

GOTCH

WORLD'S CHAMPION
WRESTLER



HIS LIFE = MAT BATTLES
and INSTRUCTIONS
ON HOW TO WRESTLE

GIVEN TO
HOWARD W. SOKOL
4/9/64
By



UNIVERSITY OF IOWA



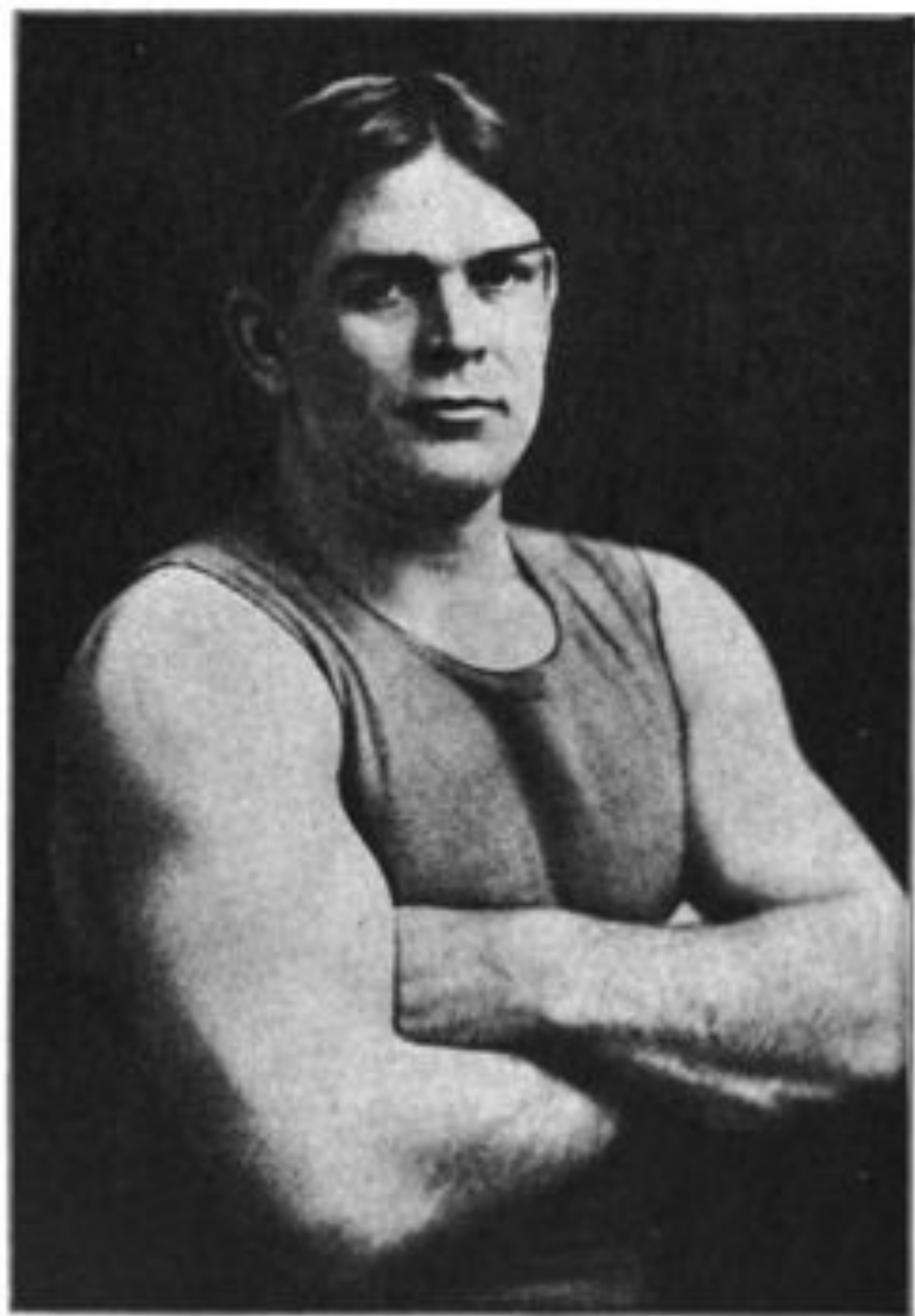
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FRANK A. GOTCH



GOTCH.

**World's Champion and Greatest Wrestler America Has Yet Pro-
duced.**

FRANK A. GOTCH
WORLD'S CHAMPION WRESTLER

His Life, Mat Battles
and Instructions *on*
How to Wrestle

By GEORGE S. ROBBINS *of the*
Sporting Staff, the Chicago Daily News

Compiled and Edited by
JOSEPH B. BOWLES



CHICAGO
JOSEPH B. BOWLES
1913

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PREFACE

All the world admires an honest battler. That is why baseball has continued to grow in popularity and draw immense crowds. The players are "on the square" and the "fans" know it. And that is why Frank A. Gotch has attracted the largest wrestling crowds in modern times. Gotch has been "on the level" and endowed with "the goods." He has done more than any other influence to make wrestling popular in America.

The good king of Sweden, gazing on James Thorpe at the Olympian games, declared him the world's greatest athlete, but the monarch had never seen Gotch. The like of Gotch for speed, the science of the holds and their counters, for strength and brain-work in action has never been seen in wrestling.

It is gratifying to the average American to know that a fellow countryman leads all the world in the most strenuous of all the forms of athletic endeavor, and it is stating it mildly to say that Gotch enjoys the warm regard of the sport-loving public. In fact, so well mixed in Gotch are the elements which command the approval of plain, every-day Americans everywhere, that his pre-eminence in their esteem is very easily understood. Who can fail to approve the type of character that remains modest and unaffected in the enjoyment of great success, temperate in speech and habits of life, loyal to what is true and right? The dazzling white lights which have led so many athletes astray in the hours of their prominence and prosperity failed to work their charm on the Iowa farm lad whose athletic prowess, early in his career, made him independently wealthy. The old homestead at Humboldt had a hold on his heart and life that

never loosened. "Blood will tell" and so will the right home training. From the scenes of his triumphs Gotch always turned his face toward Humboldt. There he married and there he resides today, esteemed not so much as world's champion wrestler as the genial neighbor, prosperously pursuing his vocations of farmer and business man. His 1,000-acre farm is worked on scientific principles and his automobile business distributes its product far and wide.

Newspaper accounts of the great battles of Gotch's career have been drawn on freely in the preparation of this volume. As far as possible credit has been given, but unfortunately in some instances the clippings which had been preserved in the Gotch scrap-books gave no clue to the authorship or the names of the papers.

G. S. R.

J. B. B.

FRANK A. GOTCH

*His Life, Mat Battles and
Instructions on How to Wrestle*

CHAPTER I.

How Frank Does It Now.

Kansas City, Mo., was one of the most popular points on the sporting map of the United States the night of April 1, 1913. GOTCH was in town—our own



"OUR FRANK."

happy, unconquerable Frank, farmer, business man, best loved of America's athletes, and wrestling champion of the world since April 3, 1908.

George Lurich of Warsaw was there also—champion of Europe and conqueror of Hackenschmidt and Zbyszko. The redoubtable Russian seemed to think that Gotch had reigned as wrestling king quite long enough. It was time another should wear the crown, and he fondly hoped it would that night be transferred to his own triumphant brow.

But let us hear the story as told in the Kansas City Star-Times of the following day by Claude Johnston, Sporting Editor:

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

"George Lurich came all the way from Warsaw to get it, and Frank Gotch administered the same in straight falls, 18:10 and 5:35, last night before one of the greatest crowds that ever caused Convention Hall to bulge at the doors and in the box office.

"The big hall rocked, too, which is the accepted way of describing triumphant joy breaking out in whoops and delighted roars and all that sort of thing.

GOTCH VERY OBLIGING.

"There were about twelve thousand there to rock the hall, and they did a good job. Deep down in the heart of every true American citizen, whether he pays his taxes or not, there is an abiding love for the land of the free and the home of the brave—and Frank Gotch. An American wrestling crowd wants to see Gotch win. Gotch is very obliging about it. And when the final heave comes and a pair of large and lobster colored shoulders kiss the mat, the American crowd proceeds to tear things to small pieces.

"Probably half of that twelve thousand journeyed in from the surrounding country to see Frank Gotch defend his title. There were three hundred more motor cars in town this afternoon than the records at the city hall will show. And there was much business at the hotels and in the shops—incidental, of course, to the flopping of George Lurich.

"It was a whale of a crowd.

"The arena floor was jammed. The balcony was solid. The boxes were without a vacant seat. The gallery hung a fringe of feet over the edge, and there even was a densely populous assembly verging on apoplexy in the roof garden, which is something like an eighth of a mile from the ring and nearly that far above it.

A WOMAN'S HAT IN THE RING.

"There were women, too. Mostly in the boxes—

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

there were hundreds, in all. But several had ringside seats. One of them was close enough to put a very fancy Easter hat tenderly on the outskirts of the roped precinct. And up in the balcony another feminine admirer of the gentle sport focused a huge pair of black binoculars on the seat of war and held on with both hands.

"It was a great crowd—small wonder that the eyes of the Polish Mr. Zbyszko bulged out with envious approbation when he was introduced as the challenger of the winner before hostilities began. Mr. Zbyszko heaved a ponderous sigh as he made his little bow, being of the build capable of heaving ponderous sighs. Possibly also he recalled the time when the same Mr. Gotch flopped him in the record time of six and one-quarter seconds in Chicago. But he was eager to try again—and looked it.

"And it now becomes the duty of the chronicler to remark that Mr. Gotch was there, too. Of course, Mr. Lurich was among those present, but he was by no means in the majority. He looked sleek and hard as a derby racer. He did his best, and he made Gotch perform in his prettiest style. And for that the crowd was duly grateful.

"Gotch looked pretty well himself. He bulked over his antagonist in size, and he bewildered him with his speed and science. Gotch might have been a trifle overweight, but he was hard and fine and in every way the usual combination of dynamo and hoisting engine.

"It would be foolish to record it that Lurich ever had a real chance, once the men had locked arms. His powerful neck and shoulder enabled him to break dangerous holds a dozen times. He put up a plucky and even a desperate resistance. But Gotch was his master from start to finish.

ROARS FROM THE CROWD.

"Taking it chronologically, it was 10:21 c'clock

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

when a roaring bellow from the crowd announced that somebody was coming. Lurich entered the ring from the western side. Then the American champion shouldered his way through the southern entrance and the roof of the big hall flopped nervously up and down in a tornado of sound.

"Gotch grinned sheepishly, as he always does, and clambered into the ring.

"The crowd roared again.

"Gotch scraped his feet in the powdered rosin and walked over to shake hands with his victim.

"The crowd roared some more. It was getting to be a habit. Still, there never was a moment when one couldn't have heard a pin drop—if it was a coupling pin and dropped on his own head from a suitable height.

"Then came the introductions and another series of roars. A very courteous one for Lurich and a terrific one for our own Frank Gotch—they always call him that, too.

"LET 'ER GO."

"At 10:27 o'clock Referee "Honest Dave" Porteous said something about letting 'er go.

"At 10:29 Lurich went to the mat with Gotch back of him.

"The history of the first fall would be comparatively uneventful if the crowd's part were omitted. There were bloodthirsty demands for a toehold—Gotch's little trade mark, as it were—and promises of all sorts of things happening to the Russian, part of which came to pass.

"As to the wrestling, Lurich was back of Gotch twice in the eighteen minutes, but such was the speed of the Iowan that not one hold did the powerful foreigner clamp on him. After the first five minutes Gotch was the aggressor, and the evident game was to see how long the Russian could fight off the inevitable.

"Working defensively, Lurich showed his boasted power by breaking half-nelsons three times and once

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

a well-knit toehold. Gotch was working with speed and precision. He kept the Russian at full stretch every second and would not let him rest.

"The first fall resulted from a pretty combination of arm and toehold. Gotch appeared to be working for a crotch and half-nelson. He let Lurich twist out of it, switched to the back hammer, let the Russian shift again, and in a twinkling was pressing his shoulders down with the arm hold, riveting Lurich's underpinning with the deadly grip on his foot.

"Then the crowd had another spasm.

"Gotch and his opponent took a short vacation, from which the Iowa farmer was back first—getting another ovation. And at 11:03 o'clock the trouble started again.

OVER IN A HURRY.

"It was over in a hurry this time. Maybe Frank wanted to catch a train, or maybe a spurt of aggressiveness on the Russian's part irritated him. At any rate, he did a great many things in less than six minutes, including the picking up of Mr. Lurich twice and slamming him very hard to the mat, so that he rebounded. The second time, however, he did not rebound very high—just far enough to become entangled in a beautiful double nelson, with which Gotch crushed his shoulders to the canvas in the brief and exciting time of 5:35.

"Which was about all for Mr. Lurich.

"As for the crowd, it stood up so it could yell better, and then got immoderately condensed in the corridors and doorways. It took fifteen minutes for the big hall to empty itself of the greatest assembly that ever saw a wrestling match in Kansas City."

Lurich said he wanted the toe hold barred if he met Gotch. Perhaps he was thinking of a winner-take-all match and wanted to be prepared to walk home.—

Chicago Daily News.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Gotch's Manager.

Emil Klank, Gotch's manager in most of the champion's great battles on the mat, is of German parentage.

He was born in Chicago June 9, 1876, and began wrestling when sixteen years old.

Klank doubled up with Farmer Burns and toured the United States for seven years and later wrestled alone all over the west and middle west. He wrestled Gotch at Denver in 1907. Klank was injured, Gotch snapping a ligament in his opponent's arm with a bar lock.

In Gotch's memorable battle with Hackenschmidt in 1908 Klank was the Iowa man's manager and has been with him ever since. Incidentally it may be said that Gotch hasn't lost a fall from that day to this.



EMIL KLANK

CHAPTER II.

The Champion's Record.

That Kansas City affair with Lurich was the latest in the most remarkable wrestling career the world has ever known. The prophecy of Ed Smith, popular referee and sporting editor of the Chicago Evening American, is well started on its way toward fulfillment. Following Gotch's second defeat of Hackenschmidt, the "Russian Lion," in 1911, Smith said: "Frank Gotch is likely to be the champion wrestler of the world for the next ten years." What happens to the wrestlers from other lands has been happily described by George E. Phair in the Chicago Examiner, thus:

THE WRESTLERS.

They come in bands
From foreign lands,
In armies, flocks and swarms,
They bravely ride
The bounding tide
Nor heed the ocean storms.

Like vikings bold
In days of old
They trim the bulging sail,
And beat it for
This friendly shore
Where blooms the golden kale.

From Bulgar hills
From Grecian rills
From Russia, Prussia, Spain,
All nations join
To get the coin
And beat it home again.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

A BIG LIST.

Here is the record of Gotch's important matches, with dates, opponents' names, results and places:

1899.

April 2.....Marshall Green..... Won....Humboldt, Ia.
June 16.... Dan McLeod..... Lost....Luverne, Ia.
Dec. 18.....Farmer Burns..... Lost....Ft. Dodge, Ia.

1900.

Jan. 8.....Linn Ruby..... Won....Ft. Dodge, Ia.
Feb. 7.....Jim Galliton..... Won....Omaha
Mar. 2..... Bert Scheller..... Won....Sioux City, Ia.
June 16.... Charles Moth..... Won....Humboldt, Ia.
Sept. 11.... Duncan McMillan..... Won....Winterset, Ia.
Sept. 26.... Lou Bucholz..... Won....Forest City, Ia.

1901.

Mar. —.... O. Wasseem..... Won....Burlington, Ia.
July —.... White Won....Dawson City.
Aug. 26.... Silas Archer..... Won....Dawson City.
Sept. 15.... Riley Won....Dawson City.
Oct. 1..... J. H. McLaughlin..... Won....Dawson City.

1902.

Jan. 5..... Miller Won....Sioux City, Ia.
Feb. 2.....Morad Ali..... Won....Davenport, Ia.
Mar. 22.... Frank Coleman..... Won....Omaha.
Dec. 26....Christ Pearson..... Won....Tacoma.

1903.

Jan. 10..... Carl Pons..... Won....Seattle.
Feb. 22..... Tom Jenkins..... Lost....Cleveland.
July 26..... Aldrich Won....Des Moines.
Sept. 4..... J. Anderson..... Won....Bellingham.
Sept. 20.... Emil Klank..... Won....Bellingham.
Sept. 20.... Coleman Won....Bellingham.
Oct. 5..... Farmer Burns..... Won....Bellingham.
Dec. 11.... Farmer Burns..... Won....Bellingham.
Dec. 23.... Chief Two Feathers... Won....Bellingham.

1904.

Jan. 28..... Tom Jenkins..... Won....Bellingham.
Feb. 24..... Aoyagi Won....Bellingham.
Mar. 10.... Chris Pearson..... Won....Iowa City, Ia.
April 11.... Tim Harrington..... Won....Butte, Mont.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

June 27.... Jim Parr..... Won.... Buffalo.
 July 20.... John Berg..... Won.... Seattle.
 Aug. 6.... Dan S. McLeod..... Won.... Vancouver.
 Oct. 5.... Dan S. McLeod..... Won.... Vancouver.
 Nov. 25.... Yankee Rogers..... Won.... Buffalo.
 Dec. 21.... Jim Parr..... Lost.... Buffalo.
 (Handicap match.)

1905.

Jan. 1..... Emil Maupaus..... Lost.... Montreal.
 (Handicap match.)
 Jan. 11.... Yankee Rogers..... Won.... Montreal.
 Feb. 1..... Tom Jenkins..... Won.... Cleveland.
 Feb. 6 Ed. Atherton..... Won.... Elmira, N. Y.
 Feb. 24.... Jim Parr..... Won.... New York City.
 Feb. 25.... Joe Grant..... Won.... Washington.
 Mar. 2.... Charles Wittmer..... Won.... Cincinnati.
 Mar. 10.... Jim Parr..... Won.... Utica, N. Y.
 Mar. 15.... Tom Jenkins..... Lost.... New York City.
 Mar. 21.... Emil Selva..... Won.... Paterson, N. J.
 Mar. 22.... Americus Won.... Washington.
 May 19.... Tom Jenkins..... Lost.... New York City.
 June 15.... Beck Olson..... Won.... Kansas City.
 July 4.... Alec Samuelson..... Won.... Minneapolis.
 Aug. 10.... Duncan McMillan..... Won.... Spokane.
 Sept. 4.... Jack Carkeek..... Won.... Butte, Mont.
 Oct. 15.... Doc Fillmore..... Won.... Des Moines.
 Oct. 30.... Hilding Ardahl..... Won.... Des Moines.
 Nov. 14.... Emil Klank..... Won.... Rockford, Ill.
 Dec. 15.... Yankee Rogers..... Won.... Utica, N. Y.
 Dec. 22.... Dan S. McLeod..... Won.... Montreal.
 Dec. 27.... Emile Maupaus..... Won.... Montreal, Can.

1906.

Jan. 9..... Chas. Hackenschmidt... Won.... Des Moines.
 Jan. 12.... Appollo Won.... Montreal.
 Jan. 25.... Farmer Burns..... Won.... Kansas City.
 Jan. 27.... Chas. Hackenschmidt... Won.... Kansas City.
 Feb. 2.... John Voss..... Won.... Ft. Dodge, Ia.
 Feb. 6.... Charles Kaiser, Geo.
 Gray, Con Al-
 bright Threw ea ch twice. Rochester.
 Feb. 23.... Chas. Hackenschmidt... Won.... St. Louis.
 Feb. 26.... Jim Parr..... Won.... Kansas City.
 Feb. 27.... Hank Rogers..... Won.... Kansas City.
 Mar. 23.... Chas. Olsen..... Won.... Asheville, N. C.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



"FRANK HAS TO ENTERTAIN A LONG LINE OF FOREIGN VISITORS
EVERY YEAR."

By Carlson, in the Chicago Inter Ocean.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

April 6.....Karahanoff Won.... Montreal.
May 14..... Pietro..... Stopped by police.. Montreal.
May 23..... Tom Jenkins..... Won.... Kansas City.
June 9..... Farmer Burns..... Won.... St. Louis.
July 4..... Jim Parr..... Won.... Humboldt, Ia.
July 20..... Chas. Olsen..... Won.... New Orleans.
Aug. 27..... Hjalmar Lundin..... Won.... Des Moines.
Sept. 28..... Jim Parr..... Won.... Chicago.
Oct. 7..... Chas. Olsen and Yan-
kee Rogers Won.... Kansas City.
Oct. 12..... Dr. B. F. Roller.. No fall 1 hr... Seattle.
Nov. 19..... Alex Swanson and
Fred Bartle..... Won.... Lima, O.
Nov. 23..... Leo Pardello..... Won.... Chicago.
Dec. 1..... Fred Beell..... Lost.... New Orleans.
Dec. 17..... Fred Beell..... Won.... Kansas City.

1907.

April 26..... Fred Beell..... Won.... Chicago.
Aug. 23..... Emil Klank..... Won.... Denver.
Oct. 29..... Emil Klank and War
Eagle Won.... Kansas City.
Dec. 6..... War Eagle..... Won.... Chicago.

1908.

Jan. 21..... Hjalmar Lundin..... Won.... Lowell, Mass.
Jan. 24..... Albert Solomon..... Won.... Utica, N. Y.
Feb. 7..... Fred Beell..... Won.... Chicago.
Mar. 6..... Joe Rogers..... F. to T.. New York.
(Gotch was to throw Rogers five times in one
hour, but threw him twice.)
April 3..... Geo. Hackenschmidt... Won.... Chicago.
(For championship of the world. Hackenschmidt
gave up at the end of 2 hrs. 3 mins.)
May 8..... Hjalmar Lundin..... Won.... Kansas City.
May 20..... Chas. Olsen..... F. to T.. St. Louis.
(Failed to throw in 15 minutes.)
July 1..... Dr. B. F. Roller..... Won.... Seattle.
July 15..... Klank, Williams and
Jones Won.... Dallas, Tex.
(19 mins.)

In addition to the above matches Gotch defeated the following:
1905—McManhon, Gordon, Prof. M. J. Dwyer, Carl Bush, Chas.
Conkle, Gus Davisson. 1906—Americus, John Anderson, John
Hanson, Carl Bush. 1908—Toured England with vaudeville com-
pany.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

1909.

Mar. 25.....	Raoul De Reuen.....	Won....	Kansas City.
Mar. 26.....	John Perrelli.....	Won....	Omaha, Neb.
April 14.....	Yussiff Mahmout.....	Won....	Chicago, Ill.
April 17.....	H. Lundin.....	Won....	Chicago, Ill.
April 20.....	Dan McLeod.....	Won....	Waterloo, Ia.
April 22.....	Ben Reeves.....	Won....	Boone, Ia.
April 27.....	Dr. B. F. Roller.....	Won....	Kansas City.
April 29.....	Chas. Hackenschmidt...	Won....	Memphis, Tenn.
May 6.....	Fred Beell.....	Won....	Denver, Colo.
May 21.....	Ed. Ferguson and M. Yokel	Won....	Salt Lake City.
May 27.....	Oscar Wassem, Kubiak.	Won....	Sioux City.
May 29.....	Dan McDonald, Joe Ackron, Prof. Miller..	Won....	Sioux Falls, S. D.
June 4.....	Henry Ordeman.....	Won....	Minneapolis.
June 14.....	Tom Jenkins.....	Won....	Des Moines, Ia.
Nov. 6.....	Frank Prindle.....	Won....	Chicago.
Nov. 9.....	Giovanni Raicevich.....	Won....	Chicago.
Nov. 10.....	Hilding Ardahl.....	Won....	Ottumwa, Ia.
Nov. 11.....	Tom Challender.....	Won....	Decatur, Ill.
Nov. 15.....	Dr. B. F. Roller.....	Won....	Kansas City.
Nov. 25.....	S. Zbyszko.....	Lost....	Buffalo, N. Y.
	(Handicap match, one hour. No fall.)		
Dec. 25.....	Con. O'Kelly.....	Won....	St. Louis, Mo.

1910.

Feb. 28.....	Jim Essen.....	Won....	Chicago.
May 13.....	Chris Pearson.....	Won....	Houghton, Mich.
June 1.....	S. Zbyszko.....	Won....	Chicago.

1911.

Feb. 6.....	Kalefosman	Won....	Sioux City.
Feb. 7.....	Fred Beell.....	Won....	Des Moines, Ia.
Feb. 8.....	Americus	Won....	Kansas City.
Feb. 20.....	Americus	Won....	Boston, Mass.
Feb. 22.....	Peter Nogert.....	Won....	Hartford, Conn.
Mar. 2.....	Paul Schmidt.....	Won....	Buffalo.
Mar. 7.....	Carl Lehts.....	Won....	Duluth.
Mar. 9.....	George Eberg.....	Won....	Winnipeg, Man.
Mar. 15.....	Ernest Koch.....	Won....	Kansas City.
Mar. 16.....	Henry Barn.....	Won....	Chicago.
Mar. 17.....	Chas. Cutler.....	Won....	Lincoln, Neb.
Mar. 18.....	Demetral	Won....	Omaha.
Mar. 20.....	Fred Beell.....	Won....	Wichita, Kans.
Mar. 25.....	Tom Jenkins.....	Won....	Denver.

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Mar. 27.... Jack Leon..... Won.... Salt Lake City.
 April 12.... Henry Ordeman..... Won.... San Francisco.
 April 17.... Jesse Westergaard..... Won.... Los Angeles.
 May 5..... Fred Beell..... Won.... Knoxville, Tenn.
 Sept. 4..... George Hackenschmidt.. Won.... Chicago. (2 falls.)
 Oct. 13.... Geo. Padoubny..... Won.... Kansas City, Mo.
 Oct. 14.... Fred Beell..... Won.... St. Joseph, Mo.
 Oct. 17.... Emile Pietro..... Won.... Des Moines, Ia.
 Oct. 28.... Jesse Westergaard..... Won.... Denver, Colo.
 Oct. 30.... Wm. Demetral..... Won.... Salt Lake City.
 Nov. 3.... Jack Leon..... Won.... Seattle.
 Dec. 1.... Chas. Hackenschmidt... Won.... Minneapolis.
 Dec. 27.... Alex Monroe..... Won.... Kansas City.

1912.

Mar. 12.... Joe Geshtowt..... Won.... Chicago.
 Mar. 12.... Paul Martinson..... Won.... Chicago.
 Mar. 13.... Henry Ordeman..... F. to T.. Minneapolis.
 Mar. 14.... Marvin Plestina..... Won.... St. Paul, Minn.
 Mar. 15.... Henry Ordeman..... F. to T.. Chicago.
 Mar. 17.... Marvin Plestina..... Won.... Milwaukee.
 Mar. 22.... Henry Ordeman..... F. to T.. Omaha.
 June 13.... Americus Won.... Baltimore.
 Aug. 22.... Jesse Westergaard..... Won.... Kansas City.

1913.

April 1.... George Lurich..... Won.... Kansas City.

In addition to the above, Gotch has wrestled in more than 200 fifteen-minute handicap matches and participated in hundreds of exhibitions, impromptu and benefit encounters during the years he has been before the public.

CHAPTER III.

Frank's Boyhood.

*wants
was
immigrants* Frank Alvin Gotch first saw the light on a farm near Humboldt, Iowa, on April 27, 1878. His father, Frederick Rudolph Gotch, was born in Schalteri, Germany, in 1831, married Amelia Nopens in 1855, and in 1863 emigrated to America and settled in Lewis County, New York. In 1864 he enlisted in Company A, 186th New York Volunteer Infantry, and served in the Army of the Potomac under General Grant, taking part in the capture of Petersburg and other notable battles in Virginia. He was mustered out in 1865 and that year took his family west and settled in Corinth Township, Iowa. Here Mr. Gotch was hurt in felling a tree. One limb was crippled and he was forced to depend on artificial support during the balance of his life. This was a heavy handicap during the hard pioneer days, and it was not until Frank had brought money home in considerable amount from his wrestling matches that the farm near Humboldt, to which they had moved in 1875, was made free of debt.

There were nine children, of whom six are still living—Mary Fredericka, Frederick William, Charles Frederick, Millie Mabel, George Edward and Frank Alvin. The father died October 21, 1911, having lived to see his youngest son attain the world's highest honors in wrestling, accumulate a fortune estimated at about half a million dollars, and yet remain modest and unspoiled, by preference a farmer and business man, highly esteemed and respected in the community which has remained home to him since birth.

GOTCH'S FINGER AND THE AXE.

Frank was known in his early boyhood as a young-

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ster of great diligence, fond of sports and a leader in his crowd.

"Maybe it takes something different from the ordinary travail of mortal folk to make a great athlete," says Lloyd Kenyon Jones in one of his "Little Stories of the Mat." "The leaven is apparently planted deep, and it germinates early. Gotch once said: 'It takes four parts strength, three parts class and three parts nerve to make a wrestler.'

Completed
at 4
months

"Back in the bucolic days of the champion's career, when the family acres south of Humboldt, Iowa, knew not fame, and the circle around the hearthstone referred to the future champion as 'Frankie,' the three parts nerve were already present.

"That was when Frank was bordering on the wonderland of five years of age and had a distinct Missouri instinct to be shown. His sister was assisting in the household duties by wielding the axe in her futile attempts to reduce a mass of basswood to kindling for the kitchen range.

"Frank surveyed the keen steel blade, looked at his dimpled fingers, cogitated the possibilities gravely, and then laid the index finger of the chubby right hand on the block.

"'Tum on!' he ordered as his sister held the axe aloft. Wishing to gratify her brother's every wish she 'tame on' and one slender thread of flesh retained the anterior portion of the digit to the corporeal form.

"'Gee, it tan tut,' Frank mused, as he watched the claret stream mingle with the chips and sawdust.

"The alarm was raised and Mamma Gotch came hurtling from the fields. She clamped the severed section to the torn stump, arranged a few splints, stitched the result in bandages, and returned to her labors. The marks still show, and although Frank graduated with honorable mention from his first course in 'simon pure

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nerve,' he never questioned the superior force of edged tools thereafter.

"But the nerve was there—the vital principle that proves the difference between the inherent athlete and the common herd. The same degree of 'sand' stood the boy in good stead in the years that fled, and brought him out of the obscurity of unknown Humboldt to top place in a professional athletic career."

SCHOOL DAYS.

"I stuck closer to the farm than a leech to a horse," says Gotch, "until I was twenty-one years of age. I spent my childhood and youth in the old home, and never set foot out of my own territory till I became of age. I played the homely games of the farmer boy, attending husking bees and barn dances that were the real thing, and finally went to school during the winter months when there was no farming to do. All the time I was growing like a weed, and my work on the farm gave strength to my muscles.

"During my career as a schoolboy I acted as substitute for the teacher's hickory stick, for every time the kids grew obstreperous teacher would threaten to 'sick' me on them. There was a rough bunch attending that school, but they were good-natured fellows, and I guess I had to 'lick' the whole lot of them before they acknowledged my right to govern them.

"In those days the best wrestler was the best fighter, for the rules were that if you succeeded in getting an opponent helpless on the ground you were allowed to whale away at him till he cried 'enough.' I got stuck on the wrestling game and showed some ability in it.

BATTLES WITH HIS TEACHER.

"Ed Kennedy, now baggage master at Fort Dodge, Iowa, was my school teacher and was considered one of the best wrestlers around Humboldt. It was one of my

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earliest ambitions to tackle my teacher, who was much bigger and older than I, and down him before the pupils. I remember our battle in the snow on a winter's day in 1894 as though it were today. The little old school house is still standing and the same old trees are there yet. We wrestled side holds in those days. I didn't know any more about the toe hold or the half-nelson than a rabbit knows about Latin. I was sixteen years old then, and Kennedy was twenty-three.

"We took holds and went at it hammer and tongs. Around and around we swung, tugging and pulling at each other for dear life. Kennedy came near scoring a fall on me, but I quickly stepped aside and tripped him to the ground. This counted as a fall and the boys and girls gave him the laugh when he complained he had slipped on the snow.

"Kennedy invited me to go in the school house and wrestle him. I told him the snow was good enough for me.

"After that battle I had more confidence and was willing to tackle any of the giants that inhabited the region about Humboldt. I doubt if any victory of my life gave me keener satisfaction. It marked the cutting of my wrestling eye-teeth and made me ambitious to excel in athletic competition."

News of the battle spread to the farm houses and barnyards about Humboldt, and the farmer lad became a hero of the younger set.

Gotch was not to "get away" with this triumph so easily, however. Kennedy was a tough customer in a "rassling match." He lost no time hurling a challenge at Gotch for a return encounter, which it was agreed should take place the next summer.

THE RETURN MATCH.

On a warm afternoon in July, 1895, they met on the lawn in front of the Gotch homestead before a score of

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boys from each of the rival neighborhoods represented. Gotch always had been tenderly devoted to his mother, but on this occasion he "double-crossed" her. He had arranged for her absence that day. Kennedy had downed several of the leading wrestling hopes of the Humboldt contingent and the Clare, Iowa, boys were in a jubilant mood over their hero. Gotch was unperturbed by this show of confidence. He was just as eager to get at Kennedy as he was to fly at Hackenschmidt nearly eighteen years later in a struggle that crowned him king of all wrestlers.

"I will always remember the battle of that July day as one of the landmarks of the champion's career," says an eye witness, now a wealthy farmer residing near Humboldt. "Gotch tore into his opponent like a demon, and hung on like a bulldog. After twenty minutes of rough battling on the grass Kennedy forced Gotch near an old tree that is still standing, and had him in a bad way. The least inclination on Gotch's part to succumb would have meant his defeat, but he failed to budge. Gradually he forced Kennedy from his position of vantage and came into the clear amid a wild shout of triumph from us boys, who were following every movement with breathless interest. For ten minutes longer they battled on even terms with the utmost stubbornness. Then the rattle of wheels was heard down the road and the referee declared the match a draw, the crowd shouting its approval.

"As I watched Gotch hang to his opponent and refuse to give in, and have seen him in some of his championship matches I believe this to be one of the secrets of his wonderful success. Once he gets a dangerous hold he will keep it. This trait earned him a hard-fought draw with Kennedy. It finally made him the most feared athlete among a race of physical giants around Humboldt."

CHAPTER IV.

His First Professional Match.

"I had started wrestling when old enough to walk," says Gotch. "I wrestled boys all bigger than myself and was always getting the worst of it. I think it was wrestling these big fellows that made me strong.

"One of them, Ben Barth, was my wrestling 'side-kick.' I wrestled with him every day and he would defeat me regularly. He was too big for me to handle, but I was always ready to tackle him. There were the Parsons, the Stoebers, the Thompsons and others, all bigger than I. We boys used to wrestle at the 'sales' which were plentiful in those days when the farmers weren't so prosperous as they are today. The wrestling bouts were advertised as a part of the auctions and always drew big crowds. When the boys would start to wrestle it would often cause the auction to stop, the matches proving more of a magnet than the eloquence of the auctioneer."

BEN BARTH'S STORY.

Accompanied by Gotch, the writer visited Barth, now a sturdy, prosperous farmer, at his farm south of Humboldt in the fall of 1912. We found him in a field husking corn.

"Well, let's have a little bout," said Barth as the world's champion approached. Gotch preferred to husk corn and showed himself a practiced hand at the job. Barth was unwilling to talk much about himself, but became eloquent when asked to relate the story of his first defeat by Gotch.

"I remember that match distinctly," he said. "I will never forget it as long as I live, for it marked the turn-

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ing point in Gotch's career. It also reminded me that I was growing old and that Gotch was advancing rapidly in the manly art of grappling.

"Gotch had been delivering milk to the creamery and was on his way home. I was in the field husking corn. I spied him coming and went out to the road. He saw me waiting for him and didn't hesitate. As soon as the wagon was pulled up even with me, Gotch hopped off and we went at it. I think Gotch had under holds. We wrestled side holds in those days.

"I tried to finish him in a hurry, but try as I would I could not trip him. The youngster seemed to have acquired added strength in a fortnight. We struggled and puffed and tugged and farmers on their way to town stopped to watch the fun.

"Gotch started to swing his free hand with mine and then tripped me backward and I fell to the ground in defeat. That was the hardest match I ever had with Gotch and it was the first time he had defeated me during the years we boys had been wrestling.

"Some time after that Gotch wrestled Marshall Green, a chicken picker in Humboldt, and defeated him. They wrestled at catch-as-catch-can style and Gotch won three straight falls, all with the strangle hold. I guess that was the only catch-as-catch-can hold Gotch knew at that time.

"After Gotch defeated the chicken picker I was never able to win a match from him, for he had adopted a style that was Greek to me."

Barth has the distinction of having defeated the world's champion more times than any other man living, but he carries his honors lightly, though proud of his part in the development of Gotch into a world beater.

SIGNS TO WRESTLE GREEN.

At the time referred to by Barth Marshall Green was Humboldt's champion wrestler. Farmers who had

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watched Gotch wrestle at the auction sales were confident their hero could defeat the chicken picker. Gotch also was confident, but his parents strongly objected to his going into a match with a professional wrestler. The farmers, however, were eager to see the husky country lad pitted against the town champion, and the town boys were keen for it also. Gotch was well aware that the professional grappler was looked at askance by persons of standing, but the urging of his friends and his own eagerness to trim this boastful "upstart" from town finally triumphed, and he signed to wrestle Green at catch-as-catch-can style.

The match occurred April 2, 1899, in the Russell Opera House, Humboldt, Iowa.

HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

"My advent into the professional wrestling game was purely an accident," said Gotch in a reminiscent mood. "I was on my father's farm south of Humboldt in the fall of 1899 following a plow. It was the time of the year when we sowed the winter wheat. I had no idea I would ever do anything except work the land about the old homestead, when a chicken picker came along and wanted to wrestle all comers. He was hailed by his admirers as the champion of Humboldt. I was only twenty years' old and didn't know any more about professional wrestling than a dog about singing or a pig about Latin. I had wrestled side holds with Barth and the other big lads of the neighborhood and played rough and tumble at the auction sales, but what I didn't know about real wrestling of the Farmer Burns kind would fill a mighty large volume.

"I had defeated Kennedy, my school teacher, and at last had thrown Ben Barth, the terror of the boys at side holds. I was considered a tough lad to throw.

"Some of the boys in town had seen me do some

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good work in our little 'scraps' and they imagined I was just the one fitted to take the measure of this chicken picker. They made up a little side bet of \$25 and the match was arranged.

HIS MOTHER AGAINST IT.

"My mother objected to my entering the wrestling game and it pained me to disobey her. When I hesitated, the boys thought I feared the big giant I had agreed to meet, and that it was simply a case of 'cold feet.'

"'Come on, Frank, I know you can beat him,' implored the ring leader of the little band that had conspired to dethrone Mr. Chicken Picker. Since I had agreed to meet Green it would never do for me to back out, so I decided to slip away, down the big fellow and come home and give the money to my mother and try in other ways to atone for the disobedience.

"The boys who were backing me told me to train for Green as he was a big fellow and nothing but cleverness would defeat him. I didn't know enough about training to last ten minutes in a professional match with a top-notch. I did know how to run and tumble around, so I passed several days imagining I was training for the big event. They told me the match was to be a rough and tumble encounter at catch-as-catch-can. I didn't know what they meant, but imagined I was training for that thing, whatever it was.

WRESTLED IN OVERALLS.

"When the eventful night approached and I had slipped away from home I found I was the first man on the scene.

"I wore overalls and when the men who had arranged for the match arrived they told me to put on my suit and get ready for the bout. When I told them

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I had come to wrestle in my overalls, they were non-plussed. After a special session of the wrestling committee of Humboldt it was agreed to cut off the legs of my overalls just above the knees and allow me to use these as tights. I consented to this compromise and when the referee was ready I climbed on the mat and took a look at my opponent. He looked as big as a house and I imagine my hair was 'on end,' but I had plenty of nerve and went into the match to win.

WON WITH STRANGLE HOLD.

"It is no credit to me to say that I defeated Green in three straight falls with strangle holds. We didn't know any better and I guess one was as ignorant of the catch-as-catch-can code as the other. I kept after Green every minute. I didn't give the 'picker' a chance to pluck any feathers from this chicken. When I fastened the strangle to him all he could do was submit or die and he decided to submit. When I had strangled him into submission in the first two falls, he was nearly exhausted and it was easy for me to gain the deciding fall with the same hold.

"I went home that night toting some silver dollars that looked mighty big to me. I proudly laid them down for my mother and I guess she was more glad to see me back alive than to get the money. While my encounter with McLeod was my first real catch-as-catch-can match, this rough and tumble affair with the chicken picker really made me ambitious to wrestle and started me on my long career."

CHAPTER V.

How Gotch Was Discovered—His Hardest Match.

“Years ago—back when the present era of the mat was dawning—there was an aspiring youth in a little middle western town who believed that he could wrestle,” relates Lloyd Kenyon Jones in another of his “Little Stories of the Mat.”

“He was a combination of beef and bone and grit.

“In the countryside round and about he had won his measure of fame. There was no opponent who could withstand his onslaughts. And as his prowess fanned a little farther away it reached the ears of another—an older man who had learned many of the subtle tricks of the trade.

“The grappler from afar had issued a challenge to the local youth, and, eager to prove his right to be known as the best, the country boy accepted.

“The meeting place was a cinder path, and the garb worn was the ordinary, every-day attire in shirt sleeves and with shoes and trousers.

A DESPERATE STRUGGLE.

“They shook hands and sailed in, and were soon locked in a tight embrace. The youth was taller than his rival, and the boy had titanic strength.

“The more slothful ceased whittling sticks and sauntered over to stand on the fringe of the throng. The lusty-lunged cheered, and the ladies ceased discussing the most recent scandal while they looked open-mouthed at the silent, intent pair that battled for the mastery.

“The sun had slipped from its zenith and time and again the contestants had fallen on the gritty cinders. Their hands were black and torn and bleeding. Their

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trousers sagged in ragged shreds. Their shirts waved like battle flags from the ruins of old forts. But they fought on.

"The venders of peanuts and popcorn stopped crying their wares. Everything was held in abeyance. There was history being made on that cinder path, and this truth seemed to whisper itself to the maple leaves.

"About an hour and a half had passed, and the breath in the bodies of both men scorched holes in their lungs. They were fighting blindly now—holding to locks with the grim determination of success.

"And the unschooled boy finally came to his knees and then wilted over to his shoulders, but his victor was too weak-kneed to talk. He had won by the narrowest margin.

"That was far back in the days of creation of the modern mat.

"The town was Luverne, Iowa.

"The grappler from afar was Dan McLeod.

"The country boy was Frank A. Gotch."

THE STORY IN DETAIL.

According to the champion's own words this match with Dan McLeod, in his day one of the greatest grapplers in the world, was the most difficult of his career. It was his second professional battle and took place at a Woodmen's picnic at Luverne.

"Three matches stand out as the hardest of my life," says Gotch. "One of these was with Tom Jenkins. Another was with a Turk up in Canada when the toe lock and several other holds were barred. The toughest of all, however, was this one with McLeod. Imagine two fellows tumbling around on the ground for nearly an hour and a half. Why, I was picking cinders out of my anatomy for a month after that battle."

In June, 1899, Dan McLeod, then a wrestler of wide renown, was en route to Belmond, Iowa, to appear in a

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wrestling match. He was compelled to wait several hours at Livermore to change cars. McLeod saw some athletes practicing for a meet near the station. He finally joined them and tried to get a bet on some athletic performance. The result was that the Livermore Woodmen "drafted" McLeod and took him with them to Luverne, where they were to oppose a team from Humboldt. Foremost among the Humboldt athletes stood the strapping farmer lad and rising wrestler, Frank Gotch. McLeod was the star of the meet for Livermore and Gotch easily led his team-mates in every event. The competition was close, Livermore winning by two points.

It was whispered about that McLeod was not a Woodman and the Humboldt athletes protested the meet, all the cash prizes for individual work finally going to Gotch.

THE CHALLENGE.

One of the Livermore Woodmen warned McLeod against Gotch.

"Look out for that big fellow over there—he's a wrestler," whispered the Livermore athlete to the mysterious stranger.

