# NEW DOUBLE PLAY MARK

**American League Had Brilliant Fielding Season This Year.**

The new double-play record of 196 checked in by the world champion New York Yankees studded a brilliant fielding season in the American League in 1941 in which the boys were picking them up generally a little better than in 1940. The general average for 1941 was .972 as compared to .970 for the previous year. Cleveland by adding a single point to their club fielding average took over first position by that margin with a .976 percentage. The Indians had tied with the Yankees in 1940 at .975.

In spite of their splendid twin-killing record which supplanted the old total of 194 set by the Cincinnati Reds in 1928 and duplicated in 1931, the Yankees did not field quite as well in their championship year of 1941 as they did in their off year of 1940. The New Yorkers' final average of .973 left them in third place a couple of points below the St. Louis Browns. Winding up at the foot of the stairs both years was Philadelphia with .960 in 1940 and .967 in '41.

While the Yankees were breaking the double-play mark, Bill Dickey tied the major league record when he made an unassisted double-play against St. Louis in the first game of their double-bill on June 8. During the season Dickey also broke the major league record for the most years catching 100 or more games by making it his 13th. This was also his 13th consecutive year of performing in 100 or more games, covering from 1929 to 1941 inclusive, which is another record. Dickey has caught 1518 games since he joined the New York club in 1928. This is short of Gabby Hartnett's record total of 1756 games caught in a major league.

All this and Dickey led the league in fielding in 1941 with an average of .994 for 104 games. That he is completely consistent back of the platter is shown by the fact that this was exactly his average in 1940 in 102 games in which his team was not as sparkling as in 1941. In 1940 Dickey placed first alongisde Rollie Hemsley of Cleveland who fielded .994 in 117 games. Hemsley sagged off to .980 in 96 games in 1941. Second honors for the season behind the bat went to Rick Ferrell of the Browns who handled some uneven pitching yet came up with a figure of .992 for 119 contests. Mike Tresh of Chicago, fielding .981 in 115 games, had the most putouts behind the bat with 448 while George Tebbetts of Detroit made 83 assists for the most in the league. Jacob Early of Washington had the most passed balls with 17 in 100 games.

First basemen had a busy and interesting season in the A. L. in 1941. The circuit had five first basemen with 100 or more assists. This was the first time in history this has ever happened. Dick Siebert of the "A's" reached high with six assists in a single game twice during the race—on May 10 and in the second game of a twin-bill on May 30. This has probably never been done by a player twice in a season before.

The first sackers also worked over-time on double-plays in 1941. Jim Vernon of the Senators took part in five double plays on June 28 against Boston, and Hal Trosky of the Indians equalled this feat on May 20 against the Athletics.

Leading the first corner men in fielding again in '41 was George McQuinn of the Browns whose .995 percentage for 125 games improved on his top figure of .992 in 150 games the year before. Just a point below McQuinn was Joe Kuhel, Chicago's valuable initial-bagger, who in turn was followed two points lower by Boston's reliable Jimmy Foxx.

**Gehringer Is Best**

Another familiar name found its way to the top when the final averages were figured up on the fielding of the second-basemen. Charlie Gehringer of Detroit, whose leg injuries had threatened to finish his career, bounced back in 1941 with the best fielding average in the league—.982 for 116 games. The year before Gehringer was fourth among the regular second-sackers with an average just ten points lower. Gehringer made only 11 errors while accepting 614 chances in 1941, and that he was covering ground once more is indicated by the fact that he had an average of 5.2 plays per game, as compared to the 6.3 plays per game of Jim Bloodworth of Washington who had the most total chances in the league—840 in 132 games. At one stretch from May 23 to the first game of two on July 5, Gehringer played 40 consecutive games without a slip.

Kenny Keltner of Cleveland, who was second among the third basemen in 1940 with a fielding average of .953 in 148, moved into the crowd position in 1941 with came in runner-up to Keltner. Pete Suder of the Athletics was just two points below Clift in 136 contests.

Although Pinky Higgins of Detroit boosted his fielding average 18 points over his pennant-year figure in 1940 to .946 for 1941, he had at least one very bad day when he tied the modern major league record for most errors in an inning with three in the 6th inning of the first game of a double-bill with Washington on June 15.

This record, however, was equalled by another outstanding infielder during the race when Luke Appling of Chicago duplicated this comedy of errors in the sixth inning of the first game of August 31 against St. Louis. Appling, nevertheless, redeemed himself by playing errorless ball for 24 straight games over the stretch from August 9 to August 28, inclusive. This fine and creditable string was not enough to lift Appling above sixth among the regular shortstops of the loop with his final average of .943 for 154 games. His record, however, showed the most chances accepted at the position in the league with 809.

Fielding honors among the shortstops for the second year in a row went to young Louis Boudreau of Cleveland with the fine mark of .966 for 147 games. This was just two points lower than the figure with which Boudreau led the league in fielding in 155 games in 1940. Second to Boudeau in '41 was Cecil Travis of Washington with .964 in 136 encounters. Manager Joe Cronin of Boston kept up his good work with

*(Continued on Page Six)*

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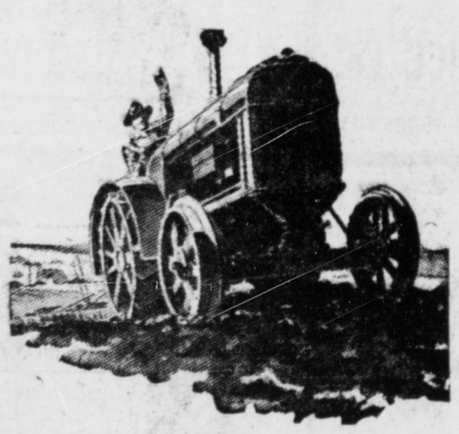

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