in straight sets, that tennis was a sport sacred to youth and that the aged and infirm would do better to confine their creaking activities to golf. Yes, he experienced quite a pang of disappoint-

ment when he and Blinky inspected the drawings. Some of the savor had gone.

An ironical Fate which presides at all tournament drawings had bracketed him with Steve Bishop in the first round, and it so became his painful duty to eliminate Steve that Monday afternoon. That it required three sets, two of which went to deuce, to attain the result somewhat comforted his victim. After their showers they picked up Blinky and Dick Somers and sped over to the inn and drank tea with some otherwise intelligent folks who thought Henri Cochet a man milliner. But they went back to the club for dinner, and a casual acquaintance of Blinky's pointed out Loring Brattle at a distant table.

Well, he didn't look forty-two, Jerry reflected, not by half-a-dozen years; although why the fact should have slightly irritated him was not patent. Brattle proved to be a tall, muscularly slim and rather distinguished appearing man, eminently good-looking and with, so far as Jerry could discern across the room, most of his hair and teeth. His eyes looked lightish, perhaps blue, although that might be only because his face was so deeply tanned. There were two ladies at the table with him, and one, the very pretty, slight one, was his wife. Jerry's thought was that once, fifteen or twenty years ago, she must have been a winner. He liked pretty women, impersonally, but he preferred them less frail and tired-looking —and younger. He never felt quite at ease, although he successfully hid the fact, with women of thirty or over. Nevertheless his eyes returned at intervals to Mrs. Brattle.

Loring Brattle had, it seemed, appealed to the sentimental side of the public by his reëntry into the arena, and, perhaps taking their cue from the sports writers, apparently hard-boiled flappers and battle-visaged dowagers went around cooing how wonderful it would be if that handsome Mr. Brattle should really win the singles and get the Chandler Cup! And not only the femmes, either, for here was Dick echoing the same great thought. "Of course," said Dick, adding a third loaf of sugar to his coffee, "he hasn't a Chinaman's chance, but it would be corking if he came through, eh? Poetic justice, you know. That sort of thing."

"Can't see it," said Jerry in his best —quoting Blinky—"nonkalant and blaze" manner. "It's just a play to the gallery. He knows darn well he can't make the quarter-finals. When a man's through he's through, and he ought to realize it and quit. If he wanted to get his third leg on that cup he should have gone after it ten or twelve years ago, not waited till he was over forty."

"All very well, but look here, Jerry."

Dick was silenced with a glance, and Jerry went on with the stern implacability of nineteen: "My dad plays darn good tennis, as some of you chaps know. He used to play with Larned and Clothier and Ward and that crowd years ago, and he's not much older than Brattle. Well, he gave up tournaments when he was twenty-nine. You don't see him cluttering up the courts, trying to act like a two-year-old! And he can still take a set off me when he's going good and I don't run him too hard."

"Well, I can't see why Brattle hasn't a perfect right to try a come-back, Jerry. Heck, he isn't in any one's way! I hear he hasn't played in a match for two or three years until last month. He got the news about this cup being found and how they were putting it up again and made up his mind to have a go at it. You know he's got two legs on it already, and if he did manage to——"

"Yeah, we read the papers, too," said Steve. "I don't suppose he's got a chance, Dick, so there's no call to get het up. He's a game guy, though, I'll say that for him."

"What's game about it?" asked Jerry wearily. "Any one can enter and play a couple of matches. He gets a lot of stuff in the papers, and his picture, of course, and folks tell him he's a hero. Sorry, old dear, but I can't see it."

"Oh, you're just a crab on the subject," answered Blinky good-humoredly. "Snap out of it. I'm going to try and see him play to-morrow. Like to get a line on that backhand of his. They tell me that when he was at his best he had the smoothest backhand in the history of the game. Used to be able to put the old ball on the head of a tack with it. He must have been good!"

"Of course he was," murmured Jerry. "Fifteen years ago."

The following evening Blinky reported. Loring Brattle had played his first match and won it, 6-2, 6-3, from a local star, and his second, in the quarter-finals, against a more worthy opponent, he had taken at 4-6, 7-5, 8-6. Blinky had witnessed the second encounter. How, Jerry asked boredly, was the famous backhand?

Blinky grinned. "Queer," he answered.

"Queer!"

"Absolutely. He uses both hands."

"Not really!" Dick protested.

"Fact. Like this." Blinky arose and demonstrated. "They say his left hand only steadies the racket, but I don't know. Looked to me like it was doing some of the work."

"I'll be darned," Steve declared. "Did he always do that or is it something new?"

"Search me. Any way, he made it work pretty nicely, and that's more'n I do sometimes with one hand! Not that Whoosis gave him many chances. The way that guy kept to Brattle's forehand was funny! Of course he couldn't always do it, but he sure did try."

"What happened when he didn't" Jerry asked.

"Well, not so much. Brattle's returns were mighty safe and accurate. He looked as though he could put the old ball about where he chose, but they had no zip. But"—and Blinky chuckled and waved his cigarette—"he didn't fool me. What the old fox was doing was playing possum. He was trying to make his backhand look weak, so Whoosis would play to it. But it didn't come off. The other fellow didn't bite. He had troubles enough anyhow. Almost ran his legs off in the second set trying to get Brattle's placements. And, say, he had so many styles of serves—Brattle, I mean—you never knew what was coming!"

"Sort of a show-off, eh?"

"No, you're wrong there, Jerry. Way I figure it, he knows a lot of tricks that'll win a point and doesn't hesitate to use 'em. Boy, you've got to watch goggle-eyed if you play him!"

Jerry suppressed a yawn. "I don't expect to."

"Why not? If you take your match with Bosworth to-morrow and Brattle beats Randal you'll come together in the finals."

"Quite so, but I don't anticipate winning from Bosworth, and I certainly don't expect Brattle to put away a player like Randal."

"No, but he might. I saw him play, like I'm telling you fellows, and there's no use trying to make him out a has-been. And as for you beating Bosworth, Jerry, why, I'll bet you ten dollars you do. Look at the way you came through to-day!"

"I had some luck," said Jerry modestly.

Later, but at an early hour for him, Jerry deserted his companions in the tap room—the name still lingered although the taps had long since gone dry—and virtuously made his way along the veranda toward the stairs and bed. To-morrow's match would be a tough one, and he didn't share Blinky's

optimism. He would, he assured himself resolutely, get a lot of sleep and cut down on cigarettes until the job was done. The evening was warm, and of those who had dined at the club many were loath to leave and still sat in groups along the porch. Jerry was forced to steer a careful course, and in avoiding one group he came face to face with an open French window. The sight of a small desk with a hooded light above it in the room beyond decided him to sacrifice a quarter of an hour of slumber and write a note to his father.

He stepped inside, selected a desk in a corner, found paper in the rack and a pen that wasn't too bad and then let his gaze wander in search of inspiration. Through the mellow gloom, from the far end of the apartment came soft glintings. He raised his head higher above the back of the desk, avoiding the rays of the light, and looked again. A table draped with a white cloth took shape, and, on it, a brave array of silver trophies from whose polished surfaces the light reflected wanly. Those were the tournament prizes, ready for display on the porch to-morrow, and among them, towering nobly stood the Chandler Cup. Jerry promised himself a look at it when his letter was finished.

A murmur of voices disturbed him presently and he looked disapprovingly toward the doorway. Two forms entered and without a glance in his direction went to the table. They were a tall man and a smallish woman. The man was lifting the Chandler Cup from the table and the woman was bending close. They were reading the inscriptions on it. Jerry's head disappeared again, turtle-wise. His pen moved on. Then the woman was talking.

"Fifteen years ago! It doesn't seem possible, dear. Why, I was incredibly young. Nineteen. Think of it! And —and I was pretty then, wasn't I, Loring? Sort of."

"Prettiest and sweetest kid in the world, Nancy, and still are." Jerry recognized them now. His pen stopped again and he peered cautiously over the barrier. Though he couldn't discern such details, he knew they were holding hands. And now the woman's head nestled against the shoulder beside her as she answered, just short of laughing: "You're an old darling, even if you do tell horrible lies."

Jerry liked her voice tremendously. Hearing it was somehow like stroking velvet.

"Fifteen years," said Mrs. Brattle wonderingly, and then was silent.

"'Thornton Peterson, 1914.' Wonder what ever became of him. Remember the last set he and I played, Nancy? It went to 14-12. I wasn't so awfully bad then, was I?" There was a wistful appeal in the words, and the woman answered quickly.

"You were wonderful, dear, and you still are."

There was a chuckle. "Who's telling them now? Well, I could play a bit, if I do say it."

"You can play now, and you know it. Just look at to-day!"

"Yes, but it came frightfully hard. I'm trying not to let these youngsters know, but I'm afraid the cat will be out of the bag to-morrow."

"I oughtn't to be listening to this," thought Jerry dismayedly. He wanted to cough or rustle the paper, but just then the big cup was put back and he didn't. They'd be going now."

"Nonsense, dear," Mrs. Brattle was saying. "I just know you're going to win to-morrow's match and Thursday's match and get the cup. It won't be fair if you don't. You ought really to have it. It's ours, Loring. Why, it was that cup that brought us together. Fifteen years ago!"

"Not so much the cup, Nancy, as that porch rocker. Remember stumbling against it and sitting down in my lap?"

"Nothing of the sort! I mean I didn't sit in your lap."

"Would have if the chap with you hadn't caught you. Cheeky beggar I thought him."

"He was rather nice," she murmured. "His name was—was—what was his name, dear? Oh, well! But what I do remember is the perfectly brazen way you ran around to find some one to introduce us!"

"Brazen? Not a bit of it. Besides, how could I do less? There you were on the porch simply begging me to hurry——"

"Oh, you beast!"—She was pinching him, Jerry told himself distastefully—"Of all the conceited—— Well, anyway, you weren't supposed to see it!" They laughed together softly.

"Oh, Lord, they'll be kissing next!" groaned the eavesdropper. "Won't they ever go?"

And then they did, the man's arm about the woman, their speech only murmurs. Jerry kept his head down and held his breath, but they never saw him. When they had gone he scowled darkly. "Silly old fool," he muttered. "Spooning all over the club!" Then the scowl faded. Oh, well, folks had probably been like that fifteen years ago. Fifteen years ago, eh? Mrs. Brattle must have been a knock-out then, with her looks and that velvety voice. His heart stirred a little, and then, "Oh, heck!" he muttered and picked up his pen once more. "Anyway, if he runs up against me he will have to play tennis, because if he thinks, or she thinks either, that I'm going to let a lot of mushy sentiment make any difference in my game he's crazy. If he wants that cup he can darn well earn it!"

THE doubles matches were in full swing when he got down the next morning, and after looking on a while from the veranda he sent a boy up to his room for his rackets and went out to the practice board. He wasn't to have it to himself, for Loring Brattle was using one face of it. He was practicing backhand strokes as Jerry approached, and Blinky hadn't lied. He was actually using both hands! But at the sound of Jerry's feet on the gravel the ball went to the forehand and remained there; at least until, after an exchange of nods and murmured "Good mornings," Jerry had passed around to his own side. Monotonously slapping the ball against the wall, Jerry thought about that strange backhand; wondered why the other had so quickly switched at his coming. He sought to connect those things with what he had heard in the writing room last night, recalled Mrs. Brattle's voice, and lost a ball in the shrubbery.

He came through that afternoon without great difficulty. Bosworth forced him to four sets, but Jerry was having one of his good days and after he had dropped the first set, more in the spirit of inquiry than because he was put to it, the flatteringly large gallery rightly predicted the outcome. He took the match 4-6, 7-5, 6-3, 6-4. He tried to get to Number One court before the Randal-Brattle match ended, and, after he had had his shower and had redressed, was barely successful. They were on the last set, Dick told him. Brattle had taken the first two at 6-4, had dropped the third at 3-6 and was now leading, at 6-5. Perhaps those about him on the veranda didn't suspect it, perhaps even Randal didn't, but Jerry, in the light of the admission overheard last evening, knew that the older man was fighting on nerve alone; that utter exhaustion threatened him, and that if he didn't win in the next two or three games he never would. Actually the man's hand was shaking as he worked the three balls into position between his fingers. As he swung it up a whitish scar flashed in the sun-

light, a pale broad stripe against the surrounding sunburn. Jerry recalled what his father had told him about Loring Brattle's war services, but then a tricky floating serve was smashed into the net by Randal and his interest concentrated on the play.

He discovered that his sympathies, so long antagonistic to Brattle, had suddenly veered. He wanted Brattle to win. Oh, he hadn't really changed his opinions, but, hang it, when a fellow makes as stubborn and up-hill a fight as Brattle had made to reach the semi-finals you couldn't help wanting him to come through.

Brattle sped a hard return down the side line to his adversary's left, moved cautiously toward the fore court, took a hard cross shot on the volley and sped it into the opposite right corner. Jerry saw the puff of lime-dust with a vast relief. Randal made a desperate effort to reach the ball, but failed. Thirty-love, now. Brattle was serving again, on his toes, his racket arching aloft. A slamming shot crossed the net, struck close to the half-court line and bounded so high that Randal's careful, studied stroke was netted. Forty-love! The veranda was very still. Jerry found his hands clinched in the pockets of his blazer, relaxed them, smiled ironically at Dick to show himself superior to the tense weaklings about him. But Dick wasn't looking. Brattle was on his toes once more. This time his first swift serve went out of court. He served again, slicing craftily. The white ball seemed to hesitate above the net, then, relenting, dropped over. Randal leaped. The ball bounced, curving erratically toward the post, a weak, spiritless thing, and Randal's racket swept against it. Brattle stepped aside and the ball struck high against the backstop. The club veranda went wild with applause. It was easy to see who the favorite was!

Jerry grinned, then smoothed his features quickly to an expression of faint and unconcerned amusement.

"The Old Guard triumphs," he said to Dick. "Let's find a dish of tea."

At the table, munching a cake, Blinky's carelessness was overdone. "Think you can take him to ride to-morrow?" he asked.

"Yes, don't you?"

"Oh, sure! That is—well, I'll tell you, Jerry. He's snaky! He sure is snaky!"

"Snakes die at sunset, Blinky."

"Huh? What do you mean, snakes die——"

Jerry shrugged. "To beat Brattle all any fellow need do is to take him to five sets. He played four just now and was all in. To-morrow I'll grab the first, drop the next two if he puts up an argument and then run out."

Blinky's face lighted. "Say, I believe that's the right dope! He was pretty well tuckered in that last set, come to think of it. Yes, sir, you'll get him that way, Jerry."

"Of course I'd rather not." Jerry frowned slightly. "If he will let me through in three straight I'll like it a heap better, but if he shows fight——" He shrugged.

Blinky gazed upon him in rapt admiration.

Loring Brattle's victory was the chief subject of discussion about the clubhouse, it seemed, for Jerry, traversing the veranda, ran into floating scraps of conversation: "—positively remarkable! I mean I really do. When you consider that he's over forty—a perfect dear. I said to her this afternoon 'Mrs. Brattle, you must be frightfully proud'—got it in his pocket this minute, I tell you. He'll put young Leeds away in straight sets, and——"

Blinky got himself roped into bridge after dinner, and Jerry wandered into the tap room, found his presence detrimental to a frank discussion of the morrow's match and wandered out

again, a little uncomfortably aware that by depriving Brattle of his third leg on the Chandler Cup he was going to make himself distinctly unpopular around Winding Brook. He didn't doubt that he would win the match. Brattle might conceivably outplay him for a while, but he couldn't outstay him.

And once he thought the match safely on ice he meant to play to his opponent's backhand, allow the latter to bring his heavy artillery into action, so to speak, and then beat him at his own game. He was curious about that famous backhand, wanted to see it displayed. Sometimes he didn't believe in it as abjectly as did the others.

There was a letter for him in his box at the office, and he retired with it to a leather chair in a corner of the living room. It was from his father, and written, it would seem, at about the same hour he had penned his own letter. There were three pages of it. His mother was feeling much brighter. The Ticknors had been over for dinner and Ellen had sent her love to him and he was to bring her home a nice cup. Jerry scowled. Why couldn't she let him alone? She couldn't stroke, hadn't any serve and shouted when she talked. Yes, and, worse still, with the sound of a rusty windmill! "Fifteen years ago!" whispered another voice, a voice that was like a fold of velvet. Jerry shuffled his feet and went on again. Not much of interest. He turned the letter.

"I see that you won your match this forenoon. Don't think I know the man you played. Loring Brattle's doing well, too. And that reminds me. Ran across Stokes at the Midday Club this noon and he told me about Brattle. They are neighbors at Milton and play together occasionally. It seems that one of the wounds Brattle got overseas was in his right hand. Shrapnel. So that's what his trouble is. Hasn't affected his forehand a bit, Stokes says, but his backhand is shot to pieces. Literally. Too bad, for it was the nicest I ever saw. Probably you know all this by now, but I thought I'd mention it in the unlikely event of your meeting him. Tennis is a gentleman's game, you know, and it wouldn't hurt to go a bit easy on his backhand. Dare say you've noticed the way M. R. and G. has been acting. There's a rumor——"

Jerry placed the letter back in its envelope and stared at his shoes for a long while.

"I wonder," he asked the clerk behind the desk later, "if you could find Mr. Brattle for me."

"Certainly, Mr. Leeds. I don't think he's left the clubhouse, but I'll go and see."

Jerry went back to his chair. Outside on the veranda a voice was chanting: "Mr. Brattle, please!" Presently Jerry saw him enter, arose and awaited him. There were marks of fatigue on the man's face, and the gray-blue eyes swept the room slowly and with a suggestion of weariness.

"Mr. Brattle, I'm Jerry Leeds."

"You don't have to tell me." Brattle's smile was friendly. "I know you very well by sight, even if, rather oddly, we haven't met before." They shook hands. "Shall we sit here?"

"If you don't mind, no. It won't take me a minute to say what I have to. I'm afraid I'm going to disappoint you, sir, but"—Jerry flicked the letter he still held—"I've just received this and I find that I am obliged to default our match."

There was an instant of silence. Jerry's gaze remained carefully on the letter. If the other showed satisfaction he didn't want to know it.

"I am disappointed," answered Brattle soberly, and to his relief Jerry found the voice convincing. "Are you quite certain there is no way? Have you spoken to the referee? Perhaps there could be a postponement."

"I'm sorry, sir, but it would be utterly impossible for me to play you before the end of the tournament, and so I haven't bothered to see the committee yet. Of course I'll let them know right away, but I thought it only fair to tell you as soon as possible."

"Yes, I see. Bad news, then, I'm afraid." He nodded at the letter. "I'm frightfully sorry. If there's any way in which we can pull it off later I needn't tell you, I think, that, while I'd like that cup, this way of getting it doesn't appeal to me. To be frank, you'd have beaten me to-morrow. Oh, there's no doubt of that." Jerry's polite remonstrance died away. "I'd have put up a good fight, Leeds, but to-day took too much out of me. So, as you can see, it isn't right that I should profit by your misfortune."

"Well, I wish we might have played. I think I'd have given you a good match, but as for winning"—Jerry smiled and shook his head—"I saw you play this afternoon, sir."

"Very kind of you. Well, I shan't consider the matter closed until I hear from the committee. Perhaps they'll see a way out of it. I hope so. And I trust that your news may prove unwarrantably disturbing. Meanwhile I——"

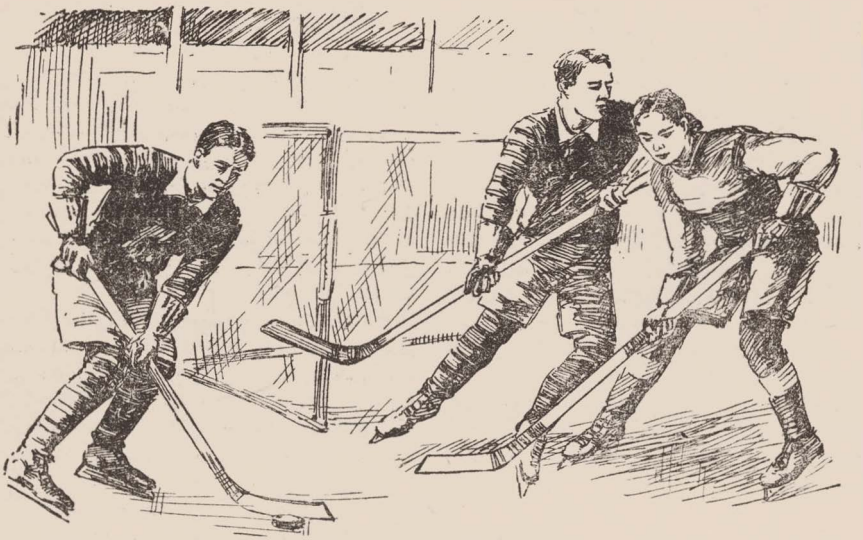
They shook hands and parted.

In the writing room Jerry scribbled two brief notes. One he left at the office. The second he propped on the dresser upstairs where Blinky would find it. He smiled as he visioned his friend reading the tag. "Sorry to make off with your means of transportation, old man, but I understand that the railroad provides excellent service. See you at Seabright."

Then he packed, settled his bill, ran his car from the garage and made off contentedly through the warm, starry night.

Cocky Lorem

By Laurence Donovan



Lorem was accused of disrupting his team, but when they took the ice against the Cubs, his fighting spirit welded the team in an offensive it had never known before.

AN expectant hush sucked away the breath of the fans in the Coliseum tiers. The new wing, Dan Lorem, purchased from the Eastern Circuit, flashed over the blue line into the Lions' defense territory, shifting the puck in the heel of his stick.

With excelling swiftness he had eluded the attempts at checking by the speedy Canucks from over the border. Darting down the ice with a peculiar glide that was mystifying to his opponents, he had "Beef" Harkins, the Lions' goalie, spreading every inch of his bulk to block the shot.

Big "Red" Simmons, the powerful pivot of the Buckaroos, paced Lorem so closely that the referee almost decided that the giant center was offside and had crossed ahead of the puck carrier into the defense territory. But he let it go.

The game was the third in which Lorem had participated, and this was prior to the revision of the offside rule to permit more latitude for scoring.

Satchett, Lorem's companion wing, arriving at the blue line with greater momentum than Simmons, shot ahead of the pair. Jarvin, a Lions' defense, whirled on his skates and streaked over beside "Beef" Harkins in front of the cage. Lorem caught the blocking action, saw that the cage was sewed up from his angle, but that a quick pass to Satchett might give his fellow wing an

opportunity to slip a shot through the open corner of the cage.

He swung around, passing to Satchett. But Red Simmons' stick reached out, deflected the puck and when it reached the spot where Satchett should have received the pass, the latter had overskated and missed it altogether. In the next few seconds the puck was the center of a cage mêlée from which Jarvin of the Lions was the first to worm his way out, with the puck in his stick.

Lorem pulled a rapid-fire crossover in time to check Jarvin near center ice just as the period closed. This was the end of the second period and the score remained tied at 0-0.

Lorem, head defiantly high, unspoken accusation in his eyes and a bitter feeling inside that he tried to overcome, glided to the bench and sat down. From above came the murmur of voices. Buckaroo fans were discussing the closing play of that period. Lorem was sure he could detect a growl of disapproving question in the comment of fans nearest to him.

"Suds" Sarviss, the grizzled manager of the Buckaroos, spoke quietly to Lorem.

"Down the river with it, son," he said. "Can't make 'em all, you know. Guess Red was off his stride a little, an' maybe you ought to have chanced a shot yourself."

So Suds had been thinking, too. That was the first thought that came to Lorem. Otherwise the veteran manager would not have spoken as he had. Lorem needed only that confirmation to rekindle his suspicion.

And his thought, that he had wanted to overcome, was that Red Simmons had deliberately robbed him of an assist and the Buckaroos of a goal. So Red believed that he had wanted his spot at center, did he? Yes, he had had that thought before he arrived on the Buckaroo ice for his first game. In fact, the manager of the Eastern team who had sold him to Suds Sarviss had hinted that the Buckaroos were badly in need of a stiffened offensive. Without being aware of the personnel of the Pacific coast team, the Eastern manager had expressed the belief that the hole most in need of patching was center. Or so he had judged from his correspondence with Suds Sarviss.

So young Dan Lorem could not be criticized if he introduced himself to the Buckaroos' manager with the idea that probably he was somewhat the salvation of the slipping team. That he was placed on the wing, and that it appeared Red Simmons would be retained at center did not in itself affect him greatly, after he had seen the giant Red in action.

He instantly recognized that Red was one of the best fighting centers he had ever watched. And he was quick to realize that the players of opposing teams also recognized it. For in the first and second games, in which he had participated, Lorem saw that Red, from first to last, was the particular target of all the rough stuff that could be conceived.

But at the same time, Lorem sensed a feeling of antagonism on the part of Red. Before the end of the second game he had begun to believe that this hostility toward himself was shared by Red's teammates. The misplay in that last period had been only one of a series of similar accidents that had marred coordinated effort. Or were they accidents?

Lorem mustered a grin when Suds hinted that he forget it. But for once Suds had committed a tactical blunder. If he had really read Lorem's innermost thoughts, he would have said nothing concerning the misplay. Suds believed merely that his new man would become discouraged by this and other unpreventable incidents, and wanted to cheer him up. Instead he completed fixing the suspicion held by Lorem.

Perhaps neither Suds nor any of his players understood the temperament of the new man from the East. Highly strung, sensitive to an unusual degree, Lorem was inclined by disposition to a feeling of inferiority. Only his native talent for the game of hockey had made him the ice wizard that he was.

But because of this very sensitiveness and tense nerves when he entered a game, Lorem had cloaked himself with an outward manner that to others conveyed the impression that he was high-hat—that he held himself too good to mix on an equal footing. If there was a slight resentment that a player should be imported from an Eastern Circuit, it would not have been great enough to survive had not Lorem's mannerisms intensified it.

When the teams took the ice for the third period, Lorem had decided that he would not again give the other forwards an opportunity to ball up his plays. This was a poor decision, and Lorem knew it, but he had the slightly desperate feeling that the team did not want him. He was well aware that winning hockey is not played by individuals, but in this instance he was determined to stand or fall on his own merits.

His chance came late in the period. Flashing across the ice at the instant the Lions' center was in the act of attempting a favorite stunt, shooting for goal from the blue line, he robbed the Lion of both the chance and the puck. Before the Lion center's teammates could reverse themselves, he was up center ice on a flying carry.

One of the Lion defense men attempted a poke check, caught his skate and fell over his own stick. Except for the widespread anatomy of Beef Harkins, nothing intervened between Lorem and the cage.

The dimensions of Beef were his greatest asset at goal. Reducing the size of the pads to permit greater opportunity for scoring had accomplished nothing when Beef's generous proportions filled them. Red Simmons and Satchett had followed down the ice on the play. The shot was almost identical with that which had been foozled in the second period.

Again Beef had shifted over to the side of the cage where he expected the try to be made. If there were any possible opening, it was on the other corner, and again Satchett was in position to have made the try. Both Red and Satchett were watching Lorem closely, eyes on the puck in the heel of his stick, evidently expecting a pass.

Instead of passing, he kept to his own hastily formed decision to play a lone hand, and took a wild shot straight at the massive Beef. He had expected that the try would be blocked. His guess was correct. The puck bounded from Beef's pads directly into Satchett's stick. Before the defending Lions could check the play, with an instinctive sweep Satchett sent the puck into the strings and the red light glowed.

As they swung back to center ice, Lorem caught a half grin on Red Simmons' lips. Red glanced at him and the corner of his mouth drew down. Lorem was sure the big center was sneering at him, and that the grin was one of derision for his solo stunt in attempting an impossible shot.

But it was after the period closed, and the Buckaroos had copped the game by a one to nothing score, winning on Satchett's accidental shot, that the stinging cut of the day reached Lorem. He had trailed the others into the dressing room when he heard Red's voice raised above the others.

"So, that's our "High Cocky" Lorem," Red was saying. "Old Cocky Lorem—been wonderin' what he'd pull? That name just fits him."

Lorem was sick all over. His feeling was anything but what the suggested nickname denoted. And because he felt

as he did, he went to his locker with his head held high, ignoring the other players.

"Huh!" sniffed one man to another. "That guy thinks he's too good to be true. But he sure pulled a boner on that last shot. He'll end, quick if he doesn't snap out of that cockiness."

Lorem was really a small boy at heart, and just now he was a deeply hurt small boy. He had imagined that his fellow players were incased in a crust of resentment at his being on the team, and to-day had confirmed that opinion. He stepped on the gas and sent the roadster tearing furiously along the river highway. When he returned to the hotel and was ready to retire, he had definitely decided that he would ask Suds Sarviss for his release and return to the East.

THE home series with the Victoria Cubs was expected to mark the turning point of the season for the Buckaroos. The four games would virtually decide whether the Buckaroos would be in a position to make a bid for the circuit honors against the leading Lions.

Lorem had not been a member of the team long enough to become saturated with the enthusiasm that gripped the city. He had come to the Buckaroos without loyalty inspired by other than his pay check. But he had always played to win, and he had thought that would be sufficient.

The day following Red Simmon's scornful derision, he learned by accident that his teammates had talked. The name applied to him had been passed around. Lorem was sitting in the hotel lobby, buried in a newspaper containing an account of the previous night's game when four men came from the billiard room and seated themselves near by.

The first few words of the conversation informed Lorem that the men were from Victoria and loyal supporters of the Cubs. They were openly elated over some news they had heard since their arrival in the Buckaroo's city.

"Yeh, I'm tellin' you the Bucks' game is all shot from the inside," said one of the group. "Team's all split up, I hear. Row started over that new forward they brought from the East. Seems like a regular feud's sprung up between him and Red Simmons."

"I heard that, too," affirmed one of the others. "Red's good and sore, they say. And the whole team's backin' him up. They're callin' this new bozo High Cocky Lorem—his name's Lorem, see? Don't mean anything, except when players on the same team get to makin' mean wisecracks like that, it's likely their morale's darned shaky."

Lorem buried himself deeper in the newspaper. Then he realized that the Victorians had not seen him play and would not recognize him. He was on the point of arising and moving away, not wanting to be in the position of eavesdropping, when a third man uttered a few words that caught his attention.

"With all that," this man said, "don't get the idea that the Cubs are going to have a walk-over. Grierson had better stick to his original plan and—well—our chances are raised a hundred per cent if something happens to Red Simmons early in the first game. I had it straight from Grierson that some neat gang play would be used on Simmons. He's the Cubs' meat, and he's dangerous."

Lorem settled deeper into his chair. He recognized the name, Grierson. He was the Cubs' center. He had a long penalty record and Lorem had heard that he had once been threatened with suspension.

So that was what the Cubs were cooking up for the coming series. Lorem paid little attention to the remainder of the Victorians' coversation, although he did hear enough to learn that they were in deep on the betting. And that the "accidental" removal of Red Simmons

from the ice in the first game of the series was regarded as already accomplished.

Dan Lorem would have been other than human if his first reaction to what he had learned had not created a grim sort of satisfaction. If Red were out, by accident or otherwise, the position naturally would fall to him. Satchett, the other regular on the wings, lacked the weight and the speed. Lockhaven and Severyns, sub-forwards, were only recently out of amateur ranks, and still were in the process of being broken in at the tag ends of periods when the Buckaroos were riding fairly safe in the lead.

Perhaps he would not have the team with him, but Lorem thought grimly that he would show them. If he were put at center, he would show the others a pace to follow. And he would even up with the Cubs, too, for their premeditated dirty work.

Up to this point, Lorem had been thinking solely from his own point of view as an individual. His mind had revolved around his own grievance and the unfair attitude of the other members of the team. He was sure that he had done nothing to merit the contempt in which he was held. He had not meant to seem high-hat. It was only that he shrank from attempting to play the rôle of a good fellow and risk meeting with a rebuff.

But the plot of the Cubs to remove Red! Resentment of that crystallized into anger at the cool assurance of these Victorians in believing that in one way or another they had the series in their sack. If they had been openly boasting of the merit of their team, voicing their belief in the superiority of the Cubs on the ice, Lorem knew he would have felt differently about it.

Their hope to take the series through the weakness within the Buckaroo organization or by a shady scheme to injure the best center in the league was of a caliber to set his blood boiling. He had intended during the day to see Suds Sarviss and ask if his release might be arranged. Instead, when he ran across Suds in the dining room, Lorem nodded and passed on to his table.

He had changed his mind about an immediate discussion of his status with Suds. And it was not because he hoped for a chance at Red's position through the latter's removal. In fact, Dan Lorem had decided to tell no one of what he had heard, but to play the puck of chance as it lay. Personal enemy or friend, Red was a fellow player. Both wore the insignia of the Buckaroos across their jerseys.

Underneath, once he had his nerves in hand, Lorem was a fighter to the core. Even now he was mapping his own plan of personal campaign in the coming game. His mind fixed on this, his thoughts became detached from considering his own position. This explained the incident in the dining room.

Red Simmons, with Satchett, Scrivener, and Sikes, was seated to one side of the aisle along which Lorem was passing. He noticed them, and as he passed close by, Scrivener, who was an irrepressible mimic, raised his head in imitation of Lorem's carriage.

"'Lo, Cocky," he drawled from the corner of his mouth. "How's the weather up there?"

Before the episode of the Victorians' coversation, Lorem doubtless would have pretended not to have heard. But in his new train of thought, his own personal affairs became a trivial item, and to his own astonishment Lorem heard himself replying.

"Kind of frosty, Scriv. Guess that's how we both got stiff necks, huh?"

The remark was accompanied by a broad grin that made a total loss of Scrivener's bit of malicious comedy.

Lorem went on to his lone table, leaving the quartet of his fellow players gaping at each other. It was the first

rise the other members of the team had got out of Dan Lorem, and it was rather discomfiting after they had set themselves for a laugh at his expense.

Suds Sarviss had witnessed the bit of byplay and had heard Lorem's response to Scrivener. The grizzled veteran's eyes twinkled. He was a wise old owl, and in many years on the lines he had discovered that the best solution of most cases of internal dissension is to ignore them. Usually they worked themselves out.

Lorem could see that the players at the other table were leaning toward each other in earnest discussion as he ordered his meal.

THE Coliseum was jammed for the opening game of the series with the Cubs. Wagering among the fans was active, and an unusual number of Victorians were in the tiers. The visitors seemed unusually confident and were betting freely against the Buckaroos.

Lorem looked from the pen across the shining ice oval. He felt somehow that to-night was to mark a turning point in his life. His nerves were jumpy no longer. He faced with calm regard the scrutiny of his fellow players. Including the spares, there was quite a squad when they took their preliminary whirl on the ice.

Several ventured to employ the new nickname, "Cocky," but all the kick was taken out of it when Lorem responded to it with an unperturbed grin.

"Sufferin' crawfish," grunted Moose Jackson, the hefty goalie. "The danged kid seems to like it. What's come over him? He acts real human."

"Smart, and knows he's smart," growled Red Simmons, somewhat chagrined to discover that the appellation had had most of the sting taken out of it by Lorem's calm acceptance.

One of the referees blew his whistle and the regulars swung into position. The high murmur of conversation in the seat tiers died to a whisper. There is something about the last second preliminary to the opening of a hockey game that catches at the breath.

Lorem's eyes were centered on Grierson, as the towering Cub faced Red Simmons. When the puck was dropped, Lorem could have taken it as it came sliding off Grierson's stick. A murmur of surprise went up from the fans as Lorem made no attempt to hook the puck, permitting it to go to Scrivener on defense.

Red had started to whirl as Grierson shot the puck away. And Lorem saw that Grierson's eyes were not following the rubber. He was bearing straight down on Red. Lorem did not know how he got between the big centers. A lightning, snaky glide and he was there.

With the referees watching the puck, which Scrivener had taken for a dash toward the Cubs' blue line, the flashing mix-up in mid-ice might have escaped their attention. Lorem saw Grierson swing widely, as though he were in the act of turning to dart after Scrivener. He also saw the swiftly juggled stick in Grierson's hand as the handle was butt-ended and brought up. Lorem narrowly missed colliding with Red, as his body interposed. Neither of the referees saw what had occurred. Red himself growled out a sharp oath, twisting to avoid falling over Lorem's stick.

The end of his exclamation was "—— cocky fool! Whatcha tryin' to do?"

Fast as he was, Lorem felt himself go down sharply with Grierson's weight driving him across the ice. A searing pain shot through his left side and nauseated him for an instant. He suspected that the Cub's stick handle had found the wrong mark. But he clenched his teeth and recovered his feet, ignoring Grierson and skating weakly after Red who continued to follow Scrivener.

Through a red haze that cleared quickly, Lorem noticed that Scrivener had been given a clear path, with only

Loring, the Cubs' goalie, between him and the net. Then Scrivener passed the puck to Red just inside the Cubs' blue line.

With his breath seeming to be pushing a sharp point into his left side, Lorem threw himself forward into such a mêlée in front of the Cubs' fort. He had quickly observed why Scrivener had been given such an unexpected free way down the ice to the blue line. The Cubs to a man, with the exception of the goalie, were concentrating on Red Simmons.

A stick was poked forward as though to snatch the puck from Red's stick. But instead of catching the puck, the hook of the stick was being brought up in a quick jerk, the Cub defense who was handling it apparently having tripped and made the motion by accident to prevent a bad fall. The stick struck Red's hands and would probably have stomached him had not Lorem thrown himself upon it with a flying reversement of position.

Lorem had a swift glimpse of Red's face. The big center's eyes were blazing hotly into his own. Red could not understand all that was happening. To his bewildered senses, from the instant play had begun, Cocky Lorem had somehow become his Nemesis. The other Buckaroos, riding tight into the battle that had caught Red and Lorem as its storm center, were in better position to realize what was happening.

Now, they, too, were fighting their way through the Cubs to align themselves with their big center.

Lorem did not know how the puck slipped from Red's stick to his own. The Cubs' goalie was close to one side. He could see that. And the goalie, undoubtedly wise to his team's intention, was making no particular effort to spread himself. Lorem saw the opening at the corner and with a lightning twist of his stick he shot the puck into the strings. The referee's whistle shrilled an instant after the red light went on.

Then Lorem found himself on the penalty bench alongside Red and Scrivener. Satchett and Sikes were left with "Moose" Jackson to defend the Buckaroos' fort against the attack of Simmons, Arthurs, and Crouch. Grierson and Ross, too, were out on penalties.

Matched two and three, luck played into the hands of Satchett and Sikes. Although they had only attempted to defend their hard beset cage against the weaving maneuvers of the three Cubs, Sikes got away with the puck when Moose Jackson thrust it to one side after a try for goal. Holding close to the boards around the oval, Sikes showed a burst of speed.

Although officially Satchett did not make the flying shot himself, it was due to his swift interference that Sikes was left free for the chance. Satchett admitted afterward that he had realized the scheme of the Cubs and it had so enraged him that he hardly knew what he had done during the remainder of the first period. What he did do was to give an amazing exhibition of how one man on skates can keep three others so entangled for a few seconds that no one of the three could overtake Sikes.

Seated on the bench beside Red, Lorem grew sick, but he had only a single idea. He had to go through. Stay in at all costs.

Suds noticed Lorem's face from which the blood had drained, but he judged it was his reaction from the swift encounter of the period's first minutes. When Red and Lorem were again on the ice, with Grierson back in the game, the Cubs apparently were laying off Red temporarily. They put the Buckaroos on the defensive during the first half of the second period and after five minutes of fast shifting back of the blue line scored a goal.

Coming back until the close of the period, they kept the puck in play mostly

in the Buckaroos' defense territory. Lorem stayed as close as he dared to Red, but the chance for a goal to even up the score seemed to have diverted the visitors from their intention to eliminate the Buckaroo center. However, the second period ended with the Buckaroos still one up on the two-to-one score.

Suds wanted to send in a spare for Lorem at the opening of the third period, but the white-faced youth shook his head grimly. He had noticed a hurried, huddled conference between the Cubs and had seen Grierson nod his head with an evil smile.

Grierson knocked the puck to Lorem when it was dropped, and he started across center ice. But the snaky glide that had served him so well in previous games lacked speed. Lorem felt like his feet were of lead. He could hardly breathe. He was in a daze when he felt, rather than saw, the clashing bodies of the Cubs' defense hurtling into him.

It was then that Red took the puck, which Lorem passed weakly to him. Lorem thought he was going to fall. But his attention was caught by the jam into which Red had swung with the puck.

