

BASE-BALL.



THIS game, which is Rounders, or Town Ball, reduced to a system, and governed by scientific rules, is a graceful and invigorating pastime, and bids fair to become to this country what cricket is to England—the national game. We give the rules and principles of the game, as played by grown players, remarking that boys should reduce the distances there set down about one-sixth.

THE GROUND.

A base-ball ground should be level and free from irregularities; turfy, if possible, but, if gravelly, then the ground around the bases should be turfed, to prevent injury in falling, and the field should be about four hundred feet broad and six hundred feet long. The home base should be seventy feet from the head of the field. The bases should be made of wood, and a ring screwed in each, and they should be set flush with the ground.

In laying off your ground, fix first the point of your home base, then measure from that, down the field, one hundred and twenty-seven feet four inches, and there set your second base. Attach a cord one hundred and eighty feet long, with a knot in the middle, to the rings of the home and second base. By taking the knot in the hand, and stretching the cord as far as you can on the right, you will get the point of the first base; and then, by carrying it over to the left in the same way, you will get the third base. On a line from, and distant from the home forty-five feet toward the second base, is the pitcher's point. The foul-ball posts are placed on a line

with the home and first, and home and third base, at least one hundred feet from the bases; and should be painted, and high enough from the ground to be seen by the umpire.

BASES AND PITCHER'S POINT

The bases are made of canvas, or some heavy stuff, and filled with cotton or hair; are about fourteen by seventeen inches, and fastened to the base-blocks with strips of harness-leather. Four quoits, nine inches across, *flat side up*, and painted white, show the pitcher's point, and the home base, and have iron spikes at the bottom, to keep them from being shifted. A piece of plank, set edgewise, six feet long, two inches wide, and eight inches deep, and the edge above ground enough to catch the umpire's eye, makes the line of the pitcher's position.

BAT AND BALL.

The form and shape of the bat and ball are regulated by the rules. For ordinary use ash is the best material; but those who like a heavy bat will take hickory, and for a light bat, English willow is preferable.



THE STRIKER.

BATTING.

There are different styles. Each player chooses what best suits him. Some give a blow like a woodman, grasping the handle with the left hand, and sliding the right toward it; some take the bat near the middle, with both hands; others seize the handle with both hands, and give a swinging hit. Whichever mode you adopt, plant yourself firmly on the ground, with your left foot on the striker's position, and while you meet the ball with a quick stroke, do not hit so hard as to lose your balance.

If your foot is off the position, and a ball comes perpendicularly to the ground, it will not be a foul ball.

THE GAME.

There are nine players on a side—one side having the bat, and the other the field. The fielders are as follows: Catcher, Pitcher, first, second, and

third Basemen; Short Stop, and Right, Left, and Centre Fieldsmen. By looking at the diagram you will see the relative positions. Whoever wins the toss at the outset, can either bat or field first. The batsman takes his position at the home base, on a line drawn through its centre, parallel to one

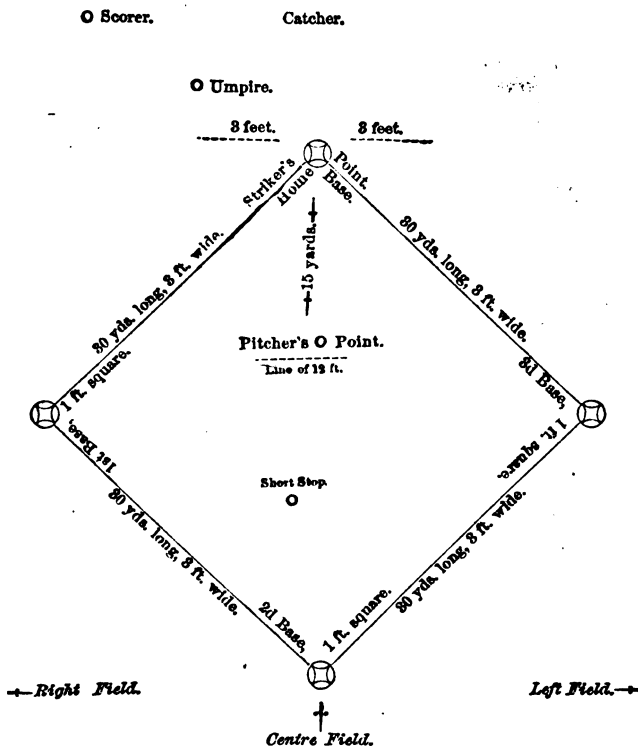


DIAGRAM OF A BASE-BALL FIELD.

extending from the first to the third base, and extending three feet on each side of it. As soon as he hits the ball he starts for the first base, and is succeeded by the other batsmen in turn. When three of these are put out, the fielders take their turns at the bat, and play their innings; and so on, to the close of the game, which consists of nine innings on a side. If the batsman, after touching successively the first, second, and third bases, reach

the home base, untouched by the ball in his adversary's hands, he is entitled to score one run; and if he hits the ball so far as to make the four bases before it is returned, he makes a home run. If the game be interrupted or stopped before each side have played five innings, it is drawn. The rest of the game will be found by a reference to the rules.