"I don't care if he's the greatest wrestler in the world," said McLeod; and then addressed Gotch:

"So you think you are a wrestler, do you? I'll take you on for money, marbles or chalk."

That was the spark that ignited the fuse. Gotch and his outraged comrades were not in a bantering mood—they were ready to fight. The challenge was accepted on the spot. McLeod wanted to wrestle on the grass, but Gotch chose to battle it out with the stranger on the cinder path, where there was less danger of slipping.

In the terrific struggle that followed Gotch found that he was pitted against a wrestler of wonderful skill, while McLeod was handed the surprise of his career.

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It was a surprise party all around. The rival Woodmen looked on with breathless interest and amazement.

McLeod showed facility in blocking Gotch away. He tripped the farmer lad, but the future champion was up in a flash. Around and around the pair struggled. The Humboldt Woodmen sent up a cheer when Gotch rushed his opponent and went back of him for the first time.

Gotch, bewildered at the stranger's unexpected skill, decided to play it safe and "hold him under" until he could tire him out. For nearly fifty minutes he held to McLeod like a bulldog to the trousers of a tramp, McLeod trying in vain to arise. Over the cinder path, on the grass and then back to the rough mat the pair fought and struggled. Gotch, angered at McLeod's impertinence and stung to the quick by his trickery, threw cinders and dirt in the intruder's face. The Livermore athletes hooted, while the Humboldt contingent yelled its approval.

When Gotch was in the act of getting a fresh supply of dirt, McLeod darted out and the wrestlers tumbled and rolled around the ground, grinding cinders and pebbles into their bodies until they were bleeding and puffing, baptized in a flood of perspiration.

McLeod executed a shift and darted behind Gotch. He finally plunged Gotch's head foremost over his own knee and locked one of his hands behind his body, holding him securely for a fall after one hour and twenty minutes of desperate battling. This was Gotch's first defeat as a professional.

AS GOTCH TELLS IT.

"I had put it all over the stranger in the 50-yard run and made him look like 30 cents at throwing the hammer," relates Gotch, "so to get even he proposed a wrestling match. Being young and ambitious and thinking it a cinch, I could not let that chance get away from me. I accepted without a moment's hesitation and we

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went right out on the cinder path and wrestled like a couple of Turks. Head spins and all sorts of things that you see in a wrestling match in a big hall were indulged in and the crowd nearly went wild with excitement. Just imagine what shape we were in when the bout ended by 'Dan' putting my shoulders to the mat after an hour and twenty minutes of fierce wrestling on the rough roadway. I was defeated but not disgraced, as they say, and after shaking hands with my opponent wished him well. No one knew who he was or where he came from, but by posing as a member of the Woodmen he managed to enter all the athletic events. Just as he was to step on the train he handed me a card familiar to every big wrestler in America. It read—'Dan McLeod, Champion Catch-as-Catch-Can Wrestler of the World.'"

"Go over to Humboldt and hunt up a young farmer by the name of Frank Gotch. He is certainly a comer and you can make a champion out of him," said McLeod to Farmer Burns. That is how Gotch was discovered.

CHAPTER VI.

First Meeting With "Farmer" Burns.

Gotch had his first encounter with Martin Burns, known all over America as Farmer Burns, on December 19, 1899, at Fort Dodge, Iowa. The "Farmer," accompanied by an "Americanized Turk," was out meeting all comers, and the country lad, untutored in the fine points of the game, happened to be the "comer" who came forward, among several others, to try to get some of Burns' money.

A delegation of Humboldt townsmen and country folk who had seen Gotch defeat Marshall Green, the chicken picker, and had watched him give battle to Dan McLeod accompanied Gotch to Fort Dodge to watch him battle Burns.

Remembering what McLeod had told him about this wonderful young wrestler, Burns decided not to risk defeat for his Turk, whom he had dressed for the occasion.

"You had better not tackle that Turk, my lad, he will kill you," said Burns to Gotch.

Gotch says that he knew Burns' protege was not a genuine "Terrible Turk," but he let the Farmer think he was scared. "It was Burns, not his Turk, I wanted to wrestle," he said, "and Burns wanted to wrestle me, so everyone was satisfied."

"I was surprised at Gotch's strength," relates Burns. "I had never encountered a young wrestler of his remarkable agility and strength, but at that time he knew absolutely nothing about wrestling. I decided to rough him for a time, tire him out and then fasten some effective hold to pin his shoulders to the mat. Gotch was eager to remain fifteen minutes and draw down the

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GOTCH AND "FARMER" BURNS IN PRACTICE BOUT.

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\$25 I had promised to forfeit to the wrestler 'sticking' that time."

Burns soon discovered that the youngster knew more about "roughing it" than about wrestling, and then rushed in and slammed him to the mat with a leg and arm hold, but Gotch was up in a flash.

"Stay with him, Frank," yelled a Humboldt backer. "Stick, Frank," chorused a hundred other friends, eager to see their "find" make good.

HELD OUT ELEVEN MINUTES.

Burns shifted from one position to another with lightning-like rapidity until he put Gotch down with a leg hold. Then he tried a half nelson but discovered that he could not budge the Humboldt lad. Hammerlocks, bar arms, head locks and many other holds were tried on the "comer" in rapid succession, and by sheer strength Gotch broke every grip his experienced opponent fastened to him.

Finally Burns fastened the double nelson grip to Gotch's arms and neck, locking his fingers over the youth's head. Gotch wriggled around until his feet dangled over the footlights. He hooked his toes over the edge of the platform and as Burns tried in vain to tip him the crowd roared with laughter. Glancing down, Burns saw what the youngster had "pulled" on him and shoved Gotch away from his position of vantage. Then ensued a struggle the spectators have never forgotten. Gotch, by sheer strength, lifted "Farmer" Burns off the floor while he had the double nelson, bringing prolonged cheers from the Humboldt fans.

Burns shifted to a crotch, and as he tipped Gotch over on his shoulders for a moment the referee patted the veteran on the back in token of victory. They had wrestled eleven minutes and forty seconds. Burns, coming to the footlights, addressed the crowd as follows:

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"Ladies and Gentlemen: I have never met an amateur wrestler the like of this fellow in my life. If he will go with me, I will make him champion of America in a few months." Burns later made good on that promise.

GOTCH ON BURNS.

"I should hate to leave the subject of wrestling at any time," said Gotch to an interviewer after he had become world's champion, "without saying a good word for my old tutor, Martin, better known as 'Farmer' Burns, one of the greatest grapplers America has ever produced. Approaching his fiftieth milestone, the old Farmer is hale and husky, and seemingly the strength and stamina which have made him a mat artist in the highest state of perfection have remained unimpaired. Ask the Farmer how he has maintained such a state of physical excellence despite advancing years and he will say, 'Avoid dissipation, boy.' The Farmer never smoked, nor chewed, nor has he indulged in intoxicating drink; in fact, he carries his care in diet so far that he does not touch coffee or tea, his sole beverages being water and milk.

In many ways Burns is one of the most remarkably developed men I have ever seen. For instance, you cannot employ a strangle hold on the Farmer with success. They have tried in vain to choke the old chap. In fact, they have suspended him by the hangman's noose, but the great protecting cords in his neck would start bulging out and the Farmer would smile as he swung dangling at the end of the rope. Then Burns believes in letting the other fellow do the work in a match. 'Some of 'em start in like two-year-old colts,' says the Farmer, but the time comes when their grip relaxes and we find they are looking for a breathing spell themselves. Then we say, "Now the old Farmer'll wrestle a bit," and, gad snipes, you know what happens next.' "

CHAPTER VII.

Wins Fortune in the Klondike.

Farmer Burns was so well pleased with the showing Gotch had made against him that he made him an offer to travel with him. Gotch accepted and traveled with Burns as his mat pupil during 1900, defeating every man he was matched against. Following his reverse at the hands of Burns he defeated Ruby, Galliton, Scheller, Moth, Duncan McMillan, former champion, Bucholz and Wassem.

In the spring of 1901 Dick Butler, one of the Butler brothers, rich placer miners from Alaska, came to Iowa to persuade Farmer Burns to take a trip to the Yukon and clean up the camps. A fortune was to be made up there for a wrestler who could deliver the goods, Butler asserted. He could wrestle under an assumed name and no one would be the wiser.

Burns was unwilling to leave his family to hazard the dangers of that rough region, but he recommended Gotch to Butler as the fellow who could clean up everything in sight and hide his identity to better advantage.

BRINGS BACK \$35,000.

Gotch was a willing listener to the glowing tales of Butler and started out with him early in the summer of 1901, but against the wishes of his mother. He told his parents he was going in quest of a fortune and that he would put them on easy street when he got back.

He was gone six months, and returned with a bag of gold and Canadian paper valued at \$35,000. His wrestling triumphs in that Arctic region ranged from a defeat of a bully to a victory over the champion grappler of the Yukon.

The Humboldt farmer lad was known in the Klondike.

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dike as Frank Kennedy, one of the host of miners washing gold dust from the sand. He passed a month or more as a placer miner before opportunity knocked at his door, opening the way to an independent fortune.

DOWNS THE CAMP BULLY.

The camp, fortunately for Gotch, had a bully. This fellow was not a wonderful wrestler, but had a habit of intimidating other miners by a show of strength and bulldog courage. Gotch had not been in camp many weeks before he had a "run in" with the bully. Gotch rushed his traducer, grabbed him around the waist and hurled him to the ground. Then he pinned him with a hammerlock until he cried for mercy.

The story of Kennedy's victory over this "bad man" caused much excitement. Billy Murdock, champion wrestler of the camp, challenged him to a finish match. The challenge was accepted and the whole camp turned out to see the young stranger's finish. The bout was held in a saloon. It lasted just four minutes. Murdock, to the surprise of the miners, was thrown heavily and pinned to the floor in such decisive fashion as to remove all doubt as to who was champion wrestler of those diggings.

Kennedy's fame spread to other camps and he was challenged by two wrestlers named Riley and Murphy. The matches were for \$2,500, the mysterious stranger agreeing to throw both in an hour. He accomplished the task in half the time.

DEFEATS WHITE.

The miners began to believe Kennedy was a remarkable wrestler for a plain placer miner, but Kennedy just kept on looking for gold on Brown's claim, and let the rest talk.

Down at Dawson, White, a crack wrestler of Alaska,

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had the papers print under big headlines that he had posted \$2,500 for a three-fall meet with Kennedy. The young "miner" came down the creek, took the money out of his pocket, covered the purse, and agreed to throw White three times in an hour. The Dawson papers predicted the downfall of Kennedy, for White had a reputation for throwing people—in fact, the Klondike boasted only one better. Money went up freely on White. The next day the story read, "White was like wax in Kennedy's grip." He had won three falls in eighteen minutes and about \$8,000 in purse, stakes and gate receipts. But still he held his tongue.

CHALLENGES ALASKA CHAMPION.

The champion wrestler of Alaska was Silas Archer. "Kennedy" having defeated all the lesser lights, naturally turned his attention to the one who would draw the biggest crowd of all. He challenged Archer to a match to a finish.

"When I challenged Si he hemmed and hawed and the natives grew anxious to see the contest," relates Gotch. "Silas declared that he knew he could throw me, and that it would be only a waste of time for us to get together. The more he put it off and stalled, the greater grew the interest in the match, and finally he consented to meet me."

Archer declared he wouldn't wrestle for less than \$5,000. That suited the young miner and the five thousand dollars was promptly doubled. This took Archer's breath away, but the papers said he would surely win and so he felt better. The winner was to get a single fall. Archer was not alone the champion of Alaska, but a resident there. Local pride and loyalty to "their champion" brought miners from every field in the Klondike down to the old Savoy theater on the night of August 13, and every man came with a bag of gold dust in his pocket. Values run high in the Klondike, and when

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it was all over the papers said more money was bet on that contest than on any wrestling match that ever took place in the world. At all events men fought for standing room at \$1 per head.

MINERS TOSS GOLD DUST.

"You never saw such a crowd in your life," says Gotch. "The miners turned out in force, traveling miles through the snow to get to the scene of the contest. When Silas came on I could see that he had lost his nerve and I went at him like a tiger. I threw him about as if he were a child, and after eighteen and one-half minutes pinned his shoulders to the mat. I wanted Si to try another fall, just to convince him that there was no fluke about my victory, but he declared himself thoroughly convinced and began to look for his clothes. Throughout the match the miners were in an uproar. They howled and yelled and threw money on the mat.

"After the contest when I came to count up the proceeds of the match, I found that it had netted me \$18,640. I brought just about thirty-five thousand good, round dollars out of the Klondike and I did not have to dig in the ground for them either."

BEATEN BY SLAVIN.

"Kennedy" soon had a very different and most unpleasant experience. Frank Slavin, the Australian prize fighter, was in the Klondike, and so great was the fame of Kennedy after his victory over Archer that the miners considered him invincible with the gloves or on the mat. Gotch, too, thought Slavin was in for a beating, if the match should be arranged, but learned quite thoroughly that boxing and wrestling are by no means synonymous.

They met in the New Savoy theater, Dawson City, September 25, 1901, before a packed house. The winner was to take all.

Slavin gave Gotch a terrible beating. Every time

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the Australian offered at the future wrestling champion he landed a clean blow. So, at least, Gotch declares. Very soon one of his eyes was completely closed and he was bleeding and staggering. In a fit of blind retaliation he picked Slavin up and hurled him through the ropes, and the match was awarded to Slavin on a foul.

A five-style match followed between "Kennedy," Ole Marsh and the "mighty Colonel McLaughlin," and when all was over it was found that "Kennedy" had cleaned them all out. Unable to find any more opponents who wanted to put their money up on straight contests, Gotch began wrestling against time for nightly purses of from \$100 to \$500.

The boat in which Gotch was to have taken passage for home, the Skagway, went down in the Yukon river. Thirty-six persons were drowned in the disaster. Gotch luckily was detained by some friends, but lost his trunk, which went down with the victims to an icy grave.



"GOTCH—WHEN HE ISN'T WORKING."
By Carlson, in the Chicago Inter Ocean.

CHAPTER VIII.

Loses to Jenkins, Defeats Burns.

In 1902 and '03 Farmer Burns wrestled and trained his famous pupil until Gotch was pronounced fit to battle anyone in the world for the highest honors in the sport. The pair gave exhibitions about the country.

Gotch's first important match in 1902 was with Scott Miller, a husky packing house wrestler of Sioux City, Ia. This match is important in that it showed Gotch's superiority against a fair second rate wrestler and from the fact that in downing the pride of the packing house district the future champion used a form of the grip he later developed into his famous toe hold.

SOME NOTABLE SUCCESSES

His defeat of Wassem at Burlington, Ia., gave him the state championship, and a few days later at Davenport he won two out of three falls from Morad Ali, the 280-pound champion of Roumania. Frank Coleman succumbed to the new wrestling star from Iowa at Omaha, and as the year's touring was drawing to a close Christ Pearson was defeated by Gotch at Tacoma, Wash.

All this time Gotch was traveling with "Farmer" Burns, who took much pride in exhibiting his now famous mat protege.

January 10, 1903, Gotch clashed on the mat at Seattle, Wash., with the giant Frenchman, Carl Pons, one of the greatest Greco-Roman wrestlers of that day, and Gotch's decisive victory opened the way for a match with Tom Jenkins, champion of America. This, it was agreed, should be contested on Washington's birthday in Cleveland, Jenkins' home city.

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH JENKINS.

Jenkins, for a number of years the American cham-

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pion and now an instructor at the West Point military academy, was, according to Gotch, the strongest American wrestler he ever met. In what Gotch terms the second hardest match of his career he was defeated by the champion, February 22, 1903.

In justice to Gotch it must be said that he went into this match with the idea of trying out Jenkins. He had heard of the latter's wonderful strength and rough tactics and was eager to match his skill with that of the Clevelander, but was afraid to take chances. That probably cost him the match. Gotch, too, had not yet reached the heights of practical perfection at the catch-as-catch-can style.

As it was, Gotch might have been given this match on a foul, as Jenkins was twice cautioned for employing the strangle hold in the first bout and once in the second. Jenkins won on a jaw lock, the next door neighbor to the strangle grip.

This match, like their later meeting at Bellingham, Wash., was among the roughest mat battles in American history. Jenkins, despite his victory, got one of the severest gruellings of his stormy career as a topnotch grappler.

Gotch was a sorry sight as he returned to his home folk at Humboldt, bruised and bandaged, his nose twisted and his body decorated with plasters and other reminders of the battle, but eager for a return encounter.

Referee Edwards at one point threatened to stop the match. He told the wrestlers he was there to referee a mat battle, not a prize fight or a cock fight.

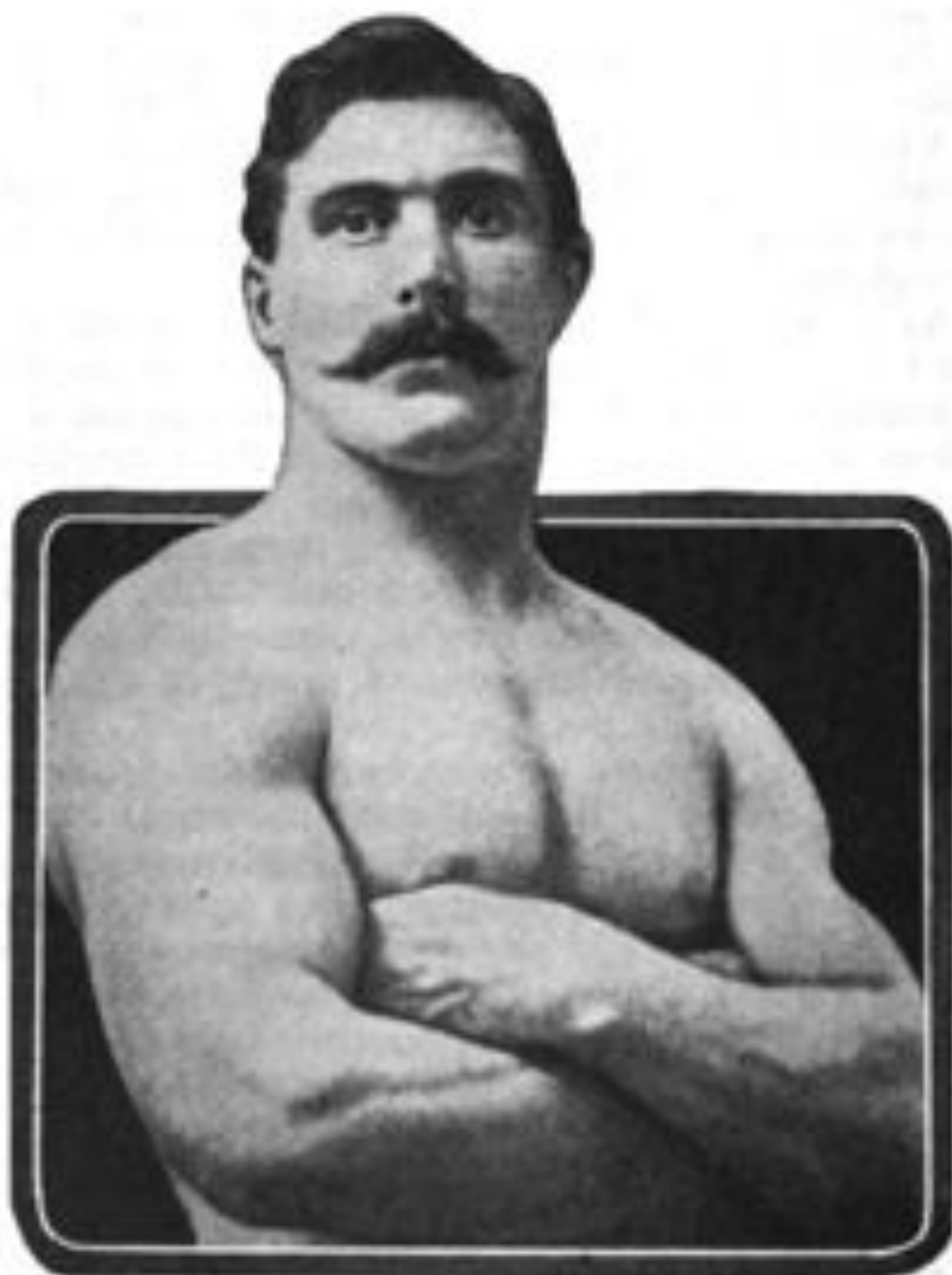
PLAYED WAITING GAME.

Farmer Burns had instructed Gotch how to meet Jenkins' attack and the Humboldt man refused to change his tactics. He simply tried to hold Jenkins off. He played the same game against Jenkins to which he resorted in his first match with Hackenschmidt, but in

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this instance it failed because Gotch didn't know enough about wrestling.

The wrestlers were on their feet roughing it for nearly an hour and a half. Edwards warned them to mix it, but Gotch refused. Jenkins rushed Gotch to the ropes.



TOM JENKINS.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the American Sports Publishing Co.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Gotch slid to the floor and Jenkins worked over him like a beaver. Edwards warned Jenkins against the strangle hold. Gotch got to his feet and tripped Jenkins to the floor. Gotch was cautious and held his opponent to the mat for some time. Jenkins with a supreme effort broke away. Then they roughed it until cautioned again by the referee.

Jenkins made a lunge and landed behind Gotch. He secured a hammerlock, which Gotch broke after a struggle. Jenkins shifted to a bar nelson and crotch and Gotch's shoulders finally were pinned to the mat for the first fall in 1:55:00.

Gotch had suffered terribly from the strangle holds and Jenkins' old trick of stabbing across the face for a further arm hold and hitting the nose. When he came up for the second fall he was wobbly, while Jenkins, in his prime, well trained and experienced, was confident. After twelve minutes of rough wrestling, Jenkins caught Gotch with a punishing jaw lock, which many thought was a strangle hold, and drew Gotch to the mat for the second and deciding fall.

Jenkins' victory was decisive, but the tables were turned less than a year later when Gotch wrested the championship from him in a desperate battle at Bellingham, Wash.

The word "quit" has never been in Gotch's vocabulary. He immediately determined to keep after Jenkins and force him into a return match by downing all other aspirants for the title.

After winning from Aldrich at Des Moines in July, 1903, Gotch went to the Pacific Coast and in a succession of victories at Bellingham, Wash., defeated J. Anderson, September 4, Emil Klank and Frank Coleman, September 20, and Farmer Burns, October 5; also Burns again, December 11, and Chief Two Feathers, December 23; and on January 28, 1904, he took from Jenkins the honor of the American championship.

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DEFEATS HIS MAT TEACHER.

Pupil had become victor over the master of the mat when Farmer Burns went down to defeat for the first time before his protege, Frank Gotch. The Humboldt boy had applied himself faithfully since his match with Burns three years previous at Fort Dodge, Ia. He had studied, practiced and dreamed of the time when he would pin the shoulders of his tutor to the padded canvas for the first time.

Burns had never lost a match previous to this encounter. He told Gotch he would not acknowledge defeat at his hands without a struggle, and the pride of Big Rock, Ia., kept his word.

"I tipped Gotch off to all my tricks, and then gave away 30 pounds in this match. How is that for liberality?" asked Burns, speaking of this memorable battle.

It was Gotch's ambition to defeat Burns decisively. He did not spare the feelings of the veteran. He rushed at Burns at the call of time, and by "bulling" it soon had his opponent down on his knees. Gotch tried to get a foot lock, and Burns had difficulty in escaping. Gotch then tried for a headlock, but Burns knew how to render the grip useless. Many supporters of the Farmer were at the ringside, and they applauded loudly when Burns broke Gotch's waist hold, darted out, and put Gotch to the mat. Gotch had been coached by Burns never to let a wrestler keep him on the mat, if possible, and the two wrestlers fought to the edge of the canvas and then rolled off on the floor. When they came back Gotch tried hard to secure a hold, and finally floored Burns. He tried for many holds, but Burns broke them with consummate skill. Finally Gotch secured a full nelson and bore down with all his strength. As Burns tipped and his feet dangled in the air, Gotch switched to a crotch and wrist lock, and bore the shoulders of the veteran to the mat in 22:30.

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BURNS TAKES SECOND FALL.

In the second bout Burns took the aggressive from the call of time. Gotch, however, managed to put Burns to the mat and held him there for ten minutes. Burns tried desperately to rise. Burns finally broke away, but Gotch threw him heavily on his head. The veteran and his pupil mixed it savagely. Burns secured a headlock which Gotch broke with difficulty. Burns followed up his advantage, and fastened on a double bar lock with which he pinned Gotch to the mat for the second fall, also in 22:30.

Gotch rushed in to finish his tutor in quick order in the third bout, but Burns by a shift and a trip threw Gotch nearly off the mat. Gotch rushed in desperately and put Burns to the mat. He tried for a toe hold, but Burns finally broke the grip. Gotch secured a half nelson, but Burns countered with an arm lock, and put Gotch on his shoulder. Gotch secured a toe lock, and had Burns near a fall, when the veteran, with a supreme effort, broke the grip and came to the top in a mixup. Gotch secured a half nelson after coming out of a bad grip and won the third fall in 16:10.

Burns, veteran of hundreds of thrilling encounters on the mat, had met his match at last in his pupil. The master slowly but surely was going down before youth and strength and skill. He had been able to defeat Gotch when the latter knew nothing about the science of wrestling, but knowledge made Gotch invincible. Burns gained applause by throwing him over his head in the final bout, but that only added to the youngster's ferocious attack, and he pinned his tutor to the canvas for the deciding fall with a half nelson and crotch in 17:25.

Burns addressed the crowd, telling them that Gotch was in the grandest condition of his career, and that he would certainly defeat Jenkins for the championship.

CHAPTER IX.

Defeats Giant Indian Chief.

Tales of a wonderful Indian wrestler on a reservation in Montana were told in the mining camps and the seaport wrestling centers of the Pacific Coast in 1903. Native Montanans did not believe the world held a wrestler who could defeat this proud chief, said to possess almost superhuman strength and endurance. Other wrestlers turned pale at mention of the Indian, but Gotch was seeking a reputation and the American championship, and showed that lion-hearted courage that later brought him the world's crown of the mat. He said he would be glad to meet the Indian and they were matched to battle to a finish December 23 at Bellingham, Wash.

"Gotch is a most unusual specimen of athletic bravery," says Farmer Burns. "Other champions have always been afraid of losing their titles. Gotch seems never to have thought of such a thing. Whether his challenger were an Indian, a Turk, a Russian "Lion" or a wild man from Borneo, they have all looked alike to the man from Humboldt. He has been willing to meet them all and fight them to a finish. Gotch knows no fear on the mat."

"On the night of December 23," said a writer in a Bellingham paper, "Gotch will wrestle Chief Two Feathers, a giant Kootenay Indian, in this city. Chief Two Feathers arrived here this week togged out in his war paint, and with his head feathers on. He is a small thing, weighing only 220 pounds, and stands six feet five inches."

With all the marks of a chieftain of his tribe, garbed in a many-colored robe of beads, Two Feathers presented an imposing appearance. In this memorable battle he showed great confidence, but Gotch taught him

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that the white man who had driven his forefathers back into the plains was the mental and athletic superior of the red man.

INDIAN A WHIRLWIND.

"The Indian was an unknown quantity," said the Bellingham writer. "As he stepped out of his gorgeous blanket, his great height and spareness stood out in contrast with the powerful build of his white opponent. They shook hands and went to the center of the mat. In less than a minute the Indian had the white man down on the mat, and to the wonder of the spectators that long, lithe creature kept Frank Gotch under for a straight 15 minutes, defeating the most desperate efforts of Gotch to free himself. The friends of the local favorite were scared and did not hesitate to say so. Was the wonderful wrestler, who had defeated the great Farmer Burns and between whom and the American championship only one man intervened, to go down in defeat before this Indian from a Montana reservation? It looked that way. While the Indian never in the first bout had a hold on Gotch that could be considered as leading directly to a fall, he seemed to handle him with the greatest ease and the way he punished him and slung him around the mat took the breath away from Gotch and his supporters. This Indian showed that he knew something about the wrestling game. And his strength—it was simply incredible. His great height and the length of his reach were also great factors in his favor. When the white man once got behind him, however, the one great weakness of the Indian plainly showed. He is not good in defensive work. As an aggressive wrestler, he is certainly a whirlwind, but he will not beat good men until he learns how to wrestle better when he is under. Had he been as good in defensive work as in aggressive, nothing could have saved Gotch last night. The Indian would surely have worn him out.

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GOTCH'S HEAD WORK WINS.

"After the first 15 minutes Gotch began to hold his own a little better, although it was well near the end of the first fall before he could be said to have come anywhere near holding the Indian level. Gotch had been taking great punishment. He had been under for the best part of 25 minutes, but his head had been working all the time. He had found the weakness of the Indian. Finally he saw his chance. Making a quick breakaway, he landed behind Two Feathers and soon had him in a perilous position. The Indian would not down. Several times he put the same hold on his swarthy opponent, and each time got him a little nearer the mat. Finally, after a great struggle, Gotch won the fall with a scissorlock. The enthusiasm as Referee McMillan touched him on the back was remarkable, even for a Bellingham audience.

"At the beginning of the second bout the Indian resumed his aggressive tactics. He had a way of getting hold of Gotch's leg and throwing him to the mat that was very distressing to Gotch. Time and again he thus forced his opponent under. He showed the result of a little coaching in this bout, and succeeded in getting a hammerlock on Gotch that nearly proved disastrous. For fifteen minutes the advantage seemed to be with Two Feathers, but his opponent's head had been working again, and when the time came he jumped behind the Indian and after a succession of bad holds finally won the fall with scissorlock and back arm hold."

It was a crushing defeat for the proud Indian. "Gotch, he heap big wrestler," said Two Feathers. "Me no match."

CHAPTER X.

Gotch Wrests Crown from Jenkins.

Jenkins
1904

Frank Gotch became champion wrestler of America January 27, 1904, after one of the roughest battles in all the annals of this ancient sport. Tom Jenkins had held the title for six years. He had suppressed all challengers by his rough-house tactics, including Gotch at Cleveland the year previous.

The sting of that defeat and its gruelling punishment spurred Gotch to secure a return contest. Jenkins at this time was considered invincible, and Gotch, well aware that he could win only at the price of supreme effort, trained night and day. He ran thirty miles across country every afternoon. Joe Carroll was his handler. Emil Klank, Farmer Burns, Duncan McMillan, Tom Davis and George Kennedy were his trainers and wrestling partners.

The pavilion at Bellingham, Wash., where the match was staged, the largest on the Pacific coast at that time, was packed to the doors and some "fans" were hanging on the rafters. Seats sold as high as \$25 each. Jenkins, seeing the size of the "gate," held the crowd for an hour, demanding \$250 more in addition to his guarantee of \$1,000, win or lose.

A FIERCE BATTLE.

"This match wasn't a scientific grappling contest," said Klank, one of Gotch's seconds and later manager of the world's champion. "It was a rough and tumble encounter. It was the fiercest battle in wrestling history. If I live to be a hundred years old, I never expect to see a mat struggle the like of that one between Gotch and Jenkins at Bellingham."

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The story of the contest as told in the Seattle Times of January 29, 1904, reads as follows:

"There is a new star in the sporting world. His name is Frank A. Gotch, his home is Humboldt, Iowa, and if he so chooses he can register 'heavyweight champion catch-as-catch-can wrestler of the world' after his name.

"The right to do this he earned last night in one of the most terrific mat battles ever seen in America. It seems preposterous to the average man who has followed athletics to be told that there exists a man twenty pounds lighter than Tom Jenkins, for six years the undefeated world's champion, who can make him quit like a dog, but that is just what Frank Gotch made him do last night.

"So after one fall had been taken from Jenkins, which left him a hopelessly defeated man in the center of the mat, so dazed that he had to be lifted to his corner and restoratives applied, he deliberately fouled Gotch four times in the second in order to force the referee to give the decision against him on a foul.

"Three times he put the strangle hold on Gotch, a hold barred by the articles of the bout, and when the strong Iowa boy shook them off again and again, he started in to slugging him, aiming one terribly vicious blow at his head that, had it landed, would have certainly put the new champion to sleep.

ADMITS HIS FOUL.

"After the referee had given his decision against him, Jenkins admitted the justness of it, but called the audience's attention to the fact that he has only one good eye and he said that Gotch had been trying all the evening to gouge that out, and that he would strike at the man who did that if it cost him every dollar he had in

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the world, and meant that he would have to quit this sphere the next minute.

"Truly the bout was something fierce. Gotch took Jenkins' measure one year ago in Jenkins' home town, Cleveland, where it is claimed that Jenkins strangled him down with the consent of a friendly referee. From that day to this he has been training for last night's event, and it was truly a gorilla rather than a man that Jenkins faced.

"Confident, alert, smiling, Gotch faced him for the first go. Of caution the soon-to-be champion had any amount, and Jenkins was equally endowed with it. Both seemed loath to take any chances that might result in his antagonist getting behind him, and it was twenty minutes before they went to the mat. Then Jenkins was behind Gotch, but only for a very few seconds. The Iowa boy came out from under him like a flash.

GOTCH THE BETTER MAN.

"Twice more during the first bout, which lasted fifty-three minutes, did the Cleveland man manage to get behind his younger opponent, but it was only for a minute or so each time. In all the fifty-three minutes Gotch was behind Jenkins at least forty-eight.

"The Iowa boy did all the leading and from the beginning had Jenkins hugging the ropes and working off the mat in order to avoid having falls counted against him. Tom Davis, the referee, was steadily trying to avoid calling any questionable falls, and for his pains had the audience hissing him early in the game for refusing to give Gotch falls to which they thought he was entitled.

"Gotch was fast. He went so rapidly that the skillful champion seemed as if he had lost his cunning. And when at the end of fifty-three minutes Jenkins was finally called "down," he was nearly helpless from four terrific slams upon the floor which Gotch had given him while

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fastened firmly in his embrace with a crotch and half nelson hold.

"Three times Jenkins managed to wriggle off the mat after Gotch had slammed him upon the floor, but the fourth time it was no use. After the referee had the third time placed him in the center of the mat to continue the match, each time giving Gotch the same hold as the one with which they went off the mat, he had not the strength to get to safety again. When Gotch turned him loose his seconds picked him up and carried him to his corner.

JENKINS IN TERRIFIC PACE.

"Jenkins started in the second bout at a terrific pace, realizing that whatever he did must be accomplished quickly. In a fierce mix-up he seemingly got Gotch into a very bad position, but his strength was gone and he could not deliver. On the other hand, Gotch was strong and was wrestling seemingly as steadily as at the commencement of the bout.

"Feeling himself going and wishing to avoid the disgrace of being fairly thrown twice, Jenkins commenced deliberately fouling his antagonist in order to force the referee to give the decision against him on a foul, hoping thus to tarnish his adversary's victory.

"After the match Referee Tom Davis said:

"'Jenkins deliberately fouled Gotch three times with a strangle hold, which was barred by the articles governing the contest. I saw that he was all in and that he was trying to force me to call the match against him on a foul instead of taking his medicine and being thrown twice, so I refrained from calling the fouls, as I saw that Gotch was wrestling strong and easily breaking his foul holds.

"'Seeing that I would not call his lesser fouls, Jenkins deliberately aimed a vicious swing at Gotch, which everybody could see, and seeing that there was no use

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in further prolonging a contest which was too one-sided to be otherwise than brutal, I gave my decision.'

"The referee's decision was greeted with great applause. The police jumped into the ring, but there was then no need of their services."

DEFEATS JENKINS AT CLEVELAND.

Jenkins was not disheartened by the outcome of the battle at Bellingham and soon demanded another encounter with the victor. Gotch was glad to accommodate him, but balked at first at Jenkins' insistence that the match must be staged in Cleveland. Jenkins insisted also on a Cleveland man for referee, and again Gotch finally yielded.

"Who was the strongest catch-as-catch-can wrestler you ever met?" Gotch was asked recently.

"Tom Jenkins," was the quick reply.

"Jenkins was the strongest and roughest wrestler of his time. His star was setting at a time when mine was in the ascendant. I had six hard matches with Jenkins and every one was a bitter struggle. This old war horse of the mat was mighty tough to handle. Any one who struggled with his well-trained 215 pounds of bone, sinew and muscle knew he had been in a real wrestling match. It was necessary for me to be in the best of condition to defeat Jenkins."

BOUT FAST AND FURIOUS.

When Gotch met Jenkins in this third match February 1, 1905, at Cleveland, the Humboldt wrestler was trained to the minute to defend his title as champion of America—in the best condition of his career up to that time. Jenkins appeared slow by comparison with his condition when he met Gotch at Bellingham, but he did not give up without a hard struggle.

The first bout was fast and furious and marked by

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rough work in which Jenkins was the aggressor. After twelve minutes of sparring and pushing and talking, Jenkins sprang forward and hurled Gotch to the floor with a leg hold.

The champion came to a sitting position, broke a waist hold and was up, but Jenkins rushed him to the ropes. They came back to the center of the mat. Jenkins rushed Gotch to the ropes, secured a waist hold and threw him over his head. He followed up his advantage by springing on Gotch, but the latter escaped and his friends applauded wildly.

Gotch then put Jenkins to the mat, but the veteran was up instantly. Jenkins rushed and again secured a leg hold. Gotch broke a half nelson. Jenkins then fastened on his famous headlock and drew Gotch to the mat. It was a cruel hold and there were calls of "strangle!" "strangle!" Jenkins also secured a crotch and Gotch lost the fall after twenty-eight minutes of sensational wrestling.

GOTCH PINS HIM.

The fast pace had its effect on Jenkins, and Gotch, noticing his opponent's fatigue, rushed in to secure the second fall in quick time. He rushed Jenkins to the ropes and then hurled him to the mat. Gotch secured a crotch hold and Jenkins fought desperately to free himself. Gotch grabbed one of Jenkins' wrists and then bore his weight on the veteran until he sank back in defeat. Only forty-eight seconds had been consumed in this fall. It was the signal for prolonged cheers by the Gotch enthusiasts, many of whom had come from Buffalo, where the champion was popular. Wrestling fans had seen the great Youssouff, the Terrible Turk, crush Jenkins in seven minutes, but they were electrified at Gotch's wonderful exhibition of speed.

Jenkins, who was nearly exhausted by the gruelling pace, made a despairing effort to win the third bout, which would give him the match. He rushed Gotch to

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the ropes and secured a strangle hold which the referee forced him to relinquish.

This was the signal for a fresh assault by Gotch and the veteran went down after the American champion had secured a leg hold. Jenkins never arose until Gotch had him pinned for the deciding fall. Working well to the side, Gotch tossed Jenkins about the mat until the veteran seemed worried and beaten. Gotch had revenge for Jenkins' terrible treatment of him in their first match in Cleveland. He secured two punishing headlocks, but released the grips. Jenkins fought gamely, but he was a beaten man. Gotch tugged and pulled his opponent near the ropes and gradually turned him on his back in defeat with a reverse body hold in eleven minutes.

Jenkins complained that he had wrenched his back early in the match. He said any wrestler in the world should be in the best condition possible to cope with Gotch. He began strenuous training to regain his lost laurels and that honor came to him six months later in New York.

Most big men are clumsy on the mat, but Gotch is so fast it would require a field glass to see him shift from hold to hold.—*Chicago Daily News*.

CHAPTER XI.

Defeats Jim Parr, English Champion.

England has reared few catch-as-catch-can wrestlers who compare favorably with the mat products of America. There was one Englishman, however, who stood in a class by himself at the Yankee style of grappling. His name was Jim Parr and he hailed from Chelsea-on-the-Strand. Parr was a master at the game—strong, ambitious and experienced. When Gotch dethroned Jenkins and was crowned king of American wrestlers he was promptly challenged by the defeated champion. Defies were hurled at him also by Dan McLeod and Jim Parr.

Gotch and Parr met in a finish match at Buffalo, June 27, 1904.

“In the presence of a crowd that packed the Olympic club from ringside to rafters,” said the Buffalo Evening Times of the following day, “Frank Gotch, the American champion catch-as-catch-can wrestler, defeated Jim Parr, the English champion, in straight falls last night. Gotch made good all that had been claimed for him by heralds of the west. He has an ideal build for a wrestler, powerful in upper and lower limbs, has a thorough knowledge of all the arts and tricks of the game, and wrestles with a fairness that is most commendable. At no time did he resort to any tactics that brought out disapprobation from a crowd that admires Parr for what he has done and what he is. Never, even after escaping from neck holds and stomach rubbing which Parr invariably inflicts on all his antagonists, did Gotch retaliate. His temper throughout the contest was in every way admirable.

“When the men faced each other for the first time there was not so much disparity in size and weight as might have been anticipated by those who had heard of

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how Gotch put it on Jenkins on the occasion of their recent contest. Gotch is the larger man, but he outweighed Parr by less than fifteen pounds. Parr weighed 175 pounds and Gotch tipped the scales at 188."

GOTCH AN INVETERATE PUNISHER.

The Buffalo Courier's story of the match read in part as follows:

"Frank Gotch is still the world's champion at catch-as-catch-can style of wrestling. He defeated Jim Parr, champion of England, in straight falls at the Olympic club last night in a contest that was hard fought from beginning to end.

"Gotch is all that has been said of him. He is strong, rough and fierce. He has a style that is not showy to look upon, but it is effective. He is an inveterate, unrelenting punisher, apparently of unlimited endurance, and possessed of exceptional speed and plenty of bulldog aggressiveness.

"Buffalonians never before last night saw such a wrestling demon as this same Gotch. Parr put up a remarkably game struggle and a clever defense, but was overpowered by Gotch's wonderful strength and worried by his punishing methods. No man ever punished Parr so severely in this city as Gotch did last night. The leg twisting did more to bring about Parr's defeat than anything else. The Englishman's legs are his mainstay in his contests, so that when Gotch put them out of commission the Englishman was left like a ship without a rudder. At that he put up a splendid contest and made additional friends by his cleverness and grit."

GOTCH BROKE SCISSORS HOLDS.

Parr had a "scissors on the head" hold, with which he was said to have defeated a thousand opponents, half strangling them into submission. He succeeded in

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fastening this hold to Gotch twice, but the manner in which Gotch broke the grip caused the English wrestler to pronounce his opponent the strongest grappler in the world.

Parr rushed at Gotch at the call of time with a fury that showed he intended testing his opponent's courage. Gotch, however, had learned the art of rough and tumble wrestling on the expansive acres south of Humboldt and in the Klondike. He seemed to enjoy that sort of milling. After five minutes Parr dived for Gotch's legs and secured a firm grip on the American's right leg, but Gotch, putting all his power in the maneuver, broke away amid an uproar.

This exhibition of strength was the first tip to the Englishman concerning the power of the wonderful wrestler with whom he was battling. He made another lunge for Gotch's legs, but Gotch sidestepped and brought Parr to the mat with a waist hold and the big crowd roared its approval.

Gotch punished Parr with a leg and nelson hold which the Englishman broke after a struggle. Parr put Gotch's head in chancery and the Humboldt man was free only after a battle lasting several minutes. Gotch secured a half nelson, but Parr spun out on his head and came to his feet. Parr tried to get a leg hold, but once more went under. In a mix-up the wrestlers came to their feet. Parr finally secured a leg hold and went to the top. It was at this point that the wonderful strength of Gotch was revealed to his opponent. Parr swung around and fastened a scissors on the head, his famous grip. By sheer strength Gotch raised up, lifting his opponent, and Parr went flying over the American's head. The crowd cheered and then laughed at the Englishman's plight.

Gotch bored in and put Parr down, but the latter again placed Gotch's head in chancery and punished him severely. The battle continued with the wrestlers

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up and down alternately until Gotch pinned Parr with a toe lock and half nelson in 49:10.

GOTCH WINS.

Parr evidently figured he must win in a hurry in the second bout, if at all. He rushed Gotch nearly off the mat soon after the call of time. Gotch pulled Parr's head forward and the Englishman went to his knees. Parr in a mix-up ran away on his hands, but Gotch put him down again. Gotch tried for a double nelson and then for a bar hammerlock, but the Englishman was wary of these dangerous grips and escaped. Parr came to his feet and wrestled Gotch to the mat amid great excitement. Parr tried several holds and then made the mistake of attempting to secure a reverse nelson and Gotch escaped.

