

# You take the Ball

By Grantland Rice



Over 15,000 entries in a bowling tournament is a world's record for number of competitors engaged

**A country that can boast 60,000 basketball players in one of its states, that has 2,000,000 golfers and can get together 15,000 contestants in one bowling tournament—such a country can't be called a nation of spectators**

**T**HERE were at least a dozen football games last fall at which from 70,000 to 80,000 spectators watched forty or fifty young athletes in action.

In each case these forty or fifty young men provided entertainment for the 70,000 or 80,000 spectators comfortably seated in vast stadiums or bowls from New Haven to Los Angeles, from the Yankee Stadium to Berkeley.

At the last world series an average of more than 50,000 spectators per game watched something like thirty ball players provide a highly athletic afternoon, replete with much excitement, but no great amount of exercise for the 50,000.

The records are still fresh of the 250,000 spectators who paid more than \$4,000,000 to see Tunney and Dempsey grind out thrills for the multitude in their two famous fights.

But this is only one side of sport. It happens to be the side that gets the most publicity, but it isn't the entire story. For example, in the well-known city of Chicago this month there is a tournament under way known as the American Bowling Congress. The size of the crowds at this tournament is an unimportant detail. The important part is that over 15,000 contestants have entered, just about as many entries in one tournament as you will see in 400 football games or 600 baseball games. More than 15,000 entries in one big tournament, singles, doubles and team matches, should come fairly close to being a world's record for the number of competitors engaged.

These competitors in the American Bowling Congress play for prizes aggregating \$150,000. It has been impossible to get a correct count on the number of bowlers in the United States, but the mark has been placed in the general neighborhood of 5,000,000.

Then again when it comes to a matter of competitors there is the eighteenth annual high school basketball tournament in Indiana. This consists of sixteen regional tournaments, and the number of teams entered was about 750. Last March there were 749 basketball teams in this same tournament.

Basketball teams grow in Indiana as orange trees in Florida or

California. They don't have to worry about spectators when there is a basketball game played; every citizen of the community, young and old, male and female, is present. They have gymnasiums with a seating capacity equal to the entire population of a town or village, and these gymnasiums are full. But it isn't the spectators that furnish the story. It happens to be the players. There are at least 1,600 high school boys' teams playing a regular schedule. There are approximately 250 junior school and grade teams and about ninety organized girls' teams in this state. This year in the state independent tourney, apart from the one just mentioned, there were 640 teams.

Here you get the idea of the playing side. One might figure, judging from the publicity given big crowds, that the country was a nation of spectators. Those who think so would do well to visit Indiana in March.

## The Unimportant Spectator

There are over 900 independent teams in that state, many from the factories. There are 250 college teams, including the fraternity line-ups. A careful estimate of high school, college and independent amateur teams shows about 35,000 players. When you add the Sunday-school teams, of which there are frequently as many as sixty in towns the size of Marion, the total runs up to 50,000 or 60,000 players. And this is only one game we are talking about.

The much-celebrated crowds of spectators are only a small part of the story. We have already shown 15,000 bowlers entered in one tournament in Chicago and over 700 teams entered in one basketball tournament in Indiana. Here is proof enough that the competitor or contestant is holding his own. You

might even consider the game of golf. It wasn't so long ago that the number of people playing golf in the United States was only about 25,000. When the first Open championship was held about thirty-five years ago there were less than twenty entries. The case today is slightly different. Last spring and early summer there were over a thousand entries, including only the best of the professionals and the amateurs, for the Open at Olympia Fields, where Johnny Farrell and Bobby Jones were the last two survivors and where Johnny Farrell finally won out.

The next Open golf championship comes to the difficult Winged Foot course in Westchester County, New York, and the early estimates are that there will be over 1,200 entries in the preliminary scramble to qualify.

In other words, the increase of entries in this one championship in about thirty-five years has been sixty-fold. When the great field meets at Winged Foot in June, cut down by then to 150 entries, there will be galleries of ten and twelve thousand people.

