

## Speaking of Sports

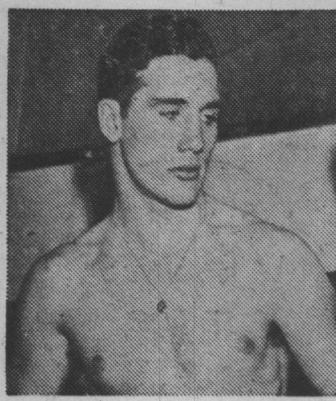
## Conn Is Sure Of Ability to Defeat Louis

By ROBERT McSHANE  
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

BILLY CONN, a slender, good looking Irish kid, only three or four years away from his pork and bean days, has done more to capture the fight-going public's fancy than any other boxer since Joe Louis' early days.

When Conn, present light-heavyweight champion of the world, defeated Melio Bettina for the 175-pound title, he weighed 170 pounds, five under the title limit. Old-timers immediately conjured up visions of Gentleman Jim Corbett who wrested the world's heavyweight championship from John L. Sullivan when Jim weighed only 176 pounds—about four pounds more than Conn weighs today.

Corbett was looked upon as an impudent upstart when he challenged the mighty John L. According to gamblers, Jim lacked the weight, the punch and the intestinal fortitude to make even a dent on Sullivan, who held the same opinion. He



CONTENDER BILLY CONN

was ridiculed by those who knew him best. Even Patrick Corbett, his father, thought it was blasphemous for him to point at the great ring god.

The world was pop-eyed when Sullivan fell before Corbett's blinding speed. That was natural—no one knew that for three years, day and night, Corbett had been a slave to the thought of unseating the champ. He concentrated on it so much that defeat, to him, was absolutely unthinkable.

## Points for Louis

In the same way Billy Conn has been pointing for Heavyweight Champion Joe Louis. He is obsessed with the idea that he has Joe Louis' number. He doesn't "sound off" for the press and call Louis a bum, a pushover and a setup. But he's quietly confident that he will be the next heavyweight king of the world.

There are a large number of Conn critics—ring-wise men who feel that Conn lacks the weight and punch to be a serious contender for the Louis throne. They feel that he hasn't got, and never will have—what it takes to beat the Brown Bomber.

Even more authorities, however, have confidence in Billy's ability to beat the champ. They know him to be a rangy, clever, fast boxer, who loves to fight. He is yearning for a crack at the title, and is absolutely sure that the outcome of the hoped-for bout would see the coronation of a new heavyweight king.

When Louis won the heavyweight title, wise men of boxing were almost unanimous in their opinion that only a slugger would topple him from his position. Now they're not so sure of it. Sluggers have proved easy game for the champ. And after watching Louis take far too much time to dispose of Bicycle Bob Pastor, many of them feel that speed and not power will defeat Louis.

## Speed Is Unquestioned

There's no argument about his speed. He delights in slapping his opponents around—particularly if they're big. His speed and accuracy have accounted for far more victories than any punch which he possesses.

Conn remembers that Jack Dempsey weighed only 185 pounds when he fought Jess Willard. Willard scaled at 260. Many fans thought it was criminal to send Dempsey against such a giant. If you remember, Jack the Giant Killer flattened Willard in three bloody rounds.

Billy isn't unduly cocky. He knows he must pick up 10 or 12 pounds. But when he has tucked away enough steaks he figures on brewing up a storm of trouble for Champion Joe Louis. Conn realizes that it isn't the easiest thing to gain weight. He is small boned and even now may be at his best possible fighting weight.

An ideal way to solve the whole problem would be for Conn to fight Pastor. That bout would furnish a thorough check on Conn's ability as compared with Louis'. If Conn could deliver a knockout wallop to Pastor in perhaps even less time than it took Louis to do it, there would be a capacity house on the Conn band wagon.

That particular fight is by no means an impossibility. Johnny Ray, Conn's manager, has been angling since last November for a match with Pastor. He may get it—with the blessing of Mike Jacobs.

## Sportlight

By Grantland Rice

Every Sport Claims Number of 'Magnificent Midgets'; O'Brien Gets Rice's Laurel Laurel Wreath Award for Durability. (NANA—WNU Service.)

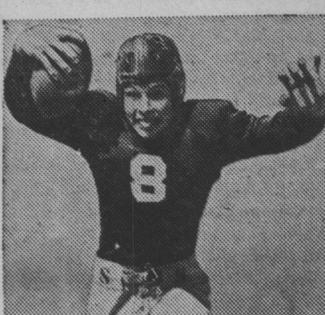
LOS ANGELES—Who were the little giants of sport, the smaller fellows who have outmatched brawn and bulk with brains and speed? In football the first of the "little giants" was Frank Hinkey of Yale, "the disembodied spirit," who at 150 pounds was tearing 180 and 190-pound backs apart with his cyclone tackles. Ask any survivor of Harvard's "faraway and long ago" team, around the early nineties.

