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This article was written by Cort Vitty.

Washington, D.C., was abuzz with celebrations during the fall of 1924. Their beloved Nationals not only captured the American League flag, but followed up with an impressive World Series victory. Club owner Clark Griffith had built a team with an eclectic mix of talent, led by the legendary pitcher Walter Johnson. Bucky Harris was the rookie manager and second sacker who provided gutsy field leadership for a lineup including Sam Rice, Joe Judge, Muddy Ruel and Roger Peckinpaugh. Interspersed among this solid group of veterans was the maturing bat of a young slugger affectionately known as "Goose" Goslin. Manager Harris called him "the best natural hitter on the team."

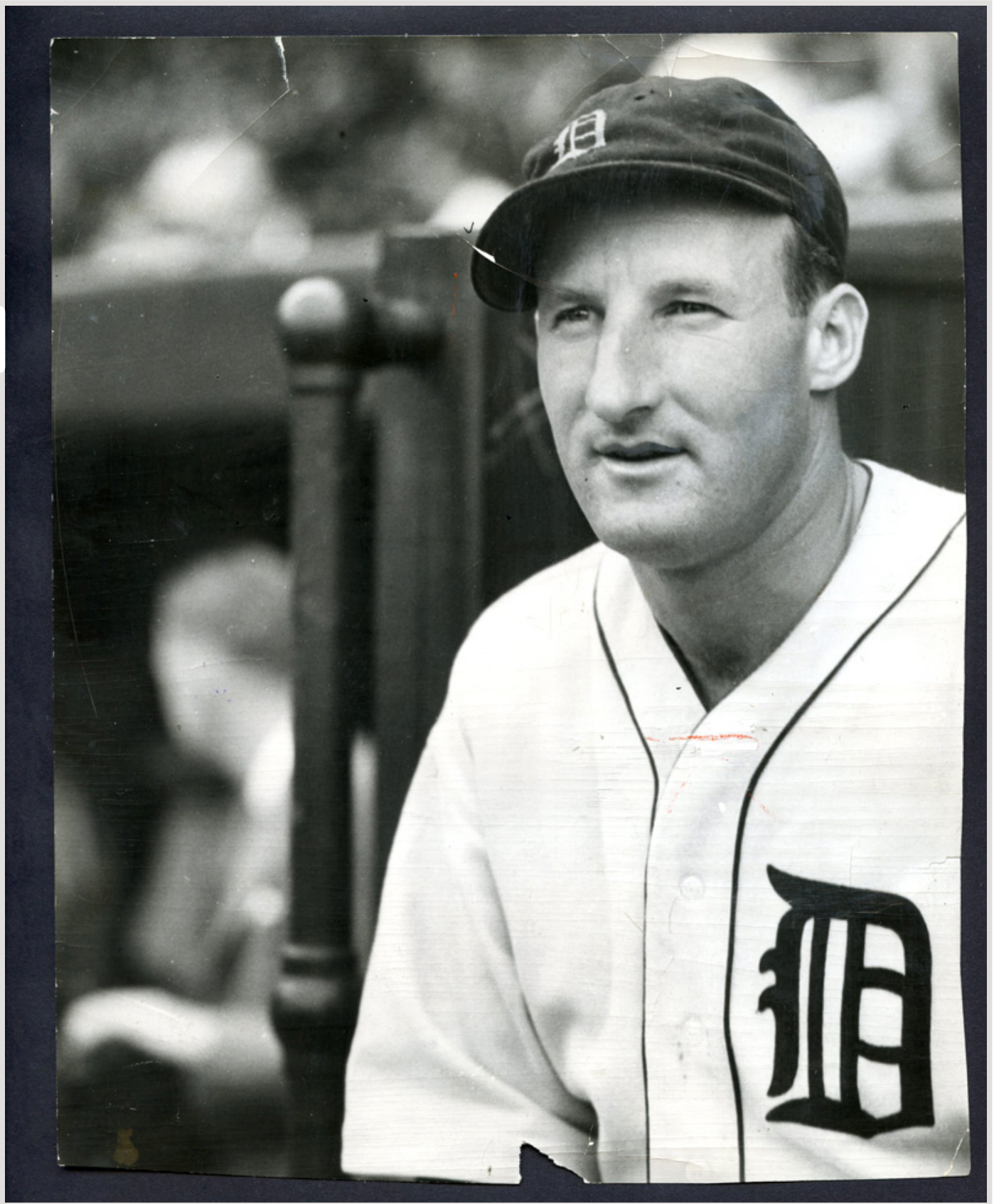
Leon Allen Goslin was born in Salem, New Jersey, October 16, 1900. He was raised on a farm in nearby Fort Mott, where the Goslin family owned more than 500 prime acres in southern New Jersey, just east of Philadelphia. His parents, James and Rachel, were of English decent; however both were born in New Jersey. Their oldest child was Russell, born in 1895; followed by Mary in 1896; Leon in 1900 and James in 1912. Hard work on the family farm helped the youngsters grow strong and hearty. At maturity, Leon stood 5'11 1/2" tall and weighed in at 185 pounds.