But on the same Saturday of that week there will be over 2,000,000 players slicing their drives or topping their mashie shots or missing their putts over 4,000 golf courses between Del Monte, Calif., and the Massachusetts and Maine coasts. The crowds of ten or twelve thousand will find their way into the headlines. The 2,000,000 players won't. There are now something like four million of our population who play golf.

This country, time and again, has been branded as a nation of spectators. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The growth of the playing side in the last few years has been phenomenal. It has reached out to include the old and young, the male and the female.

In a short while the Pennsylvania Relays will again be held at Franklin Field, Philadelphia. What does one see

here? Sixty thousand spectators cheering about fifty athletes? Not quite. One will see a respectable number of spectators, but one will also see about 5,000 athletes from schools and colleges swarming all over the enclosure. And there will be meets at Drake and other places with almost as many entered. Maybe more. There will be a public school athletic league meeting held in New York this spring where the competitors will almost outnumber the spectators, as six or seven thousand young athletes run, jump and hurdle.

The crowds watching big events are possibly growing, but we are coming more and more to the playing side. Proud fathers and mothers today are starting their youngsters into golf or tennis at the ages of six, seven and eight.

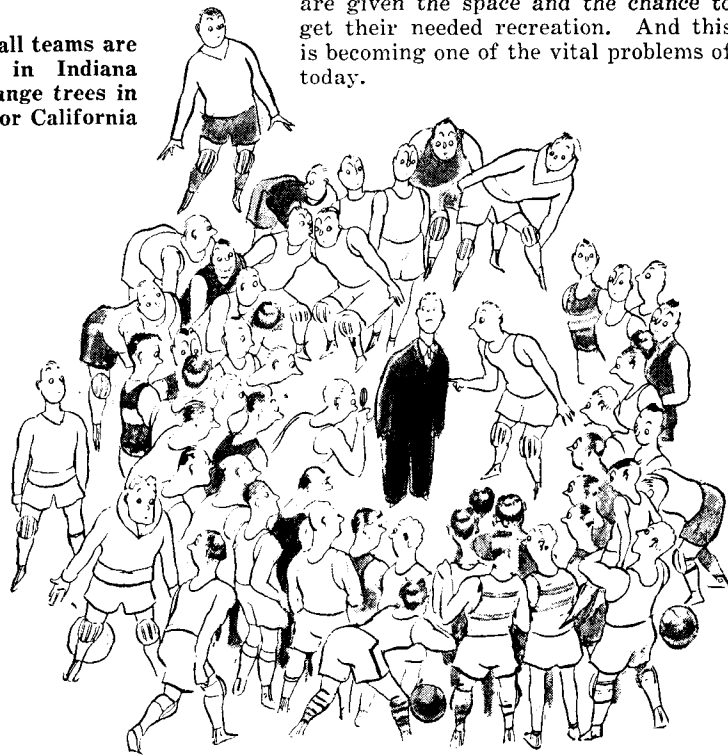
And while this is going on golfers as old as John D. Rockefeller are still playing the game after they have seen almost ninety winters and summers pass by.

## The Vital Problem of the Day

More than 500 oarsmen have answered the call at Harvard and approximately the same number at Yale and other rowing centers. I checked one university with 7,000 students to find how many were engaged in athletics of one sort or another. The report sent back showed that the count ran to 6,000. Millions of people, reading of big crowds watching certain big competitions, have missed the growth of the playing side. The unspectacular players go unnoticed and unsung. Yet the big competitions that draw the big crowds have helped to build up this increased interest in sport for the masses.

It goes far beyond the big cities. Few realize how it has gripped the interest of the smaller towns, hamlets of two thousand and three thousand population. It may be golf, tennis, football, baseball, basketball, polo, bowling, track and field or something else, but in one form or another the vast army of those who play some game is extending its already amazing range year after year. There is nothing to worry about along this line if those with the power to act will only see that the congested centers are given the space and the chance to get their needed recreation. And this is becoming one of the vital problems of today.