Apparently seeing no chance to escape being blocked in front of the Cubs' goal, Red juggled the rubber away from the defenders and flashed behind the net. Then it was that Lorem saw Grierson bore his way through the mix-up and dart around the net, facing the Buckaroos' center.

Before he had seen this, Lorem had felt himself going. He did not know from what source he drew that swift spurt that carried him around the tangled defenders and alongside Grierson. The tall Cub center towered over him, and he was set to smash Red.

Then Lorem forgot the rules, forgot the game, forgot everything else, except the desperate need to thwart the intention of the dirty-playing Cub. That last swift spurt had finished him, and Lorem knew it. He was going down, but as he went, he relinquished his stick and reached out in a flying tackle. Even at this critical juncture he thought grimly that he would be penalized aplenty for this.

This time, Red saw Lorem's action in its true meaning. Already he had instinctively raised his arms to ward off the smashing onslaught of Grierson. He saw Lorem fling himself forward between them and the pair crash to the ice together. Also he heard the crack of a bone and noticed that Grierson's arm had crumpled grotesquely under him.

Then Red streaked around and sent a bulletlike shot into the Cubs' cage. That was the last time the red light was flashed in either cage in that game. The Buckaroos had won, three-to-one.

SA-AY! You drag them punk flowers outa that vase—you hear me! Sa-ay! You'd think he got them cracked ribs on account o' you fellows! Guess I'm the guy that's got the right to bring roses, ain't I?"

Dan Lorem swam out of a distant sea into consciousness. He recognized Red Simmons' voice. The big center was disgustedly throwing a bouquet out of a vase on a stand into a wastebasket. Satchett and Sikes and Scrivener were standing there arguing with him.

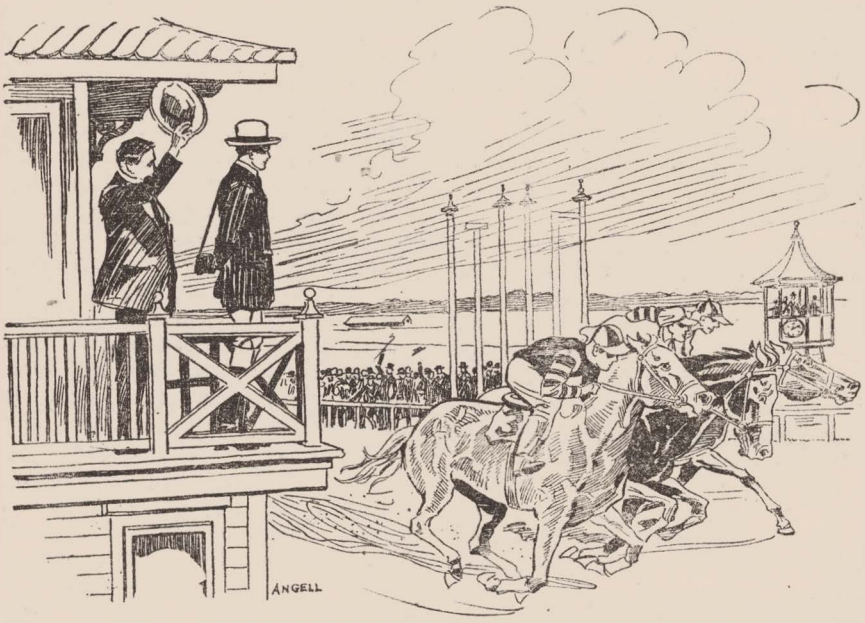
Red placed his long-stemmed roses carefully in the vase and faced around. Dan Lorem looked up into his face. Red flushed and smiled guiltily.

"'Lo, Cocky!" he gulped. "How's the old-timer, huh?"

And Dan Lorem knew that he had won his place for all time with the Buckaroos.

Paddy Moran's Boy

By Sam Carson



Bobby Moran had the breaks against him, but he learned the lesson of all good jockeys—how to fight his way back to the rides he wanted.

EVERYONE knew Paddy Moran around Churchill Downs. So when the ruddy-faced policeman walked over behind the stable area where a group surrounded two battling bantamweights, nobody ran. Not from Paddy if gloves were being used.

"Hi, Paddy," a stable boy shrilled, "it's 'Spig' an' 'Mutt' Driver."

"That so?" Paddy commented. "Who's getting the best of it, now?"

"Even rounds. They go one more frame. Hey, you bums. Make room for Paddy. He's gonna referee this last one."

It was a grudge fight, settled with gloves. Spig Clemons had said something about Mutt's way of riding. After two or three mornings spent in exchanging views, they had decided upon a more certain way of settling their differences.

Paddy sized the pair up. "Ye're fair matched," he said. "Then go."

A moment later the circle tightened as stable boys, jockeys and grown men edged nearer. The rooting grew in volume, so that a police sergeant, who had just driven into the stable section, climbed down from his roadster. He thrust his way through the ring of men. There was the sound of pattering feet.

"Fight, ye rascals. What's wrong wit ye?" Paddy demanded. But his order was ignored. Mutt and Spig went away from there. And Paddy looked up, to see Sergeant Billy Huff glaring at him.

"Ah, and the top of the mornin' to ye, Sarge." Paddy greeted. "Tis a fine day for exercise."

"How many times," Sergeant Huff inquired, "must I warn you, Paddy, about permitting these kids to stage prize fights? Suppose the newspapers got hold of this—an officer refereeing a fight down here? We'd catch thunder, and you know it."

"I'm sorry," Paddy apologized. "Sure and I oughtn't to do it, Billy. But when the boys put on gloves, and settle it with their fists it can't be much harm, now, can it? That's the way I want me own boy, Bobby, to fight. Have ye seen him this mornin'?"

Sergeant Huff nodded. He always felt bad about it, having to reprove the older man after one of his escapades. Besides, Paddy was the most valuable man he had. Paddy was the confidante of every stable employee. He knew what was going on. And he had the nerve to back him in emergencies. But the boy——

"Bobby's going to make a grand rider," Paddy predicted. "Ted Haverly was telling me only yesterday. Bobby's going to ride for Ted. When the old man is ready to retire, Billy, me fine boy will be earning scads of money."

Sergeant Huff nodded. He knew about Bobby Moran. So did the rest of the detail, and about everyone else who worked at Churchill Downs.

Bobby, according to little Mickey Burns, who was a brother apprentice, was as near a cipher with the rim off as they come. And yet he had Paddy Moran for a father, and Betty Sue Holmes for a girl. And that, others agreed with Mickey, was too much for a boy without spirit.

Paddy and the sergeant saw Bobby astride one of the Harverly horses, Ted himself standing before the file of riders along the back stretch, giving out instructions.

Paddy beamed upon the sight. He nudged Huff. "Do ye notice the kid's face? All excited he is. 'Tis a sight for sore eyes."

Paddy had hardly finished when a bit of paper blew across the track. A colt or two bolted at the head of the column. Riders pulled their mounts in. But Bobby's horse shied and the rider seemed paralyzed. Then he acted. But it was a second too late. The colt, a high strung two-year-old, had the bit in its mouth. It shot up the track, Bobby desperately clinging to his seat.

Paddy went over the fence with one leap despite his fifty years. He was in the center of the track before Ted Haverly had swerved his pony, all set to dive for the loose lines. It was Paddy who dived headlong, left hand clutching the lines. There was a tangle of brown and policeman's blue, and the colt came to its knees. But it came to a stop with Paddy half underneath.

"You fool," Sergeant Huff stormed as he and Ted pulled Paddy out. "Why didn't you wait for Ted to stop the colt?"

Paddy's face was white. There was pain in his side and left shoulder, but he smiled. "Wait, Billy. Ye haven't a boy of your own."

And so it was that Paddy went off his beat for two full weeks, with a shoulder that was to give more or less trouble the rest of his days. And Ted, who studied the situation later, shook his head. He would have washed his hands of Bobby for life, if it hadn't been he couldn't forget the sight of Paddy, underneath Brown Leaf. So he summoned Bobby.

"What made you drop the lines on Brown Leaf?" he inquired.

Bobby Moran paled. "I didn't know

what to do," he answered. "Dad got there before I could do anything."

Ted nodded. "Son, you'd be fired off any stable on the lot for this. I should. But I'm giving you another chance—and the last. But you don't straddle another two-year-old. One more break and Brown Leaf would be ruined for a year.

"You take over Glassware and Tinkle," the trainer continued. "Tinkle needs jogging. No more. Just jog the pair till I let you know differently. How's your Dad this morning?"

"He says he feels better," Bobby replied. "But he's got a bad shoulder, Mister Ted."

"Just remember, son, Paddy did that for you. Think of that shoulder the next time a horse bolts, or somebody—when you've got to face anything."

Bobby twisted his cap as he stared at his boots. "Mister Ted," he spoke, "it's Dad who picked out ridin' for me. I guess he wants me to—to be a big jockey. Him an' Betty Sue. You know her people was fairly raised with horses. An' between 'em——"

"You've got to make good," Ted supplied. "Son, it might be a mistake not to take you as a very important factor. But folks are like that. Well, I'll give you another trial—and a fair one."

"I'm much obliged," Bobby said. "Thought I'd tell you I kind of had to—well graft on this business."

He went away, to the upper end of the course, where a girl sat in her father's machine. Britt Holmes didn't use the car any more. A man who has given up stock to try his hand at truck farming hasn't time to get anywhere in the early summer. "I'll have to go back right away," Betty Sue told him. "But I thought maybe you'd like to ride out to the house with me. I wanted to see Paddy."

Bobby climbed in. A stable boy popped his head out from a window. "Oh—mercy me! Bobby's in a car and his ol' man not around to save him. Oh, dear!"

The girl said nothing. Neither did Bobby. But both heard catcalls from a dozen places. What the stable crew thought of Paddy and his son, was a lesson in opposites. Bobby stared at his cap while the girl sent the machine whizzing uptown.

Presently Bobby spoke. "I'm gonna have another chance," he said. "Honest, Betty Sue, Dad didn't have to do that."

Bettie Sue made no reply. Not until she had turned out of the main street into a narrower one, where there was less traffic and more children to watch out for. "The point is, Bobby," she observed, "Paddy did stop Brown Leaf. You didn't."

"I was about to," he defended.

They reached the Moran home a few minutes later. Paddy was propped in bed, newspapers scattered over the cover. "What a sight for an old man," he exclaimed. "Betty Sue, would ye give me one kiss now?"

She gave him two. Bobby stood hesitantly in the door, as if he was a stranger. "Come here lad," Paddy ordered. "How's the horses this morning? And what is the news?"

"I went out this morning," Bobby said.

"On Brown Leaf?" Paddy asked eagerly. "Did he behave, the rascal?"

"No, sir. Er—I'm going to handle Tinkle and Glassware."

"Now why did Ted do that?" Paddy stormed. "Ye should take Brown Leaf right back. Wait till I get up from here. But no, perhaps Ted has another reason. Is he going to race Tinkle and the other horse soon?"

"I think so, Dad. Probably next week for Tinkle. The horse is about ready."

Paddy's face brightened. "I'll be out to see ye before long. With a girl like Betty Sue, ye should beat them all."

"With a dad like you," Betty Sue spoke up, "he should."

"Listen to that, Bobby lad."

The girl took Paddy Moran's hand. "I can still remember the early morning you carried me in your arms, Paddy, when the house burned and we lost everything. And my father told me, a long time ago. how you loaned him your savings account. It was the start we needed——"

"Britt repaid me," Paddy interrupted, "like the man he is. Bobby, son, would ye mind chasing over to the grocery and buying me some lemons."

When his son was gone, Paddy looked up at the girl. "Betty Sue, 'tis on both our minds. Out with it."

"With what, Paddy?"

"Sure ye know. About me fine, upstanding lad who needs to get started. He's dreaming. And if we don't wake him up we've lost him. I know. Ye're a woman, Betty Sue. Ye know too."

"What can we do, Paddy? I do know."

A frown appeared on the officer's face. "I wisht I did, me darling. I wisht I did know what to do. Maybe I've done the wrong thing, pushing him into this. But when he was a little thing Bobby wanted to be a jockey. I dressed him in boots and a blue and white blouse. Your colors, Betty Sue. Now that I've pushed him on he seems to be living somewhere else. And if he should be without courage, I'll die, me darling."

Betty Sue caught sight of Bobby through the front window. "If I ever should do something to stir him up," she inquired, "would you forgive me?"

"Me heart would understand. Maybe I would lose me temper, at first. I dunno. But later, I would know."

Bobby came in with the lemons. And presently Betty Sue went away. Paddy regarded his offspring thoughtfully. "Everything all right?" he inquired, "at Ted's stable? Speak up, lad, if it isn't"

At first Bobby was inclined to protest there was nothing wrong. But he was silenced by the look in Paddy's eyes. "I'm afraid," he said at last, "I won't have much chance to ride."

"For Ted?"

"For anybody."

Paddy took that with the same grim smile he had taken the loss of his wife and girl.

"Ye're too serious, Bobby me lad. Did Ted say——"

"It's what he hasn't said, Dad. They're laughing at me at the track ever since the spill. And I know what they're thinking. They believe I haven't any nerve."

"A son of Paddy Moran they call yellow! Wait till I see the rascals."

"It's not you, Dad. It's me."

Paddy raised to an elbow. His blue eyes were cold as he gazed at his son. "Then it's ye who must fight. Go back to the track. Get back and ride. Hear me. Ride Brown Leaf. Ride Tinkle. 'Tis me, Paddy Moran, ye hear, who says so. Then ye come back and tell me ye've straddled a winner."

Bobby never disputed an order from Paddy. White-faced and shaking he left the room.

Now, Bobby saw only the stern face and cold eyes of a parent who made duty his idol. What to do, he didn't know. But Paddy had ordered.

He went directly to Ted. "Mister Haverly, can I ride Brown Leaf again?"

One of his fillies was sick, and Ted wasn't feeling pleasant. He stared at Bobby as the latter repeated his request. "No," he replied. "And get away from me. Can't you see I'm busy?"

"I've got to ride Brown Leaf," Bobbie insisted. "Dad said so."

"Paddy's not running my business," the trainer snapped. "I'll talk with you later. Clear out now."

That settled it. Bobby stole out of the stable building. If Ted Harverly could have known about Paddy that morning, and why the officer's son had made that

request, the trainer might have reconsidered. Instead, Ted had classed Bobby's motive as impertinent. It happened that he was going to run Brown Leaf two days away, in the Spring Trial. Bert Mackay, his regular boy, was on the ailing list, and now Ted had learned that Willy Clemons, for whom the trainer had second call, was riding the Three G Stable entry in the Spring Trial. Ted would have to bring down a boy from another track. It would cost extra money. Brown Leaf was one of the swiftest two-year-olds, yet untried to racing. Ted had ever handled. Such a colt required a cool head, steady hands and a thorough knowledge of green thoroughbreds. Ted had a jockey in mind—Craig Kenton. Craig was in Chicago.

"I gotta do something," Bobby muttered. But what? He wasn't going back home till he had obeyed Paddy. And as it appeared now, home was barred for a considerable time.

He sat over in the stands and watched the afternoon program. Then he went across the infield. Bobby had worked out his immediate future. He had money for meals. He would sleep in a vacant stall.

The first night he spent in the rear of Ted's building. He reported with the squad and drew Tinkle. Another boy had Glassware. "Going to run him Saturday," the trainer said to Bobby. "Keep jogging Tinkle. Breeze him a half, and then pull up."

Bobby swallowed that humiliation. He heard that Craig Kenton would arrive that afternoon to ride Brown Leaf. Craig had a reputation for daredevil riding. So, after the seventh race that day, Bobby hung around, to catch a glimpse of the fiery-haired young man who arrived with Ted.

Craig looked efficient. There was a cocksureness in his manner of walking. And Bobby saw the respectful manner with which Ted addressed him. They led out Brown Leaf and studied the colt. Ted went into details, while Craig listened.

A little later Betty Sue and her father drove down the street. Britt Holmes got out and spoke to Ted. Bobby walked over. He was about to speak when the girl looked beyond him, smiling. "Why Craig," she cried, "what are you doing down here?"

The jockey grinned, reached across the seat and took her hand. "Riding Ted's crack colt. Betty Sue. You're sure a sight for sore eyes. All grown up since I straddled a horse for your old man."

Bobby stood there, conscious that another young man was the center of interest for Betty Sue. "Brown Leaf's a good colt," he offered. The girl didn't arnswer. Craig turned to look at the third person to this meeting. "All right," he spoke, "Brown Leaf's a good colt That all you want?"

Bobby gazed rather helplessly at Betty Sue. But the girl behaved as if she had never seen him before. Instead she began talking to Craig, and Bobby slipped away. Hurt, he stood beside a stable across the street, while Craig climbed in beside Betty Sue. Ted joining her father on the other seat.

"Well, what d'you know about that," a stable boy jeered. "Li'l Bobby got the air when a new jockey comes around. Didja see the look on his face? Haw."

Bobby Moran did something totally unexpected. He wheeled on the grimy-faced youth. Smack, went his fist. "Next time," Bobby announced coldly, "you worry about your own business. Understand."

The stable boy was so astounded that he merely looked up, blinking. He watched Paddy's son go away without getting to his feet until Bobby had vanished.

"That jellyfish socked me," he mumbled as another boy came outside.

"Well, why didn't ya sock him back?"

"Huh. You take a paste like that, an' see if you sock back. Boy, he's gotta kick like a mule in that left of his."

Bobby didn't know why he had done that. He had decided to go away. There was nothing else to do. Betty Sue had thrown him down publicly. Paddy had ordered him to ride Brown Leaf, or not come back.

His fist still ached from the lick he had given the stable boy. It ached, but the owner of that left was a new Bobby, a young man who had turned bitter, and was somewhat angry at himself. "I'll show 'em," he muttered. "They're all down on me. Just wait."

AT the end of two weeks Paddy Moran emerged, a tight-lipped, somewhat pallid man, and reported to Sergeant Huff. "I'm as fit as ever," he announced. "Will ye be giving me the afternoon mounted patrol?"

Sergeant Huff considered. "If you want it, yes. You rate what round you want, Paddy. But if I were you—heard any news of Bobby?"

Paddy shook his head. "Maybe," he reflected, "I was too hard on the lad—about a certain matter. Ye see, I hadn't talked with Ted. But now that his precious Brown Leaf put up such a miserable race with a fancy jockey in his silks, maybe he won't turn me boy down so cold the next time. Nor his girl."

"I learned everything for you I could," the sergeant said. "From what I could gather, it would have done your soul good to have seen the kid swat that stable boy. I know Beckett. Outweighs Bobby ten pounds. Knocked him flat."

"He's a true Moran, sergeant. I knew it was in him. He'll be back, safe and sound. Only——" Paddy's eyes blinked rapidly, "I kind of wisht he'd told me he was going away."

And so Paddy went back on mounted patrol that afternoon. His duty was to circle the upper portion of the infield, in the same area as one of the patrol judges. He had a wide-backed mount, one Paddy had ridden often. He liked the mounted round. So many called to him, employees, touts, racegoers. And besides Paddy had a habit of galloping his mount as the racing fields thundered by. Being in a shorter circle skirting the upper turn, he could watch the jockeys for a quarter mile before they passed out of sight down the stretch.

This afternoon Paddy imagined Bobby was in the lead each time a field thundered on down the stretch. He watched the boys sorrowfully, with little spirit in his patrol. Bobby was gone. Only when Tinkle went to the post in the seventh race did Paddy have renewed interest in the proceedings. Tinkle ran a miserable sixth. "And that," the officer commented, "is the third straight race Ted's lost this week. It may not be punishment. Again——"

He spoke with the trainer that evening. "Ted, if I find me boy, will ye be giving him some work?"

"Might. Looks like he'd do as well as these false alarms I'm hiring. Heard from Bobby?"

"No. But he'll come back. When does Brown Leaf go to the post again?"

"I've had the colt entered in the Kentucky. Since Craig's still here, I think I'll let the kid take the colt out again."

"Ye're certain young Kenton is the boy fer ye, eh."

"He's riding winners, since I brought him down, Paddy."

Paddy offered no further comment. That night, downtown, a voice hailed him at a street intersection. Paddy saw Britt Huff's daughter in a machine waiting on the signal. "Have you heard anything?" Betty Sue called.

"I have not," Paddy replied coldly. "And I have ye to thank. I don't know what ye did, but it was something that hurt."

Betty Sue leaned toward the officer. "You promised me something—remember?"

"Aye, me girl. But I've lost me boy." And with that he turned away.

ABOUT this time a shabby young fellow came down the stable area at Lincoln Fields, that new but elaborate course near Chicago.

His face was grimy, with the look of one who has traveled on freights. He limped because of a blister beneath his right foot. No one would recognize this wanderer as Bobby Moran. There was nothing soft about him. His face had a pinched look.

He turned into a stable where light showed in the tackle room. A group of men were seated there playing cards. There was Dick McCue, a public trainer, "Monk" Owen, his lieutenant, and "Red" Larsen, the stable rider.

Dick McCue surveyed the caller curiously. "Well?" he demanded, pausing in the act of dealing a round.

"I want a job," Bobby announced.

"You do." Dick studied the applicant thoughtfully. Red laughed. "Needs one," he commented.

"I was talking to Mr. McCue," Bobby told the jockey coldly. "They told me he had room for an exercise boy."

"Maybe," the trainer grunted. "What's your name?"

"Moran. From Kentucky. I got my papers."

"H'm." Dick was more interested. "All right. See you in the morning. Seven. You'd better be able to produce. Pays ten a week and breakfast at my stable."

"Be there," Bobby replied.

When Bobby left, Dick picked up his cards. "I wonder," he mused, "if that could be old Paddy Moran's kid down at Louisville. Seems like he—yep—he did. Paddy wanted me to give his boy a job once."

Red Larsen laughed again. "Boss," he said, "that kid is trying to act hard, and afraid to get away with it. I'll try him out for you."

Which Red did, in a way. Red didn't do any of the usual work-outs, except on Star Sheen, or Pinecrest, the stable aces. But he whispered to shrewd Johnny Preston, just before the string went out, and Johnny smiled and nodded. Johnny did a simple thing. Abreast of Bobby Moran, he dug his toe in the Kentuckian's mount, then pulled away. Like a flash the horse was off, with Bobby pulling wildly at the lines. For a moment it seemed there would be a runaway. Dick McCue spurred his pony down the track, shouting advice to his new employee. But Bobby probably was seeing another morning, with Paddy Moran hanging to Brown Leaf's bridle. How he regained control he never knew. Somehow he did, wheeled his mount and trotted the thoroughbred back into place. McCue dashed up. "All right?" he called.

"Yes, sir," Bobby replied.

The trainer nodded approvingly, then he went back. Bobby leaned out as he caught sight of Preston grinning. "I know you did it," Bobby said.

"Well?" Johnny challenged.

Bobby made no reply. He went through the workout grimly, for his heart was pounding. Bobby would have to face this older man afterward. Paddy had made him learn how to box, years before. But he had never faced an opponent in a real set-to. He would either have to quit or face Johnny Preston.

It was Red Larsen who greeted Bobby at the finish. "Kid," he asked, "know how to handle your fists?"

"A little."

"I gotta pair of good gloves. Soon's Dick gets through, slip off. We'll be waiting behind the stable."

Johnny was the official glove manipulator for the stable. He grinned at sight of Bobby. "Willing?" he asked.

Bobby nodded. Five minutes later he was in the crude ring, Red Larsen his

second, Johnny dancing before him with the skill of a master in footwork.

For three minutes there was action, plenty of it, Johnny Preston smiling and brushing Bobby's face as the latter defended himself. Red shouted encouragement when time was called. And as he went out the second time, Johnny was scowling. "You stayed wit me long enough," he announced. "Out you go, kid. One-two."

Leaping forward, Preston launched a boring attack which forced Bobby nearly out of the ring. Boys were shouting. There were no policemen to fear here. As long as gloves were used there were no orders forbidding the settling of arguments behind the stables. *Blam!* Bobby's head rocked. Another blow took him in the ribs. Bobby swung wild. But he became aware of something which surprised him. He wasn't afraid.

Johnny was taller. He was superior as a boxer. But Johnny was breathing hard. Bobby went in, using the left Paddy had stressed in former years.

The end came with a swiftness which amazed even Red. All at once Johnny dropped with a lick to the chin. He got up to a sitting position, and remained there. "Nope," he protested. "Kid's all right. I gotta plenty."

Bobby stared at the exercise boy, somewhat bewildered. "C'mon," Red laughed. "You belong, kid. Johnny says so, see? He was trying you out."

It was then Bobby Moran laughed. And when Johnny came up with a friendly grin, Bobby smiled back. The gang had accepted him. Red was pounding his back. Somebody was calling him Bob. And when they reached the stable, Dick McCue spoke briefly with Red, then came over and patted Bobby's shoulder. "That's the way I take my men on," he said. "You're on the payroll, Moran. And if there's any way to help you, advance or like that, call on me or Monk."

That very afternoon Dick sent Bobby over to quarters in his silks. Bobby didn't ride, but he got acquainted, which was Dick's purpose.

As they sat together on a bench, Bobby told something of his home and what had caused him to leave.

"So Craig's the stable rider," Red reflected. "Good rider, but got a bad case of swelled head. You say your old man told you to take on this Brown Leaf colt?"

Bobby nodded. "I just kinda went away, to see if I—well, could get by where nobody knows me."

"You can do that," Red affirmed. "But the thing for you to do, kid, is to make 'em sit up back home. Not that I'm advisin' you to break away from the boss. You won't do any better than stick with him. But——"

"I'd like to go back," Bobby said thoughtfully, "for a spell. Then come back to this outfit."

"We'll talk to Dick about it," Red promised. "I think he aims to give you a break."

THE Kentucky Handicap was for horses of all ages at six furlongs. Usually, very few two-year-olds went, because of the distance at that time of the year. In the fall the youngsters go a mile without trouble. But this was summer time. A number of good three-year-olds were in, as well as older thoroughbreds. Not until Ted Haverly dropped Brown Leaf's name in the box with the secretary, was there a two-year-old represented.

Paddy saw the entry list the afternoon before the race. That meant Craig Kenton was riding, he surmised. He had seen Craig win the feature event of that day. He hadn't spoken to Ted for several days now. Paddy was a lonely man, grieving for his boy. He went home early and sat up very late, in his easy chair beside the floor lamp Bobby had bought him.

He was sitting there when a figure stole across the yard and gazed through the window. Paddy didn't know that Bobby was a bare ten feet away when he sighed and put away his paper.

"I'll see you," the son promised softly, "with your order carried out."

Bobby tiptoed out of the yard. He went downtown, pursuant to certain information he had gleaned. He found Craig Kenton in a hotel lobby, talking with a group of race fans and horsemen. Presently Craig walked out with the remark that he had "a date."

In that, Craig wasn't exactly correct. He was merely trying to have one. The jockey drove out to a residential section and rang a bell. As he stood on the porch the light from another machine touched him.

"Like to speak to Miss Holmes," Craig said to the elderly woman who answered.

"Betty Sue isn't here," the woman replied. "I imagine she is at home."

"But I thought she lived here."

"I'm her aunt. You're Mr. Kenton, aren't you? Betty was visiting me the night you brought her home."

Craig obtained her address. It was several miles out of the city, south of the track. He drove off slowly, conscious that another car was behind. Well beyond the city limits the machine came up nearer. And where the road ran alongside an interurban track Craig gasped as the other car pulled up abreast, forcing him to plunge into a ditch opposite from the rails.

"Say, you bum, what d'you think you're doing?" Craig demanded.

"I know," said Bobby Moran, "what I'm doing. Step out."

Craig surveyed the other driver. They were about the same size and build. Bobby was vaguely familiar. "Say—what's the big idea?" he asked.

Bobby walked around to the other jockey's roadster. "Me'n you," he announced, "are gonna have a little chat."

Craig waited. All at once he placed Bobby as the timid young man he had elbowed out of his way that day he met Betty Sue. "Sore are you?" he jeered. "Gonna keep me from seein' your skirt?"

"Yeah. I'm going to do that, too. Main thing, however, is to help persuade you not to ride Brown Leaf tomorrow."

"Haw. Who's gonna keep me from doin' them things?"

"I am," Bobby explained in a quiet manner.

Craig wasn't prepared for such calm but personal action. Bobby yanked him clear of the seat. Craig swung wildly. Lights from both machines played on them. Craig had one handicap. He was facing the four headlights. Thus it was, when Bobby's left came up, it loomed as large as a locomotive. Craig dodged too late.

Five minutes later Craig looked up from the ditch, a mud-caked individual, with swollen eyes and aching ribs. "I gotta plenty," he surrendered. "What you pickin' on me for?"

"It's like this," Bobby explained. "I'm going to ride that colt to-morrow. No fooling. I'm persuading you to help me."

"Huh." Craig emerged from the ditch, surveying the wreck of his clothing ruefully. "You queered me runnin' down a date. What for you gotta ride Ted's colt to-morrow? Huh?"

"I," Bobby told him, "am the late goat of the bunch. Maybe you've heard of Paddy Moran. I'm his kid."

"Cripes! Say, are you the bird—lissen—didn't you beat it when Ted gave you the run around? Say I'm beginnin' to get the slant. You blow back an' cut me out, huh? Boy, I'll say you know your stuff. Where you been?"

"Chi. With Dick McCue's bunch. On regular."

"Know Red Larsen then." Craig sat down on the running board of Bobby's

rented machine. "My head aches. Lissen, how you gonna work this?"

"You're going to be sick." Bobby told Craig. "I'll do the rest."

Whereupon he sat down beside Craig and did some explaining. The latter listened thoughtfully. "Kinda spoiled you," he commented later. "Me, I never had anything like that to worry me. Had to roll my own from the break. Lissen, kid, no hard feelin's. An' I can help by slippin' the panic signal to 'Bozo' Trent and Jimmy Hodge. If Ted can't get them two he's outa luck on riders. Till you do your stuff."

"I'm going to do my stuff," Bobby promised. "Now let's get your car out of the ditch."

Something like an hour later the two parted, Craig with his clothing brushed nearly free of dirt. But there was nothing to help his face. "I'll stay in," he grinned. "Never worry about that."

"Ted next," Bobby said to himself.

It was well in the day before a messenger brought Ted Haverly a note which contained the information that Craig Kenton was indisposed, that he was unable to report that afternoon. Ted raved. Brown Leaf was prepped to go. 'Sig' Byrd, the owner, had come down to Louisville with a party. Quite a bit of interest was attached because Brown Leaf was the only two-year-old slated to go. And now Craig was out of it. Ted went over in search of Jimmy Hodge. Somebody told him Jimmy was in a downtown hotel. He was, seated in the lobby. At Ted's request Jimmy shook his head sadly. "I got the rheumatism, Ted. Come on me kinda sudden this mornin'."

"This epidemic," the trainer grumbled, "is getting serious. Craig's sick to-day."

"That so? Say, Mister Ted, you are in a pickle. Bozo Trent's been called outa town, I hear. You got an entry in the Kentucky, ain'tcha?"

"I have. But of all the luck——"

"Lissen," Jimmy spoke, "you go back down to the stable, Mister Ted, an' I'll get busy. Might stir up a boy. Can't give you his name, 'cause I gotta work smooth. Gimme a little time."

"I'll wait till eleven o'clock," the trainer said. "Twelve at the most. Then I'll have to get desperate."

Jimmy grinned. "I don't have to help, Mister. Get your own boy."

Ted scowled at the rider. "Something tells me I'm being given the run around on this. What's it about?"

Jimmy regarded the trainer from between narrowed lids. "I'm gonna play Brown Leaf to finish in the money this afternoon," he said. "That's how I feel. There ain't no run around I know. But if you lemme alone, I'll have a boy to put on your silks who'll do his stuff or your money back. And that's all the information I'm puttin' out."

Ted stalked out indignantly. He had run up against these combinations, and try as he might, there were times when he couldn't quite understand the queer world of jockeys. But he never doubted that Jimmy would keep his word. Ted was suspicious of Craig's sudden illness. And Jimmy's indisposition on top of it all was a signal something was in the air. But if Jimmy was going to bet on the colt——

"I'll wait," he decided.

Back at the track the trainer met Paddy Moran. The officer was standing near the back entrance, holding the bridle lines as his mount dozed in the sun. "Ye're running Brown Leaf?" Paddy queried.

Ted nodded. "I'm shy my regular jockey. Craig's sick."

"Tis too bad. But we can't have all the luck, now can we? I mind me of me boy, Ted. Sure and I hoped I could see him astride Brown Leaf."

Ted nodded thoughtfully. And at noon he went over, to find Jimmy Hodge grinning outside the secretary's office. "Delivered," he announced. "You

and maroon checks of Judge Emory, with his Chancellor, a veteran handicap thoroughbred, fit and ready. There was Maytime, and Lucerne. Paddy sighed. "At six furlongs," he reflected, "the colt can give them plenty."

He circled along the back stretch as the entries trotted toward the chute at the lower turn. Sergeant Huff was at the chute mouth. Paddy saw that officer suddenly turn and gaze at him. "Now what," he muttered, "can be the trouble."

Brown Leaf was in the middle. Paddy was studying the colt and rider when the barrier flashed upward. "Here they come," he cried, heart racing as it always did at the break. "The colt's on top, so help me. A good boy, whoever he is."

Paddy rode nearer. Something had become extremely familiar in the manner Brown Leaf's jockey held himself. "No—ye're crazy, Paddy Moran," he cried. "'Tis not me lad. 'Tis not Bobby. Oh, but it is—my Bobby."

There are some who still insist that Paddy was either drunk, or a man gone suddenly mad that hot summer day at Churchill Downs. Certainly not a rider but heard that roar which surged across to startled stable boys and hostlers on stable roofs. "Bobby, me lad, do your stuff. Ride him, lad. Bring him in——"

Bobby heard but he dared not turn his head. Brown Leaf was a half length out in front, hard pressed by Chancellor, Lydia back third. Brown Leaf was full of run, and Bobby was saving every bit of energy in his horse for the stretch duel.

Paddy yanked at the lines of his saddle horse. He brought down the crop, present of a jockey, with a roar. Startled, the heavy-footed animal responded. Whooping, Paddy raced across the infield, following an arc infinitely shorter than the track circle, but which kept him abreast of the leaders.

"Bobby, me lad." Paddy shouted, "watch the big horse at your heels. Cling to the rail, me lad. Up a notch higher. That's the way, me lad. Ride home in front."

Hundreds in the stands stared at Paddy's wild race. Sergeant Huff galloped across, shouting. Patrol Judge Ogden sat on his horse and roared with laughter. Paddy wasn't hurting anything. But it was a sight worth seeing. "The old fool's older than I am," Ogden said, and laughed. "But look at him go."

Out of the upper turn and into the home stretch the field thundered. Bobby felt rather than saw Chancellor at his saddle girth. Chancellor was five years old, bearing top weight, but in the prime of racing life. Brown Leaf was still not fully mature. The pace had been fierce.

He could ease up and get plenty of credit. Any colt that showed the way to Chancellor and Lydia was worth real money. Bobby pondered that. But Brown Leaf wasn't slowing yet. And there was Paddy, falling behind, but his voice still faintly audible. "Bobby," he cried one more time.

"Coming," Bobbie replied.

Chancellor came on up. Lydia was on the outside, lapped on Chancellor. Nearer and nearer the two got up. But Brown Leaf, weakening but stout-hearted, held on.

They came that last furlong in a blanket finish, noses apart. There were many, up the track, who thought Lydia had gone ahead. The angle of vision caused that rather frequent error. But placing judges, squinting between finish posts, caught Brown Leaf's nose a scant two inches ahead, Chancellor second. And that was how the race ended. Chancellor went by on the next jump.

Sergeant Huff came up on Paddy Moran hanging to the saddle, his face pale. "You fool," Huff reprimanded,

"a nice exhibition you put up." "Take a jump in the lake," Paddy retorted, "if you don't know how they finished."

"How, Brown Leaf."

"Hooray," Paddy shouted, putting spurs to his mount again. So that was why a mounted officer went through the infield gate and thundered down the track, to the amazement of stewards and public alike. Then they saw Paddy go within the winner's circle, alongside Brown Leaf and Bobby. "Me brave lad," he cried, fairly lifting the jockey from the saddle.

There was no reprimand. It was all out of order. But there were many along the fence who knew Paddy Moran, and his devotion to his son. The roar that went up sounded like the one greeting the victor at the finish. And smiling stewards, looking down from their pagoda, laughed and called their congratulations to Paddy.

WHEN Bobby came down from quarters, Paddy was waiting. Every jockey who had descended ahead of Brown Leaf's rider had stopped to speak with the officer. And now Bobby appeared, somewhat abashed.

"'Lo Dad," he greeted.

"'Lo son," Paddy replied. Then both grinned.

"Ye rascal, ye should take a beating for running away," Paddy scolded.

"I found myself," Bobby replied soberly.

"Aye, ye did." Paddy turned his head. He had known all along that a girl was waiting, down by the paddock corner. "'Tis Betty Sue," he spoke. "Go to her, lad. Tell her Paddy's heart has forgiven her, as well as his head. Tell her to bring ye home this evening. We must talk about many things. Now run along with ye. I must go by the substation with Sergeant Huff."

Join the Sport Story Hare and Hounds Club!

Here's a Chance to Take Part in the Finest of Autumn Sports

By Handley Cross

A BRIGHT autumn afternoon. Crisp, bracing air. Overhead, the sun shining brightly. Fields turning from green to brown. Firm turf underfoot. Woods in the distance, gay with reds and yellows. All outdoors calling—and nothing much to do!

Of course, there is football. But every one doesn't play football. Same way with soccer. And none of the other popular outdoor sports are in season.

How about playing hare and hounds, which is the most pleasurable and most beneficial form of cross-country running? It's a grand old sport, and it deserves to be revived. SPORT STORY MAGAZINE is trying to revive it.

Talk to almost any track coach, and he'll tell you that the boys of the present day don't run enough. "Fewer twenty-five-dollar Fords on the roads would mean more good runners," says Dean Cromwell, University of Southern California coach. "The chief reason that the Europeans are beating us in distance running," says Ernie Hjertberg, famous coach of Swedish and Dutch Olympic teams and now track coach at Rice Institute in Texas, "is that their boys run, while too many of ours ride in automobiles. The way to become a runner is to run—to do lots of running. No normal boy ever was harmed by running. Cross-country work is the best of all—the real foundation of track success." "Boys should get out in the fields and run cross-country in the fall," says Jack Moakley, Olympic team and Cornell track coach. "I don't mean that they should race cross-country, necessarily, for cross-country racing is a hard game. But they should get out and run just for the fun of running, and the good that they will be sure to get from it. I'm strongly in favor of cross-country work for all classes of track athletes, and for every boy, whether or not he is an athlete, as a means of developing heart and lungs and legs."

A dozen or so other track coaches I've talked with have expressed the same opinions.

Now, most boys and young men aren't so very keen about doing things just because they are good for them. That's why ninety-nine per cent of the soldiers of the World War stopped going through their setting-up exercises in the morning within a month after they had been discharged from the service. Setting-up exercises are good for the body, but they aren't fun. Same way with cross-country running. It's a great developer, but doing it alone isn't much fun. That's where the game of hare and hounds comes in. Hare and hounds, or paper chasing, as it often is called, *is* fun—all kinds of fun. It is

a sport that has pretty well died out in America in this age of the automobile, but it remains highly popular in Great Britain, especially in the schools, and it deserves to be equally popular here.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A HARE AND HOUNDS CLUB.

All that is needed to play hare and hounds is some open country to run over, a supply of torn-up newspaper, a suitable bag for the hare to carry the paper in, and a crowd of boys with enough spirit in them to get out and run.

Open country can be found near any city, if you take the trouble to go looking for it. Tearing up newspapers is easy. Almost any crowd of boys will go out and run if they know that there will be fun along the way.

SPORT STORY MAGAZINE will be glad to supply Hare and Hounds Clubs with suitable paper-carrying bags.

That leaves it up to you. Talk it over with your friends, and get them to help you form a club.

The first thing to do is to appoint a captain. He should be a good runner, and the sort of fellow who can make other fellows do what he wants them to do.

The next thing to do is to find suitable country for your runs. If possible, there should be open fields, fences, woodland, and a few brooks to jump. Gently rolling country is best.