Gotch rushed in and slammed Parr to the mat and the crowd rose and cheered. The American champion reached across and secured a further arm hold and Parr came to a bridge. In this position Gotch jumped in and fastened a scissors on the body and the game Englishman gradually sank back in defeat after twenty-seven minutes of the fastest wrestling ever seen in Buffalo.

After the match Parr said he had contracted to meet one citizen of the United States, but in Gotch he had met several in one, which was hardly an equal contest.

CHAPTER XII.

Conquers Dan McLeod.

Hundreds of coal miners invaded Vancouver, B. C., August 6, 1904, to watch two athletes struggle for the wrestling championship of America. One was Frank Gotch, a few months previous crowned king of American wrestlers, and the other Dan McLeod, who had defeated Gotch in 1899 at Luverne, Iowa. McLeod had been a miner in Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, and his former companions had crossed to the mainland to watch the pride of their diggings dethrone the presumptuous lad from the States. It was the first time the pair had met since that eventful day at Luverne.

Gotch in the meantime had toppled Tom Jenkins from his pedestal, and had in turn pinned the shoulders of "Farmer" Burns and Jim Parr to the padded canvas. Only one wrestler of wide fame remained in America for him to subdue, in order to have a clear title to his recently acquired heritage. That was Dan McLeod.

FAST AND FIERCE MATCH.

It was a desperately contested battle, and was vividly described in a Vancouver newspaper of August 7, 1904, as follows:

"In a match at Brockton Point on Saturday afternoon that was worth anybody's money to see, Frank A. Gotch successfully defended his title to the catch-as-catch-can championship of America by throwing Dan S. McLeod, the ex-champion, two out of three falls.

"The match was fast and fierce from the first. Gotch and McLeod were both willing, and neither showed any disposition to keep out of the game. They were there to wrestle and they wrestled from the drop of the hat.

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McLeod undoubtedly showed better in the first fall, and on his general work all through, his aggressiveness and keeping Gotch on the defensive, was entitled to the fall that he finally got when the big Iowan's shoulders were eventually forced to the ground amidst the wildest yelling that has been heard on the grounds since the big lacrosse matches of last year.

"But youth must be served. The fast pace of the first fall undoubtedly told on McLeod, and he slowed up somewhat in the second attack. Gotch was serious but apparently always confident. He took no chances, however, and evidently had a thorough respect for the shorter man in front of him. Carroll, who seconded Gotch, more than once looked anxious, and warned his man to look out when he mixed up with McLeod on the mat, and was all but thrown.

MCLEOD THROWS GOTCH.

"McLeod was the first to try for a throw by turning and going for the waist. Gotch successfully countered and went over on McLeod, trying to draw him to the mat. There was a short, hard struggle here, and McLeod got away. The men worked on the feet for three minutes, when McLeod dived suddenly for the leg and lifted Gotch. The reach was too short, however, and Gotch struggled out of the hold and again came to his feet. The men had no sooner got to their feet again than McLeod like lightning repeated his trick, and this time Gotch went up in the air and in spite of his struggles was thrown to the mat with McLeod on top and behind. McLeod worked to the waist and then to the leg, but Gotch countered and McLeod went back to the waist. Here Gotch turned to his haunches and broke to his feet with McLeod after him. Suddenly Gotch turned and rushed his man. The men locked standing up and swayed partly across the mat before breaking. Then Gotch tried McLeod's work and went for the leg.

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McLeod turned and went down before Gotch could lift him, and Gotch was behind with no apparent advantage. Gotch worked fast and got a half nelson. As soon as he thought the hold was right he went at McLeod like a wildcat and worked faster than any big man ever worked on the mat in this city before. McLeod started the crowd to its feet by a really remarkable head spin get-away, and before the noise had stopped Gotch was on his man again, bringing him back by the foot. There was a pause for a moment, Gotch figuring on how to go at his work, when McLeod suddenly darted ahead on his hands and knees and was to his feet and in safety.

SHOWS WONDERFUL STRENGTH.

"They worked again. McLeod suddenly went to the leg and by a wonderful exhibition of strength lifted Gotch in spite of his fierce resistance and threw him heavily to the mat. McLeod was behind and there was hard work on the floor, the Nanaimo man going right after the big fellow, and he had all he knew to keep alive. The work was the best and fastest ever seen around these parts, and the crowd had become about wild. McLeod had a half nelson, but could not get to the crotch to keep Gotch from breaking away, and both were up again. Gotch in his turn went to the leg, and again McLeod saved by turning and going voluntarily to the mat.

"On the mat Gotch worked for a hammerlock, but finding he could not get the wily McLeod's arm back, shifted to a half nelson. McLeod's legs shot up in the air, he turned on his head, and was over and behind Gotch, with the latter almost surprised at how it all happened. It was another chance for the men from Nanaimo to roar, and they roared. The Bellingham visitors who were for Gotch to a man, applauded the work as well. It was worth the applause.

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"CROWD WAS CRAZY."

"McLeod went carefully at his work this time. He made a lot of feinting moves, and then suddenly went for the nelson and crotch. The crotch hold was not full. Had it been, the fall would have ended then and there. As it was, McLeod almost had his man, and it was up to Gotch to get away. He struggled and wriggled, and managed at last to save himself in the fiercest kind of wrestling. As soon as he was out of immediate danger, the lowan went at McLeod like a tiger, and was met breast to breast. The crowd was crazy, and as they went to the floor, held its breath, as it looked like a nelson for Gotch. McLeod made his getaway, though only to be nailed again. Gotch got a leg hold and suddenly jumped for the scissors, but did not make the lock. Then McLeod got his man and there was another heartrending struggle, with Gotch bridging and squirming and out of it. By this time the people were worked up to almost anything out of reason, and as Gotch got the leghold for an upturn lift, things were intense. He put McLeod down and got a half nelson, and McLeod set things going again by a lightning-like spin out of danger. To their feet again, and another dive for Gotch's leg. The counter was successful and after twenty-three minutes of good hard work from the beginning, the men went to the mat again, Gotch on top. He got a waist hold and McLeod sat up. Gotch was thinking. Suddenly he stood up, lifting McLeod, and threw his man fiercely to the mat, some distance away. McLeod landed fairly on his shoulders, but Gotch was away from him, and according to the conditions of the match it was not a fall. They got together again, McLeod behind. McLeod got a crotch and inside arm hold, and Gotch had to counter by pushing McLeod's head back. The men were very evenly matched, though working in somewhat different styles.

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HOW THE END CAME.

"It was evident that something had to happen. The men were working too fast to keep going much longer without someone going down. They were on their feet again and fiddling, and Gotch went for a leg and McLeod went to the mat. It looked serious for McLeod for a minute, as Gotch got a good half nelson, but McLeod's wonderful head-spinning saved him again. Gotch was still after him and still on the aggressive when McLeod suddenly began to fight back. McLeod got a leg hold and lifted Gotch bodily. Still holding his man, he worked down lower, and standing the big fellow on his head he tried his hardest to force his shoulder to the mat. The wonderful strength of Gotch's neck saved him for a moment, and he stood literally on his head with a powerful man like McLeod trying to force him to bend his neck, until McLeod had to give up trying. Finding he could not work his trick, McLeod threw his man to the floor and jumped on him like a cat. He jumped to a half nelson and worked his other arm to a crotch hold, and the end came. He had the hold beautifully and Gotch knew it. The man underneath started a heart-breaking struggle to get away, but it was of no avail. He turned only to be held and brought back by the crotch hold, and McLeod began to use his half nelson to turn him over. A squirm and McLeod brought him back. The turns from side to side became shorter, and Gotch bridged in the last desperate effort to save. The shoulders went nearer and nearer to the mat, and with the referee lying on his face almost, the hand went up and fell on McLeod's back, giving the Nanaimo man the first fall in 32 minutes and 44 seconds.

PACE TOLD ON McLEOD.

"The betting had been two to one on Gotch at the beginning. It was now even money. Some men won-

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dered, though, if McLeod could stand the awful pace. McLeod was somewhat old, and the way he was working made some people dubious that he could go the distance. They came back again and went at it. Gotch was working the faster of the two, and went to the attack at once. A successful dive to the leg, and McLeod was on the mat, with Gotch proceeding to business at once. He tried for a hammer, then a scissors, but could make neither stick. Though the work was fast, there was nothing serious yet until Gotch got what looked like a strangle and the referee said something to him. He let go immediately and the work went on. Shortly afterward McLeod appeared to try a choke hold, and the referee again said something. These two occasions were the only approaches to anything that looked like wrong work all through, and were hardly deliberate. Gotch lifted from the leg, but McLeod spun away to safety. Gotch was doing all the aggressive work.

“McLeod threw his arm over Gotch's neck and tried to get out, but Gotch brought him back by the foot. Gotch tried the scissors and McLeod got away and went at the attack.

“The wrestling was good, though not as fast as during the first fall. The end, though, was the fastest work of this time. McLeod went fiercely at Gotch, working on his leg. He shifted to the waist and lifted Gotch, who was struggling fiercely but could not get away. While Gotch was struggling on his haunches, McLeod with lightning-like swiftness shifted to the neck and arm hold, and it looked bad for the Iowa man. Gotch squirmed out and like a flash got behind and became aggressive. Gotch went to the leg and jumped for the scissors, which he made. Gotch then got an arm-lock and had McLeod where he wanted him. Here it was that McLeod lost whatever chance he might have had to win the match. He put up a struggle that lasted over two minutes to

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stall off the inevitable, but after bridging, turning and struggling in a way that was wonderful, but that was also killing, he went down at last, and honors were even. Time 23 minutes and 20 seconds.

ALL OVER BUT SHOUTING.

"That last struggle took the life out of McLeod. He had spent about all the strength he came out with, and the result of the last fall was never seriously in doubt. The match was still good. It only looked slow in comparison with the wonderful swiftness of the previous work, and there was many a chance left to shout. The end happened from a crotch and half nelson in 26:38."

"I renewed an old acquaintance," said McLeod after the match. "I never saw a youngster improve as has Gotch since that little encounter at Luverne. I tipped Gotch off to Farmer Burns. I told the Farmer I had discovered a world beater. That was the best tip I ever gave a fellow. I beat him five years ago. I would need a club to do it now."

CHAPTER XIII.

Defeats "Yankee" Rogers, Loses Twice to Jenkins.

Not satisfied with the terrific battle and defeat Gotch had given him in August, Dan McLeod again challenged the champion and lost to him again at Vancouver, October 5, 1904.

Gotch then went east and met the giant New Englander, Charles ("Yankee") Rogers in a finish match at Buffalo, November 25.

Here is the story as told in the Buffalo Express of November 26:

"Frank Gotch, the American wrestling champion, defeated Yankee Rogers, the New Englander, now making his home in Buffalo, at the Arsenal last night, and defeated him hard. Perfect specimens of manhood, Gotch weighing 200 pounds and Rogers about 210, both in splendid physical condition, the two men, until Rogers appeared to slow up, furnished what was the best bout ever wrestled in Buffalo.

ROUGHED IT SAVAGELY.

"The match was at mixed styles. Gotch won the toss for choice of bout and elected to have the first his favorite catch-as-catch-can. He legged Rogers down viciously before they had been at it a minute and then proceeded to go after him with scarcely the lapse of a second. Rogers, strong and fighting hard, made a gallant battle as under man, while Gotch pulled, hauled and mauled him about the mat for over half an hour. Gotch tried various artifices of the professional wrestler to weaken his man, and Rogers, spurred on by his admirers, finally thought it up to him to try some slugging, the first of the night. He rammed his elbow repeatedly into

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the face of Gotch, until finally, with fire darting from his eyes, the enraged westerner took advantage of an upward sweep of Rogers' elbow, doubled over his man like a flash and took a savage reverse nelson. Then Gotch put the championship strength into action, and packing his 200 pounds on Rogers' chest, crushed him for a very flat fall in 43:10.

"Rogers looked dazed as he left the ring, covered with sawdust, for the mat had ripped and Rogers had been under man throughout.

"The mat was sewed during the fifteen-minute intermission and they came on for Graeco-Roman. This was Rogers' favorite, it was understood, but Gotch evidently came out to win the match straight, although he had made but few moves before it was apparent the style was as unfamiliar to him as he has declared. Rogers hugged back of Gotch after two minutes and had him down for the first time in the match. He promptly ripped his knuckles across the other's face and blood trickled from Gotch's nose. Rogers repeated and smashed Gotch's arm with his elbow. He seemed prepared to have some fun when Gotch, exasperated, simply arose and broke the grip of the giant, an exhibition of cleverness and strength that brought down the house.

OVER THE ROPES.

"Then they sparred for holds. Sparred is the word, for Rogers began to push and jab the other's head back and Gotch was not slow to respond. Rogers appeared unable to accomplish anything against Gotch on his feet and could not get him down. Gotch tried for holds to drop his man, and repeatedly rushed Rogers with a body lock, Rogers being backed up each time, while the ropes and posts creaked under the weight. Referee McBride declined to permit Gotch to take locks on the ropes and threatened him for rushing his man to them. Although he tried, it was quite apparent that Rogers lacked the

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ability to rush Gotch back. Gotch finally grabbed his man, and, as he tried for a body lock Rogers gave ground and once more went into the ropes. This time he went overboard and struck the door four feet away. There he lay, unconscious, or pretending, while his seconds and part of the ringside crowd surrounded him. The police guarded the prostrate wrestler and he was fanned and sprinkled while the spectators wondered. Some argued that Rogers was hurt, others inclined to the belief that he showed a decided yellow streak and wanted to quit as quickly as possible. After a proper lapse of time, Rogers being pronounced unfit to continue, McBride gave Gotch the decision amidst cheers. The bout had gone 32:00.

“Gotch took the center of the stage and said:

“ ‘Gentlemen, I came here to wrestle honestly and fair, to be thrown or to throw. You all saw how difficult it was to work with Rogers at Graeco-Roman. The ropes are the boundaries of the ring. A man has the right to rush an opponent to them and they should be strong enough to hold. You can judge the result for yourself.’

“There were more cheers.

ROGERS RETIRED ON STRETCHER.

“Meantime many were inclined to think it a joke when the regimental hospital corps came up at a dog trot with a stretcher, and laying Rogers on it rushed him to the dressing rooms. Here the fallen giant was surrounded by his friends and a couple of doctors looked him over. Rogers acted as if dazed a bit and when the physicians felt about his ribs “ouched” and “ohed” repeatedly, until the report went forth that he had broken a rib.

“ ‘What shall we do with him?’ queried a second as the doctor finished sounding Rogers.

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“‘Oh,’ said he, ‘give him a warm bath, a rub and put him to bed.’

“‘I’m going home,’ said Rogers.

“Gotch was fresh and bright as a pebble in the adjoining apartment and did not hesitate to express himself more freely than he had done in the ring.

“‘Just in a nutshell,’ said he, ‘this fellow found this time that he had somebody game enough to go along with him, take and give roughing, and I’m a little afraid there was some yellow. He has himself to blame for going over the ropes. Why didn’t he stand and wrestle it? Yes, I found him strong and in superb condition. When I found I could not throw him in ten minutes catch-as-catch-can I just carried him along fast to get him ready for the Graeco-Roman. When they wouldn’t let me pick him off the ropes Graeco-Roman I meant to idle away the time till I passed the forty-three minute mark, making my selection of a third fall safe, and then I would have gone at him, taking a chance. He’s hard and strong and has got to be carried a long way before he is weakened enough to be downed.’

“Gotch is without doubt the greatest wrestling machine ever seen here, all things considered. In the catch-as-catch-can bout he was all over Rogers, and never for an instant could Yankee get behind him. Gotch showed the speed and ferocity of a tiger. He punished Rogers badly. Tom Jenkins challenged the winner.”

GOTCH, ILL, DEFEATED TWICE.

As already related, Jenkins was defeated by Gotch in their match at Cleveland, February 1, 1905. The former champion was still confident, however, that he could regain his lost laurels, and Gotch signed to meet him March 15 in New York City. This encounter and still another with Jenkins May 19 in New York, were bitter disappointments to Gotch. Jenkins won both contests, temporarily regaining the championship title.

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Gotch had been constantly on the road and had contracted a severe cold prior to the meeting of March 15. He had defeated Ed Atherton at Elmira, N. Y., on February 6, had jumped to New York City, where he had a hard battle with Jim Parr, and rushed on to Washington, D. C., to defeat Joe Grant before Theodore Roosevelt and other distinguished followers of boxing and wrestling. A jump to Cincinnati, Ohio, followed, to meet Charles Wittmer on March 2. Wittmer at one time was considered one of the greatest of Graeco-Roman wrestlers, but proved easy for Gotch at catch-as-catch-can. Already suffering from a bad cold, Gotch aggravated his complaint in his jump to Utica, N. Y., where he again met and defeated Jim Parr in straight falls on March 10, although he was laboring under a severe strain. He was in no condition to meet a wrestler like Tom Jenkins and risk his title, but he had signed the papers and pushed ahead to meet the greatest reverses of his career on the mat.

GOTCH LOSES TITLE.

The match March 15 was at Graeco-Roman style and Gotch, unfitted for a rough and tumble encounter with a mat tiger like Jenkins, went down to an honorable defeat after taking one fall.

George Hackenschmidt, the "Russian Lion," then in the heyday of his fame as a wrestler, was on his way to America to meet the Yankee champion.

Hackenschmidt met and defeated Jenkins at catch-as-catch-can, but turned a deaf ear to challenges hurled at him by Gotch. This was a great disappointment to the Iowa man, who had dreamed of winning the world's championship. Hackenschmidt returned to Europe, claiming that honor.

Gotch was eager to regain his lost prestige and remained in the east until Jenkins agreed to a return match.

First
titles
towards
hook
wally

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"THE MOST EXCITING MOMENT OF THE EVENING. GOTCH GRABBED JENKINS AROUND THE LEGS AND THREW HIM HEADFIRST TOWARDS THE FLOOR. JENKINS GRABBED THE TOP ROPE AND HUNG THERE UNTIL THE REFEREE BROKE HIM AWAY."

From the New York Evening Journal.

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The encounter took place at Madison Square garden May 19, and proved to be one of the most savage in wrestling history. Gotch was still suffering slightly from his cold and Jenkins was in prime condition.

The outcome of this match was a bitter dose for Gotch, and the citizens of Humboldt never have forgiven the metropolis for its treatment of their hero on this occasion. Speak to any old resident of Humboldt about it and he will tell you that Gotch was robbed and beaten by the most outlandish exhibition of thievery ever perpetrated in American sports. They contend that the referee winked at Jenkins' rough tactics and permitted him to grasp the ropes every time Gotch had him near a fall. Gotch, however, took his defeat in a sportsmanlike manner and began a campaign of training to regain his lost trophy.

The referee was Tim Hurst, famous for his eccentricities as a baseball umpire. It was a grudge match and the winner took all the receipts.

A SAVAGE ENCOUNTER.

At the call of time Jenkins rushed in, but was stopped by Gotch, who put the veteran down on the mat. Gotch held Jenkins down for nearly half an hour. Jenkins finally broke away and landed a heavy blow on Gotch's mouth. Gotch protested, but Hurst told him to go on and wrestle. Jenkins grabbed Gotch around the neck for a strangle hold and after several minutes of protesting by Gotch, in which he received a good choking, the grip was loosened. When they clinched Jenkins took another strangle hold and held it until Gotch went down, despite the warning of the referee.

Gotch wriggled out and caught Jenkins by the feet, turning him into a double thigh and crotch hold. Jenkins' head was forced down until his shoulders touched the mat, but he grabbed the ropes. Gotch protested,

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but the referee ordered the men to the center of the mat, where they began to wrestle anew.

Jenkins kicked and strangled Gotch. He fouled him deliberately. Gotch retaliated with rough work. Six times Jenkins caught the ropes to avoid a fall. Each time Hurst ordered the men to the center to begin anew. Jenkins caught Gotch with a head hold which Tim Hurst called a "mug hold" and Gotch went down to defeat in 1:30:00.

Both wrestlers were thrown from the ring in the second bout, Gotch receiving a bad fall. Gotch won the second fall, but he was clearly weakened, while Jenkins seemed stronger.

Jenkins rushed Gotch hard in the third fall and crushed him to the mat. Gotch struggled to his feet, tottered, looked about in a dazed manner, lurched forward and fell full length on his face. It was nearly twenty minutes before he could be carried to his dressing room.

REMARKABLE WORK.

About a year later the Police Gazette had this to say about Gotch:

"Gotch's work on the mat this closing season has been frequently commented upon in the sporting press as the most remarkable ever undertaken by any athlete who ever aspired to prominence in this branch of professional sport. Whistler, Acton, Lewis, McLeod, Burns, none of the great men of these or other times, has approached the record of the Iowan, who from the moment of his start in Buffalo last November, did not stop going until he capped the climax with the defeat of Jenkins in Kansas City a few weeks ago. North, south, east and west, Canada and America, covering thousands of miles of territory, and wrestling an average of over three matches a week, this great natural athlete encountered the best men that could be secured by the land's promoters and failed to have a single defeat recorded

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against him. From the time of his downfall at the hands of Jenkins in Madison Square Garden just a year ago, until the other day, when he turned the tables on the same man, Gotch's course has been one of unbroken victory.

"It has taken more than physical ability to accomplish such a record. Moral courage of high quality has been needed, as anyone familiar with the wrestling game will appreciate. In wrestling the in-and-outer is more familiar to the public than the consistent performer, consequently Gotch's work has stood out with great prominence to his everlasting credit as an athlete.

"When defeated a year ago in New York Gotch swallowed a bitter pill.

" 'This is awful,' said he. 'I can scarcely look my western friends in the face. But it has not shaken my determination to wrestle to win. I will never take the mat except with the hope and desire for victory, and when the time comes that I have to lose to continue wrestling I shall take off my tights forever.'

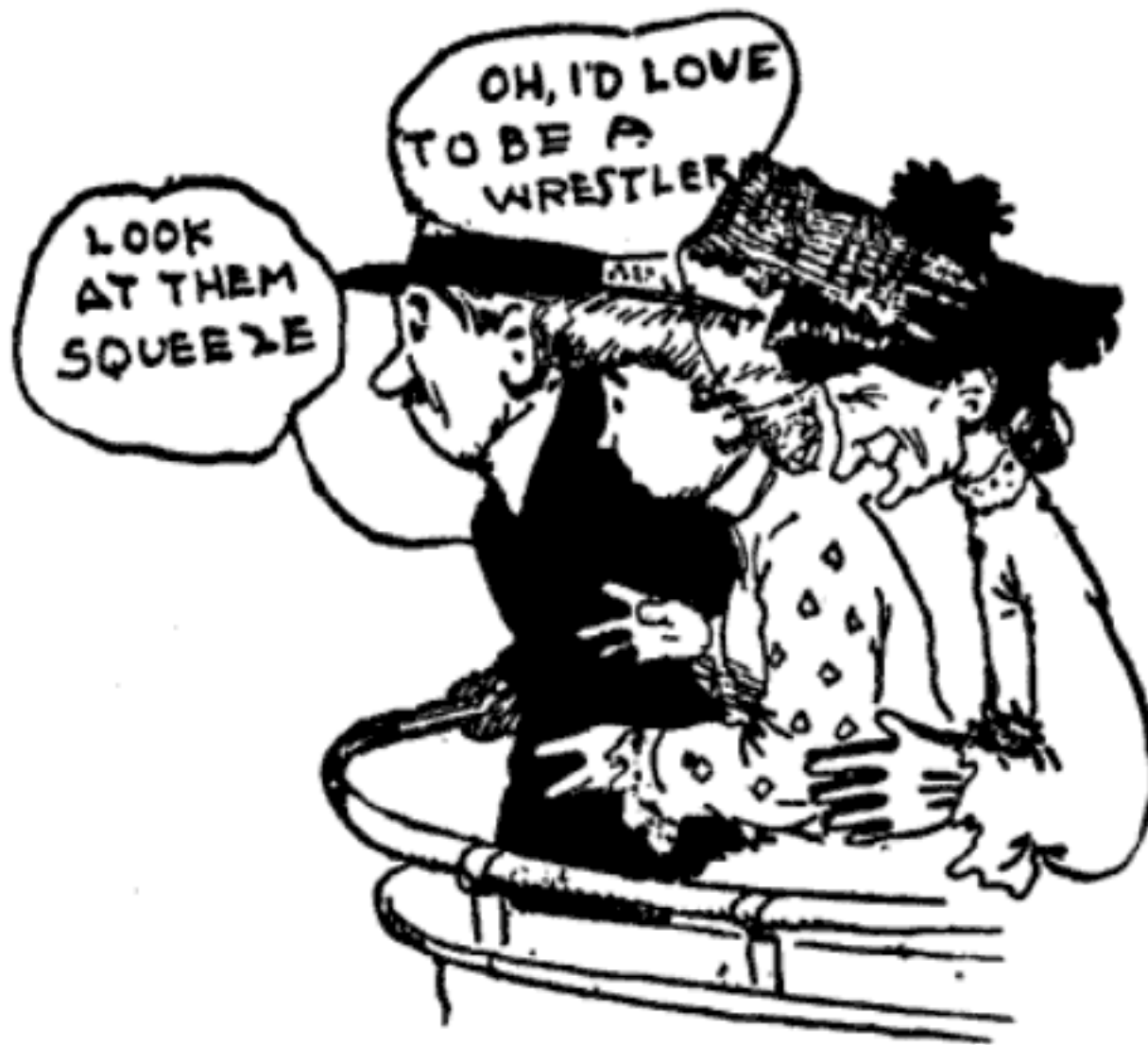
GOTCH'S FINE REPUTATION.

"And Gotch has lived up to that slogan. A glance at the Iowa boy's Jenkins matches will indicate the sincerity of his movements, and will also substantiate the statement that the experts have almost invariably picked him as the real American champion, whether in defeat or victory. When Gotch wrestled Jenkins in Bellingham, Wash., in 1904, he was a favorite and he won. At Cleveland in 1905 he was a very pronounced favorite and he won. When he first met Jenkins in New York, the same year, he was a prohibitive favorite, but again lost. At Kansas City he was an overwhelming favorite and won. None can say that Gotch has lost for gain, and the very fact that even his losing matches have been attended with very little betting has been the Gibraltar

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upon which the splendid reputation of the man has been built. There may be men abroad who have worked out records of equal value, but in America Gotch's reputation has become one of admiration and envy among professional athletes.

"When Gotch defeated Jenkins in Kansas City some of the first words he said were: 'Now I can hold my head up again amongst my friends in Buffalo, Minneapolis, Iowa and Kansas City—all through the west, where my friends were at a loss to explain my defeats by Jenkins a year ago. The loss of the championship hurt me, but not so much as the fear that I had somehow forfeited the respect of my friends.'"



By Tad, in the New York Evening Journal.

CHAPTER XIV.

Wins International Tournament.

Following his defeat of the veteran Jack Carkeek at Butte, Mont., September 4, 1905, Gotch won decisions over Fillmore, Ardahl, Klank, Yankee Rogers, McLeod and Maupas, the two last late in December, at the great international tournament which was staged at Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa. More than fifty of the world's best wrestlers competed, and Gotch carried off the honor of the championship. Some of his experiences in flattening the big specimens on their backs were among the most thrilling and yet humorous of his career.

The Graeco-Roman style of wrestling is preferred to the catch-as-catch-can in the Canadian cities and in the matches of this tournament the Canadians had a special code they called the French Graeco-Roman rules. The strangle, hammerlock and all other holds below the waist were barred.

One peculiarity of the code was that a whistle was blown at various stages of a match to give the wrestlers intervals of rest. Gotch says he observed that when his French opponents were getting tired there was a blast from the tin horn.

DEFEATS MAUPAS.

The best of them was Emile Maupas. It was in Montreal on December 27, 1905, that Gotch met and defeated Maupas after a sensational match lasting nearly an hour and a half.

When time was called Gotch rushed Maupas to the edge of the mat and the Frenchman extricated himself with difficulty. Coming back to the center of the mat, Gotch again rushed his bulky opponent and the French-

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man came near going off the stage into the crowd. Gotch caught him and pulled him back.

Gotch rushed in and secured a leg hold with which he finally worked Maupas to the mat. The Frenchman fought desperately to avoid being thrown. Gotch fastened on a half nelson and waist lock and was turning his opponent gradually but certainly to his doom. The crowd was hushed with suspense. Was Maupas to go down to defeat so soon? Not at all. Just as the shoulders of the Frenchman were nearing the mat there was a shrill blast from the whistle. The tin horn had saved him. There was applause as Gotch relinquished his grip and the men went to their corners to await the signal for a resumption of hostilities.

WHISTLE SAVED HIM.

When the match was resumed Gotch assumed the aggressive, sending his big opponent sprawling toward the footlights. Maupas came near going off the stage. The Frenchman rushed at Gotch and put him down, but the Iowan was up, after breaking a waist hold. Gotch dived for Maupas' legs and threw him heavily to the mat. Gotch again had Maupas near a fall after fastening a half nelson and arm lock to the big fellow, but a timely blast from the trumpet again saved him, and the gladiators rested.

Time and again Gotch had Maupas near a fall, but the whistle was always present, batting 1.000 in the pinches.

Maupas went behind Gotch for a time and had him near a fall. For some mysterious reason the whistle failed to blow, but Gotch escaped unaided.

Finally Gotch brought the Frenchman's shoulders to the mat with a half nelson and reverse body hold, after 1:01:00 of fast wrestling.

"I guess some fellow must have stuffed a bit of paper in that whistle," said Gotch. "The referee was

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red in the face. He must have had a terrific struggle with the tin instrument."

Gotch pinned Maupas for the second and deciding fall in 22:00, winning a belt emblematic of the Graeco-Roman championship of Canada. It was not the fault of the faithful whistle that Maupas was deprived of this trophy and the accompanying title.

MEETS A "TERRIBLE TURK."

An incident of the great tournament which Gotch will never forget was his encounter with a Turk grappler by the name of Karakanoff.

This Turk had been hailed as about the fiercest thing that ever happened in the way of a wrestling demon. He had defeated several strong men in the tournament before Gotch appeared on the scene. Gotch had heard of the dire things that would happen to him when he faced this mountain of grappling brawn from the Bosphorus. It was not the Gotch habit to back away from danger, so he agreed to meet the "Terrible Turk," to see whether this wrestler were really only half human as alleged. There was a rumor afloat that he would strangle Gotch.

On April 6, 1906, they had it out in a packed pavilion at Sohmer park, Montreal.

TURNED INSIDE OUT.

The Montreal Herald described the meet as follows: "About 8,437,243 people last night at Sohmer park saw Frank Gotch—the prettiest, roughest, most modest and handsomest lad in the wrestling game today—turn Mr. X. Y. Karakanoff, the Turk, inside out.

"The Turk quit. Quit cold. He is a Terrible Turk, but not with Gotch. 'I've got enough,' he whispered, and walked off the mat. Gotch laughed and tried to pull him back. No, sir; no more for his'n. Gotch sat

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down on the mat and grinned; he beckoned the Turk to come on again, but no. No, thank you, very much. About a minute before the Turk had lain flat on his back, and Dr. (beg pardon, Alderman) Gadbois, the referee, had failed to blow the wee bit whistle. It was too plain a 'lie-down.'

"The match was 'go-as-you-please,' strangle your man, break his legs and arms, any old thing, and a terrific crowd was on hand, for the Turk had done some fierce work in Montreal. Gotch says he's the strongest man he ever met. But anyone can see he's 'slow-brained,' and this is not meant to be offensive, Karry.

"A rumor was afloat that Karry would strangle Gotch, and Frank A., with his Grecian face and beautiful body, was there to be strangled. Strangled? The Turk didn't have a ghost of a show. The trouble lasted 11:00 about, but Gotch can throw the Turk sixty times in sixty minutes. Honest, he can. Last night he had the Turk all but down thirty times or so, in awful holds, and let him up just to punish him. And he had enough. No wonder, for the crowd fairly trembled to see it.

"GO-AS-YOU-PLEASE."

"Go-as-you-please is Gotch's favorite style and he can kill—actually kill—an opponent with any one of his dozens of dangerous locks and bars.

"Once—it was the first fall—he bent Karry's leg till it creaked; let him go; hammerlocked him within an inch of a break; let him go; pinched his leg with his knees, and all but pushed his head off; let him go; half nelsoned him till his neck just about broke; let him go; full nelsoned and barred him, within an inch of death, and picked him up five feet in the air and fell on him with knees and elbows. Go-as-you-please? Eh, what?

"A good four inches taller, Gotch had the Turk beaten 847 ways on skill, and the second fall, about three

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minutes long, was three minutes of fearful agony for Mr. Karry. Gotch went after him IN EARNEST, and say, it was appalling. He wouldn't throw him, but just punished him till he quit.

"'He's a wonder; the best I've ever seen.' This from Karry, as he sat in his dressing room.

"'Hurt any?' asked the reporter, and a wan smile was the reply.

"'I've got to wrestle in three places next week in the States,' laughed Gotch in his room. 'Oh, the Turk? Strong man, but he never saw holds like that. Last fall three minutes, eh?'"

BOUT WITH PIETRO.

Gotch's last match in this tournament was with a giant named Pietro. It technically gave the championship to Gotch, but proved to be one of the strangest encounters of the world champion's career. It was the boast of Pietro that he had not lost a match for many years at Graeco-Roman wrestling. This record was easily explained after Gotch's match with the fiery Bayonnese grappler. If protesting could keep him from being thrown, then Pietro should have gone a lifetime without being pinned, for he was debating and complaining to the referee every few minutes.

Gotch retaliated with rough work. Pietro stopped him. Gotch then rushed his opponent to the ropes, secured a leg hold and tried to drag him back, but Pietro grabbed the ropes and refused to budge. The referee finally ordered Gotch to relinquish his hold.

Pietro was known as one of the roughest wrestlers ever seen in Montreal. He had shown no mercy to his weaker opponents. He had given an opponent a terrible mauling a week before Gotch appeared to measure strength with him.

When the referee called time, Pietro rushed Gotch into the ropes and tried for a leg grip, but Gotch blocked

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wrestling to tell the referee that Gotch had pulled his mustache. The referee had difficulty convincing him that he was supposed to be in a wrestling match, not a college debate.

PIETRO PROTESTS.

Although Pietro had started the rough work he complained repeatedly that Gotch was hurting him. He turned his upper lip back to show the referee where Gotch had shoved his elbow against his mouth. Pietro evidently wished to monopolize the rough work. He made frequent passes at Gotch, giving him his fist in the clinches. There was no fall in the first ten-minute bout.

Pietro redoubled his protests in the second bout. He would leave the mat and be forced back by his friends. He would wrestle a few minutes and quit. When he would quit he would double up his fist and threaten to give Gotch a blow in the ribs. The second bout was lengthened to half an hour by these interruptions. Gotch feared Pietro would jump from the ring and leave the building.

STOPPED BY POLICE.

Finally Gotch came to the conclusion that he should delegate himself a committee to aid the referee in preserving order and keeping things moving. When Pietro began to protest in the third bout, Gotch pulled him away and made him wrestle. Pietro then quit and started to walk away. Gotch caught him, pulled him back and rushed him into the ropes. The cords snapped and the Graeco-Roman star fell to the floor on his back. This time he did not protest, but came back and began roughing it madly, hitting Gotch in the clinches. Breaking away, he swung heavily on Gotch's jaw. Instead of going down for the count Gotch came back at his man to punish him.

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Sub-Chief Lamouche stepped in and ordered the battle stopped. He tried to explain why he had stopped the match, but was yelled down. The police ordered Gotch out of the ring. Gotch stepped to the footlights to address the crowd, but the police stopped him. Lamouche ordered Gotch off the stage and followed him to his dressing room. That was Gotch's last match in Montreal.



"HE ALWAYS GETS THEIR NANNY WITH THAT CONFIDENTIAL SMILE THAT WON'T COME OFF."

By Carlson, in the Chicago Inter Ocean.

CHAPTER XV.

Defeats Olsen, Regains Title from Jenkins.

In the year 1906 Gotch swept all wrestlers before him like chaff before a hurricane. With his whirlwind speed and wonderful strength he had already won from Charles Hackenschmidt, Apollo, Farmer Burns, John Voss, Kaiser, Gray, Albright, Parr and Hank Rogers, when he met Charles Olsen, March 23, at Asheville, N. C.

Olsen had a record of sixty-eight consecutive victories prior to this match, which registered his first defeat. At the finish Gotch made this statement:

"I want to say that Mr. Olsen is as good a man as I ever met. He is the first man to win a fall from me in a year and the second in three years. I will meet him with footlocks barred, winner to take all. I know it will be a long and hard match, but I am the boy to chance it."

GOTCH PRAISES OLSEN.

At a later period, when discussing the merits of various wrestlers, Gotch spoke concerning Olsen as follows:

"Just another word for another good wrestler, who is just coming to be appreciated in America, Charley Olsen of St. Louis, a man whose weight may keep him out of the first rank, but who is destined to make an emphatic impression on the public before whom he appears. Olsen is another physical marvel. He weighs not much over one hundred and seventy pounds, if that, is built tall and thin and angular. They generally laugh at Olsen when he strips for a match. They don't laugh after the match is over. I esteem Olsen one of the most dangerous men on the American canvas. Those long, thin arms of his possess a wonderful natural

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strength, he has unusual powers of endurance, is game to the core, and he has mastered well the tricks of the sport. If Olsen don't get to the top in the future he'll come pretty close to it. I don't notice that he is losing many matches these days, and he is turning down no challengers.

"The deceiving physique of Olsen has led to many ludicrous incidents, in which he has played the star part. In Kansas City not long ago about half the wrestlers of the country were congregated for a tournament. A boisterous strong man in one of the hotel cafes got to drinking a bit, and loudly boasted that 'outside of Gotch I can throw any man in Kansas City.' They brought Olsen in and the strong man laughed at the boy of meager frame. 'Five times a minute for you!' he roared. 'Five times an hour for you!' retorted Olsen, quietly. They put up \$200 a side on that last proposition and stripped right there and then in the billiard room. When they picked the strong man up after the fourth fall, which happened in about eight minutes, he was quite a sober man.

"'Nuff!' he ejaculated, 'guess I've made a mistake. There's one other man besides Gotch I can't throw, and this bean pole's the man.'"

THE ASHEVILLE BATTLE.

The match at Asheville was reported in a local newspaper in part as follows:

"Olsen met his Waterloo at the hands of Frank Gotch last night in the presence of the biggest crowd yet packed into the Grand Opera house.

"The match was unquestionably the best that has ever been seen here, a veritable battle of giants, trained to the hour, skillful and enduring. They were not evenly matched, however, as far as weight is concerned, Gotch having thirty pounds the best of the Asheville boy. That this additional weight was a decided advantage to Gotch

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was evident all through the match, Olsen's well-known tactics in lifting men from the mat and subjecting them to the head spin failing signally. Olsen's wind was slightly better than Gotch's, but this did not make up for the weight of the latter.

"It was a fast match, full of exciting situations, replete with brilliant plays and hairbreadth escapes. Gotch perspired freely and his body may as well have been greased with oil, so slippery was he.

"That Gotch is the only great master of the deadly footlock is beyond dispute. It is a footlock which no other wrestler in the world can get in exactly the same manner. It is different from the ordinary footlock, in that Gotch pins his victim's leg with his own before he begins the 'bending' process which punishes the under man so severely. There is no getting away from it, and if Gotch ever gets that hold on Hackenschmidt, the Russian Lion, the world's championship is his, for no weight or skill can avail against it."

MEETS JENKINS AGAIN.

Gotch had been keeping steadily in view his approaching match with Jenkins, set for May 23 at Kansas City, which he was determined should restore to him the championship title Jenkins had deprived him of in New York City.

When the day arrived Gotch was in splendid condition. It was a hard-fought encounter, Jenkins taking the first fall in 26:00, but Gotch's superior training, weight and condition had their effect and the final outcome was a decisive victory which brought joy to Gotch's host of well-wishers everywhere.

Gotch went after Jenkins like a tiger in the second bout and rushed him off his feet. He picked him up and the veteran went through the ropes. It required considerable time to bring the men back to the center of the mat. They came together then like a head-end

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collision. Jenkins butted Gotch repeatedly and was cautioned. They were separated in the center of the mat and Gotch slipped to the floor. Jenkins piled on top, but that proved his undoing.

Gotch countered and grasped Jenkins' foot, pulling it over his back and winning the second fall in 14:00. Jenkins limped to his dressing room amid applause that was deafening. Gotch is popular in Kansas City and the champion was in the enemy's country.

Gotch attacked furiously in the third bout, and when he had Jenkins at his mercy went at his task like a trained mechanic. Jenkins was weary and Gotch comparatively fresh. He worked on Jenkins' aching leg until the veteran was almost ready to collapse, and then with an arm and headlock crushed him into submission in 17:00.



GOTCH'S LEGS ARE HIGHLY EDUCATED.
By McBride, in the St. Louis Republic.

CHAPTER XVI.

Crushes Italian Champion—Surprised by Beell.

Leo Pardello, fun maker of the wrestling mat, at one time imagined he could down Frank Gotch. The Italian was heralded as one of the toughest men in the game and Gotch thought he was taking on a big contract in agreeing to an encounter with this fighting "demon" from sunny Italy. Both wrestlers were disillusioned, November 26, 1906, at Brookes' Casino, Chicago, when they met in a finish match. After this defeat Pardello devoted his talents to comedy, and as a mirth producer has made countless thousands laugh.

Gotch had heard that Pardello was a bone breaker and a prize fighter. He was apprised that he would be fortunate to escape with both ears intact and all his teeth in his head after encountering the latest sensation from Latin Europe.

The night of the match found the pavilion packed almost to suffocation.

PARDELLO'S ROUGH WORK.

Pardello rushed at Gotch like a wild man when the referee signaled the start, but Gotch side-stepped him. Gotch went to his hands and knees, lifted Pardello in the air and hurled him to the mat. This was the signal for Pardello to employ the rough tactics for which he was noted. He gouged Gotch with his elbow and slugged him in the mixups. The crowd hissed Pardello, but Gotch had learned his opponent's actual strength and took these thrusts lightly.

Soon, however, Pardello showed his temper and resorted to the Marquis of Queensbury code. He came to his feet and made a swing at Gotch and the crowd again hissed. Gotch lunged and brought Pardello to the

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mat again. Gotch was working for a hold to secure the first fall. He had slipped over a crotch and half nelson and was gradually forcing the shoulders of his opponent to the canvas. Pardello reached over in a fit of rage, grabbed the Iowan by the hair and pulled a whole handful of Gotch's hair from the roots.

TOE HOLD BREAKS LIGAMENT.

That proved the downfall of Pardello as an aspirant for the highest wrestling honors. In a wild mixup the wrestlers shifted about the mat and in less than thirty seconds Gotch had Pardello's left foot up his back for the toe hold. There was a sharp snap audible to those at the ringside. Pardello, with a groan, fell to the mat in defeat. An examination showed that a ligament had been snapped, but the game Italian came back for the second fall, which Gotch won in a few seconds.

Gotch made a speech, in which he told the crowd he deeply regretted the accident to Pardello. It was one of the few times the world's champion has lost his temper on the mat.

"The day after the match," says Gotch, "a friend of mine met Pardello hobbling about the streets of Chicago.

"'What do you think of Gotch now?' my friend asked him.

"'Gotcha?' was his answer. 'Why, Gotcha, he very fina da fell. He get ona the mata and go toa da wrestle. Gotcha, he cracka da joke. One fina da joke. I stoppa to laugh. Gotcha, he catcha my foota and twist him upa da backa. Oh, yes, Gotcha, he very fina da fell.'"

