

INTERVIEW WITH HEINIE MANUSH

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R Goslin says the high spot of his career is the time he beat Manush out when he had 379 and you had 378. That was ^{his} ~~my~~ biggest thrill.

M That's right. I guess that's natural, see, we were playing against each other that time. I guess one of the biggest thrills I ever got in baseball was the time I beat Ruth out. But we wasn't playing against each other. Goose and I were playing against each other. He got 2 out of 4 and I got 2 out of 4 and he'd gain a point and I didn't gain a thing. I played every inning, you know, and Goose was in and out of the lineup that year. But I played every inning. X I was on the field when he got that hit. Funny thing, too. Our second baseman, our first baseman, our right fielder, all of them went after it. Wasn't a very good line drive, it was a more of a Texas leaguer and everybody tried to catch it, but still it was a base hit. Out in right field, I was playing left field. They sure tried to catch it.

Well, I guess I got started playing baseball back in Alabama cause

my oldest brother , there was seven of us boys in the family, and my oldest brother, and he'd play. I dont know, ~~myxix~~ how us kids got to be baseball players, I don't know. My dad was born in Germany, he didn't even know what a baseball looked like. Frank, he was the oldest, he had several chances at the major leagues. He didn't quite make it, and so, I guess I was just born in it, I guess.

I went out to California after I graduated from high school and I started playing ball out there. Out on the coast. I went to the Canadian League, that's where I really broke in. Everybody thought I was born and raised on the pacific coast, cause ^{they'd say why'd} ~~xxxxxx~~ I came all the way from Alabama to play on the Pacific Coast....I played in the Winter League out there. But I wanted to play ball and that was it. Played sand lot baseball. Was first off in Salt Lake City, played ball there. Then I went down to Utah and stayed about four or five weeks in the coal mines and played too. Amateur ball. Working for a Utah refinery, messing around the coal mines and bplaying ball two or three times a week. So I went out the the Coast and played winter league ball. And I don't think my dad ever knew a base hit from an error. My dad dies in 1924 and I made good in 1923, but I think he saw me play in a big league game. But he didn't know anything about baseball, interested in his own job, I guess.

I went from Edmunton to Omaha. See, over there in that Omaha ball club we had three pretty good ballplayers: George Grafton, Babe Herman and myself. All three of us in the same club. Grantham, he played infirled, third base. Course Babe played first base and I played the outfield. He played first base and outfield. So the Detroit ball club had options on the Omaha ball club to take one player, so they tok me and sold Grantham to Chicago Cubs. That's the way it happened. Babe and I and George were on the same club together.

I came into an outfield with Heilman, Leach, Fatheringill and Ira Flagstad! Well, I'll tell you, that was quite a funny set up there. Course back there they had an understanding and they probably just brought me down there for a look, like they do nowadays. I was already, I understand, optioned out to Rochester, before I ever reported to spring training. But they just brought me down there for a look, like they do. See what you have. But I got a chance to play. Then it looked like I was going to open the season. Of course Harry and Cobb and Leach were established, but I got a chance to play a few exhibition games and I guess Cobb saw something there and he decided to forget about Rochester and keep me in, so they traded Flagstad instead. So I got a chance to play and I went on playing. Fathergill and Weach sat on the bench.

I'm not sure but I think in 1923 the Detroit ball club had the American League team batting average record. About 315. Course Ty and then Harry, Harry led the league that year, 380 or 398 or 400 or something. And Cobb was way up there and I hit 340 I think. Then we had Blue and Chapman.

Cobb was a natural. He made a lot of these rules in baseball, about things to do, and he did them. Cause I know one time, when I first joined the ball club, he told me to hit back of the runner. I didn't know what he was talking about. Man on first base. Pull that ball through that hole. I didn't know what he was talking about. Then I got to where I was pulling everything!

But Ty, he was a great competitor. He wanted to win and he expected the ballplayers to do the same things that he could do and they just couldn't do it. Didn't have the same ~~ability~~ ability.

