

### **Bleacher Comes Through Again**

Frank O'Neil, '43

As he stepped from the dugout into the bright September sunshine of the huge Brooklyn Stadium, the thunder from sixty thousand throats smote his ears. Bleacher Brady glanced up at the stands packed with wildly cheering fans, and grinned. Then he started for the plate.

"Why shouldn't these Brooklynites go berserk" he thought. "Hadn't their beloved Badgers come from third to first place in the last games of the schedule, to oust the famed Yorkers? And hadn't he blasted seven homers to drive them under the wire? Now these fighting underdogs were trailing the Cincinnati powerhouse 3-2, in the ninth inning of the seventh game of the Series. The game had been a pitchers' duel from the start, but a homer, and a triple with a man on base, by the great Bleacher had kept the home team in the game. And now, with second filled on a lucky double, the 'Bleacher Buster' was coming up again. Small wonder the Stadium was resounding".

Snatching up his favorite willow he strode to the plate. Before stepping into the box he turned and tipped his cap to the stands behind, acknowledging the acclaim. Then, rubbing dust on his palms, he stepped up, bat swinging smoothly, waiting for the pitch. The guy toeing the rubber was smart but old, on his way out and Brady was going to help him climb to the dusty ledge where he belonged. No place here for has-beens.

The first pitch was low and in the groove. The champ grinned, then swung. His eyes followed the white pellet as it soared high and far towards the bleachers. The stands were rocking. Brady had come through ag. . . .

Suddenly a voice, "Hey, Grandpa! Cut the stargazing, and get that infield raked for the game this afternoon".

Slowly the far-away look faded from the old man's eyes, his head came down and his shoulders slumped. Thirty years' burden, for a moment thrown off, returned. With a muttered, "Yes Sir", he wearily swung the rake from his shoulder, unconsciously tipped his workman's cap to the empty stands, and began to trudge out on the diamond.

Time marches on. . . . .