After this match Pardello seemed to take a proprietary interest in the champion. After every match Gotch had in Chicago his wrestling tights disappeared. Pardello took them for souvenirs. After his last match in Chicago Gotch ordered a boy to get his tights and see that they were carried to his hotel. Pardello noticed that the boy had them in charge. After Gotch departed from

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the dressing room he approached the youngster and took the grip, saying Gotch had ordered him to carry it to his hotel. Thus he secured an imposing addition to his trophy room that night.

STORY BY SOL PLEX.

"Frank Gotch defeated Leo Pardello last night at Brookes' Casino in one of the toughest matches that has ever been seen in this city," wrote Sol Plex in the Chicago Examiner. "The end came suddenly and it might be said painfully for Pardello, for during a terrific scramble, in which Gotch was the aggressor, the Iowan's famous toe hold came into play and a sudden sharp snap apprised those about the ringside that something had happened.

"Pardello with a groan sank on the mat, his left leg limp as a rag. An examination was made and it was found that a ligament in the left knee had been snapped. This was not as serious as it had been first thought by the spectators, who believed that the leg was broken. Pardello was forced to yield the fall, and after a ten-minute rest tried to resume, but he was so weak that it took Gotch just fourteen seconds to pin him to the mat.

PARDELLO FOULS FREQUENTLY.

"Pardello put up a wicked fight and used a sufficient quantity of the Marquis of Queensberry game to bring forth the hisses of the crowd. He also did some nasty elbow work when on the mat and capped the climax by grabbing a handful of Gotch's hair, and broke a hold that way. That was the limit, and it was less than a minute after this trick that the end of the first bout came. Gotch was plainly angered and went after Pardello with fury. He got one hold, which Leo broke, and then as Pardello rolled over Gotch took a toe and ankle hold and bore down on the Italian. It

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was a mean toe hold and the result was immediately apparent.

"There was a snap and Pardello fell over on the mat writhing in pain. It was easy to see that he was hurt, and after an examination he yielded the fall. The fall came in 39:20. He took the ten-minute rest and tried to resume, but his injured leg would not bear his weight and Gotch turned him over with a body and arm hold, carefully avoiding the bad leg.

HAS FUN WITH HIM.

"Gotch showed extraordinary cleverness and time after time made Pardello look silly when they were struggling on their feet. Pardello rushed like a wild man, but usually went sailing with his head between the ropes, and Gotch was dancing off laughing at him. But when they went to the mat Leo gave Frank a terrific tussle, and the Iowan's best holds slipped off time after time just when it looked as if he had a certain fall.

"The crowd was with Gotch all through, and hissed the dirty tactics of the Italian, although they were forced to give him a hand for his great fight when seemingly near defeat. After the bout Gotch made a speech and told the crowd how sorry he was for the accident, and they cheered him to the echo.

"The two men presented a curious contrast. Gotch, tall, perfectly built and handsome, took the crowd immediately. Pardello is squat, swarthy and has a nervous trouble which causes his face to twitch and his eyes to roll. Adonis and the Satyr is the best way to describe them. Gotch put up a clean argument throughout and that won him many friends."

DEFEATED BY BEELL.

The toughest little man Gotch ever met and the most wonderful wrestler of his inches the world has ever seen was Fred Beell, woodchopper and giant killer of Marsh-

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field, Wis. Beell, says Gotch, could defeat any man of his stature who ever lived. Probably only three or four heavyweights in the world can flatten this little wonder out on the padded canvas.

Beell sprang into world-wide fame as a wrestler December 1, 1906, when he gave Gotch the surprise of his career. The Marshfield boy, a pigmy in stature but a giant in strength, caught the American champion napping. Gotch made the mistake of holding Beell too



FRED BEELL.

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lightly. His error cost him the championship for the brief period of sixteen days and a considerable sum of money, and gave Beell the honor of being the only wrestler in the world to defeat Gotch after he regained the title from Jenkins. Gotch weighed 202 pounds and Beell 169.

In justice to Gotch it must be said, however, that Beell, in spite of his apparently remarkable showing against the champion, really won by a fluke. In the second bout Gotch, in making a quick turn to dodge away from his speedy opponent, hit his head against one of the posts of the ring. This dazed him so badly that Beell had only to roll him over to secure the fall. In the third bout Gotch was still befuddled and was an easy victim.

The match was pulled off at New Orleans.

FIRST FALL TO GOTCH.

When the referee called "time," Gotch came out with a confident smile. He tried to pull Beell in, but the little fellow, slippery as an eel, dodged away and danced around Gotch as the champion tried to corner him. It was several minutes before Gotch could fasten a hold to Beell and hurl him to the mat. Gotch tried for the toe hold, but Beell shifted to one side and darted out, the crowd applauding the fast work of the wrestlers.

Gotch then rushed Beell to the ropes, secured a leg hold and forced him to the mat. Beell came to a sitting posture. Gotch picked Beell off the mat and threw him over his head. Beell came quickly to his feet and rushed into the referee hold, and the crowd gave him a big ovation. Beell went back of Gotch, but the champion lunged forward and came to his feet. In a fierce mixup Gotch again picked Beell off the mat and hurled him over his head. Again Beell was up before Gotch could follow up his advantage. Gotch continued to be the aggressor, and Beell went down after a struggle of a

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few minutes. Gotch secured a crotch hold and Beell tried desperately to escape, but the champion held him and added a half nelson, gaining the first fall in 31:00.

GOTCH MADE UNCONSCIOUS.

In the second bout Beell dashed back of the champion, grabbed him by the legs and hurled him over his head. Gotch came to his feet, but he had slowed up. Beell went back of him like a flash and again Gotch was thrown over Beell's shoulders, the champion alighting on his head with a resounding thump. Gotch refused to give up, and Beell put him down again. Gotch had come up four times and Beell had kept after him, giving him no rest.

Beell hurled Gotch to the mat and when the champion tried to rise the woodchopper from Marshfield picked him up bodily and hurled him over his head. Gotch landed off the mat on his head and fell back as limp as a rag. Beell picked him up and carried him to the center of the mat.

It required five minutes to restore Gotch to consciousness. He collapsed in his dressing room and bled profusely. After twenty minutes Gotch, groggy, was led into the ring. Beell, seeing that the champion was almost helpless, rushed in to win in a hurry. He put him down almost without resistance and won the fall with a half nelson in about five minutes, taking the American championship and enough money on the side to make him independently wealthy.

WINS AT KANSAS CITY.

The wrestling world was surprised at Gotch's defeat by Beell and it was generally considered a fluke pure and simple. On December 17, just sixteen days later, Gotch decisively defeated Beell in a return match at Kansas City before a vast crowd. Subsequently they wrestled in Chicago, Denver and other cities, Gotch always showing himself the Wisconsin man's master.

CHAPTER XVII.

Wins World's Title.

Frank Gotch became champion wrestler of the world April 3, 1908, at the Dexter Park pavilion, Chicago, before the largest crowd that had ever watched a catch-as-catch-can battle, defeating George Hackenschmidt, the Russian Lion, in a forfeited match after more than two hours of strenuous and heartrending effort. This match was one of the greatest mat encounters in the world's history. It gave Gotch world fame, disillusioned him concerning the strength of Hackenschmidt and made him invincible.

Gotch had heard wonderful tales concerning the "Lion" and his almost superhuman powers. He was told that Hack possessed the strength to tear him limb from limb. He was cautioned to stay away from his opponent and wear him down. Gotch believed these stories and went into the battle to do or die, but he played a careful, waiting game.

There was no fall in this match, but the world's championship passed to the Iowan, for Hackenschmidt quit, exhausted. Every ounce of energy the "Lion" possessed had been expended in fighting a man his superior in every department of the mat game.

Gotch, advised by Farmer Burns, the wisest general in the game, wore the Russian down to the point of utter exhaustion. For nearly two hours the mat gladiators stood head to head, sparring and stabbing for holds, hanging on, tugging and pulling. An inspection of the pictures reveals the information that Gotch fought high, bending over Hack with one arm resting heavily on the Russian's neck. Farmer Burns has figured out just how many pounds' pressure was exerted by Gotch on Hackenschmidt, who was forced to fight back, bending



HACKENSCHMIDT, THE "RUSSIAN LION."

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low. That was a part of the plan to wear Hack down, and how well it succeeded was evident from the pitiable condition of the Russian when he begged for a draw to prevent humiliating defeat.

For two long hours the wrestlers roughed it and mixed it, Gotch all the while exerting his pressure on the head. Gotch saw Hackenschmidt's strength fading. With renewed fire he sprang forward. There was a shuffle and a struggle toward the ropes. Gotch went to the top and the crowd stood and cheered like mad.

Gotch feinted for a toe hold. Hack tried desperately to rise, but Gotch held to his opponent like a bulldog. Gotch secured a crotch hold and again tried to put the foot in position for the toe hold, but Hackenschmidt, who mortally feared this grip, broke away. Hackenschmidt came to his feet and darted for the ropes with Gotch in pursuit. Gotch seized Hackenschmidt with a waist lock and with a lightning heave bore him to the mat. Hackenschmidt rolled over on his face.

Hackenschmidt, exhausted and disheartened, straightened out. Gotch pounced on his foe and started to work for a toe hold. From beneath this mass of human weight came a whisper of defeat. Hackenschmidt had wailed his plaint that was heard around the athletic world. He asked for mercy. Gotch let up and Hackenschmidt arose. The crowd gasped with astonishment.

Hackenschmidt refused to come back for the second bout, thus surrendering the championship of the world to his hated foe. He had no heart to continue; his wonderful strength had failed. His wrestling wreath had passed from his brow to adorn the head of his conqueror.

INCIDENTS OF THE STRUGGLE.

"Before the men met," wrote C. J. Murray in a Buffalo newspaper, "the writer visited Gotch in his apartments at the Morrison Hotel. He was surrounded by

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a group of Humboldt, Iowa, friends. They were all big fellows, typical western farmers, but every one of them staunch admirers of Gotch.

"When we walked into Gotch's room he gave us a merry reception. He was as chipper as a boy starting on a midsummer vacation. He was laughing and chatting with his Iowa friends. Hackenschmidt wasn't worrying him.

"Well, how are all the boys back in Buffalo?" asked Gotch. "That's good," was his merry reply when told that all were well in Buffalo.

"I don't suppose they think I've got a chance?" ventured Gotch. "Well, listen, boys I'll beat this big foreigner tonight as sure as my name is Gotch."

"And the burly westerner thumped a delicate little table with his big fist. There was determination in every word Gotch uttered. He wasn't boasting in the true sense of the word.

"Then Gotch related how he expected to win. He said that Jack Carkeek and Farmer Burns, the two veterans of wrestling who had prepared him, had taught him every trick that Hack might attempt to turn. Carkeek was robbed of his laurels in Europe a few years ago when he faced Hackenschmidt, then comparatively unknown, for the world's championship. Carkeek knew Hack like a book.

"These foreigners ain't made of the right stuff," commented Gotch. "I'm going to match my skill and craft and stoutness of heart against Hack's strength. I'm going to outgame and outlast this big fellow. Watch me."

"Gotch certainly carried out his plans to the letter. He did match his skill and craft and stoutness of heart against Hackenschmidt's strength; he did outlast and outgame the big fellow—and won the match.

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HACKENSCHMIDT WORRIED.

"Despite his wonderful physique, despite his great strength and despite the fact that he was regarded by nine-tenths of the experts as the logical winner, Hackenschmidt was a much worried man when I met him on Michigan avenue five hours previous to the match. Hack was starting in his final limbering-up exercise before going to the arena.

" 'I am going to meet a big fellow,' said Hack as he tapped the cement sidewalk with a thin cane. 'He is a great fellow, yes? I shall wrestle well. I shall do my best. I hope Mr. Gotch will wrestle fair. I may beat him quick and then, of course——'

"Hackenschmidt paused abruptly. He didn't complete the last sentence. He smiled, but it was not a healthy smile. He seemed sort of discouraged, a trifle more subdued than one might expect to find in a man supposedly so terrible as a wrestler.

"Hack changed the subject. He inquired about Buffalo friends. He was noticeably nervous. He appeared anxious to get moving. He shuffled his feet and finally broke away and started on a brisk walk down Michigan avenue, not in the direct way of the big Dexter pavilion, but off toward the hustling, bustling crowds on Chicago's principal streets.

AT THE RING SIDE.

"Five hours after leaving Hackenschmidt on Michigan avenue the writer edged up within two feet of the ringside and watched Hack as he climbed into the ring, clad in a greenish bathrobe. Hack smiled, but it was the same dull smile he smiled on Michigan avenue. Over on the opposite side of the ring stood Gotch, laughing and gossiping with his friends.

"Presently the two gladiators met in the center of the ring. They shook hands.

"Now, Mr. Gotch,' said Hackenschmidt in a soft /

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humble
was Gotch

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GOTCH TRAINING TO BREAK HEAD LOCK



By Mack, in the Chicago Examiner.

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voice, 'you know this is to be a wrestling match, not a fight.'

"'Don't you tell me anything about the rules,' replied Gotch with a broad grin. 'Here's the referee. He'll take care of that.'

"Hackenschmidt made no reply. Conditions were discussed and then Referee Ed. Smith, sporting editor of the Chicago American, gave the men their final instructions and waved to the timekeeper, who waited a second or two and then shouted:

"'Time!'

"The two men, both painfully cautious, began their tiresome 'round and 'round and 'round the circle act. They clasped hands and watched with cat-like alertness for an opening. Several times Hack thought he saw a chance to slip behind Gotch. Each time he failed. Gotch was too slippery for him. Gradually it dawned on the misnamed 'Russian Lion' that he had met a worthy foe—perhaps his master. The realization seemed to sap away his much vaunted aggressiveness and strength.

"Once Hack tripped Gotch. That was after they had wrestled fifteen or twenty minutes. It was the only thing Hack did in the two hours and one minute of work on the mat.

LITTLE UNPLEASANTRIES.

"While their heads were together and their hands locked in arm and wrist holds, Gotch continually taunted Hack.

"'And so you're the great Russian Lion, eh?' we heard him say, followed by a tantalizing laugh.

"'You think you are smart, don't you?' replied Hack.

"'Well, I ain't dumb,' chirped Gotch.

"'I shall show you,' returned Hack as he continued to twist and squeeze Gotch's wrists, at the same time continuing the round-the-circle act.

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“ ‘Well, get busy,’ Gotch fired back. ‘Show us some of the quick falls you told the reporters about.’ ”

“Hackenschmidt was silent. He had stopped talking.

“ ‘You’d better engage passage in the morning, Hack,’ resumed Gotch. Hackenschmidt was boiling with rage. Oh! If he could only crush Gotch. You could see it in Hack’s eyes. But the task was greater than Hackenschmidt had contracted for. He was up against it.

“ ‘Why, you couldn’t throw old Jack Carkeek,’ was the next thing we heard Gotch say.

“After fifty minutes of wrestling, Hackenschmidt shoved Gotch away from him and, standing up straight, motioned to the referee. Gotch was surprised. He stood looking at Hack.

“ ‘Mr. Gotch,’ began Hackenschmidt as Referee Smith stepped closer to them, ‘we shall call this bout a draw, yes?’ ”

“ ‘I should say not,’ replied Gotch, the light of victory welling up in his eyes.

“Referee Smith shook his head. ‘Go on and wrestle,’ he said. ‘I’ll stay here until morning.’ ”

“ ‘But, Mr. Gotch, you can’t throw me down,’ said Hack.

“ ‘Well, you can’t throw me down, either,’ laughed Gotch.

“ ‘That’s why I say call this a draw,’ was Hack’s reply. ‘The people don’t like this sort of wrestling.’ ”

“ ‘Oh, come on and wrestle a couple of hours more,’ said Gotch, reaching out and taking hold of Hack’s neck. ‘You wrestle and they’ll watch us.’ ”

“After that Hackenschmidt wrestled a losing match. He worked half-hearted. Gotch grew bolder and bolder. Finally a scrimmage developed. Behind Hack like a slippery fish darted Gotch. It was all over. The beginning of the end had hove in sight.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

GOTCH LIKE TIGER.

"Over Hack Gotch worked like a demon. Once Hack broke away from Gotch. Immediately followed the greatest test of the whole match. Gotch tore after Hack like a tiger. Up against the ropes went the foreigner. Gotch was on top of him.

"The spectators were electrified to see Gotch literally yank Hack off the ropes, breaking the foreigner's grasp, and smashing him down on the floor. The supreme effort on Gotch's part took all the fight out of Hack. He was licked.

"In the wild scene that followed Hack asked Gotch to get up.

"'Mr. Gotch, I give you the championship,' said Hackenschmidt.

"Men went wild with excitement. Into the ring jumped two score. Gotch was surrounded. Up onto the shoulders of admirers he was hoisted while newspaper photographers snapped his picture, once, twice, a dozen times. Then off toward his dressing room Gotch was carried—the world's champion.

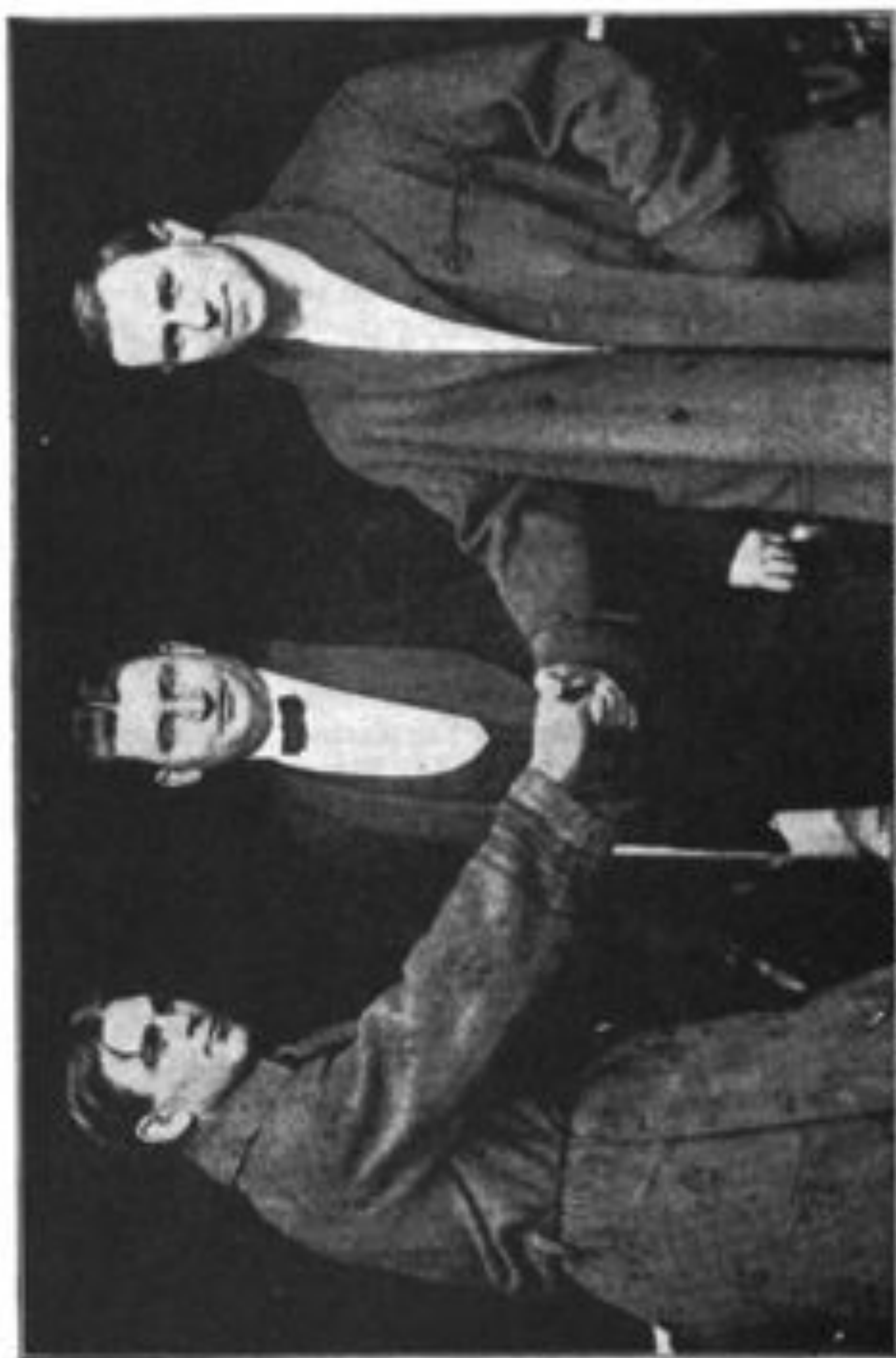
"It was different with Hack. He shoved his way through the mob. He was completely beaten. He seemed friendless and alone.

"Either Hack was grossly misnamed or Gotch is a S. J. D. G.
great lion tamer.

"Saturday afternoon I saw Hackenschmidt in his suite at the Auditorium Annex. He was badly used up. His face was bruised and blotched, his ear torn, his two eyes discolored and he was sore in body.

"'I shall not wrestle Gotch again,' said Hackenschmidt. 'He's too much for me. I cannot beat him. I could not throw Gotch. He can throw me. Why should I wrestle him again? I care not for the money. I have enough. Gotch is the greatest man I ever met. He's master of the whole bunch.'

"What a confession, especially from Hack. He was



POSED IN KING BEFORE START OF WORLD'S TITLE BATTLE.
GOTCH, REFEREE ED. SMITH AND HACKEN+CHMIDT. From Left to Right.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

completely subdued. He acknowledged the American lad the greatest of all.

"Hack quit and violated all the rules pertaining to gameness, but one thing must be said in his favor, and that is that he gave Gotch all credit. That's something."

ROBBINS' STORY.

The author's record of the match, published in the Chicago Daily News, reads as follows:

"10:30—Gotch and Hackenschmidt shook hands and immediately sparred for holds. Hack tries to go beyond his man, but is foiled. Gotch puffs hard, showing his apparent strain, while Hack is more cool. Both men appear nervous, but Hack is the more confident.

"10:35—Gotch becomes more confident, and each man spars for an effective hold, but both are extremely cautious. Hack makes a lunge and misses a front waist hold. Hack misses a try for a head hold and the American does likewise. Gotch, becoming more confident, tries to excite Hack with a rapid feint. They lock head to head.

"10:40—Gotch locks arm preparatory to dive to right. Hack breaks hold. Gotch for the first time roughs it some. Hack bores in. They stand head to head and spar for a hold. Gotch smiles with a knowing smile at his friends around the ring. Hack roughs it, but Frank has the advantage. Hack tries to trip Frank, but the American cleverly sidesteps.

"10:45—They rough it. Hack bores in and makes a try for waist hold. Frank goes to his knees, but rises in the twinkling of an eye. Gotch evens matters by making an attempt for a leg hold, but misses after a clever shift by the Russian.

"10:50—Gotch is perspiring freely, Hack does not. Hack again tries to trip his opponent, but misses. The Russian plays for a wrist hold, but Frank breaks it with ease. Hack tries pull at head for a trip and misses.

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Gotch smiles confidently and Hack becomes serious. Gotch is clearly trying to tire his man and is apparently successful at his tactics. Hack tries for a leg hold, but Frank eludes him.

"10:55—Hack complains to referee that Gotch is using his thumbs in sparring. Hack at this point begins to perspire freely. Hack bores in and goes to knees for a leg hold. Gotch is fast and escapes.

GOTCH BEGINS "KIDDING."

"11:00—Hack butted in, the wrestlers' heads coming together hard. The men work harder, both puffing fast. Some one spoke to Gotch, who began kidding his opponent. 'I am telling him a few points about American wrestling,' said Gotch. 'I am going to take a boat tomorrow and go home.' Gotch referred to the perspiration. 'Farmer Burns could get you,' said Gotch, trying to worry his opponent.

"11:05—Hack becomes aggressive and bores in for a hold, but Gotch stops him. Gotch makes a dive for legs, but misses. Hack breaks arm hold. Gotch is still cautious, feeling his man out and taking no chances. The American champion breaks away and watches for an opening.

"11:10—Hack tries for a leg hold, but Frank cleverly avoids him. Hack throws Gotch aside, but the latter comes back smiling. The Russian tries to go under for a leg hold, but the Humboldt man is too clever. Hack begins to realize that he must win in a hurry and bores in faster, but Gotch stops his rushes.

"11:15—The bout has traveled to 45 minutes and the wrestlers show the effects of the pace that has been set. They slow up. Hack again rushes and Gotch meets him half way and dives for a leg grip, but the Russian backs quickly and avoids his opponent by a small margin. The wrestlers both puff hard. Hack

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gets wrist hold to try for a flying mare, but Frank breaks the grip easily.

HACK GETS WAISTLOCK.

"11:20—Hack fails in a desperate attempt for a leg hold. At this point Hack gets one of the effective grips of the match. He gets a waist lock on Frank and the bout looks dark for the American, as Hackenschmidt is known to have a terrible grip. Frank, as quick as lightning, throws his legs forward, all his weight being exerted in breaking the hold, which he does in a clever fashion and gains his feet in his usual confident manner, the crowd cheering lustily. Frank again starts kidding his man. He espies Rooney at the ringside and tells the policeman to come in and he will wrestle both. Hack rushes Gotch to the ropes. Gotch is confident and bores in, having his man going.

"11:25—They speed up. The Russian tries for a wrist hold to draw Frank in, but is again foiled. Gotch uses head, boring in and worrying his opponent. Gotch tries for bar arm, but misses. Gotch continues to bore in, and in his anxiety to gain an effective hold goes to his knees. He is up in a flash.

"11:30—Hack assumes the aggressive, but Frank brushes him away. The match has gone to the one-hour limit. Hack began to puff hard. Hack leaned forward. Some one yelled: 'He's resting on you, Frank, make him work.' The gibe evidently hurt, for Hack bores in, working harder. Frank tries for a leg hold, but loses the grip.

"11:35—Hack makes a lunge for Gotch's legs and misses, the American champion being fast and clever. Hack bleeds at the mouth and perspires freely. The Russian secures a leg hold, but the American has little difficulty breaking the grip.



HOTCH AT LEFT EXAMPLE OF HIS TACTICS IN TIRING
OUT HACKENSCHMIDT. From Photograph Taken at Ringside.

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GOTCH SHOWS CONFIDENCE.

"11:40—Hack again gets leg hold and Frank cleverly sidestepped. Gotch evens matters by going after a leg hold. Hack bored in and roughed it for the second time in the match. Gotch protects himself cleverly and the crowd cheers. Gotch spars for a hold and backs away. Gotch began to show such confidence that nearly everyone picked him as a sure winner. Hack bores in and Frank goes to his knees, but is up in a flash. Hack again dives for Frank and gets an effective leg hold. Gotch is down, but rises quick as a cat. The crowd cheers the men and the bout looked more interesting.

"11:50—Hack breaks Gotch's arm from dangerous position. Hack tries for the leg hold in vain. Gotch dances around his opponent. The wrestlers slowed up, the terrible pace having its visible effect. Hack tries for a wrist hold, but the American cleverly breaks the grip. Gotch now goes after Hack hammer and tongs and the crowd cheers. Gotch made an ineffectual try for a bar arm hold.

"12:00—Hack again gets effectual grip, the waist lock. Frank is slippery as an eel and employs his former tactics, breaking the grip so cleverly as to bewilder his husky opponent. The crowd gives a rousing cheer for the American champion. The men were again extremely cautious, and neither was willing to take any chances.

"12:10—The American champion smiles confidently. The wrestlers bore in; but slowed up to some extent. Hack stands upright and the men laugh at each other and then go at it hammer and tongs. Hack again stood up, apparently having lost all hope of winning. Gotch would have none of it and bored in, the crowd cheering. They mixed matters. Gotch stabs for the legs, but Hack avoids him. Gotch tries for waist lock. At this point Hack stops short and asks Gotch for a draw.

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The American champion refuses with thanks and the bout proceeds.

GOTCH THROWS HIM.

"12:20—Gotch makes a lunge, secures a leg hold and goes to the top. Hack tries to rise and falls to the side. Gotch throws him again and pounces on top. The crowd is wild with cheers for the American. Gotch tries for the toe hold, but the Russian straightens out. Hack tries in vain to gain his feet. Gotch secures a hold on his opponent's toe, but Hack by a herculean effort breaks the grip before it is in position for the famous hold. Hack tries desperately to rise, but all in vain. Gotch secures an effective leg hold and plays for the toe hold. Gotch again gets hold of the toe, but the hold is broken.

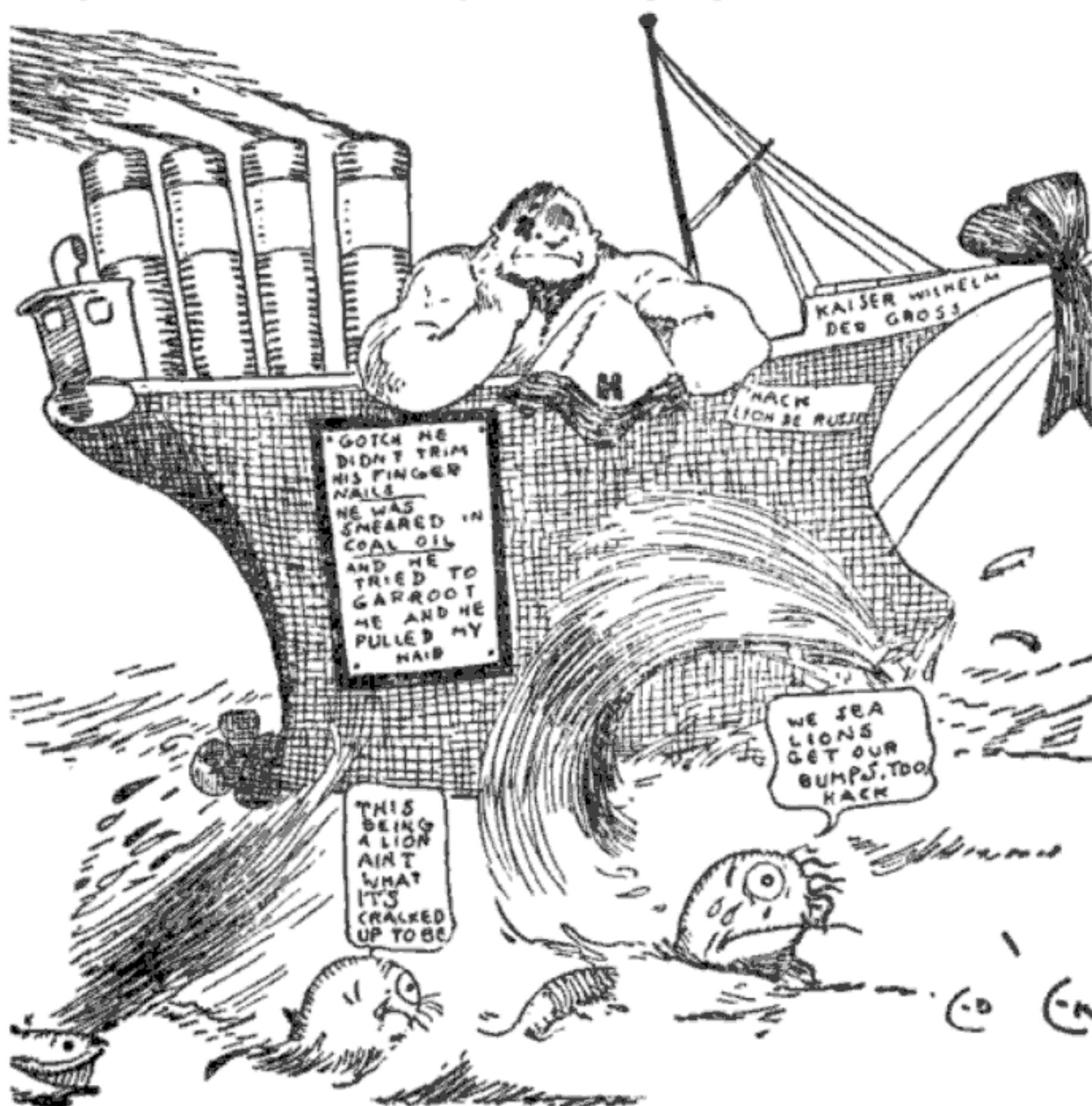
"12:30—Hack rises. Gotch follows him to the ropes with a partial waist hold. Hack holds to the ropes. Gotch bores in and secures a waist lock, carrying the Russian out and throwing him heavily to the mat. Hack manages to roll over, but is apparently exhausted. He tells Gotch that he will give up. Gotch rises and the bout ends after two hours and three minutes. Announcer Phelon says: 'Mr. Hackenschmidt surrenders the title of champion wrestler of the world to Frank Gotch.'"

STATEMENT BY GOTCH.

"It is very likely that I may never be as good a man again because of that match," said Gotch. The strain of such a contest is not appreciated by the people who look on. For the first hour we worked we both were sweating tremendously. The last hour neither of us sweat a bit. We had worked all the moisture out of our systems. I lost just nine pounds in those two hours on the mat. Think of working nine pounds of moisture out of a man's system. You can see that is a shock

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in itself. My tongue became dry, swelled up and as black as coal. So did Hackenschmidt's. My skin became absolutely dry to the cracking point and I burned like an oven. Such a contest is a terrible shock to a man's system, no matter how strong and well-trained he may be. This game is a constant strain and is sure to undermine a man's system more or less if he keeps at it. Last fall and winter I went about the country taking on four and five men a day, for a period of forty-six consecutive days. Few people realize what that



"ONE MORE DEFEATED CHAMPION GOES HOME."
From an Unidentified Newspaper Clipping.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

means. And while a man is training his life is one constant grind.

HACK BEATEN AT START.

"In the match with Hackenschmidt I got my first feeling of ultimate victory when we stood up to be photographed before the match began. I reached out my hand to shake with Hack, and when he took my hand I felt his hand shaking and trembling. And something said to me right then, 'Frank, this fellow is worried,' and it gave me new courage.

"I made Hack reach for me all the time; and never did he get a chance to exert his strength close up. He was forced to use his power at arm's lengths, which greatly diminished it, of course.

"Hack's main fault, I should say, was that he thinks too slowly. Before the match an old-time English wrestler wrote me a long letter, in which he told me of ten different tricks Hack would use, and he described just how Hack would go about each one. When I got in the ring I found out I could not have known more about Hack's style had I been wrestling with him for years. My friend's letter had hit his every move off to a dot. And every move Hack made he telegraphed to me in advance, which shows that he thinks too slowly.

"Hackenschmidt is the most perfectly built man I ever laid eyes on. Picture to yourself what you think a perfect physical man should be and you have Hack to a dot. He has not one superfluous ounce of meat on his bones; all muscle and sinew. He is certainly a magnificent specimen of physical manhood, a sight to look upon.

"I think that the main reason why foreign athletes always show so poorly against our athletes in recent years is that across the water they stick to the same old methods year in and year out. They do not seek to improve, to build on what they have had, to let go of

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

worn-out things. They go at it too leisurely and do not seem to like the exertion of throwing themselves into a sport so thoroughly as to make it evolve to higher and higher efficiency under their experimenting and hard work. Over here our fighters and wrestlers make the game a study, work at it, think over it, figure out improvements and seek always for some new way to get results. They do not do this across the water.

"Wrestling is a grand sport and so long as it is on the square it appeals to the public as few sports do. I have never wrestled before a poor audience. Every match I have had has drawn crowded houses, and I think my popularity, such as it is, is due in part to the general feeling that I have kept my end of the game clean and have never faked.

"For nine years I have been at it, meeting all comers, wrestling under all conditions, and have never yet mixed up in a queer match or failed to give the public my best. And it is gratifying to me, of course, to hold the undisputed world's title. I am glad it is held in America, glad that I brought it here. But I mean my life to be more than a mere wrestling exhibition. I expect to be an Iowa farmer all my life, and I expect to get pleasure out of life and make my life worth something. I hope that every year may find me a little better man in some way than I was the year before. I want to be a good citizen and a helpful, useful man."

Gotch has seldom worried over losing his title. What has bothered him most has been the latest quotations on corn and the price of steers on the hoof.—
Chicago Daily News.

always \$



DR. B. F. ROLLER
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CHAPTER XVIII.

Wins Hard Battles With Dr. Roller.

Among the contestants for championship honors encountered by Gotch after his victory over Hackenschmidt in 1908 perhaps none gave him a more strenuous series of contests than the Seattle athlete and physician, Dr. B. F. Roller. Gotch had wrestled him for an hour without securing a fall on October 12, 1906, in Seattle. They met again in a finish match at Seattle, July 1, 1908, and Gotch won with comparative ease.

Their next meeting was at Kansas City, April 27, 1909. Roller had improved greatly, but went down to defeat after a wonderful battle. When it was over Gotch said:

"Dr. Roller is a greater wrestler than when I met him before. He gave me the greatest battle I ever had, and he is improving all the time. I would not be surprised to see him champion some day if age does not affect him. I think he is the greatest wrestler I have ever met."

Roller's statement at the close was as follows:

"Frank Gotch is the greatest wrestler the world has ever known. He is a gentleman and I admire his work. I will wrestle him again if I ever get the chance and will try hard to win. He lost several times before he became champion, and I will have to do the same, but I think I will be the champion yet. I wish to thank the wrestling fans in Kansas City for their fairness."

November 15, 1909, they clashed again in a hard match at Kansas City. Roller put up a great fight, but was clearly outclassed and beaten decisively.

DEFEATS ROLLER AT SEATTLE.

The story of the finish match in Seattle, as told by

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Ed R. Hughes in the Seattle Times, reads as follows:

"Frank Gotch of Humboldt, Iowa, is still the wrestling king. The match last night demonstrated that Dr. B. F. Roller of Seattle is one of the gamest men in the world and that Frank Gotch is his master.

"Seattle has now seen the toe hold, made famous by Gotch, in all its thumbscrew cruelty, and Dr. Roller has felt it. No torture ever practiced in the inquisition could be keener than Gotch inflicts with that bone-breaking hold when he gets it right. It is a perfectly fair hold, but it is devilish in its cruelty.

"Gotch got it on Roller just once last night, with nearly the proper leverage, and those at the ringside imagined they could hear the bones of the foot and ankle crush and snap. Eddie Gaffney, the referee, on hands and knees near the wrestlers, could not stand it.

"'Let up a little, Gotch, you will break his leg,' he said.

"The champion eased the pressure, and with a tremendous kick with his free foot Roller got free; but he was beaten right there. That awful torture to which he was subjected took the sap out of him, and he jumped around the ring like a game cock who had been gaffed deep.

ROLLER OUTCLASSED.

"Roller, fast as a flash and tricky as a fox, was blocked in his every move by the greatest wrestler this country has ever produced, and he lost the match in two straight falls in the greatest wrestling bouts ever seen in the west. Gotch got the first fall in 15:25, and the second in 21:54. Both falls came from the crotch hold and half nelson.

"The match for the championship of the world attracted the swellest crowd that ever turned out for an athletic event in the northwest. Bankers and lawyers rubbed elbows with doctors and racetrack men. Salaried men whose sporting blood ran faster than their better

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judgment filled the cheaper seats, the price of any one of which meant a pair of shoes. And the big crowd saw a wrestling match that will live in the history of the northwest as a tremendous struggle between two real giants.

ROLLER GAME.

"Gotch, massive and hairy as a young bull, was pitted against Roller, broad of shoulder and lean of flank, with the lines of a racer—and the best man won. Of that there can be no question. Roller put up a magnificent fight; he stood punishment that would have made many a man cry quits, and he went down game to the core, though to a man of his pride it must have nearly broken his heart to lose.

"Roller is faster with his hands and feet than Gotch, but not in a wrestling way. Every move is a picture with Gotch on the mat. When he reaches for the knee he gets the knee or a piece of it. When he goes after an ankle he gets it. There are no false moves, and while Roller is as fast as a flash, he was almost constantly on the defensive from the smooth-moving Gotch, who glided from one hold to another with absolute grace and precision.

"Those who expected a long bulling match, with the men standing shoulder to shoulder, pulling and hauling each other around, were disappointed. The men met in the center of the mat with a shock when the word was given, and there was action, action and more action every minute they were on the mat.

"The start of the match was dramatic. Referee Eddie Gaffney nodded to the timekeeper and brought the men together. They met in the center of the mat with a crash just as a flashlight bomb was touched off. In the light of the exploded bomb the two big men came together, and as each man's arm went around the neck of the other, the sound of flesh slapping flesh sounded like the crack of a whiplash.

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"The two big men shoved each other around, walking slowly and shoving hard for just three minutes, when Roller made a quick dive and brought Gotch to the canvas with a crash. The rafters sang with the shout of approval as the Seattle man landed on top. Getting even such a momentary advantage was like drawing first blood in a boxing match. It did not count a thing for Roller, but it encouraged his friends.

"Roller fumbled around trying to get hold of Gotch's ankle, and the champion straightened both legs and assumed a sitting posture as easily as if he was untouched. Suddenly he got to his feet, grabbed Roller between the legs and lifted him shoulder high.

"There was an intaking of breath all over the house as the champion slammed Roller to the mat hard enough to break every bone in his body. Roller fell face down, however, just as a cat usually alights on its feet. Gotch then began to work in earnest. In trying for a crotch hold he could not get his hand between Roller's tightly locked legs, and he literally rooted Roller off the mat.

GETS AWFUL GRUELLING.

"The men were brought back and Gotch stood Roller on his head. Roller rolled around on his head like a spinning top, and with a quick twist and turn he fell on all fours and got his feet amid thunderous applause. Roller made a dive for Gotch's legs and fell flat on his stomach as Gotch stepped back out of range.

"Gotch then began sparring tactics, the men leading and feinting like a couple of boxers, until Gotch forced Roller off the mat again. Getting Roller down on the center of the mat, Gotch tried his first toe hold. Roller was watchful and kicked his way to freedom before the pressure could be put on. Gotch held Roller so he could not get away, and as patiently as a man trying to find the keyhole in the dark he tried for the toe hold again. Once more Roller kicked free. Five times Gotch

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got hold of Roller's toe in as many minutes, but could not hold it, and Roller was cheered to the echo.

"Suddenly shifting his tactics, Gotch slipped on a crotch hold, and as Roller wriggled on the mat he clapped on a half nelson. He put on both holds with absolute precision. It was just like fitting two parts of a lock together. Gotch worked close to his man all the time, and his holds fitted Roller's body like clamps.

GOTCH WINS FIRST FALL.

"Gotch swung one leg over, pinning Roller's left arm, and rendering his left side powerless, and with the shift Roller was turned face upward. It seemed utterly impossible for Roller to get away, held as he was, but with his face drawn and every muscle in his body strained to the utmost, he fought to keep his shoulder from the mat. Suddenly Gotch seemed to ease up, and Roller's head and one shoulder blade started to turn the right way.

"But just when it seemed that Roller would get away, there was a sudden upheaval of the big, hairy body over the prostrate man and a lurch forward. Roller was flattened like an omelet, and Referee Gaffney hit Gotch a resounding thump on the bare back as a signal of victory.

"The fall came so suddenly when it seemed that Roller would get free that the big crowd sat for a few seconds in a daze. Roller got to one knee and extended his hand to the smiling Gotch, and then the crowd realized that the champion had secured the first fall. When Gotch pinned Roller's left arm with his knee, Roller's head struck the canvas and he could not get his head up afterwards, so he could not put up his usual powerful resistance.

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GOTCH IN SPARRING ATTITUDE.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

ROLLER FIGHTS LIKE A WILD MAN.

"The men were allowed fifteen minutes for rest and Gotch was the first to come to the mat for the second fall. He was smiling broadly, as usual, while Roller was mad clear through, and showed it in every action.

"Those who know Roller did not have to be told that he would fight like a wild man for the second fall, for he had just been thrown for the first time in his life.

"It was all Gotch in the second bout. Only twice did Roller get on top in the twenty-one minutes the bout lasted. Once he landed on top from a mixup and the second time he tried to apply his famous scissors hold, the hold with which he handled Westergaard and Beell with such consummate ease.

"It started when Gotch was sitting down. Roller threw his forearm across the lower part of Gotch's face and gave a violent wrench backward. With Westergaard and Beell he was able to throw one leg over the body as they fell back, but Gotch's head fell forward to safety, and the scissors hold was spoiled.

