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SPOTLIGHT ON SPORTS
By JACK KEENE

Once more gloom, deep and impenetrable, is settling over Boston, home of culture, tea parties (not the kind where cake eaters shine) and defunct baseball teams. For the Braves and Red Sox seem headed for the bowwows again. This after giving the home town fans cause to believe that the baseball millennium was about at hand.

The Red Sox have been slipping, due to the overworking of Ehmke, Quinn and Ferguson in the box, and injuries to Boone and Harris, two of the team's heaviest sluggers. They cannot be considered out of the running right now, by any means, however.

The Braves, on the other hand, seem demoralized and done for. Baneroff did wonders with the team until everybody went into a slump at once and then illness overtook him.

Luis Firpo, preparing for his battle with Harry Wills late in August, says that he will steer his own pugilistic ship on this visit to America. His action is prompted by the belief—and a just one—that he was "hooked" in his first ring venture. Firpo, up against the wiles of promoters, managers, wise guys and ordinary hangers-on, did not realize as much from his venture as he might have.

He is, however, pulling a bone in deciding to guide his own destinies to the point of handling himself in the ring. Jess Willard stands out as a glowing example of how a man can direct himself to defeat.

Willard, always suspicious of friendly offers of help and economical with his money, refused all offers of help in preparation for his fight with Jack Dempsey. He had neither capable trainer nor first-class sparring partners. He did as he pleased. He entered the ring poorly trained. The result is history.

Firpo should have a capable handler and a manager who will see to the up and up with Firpo and see to the ways of his ring future.

The recent defeat of R. Morris Williams, United States Davis cup team captain, by Rene Lacoste in the semi-finals of the world tournament at Wimbledon, brings out a striking characteristic of Williams' play. Ordinarily a brilliant, heady dashing player, Williams has lapsed, in which he plays atrocious tennis. This is due to Williams' unwillingness to change his style of play when he finds himself a bit off form. Ordinarily he plays what seems to be a cat's paw game. It is at least one born of confidence. When he is in form his stroking is perfect, his shots little short of marvelous. He returns the ball from impossible angles with seeming ease. The returns, by their unexpectedness, take his opponents off their feet. When his eye is a bit off, however, these returns go wild. He loses points with little content when by more careful play he might at least rally and force his opponent to the limit to gain the point.

He would not be Williams, however, if he were to fall into a careful style and play the game safe.

Someone has dug up the interesting story that two of the five American-born lightweight champions were born in Michigan. Bay City boasts of Kid Lavigne as a native son, and Cadillac of Ad Wolcast. Somebody ought to have placed these facts before the Democratic convention while the delegates were trying to pick a winner.

The summer is proving a lean one for boxers and boxing fans, generally speaking. It seems doubly dull when last summer's activities are recalled. Soon after the open air season started last year Eugene Criqui came over from France and knocked the featherweight crown off Johnny Kilbane's head. Criqui immediately signed up to risk his newly found crown in a battle with Johnny Dundee and, before the summer waned, lost it.

Shortly after Kilbane's fadeout Jimmy Wilde lost his world's flyweight title to Pancho Villa on United States soil. Jess Willard essayed a comeback and flattened Floyd Johnson in a manner that caused Jessica to be matched with Luis Firpo.

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"BUT HE DOESN'T STAND FOR "AT BAT"



Barney Freigan.

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