FIELD POSITIONS.

Catcher.—His business is to catch or stop all balls pitched or thrown to the home base, to catch all tips and foul balls, throw the ball swiftly and



THE CATCHER.

unerringly to the bases, and keep a watch over the whole field. When a player has made the first base, the catcher gets nearer the striker, so as to take the ball from the pitcher before it bounds; and so soon as the ball is delivered, and the player runs from first to second base, he takes the ball before bounding, and delivers it swiftly to the second base, in time to cut off the player before he gets to that base. When the catcher sees several fielders running to catch a ball, he should name the one he thinks surest to take it, when the others should not strive to catch the ball on the fly, but only, in case of its being missed, take it on the bound.

Short Stop.—His duty is to stop all balls that come within his reach, and pass them to whatever base the striker is aiming at. When necessary, he covers the third base, and backs up the second and third bases, when the ball is thrown in from the field. He must be ready to take foul balls on the bound, when missed on the fly by the pitcher, or third baseman.

Pitcher.—His position is behind a line, four yards long, drawn at right angles from the home to the opposite base, at the distance of forty-five feet from the home. He should be chosen for his good fielding, and swift and accurate delivery of the ball, which he must pitch, and not throw. The ball must be delivered as near as he can to the home base, to the striker, and high enough to prevent its bounding at or before the base. He should keep his eye out to the bases, and when he sees the players endeavoring to run to the bases, should deliver an accurate and swift ball to the basemen.

He should be able to pitch the ball quickly and evenly, and give it at the same time that bias, or twist, which is best to baffle the batsman's blow, and yet is a fair ball at the striker. He should catch, too, if a player endeavors to make the home base while he is pitching, and follow his ball to the home, where he will take it from the catcher.

Left Field.—As half, or may be more, of the balls hit are sent in his direction, he should be a sure catcher, as well as a good thrower and runner.

Centre Field.—*Right Field.*—These require the same qualities as the other field; but as few balls go to him, it is usual to put the poorest player in the last named position.

Batsman.—He must not get over three feet from either side of the line drawn through the centre of the home base, and wait the coming of a proper ball; but when a fair ball comes he should strike. When he has hit the ball he should drop, not throw his bat, and make for the first base; for if it be a foul ball the umpire will declare it at once, and he can easily return. The rules, if studied, will speak further of him and his duties.

First Base.—He should take a position a little below his base, and inside the line of the foul-ball post, to catch balls he would otherwise miss. The moment the ball is struck, and does not come near him, he must get back to his base, and with one foot on it, be ready to receive the ball from any fielder; because the striker may be put out at the first base without being touched by the ball, provided the baseman, with ball in hand, touches the base before the striker gets there. The moment he has held the ball, he should either send it to the pitcher, or to any other base that players are trying to make.

Second Base.—He should play generally to the left and a little back of his base, though he should be guided in it by the customary play of the striker. When the striker reaches the first base, he should return to his base, prepared to receive the ball from the catcher, and be ready to put out the striker by touching him with the ball. On no base, except the first, can the striker be put out by the baseman holding the ball, except when balls



THE PITCHER.

are caught on the fly, or are foul, when the player, in returning to the base he has left, may be put out, as at the first base.

Third Base.—The same general rules will apply here as to the second base, in regard to practice.



THE BASE-TENDER.

ON FIELDING.

The fielders should always be able to throw the ball to base from long field; and whenever they stop the ball, they should return it *at once*, either to the pitcher, or to the baseman needing it. Let each start the moment the ball is struck, so as to take it, if possible, on the fly, and not on the bound. It is easier to take a ball by running forward than backward. You may be deceived by a ball being hit high to long field, and think it will come farther than it will—a ball describing a more sudden curve in its descent than ascent. Practice and a keen eye must strengthen the fielder's judgment on this point.

THE UMPIRE AND SCORER.

The Umpire.—The position of the umpire is not altogether desirable, for he must displease some one with his decision. But he should not merely be impartial, nevertheless, but strict, in enforcing the rules of the game, and prompt in his decision, giving an opinion in general according to the first impression on his mind, which, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, he will find correct. If the point is doubtful, the rule is to decide in favor of the ball. He should call a foul ball instantly; and call out "one strike," and so on through to "three strike," whenever a player persists in refusing fair balls. He must keep his eyes about him, see that the pitcher does not jerk the ball, or have one foot before his position, or in any other way violate the rules; and see that the batsman is on his line. If the striker is off his line, and the ball therefore fall behind the base when struck, the umpire will declare it a fair ball. His position is to the right of, and between the striker and catcher, in a line between the third and home base, unless the striker is left-handed, when he takes the opposite side. If either side try to prolong the game, in order that night may stop it, let him decide it by the last fair innings, or make it a draw. Let him remember that a bound is when it has struck the ground but once, though it may have struck against a tree or other stationary object before.

