

# 1920—A Year of Tragedy And Triumph for the Indians

By DAN COUGHLIN

CLEVELAND, O.—To a baby-faced soldier dragging his feet through the jungle mud of Vietnam, 50 years is double his lifetime. To a yellow-toothed centenarian in Kansas, 50 years is only half a lifetime.

In any event, half a century has passed since the Cleveland Indians and Brooklyn Dodgers met for the only time in a World Series.

It was 1920, one of the most incredible years in this nation's history. It was the first full year of prohibition, the launching pad for inglorious inflation and the decade described as "Roaring," the advent of the "Golden Age of Sports," the ascension of The Babe, the revelation of the Black Sox scandal and the year the Indians were kings of baseball.

In some respects, the past is not so far removed from the present, which some of the newspaper stories of 1920 attest:

A Wyoming congressman decries the deficit spending of President Wilson's administration. . . . Toledo street-car operators walk out and demand to be paid while on strike. . . . Coal miners in Ohio reject a pay hike to \$5 a day, and strike. . . . So do miners in Illinois and Kansas. . . . Because of the railroad strike, Detroit workers are forced to store cars in every available space, including the ball park and the fairgrounds. . . . Convicted of rioting during a longshoremen's strike, New York dockworker is sentenced to Sing Sing and the judge declares "An unqualified respect for law and order must be maintained in our industrial life as well as our social life if the lawlessness of anarchy is not to be allowed."

## Times Have Changed?

Meanwhile, the Social Democratic League of America states: "The chief danger to our country comes from the white reactionaries who are attempting to inaugurate a policy of repression." . . . In order to build a tunnel under the Hudson River, the U. S. Bureau of Mines is testing automobile exhaust to determine the safety level and the story says the government is "sparing no effort." . . . Two thugs beat and rob a man who gave them a lift on Michigan Ave. in downtown Chicago. . . . Five robbers lock a Parma, O., woman, her three children and their maid in a closet and steal \$5,000 in gems and liquor. . . . A man shoots his wife, her cousin, their landlord, a storekeeper and a bystander and then loses a shootout with 100 Cleveland policemen who ran over two pedestrians en route to the scene. Who says times have changed?

On the other hand, a daily newspaper cost two cents and tailor-made men's suits cost \$35. . . . You could rent a fashionably furnished apartment in a good neighborhood for \$75 a month. . . . Thanks to Sen. Andrew J. Volstead, a Minnesota Republican, you couldn't get a drink—legally. . . . Nevertheless, the Indians and the Dodgers were the toasts of baseball.

The Dodgers had held off a late charge by the New York Giants to win their second pennant in five years under Manager Wilbert Robinson by a comfortable seven lengths over their rival from Manhattan.

The Indians, however, had to rally from crushing tragedy and a late-season tailspin to nip the White Sox and Yankees in a gruelling three-team race. Each is a story in itself.

## Beating Was Fatal

The Indians began their third eastern swing of the season in New York in mid-August and Yankee Manager Miller Huggins nominated side-arming right-hander Carl Mays to open the three-game series in the Polo Grounds. (Yankee Stadium was not built until 1923.)

Mays won 208 games in a 15-year career and five times won 20 games or more. Unfortunately, the Kautskian is not remembered for these achievements.

Leading off in the fifth inning against Mays was another Kentuckian, Cleveland shortstop Ray Chapman. Chapman, who was in his eighth full season as the Indians' shortstop and a bridegroom of less than a year, crowded the plate in his customary manner as he awaited the first submarine delivery from Mays, who was headed for his second-best season with 26 victories. He won 27 the following year.

It is not known whether Chapman saw the pitch. He ducked away and the ball hit him on the temple. He crumpled to the ground, but regained his feet and received a loud ovation when he was helped off the field. Shortly thereafter, however, Chapman lapsed into a coma and was taken to a hospital. The Indians won the game, 4-2.

Chapman, 29 years old, died early the next morning. He is the only man in baseball history to die as the result of injuries suffered in a major league game. Chapman was hitting .303, the highest of his career except for a .312 mark as a rookie in 1912, when he played in only 31 games.

Indians' relief pitcher George Uhle, who remained in Cleveland nursing a knee injury, learned of

Chapman's death from a newsboy, who trumpeted the headline at the top of his lungs.

"As soon as I heard it, I said Mays must have been pitching," Uhle recalls now. "He intimidated batters. He'd throw the ball under their chins. But I don't think he deliberately threw at them. He wasn't that way."

Citing the fact that Mays had hit 55 batters in five years, the Detroit and Boston players immediately demanded that Mays be banished from baseball. A week later, the Indians petitioned the other American League clubs not to play against Mays. The petitions, of course, failed, but as a gesture of remorse and to avoid unpleasant demonstrations, Mays did not accom-

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