

HAUGHTON ASSAILS POWER OF PITCHERS

President of Braves Tells National League Hard Hitting Should Be Made Easier.

PROPOSED BOARD FAVORED

Suggestion That Body of Five Be Created to Settle Differences with Minors Is Approved.

Percy D. Haughton, President of the Boston Braves, gave the assembled National League club owners a lesson in baseball at the Waldorf-Astoria yesterday.

While some of the other owners wanted to talk about inside politics and petty squabbles, the Harvard coach brought the attention of the league to the game itself and pointed out just where it was wrong.

"The trouble with baseball," said Mr. Haughton, "is that it is too powerful on defense and not strong enough on the offense. The game would be a lot more popular with the public if the rules were changed so as to increase the batting."

So, if Mr. Haughton has his way, next season may see the pitchers stripped of some of their power, and the games will again be carnivals of free hitting and wild base running as in the good old days. Mr. Haughton pointed out that what the baseball public liked was plenty of hitting and lots of scoring. Pitchers' battles present nothing thrilling to the ordinary baseball fan, he argued, and to sit for two hours and watch a flinger mow down one player after another without a hit grows monotonous from the spectators' point of view.

The Boston owner said that the pitcher today dominates the game, and that the class of 300 batsmen is becoming altogether too exclusive. Mr. Haughton's talk was just the same kind of a conference that he holds with his college football and baseball players when he is coaching, and the National League magnates immediately became interested. One after another they joined in the talk, although the old baseball men do not ordinarily talk about "defense and offensive" in baseball. Those are new terms for the old-timers. Their way of expressing the offense is, "Get up there and slam that ball."

Many Suggestions Made.

Numerous suggestions were made yesterday for making the game a freer hitting affair. Mr. Haughton stated that much of the pitcher's supremacy nowadays is due to artificial means. The moist ball, the resin ball, and the emery ball were all criticised severely. The discussion became so heated that many of the club owners expressed themselves forcibly that the wet ball ought to be abolished. The emery ball is now under the ban, and the use of resin may be barred by next season. The league decided not to prohibit the moist ball without two years' notice to the pitchers.

Mr. Haughton stirred up a lot of talk when he suggested a change in the rules, and all suggestions will be referred to the Rules Committee, which will meet the Rules Committee of the American League some time in February.

The most radical change suggested to improve the batting was to limit the number of foul strikes to one. This would rob the pitcher of a chance to have the second strike called on a foul ball. Another radical change suggested was to give a player his base on three balls instead of four. These changes, it is obvious, would surely force the pitchers to put the ball over the plate, where a batsman would have a chance to hit it. The records of the league show, Secretary Heydler explained that it is the good batters who get all the passes and not the weaker hitters. What the league intends to do is to pass new rules so that the good hitters can get a better chance to show their batting talent.

Approve New Board.

The league voted to approve of the suggestion of the National Association of Minor Leagues for a new board of five members to decide cases involving controversies between minor and major leagues. It was the decision of the meeting that the National League had no objections to representatives of the minor leagues on a new board which is to consider cases in which the minors and the majors are involved.

If the American League approves, the board will be made up of five members, one from each of the major leagues, two from the minors, and a fifth member, who is not connected with the game. A petition for the removal of the draft from the Class AA clubs was referred to the National Commission, along with the other minor league request.

There are still many questions which the league has not discussed, and the club owners will get up earlier than usual this morning so as to be ready to meet again at 10 o'clock. That is the time set, but it is a question whether they will meet as early as that, because it is just about all that some of them can do now to get around at 1:30 P. M.

POWER OF APPEAL OPPOSED.

Club Owners Protest Commission's Role in New Players' Contracts.

A fine old fuss has been stirred up in the National League over the new players' contracts which were drawn up recently by the National Commission, and are now in the hands of the club owners awaiting their approval. One of the club owners discovered a clause in the contract which provides that in case a player is dissatisfied with the terms of his salary, he may appeal to the National Commission, which will act as a Board of Arbitration to adjust the salary.

When the club owner realized how much power was placed in the hands of the National Commission by this clause, it is said that there was an immediate protest. The controversy which the new clause has started may hold up the league meeting here for a day or two longer. The club owners are opposed to placing so much authority in the hands of the commission on question of players' salaries.

It was said last night by one of the National League club officials that the club owners had held up any action on the new contract until the two members of the National Commission, now in this city, Chairman Herrmann and President Tener, had communicated with the other member of the commission, Ben Johnson, in Chicago on the objectionable clause. President Johnson's answer is expected before the National League meeting today.

Manhattan Five in Game Tonight.

Manhattan College will meet Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute of Troy on basketball tonight in what bids fair to be a fast and interesting game. The Trojans and the local five have been rivals for years, the green and white representatives having somewhat the better of the argument thus far. Winters, who has been doing exceptionally fine work for Manhattan, may not play owing to a slight injury sustained during the Princeton game.