"Then Gotch apparently took a notion to show a Seattle crowd just what he could do with the man who conquered Beell, Burns and Westergaard. He rushed Roller off the mat, and as Referee Gaffney signaled the men to come back to the center, Gotch picked Roller up as if he had been a baby and carried him carefully to the center of the ring.

"'Where do you want him?' he asked.

"Gaffney pointed to the mat and the champion slammed Roller like a ton of coal falling down a chute.

"Then Gotch grabbed Roller by one leg and tried to lift him off the mat. He could not quite clear the mat, but he made Roller crow-hop clear across the canvas on one toe while his other leg was held as high as his shoulder. The crowd cheered as Roller kept on one leg, and then sighed as it saw him topple a crumpled heap with the great hairy bulk on top of him.

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TOE HOLD CRUEL.

"Gotch then got the toe hold right for the first time. It is a fair hold in wrestling, but it is the most brutal thing next to hanging that can be imagined. Getting a firm grip on Roller's toes, Gotch got his own thigh in between the calf and thigh of Roller's leg. With that leverage he twisted Roller's foot and began to shove up.

"The pain must have been maddening. Roller lay flat on the mat, his teeth clenched and bared like a man hurt unto death. Gotch held him there for fully a minute. It seemed like an hour. He was waiting for Roller to raise his body just an inch. That would allow him to get his own thigh up just a little closer to the crotch and thus increase the leverage to the bone-breaking point.

"Had Roller moved the way Gotch figured he would, the match would have been over right there, for unless he turned over on his back his leg would have snapped like a pipestem. But instead of raising his body Roller wriggled forward an inch or two and shot up with his other foot. He kicked Gotch in the face and so got free.

"He was cruelly hurt, however. When he got to his feet and started after the dancing Gotch he limped painfully. He looked like a man who had passed through a stone crusher, but to the everlasting credit of Roller be it said, he limped toward and not away from his man. Roller suffered more punishment in the last few minutes of the match than most men have suffered in hours of wrestling.

"Gotch, as relentless as fate, rooted Roller off the mat and stood him on his head. Roller spun to freedom, but he looked like a dead man. Gotch had slammed Roller so hard and so often, lifting him shoulder high and literally slamming him to the floor, that his spine was hurt. His foot and ankle had been twisted until they hung on him like dead bone, but he was game to

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the last ounce of his marrow. He was fighting a losing fight. He knew it, but he fought it out with teeth tightly set and the sweat pouring off his drawn face in rivulets.

SLAMMED TO THE MAT.

"Gotch got Roller to the mat again, maneuvered for a minute, and got a crotch hold on him as the latter was trying to flop to safety. Gotch literally got that hold while Roller was in the air. He quickly applied a half nelson and then the end was in sight. Holding Roller with the crotch and half nelson Gotch rose slowly to his feet, holding Roller's 200 pounds of bones and muscles in the air, looking for a good place to drop it. Then his shoulders heaved and he slammed Roller with a savage smash.

"Roller struck on the back of his head and neck and Gotch with the same movement shoved him forward from the crotch hold. Referee Gaffney slapped Gotch's broad back as a signal that the match was over. Roller dropped as he extended his hand to Gotch. The champion smiled broadly as he tramped his way to the dressing room, while Roller leaned on the shoulders of Joe Carroll and Lonnie Austin like a man who was cruelly hurt.

"There was a roar for the champion, but Gotch quickly disappeared in his dressing room. No speech making for Gotch. He is a master mechanic at his trade. He breaks his man, presses his shoulders to the mat, and then goes out for a big meal like a man who has finished his day's work.

"Roller was in pain as he lay on his cot in his dressing room attended by his friends, but he was game to the last. He had not a word of complaint to offer. He knew that he had put up the best fight he had in him and no man can do more. He had simply met a man who was his master at the wrestling game, and it is no disgrace to be beaten by the greatest wrestler in the

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world. Gotch was as happy as a big kid in his dressing room. As Jack King rubbed the champion down, he joshed and laughed with friends who called on him.

"But he paid Roller a high compliment when he said earnestly and sincerely: 'That fellow over there,' meaning Roller in the next dressing room, 'is one of the gamest fellows I ever saw.'

"And that was the verdict of every man and woman who saw the greatest wrestling match ever pulled off in the west. Roller is perhaps the greatest all-round athlete in the United States; he is also a top-notch wrestler, but against Frank Gotch he had no chance last night. Maybe a year from now, after he has taken a course of instruction under Farmer Burns and Fred Beell and Joe Carroll, and has lived out in the open, building himself up, he may yet wrest the championship laurels from the brow of Gotch, but right now he is outclassed."

The gate receipts amounted to \$12,000. Gotch received \$6,500 and Roller \$4,000.

CHAPTER XIX.

Tours America and England in "All About a Bout."

In the fall and winter of 1908-9 Gotch toured the United States and England with his own theatrical company, playing a three-act comedy entitled "All About a Bout." The first production was at Kalamazoo, Mich.

FINANCIAL BAIT IRRESISTIBLE.

A few weeks later a Baltimore newspaper printed the following:

"Gotch came to town this morning to 'do a turn' at the Maryland Theater. 'All About a Bout' is the title of the sketch, in which seven persons participate. Frank says that it is a riotous comedy all the way through. It takes twenty-six minutes to produce it, and it is in three scenes. He begins in this city tonight a tour that will cover thirty-eight weeks.

"'But you said that you would retire to the farm after defeating Hackenschmidt,' was recalled to the champion this morning.

"'Yes, I did say so,' he admitted; 'but the financial bait was too irresistible and I'll see how this goes for a while.'

"Gotch says that the other day, when he first played his sketch as a 'trial on the dog' in a small city, he stood before the mirror in his dressing room soliloquizing.

"YOU AN ACTOR?"

"He said something like this:

"'You an actor! You ignorant, gawky country lout! You on Broadway!'

"All this time he was 'making up' in front of the mirror. He was smearing his face with grease paint,

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and as his thoughts grew warmer he put more force into his thumbs and fingers as he 'worked' the paint around his eyes and on his cheeks. 'You had better go back to the field and handle a hoe! Better drive the plow again! You an actor, drawing an actor's princely salary and showing on Broadway!' Words failed him then, but they didn't fail one of the other stars of the profession who happened along and overheard the monologue through the open door of the dressing room. The star had a fit of laughter, from which he is still said to suffer at intervals."

"All About a Bout" was a success from the start. The following account of the first performance is from a Kalamazoo paper:

"The season of 'Greater Vaudeville' at the Majestic Theater in this city was ushered in under brilliant auspices last night and made notable by the appearance here of Frank A. Gotch, the champion wrestler of the world, at the head of his own company of seven people, in a dramatic playlet in three scenes by Irving Lee, entitled 'All About a Bout.'

"It was the first public presentation of the sketch on any stage, and also marked the debut of the famous mat king in vaudeville, and the ovation that he received at the hands of the admiring hundreds attested to the success of his bold plunge into the realms of the near-drama.

"The theater opening was a corker, every seat in the big, beautiful playhouse being occupied at each performance; the playlet made a pleasing hit, and as for Gotch—he scored one of the greatest personal triumphs of his career, being called to the front of the stage at the conclusion of each act and showered with applause.

TASTES GLORY OF FOOTLIGHTS.

"And blushing like a schoolgirl graduate who has just voiced the secret of existence and been rewarded

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with a bunch of loving junk by friends and relatives, he smilingly—with his brawny arms around Grace and Aunt Susan—bowed his thanks again and again, and wound up by swallowing a lump bigger than the nub on a Hubbard squash, all the time thinking to himself how pleased the folks in Humboldt, Iowa, would be to hear of his histrionic triumph in Kalamazoo.

“Gotch's wrestling bout with the drama is a short one—about half an hour in duration—but it is full of fast work, wracking falls, parlous quips, spectacular incidents and jolly surprises, and the grand finale finds Gladiator Gotch standing over the prostrate form of the ‘Drammy’ in the attitude of Ajax defying the lightning, a full-fledged and successful actor, with a figurative crown of laurel bigger than a horse collar perched on his alabaster brow.

“He has tasted the glory of the footlights, and he is hankering for another nickel's worth!

“Anyway, Gotch made a big hit, the playlet scored well, everything considered, and we'll now tell you something about the affair in general.

PLAYLET A WINNER.

“‘All About a Bout’ is a one-act playlet in three scenes and was written for Wrestler Gotch by Mr. Lee, author of the ‘Yankee Regent.’ It is full of bright lines, amusing situations and ‘go,’ and after it has been brushed up a little and whipped into shape, it should meet the requirements of the metropolitan stage, as it has an air of novelty about it and introduces for the first time on the dramatic stage a bout in which the champion wrestler of the world has a star part.

“The action of the play hinges about a wrestling bout which is to take place in Madison Square Garden, New York, between the foreign and American champions, for the world's title. At the last moment the Yankee ‘champ’ is taken ill, and Gotch, in the character of

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Frank Conroy, is approached by a friend, who endeavors to induce him to take the American's place and go after the championship.

"Leading up to this it is necessary to know that Conroy is a crack college athlete and something of a mat artist himself. His Aunt Susan bitterly opposes his athletic aspirations, while his charming sister Grace, on the other hand, encourages him.

"Finally he overcomes all objections and at the very moment when it looks as if the world's championship would go to the foreign wrestler by default, Conroy appears on the scene, takes the Yankee champion's place, bests the bumptious gentleman from abroad and carries off the coveted prize.

"THE BOUT'S THE THING."

"As might be expected, the bout's the thing—the great, big, exciting incident of the piece.

"It is the final scene and shows a wrestling ring pitched in Madison Square Garden, with ropes, mat, referee and all. Those of the spectators who are not painted on the scenery are 'supes' provided for the occasion—some fifty in all. They march into the garden in single file, wrangling, joking and excited, and furnish not a little of the amusement.

"Conroy's opponent in the wrestling bout is in reality none other than Emil Klank, a giant in size and one of the huskiest catch-as-catch-can 'boys' in the United States. He takes the part of 'Atlas' Stetzel, the champion of Austria. The two men appear in their wrestling togs and each is a mountain of bone and sinew—a lithe, powerful, fearless giant, the product of years of careful, systematic training as a wrestler.

"When the curtain goes up on the last scene there have been two falls, the first won by Stetzel and the second by Conroy. Just before the 'rubber' a telegram is read from Frank Gotch of Humboldt, Iowa, challeng-

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ing the winner. Conroy (Gotch) arises and makes a brief address to the audience, in which he says that he knows this fellow Gotch and that a great many folks say he looks like the Iowa man. This creates a big laugh and is one of the hits of the scene.

"For five minutes Conroy and Stetzel wrestle with all their might, showing all the tricks of the game and giving each other some hard bumps. They writhe on the mat like a couple of gladiators in a death battle, and the audience, in breathless suspense, watches the progress of the struggle. The ring spectators wildly cheer, and the audience finally becomes infected with enthusiasm and joins in the hubbub, which ends in a wild hurrah as Conroy puts his man on the mat, both shoulders touching the floor, and wins the bout. Then the beholders drop back to the normal and shower the hero of the hour with well-earned applause.

"Gotch has a congenial part and plays it well—remarkably well, considering that it is his first appearance on any stage as an actor. He has some bright comedy lines, and he speaks them in a most effective manner. Certain it is that he has made a most favorable impression in Kalamazoo."

IN NEW YORK.

When Gotch opened at Hammerstein's, New York, the second week in September, the following appeared in a theatrical publication:

"No one expected to find in the champion wrestler of the world an actor, nor did anyone probably imagine that important athletic personage, Frank A. Gotch, would invade New York City with a real, genuine comedy sketch to present his prowess on the mat. Mr. Gotch sprang the surprises, however. In his New York vaudeville debut Mr. Gotch is the center of a very well and brightly written comedy sketch, containing several laughable situations and employing a competent cast.

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* * * When it is considered that other than the fame and drawing power attached to the champion wrestler of the world, Mr. Gotch has surrounded himself with a most capable piece and company, it follows that Frank A. Gotch is a valuable act for vaudeville."

GOTCH A GOOD ACTOR.

From Hammerstein's Gotch went to Keith & Proctor's 125th Street Theater. Said Robert Speare in a New York newspaper:

"At Keith & Proctor's 125th Street Theater Harlem is bidding farewell to La Sylphe as Salome and saying 'howdy' to Frank A. Gotch as both a wrestler and an actor.

"Incidentally it might be remarked that Gotch is a good actor. To begin with, he looks the part. College athletes grow so big and strong and so many of them are anything but children that Gotch is not out of line.

"As an actor of an athlete Gotch does not attempt to be either a melodramatic hero or a villain. He talks straight out, he doesn't hunch his shoulders and he doesn't teeter back and forth on his heels.

"He saves the old home all right from being sacrificed under the hammer, but he makes no bones about it. He does it, that's all.

"Gotch has the lifting habit, and he lifts the others in the sketch as easily as Billy Emerson used to dance when singing 'She's as Pretty as a Picture on the Wall.' His sister sits beside him and Gotch places her upon his knee with the same exertion that would be required in elevating a match.

"Gotch is graceful without ever posing after the fashion of Sandow. He knows what he has to say and says it distinctly, and knows what he has to do and does it without self-consciousness. But when his aunt in the sketch makes a rush at him Gotch forgets his famous toe hold and falls in dismay over the back of a lounge.

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"When he sees Emil Klank in 'All About a Bout' enter Madison Square Garden and the wrestling promoter asks what he thinks of the supposed champion, Gotch replies simply:

" 'Why, he's just a man like the rest of us.' "

TOE HOLD DOES THE BUSINESS.

"Klank had passed in a high hat and a swagger get-up, and it is easy to understand that it was just this off-hand view of Hackenschmidt which enabled Gotch to go diligently and fearlessly about his work of twisting the Russian Lion's tail until he howled with dismay, pain and chagrin.

"Gotch goes right after Klank and Klank takes his medicine. There is no prearrangement about this bout. From the start it is evident that Gotch is supremely confident, but Klank makes Gotch put forth the best he has to offer.

"That awful toe hold of Gotch's usually does the business. Klank manages as a rule to prevent an actual fall. When the time comes that Gotch finally gets a grip on Klank's toe, Klank loses no time in giving up, for Klank has uses for a toe that is not broken."

INTERVIEWED IN LIVERPOOL.

November 17, 1908, the Gotch troupe sailed for England on the *Campania*. On arrival at Liverpool Gotch was interviewed by a representative of *Sporting Life*. His story, in part, read as follows:

"The Cunard steamer *Campania*, having on board the world-famous wrestler, Frank Gotch, steamed alongside the Prince's landing stage yesterday at 8:55 a. m. A representative of the *Sporting Life* boarded the great liner, and was introduced to Gotch, who at that precise moment was tenderly ministering to a tired little five-year-old child, whose mother is connected with the

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Frank Gotch Vaudeville Company. A letter of introduction sent overnight anticipated the advent of our reporter, whom Jack Carkeek had made known to Gotch prior to his departure from America. After the wrestler had accorded his guest a very hearty welcome, the conversation immediately turned upon past and current topics.

HACKENSCHMIDT FALSIFIED.

“‘You have no doubt heard Hackenschmidt's version of the contest with you. How does it reconcile itself with facts?’ asked the reporter.

“Gotch drew nearer to his inquirer, and, with a serious look, which, as his description proceeded, brightened into a good-natured smile, added, ‘First of all, let me say that I have not come here to hound him. It would be undignified; but all he has said is false, every word of it. The pictures prove it, and when they are shown no more need be said. The public of England will not convict me until they have tried me. I only plead for a fair trial. I beat him fair and square.’

“‘Was the referee your own choice?’

“‘Why, certainly not,’ replied Gotch. ‘I had no more to do with selecting him than you. They do not like me in New York, and naturally I wished to wrestle in Chicago, where a westerner has a better chance.’

“‘Were you greased in the ring?’

“Gotch laughed, and repeated, ‘Greased! Hack is perverting the truth. Where would be the advantage? I was clothed from neck to feet in long tights. Whoever hatched that story told a good one. It was made up in New York. I will forfeit \$1,000 if they can prove that I used grease.’

“‘You are accused of using profane language during the match.’

“‘No,’ retorted Gotch, mildly but sternly, ‘swearing is not a habit of mine. I did talk, and ‘kidded’ him. I said, ‘You are a fine champion of the world. Why

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don't you do something?' I wanted him to start in and show me some wrestling, but he never once got behind me.'

HIS PLEA FOR A DRAW.

" 'What about the request for a draw?'

" 'That came from Hackenschmidt when we had wrestled one hour, one hour thirty minutes, and again in one hour forty-five minutes. The referee was going to consent, but I objected, and said, "We will be here all day, and finish it." I surely must have shown some ability.'

" 'With regard to the gouging; what do you say to that?'

" 'False,' said Gotch; 'false, every line of it. With the exception of a scab, which was removed in the struggle, and bled, he had not a mark upon his face. No man could have had fairer treatment extended to him by the people of Chicago. Ed. Smith was the referee. Our contract stated that in the event of not agreeing, Rob Edgren was to select him. He declined, and I left the referee to Hackenschmidt and the press. Siler was nominated, but his health prevented him.'

" 'What is your opinion of Hackenschmidt as a man and a wrestler?'

" Gotch quickly replied: 'He has no thinking power. He tells you what he is going to do before he does it. He is not clever, but very strong. I do not hold the press of England responsible for all he has said to them.'

" 'Had Hackenschmidt ever a chance with you?'

" 'Never,' retorted Gotch. 'He was always underneath, and begged me to get away from him, saying: "I stop. Please, Mr. Gotch, I give you the match." I asked him to roll over on his back. When he left the ring the referee gave him additional privileges, and told him he had only forfeited one fall. He asked him to return and Hackenschmidt's reply was, "No, he'll kill me."'

" 'I waited for him two years. He would not come



HACKENBCHMIDT'S RETURN TO ENGLAND, AS SKETCHED BY KING IN THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.

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to America for less than \$12,000, which was expressed to England before he would leave. It was his—win, lose or a draw. He was treated like a prince in Chicago by the club members, and declined on ladies' night to make an appearance. The town was wild with excitement, and wanted to see him.

READY TO DEFEND TITLE.

“ ‘Hackenschmidt's abilities are exaggerated. He is not a terror nor a wonder. I am ready to wrestle him or anybody catch-as-catch-can. If I am the champion I want to be the real champion, and take my hat off to a better. I am human, and have a right to have wrong impressions of me removed. I have never refused a man a match. I bear no man any ill-will. I have made a great study of wrestling, attack and defense.

“ ‘I am in England unsolicited, and have no very great inducements. In wrestling Hackenschmidt I soon found out his plan of campaign. When he pulled me forward I went with him, and did not retreat, as most men do. Then with under and back holds I slashed him to the ground. His favorite head hold I trifled with, put my head against his chest, and got close, with head downward, like a boxer. Then I said, “Come along and finish it,” whereupon he got back.

“ ‘All I can say is: “I am here. Judge me.” At the end of my tour I am ready to meet any man in my style.’ ”

Gotch had been “roasted” all over Europe by Hackenschmidt, and a strong feeling against the champion had been spread in this way. Hack said Gotch was soaked in oil. He told the English people that there were two hundred butchers about the ring at the stock yards, ready to cut his heart out if he won.

“NO MORE FOR MINE.”

On his return to New York early in February, 1909,

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Gotch talked with C. J. Murray of his experiences in England. Murray's story reads thus:

"Unchanged in appearance, but a better American than ever, Frank Gotch, the proud holder of the world's catch-as-catch-can championship, is back on Uncle Sam's soil again, after a theatrical tour abroad. And if the big, modest fellow from Humboldt, Iowa, has his way about it he'll never again cross the deep blue sea to seek laurels and gold in athletics. He declares emphatically that there is only one country—Yankee Doodle Land.

"'I've had enough of Europe, ejaculated Gotch. No more for mine. This country for your Uncle Doodle in the future. They can have England; I don't want it.

"'England is all right to visit if you have a lot of money to spend, but stay away if you are broke or happen to be a Yankee athlete.

"Gotch laughed like a schoolboy in vacation time when the writer mentioned Hackenschmidt's name.

"'Why, the big lobster,' said Gotch, 'he was so scared that he couldn't even keep an appointment with me. He acted like a baby. When I landed he had all the sporting writers buffaloed, but before I hit the deep blue sea it was a different story.'

"'I'll tell you just what happened and you can draw your own conclusions.'

"'When I docked at Liverpool about 200 reporters—they call the sporting writers reporters—met me. They actually came down on a special train. They must have thought I was some terrible fellow. They began asking me a million questions.

"'The first thing they wanted to know was whether or not I'd wrestle Hack. I must have licked them the first shot, for I told them it would give me great pleasure to grapple with George.

"'When I reached London I went direct to the

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Sporting Life office. There I met the managing editor, William M. Wills. He didn't like me a bit at first, but afterward, after he had roasted me to the queen's taste, he became my best friend. Now he roasts Hack about every day. As I say, I sort of made them like me. I deposited a hundred pounds with Wills to bind a match with Hack. The next day Hack went to the Sportsman office and deposited the same amount. Then what do you suppose he did? He called a meeting of the press of England and had a committee appointed to arrange the match.

BARRED GOTCH FROM MEETING.

"This meeting was held at a swell hotel. All these reporters and Hack went inside, but I was barred out. Can you beat that? They talked over everything. I was sitting outside in an anteroom, like a fellow waiting for news from a death chamber.

"Finally Hack's committee came out and told me that I could have a match. Wasn't that nice of them? Here I'm supposed to be the champion, yet Hack was telling me I could have a match. Well, I didn't kick. I suggested that we should sign articles right there, but the committee told me Hack wouldn't like to unless we met later.

"The whole upshot was that Hack became so disgusting in his actions that even his own friends on the different sporting papers began to roast the tar out of him. He backed down like a yellow dog when the show-down came.

"I've been told that after I had sailed he began hurling challenges my way again,' Gotch said with a grin, 'but he knew that ocean liners don't turn around, so he was safe.'"

FORCED TO MEET DINNIE.

Gotch's only match in England occurred in Shef-

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field. When challenged by George Dinnie of that city he at first passed it up as a joke.

The next day, when he went out for a stroll with Emil Klank, newsboys met them at every turn holding aloft on poles flaming headlines, which read:

"Gotch Refuses to Meet Dinnie."

"Dare's de guy dat won't meet Dinnie," yelled an urchin who recognized Gotch as he approached.

"That settles it," said Gotch. "I'll meet that fellow if I have to stay here a year."

To show his estimate of Dinnie, Gotch agreed to throw him twice in thirty minutes. The music hall owners agreed to stage the match, and on the night of the "battle" three thousand disappointed followers of Dinnie were turned away from the hall.

Gotch, stung by newspaper charges of cowardice and the hostility of the fans, went in to make quick work of his opponent. He downed the Englishman so quickly that the crowd set up a big howl of disapproval when Dinnie yelled that he had not been pinned long enough. Gotch had won the first fall in 1:06 and the second in :55. When the champion pinned Dinnie for the second fall with a crotch and half nelson, the Englishman raised one shoulder when Gotch had released him and then yelled that he was not downed.

The crowd of Dinnie partisans were howling for another fall and Dinnie was still showing signs of disapproval.

"You had better go out and tell the crowd you were down fair and square," said Klank to Dinnie.

"That fellow never had me down," retorted the stubborn Englishman. "He knows I might down him in the second fall."

"Well, go out there. Gotch is there and he'll down you again," said Klank.

This was one of the few times in his career since becoming champion that Gotch was roused to anger by

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an opponent on the mat. He motioned to Dinnie to come on for another fall. The Englishman came forth and the crowd yelled itself hoarse.

Gotch caught him by his right hand, pulled him in, picked him up bodily and hurled him heavily to the mat. In five seconds he had Dinnie's leg up his back for a toe hold.

"I'm down! I'm down!" yelled the Englishman, frantically pounding the mat with his palms.

"No, I don't think you are quite down," said Gotch as he pulled the leg back a little more.

"If you are absolutely sure you are down and aren't kidding me, I'll let you up," said Gotch as he released his grip.

Dinnie limped to his feet, came to the footlights and spoke thus:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I want to acknowledge that Gotch is my master. I underestimated his ability. He is the greatest wrestler the world has ever seen."

DINNIE EULOGIZES GOTCH.

To a reporter for the London Daily Mail Dinnie expressed himself freely. The Mail's article reads as follows:

"George Dinnie of Sheffield, the only British wrestler who has taken the mat with Gotch in this country, interviewed by an Evening Mail representative today, was very enthusiastic about the American's wonderful wrestling.

"The unsportsmanlike behavior of a portion of the Empire audience yesterday pained Gotch, although at the time he only smiled. Gotch is very sensitive, but he may find some consolation in the admiration the defeated Sheffield wrestler expresses of his methods.

"'Gotch,' he exclaimed, 'is the most wonderful of all the great wrestlers I have met. Hackenschmidt altogether takes a back seat.

"'Gotch worked with his brains as well as with his

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body, in a way Hackenschmidt never did and never could do. He is strong and moves like lightning. A man stands no chance against him. He is a master of ring craft. I have never met or read of a man like him. 'There is not an ounce of science in the ring that he does not know about. He uses pure brainy science. In every movement there is something in the background.'

" 'The people who were shouting,' says Dinnie, 'did not know what they were yelling for. He wrestles fair and in a legitimate way. It is a new style and we know nothing about it here. Yet there is nothing about wrestling that he doesn't know, and he always keeps within the rules.'

" 'Gotch is a straight, gentlemanly fellow, and I don't think he would do anything outside the rules. If he were beaten he would accept his defeat like a Britisher. He would not shake hands and then go away and say things about his opponent. If all Hackenschmidt now says is true, why did he shake hands with Gotch in a friendly way after the contest? Why did he not leave the ring disgusted? Gotch is not only a straight man, but he is a gentleman.'

" 'But when he goes in the ring,' added Dinnie, 'he means to win, and he follows you like a lion. I have never experienced anything like the bouts I had at the Sheffield Empire with him. There was something about every touch he gives you.'

A WONDERFUL BRAIN.

" 'He wears you down. His brain works with a wonderful rapidity. Hackenschmidt takes a long time to think, and then those opposing him get away. The people then say, "Oh, Hack might have had him that time if he liked," but really he could not. I could last another eight minutes with Hack any time. When I wrestled him I had been only four days out of bed.'

" 'The American's thoughts are like lightning. He

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follows things up, one after another, with extraordinary rapidity. If your brain does not work nearly as quickly, you are done for. This is apart from the fact that he is a well-trained man of colossal strength.'

"Dinnie went on: 'We do not understand his style of muscular development. His muscles are not contracted in certain parts; he is full of muscle.'

"Dinnie said he had no objection to the toe hold. It was a terrible thing, but was not what the name suggested. The whole foot was seized and not just the toe.

"He could express nothing but admiration of the American's wonderful knowledge of catch-as-catch-can wrestling, and Gotch used the toe hold because he knew that it was within the rules and that he could win by it. Gotch went in the ring to win."

DINNIE'S DOWNFALL.

The following comment on the match with Dinnie was printed in a Sheffield newspaper:

"Without endeavoring to pose as an expert in wrestling, the exhibition given yesterday at the Empire by Gotch against George Dinnie did seem to me to suggest that, in all the wrestling we have seen in Sheffield during the past two or three years, this was actually the first display of the real thing. There was no clawing the air, no preliminary, merely a lightning, bewilderingly rapid succession of movements, an enveloping and overwhelming of the Sheffielder by Gotch, which, from the instant of their inception, seemed certain to bring disaster to the local man. I think what we have previously seen will be generally adjudged to be as chalk is to cheese compared with what was served up by Gotch yesterday. I am not in any way dealing with the falls; they were too technical for an outsider to criticise. What did strike me, as it must have struck every man in that vast crowd, was the masterful dominance which was instantly established by the American in this his first real wres-

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ting bout since he came to our shores. Dinnie has done quite enough at various times to prove himself considerably removed from the ordinary amongst wrestlers, but he had no chance yesterday afternoon, and met a man against whose wonderful panther-like attack he was always powerless."

THE THEATRICAL TOUR.

The Gotch company showed four weeks in London and then visited Leeds, Nottingham, Sheffield, Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. At every city from 5,000 to 10,000 people crowded about the party in its journey to and from the hotels.

Wherever Gotch showed the crowds would yell that Hackenschmidt was coming and then a hush would fall on the throngs. Gotch would come out and announce he would be very pleased to meet Hackenschmidt at any time and place. Annoyed at one of these outbursts of sectional prejudice, he offered to give the Russian Lion \$10,000 to wrestle him. Hackenschmidt stalled him off. Finally, however, he agreed to meet Gotch, but wanted twelve months to elapse before the contest.

When Gotch returned to New York he had given up all hope of forcing Hackenschmidt into a return encounter.

"I am convinced Hackenschmidt will never meet me again," he said. "It seems too bad we couldn't arrange a match. A committee of sporting men were interested who had guaranteed a \$100,000 purse. It was a great opportunity for Hackenschmidt to re-establish himself, if he really thought he could beat me."

CHAPTER XX.

Makes Quick Work of Yussiff Mahmout.



MAHMOUT.

Photograph Copyright by F. B. & M. V. Fox, Chicago.

April 14, 1909, Gotch met and defeated Yussiff Mahmout, Bulgarian, at the Dexter Park pavilion in Chicago. It was one of the great battles of the world champion's career. Although the match lasted less than half an hour, vastly more wrestling of the strenuous kind was packed into it than in the championship battle between Hackenschmidt and Gotch.

Mahmout had defeated every wrestler of prominence except Gotch in America. He had proved a whirlwind against such wrestlers as Cutler, Americus and Beell. Gotch believed he was to face a dangerous wrestler of the aggressive type. He knew Mahmout possessed great strength and unusual endurance. The world's champion objected to the Bulgarian's wrestling in his bare feet. Anton Pierri, Mahmout's manager, explained that it was customary for wrestlers to grapple in their bare feet in Bulgaria and Turkey. The Turk finally consented to forfeit \$500 for this infraction of the rules.

Gotch had trained faithfully for this match. Con-

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stant drill on the mat and long sprints on the road had put him in splendid condition.

Ed W. Smith, sporting editor of the Chicago American, was referee. The following is his story of the battle:

"He's a good, honest old Turk, this Mahmout chap, but he doesn't belong. He gave Champion Gotch the best in the shop, but it wasn't much, and the big man from Humboldt is' champion still.

"It took Iowa's pride only a breathing spell over 17:00 to send the Turk down to a crushing defeat, a defeat so thorough as to completely stagger the greatest throng that ever saw a wrestling contest in this and perhaps in any other country.

"The first fall came in exactly 8:00, with Gotch on the verge of a victory every instant after four minutes of long-range sparring for a hold.

"The second fall and the finish of the man from the Balkan mountains came in 9:10.

TURK OUTCLASSED ALL THE WAY.

"When one says that Mahmout doesn't belong, the remark can be taken in almost any sense. He simply was outclassed every inch of the way by a wonderful athlete of high mental as well as physical force. Gotch outthought, outfigured, outmanaged, outstrengthened and outmaneuvered his swarthy opponent at every turn of the vigorous but brief journey, and only for a few short moments did it seem that the grand old flag was in danger of being trailed below the star and crescent of the Orient, or whatever flag the foreign star owes allegiance to.

It cannot be classed as anything but an extremely disappointing match, and the enormous crowd that paid grand opera prices and better to see the struggle, though delirious with joy at the outcome, could only shout for a brief bit before there came the sharp realization that

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

all form lines, all dope, all "past performances" had been upset so astonishingly that the situation left everybody gaping for an explanation.

HALF NELSON AND CROTCH DOES IT.

"It was a deadly half nelson and crotch lock, shifted from one side to the other to fit the rolling and squirming of the Turk, that brought about the smaller man's downfall. It was the same hold in both bouts, although in the second fall Gotch was forced, or rather saw fit to switch this into a reverse full nelson that was even more effective than the clutch that started the Turk on his way to absolute and unequivocal defeat.

"The Turk and his manager, Antoine Pierri, accepted their downfall in silent amazement. Pierri conceded the victory after the first fall, being so astonished at the speed and strength and skill of the man from Iowa that he merely gasped that the Turk was up against a much better man. The Turk is as game a loser as he is a fair wrestler, and at the finish, though deeply cast down, admitted through Pierri that the unfortunate (to him) result was simply what could be expected in the meeting of a champion and a man far from his equal.

"He did not plead for a second match, he did not say that his condition was faulty, did not quibble or find fault with a single point of the game. He simply shook his head in heart-broken silence and waited for his manager to lead the way out of the ring.

GOTCH IN WONDERFUL FORM.

"It wasn't the same Frank Gotch that worked and pulled and tugged and hauled through two awful hours with George Hackenschmidt in the same ring just one year and ten days before. The victor this time was a splendidly trained athlete, conditioned like a racehorse and fit to do battle for the whole state of Iowa, which

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just now is a prize worth striving for. They told Gotch that this fellow might encompass his downfall if he was not careful. Gotch had this tale dinged into his cauliflower ears until he was forced to heed.

"There isn't much of a story to the struggle, although there was more actual wrestling crowded into that fateful fraction of an hour than was shown during the entire two hours and more that was consumed in the match of a year ago. Gotch showed in the preliminary sparring that he was going to prove a source of awful worry to the Turk. The latter is not a good aggressive wrestler, and until he gets to the mat with his man he is not really at his best.

"They sparred for perhaps four minutes after the handshake and the word to begin before there was any real action, although the sparring was as pretty as anything a wrestling fan could ask for. Gotch was perhaps the more aggressive, going into his man in lively style and fencing beautifully for the opening. There was a rush into the ropes and the Turk clutched the top strand to save himself. But Gotch came around behind in lightning fashion, and amid the wildest demonstration one could imagine the Turk was flopped to the mat with Gotch at his legs.

GOTCH GETS MASTERY.

"It didn't take long for Gotch to show what he intended to try for. He slipped his left arm around one of the Turk's powerful thighs and the other arm sought the half nelson lock around the neck and inside the arm. The Turk squirmed vigorously, but in less than a minute Gotch had the hold and the beginning of the end was in sight. Onto his side rolled the Turk and as he tried to work away from the champion, Gotch edged into the double clutch in more desperate fashion.

"With one shoulder flat on the canvas and the other being slowly pressed down, the Turk seemed helpless.

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He brought all of his tremendous power to bear, but the load on top this time was not an Olsen or an Americus or a Beell to be lightly tossed off. All the little artifices that threw these lighter men off easily were of no avail this time. Gotch pressed and slowly that other shoulder sank toward the canvas.

"One tremendous squirm and the shoulder was raised away from the mat again. But every squirm that the Turk used only brought about a more powerful grip by the champion.

HIS WONDERFUL SELF-POSSESSION.

"Gotch's self-possession at this stage was something wonderful to contemplate. I was flat on the canvas so as to get a good view under the Turk, and Gotch's face was turned toward me. He had a smile on his face and scarcely breathing hard, he said as calmly as if in ordinary conversation:

" 'Watch close; I'll have it down there in a second.'

"He didn't get down in a second, but with a mighty push he brought the powerful shoulder blade of the Turk within a fraction of an inch of the mat. I pushed my fingers under the Turk's shoulder to make sure of it, but it wasn't a fall just then. The Turk squirmed away once more, but Gotch didn't let go and down once more came the shoulder, this time to smash completely over my fingers.

"Then I slapped Gotch on the shoulder, and as I did so I thought the roof of the building surely would come down. It was the most deafening cheering I have ever heard. The signal for a fall was to have been given with a whistle, at the request of the Turk, who has the same European notion Hackenschmidt had, but a steam calliope at that stage wouldn't have been heard a foot away.

TURK HOLDS ON ROPES.

"The Turk tried to save himself at one stage by

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clutching the lower rope of the ring just as he had grabbed the ropes earlier in the bout, but that made little difference. He merely prolonged the end for a few seconds.

"Game man that the Turk is, his heart was gone when he came out after a rest of twenty minutes for the second fall. He wrestled with some display of spirit, but there was a despairing look on his face that told of an early finish. The gamest of men must know when they have no chance, and thus it was with Mahmout.

"Yussiff did get behind Gotch in the early stages of the nine minutes that the second bout lasted, but this was a flash in the pan. The crowd yelled all sorts of encouragement, mostly to Gotch, but Frank didn't need it exactly. The Turk got a powerful looking waist hold on him from behind and Frank had a lively minute or so



GOTCH FLOORING MAHMOUT. IN THE FIRST BOUT

From the Chicago Tribune.

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breaking it. The Turk tried to scissors him, but the champion was a bit too speedy and got away. Once Mahmout lifted the Iowa man bodily in the air and tried to make a hard toss of it, but Gotch fell lightly.

FALLS INTO HAMMERLOCK.

"Immediately after that came the fastest session of the bout. The champion rolled his man, and Mahmout, on the edge of the mat, fell into a nasty looking hammerlock. The clutch was put on just as Mahmout left the mat, and I considered it only right that Gotch should have the same hold in the center, according to previous agreement. This Mahmout declined to concede and an appeal to Pierri was equally futile. Gotch insisted, and then when Mahmout gave him a partial hold Gotch wilfully let it go.

"It was but a few moments after that that Mahmout, failing to roll out and away from his fierce opponent, was soon landed back into Gotch's favorite crotch lock and half nelson. There was some more squirming, but after about four twists back and forth, the Turk was forced into a bridge and Gotch, throwing all of his weight into a reverse full nelson, slowly crushed the Turk's shoulders to the mat.

"The vaunted and dreaded toe hold was not on display until well into this fall. It came during one of Mahmout's rolls and Gotch gathered up one of the Turk's feet and pulled it up toward the small of his back. But the grip wasn't exactly what Gotch wanted and was used at the time merely as a feeler or to force an opening for the favorite crotch and half nelson which eventually came.

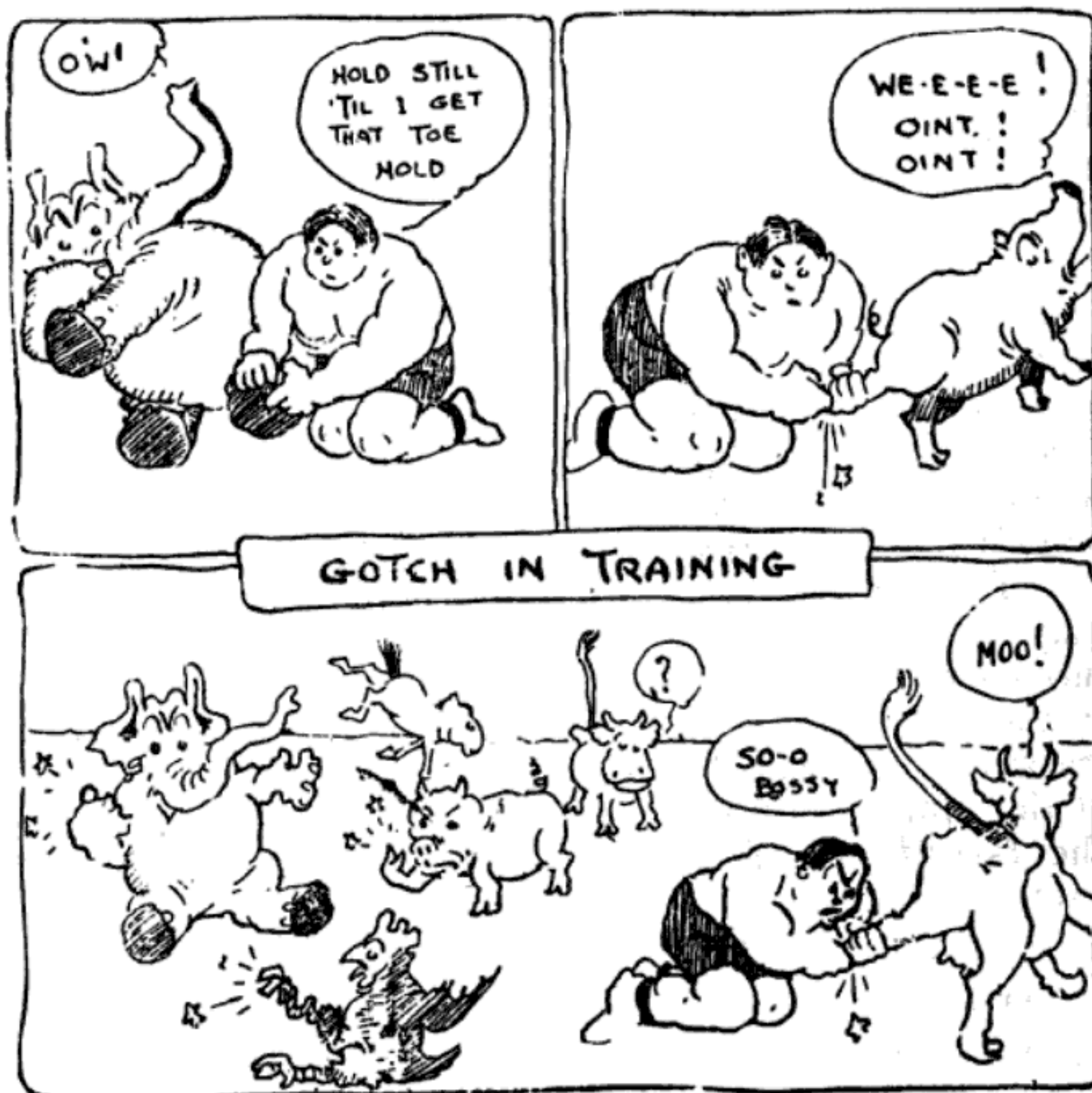
BATTLE HONESTLY FOUGHT.

"This was a match honestly fought at every stage. Mahmout never had been thrown for as much as one fall since his advent here almost six months ago, and

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his steady march through the lesser lights of the heavy-weight division created the impression that he would be a dangerous foe for the wonderful American.

"That he didn't prove so must be classed as a distinct disappointment even to the loyal Americans who longed for a Yankee victory. But the fact that the vastly better man won must silence all criticism, if there be any, of the honesty of the contest. There was too much at stake for Gotch to take a single chance. And he didn't."



by Hal Coffman, in the Chicago Examiner.

CHAPTER XXI.

Flops Zbyszko in Easy Victory.



ZBYSZKO.

The crowning achievement of Gotch's career came in his match with Stanislaus Zbyszko, the Polish champion, June 1, 1910, at Chicago. Although the big Pole was one of the strongest grapplers who ever came to America, Gotch performed the wonderful feat of flattening this Hercules on the padded canvas for the first fall in :6 2-5, a record of all time in a world's championship match.

The genuineness of this fall has been assailed by some, but the best critics of the mat have asserted there was nothing fluke about it. When the referee calls "time" the battle is on. Shaking hands then is a mere formality. Gotch obtained his hold after the call of time and after a handshake. It was simply an exhibition of marvelous speed conquering and tricking wonderful strength into defeat.

Zbyszko had defeated all the other prominent American wrestlers, crushing them

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beneath his giant proportions by sheer strength. He was slow, but wonderfully strong and with great endurance. On November 25, 1909, at Buffalo, he had held off Gotch for an hour in a handicap match, the champion failing to secure a fall. When they met for the world's championship, the Coliseum in Chicago, with its vast seating capacity, was packed to the doors.

DOWNED IN SIX SECONDS.

Gotch played the joke of the age on Zbyszko in the first bout, which was over before the crowd could catch a second breath or settle back in the seats after the preliminary excitement. Gotch backed away from his corner at the call of time and wheeled around. There was a lightning handshake and in the twinkling of an eye Gotch had grabbed Zbyszko with a reverse half nelson and bar arm and drawn him to the mat. The bout had lasted less than seven seconds.

The referee patted Gotch on the back in token of victory. The world's champion stood back and laughed heartily, but Zbyszko looked discomfited and chagrined. The big Pole was more than surprised. He was dumfounded.

THE STORY IN DETAIL.