The third thing to do is to send the name of your club, the name and address of its captain, and the names and addresses of nine other members to Handley Cross, care of SPORT STORY MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City, requesting a Hare and Hounds Club bag. It will be sent to you entirely free of cost.

SPORT STORY MAGAZINE is having these bags manufactured especially for its Hare and Hounds Club. They are made of stout material, have a shoulder strap with an adjustable buckle, and are attractively lettered "SPORT STORY MAGAZINE HARE AND HOUNDS CLUB." They are, without doubt, the best bag that could be devised for the purpose.

PLAYING HARE AND HOUNDS.

Having organized your club, appointed your captain, and received your paper-carrying bag, appoint a place and time for the first meeting of your hounds.

Select one or two of your best runners to act as hares. One of the hares should carry the bag, and scatter a trail of torn paper behind him as he runs. The hare, or hares, should be given a start of from five to ten minutes, depending on the length of your course. They are permitted to take any route they choose to the finish line, and they should endeavor to deceive the hounds by running across country that will make following their trail difficult. Of course, the hares must play fair, and drop enough paper to give the hounds a real chance of trailing them.

The club captain should see to it that the hares have the start agreed upon before the hounds take up the chase. After they start, he should make the pace, and make it slow enough for the slowest hound to follow in comfort. In large packs, a "whipper-in" sometimes is appointed. It is his duty to run behind the pack to prevent straggling, and, if necessary, call the attention of the captain to the fact that he is setting too fast a pace.

Don't forget the fact that a hare and hounds run is a game—not a race. The hares seldom are caught before they reach the finish line, and the object is to trail them and follow the paper scent, rather than to outrun them.

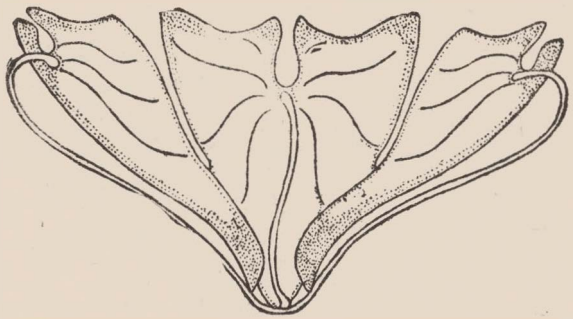
Before you have gone far you will find—especially if the day is windy—that the paper trail is becoming difficult

to follow. Pretty soon you will be able to see no paper at all. This is called a check. It gives the hounds a chance to catch their breath, which is an advantage. Directed by the captain, they should spread out and try to pick up the trail. Once it is found, on they go. The chase is a series of runs and checks.

Amusing incidents often happen on hare and hounds runs. Write and tell us about those that happen on your runs. The most interesting letters will be published.

Get busy, boys! Here is your chance to take an active part in the best of all autumn sports. Organize your club, and write for your paper-carrying bag.

In the next issue of SPORT STORY —an interview with a famous football coach.



The Announcer

A Sport Calendar

BASEBALL

National League

September 22.—Brooklyn at St. Louis; Philadelphia at Cincinnati; New York at Chicago.

September 23.—Cincinnati at St. Louis.

September 24.—Boston at New York; Brooklyn at Philadelphia; Cincinnati at St. Louis.

September 25.—Boston at New York; Brooklyn at Philadelphia; Cincinnati at St. Louis.

September 26.—Brooklyn at Philadelphia; Pittsburgh at St. Louis.

September 27.—Boston at Philadelphia; Pittsburgh at St. Louis.

September 28.—Brooklyn at New York; Boston at Philadelphia; Cincinnati at Chicago; Pittsburgh at St. Louis.

September 29.—Boston at Brooklyn; Philadelphia at New York; Cincinnati at Chicago; Pittsburgh at St. Louis.

September 30.—Boston at Philadelphia.

October 1.—Brooklyn at New York.

October 2.—Brooklyn at New York; Chicago at Cincinnati.

October 3.—Brooklyn at Boston; New York at Philadelphia; Chicago at Cincinnati.

October 4.—New York at Philadelphia; St. Louis at Pittsburgh; Chicago at Cincinnati.

October 5.—Brooklyn at Boston; New York at Philadelphia; St. Louis at Pittsburgh; Chicago at Cincinnati.

October 6.—New York at Boston; Philadelphia at Brooklyn; St. Louis at Cincinnati; Pittsburgh at Chicago.

(End of National League season)

American League

September 22.—St. Louis at Detroit; Philadelphia at Washington; Chicago at New York.

September 23.—No games scheduled.

September 24.—St. Louis at Detroit; Chicago at Cleveland; New York at Boston.

September 25.—St. Louis at Detroit; Chicago at Cleveland; New York at Boston.

September 26.—Chicago at Cleveland; New York at Washington; Philadelphia at Boston.

September 27.—New York at Washington.

September 28.—Chicago at Detroit; St. Louis at Cleveland; New York at Washington; Philadelphia at Boston.

September 29.—Chicago at Detroit; St. Louis at Cleveland; New York at Washington; Philadelphia at Boston.

September 30.—Pittsburgh at St. Louis.

October 1.—Washington at Philadelphia; Chicago at Cincinnati.

October 2.—Washington at Philadelphia.

October 3.—Detroit at Chicago; Cleveland at St. Louis.

October 4.—Detroit at Chicago; Cleveland at St. Louis.

October 5.—Detroit at Chicago; Cleveland at St. Louis; Boston at Washington; Philadelphia at New York.

October 6.—Detroit at Chicago; Cleveland at St. Louis; Boston at Washington; Philadelphia at New York.

(End of American League season)

Pacific Coast League

September 22 and 23.—No games scheduled.

September 24 to 28.—Sacramento at Seattle; Oakland at Portland; Hollywood at Mission; San Francisco at Los Angeles.

September 29.—Sacramento at Seattle, two games; Oakland at Portland, two games; Hollywood at Mission, morning and afternoon games; San Francisco at Los Angeles, two games.

October 1 to 5.—San Francisco at Sacra-

mento; Seattle at Mission; Los Angeles at Oakland; Portland at Hollywood.

October 6.—San Francisco vs. Sacramento, at Stockton, morning game; San Francisco at San Francisco, afternoon game; Seattle at Mission, morning and afternoon games; Los Angeles at Oakland, morning and afternoon games; Portland at Hollywod, two games.

(End of Pacific Coast League season)

FOOTBALL

September 28th

EAST: Pennsylvania vs. Franklin-Marshall, Philadelphia; Army vs. Boston University, West Point; Columbia vs. Middlebury, New York City; Dartmouth vs. Norwich, Hanover; Navy vs. Denison, Annapolis; New York University vs. Vermont, New York; Penn State vs. Niagara, State College; Syracuse vs. Hobart, Syracuse; Amherst vs. Connecticut Aggies, Amherst; Williams vs. Trinity, Williamstown; Temple vs. Thiel, Philadelphia; Bucknell vs. St. Thomas, Lewisburg; Colgate vs. St. Lawrence, Hamilton; Georgetown vs. Mount St. Mary, Washington; Lehigh vs. John Hopkins, Bethlehem; Springfield vs. Brown, Springfield; Washington-Jefferson vs. Ohio University, Washington, Pennsylvania; Wesleyan vs. Rochester, Middletown; West Virginia vs. Davis-Elkins, Morgantown; Holy Cross vs. St. Johns, Brooklyn, Worcester; Rutgers vs. Providence, New Brunswick; Allegheny vs. Geneva, Meadville; Boston College vs. Catholic University, Boston; Colby vs. New Hampshire, Waterville; Bethany vs. Carnegie, Wheeling; Fordham vs. Westminster, New York; Gettysburg vs. Loyola, Gettysburg; Ursinus vs. Dickinson, Collegeville; Western Maryland vs. Baltimore, Westminster; Maine vs. Rhode Island, Orono; Swarthmore vs. Drexel, Swarthmore; Maryland vs. Washington College, College Park; Union vs. Wagner, Schenectady.

MIDDLE WEST: Michigan vs. Mount Union, Ann Arbor; Wisconsin vs. South Dakota State, Madison; Indiana vs. Wabash, Bloomington; Iowa vs. Carrol, Iowa City; Michigan State vs. Alma, East Lansing; Coe vs. Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids; Toledo vs. Akron, Toledo; Detroit vs. De Paul, Detroit; Drake vs. Simpson, Des Moines; Oberlin vs. Kent, Oberlin; Western Reserve vs. Kenyon, Cleveland.

SOUTH: Vanderbilt vs. Mississippi, Nashville; Alabama vs. Mississippi College, Tuscaloosa; Florida vs. Southern, Gainesville; Washington Lee vs. Lynchburg, Lexington; Loyola vs. Rice, New Orleans; North Carolina vs. Wake Forest, Chapel Hill; Southern Methodist vs. Howard Payne, Dallas; Tennessee vs. Centre, Knoxville; V. M. I. vs. Richmond, Lexington; V. P. I. vs. Roanoke, Blacksburg; Louisiana State vs. Louisiana College, Baton Rouge; Oglethorpe vs. Presbyterian, Atlanta; Texas vs. St. Edward, Austin; Tulane vs. Louisiana Normal, New Orleans.

PACIFIC COAST: California vs. Santa Clara, Berkeley; Stanford vs. Olympic A. C., Palo Alto, Washington vs. Whitman, Seattle; Washington State vs. Idaho, Pullman; Gonzaga vs. Ellensburg, Spokane; Southern California vs. University of California, Southern Branch, Los Angeles; Montana vs. Mount St. Charles, Missoula; Oregon State vs. California Aggies, Corvallis; Oregon vs. Pacific University, Eugene.

October 5th

EAST: Yale vs. Vermont, New Haven; Princeton vs. Amherst, Princeton; Navy vs. William and Mary, Annapolis; Harvard vs. Bates, Cambridge; New York University vs. West Virginia Wesleyan, New York; Army vs. Gettysburg, West Point; Cornell vs. Niagara, Ithaca; Carnegie vs. Thiel, Pittsburgh; Brown vs. Rhode Island, Providence; Columbia vs. Union, New York; Dartmouth vs. Hobart, Hanover; Pennsylvania vs. Swarthmore, Philadelphia; Holy Cross vs. Providence, Worcester; Wesleyan vs. Connecticut Aggies, Middletown; Washington-Jefferson vs. Ashland, Washington, Pennsylvania; Boston College vs. Maine, Boston; West Virginia vs. Duquesne, Morgantown; Georgetown vs. Western Maryland, Washington; Maryland vs. North Carolina, College Park; Middlebury vs. Williams, Middlebury; New Hampshire vs. Boston University, Durham; Penn State vs. Lebanon Valley, State College; Rutgers vs. Delaware, New Brunswick; Allegheny vs. Westminster, Meadville; Catholic University vs. Mount St. Mary, Washington; Franklin-Marshall vs. Dickinson, Lancaster; Hamilton vs. Clarkson, Clinton; Colby vs. Tufts, Waterville; Fordham vs. St. Bonaventure, New York; Haverford vs. Ursinus, Haverford; Lafayette vs. Muhlenberg, Easton; College of the City of New York vs. Lowell Textile, New York; Johns Hopkins vs. Juniata, Baltimore; Lehigh vs. Penn Military College, Bethlehem; Schuylkill vs. Bucknell, Reading; Syracuse vs. St. Lawrence, Syracuse; Temple vs. St.

Thomas, Philadelphia; Massachusetts Aggies vs. Bowdoin, Amherst.

WEST: Indiana vs. Notre Dame, Bloomington; Nebraska vs. Southern Methodist, Lincoln; Wisconsin vs. Colgate, Madison; Illinois vs. Kansas, Urbana; Chicago vs. Beloit, Chicago; Michigan vs. Michigan State, Ann Arbor; Minnesota vs. Coe, Minneapolis; Northwestern vs. Butler, Evanston; Ohio State vs. Wittenberg, Columbus; Iowa vs. Monmouth, Iowa City; North Dakota vs. Haskell, Grand Forks; Purdue vs. Kansas Aggies, Lafayette; Akron vs. Kent, Akron; Colorado vs. Regis, Boulder; Detroit vs. Dayton, Detroit; Gustavus Adolphus vs. Hamline, St. Peter; Utah vs. Nevada, Salt Lake City; Washington University vs. Illinois College, St. Louis; Western Reserve vs. Miami, Gunnison; Marquette vs. Lawrence, Milwaukee; Oberlin vs. De Pauw, Oberlin; Case vs. Baldwin-Wallace, Cleveland; Cincinnati vs. Ohio Northern, Cincinnati; Iowa State vs. Grinnell, Ames; Colorado Aggies vs. Wyoming, Fort Collins; Denver vs. Colorado Mines, Denver.

SOUTH: Georgia Tech vs. Mississippi Aggies, Atlanta; Vanderbilt vs. Ouachita, Nashville; Florida vs. V. M. I., Jacksonville; Georgia vs. Furman, Athens; Kentucky vs. Maryville, Lexington; North Carolina State vs. Washington-Lee, Raleigh; Rice vs. Sam Houston, Austin; V. P. I. vs. Hampton-Sidney, Blacksburg; Baylor vs. Trinity, Waco; Chattanooga vs. Tennessee, Chattanooga; Citadel vs. Oglethorpe, Charleston; Texas vs. Centenary, Austin; Tulane vs. Texas Aggies, New Orleans.

PACIFIC COAST: Stanford vs. Oregon, Palo Alto; Southern California vs. Oregon State, Los Angeles; California vs. St. Mary, Berkeley; Idaho vs. Whitman, Moscow; Occidental vs. Santa Barbara, Los Angeles; University of California, Southern Branch, vs. Fresno, Los Angeles; Washington State vs. Mount St. Charles, Pullman; Pomona vs. California Tech, Pasadena; California Aggies vs. Brigham Young, Sacramento; Columbia vs. Pacific University, Portland; College of Pacific vs. Chico, Stockton.

TENNIS

October 7.—Fall Tournament, Virginia Hot Springs, West Virginia.

October 14.—Fall Tournament, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.

GOLF

September 30.—United States Women's Championship, Oakland Hills, Michigan.

AUTOMOBILE RACING
(Dirt Track)

September 22.—Metropolitan Speedway, New York; New Market, New Jersey; Los Angeles, California.

September 24 and 26.—Childress, Texas.

September 25 and 27.—Abilene, Texas.

September 28.—Hohokus, New Jersey; Leighton, Pennsylvania; Riverhead, New York.

September 29.—Metropolitan Speedway, New York; Deer Park, Long Island; New Market, New Jersey; Cincinnati, Ohio; Davison, Michigan; Fresno, California.

October 5.—Bloomsbury, Pennsylvania; Trenton, New Jersey; Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

October 6.—Metropolitan Speedway, New York; New Market, New Jersey; Detroit, Michigan.

HORSE RACING

August 26 to September 28.—Lincoln Fields, Illinois.

September 17 to October 1.—Aqueduct Track, New York.

September 20 to October 2.—Havre de Grace, Maryland.

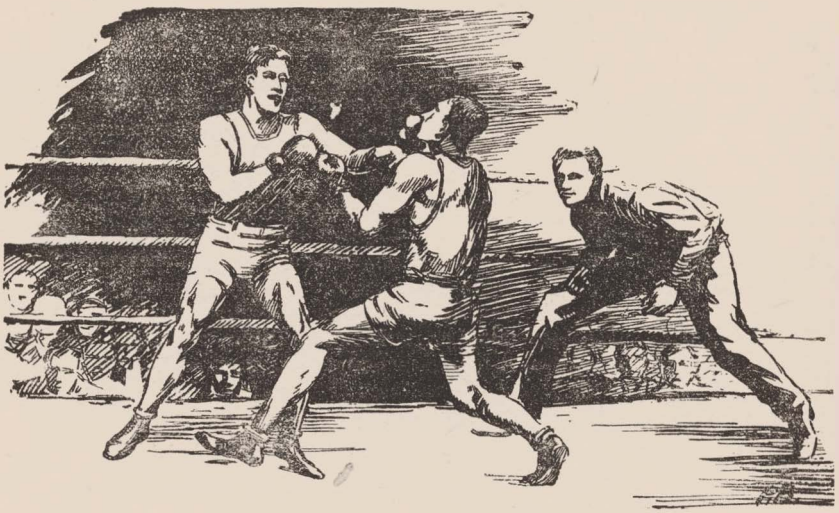
September 30 to October 12.—Hawthorne, Illinois.

October 2 to 16.—Jamaica, New York.

October 4 to 30.—Laurel, Maryland.

Honor Bound

By William Bruner



Athletic emergencies at West Point always found one of the four Cardinals being shoved into the breach. This time it was Tinsley, who found himself a heavyweight boxer almost overnight.

THEIR boxing team that year wasn't, the cadets reluctantly admitted, everything it might be. Graduation had claimed several from the season before, and the ones who were left—except Kalloch, the team captain—were simply fair, but in nowise excellent. Coming out ahead, or even with a creditable record at the end of the season would be largely a matter of sheer determination with skill and excellence lacking.

Then, to make matters worse, an unfortunate affair occurred, which, in the end, dampened what little hope West Point had for boxing glory, and for one cadet changed the whole course of life.

The incident touched close to the four Cardinals, too, for outside of the fact that they were all good friends of the man primarily involved, it made a boxer out of Frank Tinsley.

At the beginning of the season, the coach had regarded Tinsley with a hopeful eye, but the gleam therein soon changed to despair. The big cadet was one of those people, the coach presently observed, who never got excited. Though a cool head is an asset highly to be desired, there is such a thing as coolness to the point of seeming indifference—and that, decided the coach, was what ailed Tinsley.

The cadet agreed with him. Tinsley had no ambition to win fame by giving punches, much less receiving them. He boxed only because regulations required of him some athletic activity, when sleep those several afternoons each week

would have done him much more good, besides being more in accord with his tastes.

Even the other Cardinals could not imagine Tinsley as a good boxer, though they were in the habit of giving one another every possible encouragement. But after all, it didn't make much difference, for Tinsley was in the same weight with Kalloch, and the team captain was unquestionably the best man on the squad. Tinsley made a fair sparring partner—the most which could be said of him.

The Cardinals were a group of four, taking their name as they did from the chief points of the compass, for they hailed from widely separated parts of the country. Tinsley, who could claim practically any part of the United States and her territories as a one-time home—his father was a stern and crusty colonel—supplied any localities the others might have lacked. He had got an excellent start on his military career by being the class baby—the first son born to a member of his father's class—so that his subsequent traveling around and entering the military academy to carry on the Tinsley tradition had been almost inevitable.

Jefferson Minor, a whole-hearted Virginian, represented the South. Jeff had spent one year at a rather liberal and easy-going Southern university, where distinction was more highly thought of than discipline, before entering the United States Military Academy, with the result that he found the well-ordered cadet life exceedingly hard to endure. Eventually he got used to getting up and going to bed by bugle command, as well as everything else in between, meanwhile making quite a name for himself as an athlete.

Coming from upper New York State, Eric Sturdevant—tall, slim and blond—did credit to the North. Like Minor, he was prone to get himself into a mental stew if everything did not go right, but this weakness he had largely overcome through the somewhat drastic efforts of the other Cardinals. The cure left a long scar across his forehead—the result of an insane hockey game, conceived by Jeff, which put Sturdevant's courage to the test.

Dick Wheeler, who was brought up in the vast cactus-sand-and-sunlight-filled spaces of an Arizona ranch, completed the four. A quiet person, with often a far-away look in his eyes, he made few friends and kept them all. Horses were his greatest interest, for he always knew what a horse was thinking about—which was more, in his solitary life, than he had learned about people. A member of the polo team, he happily got off his athletic requirements in the great riding hall which towers, like another Palisade, over the Hudson.

Friendship was the only tie which bound the Cardinals. They had no secret pledges, no esoteric hand grip. They were not known at the academy as the Cardinals, for that word never passed their lips. Thrown together by chance in the first confusing days of entrance, they had helped one another through the perplexities and indignities of plebe year, until their friendship had crystallized into something fine and permanent.

Cadet Kalloch, also of Virginia, was a close friend of the Cardinals'. He and Jeff Minor had been neighbors in Richmond. Indeed, it was Kalloch's coming to the Point which first made Jeff interested in the place, and it was also Kalloch who demonstrated to Jeff that he could achieve nothing but unhappiness for himself by ignoring the long-established traditions of the academy.

The news, when it broke, coursed through the Point like a chill wind off the frowing summit of Storm King. In North and South Barracks it electrified

and dismayed; from the lowest plebe to the most serene first-class man it left a trail of depression.

Accused of dishonesty—Cadet Kalloch!

It was incredible. Kalloch, one-time captain of the football team and present captain of the boxing squad. Kalloch, whose academic standing and popularity had made him one of the ideal cadets at the Point Who could believe it? Who would have thought it? Surely, every one hoped and believed, there must be some great mistake.

Jeff, with heavy heart and distress in his gray eyes, came to the other Cardinals with the distasteful news. They listened, quiet and serious. They knew Kalloch probably better than any others at the Point, for Tinsley, Wheeler and Minor had played in the backfield with him. Through the long football season they had learned to respect his generalship and courage, and to admire his unerring fairness. They would have as soon thought ill of themselves as of Kalloch, and as they heard, now, of the theft he was suspected of, they frankly did not believe.

"He is confined to quarters," Jeff said unhappily. "He won't say a word, except that he is not guilty. I know that's the truth. But"—Jeff shrugged hopelessly, for this was a matter beyond reason—"a statement like that won't do him any good in an investigation."

"Something rotten somewhere," Tinsley agreed, abstractedly chewing on the stem of a battered, unlighted pipe. "Personally, I think they're acting too fast."

"But——" Wheeler began, and then he abruptly stopped.

The same thought occurred to all of them. The honor code, and its rigid definitions, formulated by the cadets themselves for their own guidance:

"Honor is a nice sense of what is right, with a strict conformity to duty. No intentional breach of honor is excusable. Every one, whether offender or not, is honor bound to report any breach of honor which comes to his attention. A second chance to one who has intentionally violated the honor code will not be given, and no partiality will be shown, no distinction whatever being made due to class work or rank."

IT had been the matter of a valuable wrist watch, purchased by a first-class man, Cadet Marsten, for his fiancée which caused the trouble. When it arrived Kalloch was in the room, talking to Cadet Hastow, Marsten's roommate. Explaining that the watch had been sent on approval, and that he had not yet decided to keep it, Marsten showed it to the others, whereupon Kalloch declared, jokingly, that he considered it very handsome and worthy of his own girl.

Marsten then left the academy for several days on account of sickness at home, forgetting the watch in his hasty departure. When he returned to West Point, he immediately started to look for the timepiece which he had so carelessly left on his desk. It was not to be found. Before he had finished, he searched the room thoroughly, even to his roommate's belongings, thinking perhaps Hastow had put it away. As manager of the basket-ball team, the latter was absent on a trip.

Distressed, Marsten went to Kalloch's room to tell about his loss. No sooner had he got there than he saw the cadet hastily cover something on his desk with a sheet of paper. But he thought nothing of this until later, when—before he got to the subject of his visit—the paper blew off the desk, disclosing a watch exactly like the one which Marsten had missed.

"Why," exclaimed the cadet, "there's my watch!"

Kalloch shook his head, evidently embarrassed.

"No," he said, "that's mine."

Marsten, in no mood for joking, angrily demanded where Kalloch got it, and the Virginian, in turn exasperated by the other's manner, replied that it was none of his cockeyed business.

"Well," Marsten said, "you don't need to tell me. I know!"

Kalloch blanched at the implication, and shut up like a clam. He refused to discuss the subject further, and Marsten, too angry for considered judgment, at once made a report. When questioned by others, Kalloch again declared that the watch did not belong to Marsten, but there were others who had seen the timepiece in the latter's possession. Deeply offended by their doubt, Kalloch told the committee they could do their own investigating, since they did not choose to believe him anyhow. To that flat statement he refused to add another word. He was confined to his room.

Hearing what happened, the coach came near having that fit on the verge of which all coaches are traditionally supposed to hover. Being confined to his room, naturally Kalloch could not box—and a team had just arrived from Washington and Lee for a match with the Army.

It was not an exceptional team which the Virginia school sent up that year. Their best man was Townsend, the heavyweight, who could not compare with Kalloch in the same class. But the Virginians thought so. They were confident that their boxer could easily defeat Kalloch, who had left their State to follow a military career.

But the word was passed around that Kalloch was indisposed, and not one of the cadets disclosed what had really happened. Some one else would box Townsend, and though the visiting heavyweight was deeply disappointed, there was nothing he could do about it.

And that some one else was Tinsley. The big, good-natured cadet was tremendously disturbed, but he had no alternative. His duty lay in taking Kalloch's place though the task was very distasteful to him. Besides that, he had not trained with the idea of representing the Point. More than anything, he had boxed to fulfill the athletic requirement, but there was no other whom the coach considered as good, nor as well suited to stand up against the big boxer from the South.

"There's no use in trying to get in condition or learn anything new," the coach told him. "Just rest—that's all—and if you come out this afternoon and do your best, I can't ask more."

It was evident that the coach was none too hopeful—nor, for that matter, was Cadet Tinsley. It was ironic that, offered an opportunity for an hour's rest in the afternoon, he found sleep elusive. Lying awake on his bunk, he tossed and grunted while Sturdevant sat at his desk and made a pretense at studying military tactics.

"Wake up!" said Eric at length. "Time to be getting over to the gym, Tin."

TINSLEY came up for the bout—the last of the afternoon—already feeling as though he had been through several minor skirmishes, all of which had found him vanquished. Military history had taught him that wars are not always won by great battles alone, but he had already fared poorly in the conflicts with himself.

Jeff Minor and Sturdevant tried to keep his mind off the coming bout, but without notable success. Tinsley smiled wanly at their jokes or looked absently beyond them while they indulged in horseplay calculated to arouse his interest. Finally the two Cardinals lost heart, too, and when Dick Wheeler—who always saw the seamy side of things—joined them, they were a very glum bunch indeed.

Kalloch's name was not mentioned, but the fate of the first-class man was

uppermost in all their minds, Tinsley, in particular, could think of nothing else, and he experienced no elation whatever in this opportunity to represent West Point. Even had he been a good boxer, he could not have anticipated the coming bout. It was Kalloch who should be going up there to the ring.

Kalloch confined to his quarters!

When Tinsley appeared, the cadets, ranged on tiers of benches along one side of the gym, gave him a loud yell. Tinsley appreciated it, but somehow he felt he merited no applause. He knew that they knew he was no great shakes of a boxer, whereas Kalloch could have walked off with the event. With four of the bouts already gathered in by the cadets, West Point did not need the heavyweight event to take the meet. That was the only thing which saved Tinsley. He could try his darnedest and still lose without causing the Academy to drop the meet.

The cadet heavy went through the preliminary ceremonies automatically. Try as he would, his thoughts were not on the fight, but Kalloch, who should be in the ring instead of himself. The gong rang. The stool was whipped out from under him by anxious seconds. Townsend advanced to meet him.

Then they were at it. Townsend led with a left to the body, and Tinsley, still hardly aware that the fight had actually commenced, clinched. Breaking, the Washington and Lee man rushed in, showering blows on the cadet. They were sharp, stinging. They woke the cadet to realization that this, after all, was a sure-enough bout.

A thought flashed through his mind. The thing to do now was to fight. What had gone before didn't matter, nor the things which would follow. The bout was the only consideration—nothing else.

Tinsley lunged in, nailing his rival with clean, straight lefts to the jaw. Townsend looked slightly surprised, but he came back with a barrage laid expertly on Tinsley's midriff. Tinsley retaliated with a crashing right just above the belt which took some of the ambition out of the Southerner for a moment. They slowed down, and sparred cautiously for the balance of the round, warily watching each other like a couple of alert game roosters.

Back in his corner, Tinsley heard advice freely and hastily offered, but he did not heed. He couldn't be bothered at this late hour with learning what to do. Besides, he knew already. If he handed out harder punches than he received, the fight would be his. It was as simple as that.

The gong! It seemed to release a catapult which sent Townsend bounding across the mat. Though the visitor weighed only a couple of pounds more than the cadet, he looked much heavier. His muscles were knotted and hard, but quick. His black eyes were all-seeing, dancing, seemingly endowed with an ability to detect a punch before it started.

Tinsley stopped him with a straight left to the head. They stood toe to toe, then, and again Townsend battered at the cadet's body. Scarlet welts appeared on Tinsley's flesh, indicating all too vividly the bite of those repeated blows.

The lack of proper preparation was beginning to tell on the cadet. Continual drubbing on the same spot was wearing him down rapidly, for he had not the skill to ward off those concentrated jabs which fell on him with the regularity of an Indian's blows on a tom-tom.

But Tinsley fought doggedly on, conscious now and then of the rows of gray-uniformed cadets who silently watched him with dull hope and little faith. There is a difference between quiet imposed by rules, and the silence of lacking enthusiasm. He knew he

was disappointing them, but it could not be helped. He was doing his utmost. He hoped they understood.

All the while Townsend was close upon him, like a bundle of steel springs coiling and uncoiling with vicious quickness—an automaton impossible to harm, cold, scientifically calculating, deadly.

The gym went suddenly all wrong. Tinsley felt himself suspended helplessly in mid-air while the floor tore loose from its foundations and rushed crazily up to catch him. The shock of collision sobered him. He saw a blurred referee standing tall above him, and with a throaty, foghorn voice he was saying:

"Five—six—seven——"

Hands and knees—a terrific effort—hands and feet. Then, unsteadily, Tinsley was standing once more. His opponent had vanished. He came back. Coiling, uncoiling, a fighting machine against whom Tinsley seemed to have no more chance than laden wheat before a reaper.

What was that? No chance? Tinsley lunged at the Washington and Lee man, and felt the electrifying crack of his glove on the visitor's chin. Townsend's head jerked back as he took squarely the hardest blow he had got in the bout. He dropped, no longer a machine, but just a man on a college boxing team. Just as he hit the canvas, the gong sounded. There was a surprise murmur from the cadets.

Tinsley stood staring while seconds helped Townsend to his corner. Then the referee gave the cadet a gentle push. He got to the stool and leaned back on the ropes. Fluttering towels chased away the mists which had begun to darken the world, and icy water shocked his burning flesh into a false feeling of freshness. It was entirely too fine to be enjoyed for only a moment, but the gong ended the luxury of rest, and the essential stool was gone once more.

Had Tinsley been able to follow up the advantage given him by that one staggering blow at the end of the second round, he might have quickly ended the fight. But the minute of rest revived the visiting heavyweight, who had had long training in the art of quick recovery.

As if to make up for the indignity he had suffered, the Washington and Lee boxer descended on Tinsley with more fury than ever before. Again he pounded insufferably on the cadet's body, until even breathing was torture. Having learned a lesson, he was more wary. In vain Tinsley sought an opening through which to drive another of those revealing—to himself—blows which had nearly finished his opponent at the end of the second round, but the Virginian kept his defense tightly closed.

Tinsley knew that the seconds were slipping fast. He concentrated all his powers on driving another disastrous blow into his opponent, like a general, who, in a tight hole, resolves to grasp a sudden victory or die gloriously in the effort.

Strategy might have helped, but Tinsley had not learned the finer points of the game. He knew only the essentials—to hit and to keep from being hit. In his eagerness to observe the former, he grew careless of the latter.

He saw the blow coming, and tried to duck. But it came so fast, so shockingly fast, that he hadn't the time. The last thing he knew was that he had failed to dodge that well-aimed left hook. He did not even know when he hit the floor.

JEFF MINOR saw Cadet Hastow coming toward the barracks with a suit case in his hand. He hurried out to meet Marsten's roommate, half hoping that the latter might be able to throw some light on the affair of the watch.

"Greetings!" said Hastow airily. "I see the old place hasn't changed——"

"Yes," interrupted Jeff somberly, "it has."

Noting the seriousness in Jeff's manner, the other put down his suit case. "What's happened?" he asked.

Briefly, Jeff began a recital of the accusation of Kalloch.

"Good Lord!" muttered Hastow, "I sent that watch back to the jeweler's. It was there on the desk. I thought Marsten didn't want to keep it. I mailed it for him and left a note——"

"Hurry!" Jeff said excitedly. "The trial is on now, I think. You get there as fast as you can. I'll take your bag."

Hastow was off at a dog trot. But the damage had already been done. To be sure, Kalloch was completely vindicated. He had sent for a watch similar to the one ordered by Marsten, but he had been reluctant, at first, to let the other cadet know that he had been aped.

Marsten's suspicions and action upon them came too fast. Angry and hurt, Kalloch declined to discuss the affair with any one when his word was doubted. A few statements would have cleared the matter up immediately, but the Virginian's outraged pride had not permitted him to make them.

"You have acted foolishly," Kalloch was told.

The cadet's proud head drooped. He realized, now, that his behavior had been far-fetched and ill-advised. All his life he had been taught that honor was the finest quality in a gentleman. Honor, in his Southern home, had been almost a fetish, and his own integrity had ever been of the highest. Thus, to be doubted, even by a man in anger, had for a while completely upset his equilibrium. He apologized, both to Marsten and to the academy.

That night, just to make Kalloch feel better, the Cardinals had him in Jeff's room for a boodle fight and general gumming session. The eventful dish of the evening was crab flakes, with peanuts as a chaser.

The next morning, Dick Wheeler and Kalloch went on sick report. They were pronounced very ill by the medico, who said that they would be lucky if they got out within two weeks.

All of which made the coach wonder, when he heard the news, if he were from some indefinite source being kidded.

"YOU could have done better," the coach told Tinsley a day or so later, "in that Washington and Lee match. But it was very gratifying to note that you did no worse."

"I got knocked out," Tinsley said, rubbing his square, still-tender chin. "I don't know what could be worse than that."

The coach grunted.

"As a matter of fact," he went on after a thoughtful pause, during which he appraised the cadet keenly, "you have the makings of a pretty good boxer."

"Don't make me laugh," Tinsley thought, "I've got a sore jaw. He said nothing, however, for he knew what the coach was driving at. He had been selected to take Kalloch's place again, while the team captain was in the hospital.

And that was not good news, no matter how Tinsley looked at it. In the first place, it reminded him that the crab flakes had been his suggestion. Nor could he, in spite of the coach's words, imagine himself as good enough to represent West Point in the ring. There was one saving circumstance. The next meet, with Penn State, would be the last. After that, he wouldn't have to worry any more.

Guessing at Tinsley's viewpoint, the coach set to work to inspire him with encouragement. Nor were Jeff Minor or the other Cardinals idle with their

praise. After a time, therefore, the big cadet began to take a lively interest in the ring sport, and more than any other comment, he appreciated the words of commendation which his friends offered when they came to watch him work out.

Tinsley hoped he was improving, at any rate. He realized keenly that he was taking the place of a good boxer, and, since he had had no choice in the matter, he was nevertheless resolved to do his best to prove no discredit to the Point. Indeed, he felt he owed that much to Kalloch.

The date of the Penn State meet drew near all too fast. Tinsley worked conscientiously, hoping meanwhile that Kalloch would get better. His opponent he understood, was rated as one of the best boxers in the intercollegiate world—a hard-fighting six-footer named Fenwick, who had not, in his several years of boxing, ever lost a bout.

The rest of the Penn State outfit was also reputed to be good, and not without cause, for they had not dropped a meet all season. For this reason the cadets were particularly anxious to defeat them, since their own record was none too briliant. From the beginning, it had been an unfortunate winter. Victory over the undefeated visitors would materially increase their own standing.

As before, that first afternoon he took Kalloch's place, Tinsley's bout came last. The Cardinals, except Wheeler, were with him in the dressing room, discussing everything under the sun but the coming bout, and this time Tinsley was better able to appreciate their efforts in his behalf.

As a matter of fact, the cadet was not worried. That calmness of nature—which had once been the despair of the coach—had returned. The time would come for the heavyweight match; it would be held, and then it would be over. Frank Tinsley was giving no thought whatever to the odds which were popularly believed to be against him. He even went so far as to discuss that morning's writ in ordinance.

With three bouts to the credit of both West Point and Penn State—the cadets had outdone themselves that afternoon, fighting as never before—Tinsley came up for the heavyweight battle.

Excitement ran at high pitch. The other bouts had all been fast, clever, thrill-providing. The spectators were eager for this last spectacle of the day. A goodly number of civilians were present, and massed on the other side of the ring were the cadets

Tinsley smiled—a slow, boyish grin which won for a friend practically every person he encountered. Seeing that smile, the coach wondered if he hadn't possibly been mistaken when he decided, long before, that the cadet would never make a fighter. Even now, he wasn't sure. But he thought of that battle with the man from Washington and Lee, and was comforted.

That smile was still on Tinsley's face when the starting gong sounded. He stood, paused, and then slowly advanced to meet his opponent. Fenwick, too, advanced slowly, but when they met in the center of the ring, he offered a haymaker to the head. The cadet ducked, and closed in. They exchanged light lefts, gauging one another, and then, with a sudden attack, Fenwick drove the West Pointer to the ropes.

Tinsley sent him back with a right to the jaw, and then followed a furious exchange of blows at close quarters, in which the advantage was certainly Fenwick's. After a few seconds the cadet began to realize that infighting was the kind his opponent liked. He stepped back and thereafter kept a good distance between himself and the brawny man from Penn State.

The visitor was not overrated in the least. He was hard, fast, and skillful. A natural fighter trained scientifically, he was a far better boxer than

Townsend, of Washington and Lee, had ever dreamed of being. Tinsley had judged that the moment they touched gloves and the cool, mocking eyes of the visitor gazed directly into his own.

Fenwick tried to close in, eagerly sparring for an opening. Tinsley drove a hard left into his body, and had the satisfaction of hearing the other grunt heavily. He followed with left jabs to the head, and Fenwick clinched. After the break Fenwick landed a right hook to the head—a hard, ringing blow which made the cadet blink dazedly.

But Tinsley was in good condition, and far more than that was needed to put him aside. He had learned to judge distance and speed. He could land his own rapierlike punches with every bit as much deadliness as the Penn State man showed. When Fenwick got too close, Tinsley met him with prickling, stabbing thrusts.

At the end of the round, the two appeared to be evenly matched. The Cardinals were enthusiastic. Even their greatest hopes had fallen short of the thing Tinsley was actually accomplishing. The coach was frankly pleased. It is something to see a man become a finished fighter in no time at all.

To open the second round, the visitor came running out of his corner as though his intention were to end the battle forthwith. But Tinsley stopped him with a hail of whacks along the ribs, driving him to the ropes. There they traded lefts, clinched, and wrestled to the center of the ring before the referee could break them.

They parried for a moment before Fenwick darted in and drove Tinsley's head back with a crashing uppercut to the jaw. He followed with a stinging blow to Tinsley's right eye, which promptly discolored and began to swell with amazing rapidity. To retaliate, Tinsley charged into his opponent and pounded him on the head with both hands, driving Fenwick into a neutral corner.

Fenwick swung wildly and worked around to the center of the ring. Then, in a welter of resounding blows, the round ended.

It had told heavily on both of them. Tinsley was grateful for the gentle treatment to his eye, which opened somewhat. In his own corner, Fenwick was blowing heavily while his seconds massaged and tried to take the hurt out of his bruised flesh. For either boxer, the rest seemed far too short.

In the opening of the last round, Fenwick ducked a heavy swing and came up with a sizzling blow which caught Tinsley square on the chin. The cadet rocked back on his heels, reeled, and nearly fell. Fenwick pressed in, forcing him to the corner, where Tinsley made a stand and got in three annoying lefts to the face.

But the Penn State man was fighting now for all he was worth. He had only two more minutes left in which to preserve his splendid record of nondefeat and save the meet for his college. Still, much the same motives were impelling Frank Tinsley. They stood toe to toe and slugged.

Tinsley suddenly realized that he was nearing the end of his resources. What he knew had been used, and though the machine-gun fire which he had steadily slung into his opponent had wrought great havoc, the visitor was still fresh compared with the cadet.

Over and over, Tinsley swore to himself that he must win. The Corps expected it of him. So did the Cardinals —and Kalloch. Tinsley felt somewhat to blame for the team captain's absence from the ring, anyhow. He figured that he might be able to square himself by winning the bout.

He warded off a left jab only to receive a crashing right on the side of his head which sent him to his knees. Up in an instant, he again became the

cool, detached fighter at whom the coach marveled. He smiled tauntingly at the Penn State man and closed in with arms going like pistons.