Well, see, when I first saw Ty, he'd been playing about 15 years. At that time Babe Ruth was at his peak. My own judgement, I would take Ruth, cause the Babe could take one swish and the ball game was over, while Ty just wasn't a home run hitter. But back in those early years, I don't see how anyone could be rated over Ty, cause he could do everything: run, field (I guess his weakest ~~point~~ point was his arm, his arm wasn't too

strong). But he played mostly in the years of the dead ball and that didn't make much difference. But boy how he could hit. Oh, boy.

I was there in St. Louis when Ty put on quite a show. He could hit the long ball if he wanted to, he said and to prove it he hit three home runs to show he could. He couldn't hit the ball like Ruth could of course, but he could hit the ball through that infield, ~~xxx~~ line drives, like the Babe couldn't to. Yes, he did that in St. Louis. The season was ~~xxxx~~ practically over. I think Harry beat him out of leading the league then. I think it was 1925. He put on quite an exhibition. Hit three home runs in one ball game.

When I saw Cobb and Babe, I think I'd take Babe, but like I say, Cobb had played 15 years or more before I ever saw him, and the Babe was right in his prime. It'd be hard to overlook Cobb back in 1907, '08 or so, back in those days when he could run and do everything. Course Babe wasn't a bad outfielder either, but I don't think he could cover the ground that Ty could. He had a better arm than Ty though. But as I see it, the only thing that Ty didn't really have was a great arm. Like I say, most of the years he played with the dead ball and didn't need a good arm.

Never saw Babe pitch, but I know his Wrd Series record held up for

for a long time.

One day, I remember, in batting practice, Cobb was pitching and pitched one to Ruth and Ruth hit it back and it looked like an aspirin tablet and Ty left the pitcher's mound! Out in Detroit. There was a lot of rivalry, you know, between Ty and Babe. When Babe broke in (that was before I broke in) Ty was the bigshot, about 1919 or '20. And he stole a lot of the kill away from Ty.

We didn't finish first that year. I'll never forget that. Why I'll never forget it was that my cut for the World Series was \$1,024.40 and I never will forget it. I know we finished in the money. That was my first year, I never will forget it. That was the year the Yankees and the Giants won the pennant. I think we finished second place that year.

I played for a lot of managers, but it's real tough to say who was the best as a manager. See, the ball players made the managers, the managers don't...see the ball player's the guy that makes the manager. Managing is getting along with the players. The ball players have to have respect for you. That ball player now...that old saying...you got the tools you can produce. When Ty was the manager with Detroit, we had everything but pitching (we sure didn't have pitching), and the best ball

club I ever played on was Washington, with Cronin, '31, '32, '33, then in '34 the club collapsed when everybody got hurt.

Now Walter was there in '30, '31 and '32. Johnson was very quiet. Walter didn't have what you'd call (well, he probably had it but he didn't show it) fight. That's what made Cobb. That disposition that he had. That's one thing Ty wanted his players to do, but they just couldn't pick fights the way Ty could. Ty, he, when he broke in, I guess he changed all the rules for ~~base~~ baseball. Different plays, different ideas, you know. I'll say one thing for Ty, we never got along too well, like a lot of the otherplayers, but I'll say one thing, I'm certainly glad I broke in under him. Ty Cobb, in the first place was, in my estimation, the greatest of all ballplayers in all around ability and he ...it was a thrill to have him as a manager and to play alongside of him. Ty would expect you to do things that he did and if you come back at him....that was it. That was how I got in dutch with him. I said something back to him, well, like "I've seen you do the same thing that I just pulled." And that was it. He resented something like that.

Nowadays the managers theydon't say nothing at all to the players. If they do, I don't know what the manager says, but you watch these games on TV and a lot of the things that are pulled, and by God you want to tear

out your hair. But the ballplayers are different nowadays than when I was a player. They're a lot more easy going nowadays. They don't...the manager jerks them out quicker than when I was a player. Some little accident ~~xxxx~~ or something and they're out. I got spike wounds on my legs now, where I was spiked, but I kept on playing. Nowadays they won't do that. Ballplayers are scarce now and they take care of them. I wouldn't say they were as scarce when I was playing. They didn't have as many leagues. Course they don't have many leagues now. I guess that have less leagues now than when I was a player, breaking in.