The Chicago Tribune's story of the battle runs thus:

"Frank Gotch still is king of them all. The world's champion wrestler defended his title against a foreign invader and challenger, Stanislaw Zbyszko of Poland, at the Coliseum last night, while the cheers from eight thousand throats resounded through the big exposition building.

"The Humboldt farmer accomplished the defeat of his opponent in two straight falls and left no doubt as to his undisputed supremacy. He threw the fans into a state of wild excitement by winning the first fall in just 6 2-5 seconds, with a bar arm and half nelson hold, a sensational performance long to be remembered

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by those who saw it. The second fall went 27:36 before Gotch clamped on a bar arm and wrist lock.

“Perhaps no more sensational match has been seen in Chicago in years, and the sudden termination of the first fall, which took the heart out of Zbyszko, will go down in wrestling history as a feat which may never again be accomplished in a world's championship contest.

GOTCH'S TITLE SECURE.

“The Hawkeye, who not a few believed was likely to be dethroned by this Pole, demonstrated beyond all cavil that his superiority over Zbyszko and all other known aspirants for his title in this day is so great that he may remain champion for time indefinite if he chooses.

“Gotch outclassed the foreign adversary at every point of the game. His speed was too great for the Pole to cope against; his generalship stood out so strongly that it made his opponent appear as a novice; his strength was superb, and added to these his offensive and defensive tactics brought him a victory which Zbyszko never had a chance to gain. It simply was a case of one man outclassing another, and that man was the champion.

“But the greatest surprise of the match for the fans was the rapidity with which it was terminated. Taking into consideration the fact that Gotch's sudden and unexpected attack had taken the Pole unawares, it was thought that he might make an attempt to redeem himself in the second bout. But he didn't, for Gotch always was master of the situation, and it took him less than half an hour to finish the affair.

FIRST FALL COMES QUICKLY.

“There was a remarkable feature to the first fall. Gotch really won in four seconds. It took only that



GOTCH WORKING FOR TOE HOLD ON ZBYSZKO.
From Photograph Taken at Ringside.

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long to pin the shoulders of the big Pole to the mat and Referee Dick Fleming touched the champion on the shoulder, indicating that the fall had been accomplished. Gotch either did not feel Fleming's hand or he wanted to make the fall more decisive, for he continued his attack, and it took him just a little over two seconds more to settle the fall beyond all doubt.

"In the time that the men were on the mat there was not a time that Gotch was in any danger of defeat. For only a short period in the second bout did Zbyszko get a chance to work on the offensive. Then he didn't gain anything that resembled a dangerous grip on Gotch, who easily wriggled out of his holds. Gotch's speed seldom has been shown by a big man on any mat, and he found it easy to attack or duck away from the Pole.

TOE HOLD LED TO DEFEAT.

"The offense of the champion was aggressive and telling. His famous toe hold, which had been his greatest forte, he used only on two occasions, and it might be said right here that it was one of these grips that was indirectly responsible for the defeat of Zbyszko in the second bout. The Pole had just wriggled out of a toe hold in one corner of the ring. He was several feet away from Gotch and started to reach downward to the foot which the champion had a moment before released. Gotch saw the move and tore in like a bull, grabbing the Pole and hurling him to the mat. There he hooked on the hold which brought him the fall and the match.

"That made the second time that Zbyszko had been caught napping, but defeat would have been inevitable in the minds of all those who saw the match whether or not he had 'slept.'

"When it was all over Gotch was carried off on the shoulders of his admirers with an American flag, which had adorned his corner, draping his shoulders. Inci-

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dentally it might be said here that it was a most profitable victory for the champion, for besides the glory he reaped a golden harvest. He took down more than \$23,000 of the \$25,000 purse and also had a 'strangle hold' on the moving picture rights. For his end, Zbyszko in defeat takes away a little less than \$2,000.

THE PRELIMINARIES.

"Zbyszko was the first to enter the ring, accompanied by his retinue of trainers. He was loudly cheered by the big mob. The staff photographers had a chance to take a few snapshots of him before the crowd broke loose with a mighty cheer. It was the arrival of the champion Gotch and as he plowed his way through the crowded aisle to the ring, the fans arose to their feet and yelled wildly.

"Gotch's first act was to shake hands with Zbyszko, the enemy of the night. The photographers got another inning, this time, Gotch and the Pole being snapped hand in hand.

"It was just 10:11 when time was called, and six and two-fifths seconds later the Pole's shoulders were pinned to the mat for the first fall. It was a bar arm and half nelson that did the business, and the Pole protested that it was not a fall.

"The fall came so quickly that the crowd was surprised as no wrestling crowd ever has been surprised before. The minute Referee Fleming called time the champion rushed at the Pole, lunged and grabbed Zbyszko by the legs. Down went the Pole on his back and in a jiffy his shoulders were down.

GOTCH GETS TWO FALLS IN ONE.

"Fleming touched Gotch on the back, and evidently neither man knew there had been a fall, for they kept on going. It was just a matter of two or more seconds,

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however, when Fleming again was forced to proclaim the champion winner of the fall. There was not any doubt as to fairness of the conquest, for the Pole's shoulders were as plainly pinned as any man's ever were.

"An intermission of five minutes was taken, the Pole all the while protesting against the fall. Suddenly there was a crash in Zbyszko's corner which caused mild excitement for the big crowd. The resting of arms and bodies of the wrestlers and their seconds had caused the post on which the ropes were strung in the southeast corner of the ring to snap at the base. An effort to fix it failed, and it was decided to go on with the match.

"When Referee Fleming called time for the second fall, Zbyszko came out of his corner cautiously, evidently having made up his mind to take no more chances of being surprised. They met with arm and head holds with Gotch on the aggressive. It was just 10:17 when the bout was started.

RUSHES BIG POLE.

"The champion rushed the Pole around the ring, and after they had struggled for two minutes Zbyszko was dashed against the ropes and the broken post in the corner of the ring nearly pulled from its moorings. But that didn't stop the battle for a moment.

"They came back to the center of the ring and resumed hostilities. One minute later Gotch sent the Pole to the floor by getting a leg hold. But Zbyszko didn't care to stay there and was up on his feet again instantly. When they had gone six minutes, another leg hold put the Pole to the mat, but Zbyszko was up again quickly.

"Another leg hold after they had been at it eight minutes and twelve seconds sent Zbyszko down again, and for two minutes Gotch worked for a hold. He failed, and the Pole got to his feet.



GOTCH HOLDS ZBYSZKO WITH WAISTLOCK.
From Photograph Taken at Ringside.

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"Gotch, by a fine, diving lunge, once more got the Pole's legs, and in twelve minutes the champion was on top. Gotch made an effort to slip on a half nelson. He missed and for the first time in the bout the Pole took the offensive. He turned quickly while both were on the mat and got behind the champion. Zbyszko got his famous waist hold, but Gotch suddenly straightened his body, and by showing great speed got out of it and to his feet. Gotch had been down only four seconds.

ZBYSZKO PUTS GOTCH DOWN.

"Keeping up his offensive tactics, the Pole again put Gotch down, but the Iowan was up quickly. It was then Gotch's turn at the offense, and in eighteen minutes after the start the Pole was once more down. Gotch worked for his famous toe hold, and once the Pole got away from what might have been a dangerous situation. Gotch tried once more for his hold, then shifted his scheme of attack, and tried for a hammerlock. He got Zbyszko's arm back all right, but the Pole wriggled out of the trouble.

"The champion smiled as he feinted for holds, but the Pole was wary and wouldn't be caught so easily.

"For six minutes Gotch kept up his attack before the Pole was able to regain his feet. Then they went at it head to head, both grabbing roughly in an effort to put the other to the floor.

"Suddenly the Pole made a lunge for Gotch's legs. He missed, but got a waist lock, from which the champion was forced to take the defensive while in a sitting posture. He got up quickly, but was slammed down again. One minute later Gotch broke the waist lock and took the offensive in speedy style.

"He hooked on a toe hold. It hurt the Pole, but he got to his feet. He started to reach down to see if his foot had been hurt. Gotch saw the action and rushed in bull-like fashion. He caught the Pole in the

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corner and heaved him to the canvas with a thud. He whipped a bar arm and a wrist lock on Zbyszko and one second later the shoulders of the man from Poland were down for defeat in the fall and the match. It was a bar arm and wrist lock that won the final fall in 27:33 and brought misery to Zbyszko.

ZBYSZKO'S JOKE.

For a year or two past Zbyszko has been making considerable noise in the hope of securing another match with Gotch and the accompanying large consignment of American dollars via a share in the gate receipts. His aspirations in this direction have not achieved serious consideration. George E. Phair, the Chicago Examiner's witty paragrapher, has touched on them as follows:

"Stanislaus Zbyszko arises to claim the wrestling championship of the universe. Somewhere in the recesses of his concrete dome Stanislaus secretes a vein of sparkling humor.

* * *

"Mr. Zbyszko, who continues to prod Gotch, will burst into print presently as The Man Who Didn't Know It Was Loaded.

* * *

"We are greatly relieved to hear Stanislaus Zbyszko has thrown down the gauntlet to Gotch. We were beginning to suspect that he had sprained his press agent.

* * *

"To answer Mr. Zbyszko's challenge Gotch remarks that the weather is salubrious. Mr. Gotch can see a joke with the naked eye."

CHAPTER XXII.

Succumbs to Dan Cupid.

When Gotch wrestled Marshall Green in the Humboldt Opera House his future wife, Gladys Oestrich, then a little girl, went asleep in her father's arms as the contest was waged on the platform. Her future husband was winning his first professional match and laying the foundation of the largest fortune ever amassed from the athletic efforts of a single individual.

Before reaching her teens this little brown-eyed girl, daughter of a Humboldt lawyer, with raven black hair, bright as a dollar fresh from the mint, with a kindly disposition and a big heart, had made an impression on the country boy, nine years her senior, which took fast hold of his heart strings. Somehow or other, as the years passed, her sweet face was ever before him, inspiring him to do great things. Always he was in a hurry to go back to Humboldt to see his mother and be near his childhood sweetheart.

When Gladys went away to school Gotch became lonesome and wrote her a letter avowing his love. The two corresponded from that time until their marriage.

"I learned to love Frank when I was going to school," admitted Mrs. Gotch, "but I refused his proffers of marriage. I first made him prove that he really loved me before I permitted myself to become serious regarding his courtship."

When twelve years old Gladys took part in a popularity contest for a watch to raise funds for a new Catholic church being built in Humboldt. She was not a Catholic, but was popular and a leading contestant for the prize, but wouldn't work for herself.

One day Frank Gotch met Mrs. Oestrich on the

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street and said, "I'll give Gladys a dollar each for a hundred votes."

"Well, why didn't you offer it to me?" asked Gladys



MRS. FRANK A. GOTCH.

of Gotch the next time she saw him.

"Well, here I am and here is the money," replied Gotch.

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"Thanks," snapped the little miss as she shrugged her shoulders and proudly walked away.

"I'll marry her for that some day," was Gotch's comment to Pat Williams of Humboldt, with whom he was talking at the time. The prophecy came true, the farmer boy and the banker's daughter linking their fortunes for life nearly a decade later; and never has the writer seen a pair more happily mated.

The marriage was solemnized in Humboldt at the home of the bride's parents, January 11, 1911.

Surfeited with his mat honors and the hard grind of the active wrestler's career, Gotch felt that the time was opportune for retiring. Within a few weeks, however, he was hard at it again, and the late Hugh E. Keough ("Hek") was inspired to pen the following verses for his column in the Chicago Tribune:

ENTER THE "OTHER HALF."

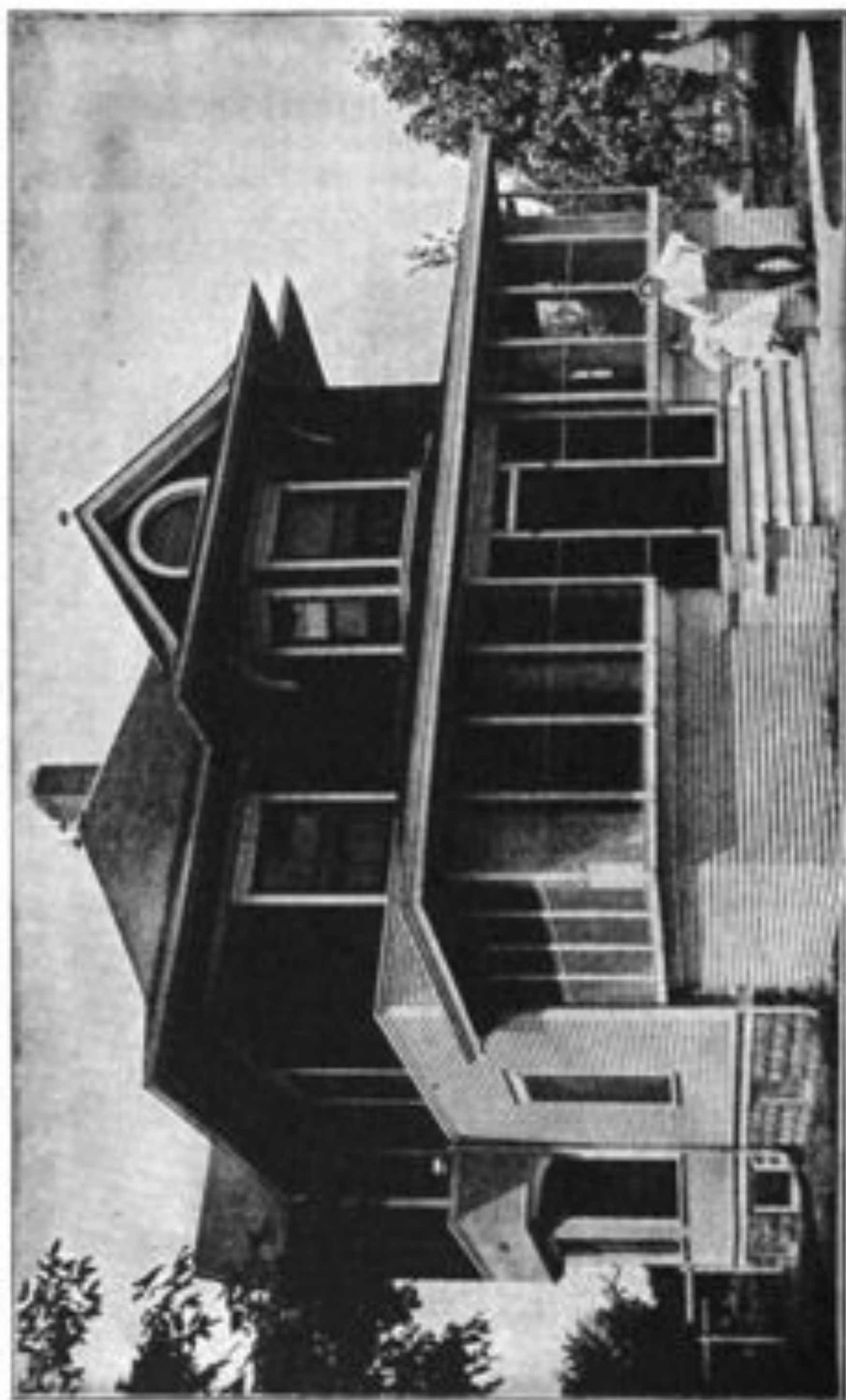
A dainty bit of muslin, a wispy little sprite, was enamored of an
athlete large and strong,
Who had won a wide publicity from the gentlemen who write, and
was branded as a hero, right or wrong.

Well, the athlete shuffled up unto this wispy little sprite and fell in
love some more than he'd admit,
And when we heard the rumor he'd forsook athletics quite—
"The other half she wouldn't stand for it."

A nifty little romance spread across the sporting page, with a
picture of the female in the case,
Who intended her intended should in business engage and cop out
for himself an "honored place."

Her father was a lawyer and her brother owned a bank, and
they lent their approval to the match,
Provided that the athlete would forego athletic rank and to some
other line his name attach.

A nifty little romance. It was nothing short of that. What a
pity it should get a rude attack!
But no sooner had we heard that he had "quit it cold and flat"
than we heard again that he was "coming back."



THE GOTCH RESIDENCE IN HUMBOLDT, IOWA.

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Fact was, the bit of muslin, the dainty little dame, had an ogle
on the oof bird like himself;
Far away from her the notion she must snatch him from the
game to pose for her exclusive on the shelf.

Nix, nix on the retirement! Likewise nay, nay, Pauline! No
rest for him as long as he was fit.
He could chase the thought of "quitting on his laurels" from his
bean—"The other half she couldn't stand for it."

She sends him out to gather and she tags him on the trip, with
her peepers on the kale box all the while;
When his part of it is counted she is always on his hip, and she
soaks it in the bank of Silk & Lisle.

"'Twas a love match pure and simple," but when articles were
signed the romantic stipulation didn't go;
You thought that you had lost him, but he's back again, you find,
and the "other half's" a-managing the show.

GOTCH CHAMPION HAPPY MAN.

"Speaking of happy men," wrote George A. Barton,
"they're all running bad seconds to Mr. F. Alvin Gotch,
Humboldt, Iowa, farmer, monologist and also some
wrestler.

"The big athlete is one long, loud laugh these days.
He is on his honeymoon and he doesn't care three
whoops who knows it. Frank is so deeply in love that
one might just as well ask him to kiss Hackenschmidt
as to stop talking about the 'Mrs.' long enough to give
out a real interview regarding the wrestling situation.

"This appearing at theaters is fine stuff, for it keeps
me away from Mrs. Gotch just long enough to make the
saying "goodby" and "hello" mighty fascinating,' says
the champion of champions. 'Honest, I am so madly
in love that I don't believe anything would make me
peevish. Just about one year of traveling and then Mrs.
Gotch and I will settle down to the simple life at Hum-
boldt, Iowa, the one little town in the world where every-
one carries out the Biblical idea of loving his neighbor.'

"What do you think of that for 22-karat sentiment?"

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

First thing we know Gotch will invest in a mandolin and do the serenading stunt every evening at twilight. And Frank is some canary when it comes to chirping too. If you don't believe it, just ask some of his intimate friends."

When the honeymoon was about a year old a newspaper man who had interviewed the happy couple set forth his impressions as follows:

"That all-conquering toe hold of Champion Frank Gotch has forced the Russian Lion and many another vaunted wrestler to kneel and call him master, but there's a brown-eyed slip of a girl who has the conqueror himself fast in a heart hold, to which he humbly bows, surrendering his title for all time.

"They are refreshing—these Gotches—in this day and age when married lovers are seldom found outside book covers. One carries away from a half hour's chat with them—or at them, for they frequently forget the visitor's presence and chat with each other—a revived faith in the enduring qualities of romance.

"This king of the muscular world defers constantly to the every wish of the slender girl who became his wife less than a year ago, and glories in his unimposed servitude. The almost reverent light that shines in his eyes as he looks at her tells of more happiness than all the riches in the world could bring.

VERY STUBBORN.

"'He is very stubborn,' smiled Mrs. Gotch. 'I have quite a time managing him, although he calls me his "manageress." If he were wrestling and found himself getting the worst of it in the match he wouldn't give up even though he were being hurt. He's too stubborn.'

"'That may be true,' chuckled the champion rubbing his strong hands good-naturedly together, 'but for all my stubbornness I don't hold out very long when she

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

gets hold of me, and—well, I usually find myself taking the same train she does.'

"'You know,' he confided happily, 'I'd have been married long ago, but I had to wait for her to grow up. We were both born there in little old Humboldt—I was born in the country and she in town—and she was always such a proud, offish little thing. One day, when she was about eleven she took part in a contest, and I told her mother that if Gladys would come to me herself I would buy a bunch of tickets. She wouldn't come, but I met her on the street and she deigned to ask me about it and I bought the tickets. She gave me a stiff little thank you and tucked her head in the air and away she went. I was twenty and a big man, but I said to the chap with me: "Some day when she grows up I'll make her marry me, just for that."'

THE WOOING.

"Mrs. Gotch laughed heartily at the remembrance, but hastened to explain:

"'You see, I didn't know him very well, although my mother and father knew him, and I could never think of being very free with folks I was barely acquainted with. Then he got to coming around to take me out in his car and teach me to run it. And I thought what a nice big man he was to be so good to a little girl. But I never really thought about caring for him or marrying him until about two years ago, did I, Frank?'

"The champion leaned forward in his chair and looked at her as he continued the story.

"'She went away to school, and, although we were engaged, I couldn't be satisfied—too many fellows down there. Her folks didn't have any more like her, and I couldn't take any chances, so I made her stop school and marry me.'

"The big boy—for that is what Frank Gotch seems—

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

stopped talking, but he didn't stop looking at the little girl who smiled into his eyes. He turned finally, without embarrassment.



MRS.
FRANK
A.
GOTCH

Sketched by Fay King, now Mrs. Battling Nelson.

"'Great thing,' said he, don't you know, to be in love with your wife! I do things that wouldn't look

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

out of the ordinary if I were not married, but I guess they do look pretty extravagant and——'

" 'Why, honestly, he's worse now than he was before,' broke in Mrs. Frank. 'When I went home to spend my birthday with my folks, he thought he must come home to see me, and to catch up with his route again and be in Omaha at the time he had agreed to fill an engagement there, he had to charter a special train.'

NOT AFRAID OF HIS GETTING HURT.

" 'Am I afraid he'll get hurt in these wrestling matches? Well, not any more. When I used to watch him at first, I was, but nobody knew it, for I felt that I would be giving the impression that Frank couldn't hold his own, and that wouldn't have been fair to him. The only time lately that I have felt at all afraid was Labor Day, and then, when I got in and saw him, I wasn't in doubt any more.'

"Mrs. Gotch is of a decidedly domestic turn, and grows very enthusiastic when she tells you how she kept house last summer and 'did all the cooking herself' for her husband while he was in training. She says that he can find nothing so good as the preserves and jellies which she made from the fruits off their farm.

" 'Why, he can eat a whole jar of preserves at one meal!' she declared. 'And he told me right before my mother that her cooking wasn't as good as mine. Last summer I cooked for strange people every day, for not a morning passed that the train didn't bring in some men who knew Frank, and after watching him down at the training camp, they'd come home with him to eat. I never knew till I saw them coming, but I gave them what we had.'

" 'And they enjoyed it, too,' said Gotch. 'Nearly all fellows of my class, who don't know what it is to have a real home in one place. That's why it means so

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

much to me. A good home and a wife that he loves—
what more can a chap ask? ”

The following verses, taken from the Gotch scrap-
book, doubtless impressed its owners as being just
right:

NOTHING UNUSUAL.

They lived together thirty years,
Through storm and sunshine, weal and woe;
They shared each other's hopes and fears—
She still his sweetheart, he her beau,
She, proud of him, though he was not
A millionaire, or known to fame,
The wife, contented with her lot,
The man—well, very much the same.

He never thought she ought to be
Always agreeable and gay;
And she did not expect that he
Would never have a grouchy day.
She didn't think that he was one
Without a single fault or whim,
Nor did she try a paragon
Of goodness to make out of him.

But hand in hand, they went along
Through all the moods that humans know;
Displeasure came when things went wrong,
She still his sweetheart, he her beau.
Frowns, smiles, delight, despair they knew
With love always to dry their tears,
Just simple, human folks, those two,
Who lived together thirty years.

—*Detroit Free Press.*

The only person who can “lick” Frank Gotch and
make him quit is his little wife. —*Chicago Daily News.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

Crushes Hackenschmidt in Second Battle.

Volumes have been written on the second encounter of the world's champion with Hackenschmidt, in which the "Russian Lion" was decisively beaten before the largest crowd that ever watched a battle of mat gladiators in modern times. Some writers have cast suspicion on the integrity of this match, alleging that the public was victimized. This is an erroneous opinion and a manifest injustice to the world's champion.

The real fact is that Hackenschmidt was defeated before he went on the mat. He feared Gotch and his toe hold, but he did his best, and the better man triumphed.

Hackenschmidt and his trainers contended he was handicapped by strained tendons in one of his knees. This Gotch has repeatedly scouted, contending it was in the heart that his famous foe was injured. There was no hippodroming in this match, Gotch asserts. He went to the mat with the Russian with the intention of taking no chances and of crushing his opponent in as decisive fashion as possible.

GOTCH SPURNS BIG OFFERS.

Gotch, exasperated and disgusted by Hackenschmidt's unsportsmanlike conduct following their first match, and the Russian's refusal to meet him in England, was little disposed to heed his demand when he finally mustered up courage to return to America in 1910 and demanded of Gotch a return encounter. The promoters begged Gotch to meet the Russian and to all he gave the same answer: "Let Hack go out and defeat Mahmout and I'll wrestle the winner." Fabulous offers failed at the time to swerve Gotch from his purpose.

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GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

For two months Mahmout's manager hurled challenges at Hackenschmidt without the semblance of an answer. Despairing of seeing the Turk and Hackenschmidt clash in a finish encounter, Gotch decided to resort to stratagem.

Hackenschmidt was scheduled to meet Jess Westergaard early in December. Gotch arranged with Farmer Burns to have Mahmout in Omaha on the date of the match to offer to battle it out with the Russian on their merits.

The night of the match arrived. Hackenschmidt's victories over so many wrestlers served to draw the curious to see the bone crusher. Westergaard is popular in Omaha, and that served to lure more people from their homes. Another influence was operating to draw the crowd to that match. A tip had been passed along the line among the friends of Farmer Burns in Omaha that "something was liable to drop" and that they had better be present if they wanted to see some real fun.

SPRINGS SURPRISE ON HACKENSCHMIDT.

Four thousand fans packed the hall that night. Twenty minutes before the bouts were scheduled to begin a mysterious stranger entered the hall, preceded by "Doc" Krone and Farmer Burns. It was Yussiff Mahmout, trained to the minute, eager and spoiling for a chance to tackle George Hackenschmidt before he left the hall.

A hush fell upon the crowd as Farmer Burns arose followed by Mahmout and his manager. When the trio ascended the platform neither Hackenschmidt nor Jack Curley, his manager, made an effort to stop them. They thought Farmer Burns had something to announce from Gotch. So he had, but it was something they least expected.

Mahmout's manager stepped to the footlights and addressed the crowd as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: Mahmout, the Turk, has

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chased Hackenschmidt all over America and the Russian Lion has ignored him. I have the pleasure of introducing to you Yussiff Mahmout, who is prepared to take Westergaard's place against Hackenschmidt tonight and give you an exhibition of scientific wrestling such as you have not seen for a long time. Hackenschmidt can have all the money and we promise you a big treat if the Russian will wrestle the Turk tonight."

Mahmout threw off his overcoat and crawled through the ropes, stripped and ready. As the Turk stood and waited for Hackenschmidt to come forth and meet him the crowd cheered for several minutes. They yelled themselves hoarse, but Mahmout waited in vain.

REFUSED TO MEET MAHMOUT.

Hackenschmidt turned pale with fright, and Jack Curley, one of the cleverest of managers, for once in his life seemed completely nonplussed. Gotch's coup had taken them unawares. They were unprepared for the time being to combat this unexpected move on the part of the world's champion. They were agreed upon one thing in their extremity. Hack must not go near the mat while Mahmout was there lest the Turk should upset all their plans.

When the crowd had waited in vain and Hackenschmidt had regained his nerve, the Russian Lion gave orders that Mahmout must leave the hall before he would consent to proceed with his exhibition with Westergaard.

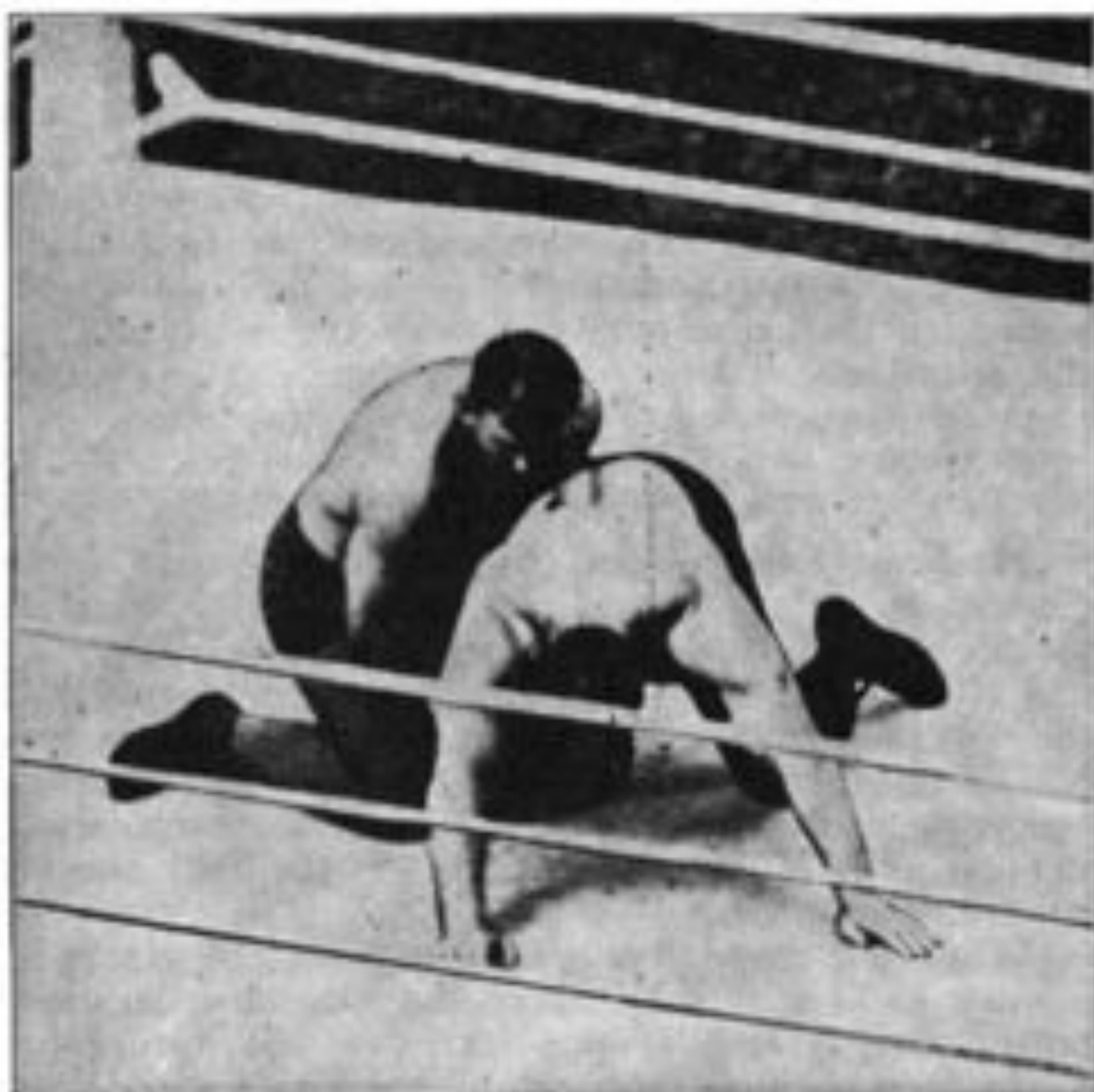
Gotch was convinced then that Hackenschmidt never would consent to meet Mahmout. There was no match for the world's championship that season, but in 1911 Gotch finally consented to give the "Lion" the opportunity he demanded.

BRAIN TRIUMPHS OVER STRENGTH.

The story of the battle, which occurred September 4,

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

June 1911, at Comiskey's new baseball park in Chicago, is one of the triumphs of speed over slowness, of courage over



GOTCH GETS TOE HOLD ON HACKENSCHMIDT.

From Photograph Taken at Ringside.

fear, of brain over mere strength. From the time the gladiators took the referee hold at the call of time until Hackenschmidt wailed for mercy at the finish, the superiority of Gotch was manifest.

Ed Smith, the referee, described the match in part as follows in the Chicago American:

"Frank Gotch is likely to be champion wrestler of

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the world for the next ten years. His complete and crushing defeat of George Hackenschmidt, the 'Russian Lion,' in Comiskey's Ball Park yesterday afternoon proved that the Iowa man is even greater today than



GOTCH HAS TOE HOLD AND HACKENSCHMIDT PLEADS FOR
MERCY.

he was when he trimmed Mahmout the Turk and a year later Zbyszko the Pole.

"Gotch ruined Hack's single chance by sheer speed in the first ten minutes.

"There wasn't a thing to it but Gotch after that.

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"And when the Iowa farmer clamped on a toe lock—it wasn't the real thing, but it would have been in a short time—Hackenschmidt had had enough of it.

"That was in the second bout, shortly after six minutes of work.

"LION" ROARS FOR MERCY.

"'Don't break my foot,' he groaned as he felt the coming of the deadly grip. Gotch had his back to Hack at the time and turned his head to hear what he was saying.

"'What?' shouted Gotch at his fallen foe. There was a grim sneer on Gotch's face as he made to get the famous grip in better style.

"'Don't break my leg,' again appealed the 'Lion' as he turned a distorted face up to me. He looked in deepest pain then.

"'There'll have to be a fall,' I shouted in Hackenschmidt's ear as the crowd was roaring with excitement.

"With that the 'Lion' groaned two or three times, and it looked as if he intended to try and wriggle out of the deadly grip that seemed to be coming to a certainty. But if he was of that mind he changed it quickly and slowly permitted his shoulders to sink to the canvas.

"It didn't make much difference excepting that the crowd didn't get as good a run for its money as it might have had had Hack put up a better fight of it.

"He complained that he had a bad leg going into the ring, but took a chance with it, believing that if he was unable to get the upper hand early in the encounter he might have a fine chance ultimately of being returned the winner. The leg never was very bad at any time, but it prevented some of Hackenschmidt's hardest training. Members of the training camp never figured the injury was dangerous and

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

refused to let Hack sag off in his training any more than was absolutely necessary.

ALWAYS GOTCH'S SPEED THAT WINS.

"It is the marvelous speed and cleverness of Gotch that stand out in amazing fashion with every succeeding international mat match that is decided.

"Never during the twenty-two years that I have been looking at professional wrestlers has there been shown to me a quicker move than Gotch made in the first bout when he secured the hold that ultimately flopped Hackenschmidt on his broad shoulders.

"They had gone about fourteen minutes and Gotch had the upper position and was fussing around Hackenschmidt's feet.

"It was evident to the 'Lion' that Gotch was working busily for the favorite crotch hold, as he was trying to get one of his powerful arms through the 'Lion's' legs. This is a familiar maneuver of the big Iowa man, and Hack doubtless had been drilled into watching for it.

"Gotch kept jabbing away and tearing at Hack's legs, keeping his head down close to the 'Lion's' knees. Suddenly and without the loss of a flash of time Gotch swung around on his belly on Hack's wide chest, swinging his legs clear to the front of Hack's head, and seizing the big foreigner in a firm grasp around the body, slowly forced the Russian's shoulders down.

"He fooled me completely, for I figured that Gotch intended to make all of the action right at that time around Hack's feet. But it was only a feint, that was certain, and the sudden swing around shifted the attack so completely that the under man was completely baffled and mystified by the move. Before he could collect his senses he was down and beyond hope just at that time.

"There wasn't the slightest question about this fall, as Hack was completely pinned for what doubtless was

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GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



HACKENSCHMIDT PINNED BY GOTCH. FINAL FALL.
From Photograph Taken at Ringside.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

the first time in his long and wonderfully successful career.

SUDDEN FINISH BIG SURPRISE.

"The sudden termination of the first bout seemed to surprise everybody, the Russian as much as anyone else. He had wrestled up to that time with a great deal of assurance and seeming confidence.

"He was working nicely and Gotch had considerable trouble reaching the 'Lion's' legs in order to drag him to the mat. He did it finally with a waist lock, lifting the 'Lion' entirely clear of the floor and slamming him down hard.

"Even when Hack assumed the defensive and Gotch started to work on him it looked as if it would be a long, trying task for Frank to get the right sort of a grip on him and turn him over. Gotch started right away to sweat profusely, while the Russian remained calm and unruffled. The early sweating may have meant that Gotch, being the more anxious worker, was assuming the burden of the forcing and therefore was under a greater strain than the Russian.

"But the 'Lion' suddenly began to break out into a good perspiration too, and after that he worked a bit faster. Gotch's jabs at his legs were easily avoided, and he seemed to have plenty of strength and control of his limbs.

"In the upper portion of his body the Russian seemed to be much stronger than the American, but the latter's superb offense and dazzling speed, it seemed, must surely turn the tide in his favor before he would permit the single item of strength to cut any figure in the match.

"And that's the way it came about.

"Gotch won before the Russian had a chance to clamp on a telling hold.

"Hackenschmidt tried sincerely in the second fall to grasp Gotch in some kind of a vise-like grip, but

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Gotch's speed was so sharp that the Russian would no more than seize Gotch by wrist or arm, when he would lose that useless hold in a hurry as Gotch jerked away.

HACK COMPARED TO CARTHORSE.

"The 'Lion' is naturally slow, there is no question of that, and pitted with a man of Gotch's terrific paces he seemed like a plodding cart horse.

"The man from Iowa worked superbly all the way through. He seemed to have everything that was necessary to down the bulky foreign star, and used what he had to in as quick time as possible.

"The 'Lion' says he is not a quitter, but that he put up the best fight he could for as long a time as he could. Doubtless this is the truth of the whole thing."

FIGURES ON THE MATCH—THE WORLD'S RECORD FOR A WRESTLING ENCOUNTER.

Total receipts, \$87,953.
Gotch's guarantee, \$21,000.
Hackenschmidt's 70 per cent. of the balance, \$43,437.
Club's share, \$18,616.
Promoters' share, \$34,591.
Attendance, 25,000.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Little Stories About Gotch.

The following is from a newspaper clipping which cannot be identified:

"In addition to being the champion wrestler of the world, Frank Gotch of Humboldt, Iowa, is acquiring considerable of a reputation as a humorist.

"Since he joined forces with Jim Jeffries he has been meeting all comers and agreeing to forfeit \$250 in real money to any man he cannot throw in fifteen minutes. Not once has he been in danger of having to pay this sum, as there is no one in this country outside of one or two men who could possibly stay that length of time.

"On one of his recent shows there appeared two husky young giants who wanted a chance to take down that \$250. Each weighed close to 180 pounds. It is an old belief that hair betokens strength. If this is true, the first of the pair mentioned must have been a veritable Samson, for on his chest was hair two or three inches long.

INJECTS COMEDY INTO WRESTLING.

"Gotch lost no time in slamming him to the mat close to the footlights. He then proceeded to pluck a few hairs from the abnormal tufts that were so prominent, repeating as he did so: 'He loves me, he loves me not; he loves me, he loves me not.'

"The crowd shrieked with laughter as the victim struggled to his feet and hustled off the stage.

"The second young man had a manager. The latter gave his protege some excellent advice. 'I know you can stay fifteen minutes with Gotch and that \$250 will come in mighty handy this winter,' he said. 'You do as I tell you and we will take the money. Now when

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Gotch offers to shake hands, you dive and grab him by the legs and hang on. You are strong enough to do it.'

"The referee called 'Time' and Gotch started forward with his right hand extended. The local 'rassler,' however, had not forgotten his instructions. He dove for Gotch's legs. Gotch, however, was wary and side-stepping, gave his opponent a slap on the back of the head with his open hand and Mr. Victim shot by at the rate of twenty miles an hour, smashing into the scenery. Gotch chased after him and picked him up in his arms as he would a baby, walked to the front of the stage and asked:

" 'Will you ladies and gentlemen tell me what hold to use in throwing this gentleman?'

CROWD DEMANDS TOE HOLD.

" 'Toe hold,' was the unanimous reply. Down went the victim to the mat with the champion sitting on his chest.

" 'This gentleman has shoes on and I cannot get a toe hold under such conditions,' shouted Gotch.

" 'Take them off,' retorted the crowd.

"And Gotch proceeded to do so, throwing one shoe to one side of the stage, the other going in the opposite direction.

" 'Ladies and gentlemen, I find that my opponent has on some tights that have very thick feet. I don't know that I can get the toe hold,' was the next remark made by the champion.

" 'Take off the tights,' yelled the crowd.

"And Gotch proceeded to do as directed, keeping his victim prostrate all the time. The unfortunate was now clad only in a scant pair of trunks. At this juncture Gotch turned to his adversary and asked with a smile on his face, 'Have you any choice as to which toe I will tweak?' The unfortunate merely groaned and Gotch did not have to resort to the toe hold to place him on

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

his back. He then rolled him up in the mat so that only his head protruded and trundled him off the stage.

ASBELL HAS CONCEIT REMOVED.

"They tell still another story about Gotch. This time, Jim Asbell, the young Kansas City wrestler, who is a member of the Jeffries combination, was the victim. Asbell, after watching Gotch throw several ambitious young men in three or four minutes, remarked that the champion could not throw him in any such time.

" 'I'll bet that Gotch can throw you in a minute and thirty seconds,' said Jeffries.

" 'You're on,' replied Asbell.

"So the next night Asbell went to the mat with Gotch and stayed one minute and twenty-six seconds. The following night he remained only one minute and eight seconds. The time on the third night was fifty-eight seconds, and when Gotch threw him in forty-six seconds the fourth night, Jeffries said:

" 'Jim, you had better quit or Frank will throw you in no time at all.' "

GOTCH GREAT AT FARMING GAME.

The following is from the Detroit News:

"Frank Gotch, the big wrestler, is a large gentleman, with a face that would be handsome if it had not been pushed against the mat so much. He dresses well and wears a silk bonnet of the vintage of 1883. Money has come to him in large chunks, and he has put it where it can't get away: in good old Iowa farm land. When not engaged upon the mat Mr. Gotch pursues the ambient mule or giddaps to the rambunctious steer. These pursuits make him strong and husky, much to the sorrow of other gentlemen who also wrestle, but do not own any farms.

" 'It is my opinion,' writes Mr. Gotch, 'that the wres-

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

ting game is on the boom. You ought to see the way I am clearing off that eighty acres of scrub oaks. It is also my opinion that squareness in wrestling, something that did not always exist, is all that is needed to make it a better paying sport than boxing. For the heavens give the animal borax and linseed oil in equal proportions. My toe hold is one of the latest of wrestling inventions, and I am rather proud of the success it has brought me.'

"Do not let go of your wheat early in the season—it is always best to hold for a rising market. Evan Lewis was the last of the great wrestlers to depend upon brute strength, without any skill or trickery. Build your barn, if possible, with an easterly exposure. Lewis was successful by bull strength clear up to the time he met Yousouf, the Turk, and what he got from Yousouf was plenty, so much so that he gave up the game. Keep harness well oiled and hang it high enough so that rats cannot get it—it beats all how rats love to chew leather.'"

GOTCH AND THE REPORTER.

When Gotch was in England London "Answers" printed the following:

"Gotch's third defeat in wrestling was a triumph for Beell—another wrestler better known in America than out of it. Nothing very remarkable attended the actual contest, but a very amusing incident was connected with it.

"The evening before the match came off, one of the worst kind of newspaper men dropped in on Gotch and bombarded him with all manner of questions. From interrogations concerning his family affairs, the intruder branched off to minute questions concerning Gotch's methods of training, and here the latter saw a chance to score off his unwelcome guest by pitching him a fairy tale.

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"With as much gravity as he could command, he explained to the man that when he wanted to get especially fit, his custom was to go on the nearest farm and wrestle with a two-year-old steer (or bull). When he could throw the animal down, he knew that he was in perfect condition, and felt satisfied with himself.

"The reporter went happily away, and Gotch chuckled hugely at the way he had sold him.

"But the morning after Beel had beaten him, Gotch concluded that the reporter was not quite so gullible as he had imagined after all, for at the top of the column describing the match appeared the following headline, in glaring capitals:

"'Gotch's steer must have been sick!'"



"GOTCH IN HANDS OF HIS HUMBOLDT NEIGHBORS."
From the Chicago Tribune.



GOTCH IN HIS CORNER.

CHAPTER XXV.

Gotch's Secret of Success.