Fenwick fell back, stunned by this sudden display just when he thought he had the skids under his opponent. One! Two! Three! The blows fell in rapid succession, everywhere and all at once, until Fenwick began to suspect that the cadet had somehow become endowed with the arms of an octopus.

But a conviction had come to the cadet. He could not win that fight on points. The Penn State heavyweight must go down for the count or the meet was lost. In this however, he was wrong. The judges themselves could not have been sure of the winner.

A cut opened on Fenwick's face. Instead of trying to make it worse—as the visitor evidently expected, for he raised his guard—Tinsley shot in a quick jab just above the Penn State man's belt which carried behind it all the cadet's weight. Fenwick's breath came out in a surprised gasp, and he doubled abruptly, pitching headlong.

That was the end. At the count of ten, Fenwick was just beginning to stir. In the same instant, the gong seemed the signal for wild acclaim. The hitherto quiet cadets surged restlessly and let out a prolonged cheer. The meet was over—and the meet was theirs.

THE Cardinals had another boodle fight in Jeff's room that night, celebrating Tinsley's victory and the release of Wheeler and Kalloch from the hospital.

"That medico said he'd let me out in time to see the fight," Kalloch said regretfully, "except that he was afraid I'd get in the ring if he did. I sure would have enjoyed the spectacle of Tinsley getting all bruised up!"

"He handed out some pretty nice bruises himself," Jeff said. "Yes, sir! He filled in the breach you left like a veteran."

"Say," protested the newly risen heavyweight star thickly—for his mouth was cracker filled—"what the heck is this, anyhow?"

"Eats!" murmured Wheeler, reaching for the milk. "I'm starved! An' here all you're giving me is crackers and milk, and that's all I've had for the past two weeks."

Tinsley thumped his fist on the desk. "That's all I give anybody hereafter," he declared. "I've fought my last fight for the privilege of feeding a flock of hungry kaydets, and that's final!"

Sturdevant looked reproachfully at Wheeler.

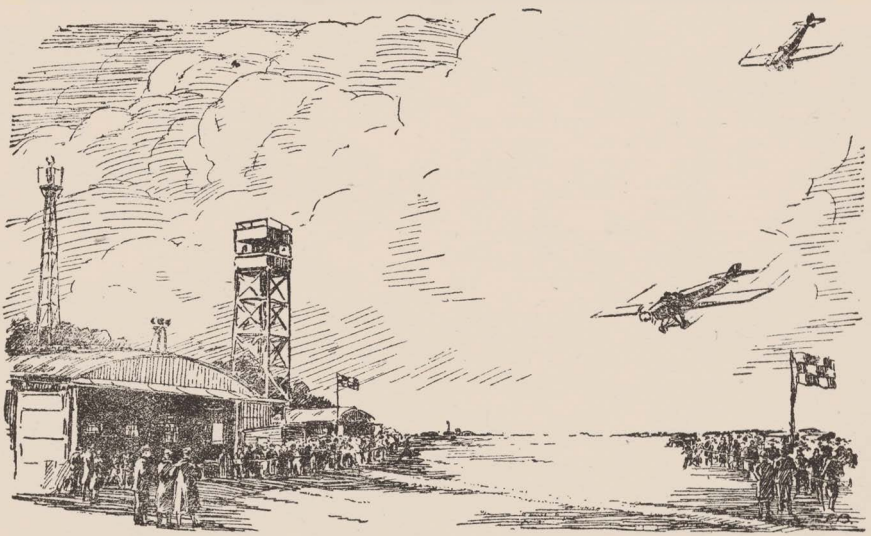
"You offend your generous hosts," he admonished. "This is a celebration to celebrate the victory of the greatest little scrapper who never suspected it, all along."

"Aw," said Tinsley, "you're smearing this banquet with a whole lot of applesauce."

Kalloch listened in silence. He was happy. The cloud had passed, to leave him wondering at his short-lived pettishness. He had discovered a weakness, and found the strength to fight it down. Indirectly, the Cardinals had show him the way to a victory as great as Tinsley's.

The Mystery Ship

By John Samson



In spite of attempts to eliminate him from the trials, Bob Dale's plane was gleaming against the clouds when the finish came in sight.

A TWO-PART STORY—PART II

THE thunderstorm passed, but Bob Dale and his crew of Yale groundmen scarcely knew when the rain stopped and the clouds began to disperse. Indeed, they scarcely realized the swift flight of time that afternoon, as they worked on the *Redbird* reconditioning her and replacing all the old control wires with new ones. When Bob Dale looked at his wrist watch, he was startled to find that it was quarter to seven and beginning to grow dark.

"By Jove, it's dinner time, and I'm hungry," he said.

"Hungry," grunted Eric Rath. "My backbone is rubbing against my belt buckle. I'm positively famished."

"Well, what do you say to knocking off and getting something to eat?" queried Bob.

Dick Bruce looked up from his work, and passed a greasy hand across his face.

"Let me make a suggestion," he said. "There's more work to be done here—not much but a little. You and Don are tired and deserve some relaxtion. Why don't you two motor back to the hotel, clean up and eat a real meal? Then turn in and get a good night's sleep, so as to store up enough energy to take you through that seven-hundred-and-fifty-mile grind to-morrow."

"We fellows won't have to work to-morrow and we can rest all day after

the race gets started. So we'll all stay here at the hangar and tinker with the plane until it is shipshape. Then we'll shake down some beds here on the floor and the work tables, and bunk in here all night, so as to be on hand if any one tries to monkey with the plane again. We can grab our meal from one of those lunch wagons up at the end of the field. We can eat in relays. How about it, Bob?"

Dale was reluctant to leave some of his friends at work while he and Don enjoyed the luxury of a real meal and a good bed, and he hesitated before accepting Dick Bruce's suggestion. But the rest of the fellows were quick to back Bruce up and urge Bob to get all the rest he could, and finally he consented to carry out at least part of the program.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he said. "I'll take Don along and we'll go get a real meal somewhere, but we are likely to come back later and see how you fellows are getting on, before we turn in."

"Don't do it—don't come back. We won't look for you. We'll be all hunky-dory here, Bob, and we'll have the *Redbird* in A-1 shape when you come to the field to-morrow morning. Now go ahead, get a good meal, relax and rest because you will need all the strength and physical resources you can muster to go through that race to-morrow."

And so, Bob and Don, after shedding their working clothes and washing up, left Franklin Flying Field in Bob's big roadster. The thunderstorm had cleared the atmosphere, and the lingering clouds in the sky had broken up and, in large fragments, were scudding away on the wings of a warm summer wind, giving place to soft, cool moonlight. It promised to be a perfectly wonderful evening, and as the roadster reached the concrete boulevard that led east and west along the Island, Bob, instead of turning the big car toward Westbury and the Framingham Hotel, headed it in the opposite direction.

"I think a spin before dinner will do us both good, Don. What do you say if we breeze out toward the South Shore Inn, and try a shore dinner, clams, lobsters, chicken, and all that?" he queried of his companion.

"Um-m-m, boy! Listens good to me," said Don, sliding lower into the seat beside Bob and relaxing pleasantly.

Bob smiled and settled down himself. But he could not completely relax as Don did. For one thing he had to drive, and although this generally was almost an effortless operation on his part, tonight he seemed a little more thoughtful as he operated the wheel and accelerator and urged his fast gray car down the stretch of concrete road that led down Long Island. There was a certain grim tenseness about his fine, firm mouth, too, and a certain pucker to his brow that indicated to Don Holt that some perplexing questions were shaping themselves in Bob Dale's brain, and he was trying hard to find their answers.

Dale was indeed beset with troublesome thoughts. They concerned that mysterious Junker that had burst out of the thunderstorm like a great black eagle and tried to force them into a headlong plunge eastward that afternoon. Of course, it had all been prearranged. Bob could readily see that. That black Junker had been circling aloft somewhere up among the clouds watching him, and when it became apparent that he was about to succeed in executing the difficult outside loop, the Junker had decided to take a hand in the situation. Under cover of the storm cloud it had dropped down in the *Redbird's* path and just at the critical moment dived at the trim little ship.

Had Bob Dale been the average pilot he might have lost his nerve then and with it complete control of the *Redbird*. A crash would have resulted in which the ship would have been ruined and

thus kept out of the races on the morrow, not to mention the fact that both he and Don would have been forced to take to their parachutes and chance death in their plunge from the five-thousand-foot level. Bob had not lost his nerve, but the swoop of the Junker had made him throw the *Redbird* into such a violent side slip and twist that the aileron wire had not been able to stand the strain and had snapped. And Bob and Don had taken their lives in their hands in an effort to control the damaged ship and bring it down to a safe landing.

Bob smiled grimly to himself as these thoughts teemed through his brain. As it turned out, the Junker had thwarted its own efforts in forcing him down, for Bob well knew that it was the spectacular landing they had been fortunate enough in making as well as the outside loop that he had executed that had moved the judges to award them nearly a hundred points more than they had given the Alton-Dennison plane and the Drummond, and thus put them ahead in the first of the two day's competition.

But was Fred Dennison behind the dirty work of the black Junker? Bob felt reasonably sure he was, but as yet he had no definite proof. He wondered where the Junker had come from. Where was it hiding? Could it indeed have a rendezvous on lonely Marsh Island in Great South Bay, and would it be waiting for him to-morrow when he had to fly across that section of Long Island to reach the first turn in the four-cornered race at Montauk Point? Would it come roaring up at him, and undertake to force the *Redbird* out of the race a second time? Bob set his teeth firmly as these thoughts took form and decided stubbornly that all that the Junker might do would not force him out of the race to-morrow. If worst came to worst, he'd chance a crash in mid-air, knowing full well that the occupants of the Junker would not have any better chance of getting clear of the wreck by means of their parachutes than he and Don would have.

It was probably the thought of the Junker and its possible rendezvous on Marsh Island that had unconsciously caused Bob to think of the South Shore Inn and the excellent shore dinner that was served there, and thus cause him to turn the nose of the fast gray roadster in that direction. Marsh Island was scarcely seven miles from the inn, although it was well out in the center of Great South Bay.

For nearly an hour they bowled along over a fine stretch of concrete road, Bob a silent figure at the wheel, and Don pleasantly relaxed at his side. Through one small Long Island town after another they moved until they began to come out in typical South Shore country---salt marshes backed by scrubby growth of oaks and broken by tidal estuaries that shimmered in the moonlight. Here and there were lonely farmsteads on the higher land that sloped down to the marshes, and now and again they glimpsed moon-splashed expanses of Great South Bay itself, a tremendous stretch of water reaching in from the ocean. There was a rich, salty tang to the air, and the night was radiantly beautiful.

Bob stepped on the gas a little harder then, and before long dead ahead of them they glimpsed a cluster of electric lights and a winking sign far off in the night that proclaimed the location of the famous South Shore Inn.

Don Holt aroused himself and began to take an interest, for the salty breeze had whetted his appetite as it had Bob's. When he saw the announcement of a chicken shore dinner, at the entrance to the long, graveled drive that led up to the inn, he smiled pleasantly in anticipation of the meal. He never dreamed, of course, that both he and Bob were destined to suffer the pangs of real hunger and a lot of mental and physical

anguish before any food would pass their lips, although they were at the moment within two hundred yards of the best shore dinner served on Long Island.

Because the South Shore Inn did serve a meal of such exceptional quality. the establishment, although remote from any important center, was extremely popular as Bob and Don realized when they discovered the number of cars that were parked in the rear of the hostelry. They were four deep all the way from the rear porch to the rather tumbled-down old barn on the slight bluff that overlooked the bay, and Bob had to drive all the way to the end of the fourth line before he could find a space into which he could work his big roadster.

Parked, he switched off the ignition and lights and locked the car. Then slipping the keys into his pocket, he and Don stepped down, stretched and started for the front door of the inn, walking up the gravel driveway and around the east wing of the building toward the front. But before they reached the broad front porch of the structure, Bob stopped abruptly.

"Hang it, I forgot something, Don. I meant to take a map of Long Island out of the pocket of my car and look it over. I want to determine the exact location of Marsh Island. It isn't so far from here, you know. About seven miles up the bay. You go on in and get a table, and start ordering. I'll go around and get the map and be with you in a few minutes," he said as he turned back and started for the parking place once more.

Don hesitated a moment as if to go back with him, but Bob hurried off without him, and being more interested in food than he was in a map of Long Island at the moment, Don continued up the broad steps of the porch and into the dining room. How he wished a quarter of an hour later he had obeyed his first impulse and walked back to the car with Bob!

Bob, meanwhile, hustled to the rear, and hurried down the line of cars toward the point where the roadster was parked. Reaching it, he turned on the dash light, opened the door, and began searching in the left-hand pocket for the map in question. He had to sort it from a bundle of other road maps and for several moments he was full in the rays of the tiny dash light.

Eventually he picked out the one he wanted, and, returning the others to the pocket, switched off the light and started down the line of cars once more back to the inn. But he had scarcely gone fifty feet toward the end of the line, when suddenly his attention was arrested by a familiar voice speaking from a point among the cars parked in the third line. Because of its exaggerated accent and supercilious tone, Bob recognized the voice instantly as that of Fred Dennison.

"I don't know why you didn't get at those bally secrets of Coburg after I telephoned to you last night. With Hart getting sick so providentially it seems to me you had all the chance in the world."

"You think we did, Fred," said the voice of Ed Rowe, "but old Coburg has them mighty well protected as I told you, and besides, Dale interrupted us. But we nearly fixed him and the *Redbird* this afternoon when we dove the Junker at him. Darn him, I wish we had made him crash."

"I can't say that was such a clever job either," said Dennison. "They got a good look at the Junker, you know. So did a great many of the spectators on the field. It was a lucky thing the thunderstorm was a bit thick, and it began to rain as hard as it did, otherwise there would have been trouble. I don't quite approve of the plan of trying to force the *Redbird* into a crash. That was Birch's scheme, and it seems to me to be mighty dangerous."

"Well, it wasn't no cinch, Fred, I'll tell the world. And believe me, the trip

back to Marsh Island was a tough one, flyin' through that thunderstorm with the lightnin' flashin' around and the thunder rumblin'. It scared us all stiff. But we'll put Dale out of the race to-morrow, don't worry—and we won't get caught at it either."

When Bob Dale recognized the voices and caught the trend of their conversation, he suddenly developed the stealth of a panther.

Like a shadow he slipped between two near-by cars and, crouching there, listened attentively.

"Well, I can't say that I'm so wrought up over Dale, to-morrow, as I was," Dennison replied to Rowe. "I have other and more important plans. Where are those men, Greer and Birch?"

"They're down on the shore, bailin' out the boat. It got full of water in that thunderstorm and we had a hard job makin' time comin' over from Marsh Island. I hurried up ahead because I knew you'd be waitin'. They'll be here in a minute."

"Very good, Rowe," said Dennison unctuously. Then he added: "Things look a bit as if they were breaking quite all right now. Listen, fellow, I discovered last night that old Coburg has got plans of his 'plane, and that secret ethylator of his. For a long time I didn't think he had any. I'm not spoofing when I say that little ethylator trick of his is worth millions in itself. And the old blighter wouldn't even have it patented—was afraid to for fear his idea would be stolen in the patent office, you know. So he's kept his working drawings and the details of all his secrets locked up in a safe in his home. What an opportunity, eh what?"

"Gee! That's soft. How do you know, Fred?" demanded Rowe.

"I learned it in the Framingham. Had a bit of luck, you know. Was listening outside the door of Jim Hart's room when old Hans was talking with Dale. I'm blessed if I didn't hear the whole thing. I know exactly where the plans are. If I can get hold of them and slap them down on my father's desk when he comes back from Europe and tell him we have the secrets to all of Coburg's inventions, and they haven't cost us a penny, I guess dad will open his eyes and figure I'm a pretty tricky business man at that, eh, what? Instead of putting me in the factory he'll make me president of the firm and he will retire, which will be a little bit of all right, eh?"

"I'll tell the world. But how are you going to get those plans?" queried Ed Rowe.

"Ridiculously easy, fellow. I have worked out a clever scheme. That's why I sent word informing you three fellows to sail over from Marsh Island to meet me here to-night. You men will have a part in it, you know. You'll get paid handsomely, too. Listen, fellow, have you ever heard of a beggar known as Wat Tarr, and another called Jed Igoe? No? Well, they are your confrères in this deal, so to speak. They are expert cracksmen.

"I have engaged them to do a bit of work for me. They are going to blow open the safe in Coburg's house to-night and steal all his plans. Then they are going to deliver them to you immediately and you and these men Greer and Birch are to take them in the Junker up to the Alton-Dennison factory and turn them over to Ezra Ames, our designer. Never mind about Dale and the *Redbird*. Trust me to find a way to take care of him and his blessed ship before the race starts. What I want you and Greer and Birch to do now is to come with me up to Walton where those fellows, Tarr and Igoe, will meet us in some place they know up there. I want you to make plans with them as to how, when and where you will get the Coburg papers from them. Do you understand?"

"Sure, I get you," said Rowe.

"Well, tell those two, Greer and Birch,

to hurry," said Dennison, in an imperious tone as he lighted a cigarette.

As the match flared, Bob drew hastily back and crouched a little lower for fear that the bright glow might reveal his presence.

But even as he moved, he suddenly became conscious of some one behind him bending over him.

He snapped upright and turned swiftly, his hands instinctively shooting out to grapple with whoever was behind him. But they closed on thin air, for the man had suddenly leaped sidewise. At the same time came a swishing sound, and a heavy thud, and Bob Dale felt a terrific pain in the side of his head. Myriads of colored lights danced before his eyes, weirdly illuminating the distorted countenance of Greer, the mechanic he had knocked out that morning. The face grinned and leered at him. Grew larger, then smaller, then large again as it seemed to advance and retreat in front of his strangely distorted vision.

Bob made a futile effort to grapple with Greer, to seize him, crush him down and batter him with his fists. But even as he struggled in this dazed fashion, he suddenly seemed to grow extremely limp and weak, and despite his best efforts to master himself, he pitched face forward into what appeared to be a black and bottomless pit that yawned in front of him. Oblivion enveloped him.

BOB was vaguely aware of being carried somewhere, and shoved into the rear of a closed car. The vibration of the motor and the bounce of the car itself caused his head to ache tremendously. He wanted to sleep, but vague, far-off voices insisted on talking to him or about him. He did not know which, nor did he at that time care.

"—— an' I was just comin' up from the boat with Birch when I seen him takin' somethin' out of his car. His dash light was on his face an' it looked like him, but I wasn't sure—yeah—follered him—he was listenin'—but not long—don't think he heard much before I slashed him on the head. I owed him that one—yeah—he plugged me good this morning—but we're square," Greer was saying.

"Glad we got the fellow—I'll take care of him, never fear. He will not be in the race to-morrow—I'll see to that. Things are working out perfectly. Now if we can only get to Tarr and Igoe quickly so they can get started on the job of cracking that safe and getting those plans—and—I say, won't I be all fixed, though? Sugar couldn't be sweeter," gurgled Dennison triumphantly.

But Bob did not want to listen. Their voices annoyed him. They hurt his head and that accent of Dennison's made him sick. Why didn't they shut up and let him rest? He was drowsy—very sleepy. Why didn't they——

He must have slipped off into oblivion once more, for the next thing he became conscious of was the fact that he was no longer in a closed car. He was lying on the floor in a smelly room, dimly lighted by a flickering gas jet. His hands were bound behind him and his feet were tied. There were others in the room—six men altogether. Through slitted eyes Bob's befogged brain slowly recognized Dennison, Rowe, Greer, and a man he knew to be Birch, a man who had enjoyed a remarkable reputation as an airman. The other two occupants were plainly of the thug type, both with mean, ratty features and heavily lined faces. One of them was talking when Bob first became thoroughly conscious of what was going on about him.

"What of it if we do get a little rough with the ol' man? Yuh want the plans, don'tcha?"

"Oh, bless me, no strongarm stuff if you can help it," protested Dennison. "I won't be a party to anything like that.

yuh know. Such a thing will be unnecessary, anyhow. There is only that old cuckoo Coburg and the girl there, and they'll be sound asleep, so——"

"Now listen, don't go tryin' tuh tell Wat an' me how tuh do the job. We'll do it, don'tcha worry, an' if we hafta muss up somebody that's our business, see? Show us that lay again an' come across with the five grand, get me?"

Dennison moved uneasily in his chair. Bob could hear its creak. Dennison fingered a piece of paper on which directions as to how to reach the Coburg house in Westbury were evidently written.

"The house is No. 87 Larch Street. It's a detached apartment and has a lawn and a lot of shrubbery around it. You won't have any difficulty as long as you find the right house," he said, handing the slip to one of the thugs.

"Larch Street? Don't worry, we'll find it. I know Westbury. Done a few jobs there in my day. Rich town an' easy pickin's. Rube police force. It's a cinch. Now where's the jingle?" said the cracksman.

There was a pause. Then Dennison spoke suspiciously.

"But I say, if I pay you now, how do I know I'm going to get the plans, eh, what?"

"Because we say so," responded one of the thugs with a snarl.

"Well, I'll give you a thousand apiece now and leave the other three thousand here with Rowe and Greer. They can give it to you when you bring the plans back here."

"Lemme see you leave it," snarled the thug.

There was a rustle of bills, and through his narrowed eyes Bob could see Dennison passing out crisp yellowbacks. He gave the thugs each a bill and handed the other three to the rather worried-looking Ed Rowe. The thugs watched the operation, then the one called Wat snarled at Rowe.

"You hang onta that jingle, buddy, and be here when we come back to give yuh the plans. If yuh ain't——" And he told Rowe what he would do to him in case he should fail to produce the three thousand dollars."

"Aw, don't worry," said Rowe nervously, "I'll be here and you'll get the money when you come for it."

"Well, we'll be back to collect—don't make no mistake about that," snarled Wat as the pair of them got up and started for the door. But before they reached the portal, Dennison stopped them.

"I say, my good fellows, wait a bit."

They stopped and stared questionably at him while Dennison turned in his chair and looked toward Dale thoughtfully. Bob, lying in a corner of the room on the floor, feigned unconsciousness.

"Look here, my men," drawled Dennison, "I'll add a thousand to the fee Rowe is holding for you if you'll take care of this man for me. Can't you get rid of him for a few days—kidnap him or something?"

"Rid of him? Sure," said Wat. "We'll pick him up when we come back with the plans, an' throw him into our bus. We'll take him over to New York an' skid him into a joint down in Doyer Street. They will keep him for a week if we say so, and when he comes out, he won't know his own name for a week longer. How's that?"

"Perfectly fine. Here's the other thousand you can get from Rowe when you return," said Dennison, handing another yellowback to Ed.

The gangsters departed then. Dennison and his three companions watched them go. When their footsteps had receded down the hall and the front door of the building had slammed behind them, Dennison muttered disgustedly:

"They'd do anything for a bit of money." Then he chuckled. "But I fooled them. I'd have given three times

as much for those plans." Then he looked toward Dale.

"By Jove, Greer, you gave that fellow a hard crack on the head. The beggar hasn't come to yet. I rather think he'll be a sick chicken for a few days, what with the way those thugs will handle him and all. Mind you, keep a good eye on him and stay here until those men return with the plans and take him away. I'm going to get out now before he wakes up. There is no use in letting him know that I have had anything to do with this job. My word, how sweet everything is working out, eh, what?"

Dennison got up from his chair, and with some parting instructions to Ed Rowe as to what to do when he got the plans from the thugs, he took his departure.

And as his footsteps receded down the outside hall and the front door closed behind him, Rowe and his two companions began to laugh.

"Perfectly sickening. And what a foxy feller he *thinks* he is," said Birch with a chuckle. Then suddenly becoming serious he looked hard first at Greer then at Rowe.

"Say," he said finally, "you heard what he said about being willing to pay three times as much for those plans, didn't you? Well, he certainly left us a fine opening to hold him up. What's the matter with us making him pay that much to us, huh?"

"What do yuh mean?" queried Greer.

"What do I mean? Don't be so dumb, feller. Listen. Those gangsters are going to deliver the plans to us in a couple of hours, ain't they? Well, we'll just hang onto them and make Fred come across with about ten thousand smackers more, see?"

"You mean we won't take 'em up to the factory in the Junker?" queried Rowe.

"Oh, sure, we'll take 'em up there. But we won't deliver 'em. We'll just hide 'em. Then we'll hang around the A. D. plant until Fred comes back from the air trials. And when he asks for the plans, we'll tell him we lost them, but for ten thousand smackers we can find them for him mighty quick, see?" and Birch chuckled.

"S-a-a-y, that's an' idea. Perfectly safe, too. Case of second thief best owner. We'll do it," exclaimed Rowe.

"Ten thousand berries! Wow! What a fellow couldn't do with that much money," exclaimed Birch. Then he added. "I'm going to California with my part of the jack, and double it on the races. I've got a system, I have."

"California," snorted Rowe disdainfully, "I'm going to Europe."

Greer had still other ideas on how he would spend his share and soon the three of them fell into a discussion as to how they would spend their ill-gotten money exactly as if they had it in their pockets at the moment.

But they grew tired of this. Greer yawned and stretched vulgarly. Birch grumbled.

"Wish we had a deck of cards. We could have a three-handed game while we are waiting for those bums to come back."

"I'm hungry," said Ed Rowe.

"So am I," admitted Birch. Then he added, "Tell you what, lets me an' you go out scouting in this town. I'll see if I can find some cards. You look for a lunch wagon and get half a dozen hamburger sandwiches. We might's well have a party while we're waitin'. Greer can watch that egg over in the corner."

"Yeah, go ahead. I'll watch him. Maybe a bite to eat would make me feel better," said Greer with a yawn.

"All right," agreed Rowe, "but don't go droppin' off to sleep and let Dale slip. He's dead to the world now, but he might come out of it suddenly," cautioned Rowe as he and Birch got up and walked to the door.

But despite Rowe's warning, the footsteps of his two companions had scarcely died out in the long hall that led to the front door of the building, when Greer, with a perfunctory glance at Dale, put his feet on the table, made himself a little more comfortable, and allowing his head to drop forward on his chest, closed his eyes for a nap.

The position Bob Dale found himself in was far from a comfortable and pleasant one. The fact that two thugs were at the moment on the way to enter the house of Hilda Coburg and her father, and steal the precious working drawing from the old inventor's safe, while he lay there in some remote hovel helplessly tied and bound and watched by the henchmen of Fred Dennison, made Bob thoroughly miserable.

There was only one ray of light on the dark horizon and that was the fact that two of the workers of Dennison had absented themselves from the scene temporarily, while the third was fast sinking into deep slumber if his snores were any indication.

This, and the fact that the cords with which they had bound his hands behind him were not as securely tied as they might have been, gave him a little hope of getting out of the predicament he found himself in before the thugs returned with the plans and carried him off to New York.

Bob had been secretly working at the strands of fish line about his wrist and doing his best to free his hands from the bonds while he pretended to be still out from the crack on the head Greer had given him. But now that his only guard had passed into oblivion himself, he no longer feigned unconsciousness, but began to work vigorously at the cords about his wrists.

In truth, he even turned over and lay face downward on the floor to give his hands and arms more freedom while he silently wrenched and struggled with the cords that made him helpless.

In making him a prisoner they had used a cord of the deep-sea fish line type, tremendously stout, but with a certain amount of give and play to its fiber, and it was on this propensity to stretch that Bob was basing his chance for freedom. He worked with all his strength disregarding the fact that the line cut deep into his flesh, and that he could feel the warm trickle of blood oozing from his wounds.

After several minutes of alternately straining and slacking off on the line, he managed to get enough play into the cord to work a loop down over his knuckles and off the end of his fingers. He breathed a sigh of relief then, for the rest was easy. With that much slack he slowly untangled his hands and freed them. Then with a glance toward the still snoring Greer he cautiously sat up and with his back to the wall, rubbed his sore wrists tenderly. But he devoted only a few seconds to this, for his feet were still fettered, and any moment Birch and Rowe might return and catch him in the act of escaping.

Hastily he worked at the knot in the strand of fishline bound about his ankles, and presently he had unfastened that, too. Then, making as little noise as possible, he got to his feet.

But with his first step forward a board creaked loudly, and although Bob froze in his track, Greer's head came up off his chest and his eyes opened. For a moment he stared at Dale stupidly. But when he realized that Bob was free and making his escape he leaped out of his chair with a roar of anger.

"Hey, you, come back here," he thundered.

But Bob only laughed at him as he bolted for the door.

"I'd be likely to come back, wouldn't I?" he called over his shoulder.

"I'll get yuh, blame yuh," roared Greer, making a wild leap forward. But so intent was he on Dale that he did not look where he was going.

The vacant chair that Fred Dennison had been using was in his way. He never saw it until he became entangled in it, and crashed to the floor with a thud and the splinter of breaking wood. And before he could leap to his feet again, Bob reached the door, yanked it open and darted into the dark hall. Along this he rushed toward the front of the building, where, after a moments' fumbling, he found the knob of the street door. Opening this he stepped swiftly outside, closing the door behind him.

He was in a narrow thoroughfare, almost an alley. It was a dirty side street, dark and deserted. For a moment he pondered the question which way to turn, but he swiftly realized that it made little difference to him then, for his first object was to get out of the immediate vicinity before Greer came out into the street and made the night noisy with his shouting.

Bob darted to his left and scurried down the street toward the nearest corner. Here he turned, just as the door opened and the yelling of Greer awoke the echoes of the sleeping town. Dale sped forward then, darting into one side street after another, and twisting and turning until presently he came out onto a well-lighted street, which he instantly recognized as the main thoroughfare through Walton—the State road that led north and south across Long Island.

He was nearly thirty miles from Westbury and the scene of the crime he had hoped to be able to circumvent, with no means of getting there for hours. He hurried toward the darkened railroad station in the hope of finding a night-hawk taxicab or getting a train to Westbury. But the place was deserted. If only a car would come along headed toward Westbury, he might beg a ride. In the meantime, there was nothing for him to do but walk down the State road in the direction of the point he wanted to reach.

A typical early morning Long Island fog was gathering that threatened to grow dense in spots. For fifteen minutes he tramped through it along the concrete road before a car did come along, its headlights cutting a white path in the growing mist. Bob stopped and hailed the driver. But when he stepped out in front of the approaching machine, the man at the wheel tooted his horn, swerved around him and put on full speed.

Bob grew angry.

"Hang these suspicious drivers. He probably thought I was a hold-up man." Ten minutes later another car hove in sight through the fog. Bob tried to stop this one with the same result. Two more passed in opposite directions, but neither would stop for him, and utterly disgusted, Bob tramped on.

Soon he came to a crossing of main thoroughfares. Here the fog thinned out temporarily to a mist. Bob knew the corners and he realized that he would have to turn to his right to reach Westbury. He was on the Barrett-Westbury Road.

He had not tramped half a mile down this concrete stretch before a car came up through the mist behind him. Bob was prompted first to let it pass unsignaled, but on second thought he turned, and stepping out into the glare of the headlights, waved his hand.

To his utter amazement the car came to a sudden stop and he saw that it was his own gray roadster. Bob heard his name shouted joyously as Don Holt leaped out.

"Bob!" exclaimed Don. "Where on earth have you been? What happened to you? We've been searching Long Island for you. I've spread an alarm all over the place. Climb in. There is a State trooper with me. I knew something happened to you when you didn't return to the inn and I went outside to look you up. Found your car, but you were gone. I got suspicious and sent out an alarm. Then I gathered in this

State trooper at Orion and we've been riding all night trying to locate you. Here, meet Trooper Lee—officer, this is Bob Dale, the man we have been looking for," said Don as Bob stepped up onto the running board of the low-hung roadster.

"Glad to meet you, Dale, and relieved, too. What's the trouble? What happened?"

"Plenty of things happened, and there are plenty of things still happening. Let me get behind that wheel, will you, Don? I want to break all speed laws getting to Westbury in spite of this fog. Two thugs are planning to break into the Coburg residence, blow open the old man's safe and steal his precious plans. We may yet have time to stop them, if we hurry. I'll tell you about it as we go. Shove over. That's it. Now we're off. With a State trooper in the car, I guess there's on objections to shoving this little old chariot up to seventy miles an hour, is there?"

"Not any—if we're on the way to stop a robbery. Go to it, Dale," said Trooper Lee.

NEVER before had Dale's gray-and-green roadster been urged to such high speed as it was that misty morning on its way to Westbury. Bob had the accelerator all the way to the floor on several occasions when the fog thinned out so that he could see well ahead, and the way he took some of the turns on the concrete road had Don and the trooper holding their breath, although they were both well aware of the fact that he drove with absolute safety nor took any desperate chances despite his intense hurry.

But as they approached the village, Bob realized with a sinking heart that despite their haste, it was more than likely that they were too late to prevent the robbery of the Coburg residence. Bob glanced at the luminous dial of his wrist watch to discover that it was going on toward half past four in the morning. The heavy, blue blackness of night was giving way to the soft, misty, violet half light of foggy dawn and birds were already beginning their morning chorus. Either the robbery had already occurred, or the thugs had given up the job by this time, and Bob was very much afraid that the first was all too true, for judging from what he had seen of Tarr and Igoe, they were not the type of criminals to back down at anything.

What had happened to Hilda Coburg, and her fine old father, if the thugs had entered their home? Had they foolishly tried to resist the burglars? If they had, Bob shuddered to think what might have been the consequences. That pair of thugs would not let any obstacle get in their way, once they started a job, and he was quite sure that the feeble attempts that Hilda and her father might make to prevent them from carrying out their full designs could only result in getting the girl and the old man into trouble.

Bob was worried. The best he could hope for was that they had not awakened while the thugs were forcing an entrance and that the theft of the plans had gone on uninterrupted.

But he was soon to know. He reached Larch Street despite the fog and swung the roadster sharply in a left hand turn into the street. Down the macadam thoroughfare he bowled, watching the numbers on the door posts as best he could in the thick half light.

With a sudden application of brakes, he brought the roadster to a jolting stop in front of No. 87 and looked eagerly up at the mist-shrouded front of the house. Something had happened there, that was certain. The door swung open just a little and a raw scar of splintered wood showed where a jimmy had been used to force it.

"They've been here," he muttered, swinging out of the car.

"They might still be inside," hissed

the trooper hopefully as he drew his service revolver and brushed past Bob up the steps. But as he shoved open the swinging front door, Bob's heart gave a great bound, for from within came the sound of muffled sobs, and much squirming and kicking as of some one trying to work free of fettering bonds. At least one of the occupants of the house was still alive. The trooper stepped across the threshold with Bob at his shoulder. And the first object that their eyes fell upon as they entered was Hilda Coburg, gagged and bound, but making a valiant effort to crawl toward the front door, despite this handicap.

Bob leaped past the trooper, and, picking the helpless girl up in his arms, moved into the living room of the residence. The trooper passed on through to the adjoining room, which proved to be the library. Bob, still carrying Hilda, followed, while Don brought up the rear. In the library, huddled in a corner, a great bloody welt across his forehead, the gore from which had stained his silvery-gray hair and beard an unpleasant tinge, lay Hans Coburg.

Bob thought at first that the inventor was dead, but a hasty examination by the trooper proved that the inventor was alive, but knocked quite unconscious by a blow from some hard object. A blood-smeared jimmy lay close beside him, which the trooper picked up and carefully preserved for finger-print evidence.

The library was chaos. Drawers had been opened, books tumbled from the shelves and papers scattered about. On the far side of the room was a substantial safe set into the wall. But the door swung on one hinge, ripped open evidently by a charge of carefully placed explosive. The thugs had succeeded with their heinous scheme of stealing the plans and had successfully made their get-away.

Bob placed Hilda in a large, leather-covered armchair that was handy, and swiftly removed the gag that had been tightly wedged into her mouth and tied firmly in place with a curtain cord.

Thus relieved, her head slumped forward on her chest and her eyes closed. Bob thought that she had fainted and called to Don to rush to the kitchen for a glass of water, but she opened her eyes and smiled just a little.

"I haven't fainted, Mr. Dale, although I would like to have a glass of water. I've had that gag in my mouth for hours, it seems."

"Can you talk? Tell us about it," said Bob.

"There isn't much to tell," she confessed. "I was sitting in my room reading very late as I frequently do. I think it must have been three o'clock when suddenly I was aroused from the book, in which I was completely engrossed, by hearing a noise downstairs. I thought at first it was father. He often gets up nights to work on some new idea that has come to him, the way all inventors do.

"I went out into the hall and passed his door. But it was closed and I knew he was still in bed. Puzzled, I decided to investigate and went downstairs. But just as I stepped into the library, some one seized me and clapped a heavy hand across my mouth. I struggled hard and tried to shout. But it was useless. They bound and gagged me and put me in this very chair. Then they switched on the light, and I could see they were two burglars. They seemed to know exactly what they wanted and where to find it, for they began to work on the safe. They tried to open the combination first, but they did not succeed, for father had put a special burglar-proof lock on it. Then they decided to blow it open. They got out tools, a drill and some other implements, and a brown bottle that contained some liquid explosive."

"Soup—nitroglycerin," suggested Bob.

"I think so. At any rate, they were

very businesslike about their job. They drilled a hole just above the top hinge, filled the rest of the crack about the door with some soap they found in the kitchen, and, making a funnel out of a piece of paper, they poured some of the soup-stuff into the hole they had drilled. It was very neatly done. They tore down some portières and found some rugs and hung them about the safe to muffle the explosion, I suppose. They seemed ready to fire the charge, when suddenly they both looked up in surprise. I could hear father coming downstairs. He had evidently heard the noise and wondered what was happening in the library. Both the thugs slipped to the doorway and waited on either side of it. One of them had that iron thing in his hand. As father stepped through the doorway they hit him—ugh—it was terrible. Father went down, and I thought they had killed him. I wanted to scream, but of course I couldn't.

"After they had knocked father out, they began working the safe again, attaching a tiny electric battery and some wires, and a few moments later, they fired the charge. It wasn't loud—just a rumble. I could see the safe door just fall out. It pulled down some of the curtains and rugs they had hung up. The thugs cleared all that truck away and forced open the inside door of the safe. They seemed to want father's plans most of all, which makes me suspicious that there is more than just a common burglary behind all this. But they took everything out of the safe. They put it all into a black traveling bag of mine they found somewhere about the house. Then, after helping themselves to other things in various rooms, they suddenly left. They had a lovely night to make a get-away in, for it was very foggy out. That was about two hours ago as near as I can judge, although it seems ages.

"I sat in this chair for a long time watching poor father. I thought at first they had killed him. But after a time, he groaned and moved, and I knew that at least he wasn't dead. I decided to try and get some assistance if I could. I was almost helpless, tied hand and foot and gagged as they had left me, but I did manage to get out of the chair. I spent a long time trying to crawl toward the front door, for I was hoping to get out into the porch and perhaps attract the attention of some passing milkman or a policeman. I heard your car stop and I was afraid, for a moment, that the thugs might be coming back again, but when I saw you and the State trooper come in, I almost fainted with relief. I——"

Hilda stopped talking abruptly and looked across the room where Don and the State trooper were working over her father.

"Is—is—he badly hurt?" she queried fearfully.

"No. He's almost conscious now. Just a hard bump on the head. The cut isn't very deep," replied the trooper as he lifted Hans Coburg into a chair.

Bob had finished unbinding Hilda's fettered ankles and she got up then and crossed over to her father. She took charge of the operation of bringing her father back to consciousness, and in a matter of ten minutes or less he opened his eyes and looked up at his daughter with a wan smile.

"Hilda—you are all right, are you? Thank goodness! What happened?"

Hilda told him the story of the robbery as she made him more comfortable in the chair.

"Stole my working drawings, did they?" said the old man wearily. Then he added, "I expected that would happen. That young Dennison is behind it, I'm sure. He is a miserable young skunk."

"I know he is behind it," said Dale. Then, graphically, he proceeded to tell the inventor and his daughter of his night's adventure.

"Just where in Walton is the house located in which they held you a prisoner?" demanded Trooper Lee.

Bob described its location as accurately as possible. Also, he gave the officer a graphic picture of the two thugs.

"Fine. Those fellows will never get off Long Island. I'll have every ferry and bridge watched for them. We'll gather them in before noon time. I'll telephone the barracks, too, and have some men go up to Walton and see if they can nab the bunch up there before they get away."

"Why can't you go down to the Framingham, or out to Franklin Field and arrest Fred Dennison? He is behind the whole business as you can readily see," queried Hilda Coburg.