I'd say the players in my time were more durable, yes. I'd say so. Not just because I was playing. Cause when I was back there as a coach in '53 and '54 with Washington, things were a little different then, than when I was a player. When I was ~~a~~ with Washington back in the 30's it was different.

They have a lot of good ballplayers today, but I don't think they have as many good players today as there were when I was a player. They have good ball players, but not as many, let's put it that way.

Now, you use those light bats, and everybody wants to hit that ball out fo the ballpark. They don't hit to the opposite fields anymore, they don't hit and run, they don't try to beat out bunts or base hits, all they

want to do is hit the ball out of the ball park. A fellow can hit 260 and hit 25 or 30 home runs and he's getting a big salary. That's why you don't find those high averages any more. In our day, I was afraid to hit ~~x~~ 260 or 270, you'd be sent to the minor league. Especially an outfielder. But the outfielders back in my day, they carried the ball club. They were supposed to carry the ball club. You watch these games on TV and see these ballplayers swing those bats and don't understand how they do it. I hit more line drives than home runs. Well, I was a level swinger and if you swing level, you're going to hit line drives. I hit to all ~~xxx~~ fields. Well, some pitchers I could call my shot on and hit to opposite field. Take when you face guys like Tommy Bridges and Lefty Walberg Grove and Rube ~~Grover~~ and Waite Hoyt and Herb Pennock, no, you just want to hit that ball safe. That's just naming a few of them. I wasn't trying for home runs. That's one thing I'll say about Ty. Ty would see one hit out of the ball park and say, well don't try to hit another one out of the park, just hit the ball safe. That was his idea and that's why I'm glad, as I say, that I broke in under him.

The way things are going now, you won't see a 320 or a 330 hitter anymore. When I first saw Mantle, I thought he was going to make a great hitter. But he strikes out so much, trying to hit that long ball,

you know, and he's a switch hitter and he has world's of power and he can run, I thought he was going to be great...hit 350 and 360 every year. But he strikes out too much.

Course that night baseball, that schedule is a little tough, too. But the way they've got those ball parks lit up at night, my gosh. one thing in favor of night baseball, you don't get as tired playing night baseball as you do out in the sun.....you may not last longer, but you as tired get ~~starked~~ playing ball at night as you do in that 100 degree heat in the daytime, like we did. But see, our train schedules allowed three and four day jumps. They don't have that now. Gosh, I think Washington last year went out west one day for a ball game and then jumped back to Kansas City the next day. But we didn't have air conditioning either. Now they have the dugout and of course all the hotels have it and the restaurants.

To me Harry Heilman (I never saw too much of Hornsby), but to me Harry Heilman was the greatest right hander that I ever saw in baseball. Probably the greatest that ever will be, too. He had so much ability that Harry was the type of a fellow that ~~poofed~~ it. He would sign with two year contracts, when his contract was up, he'd go out and lead the league. Well, I remember one story. It come down to the last day of

the season, in 1926, when I had to beat Ruth out. About three or four days before the end of the season, ~~Heinie~~ Harry was well up there. And Harry ~~Heinie~~ says, Heinie, don't worry about me, just worry about Ruth. He says, you lead the league this year, and I'll lead it next. I says, OK. Harry and I were good firends, you know. We used to pal around together. So I went out that day and I had to play a double header and Babe played one game and I beat Babe out by six or seven points. The next year Harry coasted in with 400 or something! Oh, he was a great hitter. No doubt about it. He and H_ornsby. Like I say, I never saw much of Hornsby. I played with and against Harry for quite a few years. In my book he was the greatest right handed hitter of all times. Hit to all ~~fix~~ fields. And he ~~was~~ a line drive hitter, too. Harry weighed more than I did! And I was the ^{lightest} ~~largest~~ guy in the Detroit outfield. I weighed 190 pounds. Ty weighed over 200. Harry, Fatheringill, Wingo, all the fellows weighed more than 200.

Harry Heilman , 1921, '23 , '25, '27 all those years, he led the league. I think I beat Ruth out in 1926 by about 5 points, about 372 or so. Babe and I were about neck and neck the last day. I had to play that double header and I had 7 hits that day. I beat out one bunt, but all the rest of them were safe hits.