There are four requirements of a great wrestler who can keep a title for years without having his shoulders pinned to the padded canvas: Strength, endurance, speed and skill. Probably no man in all the annals of wrestling has had these elements so mingled in him in the proper proportions as Frank Gotch.

elements
of a
great
wrestler

I have heard men of giant stature and seemingly unlimited strength assert they could do nothing with Gotch because he was too strong for them. Others have pronounced the Humboldt Hercules the fastest big man in the world. His endurance was given the supreme test in his first encounter with George Hackenschmidt. When the mat gladiators had tugged and pulled and shoved for more than two hours, and both were supposed to be at the end of their tethers, Gotch showed a flash of his wonderful speed and marvelous power of endurance. He picked the "Russian Lion" off the mat and hurled him to the canvas as though he were a child.

METHOD WITH HACKENSCHMIDT.

An inspection of the pictures shows that the American wrestler was over his opponent, holding his hand on the back of the Russian's neck. Hackenschmidt was under, with one leg extended. In this way Gotch's full weight, with the pull of his hands added, was exerted on his opponent. Let any person stand in that position for ten minutes and he may understand what Gotch was doing. He was sapping the strength of Hackenschmidt while he was resting himself. And if there is a secret of Gotch's success it is this: Gotch always has sought to travel the route in as quick time as possible

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

and make his opponent exert more energy in resisting him than the champion spent in the attack.

"In the case of Hackenschmidt," says Gotch, "I have often been asked why the Russian was able to put up such a strong front in our first battle and yet seemed so inferior to me in our match at Comiskey baseball park.

"The answer to this is simple. I had been told of the wonderful strength of the Russian. I was told that he would tear me limb from limb. I was coached to play a careful game. I was sure I could stand Hackenschmidt off and retain the strength to defeat him. I was disillusioned in that match and since that time I have gone after all those Europeans to defeat them as quickly as possible. The defeats of Mahmout, Zbyszko and Raicevich are examples.

"I confess that I tore into Hackenschmidt in our second meeting in harder fashion than I ever before ripped into an opponent. His misstatements of facts concerning our first match, his treatment of our party when we toured England and his misrepresentations in America fired me with the determination to make quick and thorough work of the humiliation that was his due. I didn't want him to have a leg to stand on."

QUICK BRAIN KEEPS HIM CHAMPION.

"What is it Gotch has that makes him stand out so far and with such cameo-like distinctness?" wrote Ed Smith in the Chicago American in 1910. "The answer is: Several things, chief of which is the marvelously quick brain the champion possesses. He is several streets and five or six alleys ahead of the average opponent in figuring out a campaign, and can put his ideas into such instant action as to befuddle a man who has to have time to make up his mind.

"Gotch has progressed far beyond his time. He is much ahead of American wrestlers in power and

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

thought. and just far enough in advance of the powerful and freakish foreign stars that are sent over here, to practically mortgage his title for years to come.

"He gets holds on his opponents that look like the holds that other wrestlers obtain on their men, but they are different. Note the half nelson that Gotch secures. The average wrestler gets merely his hand and wrist behind an opponent's head. Gotch gets his entire arm right up to the elbow into the lock and places it across the back of the man's head, not on his neck. This is only a part of the perfect system of leverage that the champion has at such great command.

leverage.

"So wonderfully well does he use this leverage that when he is exerting all of his force to move an opponent there seems to be but little exertion to the movement. That's why everything that Gotch does looks so easy.

"Take his move when Jim Esson once slipped away from him and sprang to his feet, Gotch remaining on all fours in the ring. With a stab like a lightning flash he reached out and grabbed Esson's ankle, and with apparently nothing more than a little twist he brought this big 230-pounder down as flat as a flounder.

LIKE MASTER CUE EXPERT.

"Gotch wrestles like a master cue expert plays billiards. He has his moves figured out far in advance of what he is actually attempting. Hence it was that Esson was never out of his difficulties once Gotch got a good hold on him. Esson seemed to break holds, but instantly, in his efforts to get away, slipped and rolled and slid right into holds that were far worse than he had the moment before escaped. It's a wonderful system, this wrestling scheme of Gotch's. It took years of patient toil and study and not a little intuitiveness to get it where it is. But it's there, perfected as no one else has been able to perfect it.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

"Frank's feinting is marvelous. Once on top he has an opponent worried to a frazzle wondering where the attack is to be. Gotch seems to reach a man from crown to heels and can be feeling around the toes while patting his man alongside the head.

MIND AND MUSCLES PERFECTLY ATTUNED.

A New York critic wrote of Gotch thus:

"The success of Gotch can be attributed to the fact that he possesses brains of a high order, wonderful strength and a speed and agility not possessed by very many smaller men. The mind of the Iowan works like a well-regulated machine of the highest type. When his quick and alert mind flashes the signal his muscles are quick to receive and carry into execution the message conveyed by the brain.

"To a very high degree Gotch embodies the perfect type of a man with a well-developed mind and body working in perfect accord.

"Gotch is the medium between the phlegmatic and the nervous type. He is somewhere between the Jim Corbett type of athlete and the type of the husky man possessing enormous strength and no nerves. Frank is different mentally and physically from the foreign wrestlers he has met. He is an adept at seeing and taking quick advantage of any error on the part of his opponent.

"Mahmout was rated a wonderfully strong man. Gotch dazed him by the rapidity of his attack. He thought and acted quicker than the slow-thinking Bulgarian could follow. The wrestler that beats Gotch will not only have to be possessed of wonderful strength and endurance, but he will also have to possess quickness of perception and ability to execute the messages of his brain. We have for many chapters of history heard of the superiority of mind over matter. It follows that the man who throws the great man from Iowa must

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possess not only wonderful strength, but he must also have a mind that can successfully match itself against the adroit and rapidly working mind of the world's champion wrestler."

MUST TRAIN WITH BRAIN.

When Gotch was training for his match with Raicevich in 1909 a Chicago newspaper printed the following:

"'In training it's brain over brawn,' says Gotch. 'The man who trains with his brain can get more good out of twirling a match than an athlete can out of a five-pound dumbbell who does not use his brain.

"'It's the systematic and not mechanical training that counts.

"'The man who tosses dirt and rock from the street to the wagon eight hours a day—he's mechanical,

"'The trouble with the foreign athletes is that they are mechanical.

"'They do not use their brains in training. They are taught all of the known holds and how to avoid or break them. But spring a new one and they are gone. With them it's matter over mind. It should be the reverse.

"'When I run I watch every step. I figure just where I shall place my foot. That makes me think. And it also makes every muscle employed the slave of my mind. I get much more out of it than the Marathon runner who just wants to cover distance.

"'Try to move a muscle in your arm without moving the limb. You can't? That's because your brain is not master of your muscles. There isn't a muscle in my body that I can't move at the command of my brain. It's because I think as I train.'

"This big Gotch is one of the pleasantest fellows in the world. And he's one of the most intelligent men that ever broke into professional athletics. Ask him

intellect
training

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why he does a thing and he's ready with his answer. He doesn't do a thing because somebody else did it.

"He trains as he does because he has reasoned that he gets results. Maybe that's the reason he is the champion.

"He came out of his downtown hotel in the morning. He wore a heavy sweater and heavy trousers. A cap was upon his head. He walked briskly to the North Side until he hit the Lake Shore Drive. Then he swung into a pace that would carry him about six miles an hour. He ran with head down as if he were picking his way.

"That's what I was doing,' said he. 'And that's what every athlete should do. You ask an athlete why he runs, and he says to improve his wind. But that is only one of the reasons. If he is smart he will watch every step. He will figure just where to place his foot. He will make every muscle used in walking and running the absolute slave of his brain.'

"Gotch, back from his sprint, was ready for breakfast. Then he loafed the remainder of the morning. At two o'clock he was at the I. A. C. and down to a gymnasium suit.

MUST HAVE SPEED.

"He didn't expect to do a great deal of training for the Raicevich match. Then he discovered his lack of condition and changed his mind. He secured Charles Cutler to wrestle with him and began the strenuous life. He opened with handball. And for the reason that it is good for the eye.

"It's speed the athlete must have,' said Gotch.

"That's where many an athlete makes a mistake. He thinks it's brawn. And it is a mistake that many men who exercise just for the benefit of the exercise make. Men who use dumbbells a few minutes a day get heavy ones. I use dumbbells and Indian clubs that

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weigh one and one-half pounds. It's because I can get speed out of them. Speed, you know, makes strength, but strength doesn't make speed.

"Some people make the mistake of believing that the wrestler with great, bulging muscles is a powerful man. But what good does power do him if he is without the speed to make it effective?

"Take the man in the street who tosses dirt into a wagon. Do you think that his exercise does him any particular good physically? Very little. He misses the benefit to be derived from bringing his muscles into play for the reason that he performs his work mechanically.

"Give me a match and let me put all my thought into lifting and lowering it, and I will get physical good out of the operation.

"Watch this.' The muscles in the right arm of the athlete began to move, although his hand was perfectly still.

"Try it,' he commanded. 'You can't?' That's because your muscles are not under the command of your brain.

"It's a thing that can be proved. The muscles nearest the brain centers are the ones most easily developed.

"And the easiest of all the muscles to develop are those of the neck. A bit of work, a little time and the size of my neck increased so that I wore an eighteen-inch collar where I had worn one that measured sixteen.

"It's the failure of the foreign wrestler to think as he trains, to make the brain master of his muscles, that makes him the inferior of the American athlete.

"Graeco-Roman is the most popular style of wrestling abroad. It admits of fewer holds and there are fewer variations to these holds. They know that the strength of an opponent will come from a certain direction and the pressure will be brought to bear at a certain point. They train to resist with certain muscles.

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They do it mechanically. Their brains never master their muscles. Hence they are easily surprised and in the test certain muscles fail them for the reason that they were never brought under control.' ”

HINTS FOR BEGINNERS.

The following was contributed by Gotch to the Des Moines Daily News:

“Wrestling, like all other sports, is a benefit or an abuse when used as an exercise, in the proportion of the exertion, and the knowledge of the individual concerning his own ability to endure and direct.

“Used wisely and under the same rules one would follow for any other exercise in which man personally opposes man in physical exertion, wrestling is the greatest benefit to the individual. Without wisdom, going into the game on the spur of the moment, too prolonged exertion in the early stages of the work, are liable to work greater injury than would be possible in any other exercise and any other sport.

“The reasons for this are two-fold. First, wrestling is the one sport which brings out all the fight in an individual. The close personal contact, and the excitement of battle are liable to cause over-exertion, before the contestant realizes the condition.

“Second, no other sport brings into play all the muscles of the body as does wrestling, and over-exertion at wrestling is followed by a more complete collapse of the entire system than indulging in excess in any other sport. I do not except pugilism, although the number of men collapsing in the ring is much greater than those on the mat; but these are supposed to be prepared, while I am discussing wrestling from the standpoint of the business man.

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GIVES ALL ROUND DEVELOPMENT.

"The great benefit of wrestling to the business man is in this self-same benefit to each one of the muscles of the body. Most of the outdoor sports call into play a certain set of muscles. Baseball is noted for its 'bad wings,' football for its 'Charley horses,' basketball is doubly hard on the legs, and the track athlete is a man developed to do a certain thing, and do it better than his companions. This specializing brings into play a certain set of muscles. Wrestling is an all-round developer of muscles, and as such it does not leave a man weak at any one point.

"The beginner in wrestling should keep one special thing in mind, and this is that until proper condition is reached, the greatest precaution should be used in the exercise. Fifteen minutes should be the limit of the first day's match, and even then the participant is liable to find that he is stiff from awakened activity of long-unused muscles. Conditioning in wrestling is slow, and even the veteran is sometimes off his guard and finds that he lacks condition when he comes to a longer match than usual.

The first thing in the use of wrestling as an exercise in the building up of the body is the use of brains. The bodily improvement, the muscular ability, the physical strength will follow in the course of time.

"I am a firm believer in a proper combination of brains and brawn, with brains in the ascendancy.

"The athlete of today is more of a thinking man than the one of yesterday. He is cleaner and of higher ideals. My own victories have been due to a combination of both judgment and muscle. The vindictiveness which characterized the more strenuous sports of yesterday is no longer to be found, and today we find that athletes of the front rank believe in competitive sport of the best character."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Gotch the Man.

Gotch
→ |
A critic writing under the nom de plume "Larry Ho" described Frank in 1908 as follows:

"An American farmer, citizen, gentleman is Frank Gotch. By the fortunes of destiny he happens to be the champion wrestler of the world. But he would be none the less an interesting and successful man were he something else. Wherever you found Gotch you would find him a success. His success is something deeper and finer than the mere heritage of brawn and muscle. He is a typical representative of what we like to call the American spirit—that spirit which has conquered wildernesses, sent American boys from the plow to the presidency, and insulted the stars with the audacity of fifty-story sky-scrapers. It is only in a democracy that you find men aspiring to be better than other men. When you start out with the spirit of 'one man is as good as another' it is a short step to the addition of 'if not better.' And Gotch is one of the men who has determined to be better. If he was nothing but a farmer he would no doubt raise larger cabbages than his neighbors. 'In wrestling you must out-think the other fellow,' he says, and he does that. In any line of work he would balance his brawn with brain.

AN UNSPOILED AMERICAN GENTLEMAN.

"Here he is, a young Iowa farmer of thirty years, champion wrestler of the world, his pathway among the plaudits of mankind, with a larger bank account than any man has yet saved out of athletic earnings, drawing \$1,200 a week to show himself before audiences, overwhelmed with financial offers—\$25,000 to

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do a vaudeville stunt, \$50,000 to go to Europe—and yet he remains just as he always has been, a plain, unspoiled American gentleman. His success has no more made him proud than defeat would make him humble.

“‘Of course you’ll take that European offer?’

“‘Well,’ says this Iowa farmer, ‘there is more in life than money.’

“Some day he may no longer be world’s champion. But he will be a sturdy, successful American citizen. Championships take wings, but the color of a man’s spirit sticks.

“‘I would rather be an American than to be a world’s champion,’ he says modestly.

NO FRILLS ON FRANK.

“Gotch is a splendid-looking fellow. He is a stalwart, sturdy man, without any frills or any saggings. He doesn’t rush his money into extravagant and mouthy clothes. He is satisfied to look like a substantial everyday business man rather than like a suddenly rich pugilist whose raiment is as far out of plumb as his spelling. He doesn’t carry a cane. Think of it! A world’s champion who can walk down the street without a rainbow necktie and a cane. That’s novelty in itself.

“Gotch is not by any means a scholar; neither is he a low-brow. He is keen, quick, bright, mentally active and rugged as he is physically. He knows many things. He thinks. He sees. He tries to accumulate something besides money as he travels up and down the world. ‘My early education was neglected somewhat,’ he says, but he has made up for that wonderfully well. He talks like a gentleman. And nothing so helps a man to talk like a gentleman as the mere fact that he is a gentleman. Gotch is himself in his conversation. He makes no effort to take a press-agent strangle hold on Noah Webster’s little dictionary. He talks in a plain, straightforward way and does not seem



GOTCH TODAY.

**Shrewd Iowa Farmer and Business Man—and Champion Wrestler
of the World.**

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fearful that the personal pronoun may die of inanition if he fails to overwork it.

"These things may serve to indicate that this American farmer who is the champion wrestler of the world is refreshingly unlike the general run of athletic world beaters. He doesn't show any disposition to hamper his chest development by an overweighting adornment of medals. And if this were all his merit it would be a very substantial basis for distinction in this day when champions rely mostly upon plug hats, speeches learned by rote and frequent communications to the press to impress their standing upon the public.

HIS IMPRESSIVE PERSONALITY.

Another critic wrote of Gotch as follows in the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune, under the pen name "Jim Nasium:"

"Most anybody who ever takes a slant at a sporting page knows Frank Gotch, champion wrestler. But it is given to a favored few to know Frank Gotch, stock raiser, banker, president of a street railway company and an electric light company of Humboldt, Iowa. It is the latter person of whom the entire population of Humboldt waxes eloquent, and it is Frank Gotch, the MAN, who most impresses those fortunate enough to come in contact with him outside the roped arena. While Wrestler Gotch has been grabbing undying fame through his ability to grasp an opponent by the toes and twist his gambrel joint into his hip pocket, it is Gotch, the MAN, whose impressive personality has been whacking a far more enduring dent in the hearts of those with whom he has come in contact. He impresses the beholder as a vigorous man of great courage, strong mind and exceptional force of character.

"You find few men gifted with this magnetic personality. When you do, you find a winner in whatever line of endeavor he happens to be engaged in, whether

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it be preaching, politics or sports. His success is a victory of the mind and the strong will rather than of the physical organs.

"It is this moral courage and strength of character that has enabled Frank Gotch to keep his name clear of stain while engaged in a profession that has come to be looked on by many with something more than suspicion. Never during his long career on the mat has there been any hint of a 'frame-up' in any contest which Gotch has been connected with, and never has he been anything but the gentleman and fair sportsman that he always is, whether he is trying to pin an opponent's shoulders to the mat or attempting to push through a new deal for the acquisition of another block of real estate.

NO ORGIES FOR HIM.

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"While Frank Gotch has clearly demonstrated that he is the ablest wrestler the game has known in modern times, Humboldt, Iowa, has more reason to be proud of Frank Gotch, the MAN, than it has of Frank Gotch, champion wrestler. Never in his long career as a champion has he attained any undesirable newspaper notoriety, and immediately following the occasions of victorious defense of his title that have plastered his picture in all the papers in the land he has always grabbed the first train for Humboldt and left the 'great white lights' to flicker along without him. Never have Gotch's victories been baptized in fizz-water at midnight orgies, and never, following a great victory that has jammed him into the center of the spotlight has he hit the trail for the center of population to pose before a morbid public and hand out interviews to newspaper men. Little old Humboldt and its 1,100 population is big enough for him, and down there he is just one of the 'folks.'

"Gotch does not drink nor use tobacco in any form. He thinks too much of his physical condition to permit

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him to indulge in any physical dissipation, and being a lover of the simple life he has the strength of character to tell the great, throbbing world of sport to go chase itself, little old Humboldt is a big enough world for him. While he's ready at any time to butt into the world outside and grab down a little soft money by tying into a Gordian knot some husky guy who has a loquacious press agent, it is back to the folks for him after the stuff comes off.

A SOLID CITIZEN.

“Down in Humboldt Frank Gotch is one of the solid citizens of the community. He owns two properties in Humboldt, his own home, purchased after his marriage—the handsomest residence in the town—and a large farm south of Humboldt, where he raises thoroughbred stock. He has money invested in Dakota and Canada lands, and following a successful match in Seattle he invested the proceeds in Seattle city lots, for which he has since been offered a sum equal to four times the original purchase price. He is a director in a bank, president of a street railway company and an electric light company, while his latest business venture is the automobile business. While Gotch won't talk of his money matters himself and his Humboldt banker never tells, it is estimated down there among the 'folks' that Gotch is worth in the neighborhood of a half-million dollars. When Frank Gotch retires there will be no need of the sporting public that knew him giving him a benefit, such as has become the custom of retired champions. Sports will never gather in saloons discussing Frank Gotch and say with a shake of the head: 'Well, he was a good fellow when he had it.' The man who is known to the great, throbbing world of sport only as the champion wrestler is known to a smaller world of personal friends and business associates as a

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man fully capable of taking care of himself in other lines as well.

VICTORIES DUE TO PERSONALITY.

"While Gotch is conceded to be the perfection of physical power and wrestling science and possesses a marvelous endurance, carrying 210 pounds that is every ounce vigor, it is a question just how much of his success can be attributed to his physical and scientific prowess and how much to his iron will and magnetic personality. He has defeated men of greater physical strength and men of greater scientific knowledge of the game. Possessed of an air of unbounded confidence, and a hypnotic personality that impresses even his opponents, many of his most dangerous antagonists, who felt certain they could defeat him, have been 'licked' as soon as they crawled through the ropes and faced him in the ring. The surest place in the world to look for a scared man has always been in the corner of the ring opposite Frank Gotch. His victories have largely been those of mind as well as matter.

"Zbyszko, the Polish physical freak, whose herculean proportions are enough to scare any man who is capable of being scared, Gotch handed but one hypnotic glance and then slammed his bulging shoulders to the mat in just six and one-fourth seconds.

"Gotch says that among the foreign champions of the mat who have invaded this country and are seeking press notices by hurling challenges at the title holder, Yussif Mahmout, the Turk, is the best of the lot. Gotch defeated Mahmout on April 14, 1909, and there is not in the whole world today a man who appears capable of giving him even an argument for his title, unless he continues in the game long after his period of decline sets in and 'goes to the well once too often.' "

CHAPTER XXVII.

Gotch and His Parents.

Next to his triumph in winning the heart of his little brown-eyed wife, Gotch frankly admits his greatest victory was his success in overcoming his mother's deep-rooted opposition to his career as a wrestler.

In the early days of wrestling in America one who followed the sport professionally was considered of low caste, and Mrs. Gotch was one of the many who held it in disrepute. When she saw her son turning away from home to the roped arena it grieved her bitterly. Farm life was profitable and honorable; wrestling she considered only a profession for the idle and men of low ideals.

When Gotch was importuned to accept the defi of a chicken picker in 1899 his parents strongly objected, and the fact that he won did not alter their misgivings about their son's entering a world so widely separated from the simple life and country atmosphere of Humboldt. And his mother wept bitterly when Frank departed from the old homestead early in 1901, as she thought, never to return. With his wrestling ability as stock in trade he had gone to seek his fortune in the Klondike.

He had been absent many months and no word had come from him for weeks, when Mrs. Gotch one day heard in Humboldt that a boat had gone down in the Yukon and that her son probably had perished. For many nights she paced the floor and did not rest until word was received from her wandering boy.

FATHER'S FEARS DISPELLED.

One bright day in the fall of the same year Frank bounded into the little old farmhouse hale and hearty,



FRANK'S PARENTS, MR. AND MRS. FREDERICK RUDOLPH
GOTCH.

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like a fresh breeze from the Arctic. He brought gold and paper certificates sufficient to pay off the incumbrance on the old homestead. He bought more land and put money in the bank. His father, whose hair was gray and whose hands were calloused with thirty years' toil against adversity and loan sharks, was amazed. He was at once a convert to his son's cause, but the mother was still a standpatter. It grieved her that her son was bent on following the calling of a wrestler.

MOTHER'S APPROVAL WON.

When the whole nation knew the young giant of Humboldt and fame and fortune were his; when he had departed on many campaigns of triumph only to return to the old homestead; when he became known as a prominent citizen of his town and state, who was an honor to his family and his country, and still remained the same true, devoted son as in the early days of his childhood, Gotch's mother knew that her fears had been groundless. She had become a convert at last. Every vestige of prejudice against the profession of wrestling as such had been erased from her mind. She had lived to see her son become the greatest wrestler in the world and retain unchanged his love and devotion toward his mother.

As the writer sat in a cottage in Humboldt chatting with Mrs. Gotch, now a woman of eighty, she remarked that in all his life her famous son had never spoken an angry or profane word to her. He is the same devoted son as world's champion wrestler, she asserts, that he was as a boy. Gotch the world's champion fades to nothingness in her estimation, in comparison with Gotch the son.

WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF HIM.

Frank's father was still living when the following newspaper article was printed:

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"It is interesting to know sometimes what plain fathers and mothers of famous sons and daughters think of their progeny. For instance, it is interesting to know just what Father and Mother Gotch think of their famous son, Frank, and his wrestling game. Living down on the old farm at Humboldt in a simple little world that is in marked contrast to their boy's world, they have much time for reflection on his ways, which have gone so far from their own ways. What do they say to themselves and to their neighbors about Frank?

"Mr. and Mrs. Gotch came from honest, hard-working, thrifty German stock. They emigrated to this country many years ago, and they have lived down at the 'old Gotch farm' for most of their married life. To be lazy to them was a crime, to be idle was almost an unpardonable sin; the outside world with all its sin and vice, its poverty and crime, seemed an awful place. In their simple, quiet way they had come to believe that the farm was the place for a boy to live and die on. They knew that farming was a healthful, upright and profitable business, and that with them the temptations of the world were absent.

LOOKED DOWN ON WRESTLING.

"So it is not altogether strange that when son Frank began acquiring both a fondness for and a knack at wrestling his parents looked down upon it. Mrs. Gotch was most emphatic, for Father Gotch, owing to ill health, the foundation for which was laid while he was fighting for the north in the Civil war, had been unable to take a real active part in the affairs of the family and the farm for a number of years.

"But Frank persisted in learning the game, and it was with grave misgivings that his parents saw his wrestling career launched in 1899. And when in 1901 a man came to the farm one afternoon and asked Frank if he would go to Alaska with him, he having been recom-

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mended by Farmer Burns, who had turned down the proposition, the Gotch family thought things were surely going from bad to worse.

"But the climax came when Gotch left for the Klondike on the first train with this new-found partner. Mother Gotch then gave up her boy as lost forever, another victim to sport and the devil. Mrs. Gotch from the first never believed in the game. She knew no one could ever come out of it a respectable man. Mr. Gotch was not quite so sure, and when, to the surprise of the family, Gotch returned from the far north healthy and still a human being, and, besides, with \$35,000 in his pocket, it was some different with the father, at least. Father was in somewhat of a quandary. He had bought three hundred and twenty acres of land cheaply, but he was forty years paying for it. Frank had eighty acres before he went to Alaska, but not paid for. On his return he paid for this and bought eighty more. The old gentleman was thunderstruck. It couldn't be explained. His boy, in spite of his mother's talk, was all right. So he extended his hand to Frank, and it was warmly shaken. Frank felt better, and still more so when the rest of the family sided in with 'pa;' that is, all except mother.

WANTED FRANK TO SETTLE DOWN.

"That was the one bitter feeling in Frank's breast, his mother's attitude. He was a true American son and dearly loved his kind old mother, and it hurt him to see that she did not approve of the game. Her distaste for all so-called sports and many of the ways of the world was so inborn that it was impossible for her to make an exception to her very own child. She could not see the difference between clean sport and its counterpart. Life was either all bad or all good; there were no ifs and ands, no exceptions or compromises in her religion of daily living. The roaming life of wrestling,

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so antagonistic to her own, so full of the exciting, so in touch with the sin of man, went against her. She did not like his business in the least; she wanted her boy to settle down and live quietly. She even felt a pang of shame at having a son in such an occupation as wrestling.

"To those who have been in close touch with Mother Gotch it has been a very interesting thing, this gradual change from an extreme dislike of to a wholesome pride in her son's wrestling achievements, for Mrs. Gotch was at last compelled, or rather gladly willing, to admit that her son and his business were both first-class. At first she never did think that he would amount to anything, because she said his life was as well as thrown away.

"But how the money did pour in to help out the folks down on the farm, and what a stream of victories continued to fall at Frank's feet!

"Each year since 1899 saw more honors and more money, and Mrs. Gotch kept losing a bit of her animosity.

TAKES MOTHER TO CHICAGO.

"About two years ago Frank came home from an extended trip. He had plenty of money and some time to spare, and he decided that he would give his little mother the trip of her life. However, it was with a bit of misgiving that he approached the subject. But one day he asked her if she would like to take a trip to Chicago with him.

"Mrs. Gotch at first said it was out of the question.

"She?

"Why, he wouldn't want to be bothered with her, and then, besides, she would feel out of place in a big city. The farm, where she had spent so many happy days, seemed to her the ideal spot of the world. She had no desire to see what was over beyond the hills. But then she was a woman, and her curiosity to know

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what kind of a world her son moved in finally prompted her to give her consent, though not without a fear that she had done wrong.

"The trip was made, and what a trip it was!

"Mrs. Gotch will never forget it to her dying day, and it is safe to say that Frank will never forget it.

"Was Frank ashamed of his mother?

"Not in the least. He registered his name at the best hotel in Chicago, and it read in big letters, 'FRANK GOTCH AND MOTHER.'

"Then he proceeded to show the simple old mother sights she had never before dreamed of. To her unsophisticated soul it was a revelation. And, best of all, her big son, known throughout the whole of North America, was by her side. Everyone in the street seemed to know who he was, and men finely dressed, professional men, business men, and even down to such urchins as bootblacks, recognized him.

"It surely must have been a queer sight, this unusual mother and son seeing things!

"Mrs. Gotch was converted. It is not at all improbable that she wept for joy. Her son no longer had to feel badly that his mother did not approve of his work. Mrs. Gotch on her return was not slow in letting people know that she had changed her opinion, and to this day no one has ever heard her repeat the misgivings of years gone by. The big cities were not quite so bad as she believed; she had found out the truth that good and bad are found everywhere, and that, best and dearest of all to her, at least, her son Frank was the finest and most kind-hearted boy in the world.

"She knew that her life had not been lived in vain."



FAMOUS TOE HOLD.

The Champion's Instructions *on* How to Wrestle

HIS COMBINATION *and*
OTHER HOLDS *as* EXPLAINED
to the AUTHOR *by* GOTCH,
HIS MANAGER EMIL KLANK,
"FARMER" BURNS,
AND OTHERS

FULLY ILLUSTRATED

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Gotch's Famous Toe Hold.

"I have often been asked," says Gotch, "how and when I discovered the toe hold. That is a pretty hard question to answer. Farmer Burns and I worked out the problem of the toe hold wrestling in Iowa. I think I used it first on Scott Miller in 1902. I pulled the foot over the leg and applied the leverage. The other toe hold, and the one I employ the most, was worked out later.

"There are several varieties of toe holds and locks, but the one I use most and the one which writers call 'the famous toe hold,' consists of getting the opponent's foot in a vise in which the toes and ankle are the points of attack. It is often confused with the toe hold over the leg, but the two grips are distinct.

"It is important first of all to have one's opponent in the proper position to begin the preliminary moves for the toe hold. When an opponent is on the mat, suppose the attacker is on the right side. The wrestler who is the 'under dog' must be on his hands and knees for the attacker to make the shift that traps his opponent's further foot.

"The attacker from this position holds his opponent to the mat by grasping the right leg high up with both hands, working well to the side. With his right hand the attacker reaches inside the crotch from the front, grasping his opponent's left ankle. With the left hand he grasps his opponent's foot near the toes, almost simultaneously straddling the near leg of his opponent and pulling up on the imprisoned foot. The opponent's right leg in this way is trapped and his left foot is "out of commission." When the left leg has been imprisoned in this way for a few seconds, the muscles relax and the member becomes powerless. The attacker then pulls up and may apply the twist to the toe hold. His head may be used as an instrument of attack in forcing an opponent's shoulders to the mat.

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"Since the left leg of the defensive wrestler has become ineffective by being imprisoned in this way, the ankle hold may be released and the toe hold easily retained. The free right hand of the attacker then may be used in forcing the shoulders of the defensive wrestler to the mat. Since the under wrestler has turned on his side, the half nelson may be affixed and the opponent pinned with the half nelson and the toe hold or the toe hold released and the crotch and half nelson applied. The toe hold may be used alone."

Half Nelson and Crotch.

The half nelson is the primal hold in wrestling. It is considered the simplest grip in the business, yet it is important, for an infinite number of combinations may be secured in conjunction with it. The most important of these is the crotch, a grip barred in Greco-Roman wrestling; but Greco-Roman is only half wrestling—it bars half the holds.

"In many of my hardest matches I have secured the crotch hold first by a ruse to get some other grip. Then I fastened on a half nelson and retained the combination until my opponent succumbed. I defeated Yussiff Mahmout, the great Bulgarian wrestler, in this way in our match in Chicago several years ago.

"How the half nelson and crotch may be secured is illustrated by the way I got it on Mahmout.

"Mahmout had put up a game battle. He was beginning to worry me a bit, but I had figured out the proper method of overcoming his crouch. I put my hand back of his head and jerked him forward. This overbalanced him and, continued, enabled me to go behind him and wrestle him to the mat.

"There is one thing Mahmout had been cautioned to avoid—the toe hold—but that proved his downfall. When I made a motion to get this grip he turned on his

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



HALF NELSON AND CROTCH.

side to protect his toes. As he made this move I thrust my right arm through his legs for a crotch hold. He tried to spin out and as he did so, half turning around, I

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

slipped my left hand under his left arm and completed the half nelson and crotch combination.

"When I secured the half nelson I did not place my hand on the Bulgarian's neck as most wrestlers do. I rested it on the back of his head. The pump back on the old farm at Humboldt taught me the value of this. It is simply a problem in applied mathematics. The greatest lifting power is exerted with the hand on the back of the head. It gives one a better leverage. Mahmout was forced to exert the same power with the muscles of his neck as with those of the neck and shoulders combined when the hand is placed on the neck. It was impossible for him to exert such power, for no living man can do that.

"Then there is another thing that should not be overlooked: When the crotch is secured along with the half nelson, one should ram the arm as far under his opponent's legs as possible. This enables one to hold his opponent more securely and gives the attacker greater lifting power. More than double the weight can be lifted near the shoulders than at arm's length.

"Sometimes the half nelson is secured first and when the defensive wrestler is in the act of spinning out the crotch is added. Many forms of the half nelson are employed. 'Farmer' Burns says he knows seventeen. The grip is seldom used, however, except in conjunction with other holds and for the purpose of forcing a wrestler into unguarded positions. I have won a majority of my matches with the half nelson as a partial weapon of offense."

Toe Hold Over the Leg.

"When I was in England trying to force Hackenschmidt out of his shell, I was asked quite often to explain the toe hold," relates Gotch.

"A sporting writer asked me whether I thought it right to use such a painful grip. He said it was against

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

the rules to twist a wrestler's finger and it was certainly just as unfair to twist one of his toes. To have answered that question would have spoiled a good joke, but it



TOE HOLD OVER THE LEG.

expresses the general idea of the toe hold, which is an erroneous one.

"One day when I had been wrestling in Cincinnati a newspaper man wanted me to show him how I secured the toe hold. I told him to get down on the floor and I would show him a touch of real life.

"'Gotch bent over me,' said this writer, 'toyed a while with one of my feet, then quickly grabbed the other and gave it a twist. I looked for a nice clean spot on which to put my shoulders to keep my leg from snapping off. I wanted the leg for future use. It felt

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

as though Gotch wanted to take it along with him. At that he exerted only a few pounds pressure.'

"This writer had caught the principal idea of the toe hold—the idea of leverage. I made a study of mechanics and it was there that I learned the true value of leverage in wrestling. The plan of this and other such holds is to make one's opponent use many times more power to resist one than the attacker exerts in his aggressive moves. I have wrestled stronger men than I am, but in every move I try to make my opponent use more strength than I do. In this way he tires much quicker. He is fighting himself and his opponent much of the time.

"The defensive wrestler must be on his hands and knees on the mat in order to work the toe hold over the leg. An opponent may lie flat on the mat of his own accord and if he refuses to take this means of resting up, he may be forced down by superior strength or by suddenly raising him by the near leg and lunging him forward.

"In this position the attacker straddles and sits on the near leg of the defensive wrestler above the knee. He feints for the further foot of his opponent. When the defensive wrestler shifts to protect his other foot, the near one may be grasped quickly and raised up over the attacker's leg.

"This plunges the head of the defensive wrestler forward on his face. It brings his weight to bear on his own imprisoned leg in such a way as to make him share in the leverage that is exerted by the completed hold.

"The imprisoned leg should be drawn up as high as possible to give the longest leverage, in which position it is possible for a small man to hold a giant. This works on the same principle as the handle of a pump. A small child may grasp the end of a pump handle and make it work, but it would take a strong man to grasp the handle near the top and bring a flow of aqua pura.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

"There seems a movement in some quarters to bar the toe hold in championship matches. Well, I won't mourn its loss if the grip has to go, but I think it has a rightful place just as certainly as the headlock, hammerlock and several forms of the wrist lock. I probably would have won every match that went to my credit if the toe hold had been barred. With the toe hold over the leg, to which the principal objection is made, I have won a small portion of my matches. Donelson, Rooney, Raoul De Rouen, Harrington and Grant are a few on whom I have affixed toe holds and won. I defeated most of my opponents, however, with other grips.

"In grasping the foot to pull it over the leg, the attacker should catch it just below the toes. The attacker usually discovers that the muscles of the leg are relaxed, showing the defensive wrestler was off his guard.

Grapevine Hold.

Of the many weapons of attack in the mat repertory of the world's champion, the grapevine hold deserves special mention. Gotch has pinned few dangerous opponents with this hold for deciding falls, but it is among the foremost of the subordinate holds used by him in leading up to the effective combinations with which he wins the majority of his hard matches. The lightning like rapidity with which the champion shifts from one hold to another bewilders his less alert opponents and enables him to trick them into dangerous positions.

The grapevine as used by Gotch is one of the shifts whereby he secures his half nelson and crotch.

Gotch makes the grapevine shift when over his opponent on the mat. When the defensive wrestler is on his hands and knees, Gotch holds him down by working back and well to the side, grasping his victim's near leg near the crotch. The world's champion feints for a further leg or arm hold or some other grip to distract his

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

opponent's attention. As the latter is looking away from the real point of attack, Gotch suddenly raises his opponent's near leg and, if working on the left side,



GRAPEVINE AND HEAD LOCK.

jumps in with his right leg under the leg of his opponent, which has been raised. With his right leg he grapevines the victim's far leg. With this leverage the champion has turned his opponent easily. The imprisoned leg of the defensive wrestler is thus rendered powerless. As the opponent turns Gotch suddenly reverses the hold into a half nelson with a crotch.

It was told Gotch in 1911 that an American wrestler who wished to see him defeated had been tutoring Hackenschmidt against the grapevine hold leading to the half nelson and crotch.

The world's champion laughed at the story. He said

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

the Russian Lion was privileged to practice the maneuver all he pleased, but he would defeat him in one fall by this same ruse.

This remarkable prediction actually came to pass. When Hackenschmidt met Gotch for the second time in Chicago he was coached to the minute to avoid this rapid-fire attack of Gotch. It was the means of his downfall in the first bout. Gotch put Hack off his guard, raised his near leg, grapevined his far one and then reversed it into a half nelson and crotch, with which the "Lion" was pinned for the first fall in the bitterest defeat of his career.

The grapevine may be secured on the arm, and with the aid of a cross buttock an opponent may be hurled heavily to the canvas. Gotch has seldom used this grip, however. He has avoided holds whereby an opponent might be killed in flying falls, but has used his quick brain to advantage in crushing his opponents by rapid maneuvering in straight wrestling.

Gotch has seldom used the grapevine in pinning an opponent. His defeat of Policeman John J. Rooney in Chicago with a grapevine and hammerlock in 1906 was an exception.

Headlock.

"Followers of wrestling believe that the toe hold is the most terrible grip in the game," says Gotch, "but that is an erroneous idea. You cannot deprive an opponent of life with the toe hold. You can kill with a flying mare, a strangle hold or a headlock. The strangle hold is barred in professional wrestling, but the flying mare and headlock are permissible.

"It is possible for a strong wrestler to break his opponent's neck by a quick wrench of the head with a punishing headlock. Probably more wrestlers have been killed by the flying mare than any other hold, and this

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

leads to the assertion that few men of the mat are killed in professional matches. A wrestler of small stature may become a giant in relative wrestling ability after perfecting a headlock or some form of this grip.



HEAD HOLD.

"I have used the headlock in few of my matches, although it is a splendid means of winning when pitted against a dangerous opponent. I defeated Jenkins Feb-

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

ruary 1, 1905, at Cleveland, with a form of the headlock.

"The headlock is secured in two ways. It may be placed on a wrestler when he is on his hands and knees on the mat, and in this position an arm is usually locked with the head. If the attacker is on the right side, he may push down the head of his opponent, resting his left arm heavily on the head. He reaches under his opponent's right arm and grabs his own left hand just below the wrist. In this way the head may be drawn toward the arm with which it is securely locked against the attacker. The right arm of the defensive wrestler is helpless and he may be drawn to the side and easily forced to the mat.

"Beell's headlock, however, does not include an arm. This is a form of the headlock I have used at times, but have relinquished it when it might injure an opponent. It is secured when the opponent is in a standing position.

"The attacker may pull down his opponent's head, reaching over his head with his left hand. With his right hand he reaches under the head of his opponent and grasps his own left hand just below the wrist. The attacker's left hand fits into the jaw of the defensive wrestler on the right side. The head is drawn in and locked. Then the twist may be applied and the defensive wrestler drawn to the mat. Beell's short arm and great strength in his arms and shoulders make him peculiarly constructed by nature to apply this grip.

"Tom Jenkins defeated me with Beell's form of the headlock in one of the toughest matches of my life at Cleveland, February 22, 1903. Some could not understand why I lost to Jenkins. The headlock defeated me. It will defeat any man when secured by a wrestler as strong as Jenkins. He secured this jaw lock on me while we were standing. I tried in vain to extricate myself. Jenkins applied the twist, and I began to think of all the mean things I had ever done. I wanted my head for

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

future use, so I dropped to the mat. Jenkins retained the hold, and when he pinned me with it, I determined he would never get that grip on me again."

Hammerlock and Bar Hammerlock.

The hammerlock is one of the effective holds in wrestling. When once secured by a strong aggressor, it is usually "all off" with his opponent, but the hold is by no means an easy one to secure.



BAR HAMMERLOCK.

"There are several varieties of the hammerlock," says Gotch. "The hold is usually secured when working over an opponent on the mat. The aggressor reaches inside the left arm of his opponent and grasps his hand with his own right hand if working on the left side. The at-

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

tacker also grasps his opponent's fingers with his left hand. He works the imprisoned hand up and back, using the leverage thus obtained to accomplish his purpose. When the imprisoned member is pulled back, the grip may be retained with one of the attacker's hands and a waistlock added to force back the hand toward the shoulder blades.

"I defeated John J. Rooney, a Chicago policeman, with the hammerlock in 1906, using Farmer Burns' method of getting the back hammerlock. I grasped Rooney's right hand and pushed my head into his right arm pit. Suddenly I jerked his right hand back, caught his arm above the elbow and threw my weight forward, forcing his right shoulder to the mat. His arm in this way was imprisoned. It was only necessary then to change my position and force the imprisoned arm back for the hammerlock. The arm may be shoved back to the shoulder blades, when the defensive wrestler will gladly submit, turning over on his back.

"The hammerlock is usually secured in conjunction with some other hold. A hammerlock and grapevine or a hammerlock and crotch are very effective combinations, but not easy to secure on strong opponents."

To get the bar hammerlock on the opponent's left side work the hammerlock hold, applying the double leverage with both hands. Retain the hammerlock with the left hand. Release the right and shoot it under the arm resting it on the left shoulder of the defensive wrestler as in the illustration. This completes the bar hammerlock—a punishing grip. The opponent will gladly roll on his back.

Strangle Hold.

