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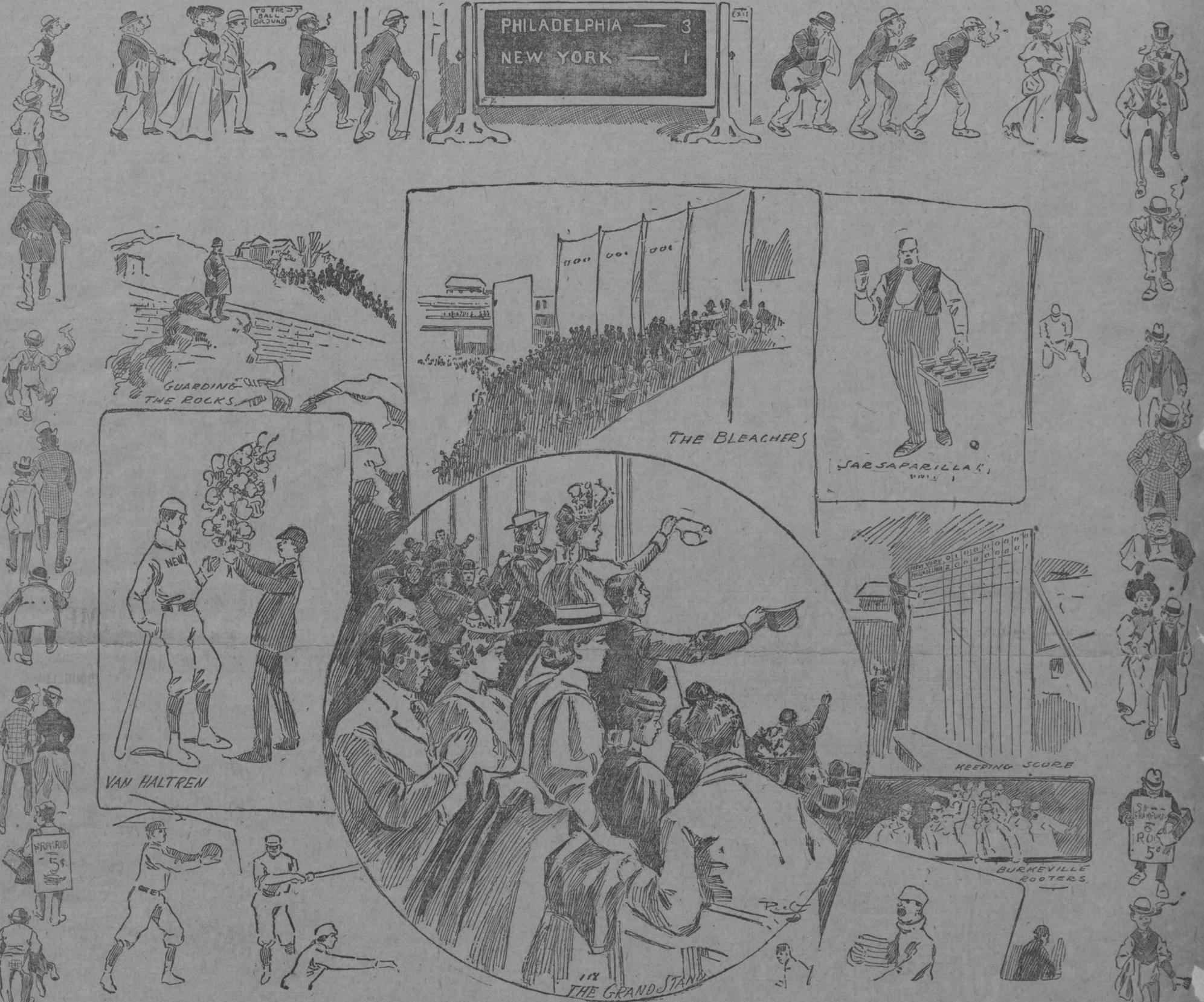


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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 1896.—SIXTEEN PAGES.

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THE FIRST NEW YORK GAME OF THE SEASON.

WELL, the season at home is open, but the Giants are still out of it. President Freedman and his doubtful entertainers gave a baseball soler at the Polo Grounds yesterday afternoon. Something like 15,000 cranks and crankesses responded, only to see the Harlem brigade beaten out by a score of 3 to 1. Yet the affair was almost fiercely interesting, in spite of the defeat. The game had thrills in it. Dad Clarke, on whom so much depended, fed that deceitful mixture—his cocktail curve—to the Quakers, but without avail. They etched the game in the first inning, though Irwin's men had several chances to reverse matters. But the star hitters could not locate the curves of Willie McGill, either performing the windmill act or boosting the ball up aloft whence it fell into the hands of the enemy. Irwin says his men are still nervous, giving that as a reason why the 350 percenters failed to find the ball when hits were needed. But when their fog-shrouded eyes do pierce the gloom, it will be everlastingly too late.

IT WAS A GREAT OPENING, THOUGH. However, the opening was a huge success, replete with howling fanatics, music, gay colors, a spatter of rain and a game well worth looking at.

The rooters were there in all three divisions, and they kept the interest up. Over on the bleachers of Burkeville sat rows upon rows of wildly tumultuous little boys, showered like red birds ready for the grill. In the bedesden boxes were the gem-studded shriekers, adding queer volume to the tumult of sound. And far back in the paddock lolled the languidly enthused, who view the gyrations of their favorite athletes

through the portholes of a hired hack. It was the typical crowd of an opening day, early on hand and reluctant to leave, and rooting for the home team from the time the gong sounded. Thus the hours flitted by—hours fraught with alternate outbursts of woe and ecstasy, the deep-lunged baying and airy perisillage of gifted coachers, swats, swipes and fiddle swings, punctured over and anon by the muffled plunk of foul tips as they sank to rest in the mushy mitt of the backstop. Great indeed is the national pastime.