The Scorer.—His duty is very plain. He is the clerk of the game, to set

down every thing as it is; and therefore he should know the game thoroughly in every point.

The following are the rules adopted by the National Association of Base-Ball Players, with the latest amendments :

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Adopted by the National Association of Base-Ball Players, held in New York, December 9, 1863.

SEC. 1. The ball must weigh not less than five and one-half nor more than five and three-fourths ounces, avoirdupois. It must measure not less than nine and one-half, nor more than nine and three-fourths inches in circumference. It must be composed of India-rubber, and yarn, and covered with leather, and, in all match games, shall be furnished by the challenging club, and become the property of the winning club as a trophy of victory.

SEC. 2. The bat must be round, and must not exceed two and a half inches in diameter in the thickest part. It must be made of wood, and may be of any length to suit the striker.

SEC. 3. The bases must be four in number, placed at equal distances from each other, and securely fastened upon the four corners of a square, whose sides are respectively thirty yards. They must be so constructed as to be distinctly seen by the umpire, and must cover a space equal to one square foot of surface. The first, second, and third bases shall be canvas bags, painted white, and filled with sand or saw-dust; the home base and pitcher's point to be each marked by a flat circular iron plate, painted or enamelled white.

SEC. 4. The base from which the ball is struck shall be designated the home base, and must be directly opposite to the second base; the first base must always be that upon the right-hand, and the third base that upon the left-hand side of the striker, when occupying his position at the home base. *And in all match games, a line connecting the home and first base and the home and third base, shall be marked by the use of chalk, or other suitable material, so as to be distinctly seen by the umpire.*

SEC. 5. The pitcher's position shall be designated by two lines, four yards in length, drawn at right angles to a line from home to second base, having their centres upon that line at two fixed iron plates, placed at points fifteen and sixteen yards distant from the home base. The pitcher must stand within the lines, and must deliver the ball as near as possible over the centre of the home base, and for the striker.

SEC. 6. Should the pitcher repeatedly fail to deliver to the striker fair balls, for the apparent purpose of delaying the game, or for any other cause, the umpire, after warning him, shall call one ball, and if the pitcher persists in such action, two and three balls; when three balls shall have been called, the striker shall be entitled to the first base; and should any base be occu-

pied at that time, each player occupying them shall be entitled to one base without being put out.

SEC. 7. The ball must be pitched, not jerked or thrown to the bat; and whenever the pitcher draws back his hand, or moves with the apparent purpose or pretension to deliver the ball, he shall so deliver it, and must have neither foot in advance of the front line or off the ground at the time of delivering the ball; and if he fails in either of these particulars, then it shall be declared a balk.

SEC. 8. When a balk is made by the pitcher, every player running the bases is entitled to one base, without being put out.

SEC. 9. If the ball, from a stroke of the bat, *first touches the ground, the person of a player, or any other object*, behind the range of home and the first base, or home and the third base, it shall be termed foul, and must be so declared by the umpire, unasked. If the ball first touches the ground, either upon, or in front of the range of those bases, it shall be considered fair.

SEC. 10. A player making the home base, shall be entitled to ~~score~~ one run.

SEC. 11. If three balls are struck at, and missed, and the last one is not caught, either flying or upon the first bound, it shall be considered fair, and the striker must attempt to make his run.

SEC. 12. The striker is out if a foul ball is caught, either before touching the ground, or upon the first bound.

SEC. 13. Or, if three balls are struck at and missed, and the last is caught, either before touching the ground, or upon the first bound;

SEC. 14. Or if a fair ball is struck, and the ball is caught either without having touched the ground, or upon the first bound;

SEC. 15. Or, if a fair ball is struck, and the ball is held by an adversary on first base, before the striker touches that base.

SEC. 16. Any player running the bases is out, if at any time he is touched by the ball while in play in the hands of an adversary, without some part of his person being on the base.

SEC. 17. No ace or base can be made upon a foul ball; such a ball shall be considered dead, and not in play until it shall first have been settled in the hands of the pitcher. In such cases players running bases shall return to them, and may be put out in so returning in the same manner as the striker when running to the first base.