"Well, we might do that. But it isn't the safest way to go about the job. In the first place, arresting him wouldn't get back the drawing for you, and he doubtless has built up some good alibi. He'll disclaim all connection with the thugs and we'll only have Dale's word against his. And if Dale told the court that he had been knocked out and that he only identified Dennison in the Walton house as he was coming to, there would be reasonable grounds for thinking that Dale could easily have been mistaken. No, the best way is to get hold of those thugs and wring the truth out of them—make them confess Dennison's part in the job. Then we'll have the goods on him."

"Well, you might have some men go over to Marsh Island and see if they can locate that Junker plane. You are liable to nab the whole crew and the plans as well up there. Then you'll have evidence enough to jail the whole gang, for Greer and Rowe will squeal on Dennison if they find themselves in trouble, I'll bet a dollar," said Bob.

"That won't be so easy either," said the State trooper. "We'll have to cooperate with the South Shore Harbor Police. The State troopers have no facilities for coast patrol work. However, I'll try and get some men moving up in that direction. I might make a try at getting out to the island myself. Although I imagine this fog is mighty thick over the bay, so that a boat will have a hard time crossing to Marsh Island."

"By Jove, I'd like to go with you," exclaimed Bob.

But Hans Coburg protested.

"No. No. Don't go, Dale. I value those drawings very highly, but winning that race to-day means more to me at the moment than they do. My whole private fortune, and the welfare of myself and family is tied up in the *Redbird*, and unless we win that race, and land the big contract, I am ruined. You must go into the race and win, Dale. It will be hard work, I know, tired as you are and with the fog so thick in spots. But the fog will probably burn off as the sun gets high. You and Holt go back to your hotel and see if you can get a wink of sleep and a little rest before the starting gun is fired at ten o'clock. Hilda and I will go over to the field and help the boys get the *Redbird* tuned up. Dale, you must win that race for me."

The old man looked up into Bob's face so anxiously that Bob could not help feeling sorry for him.

"Mr. Coburg," he said earnestly, "Don and I will win that race for you or die in the attempt."

The old man reached for Bob's hand and wrung it gratefully.

"My boy, I know you'll do it. Go rest up and get ready for it. Good luck and God bless you."

IT was six o'clock and the sun was still obscured by the fog when Bob and Don reached the Framingham. Sleep for them was out of the question. So they compromised by each taking a good cold bath and a vigorous rubdown before they went down to the dining room

for breakfast. And what a breakfast they ate! They were both as ravenous as wolves, for neither of them had tasted food since the picnic lunch on the field the previous noon time.

It was some time after seven o'clock before they left the dining room, and without much loss of time, headed for the flying field.

Although it was still comparatively early, for the race was not due to start for between three and four hours, they found the airport a hive of activity when they reached the group of hangars on the southern boundary of the expansive flat area that was to be the starting point and finish of the great aërial derby.

The fog still hung, although the sun had burned through and dissolved it to a misty shroud which did not totally obscure distant objects nor make flying impossible.

Bob knew that it would still be thick over the south shore of Long Island, but he knew, too, that it would be possible to fly above the vapor blanket if it did not burn off entirely by the time the race started, so he and Don had little worry on that score.

They found Hans Coburg and his daughter at the hangar when they arrived. The inventor was wearing a strip of plaster over the abrasion on his forehead, but aside from appearing a little pale, he looked none the worse for his early morning experience. As for Hilda, she looked positively radiant in a bright sports costume, and as Bob looked at her he could not believe that she was the same girl he had found bound and gagged but a few hours before.

The two aviators were greeted joyously by Dick Bruce and their other comrades at the hangar, who had heard all about Bob's adventures from Hilda. They all agreed that he was fortunate to be back with them and ready to fly the *Redbird* in the big race.

"You've got to go out and win, Bob—there are no two ways about it. Luck is with you and we've tuned up the *Redbird* so that she is in the pink of condition. There is just a little more testing to be done on the engine and then she will be ready to fly the race of the year. Cast your eye over her."

Bob and Don became interested in working on the *Redbird,* and they spent the next two hours in testing and tuning the trim little ship that was Hans Coburg's pride and joy. So absorbed were they in their work that time slipped by as if on wings, and when Bob suddenly became conscious of its flight, it was quarter to ten. And the starting gun was scheduled to be fired at ten o'clock, for in the seven-hundred-and-fifty-mile air derby, six or seven hours would be consumed before the last contestant made the huge cross-country circuit and returned to the field.

"Jingoes, in fifteen minutes we'll have to be at the starting line. Come on, get into your flying togs and parachute harness, Don. We'll have to hustle," said Bob. Then, looking across the field, he added, "Sa-a-ay, look at the crowd, will you."

Hundreds of cars had lined the east and west side of the big flying field while thousands of spectators fringed the huge expanse, jamming the roped-off areas some distance from the hangars. It was evident to Dale that there was a tremendous interest in the air race and that the winner of the big international event would be proclaimed as one of America's foremost pilots.

Bob and Don hustled into the hangar, and in the space devoted to lockers for the flyers and mechanics, climbed into their leather flying garments. Dick Bruce and Evans came in to help them don and strap on their 'chutes, while the rest of the fellows trundled the *Redbird* across the field to the starting line.

At five minutes to ten, Bob and Don, leather-clad and looking very much hunchbacked because of their parachute packs, came out of the hangar carrying

their leather helmets and goggles in their hands. Hilda and Hans Coburg were waiting for them and accompanied them across the field to the plane, where both shook hands with them warmly and wished them good luck as they climbed into the double cockpit.

Twelve machines were lined up across the field. The *Redbird* was in fourth position, between the brilliant green Drummond and the gray-and-silver A. D. plane, and as Bob climbed up into the cockpit, he instinctively glanced toward the latter.

Fred Dennison and his mechanic were already in their places, and when Dennison caught sight of Dale, Bob could see the look of amazement and disappointment that crossed his face, for Dennison had not yet donned the goggles and headgear.

Dennison instantly became conscious of the fact that the expression on his face was most revealing to Dale and he made haste to adjust his leather helmet and his masklike eye shields, turning his head away from Bob as he did so.

"Did you see the expression on his face, Don?" queried Bob. "He's a mighty disappointed puppy. He knows something has gone wrong with his plans, for according to the dirty schedule he arranged for me I should be unconscious in New York now, instead of getting ready to give him the race of his life. We'll make him push that A. D. plane as it was never pushed before. How about it, old boy?"

"You said it, Bob. We'll make this the race of our career," replied Don as he followed Bob's example in adjusting his headgear.

Up and down the line propellers were being whirled and motors started roaring. Dick Bruce was standing at the nose of the *Redbird* ready to turn her engine over. Bob adjusted spark and throttle.

"Contact!" he shouted.

Bruce pulled down on the propeller and let the compression of the cylinder bounce the blades back. There was a loud report, then another and another in quick succession—a volley of them that steadied to a roar as the *Redbird's* cylinders one after another came into action. And a second later the propeller was whirling in a steady hum at idling speed as was every other propeller up and down the line of gayly colored planes.

There was an interval of waiting while Bob and the rest of the airmen tuned up their engines and got ready for the starting gun. Bob shoved the stick forward and backward and worked it sidewise, testing the controls. Then, adjusting them all at their proper angle for a quick take-off, he straightened the rudder and waited, eyes on his wrist watch.

The wait was brief. Ten seconds more, five seconds, three seconds. *Bang!*

Bob accelerated swiftly. The whirling propeller of the *Redbird* quickened to a blur of speed. The *Redbird* fairly leaped forward and started bumping across the field. But as fast as it got under way, the Drummond and the A. D. planes, and the Fokker far down the line were equally as fast and the four planes, a length ahead of the rest, bumped across the grass toward the real starting line, which was nearly a mile distant at the far end of the field. It was a whitewashed starting line drawn between the black-and-white pylon on the edge of the field and the corner of a machine shop at the far end of the flat area. It marked the utmost boundaries of the airport, and until all the planes had flashed across the line, the race was not actually begun.

The four lead planes exercised the same maneuvers at the same time. With one accord the Fokker, the Drummond, the A. D., and the *Redbird* leaped off the ground together and started climbing. Up, up they sped. Two thousand feet was the point from which the rules called for a dive over the starting line

and all four planes strove to attain that height before they crossed the invisible barrier. They all climbed fast, but the *Redbird,* under Bob Dale's expert handling, climbed a trifle the fastest. Higher and higher it scudded. A thousand feet, fifteen hundred. Bob even lost ground in the race and circled a little to keep away from the starting line before he reached the required elevation. Still, Bob climbed until the *Redbird* altimeter showed just two thousand feet. Then, swinging and wheeling like a hawk, he headed for the starting line, tilted the nose of the *Redbird* downward and opened her up wide.

With the combined acceleration of the plunge as he dived along with the terrific powers the Coburg motor was capable of developing, the *Redbird* seemed to shiver from nose to rudder as it fairly screamed through the air. Down, down, down it swooped, gathering terrific speed until it was within four hundred feet of the ground. Then with a graceful maneuver Bob brought it to even keel and shot it over the starting line with the speed of a bullet.

Again the *Redbird* began to climb. The ship was fifteen hundred feet, then eighteen hundred, then two thousand. Bob leveled off, for they were passing outrunners of a fog, wisps of swirling mist that obscured the landscape below them. They were above it. No other planes were in sight.

Eastward they roared their way with the heavy boil of fog growing thicker and thicker below them.

Bob was glad indeed that he had not undertaken the task of flying through it. He would rather have lost the distance he did in climbing than to take a chance in the dense vapor. He wondered that the other planes had elected to go through it. They had been plunged into it before they could avoid it. But once in, why didn't they attempt to climb out? Perhaps they would.

Bob and Don peered below, watching for the first of them to appear, not wishing to collide with one should it suddenly shoot up out of the smothering bank below them.

Suddenly, dead ahead a quarter of a mile or so a gray shape did begin to take form in the vapors, as a ship began to climb heavily out of the mist.

Don saw it first and pointed.

"Here comes one, Bob. It's the A. D.—no, the Drummond—no—by thunder, Bob, it's that black Junker!"

"It is," exclaimed Bob, recognizing the black eagle of the sky, now dead ahead of them and quartering off their course to the northeast. Then he demanded, "What are they up to? Are they going to try and force us out of the race or are they—say, look, they've spotted us. They are turning. They are going to try and force us down. They are—no—I'm wrong—sa-a-y, they are trying to get away from us—look—they are afraid—they are running away—I know, they've got the stolen plans on board and they are trying to make a get-away. I'm going to run them down—force them to the ground and take the plans away from them," shouted Bob, swerving the *Redbird* toward the Junker.

Like a hawk, bearing down upon a lumbering crow, the smaller plane took after the Junker. Those on board the larger ship realized that the *Redbird* was after them and did their best to increase the speed of their black plane as they turned and scudded inland away from Great South Bay and its heavy fog. But the Junker was big, clumsy and awkward compared with the speedy racer. In less than five miles the slim red ship had overtaken it and was circling and swerving over and under the black craft and fairly flying rings around it. And as they circled the plane, first on one side and then on the other, Bob looked over the occupants of the Junker's double cockpit carefully.

There were three men in it; Birch was at the controls while Rowe was beside

him and Greer was in the after-compartment. Bob grinned at them. They were shouting at him, swearing, no doubt, but neither Bob nor Don could hear a word they yelled above the thunder of the two motors. The Junker tried to dodge and sideslip, but the *Redbird* followed easily. It tried to climb higher, but the *Redbird* climbed above it. Bob even shot downward in a swooping dart that fairly made the Junker wabble in the air as it tried to avoid the rush and keep from dropping.

Then, as the *Redbird* swished past the bigger machine so close to it that their wing tips almost touched, Bob leveled off under it and shouted to Don.

"Take control, Don. I'm going to get those plans. Bring me up under it *so I can grab the landing gear,*" Bob yelled the last into Don's ear to be certain he understood what was wanted. Then, turning the control over to his companion, he climbed to the edge of the cockpit and, with feet braced, stood up straight ready to grab at the landing gear of the Junker as Don shot the *Redbird* under the larger craft.

Don gave one troubled look at Bob's grim face. He knew that there was no use remonstrating with him. He knew, too, that Dale was fully aware of the dangers of the feat he was undertaking. But he also knew that Bob Dale was fully competent to complete the risky stunt he was bent on trying, and so he leveled off the ship and brought the craft up under the shadow of the bigger Junker. He maneuvered it to a nicety and timed its speed so that both ships were traveling at approximately the same rate as he drew into a position where Bob could grasp the landing gear of the big plane.

Transferring from one plane to the other in mid-air was not a new aërial achievement. Don knew that it had been tried many times and accomplished a few. But he also knew that several daring pilots had lost their lives in attempting it, and for that reason he held his breath as Bob, poised there on the coaming of the cockpit, reached upward, gauged the distance and speed of both craft, and suddenly hurled himself into the air, reaching for the Junker's landing gear. For one breathless instant he seemed to hang suspended in mid-air, while Don's heart stood still for his safety. Then his reaching hands closed over one of the braces of the landing gear and Bob pulled himself up and stood on it. Don yelled in triumphant relief, and shooting the *Redbird* out from under the Junker, began to circle as he watched Bob's next move.

For Dale the rest was easy. Climbing the landing gear, he reached the lower step on the Junker's fuselage, while the angry faces of Greer and Rowe looked over the edge of the cockpit at him in amazement. From the lower step he climbed upward, but as his hands closed over the edge of the cockpit, Rowe began to beat at his fingers, trying to break their grip on the coaming. He even reached over and made a wild pass at Bob's face. But he missed his mark by a wide margin, and, as the force of his blow carried his arm beyond Bob's face, Dale hurled himself upward, over the coaming and into the cockpit.

Birch, busy at the controls of the ship, had not seen anything that had been going on below, and when Bob's big form came over the edge the pilot was taken totally unawares. He shot one wild look at Dale, and, scarcely believing his eyes, he leaped from the control seat. Bob saw that this would be fatal as far as the Junker was concerned and leaped toward Birch, yelling for him to keep his hands on the control stick. But the frightened pilot thought that Dale meant to seize him and perhaps kill him, and with a wild yell of despair he hurled himself over the edge of the cockpit, at the same time yanking at the ring of his parachute pack.

Had Birch been of calmer mind, he

would not have pulled the parachute cord so soon, for he must have known that it was dangerous to loose the 'chute until he was well clear of his ship. But being frightened at the sudden and unexpected appearance of Bob, he did not observe this first rule of parachute jumping, and the result was that the folds of his 'chute shot out of the pack even as the Junker flashed past him in mid-air and the next instant Birch and his 'chute became entangled in the tail of the plane.

There was a ripping, tearing sound, and a yell of terror from Birch, as the plane trembled and staggered in mid-air. Birch, wild-eyed with fear, clung to the tail of the plane for a moment before the rush of air swept him off, and sent him hurtling toward the ground all wrapped up in the folds of his parachute which was too badly tangled to open.

Hitting the man that way in the air had seriously damaged the Junker. One of the stabilizers was ripped off and the rudder was shattered. Dale and the other two occupants of the Junker could see them hanging limp and useless from the end of the plane. The Junker began to wabble drunkenly, and all three men in it knew that it was but a matter of seconds before it would nose over and drop into a fatal spin downward.

Greer in the rear cockpit was the first to become fully aware of their situation, and with a cry of fear he jumped over the side, and Bob and Rowe saw him go tumbling over and over downward. With a little more judgment than Birch, Greer waited until he was clear of the ship before he pulled his 'chute cord. In truth, he waited just a little too long, for when he did yank the ring, he was dropping at such a terrific speed that his 'chute streamed out behind him like a flag, unable to open for several seconds. And when it finally did open, with a crack like a gun, the terrific force of the rushing air instantly split it in half and made it useless. And Greer, like Birch, plunged on downward to his death.

Rowe was clinging to Bob Dale in the forward cockpit, watching with staring eyes the fate of Greer. And when he saw the fabric of the parachute split, he gave a cry of terror.

"Good heavens, it split! They are old! Our parachutes are rotten! They aren't safe! Save me, Dale, please, save me!"

"I wish I could. Your only hope is to jump and trust to luck and your 'chute. Where are those stolen plans?"

"In the back cockpit! Greer had 'em! I can't jump! I don't dare! The parachute will go to pieces."

But Bob Dale knew that he would have a hard time saving himself. He determined to get the plans first, then see what he could do to help Rowe. He started to climb back to the after-cockpit, but he just managed to get astride the coaming when the ship turned over and started downward in a tail spin. And the violence of the turns as the Junker flopped over in the air catapulted Bob Dale clear of it and sent him hurtling down through space as the other two men had gone.

BUT Bob Dale had fallen through space before. Indeed, he had made a number of parachute jumps and he knew exactly what he was called upon to do in such an emergency. Thrown clear of the ship there was no fear of becoming entangled in the rigging, and his hand flashed to his parachute ring, yanking the rip cord.

No questionable 'chute was this he wore. It had been tested and inspected. It was new. Bob felt it leap from the pack on his back and ripple in the wind above him. Then with a loud report it opened, jerking him suddenly to a standstill in mid-air. And the next moment he was floating comfortably off into space and approaching the ground as gently as a falling feather.

Bob reached aloft and grasped the

rings on either side of his head, and, clinging to them, began to direct the course of the parachute by sideslipping it one way or the other as he desired to descend, a trick he had learned from a veteran parachute jumper of the army.

And as he directed the course of the chute, he watched the dropping Junker. So close to it was he that he could see Ed Rowe, now in the control seat, struggling desperately to bring the partially wrecked machine out of its tail spin and land it without actually crashing. The man was working at the controls with the frenzy of one who saw death staring him in the face, and Bob marveled at what he accomplished in spite of the wrecked condition of the plane.

Five hundred feet from the ground he did bring the big black ship out of the spin and all but level it off. Then he pan-caked it down for nearly four hundred feet before it suddenly sideslipped and skidded to the earth, buckling with a crash and piling up in a mass of wreckage in a hayfield below.

"Tough; he almost made it," exclaimed Bob. Then he added as he sideslipped the parachute toward the wreckage. "He might have come through at that."

Bob watched the wreck as he dropped toward it. But no Rowe crawled out of it nor was there any movement down there that indicated that the man was still alive. Bob came to the conclusion that he was the third casualty of the black Junker that morning.

By skillfully maneuvering his parachute, Dale dropped to the edge of the field. The moment his feet touched terra firma he began to climb out of the harness of his 'chute. In a matter of seconds he was racing toward the wreckage, while from out of the sky the *Redbird,* with Don at the controls, glided down toward him. Bob reached the wreck as the *Redbird* landed a hundred feet away, and, plunging into the mass of splintered wood, twisted wire and aluminum, he began pulling and tugging at the débris to get the cockpit clear. A dozen seconds later Don Holt was with him. Together they worked to find Rowe, and after removing a section of shattered wing, they located him, still in the forward cockpit with the control stick tightly grasped in his hand.

"Poor fellow. He made a game fight at that," said Bob, bending over Rowe and feeling for the pulse beat in his temple. Life had departed.

"Gone. Snuffed out. We had better leave him just as he is for the coroner. But, wait, I want to find those plans," said Bob.

Dale scrambled deeper into the débris that had so recently been the treacherous black Junker to reappear a few seconds later carrying a black traveling bag. A moment he paused to open this and glance inside. Then he snapped it shut and looked at his wrist watch.

"We've got the plans, and lost twenty minutes in getting them. But that isn't much in a six-hour race—not for a ship like ours. I think we can catch the bunch—and beat them yet. Come on, let's get into the air. We'll tell the State troopers about the wreck and where to look for the victims, after the race," said Bob, tossing the black traveling bag into the *Redbird* and climbing in after it. Don followed him.

Don had left the motor idling and had dropped the ship in an ideal position to take-off again. He had been very careful to do this, for getting out of a rough field is not always easy. There was a decided slope downward to the ground, toward a swale grown thick with witch-hazel and willows.

Bob knew he would have to get into the air and climb above that tangle of brush to get started once more, and so he accelerated the engine carefully and nursed the propeller up to tremendous speed before the *Redbird* began to jump along the ground.

But once the powerful Coburg motor got to functioning to its fullest capacity, the *Redbird* fairly leaped along down the slope. In a surprisingly short time, it was in the air again, skimming safely over the top of the brush tangle and swinging due east at a sharp angle for the Montauk Point Light, which, according to Bob's best judgment, lay sixty miles away. And once Bob had established definitely the course they should take to reach the first pylon in the race, he opened up the *Redbird* to its fullest. He drove her fiercely forward, traveling at the thousand-foot level, while the green expanse of Long Island flashed below them in the growing sunshine, and Great South Bay with its fog blanket was left far to their right.

On and on plowed the *Redbird*, splitting the wind with a terrific roar as Bob, a trifle tense at the controls, constantly nursed the engine to its utmost. Little was said during the next half hour, for Don realized that Bob must needs devote all his attention to the plane, while he stared steadily ahead, scanning the sky for other planes and watching the distance for the first glimpse of the lighthouse.

Time seemed to pass with agonizing slowness then, and Don finally inquired almost hopelessly.

"Do you think we've got even a little chance of getting anywhere in this race now, Bob?"

"We're going to try mighty hard to get somewhere," shouted Dale. Then he added a moment later, his voice ringing clear with pleasure and new courage, "There's the first turn, Don—Montauk Point Light. Watch us make that pylon."

The tall tower of the lighthouse on the rock-bound cape that extended into the ocean, loomed ahead. Bob and Don could see the official timer and clerk of the course in the tower.

He had his binoculars on the fast blue ship as if he had been watching and waiting for it. Eleven ships had passed and been credited at the turn, and he had been wondering about the twelfth and whether it had been forced down.

Roaring along at almost two hundred miles an hour, the *Redbird* plowed ahead for the tower, but within a hundred feet of it Bob threw the ship into a sideslip and scudded around the tower at such terrific speed that Don could feel the centrifugal force of the swing fairly pull at his eyeballs and suck the breath from his lungs.

Bob waved a greeting to the two men in the tower as the ship sped by them, and began to right itself on the second leg of the long race that reached away northeast across Rhode Island and Massachusetts to the Beverly Flying Field where the second turn would be made. Rounding that first turn seemed to give both Don and Bob a lot more heart in the race.

"I wish I knew just how far ahead the rest of those ships are," Bob shouted as he shoved the *Redbird* up to the two-thousand-foot level while the plane sped onward with the forts of Fisher's Island showing far to the left and the Point Judith light dead ahead.

But nearly three quarters of an hour was to elapse, three quarters of an hour in which the *Redbird* roared on steadily, some times making as high as two hundred miles an hour before the first of the flight of ships in the big race hove in sight. Far off across Massachusetts, flying at the thousand-foot level, Bob's quick eye caught a ship.

"Hurrah! There's the first of them! I can't make it out! It's the tailender. Looks like the Dudley. Watch us overhaul it," Bob shouted triumphantly.

But it was not the Dudley. It was one of the English planes, the Manchester. She was having engine trouble, and Bob could see, as a quarter of an hour later they flashed past her, that the pilot was looking anxiously for a place to make a safe landing.

It was while they were scudding over the outskirts of Boston that they picked up the Dudley, with the I. D. R. and the Furlong not a mile ahead.

"Wow! Two down and two to go," yelled Bob enthusiastically as they nosed past the Dudley and gradually drew away from it. "Now to pick up those two fellows dead ahead," he added as they left the slower ship behind.

The brilliant green Furlong plane, with Joe Ford in the pilot seat, made a race of it. When the *Redbird* drew up beside the green ship and tried to pass, Ford seemed to find a way to nurse his motor to greater speed. He waved to Dale and shouted something which, of course, neither Bob nor Don could hear, but which they assumed, was a good-natured challenge.

Presently the two planes were racing nose and nose and tearing through the atmosphere at terrific speed, headed for the gold-and-blue I. D. R. plane, splitting the wind ahead.

That brush between the *Redbird* and the Furlong developed into a real race. Both planes overtook and passed the I. D. R. together and were running within a hundred feet of each other all the way up the coast until they reached Salem. They were within sight of each other to Beverly, but as Bob banked the *Redbird* around the high, black-and-white pylon at the Beverly Flying Field, while a dense crowd on the field yelled and waved at him, he knew that he had left the Furlong permanently behind. The *Redbird* had attained eighth position or even better, if one or more of the ships ahead had been forced down and out of the race with engine trouble.

The course lay due west now, the next turn being more than two hundred miles away at the Saratoga Airport, on the historical Saratoga plains, in New York State. It was on this third leg of the race that Bob hoped to better their position and put the fast little ship up with the leaders. It was well past noon time. Bob and Don took several drinks of warm chocolate and divided some sandwiches Hilda Coburg had thoughtfully provided. These they munched while the *Redbird* sped onward.

Bob had worked the plane up to the five-thousand-foot level. Fitchburg, Athol, then Greenfield, loomed ahead, flattened out below them and disappeared in the distance. They could see the automobiles crawling over the famous Mohawk Trail, as they topped the northern Berkshires; but it was not until they were thundering along over the college buildings at Williamstown that they began to pick up the planes next ahead.

Three planes appeared first as mere specks against the now azure sky. But as the *Redbird* roared across the New York State line, swinging slightly northwest, one after the other of the airships began to be distinguishable. The Dalford, the Sheffield-Blont, and the brilliant *Pride of Detroit* were all bunched together and making a wonderful race of it.

As Bob identified the ships in the group, the *Redbird* seemed to leap ahead through the air as if the little craft were anxious to join them.

But those planes ahead were traveling mighty fast. Albany was passed far on the left, obscured in a haze, and the Saratoga Airport, with its white boundary lines and its buildings, the roofs of which were markers with red-white-and-blue targets, showed dead ahead before the *Redbird* drew even with the three planes.

The pilots all waved a greeting to Dale and challenged him in a race for the Saratoga pylon, the last turn in the big race before the planes swung into the home stretch, and straight-away dash of about two hundred miles to Franklin Field.

Bob accepted the challenge, and the brush that resulted was almost hair-raising in the speed the planes attained as

they headed for the black-and-white goal in the center of the Saratoga Field.

Indeed as they neared the airport the situation became positively dangerous, for it was evident that all four ships would try to swing around that pylon at the same time, which could hardly be done without the danger of a mid-air collision. Each pilot knew this, but each steadfastly refused to give way an inch as the four planes roared down toward the marker.

Bob had the throttle wide open and he kept it so. And to add to his momentum he plunged the *Redbird's* nose earthward in a terrific dive from the two-thousand-foot level. The red plane hissed for the pylon like a bolt of lightning, flashing past first the Dudley, then the Sheffield-Blont, and last the *Pride of Detroit*, just as Bob cut the motor, banked the *Redbird* to a terrific angle and scudded around the pylon, first taking the lead in that little group. As the *Redbird* straightened out on level keel once more and began to climb back into the sky again with its nose headed toward Franklin Field, Bob could not help shouting enthusiastically:

"Oh, boy, that puts us in fifth position with only the Viking, Drummond, Fokker, and A. D. planes ahead. We're stepping out, Don, old boy."

"I'll say we are. We'll win this race yet," yelled Don, now grown highly optimistic as he looked behind to see the other three ships take the pylon one after another in a string.

They were heading for Albany and the Hudson now, down which they would fly to cross Manhattan and Brooklyn and head for the finish line. Far in front they could see two specks in the sky, their next nearest contestants to be overhauled and passed.

"I don't know who they are, but we are after them," yelled Bob, nursing the *Redbird* to top speed once more.

But before they overtook those specks that gradually grew to resemble airplanes, Bob saw one of them begin to act queerly. And in another ten miles it disappeared out of the air entirely.

As the *Redbird* flashed over the airport just outside of Albany, Bob and Don made out the red-and-orange-striped wings of the Viking, on the ground, and out of the race, with engine trouble.

"There are three ahead of us, and two of them are in sight. I don't know which is which from here, but I'll wager the nearest is the Drummond, with the Fokker leading her. Goodness knows where the A. D. plane is. Dennison must have run away from the whole field," shouted Bob as they left Albany behind and started down the broad and shimmering Hudson.

Bob was right. The Drummond was the nearest of the contestants. They overhauled and passed her at Kingston, in the shadow of the Catskills, with the Fokker but a mile ahead down the river.

"Wow! Third place, with the Fokker only a hop, skip and jump ahead," yelled Bob enthusiastically.

But that was a long hop, skip and jump as it proved. It took Bob nearly half an hour to cut down that mile lead of the Fokker. A hundred feet separated them as they flashed above the Poughkeepsie bridge. But Bob was not able to shove the *Redbird* in the lead and take second place in the big race until after the two planes had roared their way past West Point, where a squad of gray-clad cadets looked up at them from the big parade grounds.

Once the *Redbird* had taken second place, however, it held its position and slowly but surely drew away from the Fokker.

Bob and Don were peering eagerly ahead now for the leader in the race, the A. D. plane that Fred Dennison was driving desperately toward the finish. And well below Bear Mountain Bridge, Bob discovered the silver-and-gray craft. It seemed to materialize suddenly out of

the air ahead and to the left, and Bob estimated that it was leading them by a good two miles. It was flying at terrific speed at about two-thousand-feet elevation.

"There's Dennison. About two thousand feet high and going like the very dickens," Bob yelled triumphantly. Then he added, more seriously, "I wonder whether we can cut down that lead before he makes the field? There is only about fifty miles left of this race now."

"We'll catch him! We have got to! There's no losing this race now after we've put up such a fight for it," replied Don, peering ahead through the windshield.

With the leader in sight, Bob's face became set in grimly determined lines, while Don gripped the edge of the cockpit tensely, his body bent forward as if he hoped in that way to add momentum to the plane. Bob was getting terrific speed out of the *Redbird*. But he wanted to get more. With a niceness of touch that came from his extensive flying experience he fingered dial after dial on the instrument board, adjusting one after another a hair's breadth, this way or that, doing his utmost to bring the roaring engine up to even greater efficiency.

And the motor responded gallantly to his masterly skill, for the indicator slowly but surely showed an increase in propeller revolutions until the *Redbird's* engine was turning over at an unheard of speed.

"That's the baby. Go to it. Faster and ever faster," coaxed Bob under his breath. His eyes moved from dial to dial and then off across space toward the flying A. D. plane, where he fancied he could see Dennison and his co-pilot working frantically to crowd more speed on their craft.

When Bob first located the A. D. plane, the *Redbird* was traveling at least five hundred feet higher than the silver-and-gray ship. By a careful adjustment of the controls, Bob nursed his craft even higher without detracting from its forward speed. Soon he was a thousand feet higher than the A. D. And a little later he was two thousand. And when the planes swung over Tarrytown and headed for Yonkers, where they left the river to set a dead-line course for Franklin Field, the *Redbird* was fully three thousand feet above the leading plane, and Bob's practiced eyes estimated that they had cut down Dennison's lead to something less than a mile.

"We're gaining on him, Don," yelled Bob. "This is going to be a mighty close race. We're in the home stretch now and overhauling him fast. This little old race is going to be won in the last mile, I'll bet a dollar."

And it certainly looked that way. As the planes swung over the Bronx and headed across the East River, scarcely half a mile separated them. As they flashed over Long Island City, the distance had been cut down another hundred yards. Over Jamaica, the planes were hardly a quarter of a mile apart, and when presently, far off down the Island the black-and-white pylon of Franklin Field loomed into view, there was scarcely two hundred yards of open sky between the planes, although Bob's *Redbird* was three thousand feet higher in the air than the A. D. plane.

But that distance did not bother Bob at all. In truth, he wanted that altitude. He wanted all the height he could for his final spurt. He wished that he was a thousand feet higher, for he realized that the only way he could win from Dennison was in a final dive out of the sky that would bring gravity to his aid and help him to cover the last mile of the race in breathless speed.

The field loomed sharp and clear now. There were the hangars with their various roof markings. There was the finish line chalked in white. Thousands of automobiles gleamed in the afternoon sunlight. Thousands of spectators fringed the edges of the flat expanse.

They were still two miles from the finish line. Now a mile and a half. Now a mile.

They were on even terms, although the A. D. plane was three thousand feet nearer the ground than the *Redbird*. But that did not count in Dennison's favor, for suddenly Bob, with an easy movement of the controls, changed the course of the *Redbird* and started it downward in a terrific plunge for the finish line. And as he started the dive, Bob grinned, for he knew as he judged the angle of descent and the speed that the *Redbird* was gathering in the plunge that unless Dennison could jump his A. D. plane ahead still faster than it was traveling, the *Redbird* would flash across the finish line a winner by the narrowest margin.

Dennison sensed this, too, for he began working frantically at the dials and controls. With a terrific roar both ships shot out of the sky, the thunder of their motors blending with each other as they neared the field and the white line they would have to cross to finish the great air derby.

Dennison's plane plunged fast, but the *Redbird* came hurtling down from the sky still faster. The three thousand feet that represented the difference in elevation between the two planes was covered in breathless time and when both ships hit the thousand-foot level, they were on even terms and tearing nose for nose for the finish line, a quarter of a mile away. But it was here that the extra momentum gained by the *Redbird* told, for in that last quarter of a mile the trim red ship fairly walked away from the plane in silver and gray and ten seconds later it flashed over the finish line at least three lengths ahead of the A. D. machine.

What a roar went up from the thousands of spectators as both planes banked and circled beyond the finish and with engines killed, glided back to the field and taxied swiftly across the greensward in a cloud of dust kicked up by their whirling propellers. Automobile horns awoke the echoes. Wild yells boomed across the field, and hats and handkerchiefs went into the air in appreciation of such a tense and brilliant finish.

Both planes came to a stop very close to each other. And both pilots climbed out of their machines at about the same time. Dennison, removing headgear and goggles, paused beside his plane for a moment and looked toward Dale with apparent indecision. It was evident that he was both disappointed and angry at having been beaten again by Dale. He made as if to hurry away toward his hangar. But realizing evidently that good sportsmanship demanded that he congratulate the victor he changed his mind, turned and advanced toward Bob, holding out his hand.

"By Jove, ol' chap, that was a rather spectacular finish, eh, what?" he drawled in an exaggerated accent.

"Some race, Fred," said Bob, moving to meet him.

But before they gripped hands, a gray-clad figure stepped swiftly to Fred Dennison's side and laid a firm hand on his shoulder.

"Dennison, you are under arrest," said the voice of State Trooper Lee.

"Eh, what? Under arrest! What for?" exclaimed Dennison. His face became the color of chalk and his eyes grew large with fright.

"Wat Tarr and Jed Igoe, two gunmen, were arrested in Long Island City this morning. They confessed to burglarizing the house of Hans Coburg and stealing certain important plans. They named you as coconspirator and said that you paid them for the job," said the trooper.

But before Dennison could deny the accusation, an elderly and very distinguished-looking man with keen, gray eyes that peered from behind horn-rimmed glasses, elbowed his way

through the crowd that was fast gathering about the two airplanes. Bob recognized him instantly as John Dennison, president of the Alton-Dennison Monoplane Co.

"Here, what's this—what's the trouble?" he demanded.

Dennison turned swiftly at the sound of the familiar voice.

"Why, father!" he exclaimed, growing still whiter. "I—I—rather thought you were in Europe."

"Oh, you did?" said the older man. Then he added, "Well, I am not in Europe, and furthermore I haven't been. I've been right here in this country—watching you and your antics, young man. Now what's the trouble?"

"I've arrested your son for conspiracy to steal plans of the *Redbird* monoplane from Mr. Coburg," said the State trooper.

"Stealing Hans Coburg's plans! Good heavens, did you go *that* far, just to prove to me that you are a clever business man?" exclaimed the elder Dennison, shriveling his son with a glance.

Then, turning, he addressed the trooper, "This is a very embarrassing situation. But there's something I think I had better explain to you concerning any of Hans Coburg's plans. Coburg was an employee of my company. He left of his own accord. But we still have his contract in which he stipulated that we have an option on all his inventions which we can buy at his price. And you had better believe that I'd pay *any* price to get the plans of the ship that just won this race. So I own, or intend to own those *Redbird* plans at any cost. Wait. There is Hans Coburg now. Hans! Come over here."

Mr. Coburg and his daughter with Dick Bruce, Sam Carlson, Evans, and the rest of the Yale crowd had just joined the group around the *Redbird*. When the old inventor saw the head of the Alton-Dennison firm beckoning him, he hastened toward him.

"You old fox," said John Dennison, slapping Hilda's father on the shoulder affectionately, "I always knew you'd turn out a wonder plane, and you have. The *Redbird* is a marvel, and we have got to own all rights to her and the mail-plane contract that goes along with winning this race. Under your old contract I'm buying all her plans and specifications at *your* price."

"The plans are gone. They were stolen," exclaimed Hans Coburg in distress.

"But we got them back again," said Bob Dale, stepping forward with the black traveling bag he had taken from the Junker. And briefly he explained what had happened on the first leg of the big race that morning.

"That *is* a wonder ship to win a race after that sort of an adventure. Give me those plans. Hans, they are mine. Name any price. And, in addition to whatever you ask, you are made a partner in the firm. It will be the Dennison-Coburg Monoplane Co. You are vice president. How's that?"

Hans Coburg was so pleased he could only stammer an incoherent answer. Tears trembled on Hilda's lashes from sheer happiness.

John Dennison grinned like a schoolboy.

"I guess that's settled. Come on down to the hotel for dinner with me. We'll fix it all up. You come along, too, Dale, and all your friends. We'll celebrate." Then, turning to the State trooper, John Dennison queried:

"You see how it stands? Those plans belong to me now. I'm paying a big price for them. I don't think any one is going to press charges against my son for their theft, so you don't really want to arrest him now, do you?"

"Well, I guess perhaps not," said the trooper. Then he added, "But he certainly should be disciplined I'd say."

"Don't worry, he will be," snapped John Dennison. Then, turning on his

son, he thundered, "Now you young whipper snapper, get on down to the hotel and pack your bag and light out for home. I'll see you at the factory to-morrow. Instead of retiring myself and making you president and active head of the firm, as you have been urging me to do, I'm going to start you at the dirtiest job in the machine shop, where you'll stick until you learn how to be something beside a cad. Understand?"

And Fred Dennison, hanging his head like a thoroughly ashamed schoolboy, hurried through the grinning crowd toward the A. D. hangar.

The dinner at the Framingham was a miniature banquet in which the victory of the *Redbird* was celebrated, Bob Dale and Don Holt and the rest of the Yale fellows congratulated on their fine work and good sportsmanship, and the business differences between Hans Coburg and the A. D. company thoroughly patched up.

But as the conversation lagged around nine o'clock, Hilda Coburg slipped out of her chair, and, coming around behind Bob Dale, put her hands on his shoulders.

"I'm going over to the hospital to tell Jim all the good news," she said. "Want to send him any word?"

"Indeed I do," said Bob earnestly. "I want to exact a reward for winning that race and incidentally winning a bride for him."

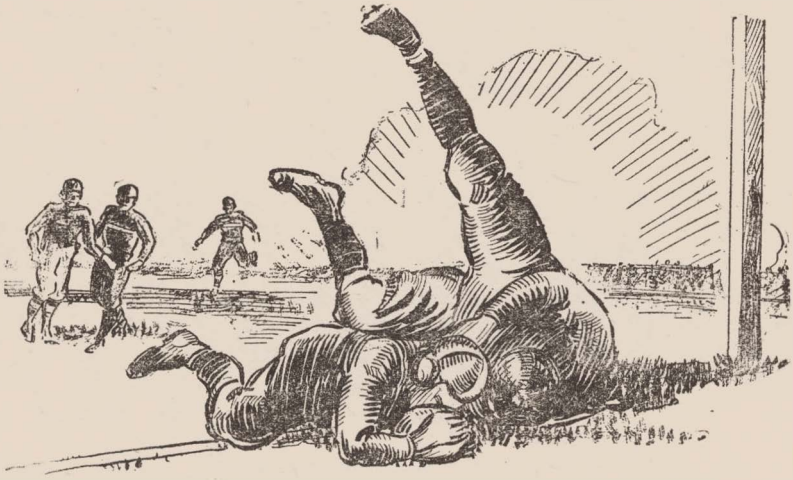
"And what is the reward?" queried Hilda, smiling.

"I want him to make me best man at the wedding," said Bob with a smile.

THE END.

The Hard Luck King

By Thomas Barclay Thomson



Fred Hilton thought an inferiority complex and hard luck were the same things—until the coach made him a forward-pass receiver.