That last day, when Goose and I were neck and neck, I got the same number of hits as he did, but because of the times at bat, he ~~gain~~ gained something, I didn't gain a thing. See I played every inning and Goose had a bad arm that year and Washington had to take Goose out cause he couldn't throw. But he really had a great arm, one of the best. But it bothered him that year. He hurt it. So when Washington would get ahead about the 5th or 6th inning, why they'd take Goose out, cause he couldn't throw. Didn't bother his batting average, though. He could swing that bat. Goode was a good hitter.

To me there's some guys, not to speak of myself, but, say, Goose, as you say, there's some guys can't even get a look in the Hall of Fame and some guys in there that I don't think should be in there. Must be the fellows in charge, I guess they don't know what they're doing, I don't know. The sports writers are the ones that vote, you know. The ones that could do Goose good, they're all out of it now. Course I think Appling and Russell (?) will get in on that new deal they got... that second recount. To me that's the biggest joke there is: the Hall of Fame. They kept Harry Heilman out, waited till he was dead, then put him in! That was awful. That's when I started thinking about the Hall of Fame as a ~~lot~~ lot of junk, when they could keep a guy like Heilman out

He was dead. Mary his wife, had to go up and get that certificate, or poem, or whatever they give them. Kept him out.

Well I was traded by Detroit to St. Louis....there was a little thing that happened on the ballfield, I guess you could put it that way...between the manager and the players. Moriarty was managing. Well, I guess he was tough in his playing days. Well, ~~this thing~~ a couple of things just happened on the ball field, when I was a player and he was a manager. So he traded me. He thought he was getting a good deal and he got the worst of ~~it~~ it. Cause those things happen, you know. Lou went along with me. Well, the year I was traded I didn't hit that much. Didn't hit 370 that year. About 340. Anyhow, I went to St. Louis. Played for Dan Halley. He was a wonderful fellow. But, of course I knew Dan before. I'd say, all in all, you ask me about managers, I'd say Halley would be the easiest manager for a young fellow to play for. Now, Joe Cronin was great too.

We had a pretty good pitching staff in St. Louis, Walter Stewart, Sam Grey, Alvin Carowther. Three of the best pitchers in the American League at that time. We didn't score too many runs, though. Well, we had Lou Blue, and Fred Schulte, I don't think I was the only 300 hitter, I've forgotten.

Well, to be honest with you, if I wasn't traded and had to stay in Detroit and play for George, the way he was....well, it was better to get away. Course I hated to leave Detroit, cause that 's a wonderful baseball town, but George, I don't believe I would have wanted to ~~say~~ stay any at all

Harry Heilman was the kind of fellow that was well liked by an established baseball star or he'd take up some kid making \$300 or \$400 a month. That's the kind of guy he was.

I remember one year, back there during the war, the club was on the road and Harry was up there doing something. I was in Detroit, I guess, up in the booth with him ~~in the booth with him~~, and here's Harry broadcasting this ball game. So some of the Detroit players were hit and running and Harry would call it before it ahppened, you know, before the pitch. And finally it dawned on me, listen I said, you know these signs better than these ballplayers, don't you? He says, I know all of them, See Harry knew when the player was flashing that hit and run sign and he'd tell it over the m~~ike~~ke. So that made the public think, gee this Heilman, he knows what's going on. He was carrying all the Detroit signs! The players would give it to him, see. ~~See Harry~~ As I said, Harry's well liked. I don't think anybody in a baseball uniform, was as well liked, visitors, owners, players, everybody liked him. I sure liked him. He took a liking to me first time I ever put on

I put on a Detroit uniform, I never will forget that.

I tried to break in to hit ~~me~~ with the regulars one day ~~and~~ in Augusta Georgia, spring training , and Tom cought me and told me that I better shag and fly balls and I did for about an hour and they finally told me to come in. Harry's the one who got me to bat for him in his turn, see. I don't know where Cobb come from, but he came out and saw mee and wanted to know what I was doing in there with the regulars. So I justI was a kid trying to break in. Those were wonderful days, though. Gee, I look back on those ballplayers... To ~~hear~~ hear some of the things that Cobb says when he broke in back in the old days, it had changed some.