Leon habitually ignored his chores, allowing cattle to wander into the corn and tomatoes; this naturally angered the senior Mr. Goslin. Although his dad voiced dissatisfaction, plucky Leon continued to run off and play baseball. Soon, he found himself as the star righthanded pitcher on the DuPont factory team, where he worked repairing elevators in the Carney's Point, New Jersey, plant, earning \$3.50 a game as a pitcher.

Ultimately, his dad became fed up with the youngster's disregard for work. A big game was scheduled and the elder Goslin forbade his son from pitching, lecturing the boy to stop wasting time on baseball. The situation got serious and the manager went to the farm pleading on behalf of the team. Arguing that the game was so important the entire nation would be watching, Mr. Goslin relented and allowed his son to play. The game commenced and the plate umpire that day was Bill McGowan, who would later have quite a future in baseball himself. He and Goslin were close in age and became friends off the diamond. Leon would periodically travel to Wilmington, Delaware, to visit with McGowan and talk baseball.

At the conclusion of the big game, McGowan was so impressed, he wired manager Zinn Beck of the Columbia, South Carolina, team in the Sally League, informing him of the can't-miss prospect. McGowan embellished the report to include a guarantee that the youngster was a winner and would make the big leagues in two years. The recommendation led to a signed contract in 1920 and Leon headed south to join the team. McGowan prepped his young protégé on how to leave the farm and travel to the city. He escorted the raw youngster to the station, told him what to do and how to act during the trip; he even described how to find his hotel. Goslin later returned the favor: After making it to the big leagues, he was instrumental in recommending McGowan for a promotion to the majors.

"Turk" Goslin, as he was called in those days, started his pitching career with a lackluster 6-5 record -- but really impressed with the bat. Manager Beck decided to move him off the mound for a rather selfish reason: It seems Beck, who also played third base, told Goslin, "the way hitters are streaming drives past the coaching box, I'll never make it to my next birthday." A move to the outfield was precipitated.



Goslin responded to his new position by hitting a league-leading .390 for Columbia in 1921, a feat that caused him to be a topic among baseball people. A golfing buddy of Washington club owner Clark Griffith let it slip one day that Jack Dunn, owner of the International League Baltimore Orioles, was ready to purchase young Goslin for \$5000. Surmising that Dunn knew talent, Griffith decided he was on to something. Tricking his informant into revealing the prospect's name, Griffith rushed to South Carolina and hurriedly signed Goslin to a \$6000 contract. Griffith pocketed the contract and climbed into the stands to watch the game, only to see his new charge get conked on the head by a fly ball as he clumsily tried to field his new position.

Despite numerous outfield mishaps, he was called up to the parent club in the waning days of the 1921 season. Goslin patrolled the outfield for Nationals manager George McBride and showed promise, hitting .260 in 14 games. It was at this time that "Turk" started to be called "Goose," a name credited to Washington Star sports editor Denman Thompson. Thompson observed the unorthodox way the young outfielder tracked fly balls hit in his direction. His erratic path, while maneuvering under the flight of the ball was accompanied by flapping arms, giving a birdlike appearance. His long neck and ample nose added to the characteristics, which gave birth to "Goose" as the nickname he'd carry the rest of his life; the moniker also sounded good with "Goslin". If Goose had trouble judging fly balls, he also had trouble learning opposing pitchers. Late in the 1921 season, he clubbed a long triple to beat the White Sox. Back on the bench, Joe Judge remarked "I never thought we'd beat Red Faber today," when Goose replied, "That was Faber?" Goose again roughed up Faber September 21, 1921, when he connected for his first ever major league homer off the veteran right-hander.