THE FAITHFUL CAME EARLY. Before 2 o'clock straggling groups of enthusiasts infested the grounds. Those who entered by the grand stand gate received a cordial handshake from Mr. Freedman. The New York impresario wore his hat hind side before, thus strengthening the belief that he is moving backward this Spring. The misplaced derby was intended for a mascot, as Gleason's dog was discovered to be suffering from nervous prostration himself. Cracker did not appear.

By 8 o'clock the bleachers were packed with the faithful, whom the threatening weather could not keep away. In the stand and balcony gathered those prominent cranks seen at every game, discussing the Giants' chances with visiting fans, evidently from Philadelphia and south of Harlem. During the wait Rogers' Seventh Regiment Band played popular airs.

As the time drew near for the march across the field the players formed in line at the clubhouse, where they were met by the band. After the slide trombonist had emptied the dregs of "He May Have Seen Better Days" from the mud valve of his

instrument, Mr. Freedman's attaches and the Phillies moved forward in an unswerving line. New York turned out eighteen men in spotless white, while the wearers of the gray were but fifteen strong. Loud huzzas greeted the advancing host, which broke away from the band on reaching the backstop, and fell to warming up with great vigor. Every now and then a smiling fan dropped himself over the front of the stand to grasp the hand of a player and wish him luck. Pfeffer had many friends, who expressed regret at seeing him on the bench.

When Umpire Hurst called time at 4 o'clock, Mayor Strong was not present to toss out the ball, but Job Hodges performed that important ceremonial. The first three Giants made easy outs. Gleason tapped one to McGill and stopped at first. As Van Haltren stepped up, a huge bouquet was sent over from the grand stand as a tribute to his prowess. The perfume was so different from the odor of the games, in which he figured of late than Van lost his nerve and struck out. Connaughton fled to Delehanty.

"DAD" NOT TERRIFIED. Dad Clarke faced the reputed hard hitting Phillies, smiling and confident. He worked two strikes on Sullivan, who popped a fly to Gleason. Delehanty bunt-ed to third, G. Davis blocking the ball with one hand. Thompson hit a hard one to right, Delehanty reaching third on the hit. Brothers sent a grounder toward first

base which took a sudden bound over Harry Davis's head. Delehanty scored. Boyle's out at first on a grounder to Davis sent Thompson home. Gleason's fumble, the only error of the game, landed Cross safe, and Hallman smashed a hot one at Dad. The twirler got one hand on the ball, blocking it sufficiently for Connaughton to field and throw the runner out at first.

This was the inning that settled the Giants, as Nash's men had but little use for Dad's mixture in the remaining rounds. The Giants should have tied in the second, but didn't. G. Davis fell an easy victim to McGill's art, but Tierman was more cautious and got a base on balls. Jim Stafford's double to right scored Tierman, and Stafford moved to third on H. Davis's centre shot single. Jim tried to score on Harry's steal, but Hallman returned the ball in time to tag the runner at the plate. Dad Clarke went out from the pitcher to first.

"KID" GLEASON'S CHANGE. With this lone run the Giants wriggled along to the bitter end. In the fifth they had a chance to tie or even better with H. Davis on third, Zearfoss at second and one hand out. But Gleason fled to his esteemed contemporary. Mr. Hallman, and Van Haltren sent an easy one to Delehanty. McGill's curves were too much of a puzzle for the left handers.

The visitors went out in order in the second and third, and the fourth brought up a double play that cheered the faithful. With Boyle an easy out at first, Cross got safe on a single to left. Hallman flew to Van Haltren, but the Phillies' coacher allowed Cross to sprint down the line. He stood in a thoughtful attitude on the bag

while Van passed the ball in to Harry Davis. At the end of the fifth, the usual order to rise and stretch was strictly obeyed by the multitude. Both sides drew blank in the sixth. Dad increased his popularity by striking out Delehanty. Connaughton made a nice stop of Thompson's grounder on the high side of second, and completed the play. Brothers banged a three bagger into the right bleachers, but Boyle's pop fly to S. Davis headed off the run.

STAFFORD RAISED HOPES. When Stafford opened the seventh with a safe hunt, a drizzling rain was falling. The Phillies wanted the game called, but the Giants said no. Nash pointed to the deserters leaving the open seats with Van Haltren beseeching them to return, and Delehanty shoeing the crowd in the direction of the gates. Umpire Tim decided, however, that a little moisture would help matters and the game proceeded. Stafford and his bunt were still on first when H. Davis hit to Brothers, doubling Jim at second. Clark was given his base, Zearfoss singled and Gleason retired the side with a fly to centre.

Three Quakers reached Dad in the seventh, none of whom reached first. In the next McGill led off with a single to right and took third on Sullivan's double. A wild pitch scored McGill, the ball being wild and slippery. Delehanty fled to Gleason. Thompson got hit on the spinal column for one base and Brothers sent a hot one to first. Harry fell in holding the ball but recovered and stopped Sullivan at the plate on his attempt to score from

DESPAIR.

UMPIRE HURST'S CRITICISM.

To the Editor of the Journal:
Philadelphia won the game through superior team batting and McGill's splendid work in the box. I cannot recall having seen a game in which better control has been shown by a pitcher than was displayed by McGill. When he got into anything like a hole he sent the ball straight across the middle of the plate with great effect.

New York lost through failure to hit the ball at the right time, although their record of hits seems to justify a better score. "Dad" Clarke pitched good ball throughout, and held the hardest hitters in the League down to an unusually small score, which his unfortunate wild pitch helped to swell. If there was an element of luck in the game, it was unfavorable to the Giants, beginning with the bad bound away from Harry Davis in the first-inning.

TIM HURST.