THE play came—the crucial, all-deciding play—as these important, decisive plays will come, unheralded, unexpected, cataclysmic in its results. The Stanfield team, playing steadily, but falling far short of its usual brilliant game, was on the safe end of a hard earned, six-to-nothing score. They were in possession of the ball on their own twenty-yard line, with less than two minutes to play. Both teams were playing slowly, doggedly, tired out from their previous strenuous efforts. Certainly it was not an ideal situation for an epoch-making play. But "breaks," at once the hope and the despair of football coaches and players, come in a manner and at a time unknown and unfathomable to mere humans.

Ted Holt, captain and incomparable line plunger of the Stanfield team, completed a desultory smash into left tackle for two scant yards and a third down. The Red-shirts trotted back, huddled for their signal, their minds busy with the thoughts of completing their day's chore and tallying up one more victory for their season's exceptional record. Fourth down and four yards to go. They well knew what the next play would be—a punt deep into enemy territory.

They clustered about Jamie Blake, the wiry quarter back. "Three—twenty-four!" he whispered, and they dispersed to their several positions.

"Three—twenty-four!" Fred Hilton, perturbed, dropped back to position. Three was his own number, but the twenty-four, while calling for a punt formation, was in reality a running play, which started as a cross-tackle buck and developed into an end run behind massed interference. It was a deadly

ground gainer when the men were fresh —on their toes—but a poor one now, with little to gain and the game to lose.

Back, back, Hilton walked, hands outstretched, the stage seemingly set for a punt. Outwardly calm, but inwardly disturbed, he reached the proper distance and paused, waiting. He didn't like this play—felt that it was risky. He would far rather give the ball an aërial ride; the ends were comparatively fresh —they would pull the receiver down within the shadow of his own goal posts. He kicked an imaginary rock away and settled himself; there came the tiniest flicker of a finger and the ball shot back in a perfect spiral.

As it left the snapper back's hands Hilton darted away, expecting to intercept it at his second step. He stopped in mid-stride. There was some mistake —the ball was not coming where he expected; it was shooting straight back —toward his central position of a moment ago. He twisted around, straining desperately to intercept it. Luckily, he just did succeed in knocking it down.

He quickly recovered it and turned, intent upon following up his interference. And then he received a shock! His interference was not racing around the opposing line as he had expected; they were motionless, waiting. The quarter back, close to the line, had intercepted the break through of the opposing full back. The other two backs, crouched slightly in front of him, were awaiting the charging ends. He paused, confused for an instant.

They were expecting him to punt—not make an end run. He readjusted himself, hurrying to launch the ball into the air. He raised it in both hands, stepped forward and dropped it squarely toward his foot which was swinging upward to meet it—praying that some one would stop those charging ends.

As the ball left his toe a dark form hurtled in front of him. The ball struck with a resounding smack and bounced back, out of sight and toward his own goal. Somebody had failed to get his man.

The end shot past him and he took up the pursuit. The ball was far away, bouncing toward the goal line and he sped swiftly past his opponent, reaching it just as it rolled across the line. Stooping as he ran, he scooped it up, crossed his own goal line, circled, intending to evade his opponent and retrieve some of those precious lost yards —and again disaster struck. A cluster of grass shoots—a veritable ball—came directly under an outthrust foot, and Hilton slipped. He immediately recovered, but too late to get away. Shutting his eyes, he plunged straight out, clearing the goal line by at least three valuable yards before he was stopped.

Three yards! Thirty-six inches! Inches of territory between those hungry Blue-shirts and a touchdown. The Stanfield team, sick at heart, but determined, formed in defense of its goal. But could it hold? A huge, blue-clad figure had left the side line and was streaking toward the group. He was reporting to the referee. It was McCandless, the husky reserve line plunger of the Blue-shirts—held back for just such emergencies as this. The regular full back had seen him and was racing off the field. The substitution was accomplished with no loss of time.

There came a quick, tense huddle—unneeded, except to locate the point of attack—a jump to position, a snapped ball, and McCandless pounded, bull-like, into the line. Irresistibly he drove forward; and the Stanfield line—desperate, determined—bent, but didn't break. The ball stopped a scant foot short of the goal. Again the blue-shirted figures snapped into position—they were running on a series signal—and again the giant full back hurled himself at the

grimly resistant line; and again the desperate defenders were forced back over the precious inches, across the goal line. Touchdown.

With the score now six to six, and faced with possible defeat, "Towser" Bernard, big shaggy-haired tackle, rose to superlative heights and gained undying fame by crashing through the line to block the Blue-shirts' try for goal. Stanfield's team limped listlessly off the field with a tied game and a moral defeat marked up against them and apart from the remainder of the team, sick at heart—stunned under the weight of the catastrophe—walked Fred Hilton, whose one blunder had cost his school the victory, his mind revolving—over and over—the sickening details.

Had he misunderstood? Could it be possible that he, alone, of the entire eleven men, had heard correctly? That he was right and ten others, including the one who gave the signal, were wrong? The signal, as he understood it, had been "three—twenty-four." But the numbers, "three—thirty-four"—called for a punt by him from the same formation. Had his ears deceived him?

Moodily he entered the dressing room and discarded his torn, sweaty togs—alone; took his shower, dressed and left the room—still alone. His teammates, his friends, avoided him. Not one word of excuse, of extenuation was volunteered in defense of his disastrous mistake. The entire team treated him as if he were infected with a combination of yellow fever, bubonic plague and leprosy.

If they would only come right out and condemn him—say how rotten they thought he was. But this silence, the averted looks, the quickly suppressed conversation when he approached; these hurt. In grim silence he boarded a car laden with homeward-bound football fans and there he heard condemnation aplenty. No one recognized him, and on every lip he heard the public's verdict, a verdict even more damning than that of his teammates.

In silence he left the car and entered the hotel where the Stanfield squad was staying, and later, when the remainder of the team arrived, he had disappeared. The following day, when he failed to return, his absence was reported to "Dad" Horton, the grizzled veteran coach who guided the destinies of the Stanfield football teams.

"Who saw him last?" Horton questioned.

"He dressed and got out ahead of the rest of us," Ted Holt replied. "I'm rooming with him this trip, and when I reached our room he wasn't there. I just thought he didn't care to be around the rest of us for a while; but, when he didn't show up this morning, I decided to investigate. I found that everything of his was gone—cleaned out. He must have packed his bag as soon as he reached the room. I was less than a half hour behind him."

"Then he left no word concerning his plans?"

"Not a thing, sir."

"What did he say while dressing? Did he say anything about visiting any one?"

"I don't believe he spoke a word all the time he was dressing."

Dad Horton fell silent for a space of time, musing.

"Did you—any one say anything to him?" he then asked.

Holt flushed guiltily. "I—no, sir, I don't think so."

He and the absent boy had been buddies for the past two years, and he well knew what was passing through the veterans coach's mind.

"His parents live somewhere in this vicinity, don't they?"

"Yes, sir. In El Molinda—about forty miles out."

"Have you the correct address?"

"Yes, sir, I have it—that is, I know what it is. I'll write it out for you."

He scribbled the directions on a card which he passed over to his coach. And with scarcely an acknowledgment the latter accepted it and hurried toward the desk of the hotel clerk.

In truth, Coach Horton felt a bit guilty, himself. He had neglected to go near Hilton after the game's close and now realized his negligence. At the desk he wrote rapidly on a telegraph blank. "Rush it!" he commanded tersely, shoving the completed message across to the clerk. The clerk obligingly did so and within a half hour the reply was handed him. His message had been sent to the senior Hilton; the reply came from Fred, himself, and was brief, forcibly so, leaving nothing to be misunderstood. It said:

I AM THROUGH WITH SCHOOL FOREVER.

Horton read it thoughtfully, then went over to a part of the big lobby where the greater part of the squad were congregated.

"Boys," he said, pausing at the edge of the group. "I want to ask you something. Did you—any one of you, have any conversation with Fred Hilton after the game yesterday?"

There came an awkward silence, intensified by the uneasy rustling of feet.

"I thought not," he nodded. "And I'm just as guilty as any one of you—I didn't either. Of course you know he's gone. Well, I've heard from him." He held up the telegram. "He went home—says he's not coming back."

Startled, uneasy glances were exchanged. This was becoming far more serious than they expected.

"Gosh, he hadn't ought to have done that!" The feeble protest came from Towser Bernard.

"Maybe we're just as well off," a guard, "Tubby" Wells, offered. "He's had more grief than all the rest of the team put together."

"He sure has," another corroborated. "Do you remember how slick he fumbled that pass back of the Aggies' goal line?"

"You bet," chimed in a fourth. "And we're not likely to forget the way he dropped the ball just when we had opened a hole for him to trot across for a touchdown. He gave St. Vincent a touchdown instead."

"Those were easy to forgive," Morrison, the center, added. "They didn't cost us the game—his last one did."

"But, boys," Horton spoke quietly, earnestly. "You must remember he had a bad hand in the Aggie game—should never have been called on to receive a pass. And that St. Vincent game fumble—if you'll recollect, it started with a bad pass from center, and Fred had never really gained possession of the ball when that lineman reached past Towser and tripped him. I don't believe he's to blame for either of those bobbles."

"He's a hoodoo," Wells insisted. "He does all the fumbling; and it certainly wasn't any one's fault but his when he started to run out from under that pass yesterday. A green freshy playing his first game would have known that play couldn't have been anything else than a punt."

"I'll admit that," Horton agreed. "I've heard no reports on that affair yet; how about it, Jamie?"

The quarter back, thus singled out, held back for a moment; then, as if moved by a power greater than his own, he stepped forward, hesitated again, finally steeled himself to meet the penetrating gaze of Dad Horton.

"Mr. Horton—coach," he stammered. "I—I have a—a confession to make—an explanation."

He paused, studying the face of the man before him. Horton nodded encouragement and he proceeded. "I—it's about that signal. I called it wrong.

"It was this way," he hurried on. "I had really expected Ted, here, to make it a first down on the previous play and

had decided to call for the three—twenty-four play and his failure made it necessary for us to punt. I thought, since Ted was pretty tired, to have Fred punt; that signal is 'three—thirty-four.' Well I—got mixed up—forgot, and gave the one that was already in my head.

"When I saw Fred start forward I remembered—knew what I'd done. You see, everybody was so sure it would be the punt signal that they understood it that way—all except Fred. I'm terribly sorry; I know I should have spoken sooner, but—I never thought—never realized how he would take it. I guess it's up to me now to go out there, wherever it is that he lives and tell him—get him to come back. It would serve me right if I'm kicked off the squad—out of school," he finished somewhat bitterly.

"That's the stuff!" Horton was grinning from ear to ear. "As long as you feel badly about it there's no need for the rest of us to. I think I can about make a trip to El Molinda before time to catch the evening limited for home. I can use this 'signal' business as a powerful argument to jerk Fred back where he belongs.

"Another thing," he continued. "I know you boys blame him for a lot of things that go wrong, while, usually, he is the victim of—shall we call it, fate? I'm more inclined to term them 'breaks' which might as well have happened to any other player, or, better still, have been distributed among several others. You must bear in mind that we have been exceptionally free from unlucky 'breaks,'" Ted Holt expostulated. "I has been mixed up in all of our bad ones. The law of averages must operate in his favor sooner or later—if we can get him back, and then, perhaps, some of the rest of you will be carrying a portion of his load of tough luck."

"But you can't call his fumbles 'breaks'" Ted Holt expostulated. "I can remember at least five important passes that he has muffed this season."

"Ordinarily," the coach continued kindly, "I could not allow any question as to a player's fitness; this case is out of the ordinary. Hilton is scarcely a pass receiver, despite his speed and elusiveness. He's nervous, imaginative, and the thoughts of having to receive a pass cause him to fumble. And, if you will notice, the best pass receivers have very long arms and large hands; Fred is more on the 'chunky' order. Now, let's forget all this and treat him right—if I can persuade him to return."

"Make him do it!" Ted Holt was on his feet, gazing truculently at his teammates—daring them to protest.

"I guess—since you've mentioned it—he has absorbed all the tough luck this season. Also, he's toted that old leather for plenty yards after any of the rest of us would have given up. He simply refuses to stay tackled long enough for the referee to blow his whistle. How about it, gang? Are we going to cut him because he was the only one to get that signal the way it was given, or will we pretend that he's dumb, too, and treat him as one of the bunch?"

An instant approving chorus gave conclusive testimony that, with the entire squad, yesterday's debacle was ancient history. One player, alone, remained silent during the entire time. It was Jamie Blake. He now attempted to edge quietly out of the group, but Ted observed him. Ted had won his captaincy through the possession of other qualities as well as football prowess. His magnanimous sportsmanship now came into evidence.

"Hold on there!" he called. "You're not going to sneak out on us like this. The next thing we know coach will be making a trip down into Arizona to bring you back. How about this, fellows?" he appealed to the listening group. "When a guy tries to cop a bunch of glory by pulling a martyr stunt

—owning up to a mistake and throwing the blame on the rest of us—do we let him get away with it, or do we work him over?"

"Let's take his shirt off!" shouted one. "Put him to soak in the bathtub!" volunteered another.

Instantly they were a scuffling, hilarious mob and Horton, nodding wisely to himself, drifted away.

LATE that evening, accompanied by Fred Hilton, Horton rejoined the squad in the huge Arcade depot where they awaited the evening limited.

"I thought we weren't going to make it," Dad grinned boyishly at his pupils. "Fred and I made a rush trip out to see his folks. They have a dandy ranch out there."

The players, taking their cue from him, treated the matter as of every-day occurrence and soon they were rolling homeward, a happy, united group. And Horton, the silent power which directed the destinies of the Stanfield football machine, sat alone wrestling with his problem.

Two weeks more and they were due to meet Northern University for the supremacy of the West and, beyond a doubt, it would be a tough, hard-fought battle. The big gray team, the "Colossus of the North," was composed of heavy, experienced giants. What they lacked in speed they more than made up in brute strength. Once they gained possession of the ball their driving power was well-nigh irresistible. That they would score on his team, Horton felt certain. His task was to send a confident fast outfit on the field—one that would carry the fight to their heavier opponents and, by sheer speed and daring, outscore them.

The key man in his speed attack was Fred Hilton, and now Fred was certain that a more rotten footballer than himself never had pulled on a shoe. Horton's task was to replace this inferiority complex with a maximum of aggressive confidence before the game. If they only had another contest, an unimportant practice game in which the boy could be carried along easily, given only such plays as would prove sure ground gainers—and kept away from passes—this might be accomplished. But it was near the close of the season and their schedule was finished, except for the game with Northern.

Far into the night Horton debated his problem, retiring, finally, to toss restlessly in his berth, unable to close his eyes. And when they arrived on the Stanfield campus in the early morning he was worn, haggard, and ready to snap the head off any undergraduate who might dare to pass out unkind remarks to the school's hard-luck king.

Throughout the remainder of the week and the earlier part of the following one the Red-shirts were put through their paces—not learning new plays, but touching up, polishing the ones they already knew. Only the plays which called for Fred on the receiving end of passes were avoided. Instead he was used on end runs—straight end runs behind perfect interference, and those which were the outgrowth of double and triple reverses, for which Horton-coached teams were famous.

Fred soon realized he was being slighted in the passing game and, while he made no comment or objection, he felt deeply hurt. Horton's system, intended to restore his morale, was doing just the opposite. And the time for the invasion of the gray-clad team from the north rapidly approached.

Time after time the "Goofs"—the self-sacrificing ineligibles—over whose bruised bodies the first-string men usually plunged to scoring perfection, dispersed the first-team interference through sheer force of numbers and dragged down the hitherto invincible Fred Hilton. He just couldn't seem to get going. They pulled him down

with the same ease they employed in bringing to earth one of their own numbers. Fred was off, decidedly off, and Horton seriously considered benching him. Only the hope that the boy might possibly find himself, kept him from making the move.

Fred grew more nervous, more lacking in self-assurance, with each passing day. If they would only give him a chance. He knew he'd probably drop the first pass, perhaps the first half a dozen. But if they would only pass to him—show him that they had faith in him—he knew he could soon master himself and be ready to help in the task of turning back the invading giants from the north.

On Thursday, two days before the Titanic struggle, the squad took the field for light signal practice and to drill further in their passing. For fully an hour they worked with Fred, going mechanically through his paces, still faintly hopeful that the one chance that had grown to mean everything would come to him, but in vain.

Benton, a fourth or fifth-string quarter back was injected into the game and Fred suddenly lifted his head, unbelieving. Could it be possible? Was this the signal for which he had been waiting? As he quietly took his place directly behind the line of scrimmage, tense, waiting, he was sure the others must hear the mad pounding of his heart. Never, not in the most important games, had he felt the critical importance which must attach to his next moves.

As the ball was snapped, and while his backfield mates were pounding into a seeming line plunge, he sped out, paralleling the line of scrimmage. Carefully he counted his strides, measuring the distance he was covering, making doubly sure of his every move. Suddenly he swerved, swinging into enemy territory and, as he ran, he glanced back over his shoulder. The ball should be on its way now. He located it as it floated smoothly through the air, drifting down toward a point slightly inside of and ahead of him—a perfect pass. He had exactly time enough to intercept it easily. He raised both arms—basket fashion—in advance of his left shoulder. The point of the ball struck the palms of his hands and it was instantly jerked down and in—tightly against his triumphant, panting body. He had caught it!

He swung back toward the remainder of the team and tossed the precious, glorious football to the waiting center. It was only practice, but he could scarcely conceal the high elation that suffused his entire being. The brilliant handling of that one pass had done more to restore his self-confidence than a month of successful end runs could have done.

Coach Horton had noted the formation which had foretold the play to his practiced eye, and started up, thinking to have it changed. He changed his mind, instead. To let it go through and end in failure was preferable to calling attention to the fact that he didn't trust his right half to receive. He signaled another quarter back to his side and began instructing him in his duties. Then, as Fred made the beautiful catch, he rapidly gave new orders to the signal caller and sent him onto the field to relieve the acting quarter back.

For play after play the practice went, and almost every other one was a pass to Fred. Some of them he muffed, but he caught the most of them and, at the conclusion of practice, he trotted from the field, his heart singing a pæan of joy and gladness. He could still catch a pass!

THE huge stadium was filled by the time the two teams took the field. Stanfield, the Big Red team was faced by the Big Gray team to-day, and seemed shrunken by comparison. The warriors from the northern institution were great, strapping, healthy specimens,

who might have been recruited from the logging camps of the North Woods, so big and powerful did they look.

Ted Holt, himself a six-foot, one-hundred-and-ninety pounder, seemed slight and boyish when he went forward to meet the big bald-headed Captain La-Rue, of the visitors.

"Boy, oh boy!" he sighed admiringly as he returned to his own team, "if these babies pack as much football as they do weight, we're in for a rough afternoon."

"We can outrun big guys as easily as little ones," Jamie Blake replied. "And they never stand so tall that we can't heave passes over their heads."

"Yes, but how about when they have the ball?" Towser Bernard queried. "It'll be like stopping a fleet of runaway trucks."

"Get under 'em, my boy!" Wells, the guard, replied. "They can't go far after you've yanked their legs out from under them."

"Let's go," Captain Ted ordered. "We're receiving; and don't forget what coach said about running them ragged."

They scattered to their positions and Ted signaled to the referee that Stanfield was ready for the kick-off. A gray-clad behemoth trotted toward the balanced ball, ten other gray-jerseyed pachyderms kept pace with him, a ponderous foot swung forward and the ball shot into the air—the game was on. Jamie and Fred, playing almost on their own goal line, tensed, waiting—then relaxed; the ball was passing well over their heads.

The two teams lined up on the twenty-yard line with Stanfield on the offensive. Coach Horton had reasoned that nothing was to be gained by attempting to punch the powerful Northern line while it was fresh. Later it might be different. Quarter back Jamie called for a double reverse—but a big guard broke through and nailed the play for a four-yard loss. He next tried a straight end run, wisely deciding to keep clear of the opposing line until its first enthusiasm had somewhat abated. The four yards were gained back with one in addition. Third down, nine yards to go, and exactly twenty-one yards from their own goal line. The circumstances certainly called for a punt. But, for that very reason, Jamie decided to cross the enemy up with another end run. To further the deception he started it from a punt formation, right half Havers back. It was an audacious success, Havers was stopped on his own forty-six-yard line.

Again Blake tried a double reverse around left end and once more the same big guard broke through and smeared the play for a two-yard loss. An attempted end run from a delayed pass resulted in another loss of four yards. Third down and sixteen yards to go.

Jamie had been watching Fred, and his calm competence assured him. He decided to try him on a pass. Again the ball spiraled back to Captain Ted who acted as a sort of backfield distributing station, receiving the ball on every play and passing it on to the designated carrier. He whirled, faked a pass to Fred as the latter flashed past him toward the right side of the line. He repeated the maneuver toward Havers as he crossed toward the left side. The defense hesitated, plainly puzzled as to which of these two crouching, speeding figures really carried the elusive pigskin.

An instant later Jamie darted past the stationary Ted and went through the motions of receiving it. He raced out, paralleling the line of scrimmage and the Northern players took up the chase, confident that the riddle was at last solved. Ted then trotted back a few steps, turned, raised the missing ball aloft and sent it spiraling down the field to where Fred was racing to receive it. He was already even with the opposing safety and far over to the side of the playing field. It was football deception at its best, and all that remained to complete a sure touchdown was for Fred to

catch the pass and coast across the goal line.

Fred ran, looking back over his shoulder—watching Ted. He wished to keep the ball in sight every instant after it left Ted's hand. Straight toward him it came, a trifle high; he ran a few steps further, then turned to receive it as it settled toward his cupped arms.

The opposing safety was running desperately, quartering across the field, hoping to intercept Fred before he could complete the catch and again get under way. Fred glimpsed him out of the corner of his eye and it worried him. If Ted had only made his pass a bit further, making the pause unnecessary, there would have been plenty of time. Now he must make up for it by a quick start as soon as the ball reached him. Overanxious, he snatched at it as it dropped toward him; but, hurried and nervous, his arms responded a shade too fast to the brain impulse and the ball, almost within their clutching embrace, slipped away and fell to the ground. An incompleted pass.

Heartbroken, almost sobbing, he walked slowly back toward his stunned teammates. Northern's rooting section was in an uproar, mercifully drowning out the vicious cries of derision which were hurled at him from the Stanfield bleachers.

Fred's failure took a lot of the fight out of his team, and practically ruined him for further usefulness. Horton watched him for three downs and then sent in a substitute. Fred left the field, wrapped himself within the folds of his blanket, and sank hopelessly down on the bench to nurse his misery in silence.

Again Ted punted out of bounds, this time on Northern's eighteen-yard line—and LaRue immediately drove it back to its starting point. It was becoming a great punting duel—between two of the foremost punters in collegiate circles.

After three attempts to advance the ball, Ted punted again and immediately the timer's pistol closed the first period. No scoring had been indulged in, but, instead of the big warriors from the north being the tired ones, it was the lighter, faster Stanfieldites who were in need of rest. Northern's quarter back had carefully conserved his team's offensive strength.

With the opening of the second quarter his tactics changed. LaRue, back in punt formation on his own seven-yard line, charged forward in a vicious line plunge which netted twelve yards. The entire Stanfield line was carried back on the play—a clean-cut demonstration of the power stored up in those gray uniforms.

Again he drove into the line—for six yards. The necessary ten yards were completed by right half Edmonson on the next play and a steady, irresistible march down the field was in progress. The visitors never halted until the ball rested back of Stanfield's goal line. They failed to kick the goal and were out in front by a six-to-nothing score.

Ted elected to receive and LaRue continued to impress by his kicking ability. He again kicked across the goal line. Then, starting on their own twenty-yard line, the Red-shirts drove forward for two first downs before being forced to punt. This time, unfortunately, the ball crossed the end of the field and was put into play on the twenty-yard line. And again Northern took up its ponderous, plodding journey to the Stanfield goal. The resulting touchdown and kicked goal gave them a thirteen-point lead and Stanfield's hopes sank. The half ended with no further scoring.

The third quarter was almost over when Horton decided that further efforts from his beef squad were useless; they were a wonderfully defensive bunch, but just now he needed an offense. He replaced the entire backfield and the two ends with light, rangy speeders. They were in possession of the ball

on their own thirty-five-yard line at the time and, almost before the gray jerseys realized it, three successful passes had placed it on their twenty-three-yard line. From there two reverse plays—a double and a triple—carried it across for Stanfield's first touchdown. With Northern expecting a try for goal from placement, the right half went across for the extra point on another of their reverse plays, leaving them exactly a touchdown behind.

Northern's coach took alarm and replaced a number of his tired crew with fresh players, who were equally large and almost as good as his first string. Beginning the fourth quarter the ball was almost in midfield in Northern's possession. At this time Horton returned the greater part of his first-string players; all but Fred Hilton, in fact.

The ball seesawed back and forth for a time and then again the gray jerseys began a steam-roller advance on the Stanfield goal line, being finally stopped inside the ten-yard line. The last quarter was more than half gone and Horton realized that his team's chances were slipping. Several times he glanced speculatively toward the huddled form of his fleetest backfield man. Suddenly he determined to stake all on a daring chance.

Calling a sub quarter back to his side he instructed him in his duties and sent him racing onto the field. Then he walked over to where Fred sat staring ahead with unseeing eyes.

"All right, son," he said, "take right half for a while."

Fred looked up dully, uncomprehending, unable to realize he was being given another chance.

"Here! Snap along!" Almost smiling, Horton reached down and fairly dragged the unresisting boy to his feet. "Give us the best you've got," he whispered. "We need it."

Fred's face changed from dumb misery to amazement, to sheer unbelief, then to eager, comprehending joy. He shed his blanket and streaked for the closest official.

Stanfield had just regained the ball when he reëntered the game. He settled his helmet into place and glanced over toward Swope, the quarter back who had so lately preceded him into the fray. Of course it would be a punt. They huddled and, as Fred heard the signal, he almost fainted. Had Swope gone completely crazy? "Signal!" he muttered hoarsely and Swope repeated it. Captain Ted nodded reassuringly at him. Almost shaking, he took his place, waiting for the ball to be snapped.

Again, as in that earlier play—the play that sent him from the game in disgrace—he darted across to the left, apparently carrying the ball. Again the left half streaked across to the right, also seemingly burdened with the ball, and the quarter back raced out, paralleling the line of scrimmage, drawing the aggressive opposing players after him. And again Captain Ted dropped back and flipped a pass far down the field to where Fred could easily intercept it. But this time the opposing safety was not to be caught asleep. As Fred raced down the side line, he moved swiftly across and, when Fred slackened speed a trifle, accurately gauging the point of contact with the hurtling ball, he was almost within striking distance.

Too late to knock down the pass, he took off in a long hard tackle, timing himself to hit Fred at the same instant his arms closed on the ball, hoping to cause him to fumble down. Down they went, rolling over and over, and every Stanfield supporter groaned. A field judge raced across, signaling that the down was completed—and Fred was tightly clutching the ball on the fifty-yard line.

Then began an advance as unstoppable as the two unloosed by Northern. Short passes, end runs, more short passes, and steadily they drew across the chalk lines—measuring posts of their

march to victory. And the minutes sped swiftly by.

Across the twenty-yard line, the ten, the five—and time was almost up. Again Fred's signal came. He was to receive a pass at the line of scrimmage just outside the opposing end.

"Take it over!" Ted hissed in his ear. "It's our last chance."

The last play! He almost shivered at its significance. He must put it over. That would mean possible victory, at least a tie. Failure meant defeat.

He shot out, paralleling the line of scrimmage, turned as he cleared the opposing end and grabbed at the ball as it shot toward him. The end lunged at it as it shot past, but missed. He instantly recovered and dove at Fred. The ball struck Fred's arms, bounced away, and dropped squarely into the hands of the charging end. He wrapped his arms about it, turned to elude Fred—and banged headlong into Swope who had followed up the pass. Swope tackled him with all the force and drive at his command. The end catapulted backward toward his own line and the ball again flew into the air—the property of whoever should recover it; Northern's end had completed the pass.

It bounced toward Fred and he gathered it in. He realized that he couldn't cross the goal line at this point—there were too many gray-clad men in front of him. He circled, racing back of his own line, seeking an opening. But the opposition was dashing to head him off. He kept on and, directly ahead of him, over toward the side line, he saw smoke leap from the timer's gun and knew that the game was finished—finished as soon as this play stopped.

On he raced, parallel to the goal line, striving desperately to gain a lead on his pursuers. The side line was dangerously close. He didn't dare double back, part of the enemy were directly behind him. He determined to go through at all costs. Straight toward the goal line he flashed, driving through the eager Northern players. Hands grabbed at him from every side. He side-stepped a would-be tackler, stepped squarely into the path of another, straight-armed him, dragged clear of the clutching hands of a third. He was almost through. Another gray sweater appeared in front of him and again he employed his deadly straight arm.

He spun around as arms closed upon him, straightened out, attempting to regain his balance. One cleated shoe found footing for a second and he made the most of it, surging desperately toward the last chalk mark. Down he went and, as he fell, he reached ahead, straining mightily for the touchdown.

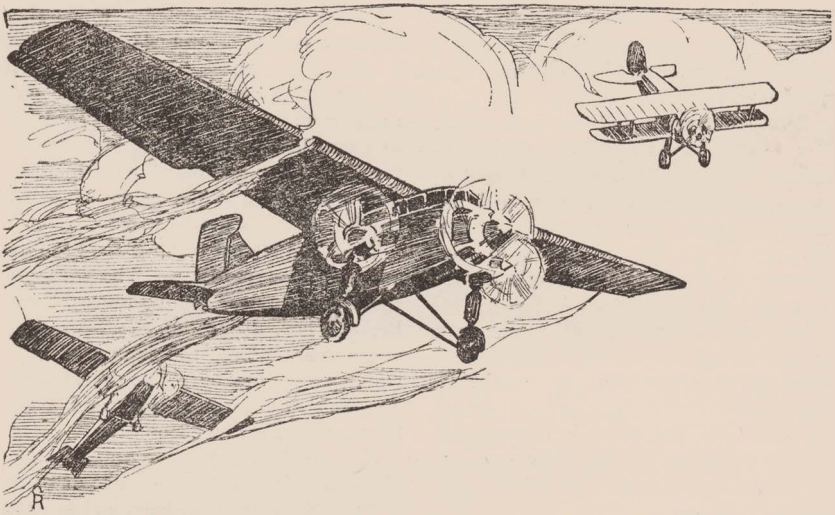
Directly under his eyes appeared a white smear. It was the goal line. He was directly on it, and the ball was ahead of him. It was over.

Weakly he staggered back through his hilarious, congratulating comrades, ready to take his position for the final play—the one which would determine the outcome of the game. A moment later Captain Ted, standing far back, received the ball from the snapper back and placed a neat drop kick over the crossbar for the deciding point of the game.

"Hail to next year's varsity captain!" Jamie Blake yelled as he led the van in a mad race from the players' bench toward the victorious team. "The man who can turn his own fumble into an honest-to-goodness touchdown!"

Tri-motor Speed

By Raoul Whitfield



McLeed had confidence in his new design, but he had no chance to show what the tri-motored job would do until the big race was announced.

THE big triple-engined plane banked mildly over the field of the Southern Airport Company. Graham McLeed, seated forward in the control compartment, moved the wheel to the left, pressed downward on the rudder pedals, putting the ship on an even keel. He moved the whole wheel forward, nosing her downward. With his left hand he snapped the switch cutting the left and right air-cooled engines. The center engine he throttled down to idling speed. Gently the big plane dropped toward the level stretch of the field below.

McLeed turned his head, and glanced at the man seated back of the dual controls, on his left. Cochran was frowning. He turned his head, saw McLeed's eyes on his. He smiled faintly. McLeed was watching the field ahead as he pulled the wheel back slowly. The ship struck in a perfect three point landing. Graham McLeed let her roll to a halt. Then he turned to the man beside him.

"Well?" he asked quietly, but with a faint tremor in his voice. "Do we get the contract?"

The man beside him was older—perhaps ten years older.

"You're young, Mac," he stated. "One of the youngest transport men in the business. Got a nice ship here—nice girl. Handles well. Carries a load well. But your ship design—it's different from the other three.

He broke off, his eyes going away from the blue ones of Graham McLeed. Mac drew a deep breath. He fought to speak calmly.

"That's what I've been working for—what we've been working for, Cochran," he said slowly. "We've got load power in this ship. We've got climb power—safety. She handles—you know that. She's right for your route. But something's wrong. You're holding back some——"

Harry Cochran nodded his head. He spoke sharply now.

"She looks good and she feels good, Mac. I know you did most of the designing. I know Bradley didn't want to go into big ships, didn't want to build them. I know you need this contract, Mac. And I'd like to give it to you. Twenty of these babies—that's a nice contract. But——"

He broke off again. His eyes went toward the grease monkeys running out from the Southern Airport's dead-line. They picked up the blue roadster beyond the dead-line. He smiled. There was a girl standing up on the front seat of the roadster—a tall, fair-haired girl. She was waving.

Harry Cochran rose from the dual control seat, moved back through the compartment door and went down the aisle between the wicker chair. McLeed followed him. As they dropped to the earth of the field he spoke in a level voice to Dan Curran, the boss mechanic.

"Taxi her over in front of Hangar B, Dan. I may want to use her for a while later."

It was a warm afternoon. Neither of the men who had been flying aloft wore coats, helmets or goggles. Harry Cochran smiled faintly at McLeed, gesturing toward the blue roadster.

"There's Helen," he said. "She's been waving to you ever since we hit dirt."

Mac waved toward the girl in the roadster. He smiled, but the frown was back on his face again as the two men walked toward her. He spoke quietly.

"Cochran," he said, "I think you like the Standard job. Why?"

He saw the older man straighten and glance at him sharply. Then Cochran was chuckling.

"Haven't made any decision yet, Mac. The Standard has speed. For a big ship she travels. And she maneuvers. I want to use these transport ships on an airway that demands speed and maneuverability. Speed to beat the train between the two key cities, and maneuverability, because we're making three stops enroute, and the fields are fairly tough. A ship's got to handle."

They had almost reached the deadline and the blue roadster. The girl had climbed down, was coming toward them. Beyond her, from the Southern Airport's main office, the figure of Eric Bradley was moving. The president of the Southern Airlines was coming out to get Cochran's decision.

Graham McLeed spoke quietly. The girl was smiling toward the two of them.

"The Standard has speed and so have the Union, and the Bokker Special. And so has our plane. The engines are new. I couldn't get all the revolutions per minute out of the props that——"

Cochran cut in steadily. "You knew it was a test, Mac. You knew I had to make a decision in a hurry. A new air line can't wait for——"

He broke off, hailing the girl cheerfully. Helen Bradley's eyes went from his to the brown eyes of Graham McLeed. Her body straightened a little as she saw the worried look on Mac's face. She started to speak, but checked herself. Eric Bradley came up. His dark eyes bored into those of Cochran. He was direct.

"Well, do we get it, Cochran?"

Cochran's eyes went from those of the president to Mac's. He smiled faintly as he looked at the girl and reached for a cigarette.

"I don't think so, Mr. Bradley," he replied quietly, passing the cigarettes.

"Nice ship and a change in design, but your designer and pilot failed to show me one thing—tri-motor speed."

Eric Bradley turned toward Mac. The pilot and designer spoke in a level voice.

"I've worked day and night to get the ship out so that we might get this contract," he stated simply. "The engines have been tested on the block—not in the air. I couldn't open them wide. Anyway, they're standard engines. Our standard, changed very little——"

Cochran laughed, a disagreeable laugh, and lighted his cigarette.

"A standard engine, with modifications, hauling a new type transport plane, and you expect me to buy twenty on specifications. No thanks!"

Mac fought down the little tremor of rage that struck at him. He'd had Cochran up for almost an hour. The man had been at the field looking at the ship all morning. Cochran was smiling at Bradley now. He shrugged his shoulders.

"I favor the Standard, frankly," he said quietly. "The Union people have a ship about equal to your Bradley Giant. So far as I know, the Bokker is faster. It's business with me, Bradley, you know that."

Mac laughed, a peculiar, half bitter laugh, and spoke before he could control his feelings.

"Funny business, at that!" he muttered.

He saw anger in the eyes of the man who was to buy twenty transport planes. It was reflected in the narrowed gaze of Eric Bradley. The girl was looking at him with wide eyes.

"Steady, Mac!" she said suddenly. "You've been working pretty hard. Come on, Mr. Cochran, I'll take you to lunch. Dad, are you coming?"

Eric Bradley shook his head. He smiled faintly.

"I'll stay here. I want to talk with McLeed," he said slowly.

The girl nodded. "And you don't want to leave the ship, do you, Mac?" She appeared to take that for granted. "All ready, Mr. Cochran?"

Graham McLeed spoke again. "It won't work, Helen," he said in a tone that was shaken a little with anger. "You can't change his mind. He's already decided on his ships!"

Anger flashed in the girl's eyes. Cochran laughed shortly. He shrugged his shoulders and turned away, saying something in a low voice. Mac didn't catch the words, but the girl spoke clearly.

"I'm not discussing planes with Mr. Cochran," she said. "You designed the ship, Mac. I'm not responsible for her failure, you know."

She turned away. Cochran followed her and climbed into the roadster beside her. The car shot away toward the main gate of Southern Airport. There was a little silence, then Eric Bradley spoke.

"Another flop, eh? The big girl won't do!"

His eyes were on the ship that was being taxied slowly toward Hangar B. McLeed spoke in a steady voice.

"The first design failed because you interfered. This ship is right. She hasn't had a fair test."

The president's eyes were narrowed on McLeed's now. He smiled faintly.

"The trade knows we were out for this contract. We didn't get it. I've created a department and put a lot of money in big plane material. We've got that—Jonah."

He broke off. Graham McLeed laughed harshly. His ship a Jonah!

"I've tried," he said slowly, "but Cochran favors the Standard."

Eric Bradley gestured impatiently. Then he spoke in a hard tone.

"If that big girl had speed you'd have shown it to Cochran. You've been worried about that right along, about the new design, sacrificing other things.

You know the speed of the Standard, the Bokker, the Union."

He checked himself. The expression on Mac's face stopped him. He shrugged his shoulders and was about to turn away. Graham McLeed spoke in a very level voice.

"You've put about thirty thousand into this ship, E. B.," he said slowly. "You don't think she's right. You say I've failed again. I won't argue that. I've got about as much money as you've put into the big girl and it's every cent I have. Money for the patents I sold two years ago. I'll buy the Bradley Giant from you for thirty thousand!"

Eric Bradley stared at the lean-faced man before him. He smiled faintly, then he nodded his head.

"Sold!" he snapped. "Come on in to the office—we'll fix up the papers!"

Graham McLeed smiled twistedly. He hadn't expected the big boss to take up his offer this way. It would take every cent he had to buy the big ship. Eric Bradley had no confidence in her. And she hadn't had a fair test. He knew that. Something was funny.

Eric Bradley was walking toward the field office now. Mac turned and stared toward the tri-motored, twelve passenger ship. Her center engine was turning the stick at idling speed. She had been taxied to Hangar B. Mac nodded his head slowly. There was a grim expression in his eyes. The girl and her father both doubted him and thought he had failed. He followed E. B. toward the white-painted office just off the Number One runway.

"Never had a chance to show!" he muttered, grimly. "But she's got it—tri-motor speed!"

IT was Lee Farrell who brought him the news. His old pal and mechanic came into the small building on the field where the giant ship rested, his eyes shining.

"Listen, Mac," he commenced. "I got this from Eddie Farr of the Bokker outfit. Cochran's been holding back on awarding the contract for those twenty big ships, you know. We wondered why. I've got the reason. Barstow, of the Alaskan Airlines is here and wants transport ships. He's worth millions, and Cochran wants to hook up with him. Cochran wants to buy Standards, but Barstow's not so sure about them. He's a big time sportsman. He's called for a real test in a big ship race! The papers'll carry the news to-night. A hundred mile race with a five thousand foot climb and landing at the finish. There will be an observer in each plane and the winner gets the contract of fifty planes! Open to all cabin monoplanes capable of carrying twelve passengers."

Mac rose from the bench back of the rough desk. For two weeks now they had been carrying passengers in the Bradley Giant, and making a fair living. Here was a chance. The engines were broken in and there had been time to make adjustments and changes.

"Barstow!" he muttered grimly. "He's a big-timer. He'd see that we got a fair chance. Tri-motor race—first one ever held, eh?"