Then I went to a good club, went to Washington. See we were traded for each other, me and Goose. Crowther and me, we went to Washington for Goose. Then two or three years later, Goose come back to Washington. That's the year we won the pennant. I played left, Goose played right and Schulte played center.

That World Series of 1933...the Giants beat us. All of those games were close, extra innings, too. We had good pitching. That was the only Series I was ever in. But a lot of better ball players than I was never did get in a series. Take Harry, he never was in one. Paul Waner was in one in '27. First time at bat, I was maybe a little nervous. Little

nervous. It is a little different, not matter how much experience you have, it's a thrill and to get something over the plate....

R Tell about Hubbel striking everybody out.

M Well, I was playing first base, you know. Charlie Geheringer, he led off and I walked. I'm kidding Terry, you know, saying, you better plan on Ruth's bunting. He says, I will, like the devil. He leaned way back...not even holding me on, and Gehringer's on second base, and I'm watching Charlie, and my gosh, those infielders are way back, with the Babe up there, you know. And I'm watching Charlie and I see him break for third and I go to pull a double steal. That's when the fun started. Hubbell struck them all out. I'm out on second base where I can see everything. Ruth, Gehrig and Foxx! Then he strikes out Cronin and Simmons. I was on second base, looking at it and laughing at them! Trying to hit Hubbell! Screwballs, one after the other. I remember (now this has never been published before) what made me laugh was that my old teammates was , before the game started, Ruth, Foxx and some of those guys were giving Cronin a bad time about the World Series the year before, so I just took them down, saying, listen you bunch of so and so's, see that guy warming up. That's Hubbell, that's the guy that beat us. You fellows are going to have a chance to see what you can do with him, today! So that's why I

was on second base laughing at them! So then I had my chance and I said, now, you fellows really should have been there on second base, where I was. You could have seen yourselves trying to hit Hubbell!

The best pitcher I was ever up against, I think, was Tommy Bridges. That curve ball. Course Lefty Grove....I'd say Lefty Grove and Bridges were two of the best pitchers I ever tried to hit. You could get hits off of them, but..... You had to hit them, had to hit them all if you're going to be a 300 hitter, you know. Once in a while, you got to get hits off them. Course, off Grove I never could pull the ball. I let him furnish the power and let it go where it was. If you can hit, you can hit. I don't agree with this left hander against right hander.

Stengle was the one that started all that junk. But they always let Berra hit, and Maris hit, and Mantle, well he's a switch hitter. One old-timers day, in New York, we were over at Toots Shor's having a drink, Stengle and I, and I said to him, Stengle, if you were my manager, I wouldn't play with you for five minutes. He says, why. I says, well, I want to play every day. Lefthand hitters ar right hand hitters, I says, you got some silly ideas. Well, he says, you know, in that voice of his, everybody's not like you! We were busy drinking! But you can't complain about his record. The record he had. So he ~~must~~ ^{must} have been doing the right thing.

But like I said before, the manager, he has to have something to work with. I'm anxious to see how Yogi's going to work out. I think he'll do it. Cause the ballplayers respect him and if he don't let them take advantage of him, that's up to him. But I think he'll do all right. He sure has some good material there.

Yes, I'd do the same right today, if I could. I might play it a little different, I don't know...but I doubt it. Always played to win. Asked no favors and didn't give any. I loved it. Wonderful. Course nowadays, it's a little different. Little harder hours, but little more money...course I don't know whether they get to keep it or not, with all the taxes. I loved to play ball. and ~~when~~ when I first started out I'd really hate to see the rain, but later on, I enjoyed it all day, if I didn't have to play double headers! That's the way it works.

Burley Grimes was a John McGraw type. Burley suffered under McGraw and I guess he thought he could do the same thing with his own ballplayers. But you can't do that. McGraw maybe could get away with it.

Pie Was just as much different from Grimes as day and night. Walter was very easygoing too, yeah.