

Pro and Coin

Saving for the inevitable rainy day is one contest few star athletes have ever mastered. Starting broke in their race to fame, they usually end the same way, climbing up and sliding down a mountain of gold

By Grantland Rice

CLOSE upon forty years ago an able-bodied citizen by the name of John L. Sullivan cleaned up over a million dollars because he could punch with either fist and take it on the chin.

Just a short while after this, fair hitters by the name of Napoleon Lajoie and Ed Delehanty were Philadelphia holdouts because they were refused a salary of \$2,500 a year. In fact the Philly owners of that day came near choking to death when Lajoie and Delehanty demanded this royal pay check for hitting home runs, triples and doubles while batting .400 or more.

In the days of John L. Sullivan there were no professional golfers and there were only a few when Lajoie and Delehanty were ripping down the fences.

Most of the football coaches were old grads returning to help out, although in the early nineties John W. Heisman, A. A. Stagg, Pop Warner and a few other notables were getting under way and starting a profession that several thousand follow today.

There has been a lot of talk, year after year, as to which sporting profession paid out the most money and the best all-around opportunity.

The pay check is important, but it isn't the entire story. No one has ever disputed the fact that boxing champions have cleaned up far greater amounts than any other professional stars. But after collecting his million John L. Sullivan died in poverty and most of the others since his day have finished broke and disillusioned, or have hobbled down the trail listening to funny noises in their battered domes.

Jim Jeffries had to come out of retirement after he had been world's heavy-weight champion for years and he had to come back because he needed the money. Bob Fitzsimmons had almost nothing left from his ring earnings extending over twenty years. Jess Willard had to return and take a beating because he, also, was broke or on the verge.

Joe Gans, Kid Griffo and Terry McGovern, three of the greatest of their day, finished with almost nothing left. Bat Nelson, who made well over half a million, has only a small portion left. Ad Wolgast, another great champion, believed for years that he was training for a fight after his badly battered brain had lost all reason.

What about the modern game? Paul Berlenbach, the champion and the sensation of only two or three years ago, was recently jeered and hooted in a cheap, second-floor den while attempting to come back as a wrestler with three hundred razzing spectators looking on. Stanley Ketchel, one of the greatest middleweights that ever lived, had almost nothing left when he died.

Up to the heavyweight era of Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney there had

Ad Wolgast, one of the greatest of the old champions, whose mental balance was affected by years of fighting

The Ring, Inc.

been almost no famous fighter able to retire on his money and most of the flock had finished either in poverty or walking the road that leads to at least partial insanity.

Yet their earnings in later years have been enormous. Young Stribling, Paul Berlenbach and Jack Delaney, from 1925 through 1927, were collecting far more than Babe Ruth or Walter Hagen or any football coach.

With Almost No Exceptions

What becomes of all the money boxing stars have taken in? In the first place they have to cut it in various ways with their managers and trainers. In the second place the human brain is a fairly delicate instrument. Few fighters are born with any phenomenal intellects, or they wouldn't be fighters. The head punches they get from the time they start until they finish don't help the situation a lot. Many of them become addle-brained in one form or another and have their judgment pretty badly wrecked. A notable exception from the old days was James J. Corbett, who was too clever to be hit often in the head



Athletes have been notoriously unable to care for their easy money

and who in addition was one of the smartest of them all. Yet Corbett had no heavy bank roll to fall back on.

Many of them have been lured into the craziest sort of speculations or have been cleaned out in gambling. Few of them have known how to save or how to invest. Tunney and Dempsey may be exceptions. Tunney is almost sure to be. But their final chapters are still to be written.

What about the professional ball player? Up to a few years ago his pay was comparatively small when measured with the fighter's financial return. For that matter it is still far behind. A pitcher as great as Ed Walsh received only \$5,000 or perhaps \$6,000 a year and had to take up umpiring when his arm gave out. The average pay today is around \$10,000 a year for the better product, those just short of stardom.

Babe Ruth has smashed all records in this respect with a contract for \$75,000 and the Babe has been able to collect fully as much more from exhibition games, motion pictures and syndicate articles. Yet up to two or three years ago even Ruth had saved but little from his swarm of checks. He learned his lesson and now has a trust fund that will take care of him for life.

The one ball player who beat the financial game by a killing margin was Ty Cobb. Cobb, another smart citizen, not only collected a salary around \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year but on the side he invested this wisely in certain stocks that left him with something like a million when he decided to retire.

But you would be surprised to know how many old-time stars from the diamond are living today upon the salary of some obscure job. Even Hans Wagner, pronounced by John McGraw the greatest ball player of all time, had no great substance left after twenty-three years in a big-league uniform.

What about the golf professional? He has a far better chance for at least one reason. The average fighter is through at thirty-two or thirty-three. Few ball players last beyond forty. When their competitive days are over their pay checks are closed out in the only profession they have ever known. They must get it in a hurry and then save and invest wisely on the side. But hundreds of golf professionals today are taking up the science of instruction and greens-keeping and any one of them who can make himself useful at some club has a

good job for life. They also sell golf supplies to help bring in the money and there are many of these, unknown to the headlines of championship play, who draw down \$12,000 or \$15,000 a year and who will still be drawing this amount when they have passed fifty.

Those who star in championships and who are featured in exhibitions form only a small part of the professional cast. Only a few years ago Gene Sarazen and Johnny Farrell were caddies around Westchester. Before they reached twenty-six each of these ex-caddies had well over \$100,000 safely invested with the better part of their earning capacities still ahead.