Basketball teams are thicker in Indiana than orange trees in Florida or California







PAUL BROWN

# Who Travels Alone

By E. Phillips Oppenheim

*In his little bedroom over the offices in which he was employed, a solitary, lonely lad dreamed of money—not for itself but for the power which it would bring. Mentally he worked out elaborate calculations and plans. Each evening he would map out speculations as to the trend of world markets on the forthcoming day, like an enthusiast playing roulette for worthless counters. Then came a day when Alfred Loewenstein was able to put the results of all this planning into actual operation. Playing a lone hand always, with incredible rapidity he built up great fortunes. When he traveled from one European capital to another it was in his own airships with his own pilots and accompanied by a circus-like entourage of secretaries, masseurs and servants.*

*This lone builder of gigantic schemes, grim, secretive, fantastic, might have been the central figure in one of E. Phillips Oppenheim's novels. It is not surprising that his life and strange death aroused the interest of Mr. Oppenheim, who here relates this real story in his own graphic fashion*

Alfred Loewenstein had a passion for fine horses; he rode flashily and delighted in organizing and winning competitions

ALFRED LOEWENSTEIN lived for the thirty years of his working career in a series of dramatic episodes. His was not the simple, carefully developed life of the ordinary man of finance. He may be said to have lived kaleidoscopically, in flashes

and spurts, an uneven, restless existence, full of accomplishments, full, also, of failures, some of them ignoble, some of them almost as brilliant as his successes. He resembled in no way any of the other giants of finance who have carved their way to fortune. He was no opportunist; chance, indeed, seldom favored him. In a brief study of his career, one may perhaps be brought to a fuller comprehension of the psychology of his death.

He started life untrammelled by the enervating and false stimulus of family prosperity. His father, a small banker in Brussels, died when he was still a boy, leaving behind him debts to the amount of \$20,000—no inconsiderable sum in those days.

Young Alfred Loewenstein promptly entered a somewhat similar business on an even smaller scale, and announced his intention of paying off his father's debts within two years. He kept his word. No one knows exactly how he did it, but the whole of the business of the firm, so far as its employees were concerned, seems to have been run upon a commission basis, and young Loewenstein, although scarcely past the office-boy age, was already equipped in all the arts of bond selling, and was an adept in all the tricks of minor speculation. From the first, he gave signs of an

unusual genius for concentration and the moment a commission was placed in his hands he neither thought nor dreamed of anything else until he had met with success. If the commission itself was unworkable, he studied and pored over it until he was able to twist it into a worth-while proposition. Already in the early twenties, he was fretting to take his place among the moneyed giants of the capital. Money itself he never greatly cared for, as was shown by the reckless way he spent it as soon as his success was assured. It was power which Alfred Loewenstein craved. He was aching to match his wits against the other man's and, with a touch of that ruthlessness which was largely to affect his popularity in later life, to climb, over the financial corpses of the vanquished, to a larger measure of prosperity.

In those days he lived in a room on the top floor of the building in which his offices were situated—lived practically alone, a life of almost Spartan simplicity. His one relaxation was fencing, in which, after business hours, he frequently indulged, but, save for this exception, by night and by day he was not exactly a dreamer of dreams but a planner of plans. It was, curiously enough, his indulgence in this particular form of recreation which helped to bring him his first chance.

## An Amazing Confidence

His fencing partner, at times, was a relative of the head of the firm. One summer evening, after a somewhat prolonged bout, the two young men sat at the open window, his visitor with his tankard of beer, young Alfred Loewenstein with his customary glass of water. They happened to talk of some of their clients. Henri, the nephew of a highly placed official in the business, asked his host a question.

"What should you do, Alfred," he inquired, "if one of these South American firms we were talking about came to Brussels with a big business proposition, wanting to raise, say, five or ten million dollars for a sound industrial undertaking? I mean, of course, supposing the chief sent for you and asked you to take a hand in it."

Loewenstein made no reply for a moment or two. One imagines that he may have been making up his mind as to trusting his visitor.

"What sort of an undertaking?" he rejoined at length.

The young man considered the question.

"Well, supposing it was one of these new amalgamations—hydroelectric power for instance?"

Alfred Loewenstein rose to his feet, unlocked his desk, and from a sheaf of papers produced one particular roll.

"How much capital?"

"Oh, say ten millions," was the careless reply.