Lee nodded excitedly. He was short and red-headed and a fine mechanic. He had stuck with Mac and they both loved the ship.

"If we could win it, Mac, Barstow would finance us."

Mac nodded his head and smiled.

"We'll have a try, Lee!" he stated slowly. "A hundred miles! That means all engines wide open for the distance. If one power plant fails the plane's licked."

Lee nodded. "I'll fix ours so they won't fail!" he snapped. "But can we pass inspection to enter?"

Graham McLeed smiled more broadly. He reached for his hat.

"I'll find out about that, Lee," he replied. "I'm out to look up Barstow. Watch the big girl."

Lee grunted. "I'll keep her in my flying coat pocket, Mac!" he returned. "And I'll handle her like a two-year-old."

Mac's face was serious again. "It's a big chance, Lee," he stated. "Direct competition with the others. We'll win or lose. That's fair enough."

"We'll win!" Lee muttered. "I'll have the engines right, Mac, and you've made the ship right. We'll be down first."

"At the finish," Mac corrected quietly. "We'll give 'em a fight, Lee!"

A BLUE roadster pulled up near the shack on the level field beside the State road. Helen Bradley climbed down from behind the wheel and moved toward the small building. It was the morning of the sky giants' race, Mac and Lee had just come in from a final inspection of the big plane.

Mac faced the door as the girl stood framed at the entrance. She was smiling. She held out her hand, but Graham McLeed did not take it. He forced a smile.

"Hello! Come over to wish me luck? And which kind, Helen?"

There was a hurt expression on her face. She spoke quietly.

"The crowd's turning out already, Mac," she said slowly, "and the race is three hours off. It'll be wonderful advertising for the winning plane. There'll be thousands at Central Field and more thousands beneath the course."

"Not so good for the losing ships," Mac said steadily.

There was a little silence. The girl broke it.

"Dad's pretty busy, Mac," she stated. "He asked me to come over. He said" —she hesitated, then went on—"that when he came out the other day with Mr. Barstow and the inspection committee he noticed your plane still had the old lettering, Bradley Giant. He doesn't——"

She broke off again. Mac smiled bitterly. He finished for her.

"Doesn't want the Bradley part on, eh?" he asked. "All right, Helen, we'll paint it out. He's sure we'll lose—so sure that——"

He checked himself and turned away. The girl was speaking.

"Mac—he thinks you're foolish because of the entrance fee. Putting up a thousand dollars, when you know you are almost——"

"Almost broke?" he finished. "What did he expect me to do?" There was bitterness in his tone. "He's a business man, Helen—a hard fighter. The winner gets five thousand, and the big cup. I had to put up everything I had to get into this race. But we've got a chance, Helen—a good chance. She handles and she's got speed in her engines."

The girl stepped close to him. There was a little smile on her face as she held out a hand.

"My middle name is Sailor, Mac," she said in a quiet voice. "It was my grandfather's name. He was a fighter, a sailing man. Paint out the Bradley and call her the Sailor Giant, Mac. Will you, for me?"

Graham McLeed stared at the girl. He took her outstretched hand in his. Their heads were very close.

"The Sailor Giant she is, Helen!" he stated firmly. "We'll paint out the Bradley, and after the race he'll be sorry he asked for that to be done. Not that he isn't fair enough about it. He's got a name, a reputation. I've got to get mine."

The girl smiled into his eyes. "You will get it, Mac!" she stated fiercely. "I tried to talk Cochran into giving us the contract but failed. He didn't give you a chance, and Dad made a mistake. He's made others, Mac, and he admits it, when he's wrong."

Graham McLeed nodded his head slowly. He laughed.

"I'll make him admit it this time, too!" he stated. "If I win I'll be looking for you at the field."

Helen Bradley smiled. "I'll be looking for you—win or lose!" she came back quickly. "But the Sailor Giant will win, Mac! Dad said he'd tear down the big ship hangar and get rid of the material, the men, the whole plant. He hasn't, so win and you've got him, Mac!"

She turned away abruptly. He was staring at her. Eric Bradley hadn't dismantled the plant. He was waiting. Why? Did he believe, after all, that Mac had a chance?"

At the doorway the girl turned. She looked Mac squarely in the eyes.

"I'm giving you a break, Mac," she said slowly. "The others have crews to work on their ships, experts. You haven't. There's just you and Lee. So I'm telling you this. Barstow didn't get up this race. Dad did! He was sorry about the way he'd treated you. He'll never admit it, Mac, but I wanted you to know. He's giving you this chance. Luck!"

She was gone. Mac stood staring toward the open door of the shack. He muttered to himself. The exhaust beat of the roadster sounded as the girl drove away. It was like E. B. He had made a mistake, but he was making up for it. The tri-motor plane that Mac had bought from him had passed inspection so she was to fly in the race of the giants. And E. B. had made that race!

Graham McLeod drew a deep breath. The girl wanted him to win. Eric Bradley was giving him the chance to win. But there were five other planes in the race of the tri-motored wings. And their pilots wanted them to win if possible.

He spoke slowly, fiercely. "Sailor Giant! Got to pull her in first and she can make it. But it'll take every revolution per minutes her engines can turn up—and then some!"

CENTRAL FIELD was crowded with people who had come to watch the race of the leviathans. The field was a large one with the five ships in line, fifty feet between each one. In a group near the third plane were the pilots and their reliefs, also the observers who were to ride one in each giant. Lieutenant Medley, of the Air Service, pressed into action as chief official, was giving instructions.

"All starting at once and give each other plenty of air room. Remember you're not flying baby planes. The course is thirty-three and a third miles—triangular. You've all flown it in practice. Bank below the crests of the pylons. After you bank the second pylon on the last lap you can climb any time and any way. A red-painted Waco will be circling at five thousand, a mile north of this field. Each racing plane will circle the Waco to the left and glide for earth. The landing must be a good one and the ship must be taxied across the starting line. The first ship taxied across wins. A crash or a nose-over disqualifies a plane, even though she gets down first. Clear?"

The pilots nodded. The lieutenant instructed the starter to go down the field ahead of the ships.

"Five minutes!" he warned. "Hop aboard, and ride 'em for that cup!"

He turned away. Pilots, relief pilots and observers headed for their respective planes. A siren wailed and there was a cheer from the crowd. Sand bags weighing eighteen hundred pounds were in each ship—the approximate weight of twelve passengers. The observers added more weight, making the race a real test. Almost a capacity pay load.

Don Brock climbed into the Sailor Giant first, and took a seat halfway back on the left side. The pylon banks were to be to the left. Observers were an added precaution—the big ships must bank below the pylon tops. And there would be observers on each pylon.

Graham McLeed dropped down back of the left controls in the pilot's compartment. Lee Farrell was on his right. The three propellers were whirling at throttled speed. Mac grinned at Lee and they shook hands soberly. The siren whined again. The roar from the five great planes increased. Pilots were throttling up a bit. But no ship rolled forward. Far down the field stood the starter, a checkered black and yellow flag in his right hand.

The Bokker was on the left of the line, a gray monoplane. In second position was the Standard, a monoplane with wings raised higher on the fuselage than those of the other entries. In third position was a Brant Thunder Eagle, dark in color and a huge plane. The Sailor Giant was fourth in line. On the outside was the tri-motored Union. All were monoplanes and each was powered with three engines.

Pilots' eyes were on the starter now. Suddenly his raised right hand flashed downward. The flag dropped. There was the terrific roar of fifteen engines thundering sound through the exhaust pipes. Five giants of the sky rolled slowly forward. The race of the big planes was on!

Mac stared through the glass of the stream-lined window ahead of him. The Sailor Giant was gaining speed rapidly, but the three engines were not wide open. He twisted his head to the right. The cabin control room was mounted above the monoplane's center wing structure—he had a fine view. Already his ship had gained half a length on the Union entry!

Beside him, above the beat of the engines, Lee spoke.

"Bokker's in the lead—Hazeltine's lifting her already. Standard's rolling even with us. The Brant entry is back—now she's coming up. Almost even!"

Mac pulled the control wheel back toward him. There were tiny gusts of wind on the field, but the big ship had plenty of forward speed now. Her nose lifted—she struck a bump and dropped.

Lee cried out fiercely. There was a sharp crack. The plane was limping a little now. Mac, stiff in the seat beside Lee, pulled back on the controls again. The nose came up and the big plane lifted.

"Left tire blew!" Mac stated grimly. "But we're off!"

They were off, climbing. Jerking his head, Mac saw that the Bokker was off to a fair lead, and on the inside. The Standard had got off behind, but the Bryant entry was ahead of them, and on the right the Union monoplane was ahead, too.

The first pylon turn was many miles distant and, as the Union and the Thunder Eagle closed in toward each other, Mac pulled back on the controls. He opened up all three engines to within two notches of their full power. He was climbing the ship steeply now—climbing her over the two converging planes below!

But his face was white as he twisted it toward Lee Farrell. The big ship had power. She was flying finely but she had a left tire that was flat. And the finish of the race was dependent on a good landing, a taxi across the white starting line!

"That was close!" he muttered grimly. "We've got a tough landing, Lee."

The mechanic and relief pilot nodded his head slowly. He ran a hand through his ruffled, red hair. He smiled.

"Forget it until we get ready to drop, Mac!" he returned.

AT the first pylon turn they were flying in third place. The Bokker was in the lead, an eighth of a mile ahead. The Union was in second place. In fourth—a close fourth—was the Standard, the ship that Cochran had favored. She had been gaining on Mac's plane for

the last two miles. In last place, a half mile back, was the Brant Thunder Eagle.

Hazeltine was a veteran big-ship pilot. He had made half a dozen transcontinental nonstop flight. He could handle a big plane in the air as skillfully as the average pilot handled a small plane. He banked below the crest of the tower at seventy-five degrees, and his ship was carrying weight!

The Union went wide at the pylon, making a mild bank. Mac smiled grimly. He kicked down on the left rudder pedal and turned the wheel sharply to the left. The right wing of the giant monoplane slanted upward. Fifty—sixty—seventy degrees! And then they were around, leveling off. Now the Sailor Giant was on the inside of the course, almost even with the prop whirl of the Union's three sticks!

Lee Farrell had twisted his head—he spoke sharply.

"Vance made a nice bank and the Standard didn't lose air. She's gaining!"

Mac nodded. He advanced all three engines another notch. He stared at the air speed indicator. One hundred and ten! That was big ship speed—trimotor speed! They were carrying a heavy load. And it was not wide-open speed.

He climbed the plane to five hundred feet, roared her toward the second pylon, eleven and a fraction miles distant. He relaxed, then his body tensed as he thought of the flat tire. A landing out of a drop from five thousand feet, a heavily weighted ship, and a flat tire!

He smiled grimly. Lee Farrell spoke in a level tone.

"All right, Mac, the Standard isn't gaining now."

He nodded. Twisting his head, he grinned at Brock, the observer. That individual clapped his hands together gently, grinning. He nodded his head. His lips framed the words that did not come through the glass door of the control compartment. "Nice bank!"

Mac nodded and smiled. He turned his head to the front again. Lee was looking around. He spoke again.

"Ship going down—one engine dead—the Thunder Eagle! She's away back."

Mac grunted. "Didn't last long," he stated. "We're holding our own with the Union and picking up a little on them."

For several minutes they watched the Union. Slowly that big plane was dropping back, on the outside. Mac watched the instruments on the dial board ahead of him. He watched the Bokker. She was still about an eighth of a mile ahead. But she wasn't winging away from them.

Graham McLeod relaxed again, his eyes on the instruments on the board. He was thinking about the flat. A slow landing would get them down without a crash, but in a close finish a slow landing would mean the loss of the race. His face was twisted. So much depended on the Sailor Giant winning. Only four ships left. First prize, the contract! Fifty planes to be delivered! The cup and five thousand dollars. And what a crowd to know that the Sailor Giant had won, if she did win!

Lee was speaking. "Standard's in third place. Union back to fourth! Standard seems to be gaining on us again, Mac."

Mac twisted his head around. Beyond the tail assembly of the tri-motored ship he could see the three blurs from the props of the Standard. She was gaining. He hesitated, shook his head.

"Not wide open yet, Lee," he said above the triple beat of the engines. "We'll save them a little."

Lee Farrell turned a grim face toward him.

"You're the boss, Mac!" he stated. "But you won't save 'em long!"

AT the start of the second lap, almost over the crowd on Central Field, the Standard passed the Sailor Giant on the outside. She winged so close that Mac and Lee could see Vance waving behind the non-shatterable cabin glass.

The Bokker Special was still leading, and by about the same distance in air. At the second pylon turn Lee turned his face toward Mac's. There was appeal in his eyes. The Standard was picking up air on the leader of the race and she was two hundred yards ahead of their ship.

"The Union's only a quarter mile back," Lee stated. "She's gaining, too."

Mac leaned forward. He worked the throttle of each engine. The beat became a tremendous roar now. The r.p.m. indicator hand crept up. Mac smiled grimly.

"The big girl's wide open, Lee!" he returned. "It's up to her!"

But he was handling her with all the skill he possessed at the pylon turns. He gained on the Standard at the next pylon and was almost even on the last turn of the lap. They were fighting it out for second place as they roared over Central Field. Mac could see the arms of the crowd waving—the white of handkerchiefs. He thought he caught a flashing glimpse of Helen Bradley's blue roadster, parked near the dead-line, but he wasn't sure.

Vance went wide at the first pylon of the final lap. Mac went around at fifty degrees—he couldn't chance a slip here. He had the Sailor Giant in second place as they raced toward the second pylon. But they were not gaining on the leading ship. She was a good quarter of a mile in the lead now. Hazeltine was handling the Bokker Special with all his skill.

They gained steadily on the Standard. Mac smiled grimly. If nothing happened, if the three engines held out he'd prove that Cochran had been wrong about the Standard. But that wouldn't be much satisfaction—not with the Bokker winning the big prize.

He banked the second lap at sixty degrees and stared upward. The Bokker was already climbing—climbing to reach the red-winged Waco that marked the sky spot around which they must bank. The Waco was only a speck in the sky but Hazeltine was taking no chances. He was going up in a gradual, mild climb.

Mac roared the Sailor Giant toward the distant sky spot of the marker ship, but he didn't climb her. He roared her for two miles, then suddenly nosed her up. He settled back in the seat, spoke in a level tone to Lee Farrell.

"This is the test—make it or fail! We've got a climber. Have the Bokker people?"

Lee Farrell grinned. "Here's hoping they haven't!" he snapped back.

Steadily the big monoplane climbed. Her three air-cooled engines were roaring a climb song, wide open. They were pulling. The ship was far ahead of the Bokker in ground distance toward the finish, but she had altitude to get. And she was getting it.

As she gained altitude, Lee watched the ship that had been leading. Several times he muttered to himself, then he spoke.

"We're licking her, Mac! She's almost got altitude, but she's far back of the Waco!"

Mac tried to speak calmly. "We've got two thousand more feet to make. When she levels off she'll ride pretty fast!"

At four thousand feet he twisted his head and stared behind and above. The Bokker was still climbing. She was a mile behind them! But even as he stared back at her she leveled off.

Steadily the Sailor Giant pulled up toward the Waco. Now she was within a quarter mile of the marker plane. Mac stared back. The Bokker was coming in fast. She was only a half mile

behind. She had altitude. The Standard was coming along back of her. Vance had followed the climb path of Hazeltine's plane.

They were almost up now. Mac was tense back of the wheel control. The nose of the Sailor Giant reached five thousand feet. He leveled off, roared her toward the red-winged official plane. Now they were banking around her, slightly higher in altitude. The official in the rear cockpit raised a hand with one finger extended and nodded his head quickly.

Mac felt his heart pounding. He shoved the wheel control forward, pressed downward on the left rudder pedal. The big girl banked and dropped toward the earth and Central Field, a mile to the southward. The wind commenced to scream through the few, huge struts, to batter against the control cabin glass.

"The Bokker's around—she's diving!" Lee cried out. "Mac, the Standard's going down! She hasn't reached the Waco. An engine gone, smoking. The center engine!"

Mac smiled grimly. "Just two of us!" he breathed. "Watch the Bokker, Lee! Hazeltine can fly!"

Strength counted now. The Sailor Giant was roaring toward earth, screaming downward. She was quarter throttled in all three engines. But she had weight and glide speed. Mac was holding her in a steep dive. Four thousand—three thousand—two thousand——

"We've got him!" Lee cried out. "The Standard's spiraling down and the Bokker is a quarter mile above us. Mac, we've got him!"

But Graham McLeed was thinking of the left flat tire. He was thinking of the second when the great ship would strike earth, the turf of Central Field. She had proven her power, her speed. She had proven how easily she could be handled in the sky. She could climb and dive. But now she would be forced to strike dirt, heavily weighted, with a flat tire on the left side. If she crashed, nosed over, cracked a wing, she would be disqualified!

Mac was suddenly calm. He could see the surging crowd below. They were back of the field now and he was forced to ease off on the dive speed. The arms of the crowd were moving. They were cheering. The big ship was coming in against the wind.

"Where's the Bokker?" Mac snapped, a hundred feet above the earth.

Lee's voice was hoarse, tense.

"Five hundred yards back. Coming in fast. Lower. Steady, Mac!"

Sudden panic struck at the pilot, then he was calm again. He could do it, the big girl could do it. He'd landed before with a flat tire, and with weight, too. Slowly he pulled back on the wheel control. Slowly the nose came up and the tail assembly dropped. She was winging just off the earth now, ground skimming. He held her off, letting her lose speed. He gave her a bit of right rudder, to take the weight off the flat. She struck!

It was a pretty landing. A gust of wind swept dust across her path, twenty-five yards ahead. Mac let her roll. She was losing speed now, limping. The white starting line—now the finish line—was ahead. Lee cried out.

"The Bokker's down—a hundred yards back. Fast landing."

Mac cut the two outside engines down to idling speed. He advanced the throttle of the center engine. He was taxiing now—taxiing toward the white line. The ship limped but she rolled. He twisted his head, risking one glance. The Bokker was fifty yards behind, rolling.

Mac jerked his head to the front again. He gave her rudder pressure to fight off a gust of wind, and then the white line flashed beneath the three propellers of the Sailor Giant. They had won. Tri-motored speed had won!

ERIC BRADLEY sat back of his desk in the office at the Southern Airport, and smiled at McLeed. He spoke slowly. Helen Bradley stood at his side.

"A partnership, McLeed, and a free hand for you. I made a mistake, but I realized it. When Helen suggested that race——"

He broke off at Mac's expression of surprise. The girl's face was flushed as Mac stared at her.

"So it was your idea—the big ship race!" he muttered slowly. "And you told me——"

He checked himself and smiled faintly. In a steady tone he spoke to E. B.

"It's a go—the partnership, E. B.," he said quietly. "The way things happened, perhaps it was best. The Sailor Giant's engines needed time, a slow breaking in. We'll turn out a lot of those ships, E. B., and they'll all be good ones!"

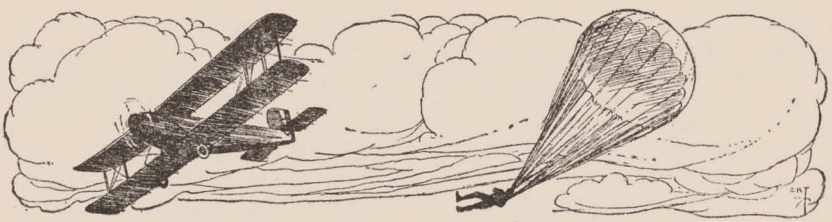
The president of the Southern Airport nodded. He reached for a cigar. Mac moved toward the girl. As he led her to one corner of the office, his eyes met hers steadily.

"The big race was your idea, Helen," he said slowly. "I've got an idea now. Want to hear about it?"

Her eyes were bright. But she could read his idea. It showed plainly in his eyes. She spoke shakily.

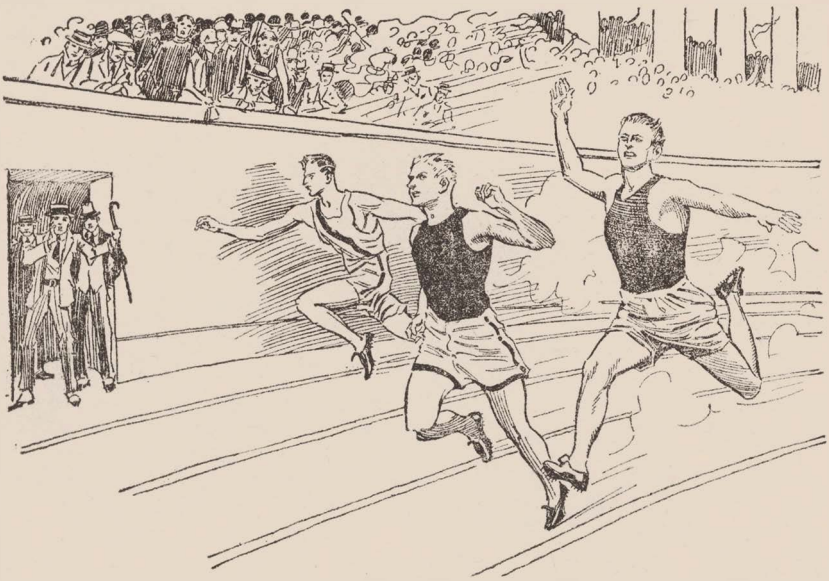
"It's a great idea, Mac!" she said slowly. "Tell me!"

And he did.



Rabbit Rampant

By Kingsley Moses



John Hare, nicknamed "Rabbit," could run, but it was by no means in the manner of a scared rabbit, as he demonstrated in the big intramural meet.

SINCE his family name was Hare, and his mother had christened him John, his nickname was almost inevitable.

"What's your name, freshman?" he had been asked a year ago, lined up with a lot of other trembling neophytes.

"John Hare."

"'Hare', huh? Well, yuh, look like a rabbit. Jack Rabbit, by golly!"

Jack Rabbit he remained. With a month of sophomore year gone by he was still "Jack Rabbit" to those who knew him at all.

Not that any one bothered much to know John Hare. He was one of those unlucky lads who seem to have been born inconspicuous, slim, of medium stature, with a narrow, pale face and a long upper lip which added to the appropriateness of his nickname. He was possessed, moreover, of a serious turn of mind which put him several years ahead of his classmates mentally. He had the conviction—unfortunate for a mere sophomore—that college was a place where a fellow should start to prepare himself for his life's business.

He was, therefore, both the sorrow and salvation of his roommate Reggie Parsons. Both had gone to the same good prep school, both expected to go into the foreign service after they graduated from Meadowbrook College—

Reggie because he conceived of diplomacy as a nice, easy life in exciting foreign cities, John because he was really interested in the politics of the world.

"But you'd think you were goin' to be a moth-eaten old college prof the way you stick around by yourself, an' won't go out for the track team, or baseball, or anythin'." Reggie was in the bedroom trying to find a silk handkerchief for his coat pocket and a necktie that would match.

Getting no reply from his desk-bound roommate Reggie meandered on. "I've told 'em down at the frat house how you played third at St. Michael's, an' how you ran on the team at the Penn Relays, an' how you might develop into a swell track man now that you're bigger and stronger——"

"Get another station," answered his scholarly roommate. "I've got a whole book on the jolly old Jugoslavs to read before to-morrow." The athletic fame Reggie desired for his roommate had been all hashed over long ago. John knew that athletic distinction in a small prep school and at a big college are two different things altogether.

"But you got to do somethin', be somebody, if you ever want to make Alpha Delt," persisted Reggie, who now issued from the bedroom with a green and pink necktie and a green and purple handkerchief. Reggie had been bid to Alpha Delt a year ago. John—a legacy though he was—had been passed over.

"Ten years after you graduate," John returned, "no one ever knows whether you're an Alpha Delt or an Ancient Order of an Hibernian."

"Just the same, if you'd go out for track, do somethin' that'd make people look at you——"

"Oh, go hire a hall, or get a job as a radio announcer, or somethin'," growled his irritated friend from behind his heavy book. It was hard enough to keep from getting mixed up in Lobnitz and Mirovitz and Feistritz without having this human alarm clock sounding off continually.

Reggie departed sadly, with much the air of a professional charity worker who had done his best to help misguided humanity and has been rudely rebuffed. John, alone, put both Alpha Delt and athletics out of his mind—or at least thought he did.

But he dreamed that night that he was winning the Intercollegiate eight-eighty, while a mammoth announcer bellowed at a Stadium full of people: "In the haf-mile r-r-run, Hare of Meadowbrook—with a vault of thuteen feet—wins the shot-put!"

NEVERTHELESS it was extremely unlikely that John Hare would have done anything at all in an athletic way if he had not been pretty pointedly prompted to do so. For no reason at all, it seemed, he began to have trouble with his head and his eyes. Reading wearied him unnaturally. Even out of doors objects got blurry now and then inexplicably.

The oculist he first consulted fortunately had the common sense to send John to a general practitioner. And that sage old country doctor made several remarks about auto-intoxication—which John knew had nothing to do either with booze or flivvers—and ended: "For a lad that's been used to exercise all his life this spending all day, and part of the night, on your books isn't going to lead anywhere but a *summa cum laude* and a sanitarium."

"What'll I do about it, doctor?"

"Walk, run, ride—anything that'll get up a good sweat every day. Now, go to it, young fellow."

The advice, excellent as it was, still didn't inspire John to go out for any of the varsity athletic teams. Rather precociously mature mentally as the lad was he was of the opinion—generally

held only by the more elderly members of the faculty—that college athletics were seriously overemphasized. He had once elegantly expressed his opinion, to the admiring awe of Reggie and other comparatively illiterate sophomores, as: 'an unwillingness to be dragooned by a lot of shouting chauvinists.' That was pretty highfalutin' language, but Johnny Hare was the boy who knew the big words.

Vastly against his inclination, therefore, John forced himself to trudge down to the big gymnasium every afternoon, and there go through a series of physical exercises such as is prescribed regularly for squads of callow freshmen.

Thankfully dropping the chest weights one afternoon, after a hundred wearisome pulls, John was surprised to see Alan Trine, the captain of the track team, watching him with evident amusement. Trine, a senior, was one of the leaders of Alpha Delt, and had privately been rather predisposed to young Hare. Trine, a good student himself, thought it no disgrace to be a scholar.

"What's the idea of the jolly old physical jerks—as our British pals call 'em?" the track captain grinned. It had been pouring rain all day and Tirne had been forced indoors for his regular pole vault practice.

"Doctor told me to take some exercise—awful' nuisance," panted John, glad of any excuse to let up on the cursed weights for a minute. "Stomach's on the bum."

"Why not get a little fun out of the prescription?" Trine suggested. "That fat kid roommate of yours has been sounding off about what a swell track man you were at St. Michael's. Why not come out for the Fall meet next week?"

"Me? I haven't had on a spiked shoe for two years."

"Well, running's better fun than pulling chest weights."

The vaulting standards had stuck and Trine had nothing to do for the moment, while two aspiring assistant managers wrestled with the balky sticks.

The track captain continued: "We're going to need an eight-eighty man awful bad this winter, what with having entered a two mile relay team in Boston, Hartford and New York. Two good men we've got, Booth and Barnhart. But the others——" he shrugged his shoulders.

"Why there's—well—Roy Charwood." To his sorrow John knew Mr. Charwood of the junior class. Charwood had roomed just across the entry from John all the previous year, when John had been only a freshman. And Charwood was one of those natural bullies who conceive it to be their mission in life to make freshmen just as uncomfortable as possible.

"Charwood!" Trine leaned to pick up a vaulting pole. He never saw the object of his apostrophe approaching directly behind him. "Charwood! Why he's so yellow he sweats orangeade! The minute he thinks he can't win a race, *blooey*, he curls up with a pain in his side. We'll have to use him, of course, unless we find, uh——"

Charwood was walking away swiftly. But there was no doubt that he'd heard his captain's opinion of him. Trine grimaced, and went back to his pole vaulting.

Johnny Hare took a tepid shower and went home to think. Two years ago, he pondered, he had been able to turn in a half mile that was close to two minutes. He was two inches taller now, a good deal stronger. Before he went to bed John had unearthed from his trunk his old shirt with the S. M. on it; the black silk pants with their broad red stripe, and the spiked shoes, now all stiff and green with mold.

He kept to himself the next day, just jogging up and down the green turf of the infield, not trying the cinders at all.

He wanted to feel out his leg muscles, to discover if he had any wind at all left, after several months of smoking. He'd stuck to a pipe fortunately, however, which meant little inhaling. His legs he found surprisingly strong. There was plenty of drive and spring in the muscles. The wind was poor, but that might be improved.

For five days he jogged and walked, jogged and sprinted and walked again, all over the stiff brown hills of the autumn countryside.

Then, three days before the big meet itself, an assistant manager dropped into his room to announce that so many sophomores had entered the eight-eighty that they would have to run an elimination race the next afternoon to determine which three entrants from the class should be permitted to start.

"Fair enough," John nodded. He was rather glad of the chance to give himself a test before the real race. Not having been timed at all he didn't even know if he could carry through for the full distance. He had no desire to make a spectacle of himself by coming trailing along with the also-rans. And the Fall Meet at Meadowbrook is one of the few big inter-class contests of the college year. Between freshmen and sophomores the rivalry is particularly keen. The freshmen are getting their first chance for college notice, the sophomores have their first chance for a place on the varsity track team.

But no one would know or care anything about an informal elimination race. Pole vaulters, jumpers and weight men continued their practice in the infield, with not even an interested glance over their shoulders as the gun fired to send away a squad of a dozen sophomores, would-be half-milers.

John, still dubious of his own staying qualities, didn't attempt to go out into the lead. Down the backstretch of the first lap, into the home stretch, he loped along in fourth place. He knew he wasn't being carried along too fast, but it had been so long since he had been on the cinders that he had no idea of pace. Finishing the first lap, he put on a little steam, and moved up into third position, going into the big curve at the heels of two classmates, one in a red shirt, one in black.

He was rather surprised to realize that he wasn't yet in the least tired. The simple fact was that he didn't know that he was really—even out of training—a pretty fair, natural half-miler. He had been so definitely out of athletics for the past year and more that he had no way of measuring his own ability against others.

Even down the backstretch of the second lap he was content to trail along behind the two leaders, fearing always that his wind might suddenly fail him. Not till he was going into the last big curve did it occur to him that the object of running a race was to win it if possible.

It was by no means the best of times to attempt to put this theory into practice. Going wide on a curve costs many precious yards. But John, with all the springy strength still in his legs, and with his wind coming as easily as if he'd been walking, pushed himself forward, and found he could go faster and faster. Like a headstrong colt which must make its own run Johnny Hare went clear out and around the black shirt and the red, and came into the home stretch 'way out in the middle of the track, and went galloping for the scarlet worsted as if he were finishing a forty-yard dash.

"Yeah, Rabbit! Yuh good old Rabbit!" Reggie Parsons was jumping up and down delightedly on the grass beside the finish line. "Knew yuh could beat 'em, boy. Gee, that's showin' 'em!"

John was feeling pretty good himself. He turned to Mr. Watkins, the track coach, with a happy grin. Trine, also

with a stopwatch, was standing beside the coach.

"That lets you in," said Trine. But the track captain didn't smile; indeed he turned away and walked off across the greensward.

John, accustomed in his schoolboy days to a good deal of lionizing after any successful race, looked after the track captain perplexedly. Reggie was even more taken aback. That his roommate should achieve the athletic distinction which is so often an open sesame to the best fraternities was Reggie's dearest desire. And now, when John had proved himself——

The coach quickly cleared up the mystery, however. "Two-eight," he said. "You could have run that about ten seconds faster without hurting yourself, Hare." Then he, too, walked away.

So the crowd he had been running against had been as crumby as that! No wonder he had won with such ease, John thought. All the exhilaration he had felt for a moment when, all by himself, he had gone through the worsted, was dissipated now. There succeeded instead a feeling of sour depression. They thought he was just a common ordinary loafer, that he had dogged it.

Reggie cut in on his gloomy thoughts with the remark: "Well, now you'll just have to show 'em day after tomorrow."

Yes, there was no doubt of that. Sitting comfortably among his books that evening John wished to heaven that he'd never dug out those spiked shoes again. If he hadn't run at all no one would have ever bothered him. He would have been permitted to go along quietly and peacefully, maintaining his extraordinarily high academic standing, alone and unannoyed. If he had run and been beaten he could have retired with grace, too.

But to have run and won so ridiculously easy that every one had thought he hadn't even tried——

"Oh, well," said the placid John, most surprisingly. "Now I'll have cinders in my nose until I graduate."

At ten o'clock he reluctantly put away an interesting book on the Franco-Prussian War and started glumly to bed. Reggie came in while he was undressing, equally glum. It had been Reggie's fond hope that that evening he might argue the fraternity brethren into acceptance of John. Instead, a distinguished alumnus had taken up the whole time of the meeting.

"Ole Judge Santvoord," Reggie divulged. "He beefs an hour about how the fraternity ought always to stand for the best in scholarship. Gives us Hail Columbia because our marks are a fraction of a point behind Psi U and Zeta Phi. Talked about the 'competition complex' an' all such rot. Phooey!"

"Always respect your elders, Reggie," grunted John sardonically as he climbed into bed.

"Yeah? What does that get yuh?"

"When you're seventy some real old bird will die and leave you enough to hire a coon to push your wheel-chair," John tucked his head under the covers to shut out the light. Reggie went through an elaborate evening toilet, rubbing salve into his prematurely thinning hair, examining his neck carefully for adolescent pimples, even secretly rubbing some patent ointment on his upper lip to encourage the fuzz which might some day grow up to be a mustache.

"That's just the trouble of it—'bout ole Judge Santvoord," the primper ran on. "Everybody thought he was comin' across with the offer of a loan for a new frat house. My foot! All he talks is about how Alpha Delt ought to lead the college in scholarship. To hear him you'd think everybody in the house ought to be Phi Beta Kappa!"

Wriggling into mauve pajamas much too tight for him the misanthrope finally went to bed.

THE autumn track meet at Meadowbrook is always held on one of the Saturdays when the football team is playing away from home, and generally at a place so far away that few of the student body can follow the eleven. Everybody goes to the meet, therefore. Class rivalry is intense.

To-day the competition had been unusually keen. Very few of the runners were on the football squad, and placing well in the autumn meet meant that the point winners would be first choice for the indoor season which would begin directly after the Christmas vacation.

But enthusiastic as the spectators were, bundled up in raccoon coats and protected in the grandstand from the strong northwest gale, the weather conditions for the contestants were not so agreeable. Bright and sparkling though the sun was, with the track crisp and fast, the wind on the backstretch was a cruel obstacle to wearying distance men.

In the big locker-room beneath the grand stand a lot of miserable athletes lay around and waited for the first call for their events. Some men—few however—are able to wait for the call to the mark without perfect agonies of nervousness. Many a good runner has been actually sick at his stomach ten minutes before stepping into his starting holes.

Johnny Hare never spent a worse hour in his life than that in which he waited for the first call for the eighteighty. Added to his native bashfulness and reticence was the thought that his seniors, Trine, the coach, all the other older fellows, expected a great deal more of him than he himself believed he could do.

Over and over in his restless mind tumbled the alternative. If I do well they'll say I've been shirking my duty to the college by failing to come out before. If I do rottenly they'll say I'm quitting because I don't want to try. Whatever I do they'll think I'm a mutt. Sweet, isn't it!

And his old enemy, Charwood, didn't help any by stopping beside him and remarking: "So the pride of the prep schools is going to show us something, eh!"

Nimblewitted enough usually John had, at the moment, no adequate answer. His confounded heart seemed to have wandered down to his stomach again temporarily. It was half past four, getting pretty dark at this time of year, and still the eight-eighty wasn't called.

Then they carried in a freshman who had collapsed in the two-mile run, and, of course, had to put him on a rubbing table right beside where John was lying on his T shirt and sweater.

Reynolds, the hurdler, limped in with a lame leg. Through the whole locker-room were the smells of rubbing alcohol, iodine, wet clothes, arnica. Steam from the showers eddied and curled along the ceiling. John continued to feel sicker.

To top it all, Reggie, the boob, had to barge in with the news that the half certainly appeared to be the deciding event on the program.

"It's 'tween us and the freshmen, John," Reggie gasped. "Seniors and juniors are both ten points behind. But we an' the freshmen are exactly even. If you can get just a third, one point, Johnny, we'll trim 'em. Booth an' Charwood are sure to get first and second, but if that Mercersburg freshman, Stevenson, gets third—blooey!"

That was nice, too, wasn't it? Putting it up to him to decide the whole meet. "Oh, go 'way!" was all John could get the heart to groan at this perishing pup of a roommate.

For the sixth time John fidgeted in

to the water spigot to wash out his parched mouth. He knew enough not actually to gulp a big draft of water, but his tongue and throat felt as if they had been sandpapered. Quarter to five——

"All out for the eight-eighty!" the summons at last. John, with ten others bundled in T shirts and trousers or complete sweat suits, crowded out of the door.

Booth, the senior, and the best man in college, had drawn the pole. The other good senior, Barnhart, was away with the football squad. John was in the middle of the track, with the unfriendly Charwood just outside of him.

"Keep out o' my way, kid, or I'll walk all over you," Charwood remarked. If he had thought, however, to scare off John by conversation he had misjudged his man. In his tensity of nerves the threat served only to stir the younger boy to slow anger.

"Have to catch me first." It was entirely unlike a "Rabbit" to adopt so challenging a tone. Charwood glanced at this youngster he'd been so accustomed to bully.

"Goin' to lead us all—half way?" he answered.

"Get set!" came the starter's command behind them. All eleven men crouched, three from each class except the seniors who had entered only two.

The gun cracked. John went out of his holes at top speed.

That was one trick he had learned from a good coach at prep school. A high-strung, intensely nervous runner might as well start fast as slow. The sudden, violent action is a relief to his nerves—takes the keen edge off the agony, you might say. And a second or two may be saved in the first fifty yards, probably.

The start had been squarely in the center of the straight of the track in front of the grand stand. The distance to the beginning of the first big curve was, therefore, exactly forty-five yards. John's flashing start carried him to the curve a good stride in advance of any of the others. Shooting across diagonally he grabbed the pole.

From the grand stand came a whooping roar. Every one knew just how the point score stood. All the bleacher mathematicians knew that a single third place would win the meet for either sophomores or freshmen—Booth and Charwood being generally conceded first and second positions at the finish.

But the sudden appearance of John in the lead revived the sophomores' faint hopes. They howled and whooped in delight even though most of them inwardly were aware that the advantage was most likely just one of those fool runaway exhibitions so often staged by novices.

And Johnny Hare, too, knew enough to realize that his present pace was ridiculous. He had gotten rid of the tremors of his nervousness, however, and felt quite comfortable now. And, moreover, he had the pole. That would save him a lot of traveling. He did not, therefore, much relax his pace until he came to the straightaway of the backstretch.

That happened to be a lucky decision, too. The very momentum of his speed carried him almost halfway down the backstretch before he felt the fierce pressure of the wind blowing straight against him. Just as it's easier to ride a bicycle up a hill if you get a good start before you begin the ascent, so it's easier to run into a wind if you're already moving fast when you strike it. To John's own surprise—and the utter amazement of the spectators—he held his lead of the field all the way down the backstretch and into the second curve.

But, coming into the home stretch, they'd jump him.

They did.

The Mercersburg freshman, in a white shirt, was the first to go past; a tall, nice-looking kid with abnormally long legs. Then another freshman in the blue shirt of Hotchkiss. With the wind lifting them from behind now these two youngsters went up the straight as if they were finishing a quarter, instead of facing another long, cruel lap of the track.

John let them go. He was in no trouble yet. Booth, the college champion was the man who must be watched.

Booth's green shirt with its big varsity M didn't show yet at John's shoulder. Finishing the first lap John went past his wildly cheering classmates neatly tucked into third position. The freshmen would come back, he guessed, when they struck that brutal wind on the backstretch.

It must have been an amusing sight from the stands to see those leaders as they came out of the third curve and struck the deadly head wind. It was almost as if they had run into the side of a tent. Knees and arms went up, arms began pumping violently. John barely avoided being spiked as the two boys before him were nearly halted by that invisible, but very palpable, wind pressure.

