

# JURY FREES BASEBALL MEN

## ALL BLACK SOX ACQUITTED ON SINGLE BALLOT

### "Never Talk Again," Says Cicotte.

The "Black Sox" were acquitted last night. It took the jury two hours and forty-seven minutes.

The defendants are Eddie Cicotte, Claude Williams, Joe Jackson, "Chick" Gandil, "Buck" Weaver, "Swede" Rishberg, "Happy" Felsch, ball players, and Carl Zerk, St. Louis, and David Ziser, Des Moines, alleged gamblers.

Immediately the question arose, Shall the acquitted players be permitted to play big league baseball again?

Efforts were made after the verdict was reached to communicate with Judge Landis, the high commissioner of baseball, but without success. Nor could Charles A. Comiskey, president of the White Sox club, be reached. It was the opinion of other baseball magnates, whose names, however, may not be used, that only Judge Landis may decide the future of the "Black Sox" in the big leagues.

#### Only One Ballot.

Amidst the wildest enthusiasm the ball players pounded each other on the back and fought to shake hands with the jurors who had absolved them of the charge of conspiring to throw the 1919 world's series games for \$100,000.

There had been only one ballot taken when the crowd lounging in the courtroom was startled by three loud knocks from the jury room.

Judge Friend was hurriedly summoned from the Cooper Carlton hotel. The jury fled into the room. Chief Clerk Edward Myers was handed the verdicts.

The courtroom, which had been a babel of tongues as the spectators speculated on the finding, hushed, as the clerk read:

"We, the jury, find the defendant, Claude Williams, not guilty."

#### Cheers Greet Verdict.

Announcement of the verdict was greeted by cheers. Bailiffs pounded for order. For a moment the crowd quieted as the clerk read the verdicts acquitting the others, then they broke forth again.

Bailiffs, noticing Judge Friend's smiles, joined in the whistling and shouting as the judge started for his chamber.

Eddie Cicotte leaped to his feet and pounded Joe Jackson on the back. "Lefty" Williams, his palms hot and moist from worry, shook hands wildly with every person he met.

Cicotte was the first player to the jury box. He grasped the hand of William Barry, the foreman.

"Thanks," he shouted. "I knew you'd do it."

For the next few minutes the courtroom was like a love feast as the jurors, lawyers, and defendants clapped each other on the back and exchanged congratulations.

#### One of the Deciding Points.

Although the closing arguments were ended at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon it was not until 8 o'clock that the case was given to the jury. Arguments over the instructions centered over those dealing with specific intent and considerable time was spent by Judge Friend in dealing with these.

Judge Friend finally overruled the state and gave the instructions directing the jury that in cases where conspiracy to defraud the public and the baseball owners was charged, it was up to the state to prove that the acts were done by the ballplayers with specific intent to defraud.

This was said to be one of the points which led the jurors to decide that the ballplayers were not guilty.

At 10:40 o'clock the jury reached its verdict, but it was not until 11:00 o'clock that it was read in court. When the first rumor circulated through the building the belief was expressed by the ballplayers that the verdict would be not guilty.

The attorneys appearing in the case in behalf of the defendants were Benedict Short, Michael Ahern, Tom Nash, Henry E. Berger, A. M. Frumberg of St. Louis, Daniel P. Cassidy of Detroit, James C. O'Brien, and J. J. Cook.

#### Jurors Silent on Verdict.

The jurors refused to talk to reporters.

"We voted not to tell what happened in the jury room," Mr. Barry said.

They all seemed proud of their verdict and grinned like schoolboys as the players and attorneys crowded around them.

"Everybody knew I had nothing to do with the conspiracy," said "Buck" Weaver as he shook hands with the judge. "I believe that I should be

given my old position back. I'm going to fight for it."

"I'll put him back in organized baseball," declared his attorney, Tom Nash.

#### Jackson Considers Stage.

"I'm through with organized baseball," announced Joe Jackson. "I've got a store here in Chicago. This will be my home. I'm going to play ball with Williams in Oklahoma for a while this summer. At present I'm contemplating taking a position as coach for a university team in Japan. I've also had an offer to go before the footlights."

"All I want to do is to get to Detroit," Cicotte said, gaily. "Talk, did you say? Not here. I talked once in this building; never again."

"Never was in doubt about the verdict," was "Chick" Gandil's reply to questions by his friends. "I knew where I stood and knew I had done no wrong. I'm going to try to get hold of a good ball club and manage it."

"How could the verdict have been anything else?" asked "Lefty" Williams, former star pitcher for the White Sox. "I'm going to stick in semi-professional baseball."

#### "Happy" Is Ticked.

"Tickled to death," was "Happy" Felsch's contribution. "I never had anything to do with any conspiracy."

David Zelser, charged in the indictments with being a gambler from Des Moines, and Carl Zork, St. Louis shirt-waist manufacturer, planned to leave for their homes today. They had little to say.

"It was the only kind of a verdict that the jury could have returned," Zelser declared. "I never knew Arnold Rothstein, the man they said I worked for."

