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Athletics in Accountancy, being an account of the organization and exploits of the Haskins & Sells Athletic Association during its first season -- The summer of 1907;

Haskins & Sells;

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ATHLETICS IN ACCOUNTANCY
Dear Mr. Bickett:

Please accept with my compliments the copy of "Athletics in Accountancy" which I am sending you today under separate cover.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Mr. W. P. Bickett,
6410 Monroe Avenue,
Chicago, Illinois.
ATHLETICS
IN
ACCOUNTANCY

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORGANIZATION AND EXPLOITS OF THE HASKINS & SELLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DURING ITS FIRST SEASON—
THE SUMMER OF 1907
PRIVATE LIMITED EDITION

NO. 149

Copyright,
1908,
ELIJAH W. SELLS

PRESS OF
SAFETY SYSTEMS COMPANY
NEW YORK
To My Associates and Those Interested in Our Athletics

The success of the “H. & S. Athletic Association” during its first season was so striking, not only from the point of view of the pleasure and health of those concerned, but in the increase of good fellowship which it gave to all of us, that I have gratified my desire, through this means, to provide a permanent record of the leading features.

This little book was written at my request by a friend, himself an enthusiastic follower of out-door sports, and an occasional contributor to its literature.

ELIJAH W. SELLS

New York, December 30, 1907
It is only within the last generation that Americans have begun to learn how to play. It is only within the past ten years or so that we have really discovered the country. The country clubs and golf courses which now surround every large city—which every little freshwater town must needs lay out, in some deserted cow-pasture or across the cornfields where the houses stop and the prairie begins—are all of the most recent history.

No social phenomenon of recent years is more wide-spread, more apparent and picturesque than this return to the country. The country club has changed the whole social atmosphere of the average small town. It has furnished a social center, a common meeting-point where none was before. Here the men meet after the day’s work in their offices, to slip in a quick “nine holes,” at least, before going home to dinner. Here their wives meet for afternoon teas and tournaments. Here the young folks hold their summer dances. Here the chance guest is taken, “put up,” perhaps, and left to make the rounds of the links during the day and amuse himself while his host is busy down-town. Hundreds of towns where, ten or fifteen years ago, there was absolutely “nothing to do,” now, through the mere possession of a little pine club-house and a nine-hole golf course, are never at a loss either to amuse their people or to take care of their guests.

What the country clubs have done to make our every-day life more happy and healthful it would be hard to overestimate. They have not only performed these desirable social functions, and added to the health and pleasure and effectiveness of those individuals who use them, but they have taught the charm and

ATHLETICS IN ACCOUNTANCY
practical value of the free out-of-doors so wisely and so well that their influence has been contagious and the appreciation of the out-of-doors becomes increasingly general. To get out into the open, to exercise, to walk, to ride, play ball, golf, tennis—these have become second nature with the growing generation. As soon as one's work is over these are the things that one is naturally expected to do. City people who lay out elaborate country estates where they live the greater part of the year are only following out this general tendency in the more spectacular way that their wealth and comparative leisure makes possible. More and more they are coming to do this, more and more they are making their country house their home and their city house or apartment a sort of branch office from which conveniently to arrange expeditions to theaters, opera, and the other pleasures which the city offers during the winter season.

Nowhere in America, naturally, has this sort of country life been developed so far as in the neighborhood of New York City. Large parts of Long Island, Westchester County, and other outlying neighborhoods are now almost completely taken up by large estates and by the farms of amateurs quaintly engaged in solving the eternal question of whether or not farming of that sort can be made to pay. These experiments vary all the way from large estates, modeled after those of England, to little plots with scarcely more than a backyard garden, but they all represent a similar tendency—the desire of people to get away from the abnormal stress and strain of the modern city and to find the new strength and refreshment which come from the country and the getting back to the soil.

There are special reasons, aside from the wealth centered there, which explain the enthusiasm for country life which is found in the neighborhood of New York. They are very matter-of-fact tangible reasons which have meaning to every one compelled to live on the Island of Manhattan and will have more and more meaning as time goes on. New York City, proper, is a long, narrow island. It cannot spread sidewise beyond its present narrow limits; its longitudinal breathing space is all but exhausted. Necessarily it must expand up and down. Hence the elevated roads and the subways. Hence the sub-base-
ments and the sub-sub-basements and the skyscrapers, climbing higher and
higher into the air. The streets, already canons, are fast becoming mere
crevasses between the dark glacier-like office hives that tower above them.
With all due allowance for the ability of the human body and brain and nervous
energy to adapt itself to new levels of stress—and having once climbed to the
higher level to move on as serenely as it once worked at the lower tension—it
is not going too far to say that long-continued high-pressure activity, in this
specially crowded and concentrated city, is abnormal and beyond the power of
natural human endurance successfully to withstand.