Grunting, John put his head down, literally to buck into the gale. Breast to breast, all three level now, he and the two freshmen fought it. On their outside, running easily as an automaton, came Booth, with steady, even stride. Even he was not making much ground speed—as the aviators call it—but he was running straight up, without distress, powerfully.

John's chest felt flattened in pain; there was something hot deep down in his gullet.

But the Hotchkiss boy in blue had dropped away from sight. John was bumping elbows with the lad from Mercersburg.

That was the boy he had to beat, too Dully, in his pain of battling the wind, this thought came to him. It wasn't now a question of merely getting third place. John was in third place at the moment. But that—unless something happened—wasn't going to be good enough. It was second place John wanted.

Well, the curve was coming at last! Once into that curve, John knew, the cruel resistance of the wind would vanish. Instead, the nearer home he came the stronger would be the gale behind him.

Beat the freshman to the curve, then. A couple of steps advantage and John could cut over and take the pole away from young Stevenson. But how get those couple of steps. As if they'd been yoked together the two came, breast to breast to the turning.

The volunteer policing of the meet had collapsed under the excitement of this last, deciding event. Everybody in the infield came swarming over to watch the contestants battle it out around the last big curve. The runners were consequently entirely hidden from the officials who stood at the finishing line.

John, fighting along as best he could, was mentally incapable of trying to decide whether to drop behind the freshman, or to try to go out and round him on the turn. His brain was too benumbed to make any decision. He knew only that he had to run. "Gotta run! Gotta run!" the rhythm of the words pounded in his head.

Actually his brain had so little control of his physical functions that he ran very wide at the turn, slanting out at a straight diagonal instead of following the curve of the track's edging. He was utterly surprised to feel himself suddenly pitching forward, to see the brown-black surface of the track slope up to meet him.

He didn't even feel the shock of the

impact with the earth, much less the rough scarring of the cinders. For one blessed fraction of a second he sensed only that he was through, at rest. He crouched there on hands and knees, dazed, motionless.

Till, from far away, he thought, there came to him a voice—a voice screaming.

"Charwood—he tripped you, John. Charwood tripped you!"

Only two or three of the spectators, crowding there onto the turn, had been able actually to descry what had occurred. But the faithful Reggie Parsons had been one of those eye-witnesses.

None of the runners, buffeted as they were by the northwest gale, had been moving very fast when at last they reached the agonizing end of the backstretch. Both Stevenson, the freshman and Johnny Hare were chopping their strides in their struggle, throwing their feet high to the rear as runners will when they have lost all sense of form and are merely carrying through on their courage.

Charwood, mean streak coming to the surface as usual, and still with plenty of strength left, saw his opportunity and took it. A quick sidewise kick, as he threw his right foot forward, had clipped Johnny completely off his balance.

It left a nice opening for Charwood to go through to overhaul the fading freshman.

Likely the trick would have been entirely successful, too, had it not been for Reggie's quick eye, and, even more important, his shrill and indignant announcement of the foul.

For none of the qualified officials had been able to see the foul, and probably the testimony of even several over-excited sophomores would not have been weighed as conclusive.

But Reggie's yell, penetrating to his roommate's dazed consciousness, stirred something in the fallen lad's soul that was superior even to physical fatigue.

Charwood—the mucker! Charwood had done that to him, had he!

Johnny was not actually down. Some would have said that he never did quite halt his forward motion. He was like a runner on the football team who, tackled, hits the ground, bounces, and continues onward. The football rules recognize such a situation in stipulating that a runner is not down unless in the grasp of an opponent.

And now anger suddenly re-fueled the dying engine of Johnny's will power. He went up off his hands and knees as if he had crouched there on purpose to get impetus for a new flying start.

Charwood's faded green shirt was fully ten yards away, for the junior had gone past young Stevenson who was out on his feet, though he was still staggering.

But Johnny never even saw Stevenson. He was going, somehow, to catch Charwood. And he had been tripped and thrown so far toward the outer edge of the track that he could now run almost on a straight line to the last curve.

And he ran. Head down and fists swinging he ran like a little bull charging a fleeing persecutor.

Charwood heard the thumping feet behind him, and swung his head to see who, at this late moment, had the strength to challenge.

He saw. And lined out for the tape.

But he hadn't a chance in the world. Johnny went by him as if he hadn't been there.

And then Lewis Booth, the college champion, slowing to breast the worsted, felt something brush into his bare shoulder.

Through the tape Johnny Hare went, in a dead heat with the best half-miler in college.

Then Johnny pitched to his face,

skidding and plowing through the cinders. But he'd won the meet for his classmates.

While the salvos of cheers reëchoed they carried Johnny into the locker-room.

The boy came to in five minutes. The doctor was above him, with stethoscope on his heart.

"Sound as a bell," the doctor was saying.

Sound or not, Johnny had quite lost memory of the last few seconds of that race. His splendid spurt to victory had been totally erased from his recollection.

The doctor had moved on to inspect some of the other contestants by the time Johnny's friends had impressed upon him, and finally convinced him, of the real truth of the triumph.

Johnny sat up like a jack-knife snapped open. "So it was Charwood fouling me that did it?" he grunted. "And I trimmed him good, did I—well——"

Charwood was standing near the showers. The tall junior was still breathing hard, shoulders drooping forward from exhaustion. Johnny, garbed only in his running pants, walked directly up to the nude athlete.

"Once more—for good measure," Johnny said fiercely. And hit Charwood in the mouth with all his might.

Charwood went down on the wet duck-boards outside the shower. And he stayed there. Not that he had been knocked out. He was perfectly able to peer up at Johnny from under a shielding arm. But it was safer, Roy Charwood concluded, to stay where he was for the time being.

Alan Trine and Reggie Parsons grabbed the belligerent's arms. "Now, Rabbit," soothed the track captain, "calm down. You're still out of your head, I guess."

"Well," said the Rabbit gloatingly. "I kinda like the feelin'."

THEY held a long session on the subject of Johnny Hare that night in the Alpha Delt fraternity house. There wasn't any question, of course, as to whether or not they would extend a bid to young Rabbit. But Alan Trine took pleasure in pointing out to some of the more obtuse brethren just how dumb and astigmatic they had been.

"And I don't know, after all, but that Judge Santvoord was right," the head of the chapter concluded his discourse. "It wouldn't hurt any of you birds to get down to work a little harder. If all twenty of us could raise our grades just one point apiece we'd lead the college.

"We've been traveling too long on our reputation of being the best and most exclusive fraternity in college, and judging too much by appearances. We should have had sense enough to see last year that young Hare is just the sort of a chap we ought to have with us. Instead it takes a track meet and a dirty trick to show the fellow's real character.

"And—oh, yes," the captain of the track team concluded. "If he accepts our bid I advise the worshipful working crew to go a mite easy on its initiation. Even a rabbit packs a powerful punch, sometimes, as we've recently had demonstrated."

Johnny Hare did accept the bid when he was wakened by a polite, and almost deferential, delegation the next morning.

After they had gone, and still feeling rather sick and weak, Johnny wondered to himself just how the whole thing had happened. Thumbing over a dictionary, in preparation for an English test at ten o'clock, his eye fell on an illustration of a bunny. Its label was *Lepidus timidus*, the hare. Johnny read with amusement: "proverbial for its timidity and fleetness."

But the most amusing consequence of

the whole affair didn't materialize until after the Christmas holidays.

Johnny returned to find the chapter jubilating over the gift by Judge Santvoord of a handsome new fraternity house.

"Funny thing is," Trine told him, "that the old fellow gave it to us because the Dean wrote him that we led the college in scholarship. Our average was almost a full point behind Zeta Phi this fall." Trine paused. His eyebrows rose as he stared at his young friend.

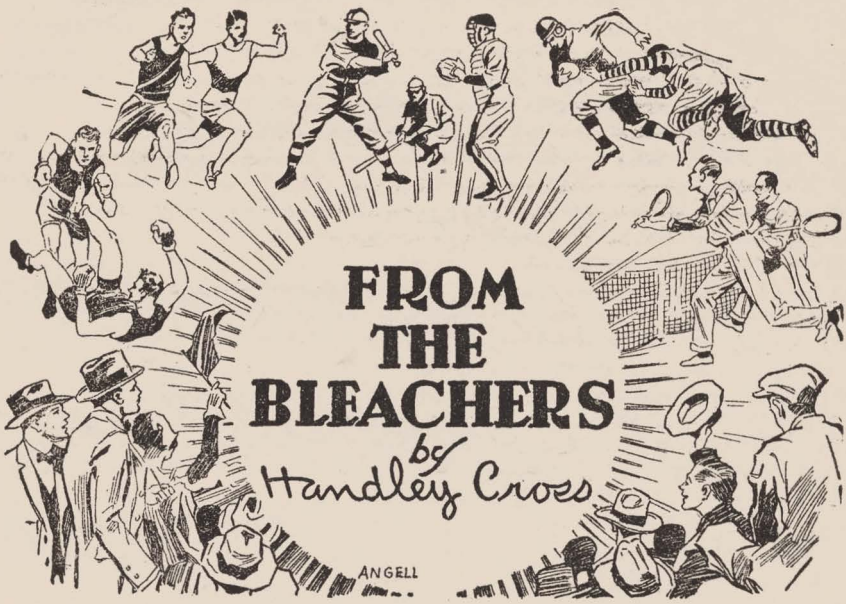
"Say, young fella," the track captain exclaimed. "Just what was your average mark for the last term?"

"Ninety-four," said Johnny.

"And the chapter's average was seventy-four. That explains it. Now that you're counted in with us we go into the lead."

Shouting, he summoned half a dozen of the others from in front of the open fire. Briefly he explained to whom they were indebted for their new home. "And," Trine concluded, "I durn well know what we're going to call the house, when we get it. 'The Rabbit Hutch.'"

"And hang out one of those signs," grinned Bottomley who was majoring in Fine Arts. "A battling bunny on a green field. 'Rabbit rampant on a field vert,' is, I believe, the correct heraldic description."



FOOTBALL SEASON STARTS

AFTER some early-September gridiron skirmishing, the 1929 football season really will get started on the afternoon of Saturday, September 28th, and will reach the important-game stage on the following Saturday, October 5th.

Perhaps the most attractive of the September 28th games will be the Stanford-Olympic A. C. set-to in Palo Alto. Last year the clubmen—most of them former college stars—defeated "Pop" Warner's earnest young men by a twelve-to-six score. If you know anything at all about Pop Warner, you will understand that that early-season licking didn't "set well" with the master coach, and it is a good bet that when the Stanford players take the field this year they will be all steamed up to get revenge. Other good games on the Pacific coast should be the battles between California and Santa Clara, in Berkeley, and between Washington and Whitman, in Seattle. Last season's Washington-Whitman game was close, the Huskies emerging from the fray very well satisfied with the long end of a seven-to-nothing score.

Swing across the continent to the Atlantic seaboard and you will find other good gridiron fare. Up in the picturesque West Point Stadium, Army starts the season with Boston University. Last year's score was thirty-five to nothing, Army winning. Pennsylvania plays Franklin-Marshall in Philadelphia, and Columbia meets Middlebury in New York. Another good New York game will be between New York University and Vermont, teams which did not meet last year. Brown journeys to Springfield to play the Springfield Y. M. C. A. College. Boston College swings into action against Catholic University, in Boston. Syracuse plays Hobart, and will try to improve on last season's fourteen-to-six score. Other good games are scheduled between Dartmouth and Norwich, Navy and Denison, Penn State

and Niagara, Georgetown and Mount St. Mary, and between Washington and Jefferson and Ohio Northern.

In the Middle West, Indiana meets Wabash in Bloomington. Last year Indiana won, fourteen to nothing. Michigan takes on Mount Union and Albion in Ann Arbor. Wisconsin opens the season with South Dakota State.

In the South, Vanderbilt meets Mississippi, Alabama's Crimson Tide will try to engulf Mississippi College, Florida plays Southern, and Southern Methodist meets Howard Payne in Dallas.

On October 5th Indiana plays Knute Rockne's Notre Dame warriors, in Bloomington. Always a "traveling team," the Fighting Irish will travel even more than usual this season, playing nine games away from home while the workmen are busy building a new stadium in South Bend. And they will travel fast—trust the talented Rockne for that! Michigan meets Michigan State in Ann Arbor. Last season the Wolverines got a scare from State, winning by a field goal that was the game's only score. Two intersectional games are scheduled—Nebraska versus Southern Methodist in Lincoln, and Wisconsin versus Colgate in Madison. Illinois meets Kansas in Urbana, giving Bob Zuppke a chance to show what sort of material he has this season. Chicago plays Beloit. In Minneapolis, Minnesota plays a doubleheader, Coe and Ripon being the victims. Northwestern also plays two visiting colleges, Butler and Cornell College.

In the East the teams of the "Big Three" of hallowed memory open their seasons, Yale playing Vermont, Princeton playing Amherst, and Harvard playing Bates. New York University meets West Virginia Wesleyan, and probably will have a lively afternoon equaling last season's twenty-six-to-seven score. Pennsylvania plays Swarthmore, and Cornell meets Niagara. In Pittsburgh, Carnegie plays Thiel. Last year's score was forty-five to thirteen. Army plays Gettysburg at West Point, Boston College meets Maine in Boston, and Penn State plays Lebanon Valley at State College. In Washington, Georgetown meets Western Maryland.

Pacific coast fans will flock to the California-St. Mary game in Berkeley, hoping to see another battle such as last year's, which California won by a single score. Stanford meets Oregon in Palo Alto, in a game which should give us a line on Stanford's prospects. Southern California plays Oregon State, in Los Angeles. Last season's score was nineteen to nothing, California winning.

In the South, the standout game is between Georgia and Furman, in Athens. Last year's battle was close, Georgia winning seven to nothing. Georgia Tech will gladden the heart of the citizens of Atlanta by opening the season against the Mississippi Aggies. North Carolina State will entertain Washington and Lee in Raleigh, and will try to reverse last season's thirty-eight-to-six score. Vanderbilt plays Ouachita in Nashville, and Florida meets V. M. I., in Jacksonville. In New Orleans, Tulane will play the Texas Aggies.

All of which makes a very appetizing first course on the season's gridiron menu!

FOOTBALL RULE CHANGES

SEVERAL football rule changes, made by the Rules Committee at last winter's session of that august but much-criticized body, will go into effect at the beginning of the fast-approaching season.

The most drastic and far-reaching of these changes—a change that affects the character of football as we have known it—is the rule making a fumbled ball dead

at the point of its recovery by the opposing team. This rule change will take from football one of its most exciting "breaks"—the recovery of a fumbled punt by a trailing team, and a subsequent run for a long gain, or even for a touchdown and a last-moment victory. It will take some of the element of chance out of football—a good thing if you think of football as a science, but perhaps not so good a thing for those of us who like to think of football as a game.

The new rule makes a ball which has been muffed or fumbled, and then recovered by the opponents after it has struck the ground, dead at the point of recovery. If Team A kicks, and the ball is fumbled by Player Brown of Team B, and then, after it has come into contact with the ground, it is recovered by Player Smith of Team A, Player Smith cannot advance with the ball, but the ball goes to his team at the point of recovery. The new rule makes loss of the ball the penalty for a fumble. Under the old rule loss of the ball, and the chance of a long gain for the opposing team, was the penalty for fumbling.

Another rule change makes it illegal for a player of the kicking team who legally has recovered a kick-off, a free-kick, or a kick that has not crossed the line of scrimmage, to advance the ball after recovering it. This change is an extension of the rule making illegal the advancement of the ball after the recovery of other kicks.

Still another change prohibits what is called "passive interference" beyond the line of scrimmage by players who are not eligible to recover a forward pass.

To encourage the use of running plays in attempting to score the extra point after a touchdown, Rule X has been changed so that the try-for-point will be made from the 2-yard line, instead of from the 3-yard line.

Slight changes cover the specifications of the ball, and of the equipment of the players.

THE BIG STICK IN BASEBALL

IF—as at this writing seems probable—this year's World Series is played by the Philadelphia Athletics and the Chicago Cubs, heavy hitting should play a big part in deciding the issue of who will be the next world's champions. Both teams are blessed with tremendous offensive strength. The Cubs attack would feature Hornsby, Stephenson, and Wilson, all of whom are in or close to the .350 class. Connie Mack would send to the firing line a whole brigade of pitchers' pests, with Foxx, Simmons, Cochrane, and Dykes leading the attack.

Each year the Big Stick plays a bigger part in professional baseball. The lively ball and stands close to the plate play their part in the walloping drama, but the batters themselves are doing good work. Some old-time fans do not like the present style of baseball, but these standpatters are greatly outnumbered by the baseball bugs who find their greatest pleasure in seeing the ball hammered for homers. Ball players, managers and public alike are in a "hitting state of mind." It is the slugger who gets the cheers and the sports-page headlines. Skilled pitching and scientific defensive play are neglected by most of those who click the turnstiles. They want to see hard hitting, and if they see hard hitting they are satisfied. The entire strategy of baseball has changed—teams now try to bat their base-runners around the bags. Base stealing has become a neglected art, and "inside" offensive baseball almost a thing of the past. Like it or not, it's the big stick that counts in baseball nowadays!

As these paragraphs are written, it looks as if there may be new batting champions in both big leagues. "Babe" Herman, of the Brooklyn Robins, with

a batting mark away over .400 in mid-August, seems to have much better than an even chance of winning National League top honors. In the American League the race is closer, with Foxx and Simmons, both of the Philadelphia Athletics, leading the big hitting parade.

GRIEFS OF THE YANKEES A JOY TO AMERICAN LEAGUE CLUB OWNERS

THE misfortunes of the three-times world champion New York Yankees have brought grief to New York baseball fans and to the experts who picked them to win this year's pennant race and their fourth consecutive championship, but they have brought joy into the lives of the other American League club owners. The Yankees have been successful too long for the financial good of the American League. Their habit of going out in front early in the season and staying there most or all of the rest of the race has detracted from the public's interest in the junior-league campaign.

This year it has been different. The Yankees soon dropped behind the fast-moving Philadelphia Athletics in the pennant race, and at this writing it seems pretty certain that they will not be able to make up the lost ground. With the Athletics in the lead, interest in American League ball revived. A shower of dollars has been falling into the strong boxes of the American League magnates.

Another feature of the American League race has been the performances of several young stars. Baseball fans always are on the lookout for the men who will be the top-liners of the not-distant future.

The National League season also has been highly successful for most of the clubs. Up to the time that these paragraphs are written it has been a close and exciting race, with the Chicago Cubs and the Pittsburgh Pirates fighting for the lead. The Cubs have been the sentimental favorites all over the senior circuit, and their victory would be highly popular with nearly all of the fans. Chicago wants a pennant badly, and a pennant-winning team in Chicago would be a fine thing for big-league baseball. It has been eleven long years since the Cubs won, and ten years since the Chicago American League club finished in front.

New champions, new individual stars—those are the things that make professional baseball profitable to the club owners.

THE FIRST PERFECT BALL GAME

ORGANIZED baseball is fifty-eight years old, and in all that time only five big-league pitchers have turned in perfect games—games in which there were no hits or runs, and in which no man reached first base. The first man to pitch a perfect game is still alive, and still interested in baseball. He is John Lee Richmond, a professor at the University of Toledo, and an ardent fan for the Toledo Mudhens of the American Association.

Professor Richmond's perfect game came while he was pitching for the Worcester club of the National League, shortly after being graduated from Brown University. The opposing club was Cleveland, then a National League club. The date was July 12, 1880. The Cleveland batters succeeded in driving only three balls out of the infield. At that time Professor Richmond, a left-hander, was pitching almost every day. He says that present-day pitchers have things too easy—that they don't work often enough to reach their best form.

Five days after Richmond's perfect game, John Ward, pitching for the Providence club of the National League, duplicated his performance. Then twenty-four years passed before "Cy" Young pitched the third perfect game of baseball history. Addie Ross and Charlie Robertson are the other pitchers who have registered perfect performances.

AN EVEN BREAK IN INTERNATIONAL TENNIS

AMERICA'S masculine tennis players didn't succeed in winning back the Davis Cup, emblematic of the world's team tennis championship, from France, but our women players earned an even break for Uncle Sam in the year's international team contests by successfully defending the Wightman Cup against the attack of the English team.

Although few American tennis enthusiasts had expected our team to be successful in its Davis Cup quest, the results of the Challenge Round matches were disappointing, especially in view of the unfortunate illness of Rene Lacoste that kept him from taking his place in the front rank of the French defenders. We did win two of the five matches played, but many tennis followers feel that with Lacoste out we should have won three, and regained the cup.

In spite of Frank Hunter's good work in the interzone finals against Germany, it was decided to replace him by George Lott, the twenty-four-year-old University of Chicago star, for the Challenge Round matches. Whether or not this change was good generalship never will be decided, but it cannot be denied that Hunter has had more than his share of success against Jean Borotra in other years, or that Lott lost to both Cochet and Borotra. No one thinks that Hunter could have beaten Cochet, but many think that he would have beaten Borotra, and in doing it won back the cup.

"Big Bill" Tilden, veteran master of the courts, played gallantly, as he always plays, but the results of his match were disappointing to his many admirers. The first day of the matches in the Stade Roland Garros in Paris found him powerless against the brilliant and deadly game of young Henri Cochet, and he lost in straight sets, the scores being 6-3, 6-1, 6-2. Lott then took the court against Borotra. Many of those who were present think that had he used all his speed and power he would have beaten the "Bounding Basque," who no longer bounds with quite the ease and abandon that once were his, but Lott elected, or was instructed, to play a safe game and keep down his total of errors, and the Frenchman beat the young American in four sets, the score being 6-1, 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.

The second day, sacred to the one doubles match of the series, raised American hopes, for our colt doubles team, Van Ryn and Allison, lived up to their Wimbledon reputation by defeating Cochet and Borotra in straight sets, 6-1, 8-6, 6-4.

That made the score two matches to one in favor of France, and America still had a chance. Tilden, not the Tilden of his greatest years, but playing mighty fine tennis, made that chance better by beating Borotra, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-5. That evened the series, but Cochet was on the firing line for France. He won the first set from Lott easily, 6-1. Then Lott played the best tennis he ever has played, and won the second set, 6-3. But that effort cost him much in stamina and nervous energy, and Cochet took the next set at love. Lott then made a gallant effort, and managed to get to three-all in the fourth set, but Cochet was too good for him, and ran out the match without losing another game.

While some American tennis followers, thinking that the absence of Lacoste

gave us the greatest chance that is likely to come our way for a long time, look on this year's Davis Cup matches with gloomy eyes, others are encouraged, and even optimistic. They point out that our youngsters, Van Ryn, Allison and Lott, all have improved tremendously, and that before many years have rolled past, France will be in the position of defending the cup with veterans, while we will be using young and still-coming players. But it will be some years before Lacoste, Cochet and Brugnon lose their effectiveness on the court, and France also has promising young players, among them Christian Boussus. It is my opinion that the Davis Cup will stay on French soil for some years to come.

Playing the seventh Wightman Cup match, the American women's team defeated England, four matches to three. Miss Helen Wills was a double winner in the singles, defeating Mrs. Phoebe Watson and Miss Betty Nuthall, both in straight sets. Miss Nuthall put up a great fight, the game scores being 8-6 in both sets, and convinced those who watched that if Miss Wills should lose her crown in the next few years, it will be the hard-hitting English girl who will climb to the throne. One of the surprises of the series was the defeat of Miss Nuthall by Miss Helen Jacobs, and another was the defeat of Miss Jacobs by Mrs. Watson. Miss Edith Cross, playing fine tennis, defeated Mrs. Mitchell in the fifth singles match. England won both doubles matches, Mrs. Watson and Mrs. Mitchell defeating Miss Wills and Miss Cross, and Mrs. Covell and Mrs. Shepherd-Barron defeating Mrs. Wightman and Miss Jacobs.

Great interest was displayed in the matches, a crowd of about eight thousand being in the Forest Hills Stadium on the second day.

The United States now has won the Wightman Cup four times, and England has won it three times.

THE LOUGHRAN-SHARKEY FIGHT

THE fight between Tommy Loughran, light-heavyweight champion of the world, and Jack Sharkey, the man who showed that Jack Dempsey was foolish in refusing to fight Harry Wills, scheduled for New York's Yankee Stadium on September 26th, marks the acceptance of Loughran as a full-fledged heavyweight fighter. Business has been slow in the light-heavyweight division, and Loughran hasn't made a fortune out of his title, although he always has been ready and willing to fight any contender for his crown. For some time he has been anxious to fight as a heavyweight, but he demanded—and rightly—a chance to meet one of the leading heavies before he would give up his light-heavyweight crown. Now he has that chance, and he will resign the lesser title before he steps into the Stadium ring to do battle with Sharkey for a chance at the most profitable of all pugilistic championships.

Tommy Loughran, although somewhat lacking in punching power, is perhaps the classiest of all the champions of to-day. A fine boxer, the Philadelphian can take punishment and come back fighting. For some time he has had trouble in making the 175-pound limit of the light-heavyweight class, and it is more than likely that being able to fight at his natural weight will add to his effectiveness in the ring. He may not be able to win the heavyweight title, but he should go a long way in the unlimited weight class. A good, game, clean-living young man, he would make a most worthy champion, and every one except those interested in the men he will fight wish him the best of luck.

Jack Sharkey, his opponent in the coming fight, is something of an in-and-

outer. He made a great name for himself by defeating Wills—although it must be admitted that the big colored scrapper had left his best days far behind him—and at one time seemed to be headed straight for the championship. Even when Jack Dempsey, returning to the ring for his second fight with Tunney, knocked him out in seven rounds in 1927, his admirers didn't lose their faith in him, for many of them thought that Dempsey's knock-out blow was a foul. But, like all the other men who were beaten by Dempsey, Sharkey hasn't amounted to much in the ring since he met the "Manassa Mauler." He fought a ten-round draw with Tom Heeney, who, a little later, was artistically trimmed by Gene Tunney, and then lost to Johnny Risko in fifteen rounds. His one-round knock-out of Jack Delaney brought his stock back to par, but his latest exhibition, his fight against Young Stribling in Florida last winter, sent it tumbling again. Sharkey is hard to "dope"—but I expect to see Loughran outpoint him.

Loughran's chance to fight as a heavyweight came through the refusal of Max Schmeling, the most colorful of the present-day heavyweights, to live up to the two-year option on his services that he—or one of his various managers—had given Madison Square Garden. Apparently the hard-hitting German didn't want to fight Sharkey—though why he shouldn't jump at the chance is hard to figure. Perhaps it is the lure of a fight in Mexico with Jack Dempsey that is keeping him idle. Personally, I do not think that Dempsey is in good enough condition ever again to step into the ring as a fighter, but they say that he needs money badly, and perhaps he needs it badly enough to have one more try inside the ropes. But I doubt it. Dempsey has become interested in promoting, and it is more likely that Schmeling will fight for him than that he will fight against him.

STANFORD MAY TAKE UP ROWING

OUT at Standford University the boys are talking about rowing. They feel that as California and Washington both have crews, and that these crews have won much glory for their universities in the East, Stanford also should have a crew that can win glory in the East. And, of course, they are hoping that their crew would win glory on the Pacific coast, for collegiate rivalry is red-hot out that way.

Like most other colleges, Stanford has obstacles to overcome before it can take its place among the web-foot universities. There's the expense—but Stanford, with a football team that is a big money maker, can stand the expense. There's the matter of a good rowing course—the best one available is sixteen miles away from Palo Alto. But the Yale oarsmen travel twenty miles each day to their boathouse on the Housatonic, and what Yale can do Stanford can do. Then there's the objection of other coaches, headed, I am told, by "Pop" Warner, who doesn't want anything to interfere with his football squads. But even Pop Warner can't stand in the way of athletic progress, and he may find that the crew squad will provide him with some mighty fine line material, just as the Navy coaches have found that rowing is a builder of football material.

The biggest obstacle that Stanford is likely to encounter, should rowing be decided on, is the selection of the right crew coach. It is said that the Palo Alto authorities would like to have either Ed Leader or "Rusty" Callow.

A lot of other rowing colleges would like to have either of those gentlemen! But wanting them and getting them are two different things! Leader is likely to stay at Yale just as long as he wants to say there. Callow, although

he didn't have such good material as he used to get at Washington, did well with this year's Pennsylvania varsity, which finished third at Poughkeepsie. So, unless one of these sweep-swinging masters gets homesick for the Pacific coast, Stanford will have to look elsewhere for its rowing coach.

Rowing at Stanford would be a good thing for rowing, and a good thing for Stanford. It's a worth-while sport. Material at Stanford is plentiful, and there always are enough six footers about the campus to load a dozen race ships. Given a competent coach, Stanford would do as well in rowing as Stanford has done in football and in track—and that is very well indeed!

BASEBALL INTEREST DECLINING AT YALE

ALTHOUGH Yale, together with Princeton, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, and Pennsylvania, has joined the new intercollegiate baseball league that will open its first season next spring, baseball interest is at a low ebb among Yale students. It seems that in the springtime they would rather play tennis or golf than sit in the stands and watch their college mates play baseball. The Yale authorities are not at all worried by this choice of the majority of the students. They consider it a most healthful indication of the success of Yale's "athletics-for-all" policy. The baseball grand stand is not well filled on fine spring afternoons, but the new eighteen-hole golf course and the many tennis courts are crowded—and it is better to play than to watch.

While interest in individual participation in sport has hurt baseball as a varsity sport at Yale, it hasn't hurt football. The students hang up their rackets and their golf bags when the Yale team is playing in the Bowl. And, as has been the case in the past, nearly all of Yale's games will be played in the Bowl. The Blue's policy is to play one football game a season away from home—a game with Princeton in Princeton, or a game with Harvard in Cambridge. Exceptions to this rule will be made this fall and in 1931. The Yale-Georgia game, which is something of an intersectional classic, will be played in Athens, Georgia, this year, in honor of the opening of the University of Georgia stadium. In 1931 Yale will journey out to Chicago, to play a game in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the athletic history of the University of Chicago. Yale has no intention of altering its policy of refraining from playing post-season intersectional games to determine national championships in football. Yale's "big" games always have been, and probably always will be, with Harvard and Princeton, with the Army game becoming more and more important with each passing year. If the Bulldog can beat Harvard, Princeton, and Army he is satisfied to let those who want to scrap out the mythical national football championship.

HERE AND THERE IN SPORT

THE championship for long-time interest in a baseball team should go to Doctor L. R. Wilson, who has been rooting for the Chicago Cubs since 1876, when A. G. Spalding was a star. Doctor Wilson follows the Cubs all over the National League circuit, and hasn't missed one of their games since 1924.

Here's one for the book! In a game between Hazleton and Triple Cities, Pennsylvania clubs, Roseberry of Hazleton hit a long fly to center field. Layben, the Triple Cities center fielder, started after it, and the ball hit his head as he neared the fence, bounded high in the air, and cleared the fence for a home run.

The homer hurt Triple Cities' chances, for Hazleton won the game by a single run, but the ball didn't hurt Layben's head—that is, it didn't hurt it much.

"Babe" Ruth has broken another record. Hitting fungo flies at the Yankee Stadium recently, he drove the ball 447 feet. The best previous record, 418 feet, was made by Ed Walsh, the great old White Sox spitball artist, back in 1912.

Another long-distance baseball record was established recently. Roy Carlyle, playing for the Oakland club of the Pacific Coast League against the San Francisco Missions, hit a 618-foot home run, said to be the longest hit ever recorded in a ball game. The ball cleared center-field fence by at least twenty-five feet, and landed on the roof of a house, where it was marked and measured.

Leo Lermond, the Boston A. A. athlete who has better than an even chance of being the world's greatest miler by the time the 1932 Olympic Games are held, recently defeated Harry Larva, Finnish victor in the last Olympic 1500-meter race, in a race at that distance at an international track meet in Stockholm, Sweden. His time was 3:56 2-10. Eddie Tolan, University of Michigan sprinter, won the 100-meters in 10 4-10 seconds.

Phil Edwards, New York University and Canadian Olympic Team track star, ran a remarkable race in the half mile at the Ontario Championships. He was badly spiked at the finish of the first quarter mile, and had one shoe torn off, but he stayed in the race, and won easily in 2:03 8-10.

The third women's international track meet of the Federation Sportive Feminine Internationale will be held in Prague on September 6, 7 and 8, 1930. It has not been decided whether or not the United States will be represented by a team. The question will be debated at the A. A. U. convention in St. Louis in November.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"F. B. B.," Tuscaloosa, Alabama.—1. Professional boxing is a hard, and often unsatisfactory and unprofitable business. I would suggest that you box for at least a year as an amateur before you try the professional game. 2. One of the most useful books on boxing is "Boxing," by O'Brien and Bilek. It costs $2.00, and is published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York City.

Louis Weinberg, Lynn, Massachusetts.—The best way to build up a good body is to take part in one or more active sports, such as baseball, track, swimming, tennis, football, handball, wrestling, or boxing. Sports are much better developers than gymnasium work.

Louis Doepken, Wheeling, West Virginia.—The National Interscholastic record for throwing the discus is 145 feet 6 inches, established by "Bud" Houser in 1921.

H. Sanders, Camp Knox, Kentucky, and others.—Here is a three-days-a-week training schedule for sprinting, good for all distances up to and including 220 yards: First day: Six starts of twenty or thirty yards each. Stride through 220 yards. 100 yards at good speed. Second day: Six starts. 130 yards at nearly best 100-yards speed. A very easy 440 yards. Third day: Six starts. A fast 220 yards. 100 yards at best speed.

Russell E. Madsen, North Troy, New York.—The following books on tennis should be of value to you: "Tennis for the Junior Player, the Club Player, and the Expert," by William T. Tilden 2d. Price, fifty cents. "Mechanics of the Game," by J. P. Paret. Price, $3.00. "Psychology and Advanced Play," by Paret. Price, $4.00. You may order these books from American Lawn Tennis, Inc., 461 Eighth Avenue, New York City.

Carl Struppeck, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.—I would suggest the following combined four-days-a-week training schedule for the shot and discus: Monday: A little easy sprinting. Work on developing form and footwork for discus and shot. Tuesday: Easy sprinting. Shot putting and discus throwing for form. Wednesday: Discus throwing for form. Shot putting for distance. Friday: Shot putting for form. Discus throwing for distance.

Ross Shaw, Anadarko, Oklahoma.—Neither the high kick, nor the running broad jump on ice skates, were events on the 1928 Olympic Games program.

Handley Cross will endeavor to answer any questions on sport topics that readers care to ask. He will make every effort to give full and accurate information in reply to queries on matters of fact; when his opinion is asked he will give it with the understanding that it will be regarded as no more than an expression of opinion. Readers also are invited to write to him regarding sport matters that interest them; as many as possible of these letters will be printed in this department.

Letters should be addressed to Handley Cross, Sport Story Magazine, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City. When a reply is desired sooner than it can appear in the magazine a stamped and addressed envelope should be inclosed.

If I Can't Give It to You.... *I don't want your money*

By Alois Merke

To Those Afflicted With Thinning Hair, Dandruff, Itchy Scalp

YOU want HAIR . . . plus quick relief from scalp troubles! And in seeking both these things you demand:

Reasonable assurance that you won't be fooled out of your money or take chances on injury to your scalp!

Oh, I know what you're up against. For years I've been in touch with thousands of scalp patients. They all said the same thing: "We don't want rosy promises; all we ask is reasonable assurance of scalp safety and new hair."

Now follow me closely! I give you *infinitely more* than reasonable assurance. I give you this iron-bound *guarantee*—

New Hair On Your Head in 30 Days . . . Or You Keep Your Money

And I give you this guarantee in writing! Besides, I positively assure safety to your scalp.

I leave it to your good judgment. How could I make such a guarantee if I didn't have absolute confidence in my treatment? Why, I'd be out of business in a week! I'd lose my reputation. I'd ruin the professional standing of the Merke Institute, Fifth Avenue, New York, a scalp research bureau established 13 years ago, and known from Coast to Coast, but I can *safely* guarantee new hair . . . or no cost. For patient research showed me what others either purposely ignore or just *don't know:*

Falling Hair Cannot Be Stopped By Ordinary Surface Treatments! Leading dermatologists agree with me on that. Years of investigation taught us all that scalp troubles originate *below the scalp!*

Simple as A . . B . . C

Modern habits rob the hair of normal nourishment. Dandruff appears, itching begins. Soon roots weaken and hair falls out. But in countless cases those roots, far from being dead, are only temporarily inactive. Ordinary surface treatments can't reach them.

But my scientific treatment wakes these sleeping roots to active life. I get down BELOW THE SCALP, stimulating the blood vessels, rushing nourishment to the roots themselves. That's why I can safely GUARANTEE NEW HAIR . . . OR NO COST!

Don't Buy a "Pig in a Bag!"

What a shame that so many dollars and hours are wasted on useless surface treatments. *Not only that.* Hair is actually removed and scalps injured by doubtful salves and tonics. If a man came up to you in the street and said, "Here's a tonic that'll grow hair!" . . . would you buy it? Of course not. You wouldn't know the maker, the ingredients, nor would you have any redress in case of injury.

In other words, when you buy ordinary "hair-growers," you buy "a pig in a bag." You GAMBLE! Not only with scalp health, but with *your* hard earned money.

Thousands Know Me

My treatment is based on scientific facts that you can check up with your family physician or medical reference books. My treatment is backed by years of research, and the gratitude of thousands who invested a mere few minutes a day in my effective treatment.

Very important, too, I have the Merke Institute behind me, an ethical institution known everywhere for its accomplishments in growing hair. And last of all, I say in the strongest way I can, I DON'T WANT A PENNY OF YOUR MONEY IF I FAIL TO GROW NEW HAIR. I assume the burden of proof, not you!

Before It's Too Late

Run your fingers through those thin spots on your head. Then reflect. What will happen if you let yourself become actually bald . . . changed appearance, lost prestige, years older looking. Is indifference worth it? No! Tear out the coupon and MAIL IT TODAY for my free booklet filled with complete details of my treatment, and scientific facts. Not theories—but convincing, guaranteed statements backed by leading dermatologists. Send for the booklet NOW. It's yours by return mail. Allied Merke Institutes, Inc., Dept. 424, 512 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

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Please send me, without cost or obligation—in plain wrapper—copy of your book, "The New Way to Grow Hair," describing the Merke System

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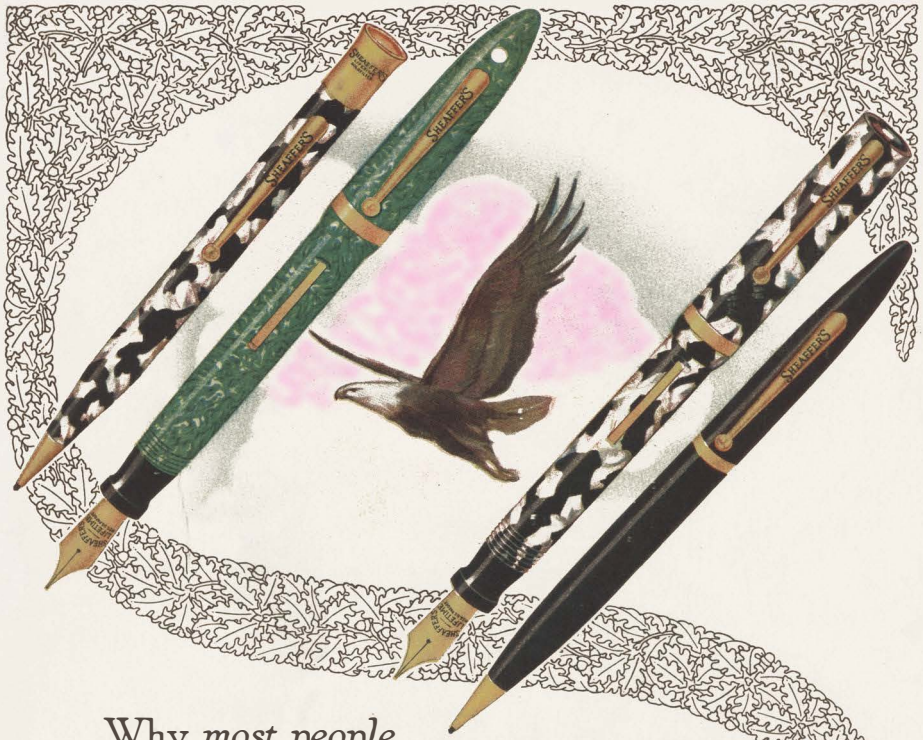

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