

'BASEBALL IS AMERICA' SAYS SPORTS ANNOUNCER IN HALL OF FAME ARTICLE

(The Torrance HERALD has been granted permission by Ernie Harwell, nationally-known Columbia Broadcasting System sportscaster and writer, during a visit here to publish herewith his prose tribute to baseball which was selected this summer to be placed permanently in the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, N. Y. It has received wide acclaim throughout the nation and the HERALD is proud to be the first west coast paper to carry this feature on its sports pages.)

THE GAME FOR ALL AMERICA
By ERNIE HARWELL

Baseball is President Eisenhower tossing out the first ball of the season; and a pudgy schoolboy playing catch with his dad on a Mississippi farm.

It's the big league pitcher who sings in night clubs. And the Hollywood singer who pitches to the Giants in spring training.

A tall, thin old man waving a scorecard from his dug-out—that's baseball. So is the big, fat guy with a bulbous nose running out one of his 714 home runs with mincing steps.

It's America, this baseball. A re-issued newsreel of boyhood dreams. Dreams lost somewhere between boy and man. It's the Bronx cheer and the Baltimore farewell. The left field screen in Boston, the right field dump at Nashville's Sulphur Dell, the open stands in San Francisco, the dusty, wind-swept diamond at Albuquerque. And a rock home plate and a chicken wire backstop—anywhere.

There's a man in Mobile who remembers a triple he saw Honus Wagner hit in Pittsburgh 46 years ago. That's baseball. So is the scout reporting that a 16-year-old sandlot pitcher in Cheyenne is the new "Walter Johnson."

It's the wizened little man shouting insults from the safety of his bleacher seat. And a big, smiling first baseman playfully tousling the hair of a youngster outside the players' gate.

Baseball is a spirited race of man against man, reflex against reflex. A game of inches. Every skill is measured. Every heroic, every failing is seen and cheered—or booed. And then becomes a statistic.

In baseball, democracy shines its clearest. Here the only race that matters is the race to the bag. The creed is the rule book. Color is something to distinguish one team's uniform from another.

Baseball is Sir Alexander Fleming, discoverer of penicillin, asking his Brooklyn hosts to explain Dodger signals. It's Player Moe Berg speaking seven languages and working crossword puzzles in Sanskrit. It's a scramble in the box seats for a foul—and a \$125 suit ruined. A man barking into a hot microphone about a cool beer, that's baseball. So is the sports writer telling a .383 hitter how to stride, and a 20-victory pitcher trying to write his impressions of the World's Series.

Baseball is a ballet without music. Drama without words. A carnival without kewpie dolls.

A housewife in California couldn't tell you the color of her husband's eyes, but she knows that Yogi Berra is hitting .337, has brown eyes and used to love to eat bananas with mustard. That's baseball. So is the bright sanctity of Cooperstown's Hall of Fame. And the former big leaguer, who is playing out the string in a Class B loop.

Baseball is continuity. Pitch to pitch. Inning to Inning. Game to game. Series to series. Season to season.

It's rain, rain, rain splattering on a puddled tarpaulin as thousands sit in damp disappointment. And the click of typewriters and telegraph keys in the press box—like so many awakened crickets. Baseball is a cocky batboy. The old-timer whose batting average increases every time he tells it. A lady celebrating a home team rally by mauling her husband with a rolled-up scorecard.

Baseball is the cool, clear eyes of Rogers Hornsby, the flashing spikes of Ty Cobb, an overaged pious named Rabbit Maranville, and Jackie Robinson testifying before a Congressional hearing.

Baseball? It's just a game—as simple as a ball and bat. Yet, as complex as the American spirit it symbolizes. It's a sport, business—and sometimes even religion.

Baseball is Tradition in flannel knickerbockers. And Chagrin in being picked off base. It is Dignity in the blue serge of an umpire running the game by rule of thumb. It is Humor, holding its sides when an errant puppy eludes two groundskeepers and the fastest outfielder. And Pathos, dragging itself off the field after being knocked from the box.

Nicknames are baseball. Names like Zeke and Pie and Kiki and Home Run and Cracker and Dizzy and Dazzy.

Baseball is a sweaty, steaming dressing room where hopes and feelings are as naked as the men themselves. It's a dugout with spike-scarred flooring. And shadows across an empty ball park. It's the endless list of names in box scores, abbreviated almost beyond recognition.

The holdout is baseball, too. He wants 55 grand or he won't turn a muscle. But, it's also the youngster who hitch-hikes from South Dakota to Florida just for a tryout.

Arguments, Casey at the Bat, old cigarette cards, photographs, Take Me Out to the Ball Game—all of them are baseball.

Baseball is a rookie—his experience no bigger than the lump in his throat—trying to begin fulfillment of a dream. It's a veteran, too—a tired old man of 35, hoping his aching muscles can drag him through another sweetering August and September.

For nine innings, baseball is the story of David and Goliath, of Samson, Cinderella, Paul Bunyan, Homer's Iliad and the Count of Monte Cristo.

Willie Mays making a brilliant World's Series catch. And then going home to Harlem to play stick-ball in the street with his teen-age pals—that's baseball. So is the

husky voice of a doomed Lou Gehrig saying, "I'm the luckiest guy in the world."

Baseball is cigar smoke, hot-roasted peanuts, The Sporting News, winter trades, "Down in front," and the Seventh Inning Stretch. Sore arms, broken bats, a no-hitter, and the strains of the Star-Spangled Banner.

Baseball is a highly-paid Brooklyn catcher telling the nation's business leaders. "You have to be a man to be a big leaguer, but you have to have a lot of little boy in you, too."

This is a game for America, this baseball!
A game for boys and for men.



DEC. 8, 1955 TORRANCE HERALD Thirty-three

Eagles Fly Off With YMCA Football Title

The Golden Eagle club clinched the championship of the Torrance YMCA Gra-Y League Saturday, by defeating the Vikings 19-0. Again it was Quarterback Steve McGuire, who spearheaded the Eagle attack. McGuire threw two touchdown passes, one to Bill Barnum and one to Leslie Stanton, and ran to the third touchdown. He also added the extra point with a pass to Terry Greason. Outstanding defensive play by the Eagles' Greason and Bill Haggerty helped keep the Vikings in check. Standout players on the Viking team were Jim Wood, who intercepted a pass, and Mike Leonard, who turned in a long

Cage Play Set at THS

The Torrance Recreation Department will again sponsor a basketball program for boys during the Christmas vacation at the Torrance High School Boy's Gym.

Classes will begin Dec. 19, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Two week program will be open to all boys in the eighth grade and below.

The young hoopsters will have an opportunity to learn the arts of passing, dribbling and proper methods on shooting. Practice games also will be held.

During the session, all boys will register and form teams. The Eagles have one game left but already have the league title with a 3-0 record.

for the league. All league games will be played on Saturdays. The first game is set for Jan. 14, at 9 a.m.

A complete roster of all players and teams must be in the Recreation office no later than Dec. 28 in order to draw up the playing schedule.

A local Midget team will participate in the Los Angeles County Basketball Tournament to be held at Sims Park Dec. 27-30 inclusive.

Coaches Don Porter, Jack Miller and Fanny Marikham will be in charge of activities.

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CREAM O' CROP FRESH EGGS LARGE "AA" 1 doz. **62¢**
Finest eggs money can buy! Produced on modern, local egg ranches. Kept fresh 'til you buy by controlled refrigeration.

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Enriched White and Wheat Breads Regular or large Sandwich Sliced loaf **28¢**

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