Of the various sorts of workers in this sophisticated modern Babel few,
certainly, more acutely need the rest and refreshment that comes from enjoyable out-of-door exercise than those engaged in the profession of accountancy.
This work requires intense concentration, it has few of the alleviating distractions of many other occupations—the physician’s, the journalist’s, the lawyer’s,
for instance—it is essentially impersonal, dispassionate and precise. No human
machine—built as such machines are, not for specialized activity along one
hair-breadth line but for a diversity of activities and the rest and mutual
compensation which come from such variety of occupation—can long continue
completely absorbed in such work without losing in practical effectiveness.
Mere business sense, aside from any questions of health and pleasure, demands
that the worker have a reasonable amount of rest and diversion. And condi-
tions being what they are there are few ways that such diversion can better be obtained than in some good-natured game out-of-doors. It was with all
these things in mind, instinctively, at least, if not consciously, that the “H. &
S.” baseball team—of whose exploits during its first season, the summer of
1907, this is a narrative—was started by the members of the staff of Haskins
& Sells.

Delving into the archives of this organization, we find the first definite
whisperings of the future that was to be in Athletic Bulletin No. 1, which was
tacked up on the office bulletin-board early in the month of June. This bulletin,
now possessing something of the prestige and dignity of a Magna Charta or a
Declaration of Independence, read as follows:
The following members of the Staff of Haskins & Sells have organized a Base Ball Team:

E. A. Hifton
W. N. Peal
C. Dooley
L. L. Perrine
S. Rareshide
R. C. Brown
E. A. Mitchell
L. C. Matthews
J. V. Westfall
F. Samuelson, Jr.
✓T. H. Willins
✓H. B. Cook
F. A. Bresher
John Flint
F. H. Clark
A. T. Johnston, Jr.
✓J. R. Wildman
F. Schavel
B. E. Gilbert
R. D. L'Hommedieu
W. L. Hawkins
W. H. Kuper
T. J. Murray
Gage Hills
✓E. Fuller
T. H. Lee
✓C. S. Ludlam
F. M. Brown
✓E. W. Sells
D. S. Fero
C. D. Martin
J. H. Ostberg
J. S. Mitchell

Game at Woodhaven Saturday, June 22nd.

All those who desire to become members and have not yet presented their applications may send same to the undersigned.

J. S. MITCHELL, S.A.M.

FANS

1st B.—Westfall
L. Taaffe
B. Hatfield
H. Riley

M. Fleming
Close on the heels of this document is the scarcely less significant letter addressed to the self-appointed manager, "S.A.M.,," J. S. Mitchell, under the date of June nineteenth, by Mr. Sells and expressing the latter's cordial approval of the suggestion of organizing a baseball team. Mr. Sells demonstrated his interest practically by a substantial contribution toward meeting the team's initial expenses and he gave assurance that the other members of the firm, Messrs. Ludlam, Fero, and Dunn, would make similar contributions. He said that he had thought of such a club many times, and that he would like to have it include enough members so that sides might be chosen, regular match practice games played, and complete score cards kept. In speaking of his pleasure in looking forward to the games, he said that one of the pleasantest recollections of former years was that of membership in a baseball club where he had attempted two or three times to play. "I do not recall, however," added Mr. Sells, "that I caught a ball or made a run"—a statement which caused the members of the team to suspect—after Mr. Sells's achievements on the diamond later in the season—either that his modesty was far above or his memory far below the normal average.

On the same day, Athletic Bulletin No. 2 announced that the grounds of the Woodhaven Baseball Club had been leased and that the first game would be played there on Saturday, June twenty-second. "Regular League rules will prevail," read the Bulletin; "if, however, either team should score 100 runs prior to the ninth inning, the game shall be considered a tie game to be played off the next Saturday following." Each member of the staff was notified that he was expected to contribute $1.00 for each game which he played and to buy his own baseball shoes; the club was to furnish everything else.

The two teams on this deservedly historic occasion were captained by J. S. Mitchell and D. S. Fero. The Fero team won 26—9, Mr. Fero striking out twelve men, Mr. Mitchell eight, while Dr. Cleveland achieved the honor of being hit by a pitched ball. There were no home runs and no double plays, but a number of two-base hits and one three-bagger by Samuelson.

Saturday, June twenty-ninth, being one of the days on which securities are counted, was without its game, and the next match game was played
on the afternoon of the Fourth of July. Bulletin No. 3 warned the members
to put in at least two hours' practice on the morning of the Fourth and con-
veyed the exhilarating information that a challenge had been received from the
Accounting Department of the Royal Baking Powder Company. It also an-
nounced that the afternoon of July Fourth would be Ladies' Day and the
members were advised by the "S.A.M." to "Bring your wives and other fellows' 
sisters." The wives came and so did the sisters and the afternoon was a great
success. Again Mr. Fero's team won by the score 20—14.