Assistant State's Attorneys George E. Gorman, John F. Tyrrell, and Edward Prindeville had little to say.

"We did our best," said Mr. Gorman. "But I did my talking before the jury."

As an evidence of what the state thinks about the case, speeches made during their arguments are cited.

"Unless this jury, by convicting the ball players in this trial, does its part to stamp out the gambling that is corrupting baseball, I predict restrictive legislation for baseball such as has been enacted for boxing and horse racing." This statement was made by Edward Prindeville, assistant state's attorney.

#### State Asks Maximum.

Attorney Gorman asked for the maximum sentence for each defendant. He bitterly attacked the players and charged the jurors that the responsibility for the future of baseball was in their hands.

"The attorneys for the defense ask for mercy," he said. "They point out that 'Lefty' Williams only got \$500 a month for his services. They charge that Comiskey, the grand old man of baseball, is persecuting the players because he has tried to clean out the rottenness in the national game."

"Gentlemen, Comiskey wants to keep the game clean for the American public and I tell you now that if the owners don't get busy when rottenness crops out baseball won't last long."

#### "Game" Dragged in Mire.

"Comiskey gave these men a job. And here we find these fellows, these defendants in this trial, deliberately conspiring to injure and destroy his business. They have dragged the game through the mire and in their blindness deliberately fouled their own nest."

"There has been much poison injected into the case by the attorneys for the defense. They have attacked Bill Burns, the man who bared the conspiracy of their clients. They have hit at Bill Maharg, the man who corroborated him. They tell you these men lied. They call Burns an accomplice."

"By their own words they convict their clients. If Burns is an accomplice, some crime must have been committed. If he has committed a crime with the defendants, then it is your duty to find them guilty. I tell you that at least three of their clients, Eddie Cicotte, 'Lefty' Williams, and Joe Jackson, have condemned themselves so badly that I don't see how you can acquit them."

#### Ball Game or "Con" Game.

"In his confession Cicotte tells how the games were fixed. Then we have the spectacle of the public going to the game believing it was on the square. Thousands of men throughout the chilly hours of the night crouched in line waiting for the opening of the first world's series game. All morning they waited, eating a sandwich, perhaps, never daring to leave their places for a moment. There they waited to see the great Cicotte pitch a ball game. Gentlemen, they went to see a ball game, but all they saw was a 'con' game."

### HISTORY OF CASE

Even while the 1919 world's series was in progress there were persistent reports in sporting circles that the White Sox were "throwing" games to Cincinnati. After Cincinnati won, these reports were whispered all through that winter, and continued during the 1920 baseball season.

It was not until September, however, that the scandal was given publicity. President Comiskey of the White Sox and other baseball officials had hired detectives to investigate the alleged "fixing," but with no definite results. Then in September, 1920, a rumor was spread that a game between the Cubs and Philadelphia had been fixed for Philadelphia to win. This led to a thorough inquiry into the gambling end of baseball, and eventually uncovered the 1919 world's series scandal.

#### Maharg Makes Confession.

When the news first was published William Maharg of Philadelphia, a former pugilist, volunteered a confession. He said he and William [Bill] Burns, the former White Sox pitcher, had acted as go-between for the indicted players and the gamblers who sought to fix the series. His story named the Sox players who were later indicted.

Maharg's story was followed by confessions by Eddie Cicotte, Claude Williams, and Joe Jackson. They later repudiated the confessions, however, and demanded trials.

True bills against the players named by Maharg were voted by the grand jury last September, but these indictments finally were quashed by Judge Dever. The players and gamblers named were reindicted and were brought to trial last month. Several weeks were consumed in getting a jury.

#### Documents Are Stolen.

During the trial it developed that the confessions of Cicotte, Williams, and Jackson, and their immunity waivers had disappeared from the state's attorney's office. It was charged eastern gamblers had made up a \$10,000 purse to obtain these papers. The theft left the state with the testimony of Burns, who turned state's evidence, as its principal weapon of attack. Burns charged Cicotte and Gandil originated

the plot to sell the series for \$100,000, but got only \$10,000 from Attel.

There were twelve counts in the indictments against the men brought to trial. The state dismissed three of them. The others charged a conspiracy to obtain money by fraud, a conspiracy to injure the business and reputation of the American league, and similar conspiracies.

#### Fifteen Are Indicted.

Seven White Sox players and eight alleged gamblers or go-betweens were indicted. Abe Attel, former featherweight pugilistic champion, and Hal Chase, former White Sox player, who were named as "fixers," beat extradition proceedings in New York and California, respectively. Fred McMullin, White Sox utility man in the 1919 series, gave bond on the first indictment, but never was apprehended on the second.

During the trial the defense demanded the dismissal of the cases against Weaver and Felsch, former Sox players, and Carl Zork of St. Louis, an alleged gambler. The judge indicated he would not permit a verdict to stand against these three men, but the state insisted on going to the jury with their cases.