Spring training 1922 took place in Tampa, Florida, and new skipper Clyde Milan was cautious in predicting future plans for Goslin; his ineptitude with the glove was not lost on the Nats' field boss. The young outfielder also incurred the wrath of his skipper by breaking training rules. Milan was quick to point out that the "touted youngster was not a shoe-in for a regular outfield position." But Goose's bat kept him in the lineup, as he hit .324 in 101 games during Milan's single season as manager.

During spring training in 1923, Goose was plunked on the right elbow during an exhibition game with the Braves. Though swollen and sore, X-rays indicated the wing was not broken. While barnstorming north, Goslin's ailing arm and lackadaisical play was noticed by new field boss Donie Bush, who promptly separated Goose from the team and ordered him north to get his attitude into shape. A badly infected set of tonsils was blamed and removed; he recovered and returned to hit .300 in 150 games. He topped the league with 18 triples and his nine homers led the team. One dinger in Detroit August 28 was served up by righthander Ken Holloway. It was one of the longest balls hit all season at Navin Field; landing well over the bleachers in deep right field. His left-handed power resulted from an exaggerated closed stance -- turned where he could almost see the catcher out of his left eye. He swung hard and from the heels, his quick bat appearing as a blur of motion. He turned nearly 180 degrees completing his swing. His stroke was termed "fun to watch" if he homered or struck out.

Despite impressive offensive numbers, owner Clark Griffith noted that "good defense was just as important" and Goose "was severely lacking in that department." The Nats' owner considered "poor fielding to be a liability not compensated by a proficient bat." Griffith was particularly irked by the inability of Goslin to properly judge a fly ball hit in his direction. It was not uncommon for the Goose to drop back on a fly barely out of the infield; he habitually would charge in on a ball headed for the fences. Such fielding miscues did not show up as errors in his overall fielding percentage, yet were costly mistakes allowing hitters to get on base. Griffith prophetically commented that "good hitters who were suspect fielders wouldn't do on a championship bound team."

The 1923 team finished fourth under Bush, who was dismissed as manager at the end of the season. Although several candidates were rumored for the job, Bush's former roommate, second baseman Bucky Harris, was awarded the position just before the start of spring training in 1924. Harris received a letter from Griffith stating: "If you want the job it's yours." Harris wired back "I'll take the job and win Washington's first pennant."

The team got off to an early start with a pre-spring session at Hot Springs, Arkansas. Harris, aware the older veterans could resent his promotion, won them over by asking for their support; this laid a solid foundation for the club and they became a very close knit group. The team really began to jell in Tampa during official spring training. Harris, the "boy wonder," worked well with all of his players while Griffith made key acquisitions to fortify an already strong lineup.

A month into the 1924 campaign, the team languished in seventh place. They pulled up to the .500 mark in June -- caught fire with nine wins on the road and pulled into first place toward the end of the month. Babe Ruth remarked, "He'd never seen a team get so hot -- so fast." The lead see-sawed until late August when the Nats took three of four from the Yankees to establish a 1 1/2 game lead over the defending AL champs. On August 29, behind Walter Johnson's pitching, Goose went 3 for 4 including a home run; he also scored three of the Nats' five runs. Goose hit for the cycle August 28, against the Yanks in New York.

Goslin never minced words about idolizing Babe Ruth and trying to do his best against the Bombers. One day at Yankee Stadium, he sliced a fast ball thrown on the outside portion of the plate into left field for a two-base hit. Next time up, an outside curve was slammed into center for a line drive single. Third time up, a low inside curve was golfed off his shoe tops into the right field stands for a home run. The Yankee pitchers were in a panic; Goose was coming up again with men on base and the game on the line. Manager Miller Huggins was consulted and recommended "right down the middle." Goose took three hefty swings and struck out. A fast ball down the middle was certainly not a weakness for the Goose; it simply caught him off guard and showed how the

unexpected can fool even the best hitter. Even so, Babe Ruth must've liked what he saw. Asked in the mid-1920s to name his "All American Major League Baseball Team," the Babe selected Goslin as his left fielder.