Interest in the game, stimulated by the approaching contest with the
Royal Baking Powder Nine and the Saturday afternoon games, had risen to
a high pitch by the middle of July. A part of Columbia oval, at Williams-
bridge, was secured for a permanent ball ground and men put at work grading
and rolling the field. Uniforms of gray flannel, with H. and S. in blue on
the shirts and blazers, were provided for the team, and officers selected as
follows:

President, E. W. Sells; Manager, J. S. Mitchell; Treasurer, B. E. Gilbert;
Secretary, H. B. Cook; Field Captain, D. S. Fero; Assistant Field Cap-
tains, Messrs. Patton and Willins. It was also decided that the members of
the club should not be required to pay an entrance fee for participating in the
games.

As the men improved their play, two teams were selected and euphoni-
ously named "The Lemons" and "The Blues." Mr. Mitchell captained the
"Lemons" and Mr. Fero the "Blues." The teams varied somewhat from week
to week, but in the game of July twentieth, played at Woodhaven and won by
"The Lemons" by a score of 14—12, the batting order was as follows:

"Lemons"—Mitchell, Willins, Hawkins, Westfall, Kelland, Gilbert, Walter
Fero, Dooley, and Flint.

"Blues"—Fero, Brown, Ludlam, Schavel, L'Hommedieu, Fitcher, Hills,
Martin, and Prince.

The great game with the Royal Baking Powder Nine took place on Satur-
day afternoon, July twenty-seventh. No time or trouble had been spared to
make the event a success. The "S.A.M." exhorted all the members of the staff
to be present “for the purpose of rooting and to substitute in place of any injured or tired player.” Even those accountants whose enthusiasm over their work prevented them from taking interest in a mere matter of sport were ingeniously appealed to on their professional side. As the “S.A.M.” put it, “The Royal Baking Powder Company is a client of Haskins & Sells and we desire to make a careful analysis of their pitcher’s curves, segregated as to home runs, three-baggers, two-base hits and safeties only.” All the wives and sisters were invited. One of these “sisters”—the pitchers’ devotée—enthusiastically availed herself of this invitation. It was deftly rumored about that refreshments were to be served after the game. Careful directions as to the best way to reach Columbia oval were bulletined in the office—directions which included this witticism from the gifted hand of the “S.A.M.” “Turn to the right after alighting, walk about two blocks, and there you both are.” The game was won by Haskins & Sells by the score of 24—13.

The next great game and one in which Mr. Sells himself achieved a personal triumph, although the firm of Haskins & Sells ate the dust of defeat, was that fought out on the afternoon of August tenth, between the office nine and a team made up of the men employed on Mr. Sells’s farm. “The Farmers,” as they call themselves, came down from Mount Kisco, arrayed in blue jeans and farmers’ straw hats and wrapped in that external assumption of bucolic awkwardness which would have done credit to a troupe of experienced actors. During the preliminary practice, they fell all over themselves, threw wildly, called each other “Si” and other names dear to the rural drama and, in every way, did their best to put a vein of confidence into the minds of the city men. The H. & S. team marched on the field with the air of saying that it was a
shame to take the money. The score at the end of the game was 17—2 in favor of “The Farmers,” who returned to Mr. Sells's North Castle farm like a conquering army. Their names, as inscribed in the score book, were as follows: McDonald, first base; Stooza, center field; McDonald, pitcher; Vandine, short stop; G. Flint, left field, French, catcher; Lowden, second base; Young, right field; and D. Flint, third base. The batting order of the vanquished was as follows: Brown, p.; Murray, c.; Schavel, s.s.; Ludlam, f.b.; Rareshide, s.b.; Bradbury, t.b.; Samuelson, l.f.; Gilbert, c.f.; and Mitchell, r.f.

Another game between the staff and office nines intervened and on August twenty-fourth, the H. & S. “Varsity” crossed bats with a nine from Lalance & Grosjean Mfg. Co. The experience the Accountants had had with “The Farmers” stood them in good stead here and the manufacturers were beaten 15—9. The next Saturday the office nines, chosen up under the names “Brownies” and “Pattonites,” played the regular game and on the following day (Sunday, September first) the “Varsity” met the Columbia Oval Cricket Club’s nine and again H. & S. won 13—9.

On Saturday, September seventh, a team from the United States Mortgage & Trust Company attacked the now triumphant Accountants and was defeated 11—10, and on the following Saturday the Royal Baking Powder team made a vain effort to retrieve its lost laurels. It was defeated 17—14. The Lalance & Grosjean Company tried the same thing the following week, but at the end of six innings, when the game had to be stopped on account of rain, the score was 1—1.