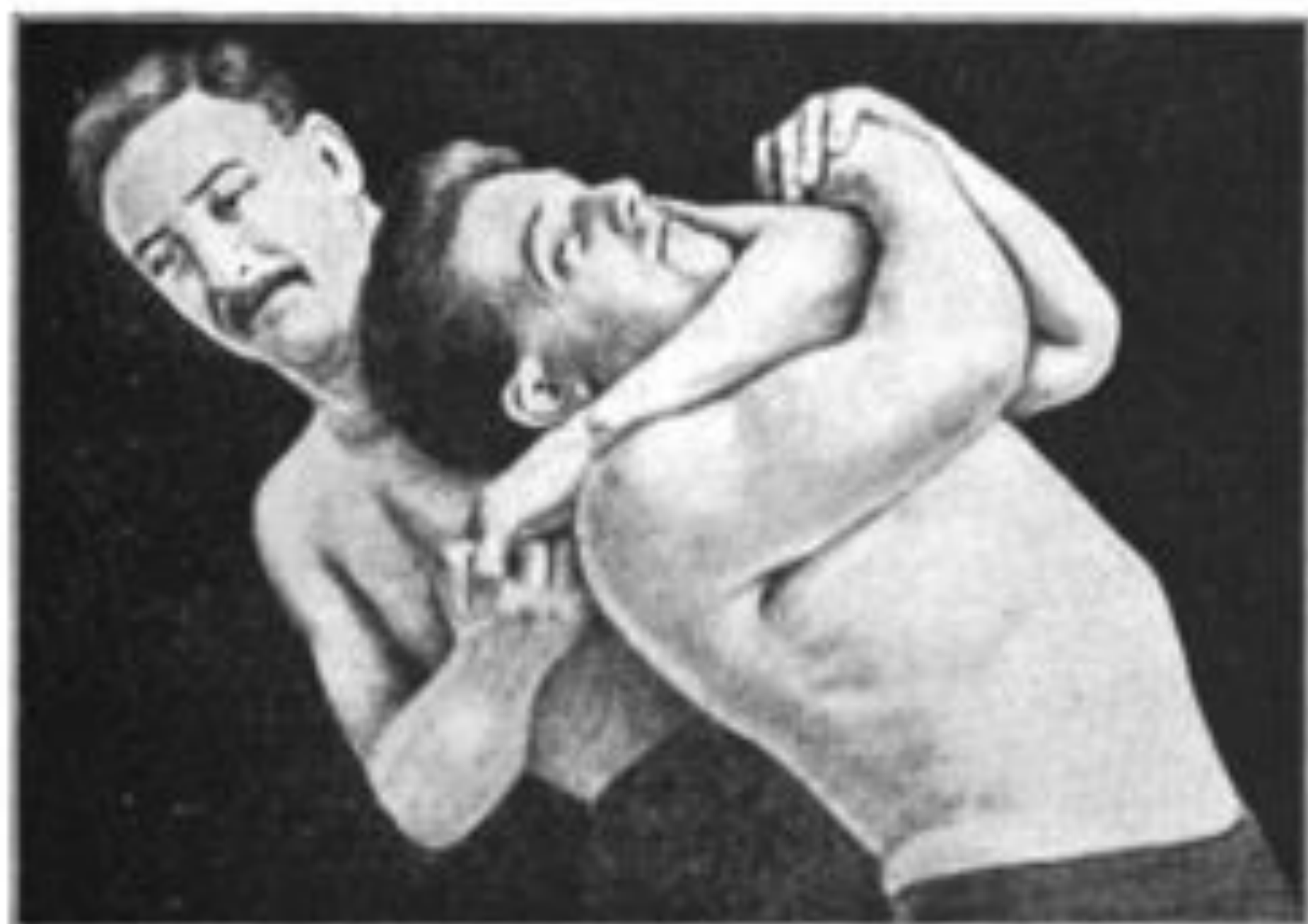
The strangle hold is a discarded relic of the early ages of wrestling. It is rightfully barred from championship matches, but still may be an effective means of

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

defense in handling a bully or saving one's life in a personal encounter with a robber or murderer.

"It is the most dangerous grip in wrestling, and yet the old timers used to employ it quite often. In my match with Tom Jenkins at Bellingham, Wash., when I won the American championship, he put a strangle hold on me after I had won the first fall. His powerful arms and great strength made it difficult for me to extricate myself.

"Maddened over the loss of the first fall and the peril of losing the championship, which he had held for six



FARMER BURNS ILLUSTRATING STRANGLE HOLD.

years, Jenkins charged at me furiously in the second bout and in a mix-up worked himself behind me. He slipped his left forearm under my chin and bore the weight of his right arm against the top of my head, tightening his

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

grip and completing a strangle hold, from which it would have been impossible for a weak man to escape.

"There is only one way in which to break this hold, and one cannot linger, as delay may prove fatal. That is to employ both hands in grasping the aggressor's left member below the elbow, and thus lessening the heavy pressure on the Adam's apple. If one possesses great strength it is possible to break the hold. I employed this method in escaping from Jenkins.

"Although the strangle hold is barred nowadays, it is used more or less in many matches. Wrestlers get it when attempting to obtain other holds, sometimes by mistake. It weakens an opponent, and if continued might prove fatal.

"Farmer Burns is one wrestler who was practically immune from the strangle hold. This was due to the wonderful development of the muscles of his neck."

Inside Crotch Shift.

This hold is secured by the defensive wrestler when



INSIDE CROTCH SHIFT.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

going after the toe hold or making a feint for an ankle hold. In almost every match when the wrestlers are down on the mat and one is working on the side, the defensive wrestler is seen to straighten out his near leg when attacked. If the aggressor is on the right side when his opponent straightens out in this fashion, he retains his hold on the ankle and raises this leg. He grasps his opponent's left thigh underneath his body with his right hand, pulling him in close and at the same time stepping inside the crotch with his left leg, he shifts both hands to encircle his opponent's body, reversing his leg grips into a double body hold. The defensive wrestler in this position is forced to turn slightly to the right when the hold may be quickly reversed into a crotch and half nelson and a fall secured.

Bar and Toe Lock.

In this combination the attacker proceeds as in getting the toe hold over the leg. When this hold has been



BAR ARM AND TOE LOCK.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

secured, the aggressor suddenly shifts the imprisoned foot from the left hand, if working that way, to the joint of the left arm, at the same time crawling forward and applying the bar hold with the right hand as in the illustration.

Back Hammer and Half Nelson.

Secure a half nelson first. If on the left side, the nelson is secured with the left hand of the attacker. Reach over and grasp the opponent's right wrist with the right



HAMMERLOCK AND HALF NELSON.

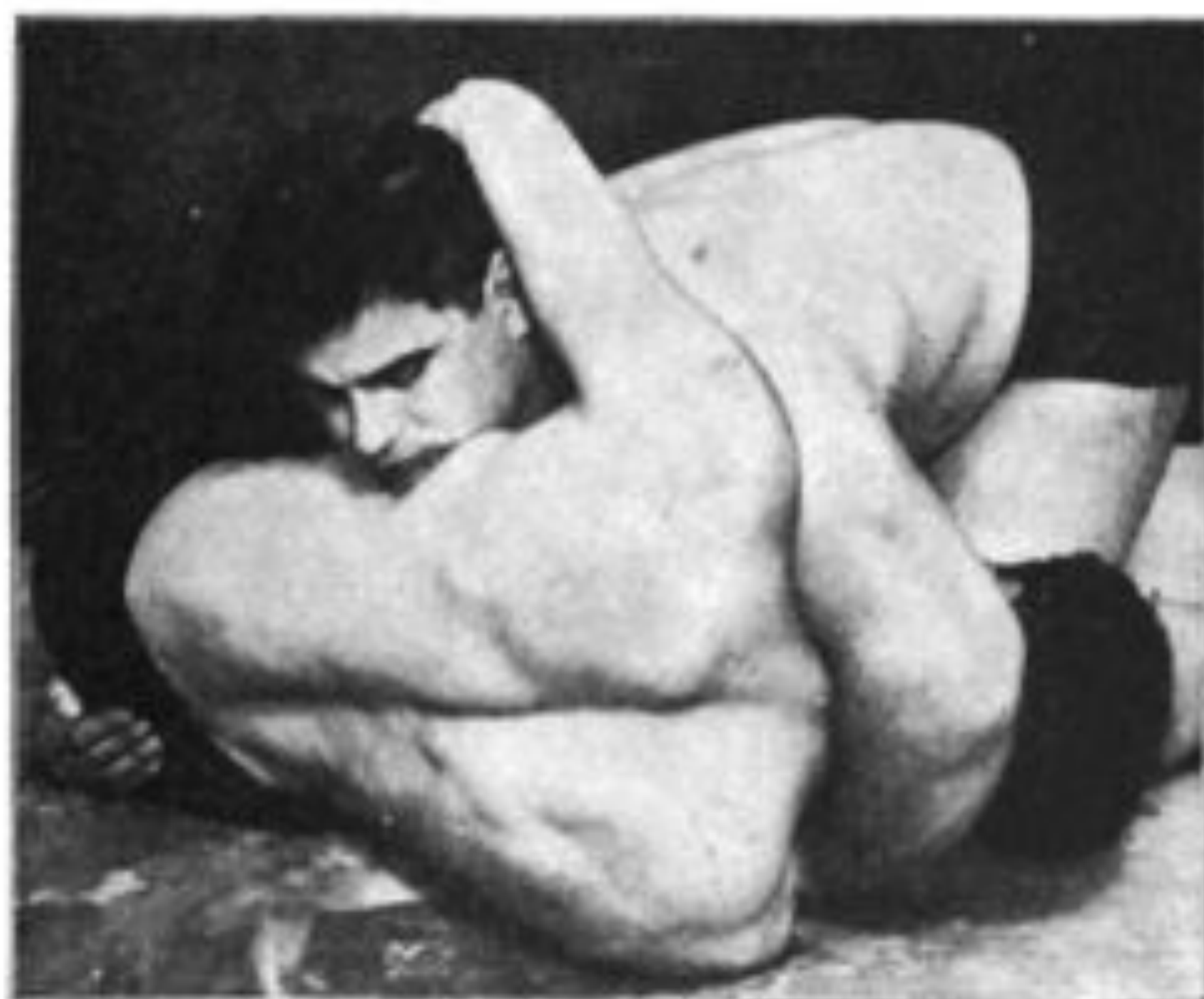
hand and draw it up the back. This is a punishing combination that may weaken the arm and render it power-

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

less. With the leverage and wrist hold both arms of the opponent are out of commission.

Chancery and Crotch.

This results from a half nelson and crotch and is one way of holding a wrestler with this combination.



CHANCERY AND CROTCH.

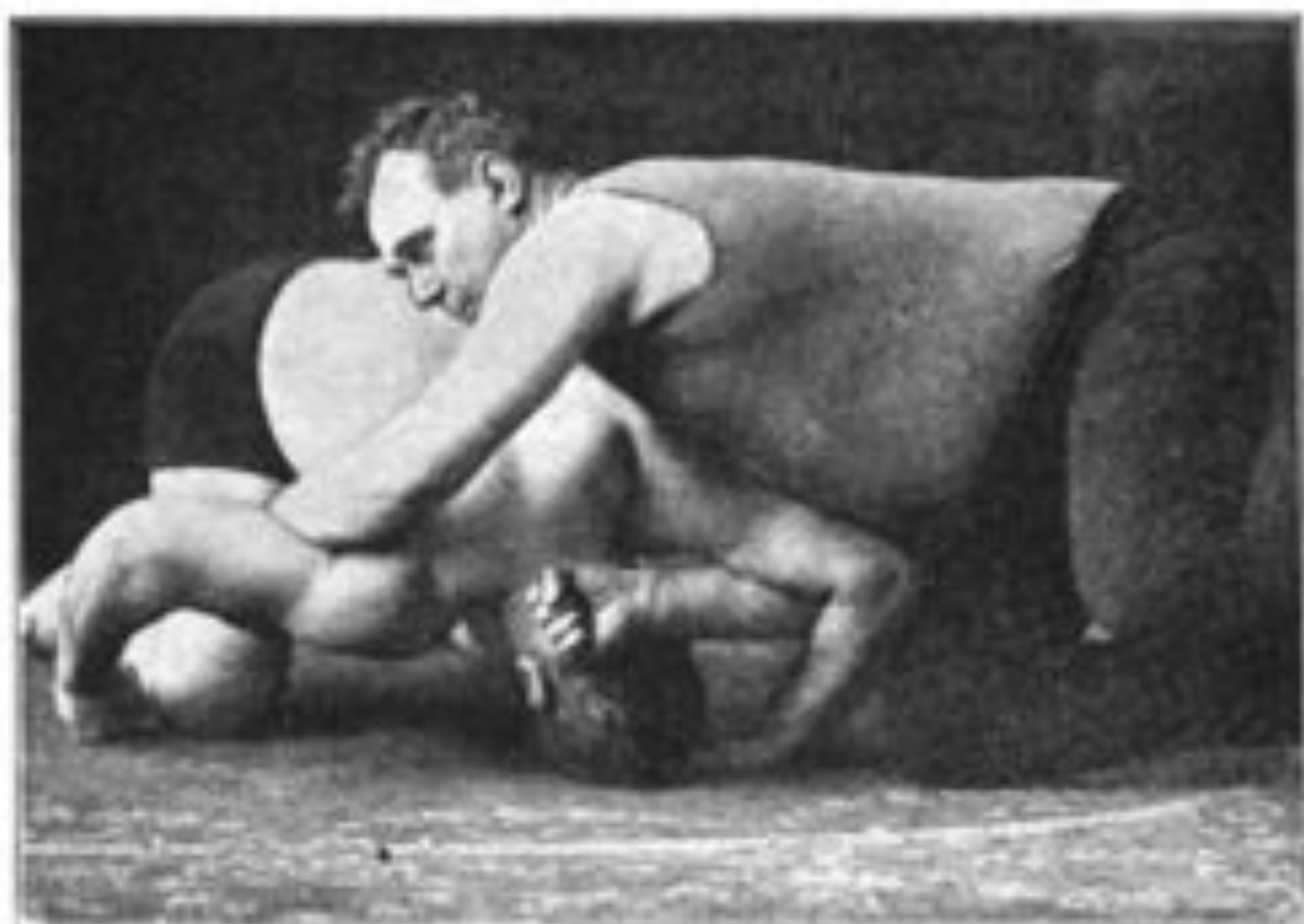
When an opponent has been worked to the mat, if on the right side get a half nelson and with the leverage turn him over far enough to get a crotch. The wrestler has tried to spin out, but has been halted by the combined force of the half nelson and crotch. As the de-

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

defensive wrestler raises his head the attacker may encircle his head and retain the crotch hold, completing the chancery and crotch. It prevents the under wrestler from bridging. The attacker is in a position to bear his full weight on the defensive wrestler's shoulders. He may rest on his elbows, but the aggressor can pull him forward with the crotch hold until he gladly submits.

Reverse Nelson and Bar Lock.

This hold is started the way the hammerlock is usually worked. Get inside arm and work it up with leverage, using both hands. When the double leverage is secured



REVERSE NELSON AND BAR LOCK.

let go suddenly and as the defensive wrestler turns on side to resist it, shoot the right hand around the head of the opponent for the reverse nelson and bar lock.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Half Nelson and Toe Lock.

When the defensive wrestler is down on the mat, the aggressor gets a half nelson and tips his man to the side. If working on the right side, as in the illustration, the



HALF NELSON AND TOE LOCK.

half nelson is secured with the right arm. With the left hand the aggressor reaches over and pulls up the far foot of the opponent and tips him over with the combination. The left hand encircles the right thigh of the opponent, making the grip doubly effective.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Toe and Ankle Hold.

This combination hold is secured when the wrestlers are on the mat. While working on the right-side, the left



TOE AND ANKLE HOLD.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

foot of the defensive grappler is drawn up. The attacker slides under right leg of his opponent holding the toe grip. The defensive wrestler is raised off the mat, the attacker reaches under with his right hand and grasps the imprisoned left ankle completing the hold. In this position the least twist is painful and the defensive wrestler will gladly succumb.

Bar and Further Arm Hold.

If on the left side of the opponent, shoot the left arm around and secure a further arm hold. Get the hold under the head. Almost simultaneously secure a bar hold



BAR AND FURTHER ARM HOLD.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

under the left arm of the defensive wrestler with the right. Force upward with the bar hold and pull forward with the further arm grip. This will force the defensive wrestler to the mat where the weight can be brought to bear on his chest until he sinks in defeat or the grip may be shifted to some other hold and a fall secured.

Scissors on the Body.

The scissors on the body is obtained on an opponent when down on the mat and is usually secured when in the act of rolling. If on the left side, suddenly push his head down and secure a half nelson with the left arm. While the defensive wrestler is in the act of resisting the hold jump in so that he will slip between your legs and roll over on his side as in the illustration. The



SCISSORS ON THE BODY.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

feet may be grapevined and pressure brought to bear on the stomach and a fall is imminent.

Half Nelson.

The half nelson is the commonest grip in the business and may be secured from either side. Most wrestlers prefer the left side for the simple reason that "south-paws" are a scarcity. A wrestler likes his right hand, which he can use more adeptly, to be free for attacking purposes. If the attacker is on the left side he inserts his



HALF NELSON.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

left hand under the left arm of his opponent. "I shove my hand over my opponent's head," says Gotch, "giving me a stronger leverage than can be obtained on the neck." It is best to work well to the side to prevent an opponent countering with an arm lock for a side roll or some other grip. When the leverage has been secured, the attacker pushes against opponent's side with an upward motion applying the leverage until his man is turned over, when other grips must be applied.

Counters for the half nelson seen in almost every match are the head spin, the side roll and coming to a sitting posture.

Three-Quarter Nelson.

The attacker, if on the right side, first gets a half nelson with his right arm under the right arm of his opponent and over the back of the head to secure the most powerful leverage. With his left hand the aggressor reaches under the chest of his opponent and locks the fingers of his hands as seen in the accompanying picture, or he may grasp his right wrist with his left hand. With this leverage or pull, the defensive wrestler is drawn down and compelled to roll when the aggressor may pounce on him and secure some other hold.

Double Nelson.

The full nelson is a punishing hold and is used little in championship matches. If on the left side, push opponent's head down with the right hand, secure the half nelson with the left hand—that is the near nelson first. As the attacker applies the leverage with his left hand he almost simultaneously reaches over and secures the further nelson with his right. The left wrist of his own

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

hand may be grasped with the right or the fingers may be interlaced and the opponent's head drawn down in such a position that he is practically helpless.

This is a dangerous hold that is difficult to retain on an opponent whose neck muscles are highly developed. Several wrestlers have been killed with this hold, having their necks broken.



DOUBLE NELSON.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Further Nelson.

If on the right side of the defensive wrestler, the aggressor reaches over with his own left hand and secures a half nelson as in the accompanying illustration. The aggressor places his hand, palm down on the back of the defensive wrestler's head. The leverage



FURTHER NELSON.

may then be applied and the head of the defensive wrestler pulled under. One may escape from a further

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

nelson by the head spin—or by bridging and throwing the feet back over the body of the aggressor and spinning out.

Wrist Lock and Arm and Leg Grapevine Hold.

This hold is secured by the under wrestler when his opponent is working over him. The defensive or under



WRIST LOCK AND ARM AND LEG GRAPEVINE HOLD.

wrestler grasps the left wrist of his opponent with his right hand. He encircles his left arm with his own left for the arm grapevine as in the picture. At the same time he grapevines the left leg of the aggressor with his own left leg as in the illustration. He then bridges, applying the combined wrist lock and grapevine twist, drawing his opponent under him for a fall.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Quarter Nelson.

The quarter nelson is not used much by professional wrestlers except in shifting to other grips. If on the



QUARTER NELSON.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

right side of the opponent, the aggressor thrusts his left hand under the right arm pit of the defensive grappler. This move is made simultaneously with the placing of the right hand of the aggressor on the back of the head of the opponent, palm down. The aggressor grasps his own right wrist with his left hand. The pressure may then be applied and the opponent worried into other holds like the chancery, half nelson, etc.



DOUBLE ARM LOCK FOR SIDE ROLL.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

Double Arm Lock.

This hold is a counter for the double nelson and is secured by the defensive wrestler when under his opponent on the mat. It is one of the advantages of being the under dog. It is often secured when the aggressor has become careless and dangles his arms under the arm pits of the defensive wrestler. To execute the double arm lock for a side roll, the defensive wrestler bides his time until the attacker becomes careless in going after further grips. The wrists of the attacker may be caught almost simultaneously and drawn down. The defensive wrestler should draw his opponent down until he can clamp his arms above the elbows and if on the left side close in and pull opponent to the right. The defensive wrestler should brace his feet, pull his opponent under him and shift well to the side. In this way the defensive man has become the aggressor and put the attacker in a bad way.

Flying Mare.

The flying mare is a dangerous hold that may result fatally, as it causes the opponent to be hurled violently over the head of the aggressor. If the aggressor seizes his opponent's wrist with both hands, steps in with his back to his opponent, draws the arm over his right shoulder; stepping to the right, the defensive wrestler is thus helpless. With the arm as lever the aggressor suddenly bends forward, gives his own hips an upward twitch and pulls forward on the imprisoned arm. The defensive wrestler will be plunged headlong over the shoulder of the aggressor and fall heavily to the mat.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



FLYING MARE.

Chancery, Arm Lock and Cross Buttock.

This hold is secured when the wrestlers are on their feet. The attacker grasps the right wrist of his opponent with both hands, pulls him in and steps outside and behind the defensive wrestler's near leg as in the accompanying picture. Almost simultaneously the aggressor

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



CHANCERY, ARM LOCK AND CROSS BUTTOCK.

encircles the head of his opponent with his right arm, retaining the grip on his opponent's right member with his left hand as in the picture. The defensive wrestler is then thrown forward over the hip of the aggressor when the holds may be retained or other combinations secured.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



CROTCH LIFT AND FORCE-DOWN BY DOUBLE LEG HOLD.

Crotch Lift and Force Down by the Double Leg Hold.

When on the mat, reach over with both hands, lift opponent by his far leg, raise him and bear down weight on head and shoulder. The opponent's legs are thus swung over the shoulder. Shift the hold so that the opponent is caught between the legs with a reverse waist hold. In

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



CHANCERY AND BAR ARM.

this position the full weight of the attacker is borne down on the opponent until he is gradually forced from a bridge to the mat.

This peculiar hold also may be secured by plunging forward and getting a double leg hold and lifting the defensive wrestler from the mat. The reverse waist hold

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES

is secured and the opponent falls back with his face upturned. It is difficult to escape from this hold.

Chancery and Bar Arm.

This hold may be obtained from a standing position. When sparring for holds, the attacker may work his opponent into a forward chancery by encircling the head with his right hand. Chancery means having the head caught and securely held under the arm of an opponent.

Then the bar arm may be added almost simultaneously by thrusting the left hand under the right arm of the opponent and applying the leverage. The opponent in this position is in a helpless condition and may be drawn to the mat. Step back, draw opponent's head in close and apply the leverage until he falls to the mat.

Crotch and Arm Lift.

This is a common shift in wrestling and has been brought to perfection by Americus, one of the fastest of all light heavy-weight wrestlers. It is secured when standing and sparring for holds. Grab opponent's right wrist, pull it in, drop to right knee.

Thrust head under right arm pit and at the same time secure a leg grip with the right hand, pitching opponent forward. A fall may not be secured as a result of a tumble from this combination, but it may be reversed into other grips—sometimes the half nelson and crotch.

GOTCH'S MAT BATTLES



CROTCH AND ARM LIFT.

APPENDIX — 1963

The First National Bank in Humboldt, Iowa, takes pleasure in presenting this book relating to many of the incidents about one of Humboldt's most noted citizens, together with comments from sports writers and other persons who knew Frank Gotch well during his lifetime. It is quite appropriate that this book be printed and presented during the centennial year of the City of Humboldt.

Mr. Gotch was born and raised near Humboldt and is buried in the Union Cemetery in Humboldt, Iowa.

Probably no other athlete from the State of Iowa was more in the headlines of the sport pages of the nation's papers during the first twenty years of the present century than Mr. Gotch. His exploits as a champion wrestler were well known to the nation and world until his untimely death at the age of 40 in December of 1917.

Mr. Gotch was known to the sports world as the Humboldt, Iowa, farmer, and the name of Gotch is still closely associated with Humboldt, Iowa. Gotch did all of his training for the second Hackenschmidt match in Humboldt, and Mr. Gotch frequently stated that he never felt any more at ease when he was training for a match than he felt in his home town.

The Humboldt-Dakota City Jaycee's developed and dedicated and the State of Iowa has designated as a State Park, an area approximately four miles south of the City of Humboldt, Iowa, as the Frank Gotch State Park and Memorial. This park is located at the forks of the Des Moines River adjacent to the farm where Mr. Gotch was born and reared. It is quite appropriate that it is now used as a picnic, fishing and recreational area.

President Theodore Roosevelt, a great sport enthusiast, and a close follower of Gotch, invited Mr. Gotch to the White House where the President was entertaining one of the world's most famous jujitsu experts. President Roosevelt was a strong advocate of jujitsu and induced his friend to place his different holds on Gotch, and it is said that Gotch broke all of them with ease.

SPEED, CUNNING BEAT WORLD'S BEST

By IVOR REMINGTON

Castle Rock, Colorado

One of Gotch's most devoted followers is Ivor Remington, a prominent rancher living at Castle Rock, Colorado, and Mr. Remington takes great pride in relating many of the incidents that occurred during the time that Frank Gotch was world's heavyweight wrestling champion. The following are incidents and remarks made by Mr. Remington recently related in a letter to Dale Fraser of Humboldt, Iowa:

"I shall always remember some comments after Gotch had beaten Yussiff Mahmout, the 'terrible Turk' in Chicago, 1909, two straight falls in less than 17 minutes; and Mahmout's manager had wagered before the match \$500 that Gotch would not 'even' get behind Mahmout and another \$500 that Mahmout would win; the wrestler remarked 'Gotch seemed 'freakish' today but he just can't be that good every time out'?

"However about one year later, in Chicago too, Gotch was meeting Stanley Zbyszko, the 'mighty Pole' in a finish match and 'my friend' said, 'Now we will see how Gotch performs against a real hercules, and Stan Zbyszko was just that too. Gotch beat Zbyszko the first fall in 6 seconds and second fall in 28 minutes; I remarked, 'another epic achievement again was it not'? He agreed.

"I believe that Stanley remembers his match with Gotch better than all the rest of his thousands of matches throughout the world. Perhaps it was because he was so easily beaten by Gotch's dazzling speed and cunning. He will candidly admit that this was an embarrassing event inasmuch as thousands of Poles had come to see him win. However, later he was to become the champion of the world twice. The first time in 1921 when he beat Strangler Lewis for the title in New York and later in 1925 when he beat

Big Munn for the title. His brother Wladek was also a great wrestler, becoming champion when Jack Curley promoted a tournament in New York, Laddie (Wladek) won out easily. He beat John Pesek in two memorable matches in Kansas City, Missouri, and later in Des Moines, Iowa.

“When Gotch met the great Hackenschmidt, the Russian Lion, the second time in Chicago on Labor Day, September 4, 1911, I’ll admit I thought that maybe ‘this could be it!’ But Gotch was supreme again before the vast crowd of 33,000 rabid fans, beating the invincible Hackenschmidt two falls in less than twenty minutes.

“Probably the greatest sports spectacle of all times would have been a finish match between Gotch, world’s champion at the time, 1910, and the great Hindu Gama from India. Gama claimed he had never lost a single fall in his life and at 20 years of age had defeated with ridiculous ease every wrestler in Asia and Europe. He was enroute to America in 1910 to wrestle Gotch for the title, but when he stopped in London, England, to wrestle either Hackenschmidt or Stan Zbyszko, Hackenschmidt refused and, therefore, on September 7, 1910, he met a tartar in Zbyszko, who held Gama to a 3 hour 47 minute draw. Inasmuch as Zbyszko was defeated by Gotch at Chicago in June, 1910, just a short three months previously, two falls in less than 30 minutes, Gama undoubtedly changed his mind, as he immediately set sail for home instead of fulfilling his agreement to wrestle Gotch.

“For those who never saw the immortal Gotch in action but know the ‘legend’ of his triumphs, also know ‘he never let his public down.’

Sincerely yours,

Ivor Remington
Castle Rock, Colorado”



Stanley Zbyszko (left), great Polish wrestler, and the great Hindu Gama (right), from India, shake hands at ringside in London, England, Sept. 7, 1910. These two wrestlers gave 'their all' for 3 hours 47 minutes without a fall and the match was declared a draw.

'NEVER ANOTHER GOTCH'—MANAGER KLANK

The following are a few incidents and episodes by Emil Klank, who was Gotch's manager during most of his wrestling career:

After the untimely death of Frank Gotch, Klank began scouting the country looking for another Gotch, but without any success, and shortly before his death, remarked that there probably never would be another Gotch, as Gotch could beat most of his opponents almost at will — which was evidenced by the rapidity with which he won his matches.

Stanislaus Zbyszko, the Powerful Pole (one of the all-time greats), who stayed 27 minutes in the second fall in the championship match held in Chicago June 1, 1910, was the longest anyone stayed with him.

Klank was asked if he wasn't nervous and worried whenever a championship match was coming up. His remark was, "There wasn't anything to worry about, as Gotch was simply in a class by himself." Klank stated that in the last workout in Riverside Park at Humboldt (now known as Bicknell Park) for the second Hackenschmidt match, they lined up six of the best men in America, and as fast as Gotch pinned one man to the mat, another came on, and it just took six minutes to pin the six men.

Gotch never lost a fall after he had won the world's championship, as Klank said he never was off his feet long enough for an opponent to work on him. If an opponent got him down, he would come to a sitting position on the mat with his feet extended, expand his chest, then suddenly contract it, losing his opponent's grip on him, and would be on his feet in a flash. Probably many of the old time wrestling fans will remember seeing Gotch do this.

Klank related about going into a western mining town where they thought they had a man who might give Gotch a real battle. Klank said he went to the man and his manager (he was good enough to have

a manager) and told them we would let him stay the fifteen minutes if he wouldn't claim the \$100.00 and we would come back for a return match. Klank stated that he was a big, tall, raw-boned and ugly individual. He said to Klank, "You don't pull that with me, I am here to get this \$100.00, and I am going to get it." Klank said, "I told him, O.K. you are going to get your chance." When the match started, instead of shaking hands with Gotch, he made a dive for his leg. Gotch sidestepped him and gave him a hard shove on the back of his head and pushed in the ropes. Gotch then grabbed him around the waist with his feet in front of him, and walked over to the edge of the mat and wanted to know what to do with him. Of course, it was all planned. Jim Asbell, the trainer, who always accompanied Gotch and Klank, had been placed in the crowd. He called out for Gotch to put the toe hold on him. Gotch said, "I can't, he has his shoes on." Asbell said, "Take them off." Gotch put him down on the mat with his back to the fellow's head, pulled up his leg and unlaced and took off a shoe and tossed it to the crowd — the fellow squirming and kicking all the time. Gotch then applied the toe hold on the fellow. Asbell then called out that he meant the other foot; so Gotch repeated the procedure with the other foot — applied the toe hold a little more strenuously on the second foot, then picked him up, took him over to the corner of the mat, slammed him down and rolled him up in the mat. Klank said he believed he was the maddest man he ever saw.

This is just one of the many episodes that Klank related happened during his years as manager for Frank Gotch.

It is said that on the afternoon of Gotch's second match with Hackenschmidt the Chicago crowd jammed the street around the Morrison Hotel, blocking all traffic, and would not disperse until Gotch had made an appearance and a brief speech.

Gotch traveled with James J. Jeffries one season throughout the country meeting all comers. Gotch offered

anyone \$100.00 who would stay with him fifteen minutes, but no one ever collected.

Jeffries at the time was the retired heavyweight boxing champion and was getting in shape to fight the then present champion, Jack Johnson. Gotch often told the story about his friends wishing to meet Mr. Jeffries, and Jeffries, who was quite retiring, did not care to meet everyone who expressed a desire to see him, but Gotch would tell Jeffries that the people attempting to meet Jeffries were his friends from Humboldt, Iowa. Upon being told this, Jeffries would always consent to meet anyone Gotch said was from Humboldt, Iowa. After this was done for a number of times Jeffries began to get wise to the fact that Gotch was merely using this device to get an audience with Jeffries for Gotch's friends, and finally, when Gotch went to Jeffries with the story about having some friends that wanted to meet him, Jeffries said, "Say, how big is this Town of Humboldt. I have met 10,000 people from there already."

Humboldt is not a Town of 10,000 people, but we pride ourselves in being a fast growing and progressive Iowa town, and this Bank wishes to use this opportunity as a means of carrying on the memories of Frank Gotch and the high ideals that he set in the sports world during his career.

SPORTS EDITORS PRAISE GOTCH

By SEC TAYLOR

(Sports Editor, The Des Moines Register)

EDITOR'S NOTE—Sec Taylor is the dean of Midwestern sportswriters. A native of Wichita, Kansas, one of Sec's early positions was as secretary of a Western League baseball team. He took over as Sports Editor of the Des Moines Register in 1914 and has held that position ever since. During the heyday of wrestling Sec was both a writer and a referee of the sport. His career allowed him the opportunity to see Frank Gotch in the ring on many occasions.

If a boy showed aptitude with his fists the oldsters said, "He's a John L. Sullivan."

If he could run fast his elders muttered something about Maud S., then a champion harness horse.

If a youngster could do well in several branches of athletics, particularly football, he was "Another Jim Thorpe".

If he was a star baseball player he was said to be a coming Ty Cobb or Honus Wagner.

Those were the days when movie theaters were Nickelodeons, autos were horseless carriages, telephones had to be cranked, an evening meal was supper, not dinner; and women wore do-it-yourself hair-dos.

Every midwestern youngster wrestled from the time he was 4 years old until he was in his 20's and every village, almost every farm, had a grappler of which it was proud.

Such was the environment of Frank Gotch, the greatest wrestler ever to apply a hold in the western continent and perhaps in all the world.

Like most other lads he wrestled for fun on his parents' farm near Humboldt, and also in the town, until suddenly his talents were recognized and he began a professional career that has no equal.

He defeated all America's best wrestlers as well as many from foreign lands—all who challenged him.

From 1899 to 1913 he engaged in 159 bouts, exclusive of handicap matches, and lost only seven. Two of the defeats came in the second and third bouts of his pro career to two great wrestlers of their time—Dan McLeod and Farmer Burns.

After he had defeated Fred Beell in a return bout, following an unexpected reverse at the hands of the Wisconsin grappler, Gotch was victorious in 68 consecutive outings, again excluding handicap affairs in which he agreed to throw an opponent in a given time—usually in 15 minutes.

Included in this list was George Hackenschmidt. "The Russian Lion", from whom he won the world's championship, and who was beaten twice in matches that attracted world-wide attention.

This writer saw the "Humboldt Terror" in several bouts and always marveled at his performances in which he usually toyed with his opponent until he wanted to make the pin. Then he was a tiger.

Gotch was all man. He had everything although he was not large or heavy as wrestlers go. But he was big enough. His supple muscles, not bulging, were deceiving, for in them was dynamic strength.

He was as fast and quick as a lightweight. His speed was often the dominating factor in his toughest matches, and with this he had determination and utter disdain of opponents, fear and pain.

There has never been his equal. He was a wrestler with "the mostest".

'THE GREATEST' – BARTON

By GEORGE A. BARTON

(Sports Editor Emeritus The Minneapolis Tribune)

(Editor's Note: George A. Barton, sports editor emeritus The Minneapolis Tribune, now 78, and retired after fifty-four years of newspaper work in Minneapolis, was a close friend of Frank Gotch from 1906 until his untimely death in 1918. As a sports writer, Barton reported a number of Gotch's championship matches, and served as referee for a number of his matches.)

In my opinion, the late Frank A. Gotch of Humboldt, Iowa, was the greatest professional wrestler of all time. I make this statement after seeing in action all the topnotch wrestlers of America and Europe from the time I began my sportswriting career in Minneapolis in 1903 until my retirement in 1957.

As a sports writer, I reported all of Gotch's championship matches from the time he won the world's title from George Hackenschmidt, "The Russian Lion", at Chicago in 1908 until his untimely death at the age of 43 in 1918. Later, I reported Frank's successful defense of his crown against such top European heavyweight wrestlers as Stanislaus Zbyszko of Poland, Yussiff Mahmout of Bulgaria, Con O'Kelly of Ireland, Henry Irslinger of Austria, and Hackenschmidt in a return match.

Gotch successfully defended his crown against all of the leading American challengers: Farmer Burns of Omaha, Dan McLeod of Bellingham, Washington, Henry Ordemann of Minneapolis, Tom Jenkins of Cleveland, Dr. B. F. Roller of Seattle, Jess Westergaard of Des Moines, Charley Cutler of Chicago, Fred Beell of Marshfield, Wisconsin; Gus Schoenline (Americus) of Baltimore and Charley Cutler of Chicago.

Between times of defending his championship against outstanding contenders, Gotch toured the United States and Canada as a featured attraction with burlesque shows. Gotch met all comers in matches limited to any-

where from fifteen to thirty minutes, agreeing to throw an opponent within the specified time limit or forfeit \$100.00 to his adversary. Very few indeed were the challengers who won the \$100.00 forfeit.

From the time Gotch won the world's championship in 1908 until his death ten years later, the famous Iowa grappler never lost a fall, much less a match—a most amazing record.

✓ Gotch, standing 5 feet 11½ inches and weighing 212 pounds in his prime, was a remarkable physical specimen. He was tremendously strong, amazingly fast, and catlike in movement. Frank was master of all holds on offense and blocks for these holds on defense. He also mastered leverage to the nth degree and was the last word in courage.

✓ Topping off his wrestling skills, Gotch was a handsome, intelligent fellow, gifted with the personality and friendliness like that which has made Jack Dempsey the most popular sports figure of all time.

Returning to Gotch's stunt of meeting all comers in handicap matches, I recall an amusing episode which occurred at the Star theater, a burlesque house, in St. Paul, when Frank appeared there in 1912. It was a bout which I refereed.

An employee of the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Omaha railroad shops, better known as the Northwestern railroad, in St. Paul, was noted among his fellow workers for his tremendous strength. It was said of him that he could lift a length of rail, weighing hundreds of pounds, and place it on a flat car. This was a feat that required the combined efforts of at least a dozen ordinary workers.

Reading in the sports pages of St. Paul newspapers that Gotch agreed to forfeit \$100.00 to any man he failed to throw in fifteen minutes, the mighty railroad shopworker, urged on by his fellow shopworkers, decided to tackle the world champion.

“With my strength”, the powerful bucko boasted to all and sundry, “I'll grab Gotch around the waist and hold him helpless for fifteen minutes. No man can get me off

my feet, much less put me on my back and pin my shoulders to the mat in that short length of time.

"Don't be surprised if I should just happen to throw Gotch."

Upon being tipped off by friends in St. Paul what was in store for him, I told Gotch to be prepared for an exceedingly formidable opponent.

"Has the guy ever done any wrestling?" Frank asked.

"No," I replied, "but he is a big fellow, standing more than six feet and weighing about 220 pounds."

"Don't worry, George," said Gotch. "If he doesn't know much about wrestling, his strength alone will not be much of a problem."

Came the night of the match and the theater was jammed to capacity with hundreds of railroad men in the audience to watch their hero tangle with the world's champion. The shop worker was greeted with thunderous applause when introduced, while Gotch was the recipient of a mixture of cheers and jeers.

Within seconds after time was called, Gotch dove for his opponent's legs and hurled him to the mat with a crash that caused the stage to vibrate.

The burly shop worker who landed on the back of his head, was badly stunned. Gotch leaped upon his foe like a flash, picked him up like he was a huge dummy, and flung him on his right shoulder.

Holding his opponent helpless, Gotch carried him down to the footlights and called out to the audience.

"Where do you want me to dump him, boys?"

"In the middle of the mat, Frank," a front row spectator yelled.

"No," shouted Frank, "I'll pin him in the corner over there."

With that, Gotch carried his huge rival over to a corner of the mat, slammed him down. And, despite the shop worker's efforts to break loose, Frank rolled him up in the mat. The champion, a broad grin on his handsome face, walked down to the footlights, and said:

"How did you like it, boys?" Then Gotch walked off the stage while the audience cheered wildly.

KING OF MUSIC PRAISES KING OF WRESTLERS

April 6, 1963

First National Bank
Humboldt, Iowa

Dear Sirs:

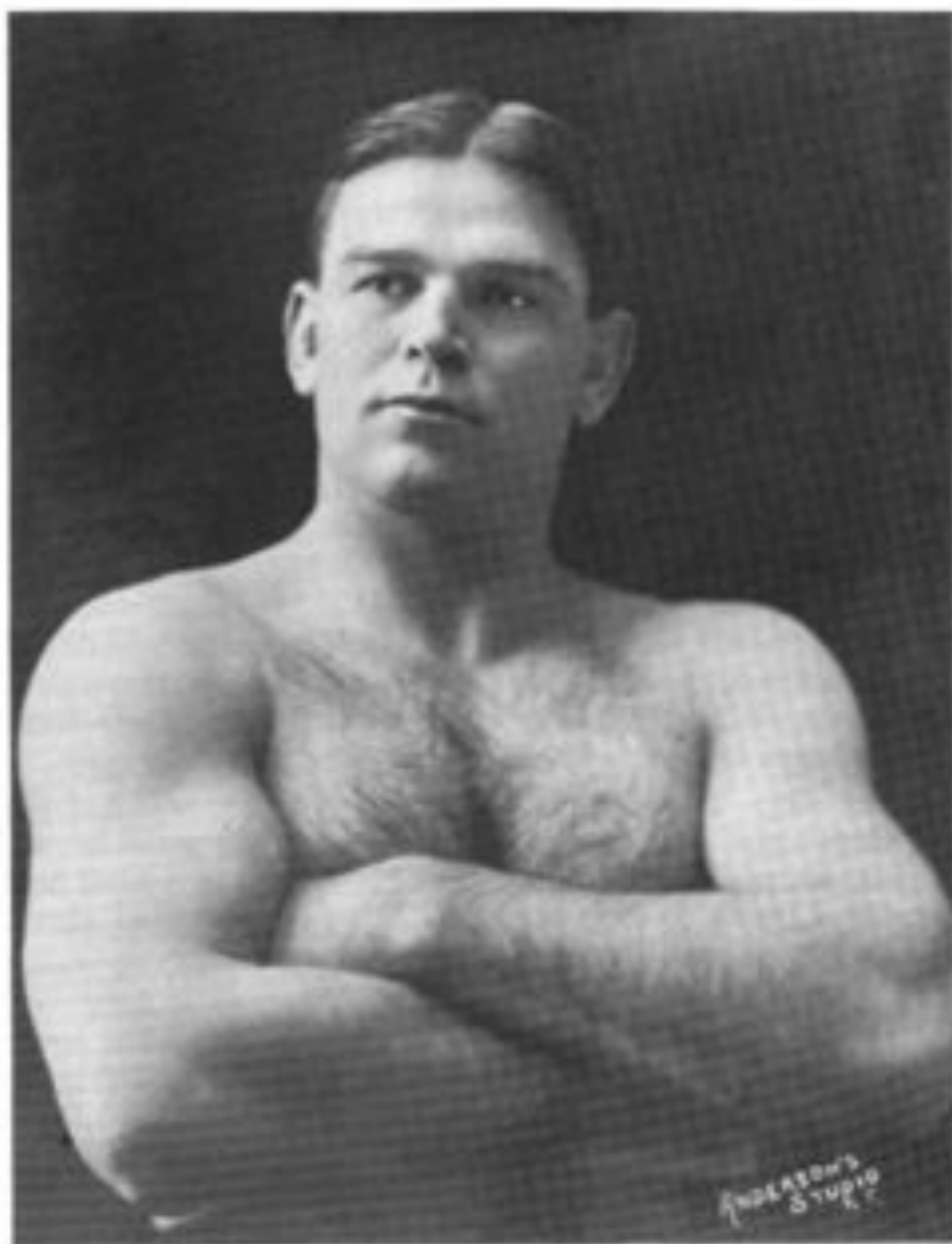
You asked me about my association with Frank Gotch in 1916. I was band master of the Sells-Floto Circus at that time, and two feature attractions were Jess Willard and Frank Gotch.

Jess Willard gave a three-round exhibition of boxing and Frank gave a fifteen-minute exhibition of wrestling. Willard boxed with his trainee, Walter Monahan, and Gotch wrestled with his partner, Bob Managoff "Armanian", so I watched them perform twice daily through a whole season and got to know them quite well. Both were fine fellows and very well liked around the show.

Gotch did his last wrestling on that show as he acquired some injury (to his ankle, I believe) in a bout and returned home late that season. I believe he died about a year after that.

He was a fine friendly sort of person, a typical Iowa boy, nice to everybody and I believe loved by everybody around the show. It is fine that Humboldt is honoring his memory for that is as it should be for he was a great lowan and the greatest of all in his line of work. I think everyone will agree that he was the greatest wrestling champion of all time and a fine friend to all who knew him.

Karl L. King



FRANK A. GOTCH

Handwritten text in a cursive script, possibly a signature or a name, located in the lower right quadrant of the page.

Spetch reached the American at of
-troubled-^{to} go in both directions.

