

# FAMOUS BALL PLAYER INTENDS TO RUN BASES FROM THIRD TO FIRST

Norman Elberfeld, the famous guardian of the New York Highlanders' short field garden, has invented, or rather, figured out a brand new baseball game. Elberfeld's idea, if given a thorough trial next spring, will no doubt create a mild sensation in the baseball world.

The scheme is most unique from every angle. In fact, at first thought the average expert would be prone to laugh at "Shorty's" idea, but after the innovation is fully explained the idea grows upon one fast, and many combinations for new plays appear.

Here's the basis for Mr. Elberfeld's game: The man who originally "invented" the present game, or the old games of town ball, rounders and old cat, from which it sprung, was evidently a right-handed athlete—no also batted right-handed, and when he hit the ball his first move was to run or start to the right, or what is now called first base, thus following out that natural characteristic of almost every human being to use his right hand, right foot and move in that direction.

## JUST AS GOOD

Thus we have been chasing down to first ever since. Now comes the little St. Louis boy with an idea which is just as good as that of the original "inventor" of the game.

Instead of compelling every batsman to run to first base after hitting the ball, "Shorty" suggests that the first batsman up in each inning have the right to choose—on the quiet—whether he shall run to first or third base. Then if he makes a bingle and breaks for third he will be compelled to chase to second, across to first and then come home from that side of the diamond. Of course the batsmen who follow him in each inning must continue to make the circuit the same way.

The infielders and outfielders as well will be "up in the air" when the first batter comes up. They will have to trust to luck to get him or try to outguess him. The third baseman will have to be a combination of both a first and third baseman. And over at sack No. 1 the gentleman there will have to do third base duty and also work as a first sacker.

## WHERE FUN COMES IN

The uncertainty of just where the batsman will make for is where the fun will come in. If he makes up his mind to head for third he will naturally try to crack one against the first baseman's shins, thus making him the third sacker for the inning. This will make the second sacker the shortstop and the shortstop the second sacker.

With the runners continually reversing their direction on the bases, the infielders would gradually develop into all-round infielders. "Dead wings" on first would be a thing of the past as Mr. First Sacker would have to be

there with that long swing across to third. Then the pitchers would get a whole lot of exercise chasing over to third one moment and then switching over to cover first on bunts.

The idea would keep every man on the infield awake. It would certainly make a hit with the fans, as it would do away with a lot of mechanical batting and fielding. Then the shortstop and second sacker would have to be men who could work to both right and left sides — not one-siders as many of them are at present. The idea is not a bad one. Why wouldn't it be just as proper to run to third as first after making a hit? It would create a lot of excitement in the stands.

## A BASEBALL INVENTOR

Elberfeld is dead serious about this new game. He has the backing of Manager Clark Griffith as well. Elberfeld, be it known, is one of the brainiest thinkers in the baseball world. He and Griffith are credited with being the originators of the "squeeze" play and many other winning points of the game.

Elberfeld sprung the famous "standing steal" this year. He figured this steal out while he was laid up in New York suffering from a fractured shinbone, due to his having collided with George Stone at second base.

"Shorty," anxious to eliminate the long, dangerous sliding of basemen into second, lined up his scheme like this:

"Instead of dancing off first and trying to steal second on every ball pitched, I will simply loaf a few feet off the sack and not worry the pitcher. Then he will think I have no idea to steal. This also throws the catcher off as well.

## WON'T BE LOOKING

"When a slow ball is sent over I will jump into the air and leg for a second. The second baseman and the shortstop won't be there, because they were not looking for me — see?"

The "kid" worked this system out perfectly. He was on first, "jawing" with Tom Jones, slowly but surely stealing his way toward second.

Powell never noticed him, neither did O'Connor. Then Powell sent over one of his floaters, and the "kid" broke like an express train for second. Rockenfield and Martzell were dumbfounded, and O'Connor was so surprised that he actually couldn't get the ball away.