

THE GASHOUSE GANG



WHY, I TELL YA, in the 1930s the Gashouse Gang was on top of the world! We was ruling the baseball scene and having a good and dandy time with it, too. We sure did have some fun.

Once, we was in Philadelphia, playing the Phillies, of course, and I heard word that the

Democratic National Convention

was in town to nominate Mr. **Franklin D. Roosevelt** for his second term. Me 'n' Frankie Frisch decided to mosey on over and check out the action. Turns out, when we showed up we caused quite a stir! Everyone wanted to meet the star pitcher of the St. Louis Cardinals and his famous manager, too. Nobody was listening to those speeches anyhow, so the good Senator from Missouri thought it a fine idea to invite me to the stand to address the crowd! Well, the chairperson that day vetoed the idea. Somethin' about not being quite too certain what I might say. Well, I told them all, that chairperson was just afraid I'd stampede the convention and take the nomination away from Mr. Roosevelt himself!

Truth is, presidential nominations aside, there's not much Ol' Diz can't do. Why, I'll tell ya, one day I was visiting some kids in a hospital in St. Louis. That day, we was supposed to be playing the Giants in the afternoon. When I was leaving the kids at the hospital I says to them, "Is there anything I can do to make ya'll happier? Anything at all, I don't bar nuthin' for you kids." Well, those little firecrackers asked me if I could strike out Bill Terry. Yes sir, they wanted me to strike out Bill Terry with the bases loaded that very afternoon. Dagnabbit, I was thinking why couldn't they have picked Vergez or Critz? Bill Terry was a monster. Nowadays, I hear "Memphis Bill" is considered to be one of the greatest men to ever play the game. He was the last National League player to bat over .400, no easy feat. Yeehaw, striking out Ol' Bill weren't gonna be easy. But a promise was a promise, so later that day I walked a Giants

batter just to get them bases loaded before Bill Terry stepped up to bat. I looked him square in the eye and I says, "I hate to do this, Bill, but I promised some kids in a hospital today that I'd strike you out with the bases loaded."



And ya know, I struck that fellow out in three pitches.

Ol' Diz has quite a bit of natural ability, but, of course, that doesn't mean I never relied on luck! All ballplayers do. I always insisted on wearing number 13. And I had a lucky sock. Never pitched a game without that good sock. Almost lost it once. It was in the clubhouse. I looked around and couldn't find that sock anywhere. I told the boys I couldn't pitch until I found it. I said I hadn't worked a game all season without that sock in my pocket. So, we all was looking around, tearing that clubhouse apart trying to find Dizzy's lucky sock. When all of a sudden Frankie Frisch


looked at me and he says, "Diz, you've never had more than two socks in your entire life. You'll probably find it on your foot!" And whattya know, there it was.


I got one more yarn to spin for ya. Once, I just happened to wander into a St. Louis drugstore in the middle of an armed robbery! I said to them robbers, "Whatchya doin'?" And ya know they had the nerve to tell me to shut up. I like to be a friendly sort so I decided to introduce myself. "Hi! I'm Diz ..." I began, but those robber men they stuck a pistol right into my ribs and ordered me to the back of the store with the other customers. I guessed they weren't baseball fans. Turns out we all made it out of that jam just fine and later that night I got a phone call from one of the robbers. He'd just realized that he'd held up the famous Dizzy Dean! "I got nothin' against ya, personally," he told me. "In fact, I'm a fan." To

prove it too, that robber told me he'd send me a bunch of neckties. And whattya know, next day half a dozen neckties arrived all packaged and ready for Mr. Dizzy Dean. I shared those ties with the other boys on the Cardinals team and they was all darn happy to receive 'em!



EXTRA INNINGS!

 Dizzy Dean visited kids in the hospital. Many professional athletes spend a lot of time in community service. Use the newspaper to find examples of people completing community service.

 Dean attended the Democratic National Convention. Can you find an example of an upcoming election in the newspaper?

Learning Standards: I can use the newspaper to locate information.

POP UPS

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION is a series of nominating conventions held every four years to prepare for the national election. It involves lots of speeches and rallies, culminating in the nomination of a presidential candidate for the Democratic party.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT was the 32nd President of the United States, serving between the years of 1933-1945.