The Accountants, meanwhile, had been waiting for a chance to get back at “The Farmers,” who, when not completely absorbed in the more exacting
THE FIRM'S CARTOONIST DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF, BEFORE THE GAME OF AUGUST 10, 1907, BETWEEN H. & S. NINE
AND NORTH CASTLE FARM HAND NINE, IS CALLED, IN ANTICIPATION OF RESULTS
duties of rural life, had spent all their waking hours since the victory in talking and practicing baseball. They were lured down from Westchester on the afternoon of September twenty-eighth, and although they declared afterward that only a conspiracy and the most abandoned behavior on the part of Umpire, audience, and opponents was responsible for the result, they nevertheless had to return that night with the score of 7—4 against them.

The United States Mortgage & Trust Company team also made an unsuccessful attempt to retrieve its fortunes in a second game on October twelfth, but was defeated 3—1. Except for the defeat by "The Farmers," who, being employed on Mr. Sells's farm, were considered almost as one of the family, H. & S. had thus far not lost a game to an outside team. On October twelfth, however, the team of the Mutual Life Insurance Company proved a Waterloo. Eight runs were piled up in the second inning, six more in the fourth by the Insurance men, and the final score was 17—5. The Insurance men were so much younger and so much more experienced players than the Accountants that this defeat could hardly have been considered a disgrace, and on the following Saturday the persistent Royal Baking Powder Nine was again beaten 17—14.

By this time the H. & S. nine had long since passed the experimental stage. Interest in the sport had become so keen and consistent and its benefit to all concerned so obvious, that it was to organize on a still more substantial basis. The following letter was therefore sent out, addressed "To all members and ex-members of the staff of Haskins & Sells":

"As you are doubtless aware, a Baseball Club was formed during the month of June by some of the members of the staff in this vicinity. The move-
ment met with so much success that a diamond was provided by the firm at Columbia Oval, between Webster and Jerome Avenues, Williamsbridge, New York, and games have been played every Saturday, either with outside teams or between nines composed of members of our organization.

"A few weeks ago two tennis courts were laid out and now a croquet ground is under way.

"Interest in these sports has been so keen that an organization called the 'Haskins & Sells Athletic Association' has been formed. In addition to the Baseball, Tennis, and Croquet Clubs, which will be continued as long as the season permits, a Bowling Club and a Billiard and Pool Club have been formed for the coming winter.

"The following officers have been appointed for the present year; new officers to be elected by vote at the first annual meeting, to be held next spring:

President, . . E. W. Sells
Vice-President, J. S. Mitchell
Secretary, . . H. B. Cook
Treasurer, . . B. E. Gilbert

"It is proposed to have this Association open to all members of the organization of Haskins & Sells, as well as to those ex-members who still take an interest in the firm's affairs. The dues are $5.00 per year (May first to April thirtieth), payable in advance. There is no initiation fee. It is not expected that the dues will pay the expenses of the Association; the amount is intended to merely identify the membership and to pay, as far as it will, some of the incidental expenses—the firm having signified their disposition to defray the principal items of expense. They have paid all the expenses thus far.

"An invitation to join the Association is extended to you. If you desire to become a member, please forward your name and address, together with the
amount of the dues, to the Treasurer, 30 Broad Street, New York, and a receipt will be sent you.

“Bulletins will be sent to members from time to time.

“Yours very truly,

“H. B. COOK, Secretary.”

Every fair Saturday during the autumn, the early afternoon train to Williamsbridge carried out to the country this big family party. The young women stenographers employed in the office came along, too, and four or five automobiles bringing members of the firm and their families generally arrived before the teams began to play. By that time, the tennis courts were active and a considerable gallery gathered to enjoy the afternoon’s sport.

Out of the more than one hundred persons employed by Haskins & Sells, about a third actually played in the baseball games. The fact that the average age of the players was about thirty-five years, and that most of them had not touched the ball or bat for something like a decade, suggests how much the organization of the team had to do with getting men interested in sport who otherwise might never have thought of it.

After the games were over, tea and sandwiches and other refreshments were served in the club-house, and it was generally close to sundown before the party broke up and returned to town. To say that the first experimental season was a success is putting it very mildly, for success was realized in many ways. The practical result of merely a half day’s regular exercise each week in the open air very plainly showed itself in the heretofore pale faces and tired eyes of the accountants. This result might have come, however, had each in-
dividual merely gone to the trouble of taking exercise by himself. The other result, the new *esprit de corps*, which plainly enthused the staff, could only have come through bringing together in a common, enjoyable sport those who before had been associated only through arduous, tiresome work. In this sense athletics had really entered into the profession of accountancy and baseball become an important part of the week's work. It had made the latter more human and enjoyable, given health and pleasure, and added practically to each one's capabilities in the art of living.
WINTER RE-UNION
AT A BEEFSTEAK DINNER—DECEMBER 30, 1907—HEALY'S AFRICAN JUNGLE ROOM, NEW YORK