Hinkey practically exploded when he hit you—and so did the party of the second part—the ball carrier.

## The Hardiest

In one way young Dave O'Brien of T. C. U. and the Philadelphia Eagles gets the main sprig of laurel.

I talked with Texas Davey just before the Packers-All Star game. Short in stature, and none too stocky, weighing around 148 or 150 pounds, he looked even smaller outlined against the two sets of mast-



TEXAS DAVEY O'BRIEN

dons and mammoths on each side—Musso at 260, Baby Ray at 245, and others at 240 or perhaps 230. He is a needle in football's haystack. Yet Dave O'Brien has never had time taken out in three hard years at T. C. U. and this last year, his first as a pro with the Eagles.

As a forward passer they have bounced his head and slender body off the ground more than 200 times, but he has always bounded back with a grin. He has been the rubber ball of the gridiron. And, don't forget, he can split a line as well as throw a pass.

## Baseball's Share

Baseball has also known its share of these magnificent midgets.

What about Johnny Evers, the "Human Splinter?" Evers was a stout 118-pounder in his early days, but Johnny was a 200-pound thorn in the side of John McGraw and his Giants.

And there was Rabbit Maranville of the Cubs and Braves, another chunk of gun cotton, who was about the size of a baseball bat.

And there was Dicky Kerr of the White Sox, one of the few small pitchers who could make the grade.

To keep from being waylaid and assaulted I'll also give you Wee Willie Keeler from a lost decade, who was smart enough to "hit 'em where they ain't." I saw Keeler play 40 years ago and I still think he stands out as the most scientific hitter of all time. An old-timer by the name of Denton Tecumseh (Cy) Young agrees with me.

Willie was one you couldn't fool," Cy says. And Cy fooled most of them.

## In Boxing

Who was the all-time top of the little fellows in boxing?

There was Jimmy Wilde, "The Great Atom," a 105-pound flyweight who for years whipped men who were 15 to 25 pounds heavier.

I saw Wilde near the sunset of his career when he, Bob Edgren, Jack Wheeler and I played golf together.

Washington's Sen. Lewis Schwellenbach had his own opinions. Whereas the original Pittman embargo resolution would censure Japan for viol-

ating U. S. rights, Senator Schwellenbach would censure the U. S. and thereby avoid international complications.

The Method: Pass an embargo on the contention that the U. S. is violating the nine-power treaty by furnishing 80 per cent of Japan's war material. Nor was the senator far wrong in suggesting the embargo as a means of "complying with the wishes of 75 per cent of the people."

Also in congress:

Q. Continued was the economy drive to avoid either new taxes or a boost in the federal debt limit. Having

clipped \$113,000,000 from the President's budget recommendations, the house appropriations committee was

expected to eliminate altogether more than \$200,000,000 for farm parity payments. Reasoning: Foreign developments might force prices up to a point where parity will not be needed so badly.

EUROPE:

## The Neutrals

Momentarily in the headlines was a report that the U. S. had asked all American nationals in Sweden to leave for home. The Swedish foreign press department gave as a reason "German troop concentration" across the Baltic, but the state department in Washington failed to confirm this fear.

Bigger neutral news came from Rumania, which suddenly found its oil resources both a curse and a bulwark of defense. When Germany insisted that Rumania increase oil shipments to the Reich, King Carol demanded that French-British petroleum interests in his country co-operate. Since this meant that all oil would be feeding Nazi planes to bomb the allies, both London and Paris threatened to suspend economic relations with Rumania.

Though he was in a tough spot, Carol did not overlook the temporary value of this double pressure. Much though he disliked acquiescing to German demands, it meant that Germany would have to defend Rumania against Russian arms in his eastern province of Bessarabia.

THE FINNISH WAR

At Rome, Il Duce's paper *Girale d'Italia* printed rumors of mass arrests in the Ukraine following exposure of a "vast plot" to assassinate Russia's Dictator Josef Stalin, Premier Viacheslav Molotov and War Commissar Klementi Voroshiloff.

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Little Bill once told me his normal weight was around 116 pounds. Yet in 1919 he beat Big Bill Tilden three out of four sets for the championship, and always carried Big Bill head and heart into the stretch.

Johnston had a forehand drive worthy of someone who weighed over 170 pounds. It was terrific—smoking hot. And that from a man whose normal weight was considerably less than 125 pounds.

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