SEC. 18. No ace nor base can be made when a fair ball has been caught without having touched the ground; such a ball shall be considered alive and in play. In such case players running bases shall return to them, and may be put out in so returning, in the same manner as the striker when running to first base; but players, when balls are so caught, may run their bases immediately after the ball has been settled in the hands of the player catching it.

SEC. 19. The striker must stand on a line drawn through the centre of the

home base, not exceeding in length three feet from either side thereof, and parallel with the line occupied by the pitcher. He shall be considered the striker until he has made the first base. Players must strike in regular rotation, and, after the first innings is played, the turn commences with the player who stands on the list next to the one who lost the third hand.

SEC. 20. Players make their bases in the order of striking; and when a fair ball is struck, and not caught flying (or on the first bound), the first base must be vacated, as also the second and third bases, if they are occupied at the same time. Players may be put out on any base, under these circumstances, in the same manner as the striker when running to the first base.

SEC. 21. Players running bases must touch them; and, so far as possible, keep upon the direct line between them; and must touch them in the following order: first, second, third, and home; and if returning must reverse this order; and should any player run three feet out of this line, for the purpose of avoiding the ball in the hands of an adversary, he shall be declared out.

SEC. 22. Any player, who shall intentionally prevent an adversary from catching or fielding the ball, shall be declared out.

SEC. 23. If the player is prevented from making a base, by the intentional obstruction of an adversary, he shall be entitled to that base, and not be put out.

SEC. 24. If an adversary stops the ball with his hat or cap, or takes it from the hands of a party not engaged in the game, no player can be put out unless the ball shall first have been settled in the hands of the pitcher.

SEC. 25. If a ball, from the stroke of a bat, is held under any other circumstances than as enumerated in Section 24, and without having touched the ground more than once, the striker is out.

SEC. 26. If two hands are already out, no player running home at the time a ball is struck, can make an ace if the striker is put out.

SEC. 27. An innings must be concluded at the time the third hand is put out.

SEC. 28. The game shall consist of nine innings to each side, when, should the number of runs be equal, the play shall be continued until a majority of runs, upon an equal number of innings, shall be declared, which shall conclude the game.

SEC. 29. In playing all matches, nine players from each club shall constitute a full field, and they must have been regular members of the club which they represent, and of no other club, for thirty days prior to the match. No change or substitution shall be made after the game has been commenced, unless for reason of illness or injury. Position of players and choice of innings shall be determined by captains previously appointed for that purpose by the respective clubs.

SEC. 30. The umpire shall take care that the regulations respecting balls,

bats, bases, and the pitcher's and striker's positions, are strictly observed. He shall keep a record of the game in a book prepared for the purpose; he shall be the judge of fair and unfair play, and shall determine all disputes and differences which may occur during the game; he shall take especial care to declare all foul balls and balks, immediately upon their occurrence, unasked, and in a distinct and audible manner. *He shall, in every instance, before leaving the ground, declare the winning club, and shall record his decision in the score books of the two clubs.*

SEC. 31. In all matches the umpire shall be selected by the captains of the respective sides, and shall perform all the duties enumerated in Section 30, except recording the game, which shall be done by two scorers, one of whom shall be appointed by each of the contending clubs.

SEC. 32. No person engaged in a match, either as umpire, scorer, or player, shall be, either directly or indirectly, interested in any bet upon the game. Neither umpire, scorer, nor player shall be changed during a match, unless with the consent of both parties (except for a violation of this law), except as provided in Section 29, and then the umpire may dismiss any transgressors.

SEC. 33. The umpire in any match shall determine when play shall be suspended; and if the game cannot be concluded, it shall be decided by the last even innings, provided five innings have been played, and the party having the greatest number of runs shall be declared the winner.

SEC. 34. Clubs may adopt such rules respecting balls knocked beyond or outside of the bounds of the field, as the circumstances of the ground may demand; and these rules shall govern all matches played upon the ground, provided that they are distinctly made known to every player and umpire, previous to the commencement of the game.

SEC. 35. No person shall be permitted to approach or to speak with the umpire, scorers, or players, or in any manner to interrupt or interfere during the progress of the game, unless by special request of the umpire.

SEC. 36. No person shall be permitted to act as umpire or scorer in any match, unless he shall be a member of a Base-Ball Club governed by these rules.

SEC. 37. Whenever a match shall have been determined upon between two clubs, play shall be called at the exact hour appointed; and should either party fail to produce their players within fifteen minutes thereafter, the party so failing shall admit a defeat.

SEC. 38. No person who shall be in arrears to any other club, or who shall at any time receive compensation for his services as player, shall be competent to play in any match.

SEC. 39. Should a striker stand at the bat without striking at good balls repeatedly pitched to him, for the apparent purpose of delaying the game, or of giving advantage to a player, the umpire, after warning him, shall call one strike, and if he persists in such action, two and three strikes. When