More Hope for the Golfer

Walter Hagen has averaged as high as \$80,000 a year, being the best money earner of the lot. As the greatest of all showmen in golf and a constant winner for fifteen years he has drawn enough money from prize purses, exhibitions and royalties to get along very nicely.

The majority of golf clubs today want a professional who will stick to the job at home. They want someone around to teach, look after the course and handle the necessary supplies. Any golf professional with these qualifications has nothing to worry about, even after he has passed fifty.

Vardon, Braid and Taylor are near sixty and it would be no trouble for any one of these to get a good paying job.

There are few jobs open to old ball players or old fighters. Old golfers who know their stuff are still in brisk demand, and always will be.

When you figure it out from beginning to end the professional side of sport doesn't pay the full returns that would seem to be in easy reach. You read about Luis Firpo collecting more than \$300,000 and returning to his Argentine home to take life in an easy fashion, but there was only one canny Firpo.

Check through the list of boxers and old ball players and you won't find many left who are walking on the sunny side of the street with a bag of gold in either hand. And this applies especially to the long parade of fighters from all the weight divisions, from John L. Sullivan to Paul Berlenbach. There isn't much to collect on past fame when a new star shines in their sporting sky and they wake up to find they are forgotten.



Promptly Verina sat down, her back to his. "Don't look," she faltered. "You know I won't!" Tip shot back. They tugged in uneasy silence

Open to Argument

By David Thibault

AUNT HETTIE, seems like milk ain't this good anywheres else." Tip spoke with the compressed breath of recent swallowing. The habitual frankness of his blue eyes was backed with conviction as he held the half-empty glass toward the light of the spring-house door and squinted at it as a connoisseur might scan his vintage for evidence of clarity and bead.

"It's cool an' fresh an' clean. Anything that is, is good." Behind her nickel-rimmed spectacles Aunt Hettie's features registered the reserved pleasure with which sensible women take flattery. Before her clear gray eyes Tip's blue ones wavered. He had praised her dairy products for eighteen summers—since he was five years old; but today he came to ask a favor.

"Aunt Hettie—"

"Some more?" His hostess motioned toward the floating crocks with a three-pound teacup. The spring branch pleasantly gurgled out over the rock wall.

"No'am. Plenty. You seen Verina today?"

"Verina? No. If anybody seen Verina I thought it might be you," Aunt Hettie's wide, kind mouth spread.

"Well," Tip shot back sturdily, "lookin' at her ain't no hard job." He glowed under his tan, and grinned the grin of stricken males. Aunt Hettie knew the grin.

You can't win a debate and lose it, too—but Aunt Hettie did it because she never could resist the truth—or a good old-fashioned love affair

"That it ain't, Tip! An' what's a heap more, she's a good, bidable, patientable gal along with it. She'll make you a middlin' good wife."

"No'am. I'm scared things is kinda against us—" Suddenly Tip broke off. His jaw set and he leaned tensely toward Aunt Hettie, the empty glass extended like a chalice of hemlock. "Aunt Hettie, you on the Wood Side or the Iron Side?"

The elderly woman's eyes sharpened without losing their kindly light. "Iron, Tip—for a good reason."

OZARK mountain men don't groan, or Tip would have done so now. He lowered his eyes and let the glass sink toward his thigh. His whole figure was relaxing nerve by nerve. Aunt Hettie deftly whisked the precious vessel from his fingers.

"You're more than welcome to all the milk you can down without founderin', but I ain't got but three of them goblets left." It was characteristic that she could hold off a man, giving him time to pull up, before asking the real trou-

ble. "Now, Tip; what ails you?—about me bein' on the Iron Side?"

"You ain't heard who the other debaters are?"

"No. Now I reckon *you* must be one. No! Why, it must be Verina!"

"An' she won't stand no more chance against you than a snowball in—" Tip broke off, blushing. Normally he had the hillman's punctilious respect for good women. One can swear with propriety only before one's wife.

"Tip," asked Aunt Hettie slowly, "you know why I nearly always win in these here debates?"

"You got sense an' everybody likes your talk."

"It's because I know they're just for fun an' to gain knowledge, an' I don't take 'em serious. Only this one I do," she added, seeming to forget Tip for the moment. "An' I never talk against my convictions."

"It ain't that, Aunt Hettie," Tip sensed her kindly thrust at his lack of sportsmanship and repelled the aspersion. "I—Aunt Hettie, I done been gone an' bet on Verina."

"You oughtn't to have. What made you do it?"

"Well," Tip made one sigh do for the pangs of confession and the relief of confessing, "we ain't told anybody, but Verina an' me aimed to get married next month. We need anyways a hundred dollars, an' I didn't have but fifty-seven."

"Shoo! I ain't gettin' after you. I know how young folks are. It's just the foolishness of it. You know Verina ain't—" And Hettie stopped on a gentle but firm note.

"No'am. She ain't the best. But I didn't know she was up again' *you*." Tip dug his brogue toe into the hard clay of the spring-house floor and reflected that as a debater Verina Moore was a mighty sweet sweetheart.

"Somethin' you ain't told me yet—but you want to. Lawsy! I pinned you up many a time when you wan't no bigger than a jaybird: What's the matter with you, Tip?" She put just the little whip-lash of impatience into her tone which she found effective with righteous but slow-witted males.

WELL—Tip's voice faded; then he spilled it all in one scared rush of speech: "Ward Savage he's been settin' up to Verina. She don't like him, but he's powerful well fixed, with the store an' the post office at Grand Glaise. It was him I bet with, Aunt Hettie. Last week