A doubleheader was scheduled September 2, 1924, at Griffith Stadium; the first pitch was thrown by Helen G. Sweeney, the reigning Miss Washington, D.C. Between games of the twin bill, she hosted a reception for the players and apparently met Goose for the first time; she and Goslin were considered to be quite an item on the Washington social scene that fall. But Goose remained a bachelor until 1940, when he applied for a license to wed Marian Wallace, a Philadelphia social worker. Marian passed away in 1960; the couple had no children.

Down the wire it was a three-team race, but the Senators ultimately took their first AL flag. The Yankees finished second, while the Tigers came in third. Goose hit .344 in 154 games for the pennant-bound Nats, adding a league leading 129 RBIs. The trio of Goslin, Rice and Harris were acknowledged to be the big three offensive weapons in the Nats' arsenal. During the course of the season, Goslin was credited with batting in the winning run 14 times, with Rice getting 12, and Harris batting ten. Goose hit 12 homers during the season, with only one coming at immense Griffith Stadium. It was the only homer hit by any Senator at the home park that season. Though the dimensions varied over the years, 1920s Griffith Stadium was almost 400 feet to left; more than 420 to center and close to 400 in right. On the road, an example of Goose's power was displayed in Boston when he smacked a line drive homer into the deepest reaches of center field, obviously a long and powerful blow. Upon reaching the bench and receiving accolades from manager Harris, the ever modest Goose said, "I wish I had really gotten a hold of the ball, it would really have gone places."

The Goose's home town of Salem was naturally proud of their local hero. Postmaster Isaac Klein organized events among fans who generally acknowledged their native son put the little town on the map. Traveling back from New York, manager Harris allowed Goose to leave the train in Philadelphia to make a side trip to Salem. Fans recognized him at the station and followed their hero to his home on Carpenter Street, offering congratulations along the way. All Goose could say at the outpouring of sentiment was "gosh -- this is the life."

The Giants were making their fourth consecutive World Series appearance, as they bested Walter Johnson in the 12-inning opener, 4-3. The Nats supported Tom Zachary in Game 2. Goose started the run production with a two-run dinger in the first. The Giants tied it in the ninth -- then Roger Peckinpaugh poked a game-winning RBI in the bottom of the inning, as the Nats prevailed 4-3. The momentum after Game 3 swung back to the Giants, 6-4, after a fielding miscue by Bucky Harris.

Washington tied the series with a 7-4 victory in Game 4. Goose Goslin had four hits, including the decisive blow, a long three run homer, soaring deep over the right field fence in the third inning. The 49,000 plus New York fans, initially cheering the Giants, started to wildly applaud the Nats, as their Giants went down to defeat. W.O. McGeehan wrote in the Washington Post: "For the country at large the eagle may remain the national bird, but for the National Capital the greatest bird that flies is the goose." The team gathered for supper at their New York hotel and relaxed while gushing with stories of game situations leading up to the improbable victory.

The Nationals returned to Washington and were greeted at Union Station by 5,000 cheering fans. Walter Johnson, already the loser of two games, inconspicuously slipped away without acknowledging the crowd; however Goslin and Harris received great ovations, as the team arrived to take on the Giants for Game 5. The contest resulted in a 6-2 New York victory, as Walter Johnson once again came up short. The Goose contributed another homer in the losing cause.

Game 6 was a duel of southpaws, as Tom Zachary bested Art Nehf 2-1, tying the Series and setting the stage for a Game 7 showdown. In the deciding contest, the Senators trailed 3-1 in the eighth, but remarkably tied the game when the ball struck a pebble and took a bad hop over the head of third baseman Fred Lindstrom. In the twelfth, with Walter Johnson on in relief, Muddy Ruel got another life when his foul pop was dropped by rival catcher Hank Gowdy, who tripped on his mask. Ruel promptly doubled -- then Johnson reached on an error. Next up, center fielder Earl McNeely grounded to third and remarkably another bad hop caromed, allowing Ruel to score the winning run and the Senators were victorious for their first ever world championship.

The Senators repeated as American League champs in 1925 and battled the NL champion Pittsburgh Pirates in the fall classic. This time Washington was favored to win, but it wasn't meant to be as the Pirates took the title in seven games. Washington took the opener 4-1 behind Walter Johnson. The Pirates prevailed in Game 2; however Washington won Game 3 by a score of 4-3, thanks to a solo homer contributed by the Goose. Sam Rice saved the victory by catching Earl Smith's drive while falling into the bleachers and disappearing from sight. Washington won Game 4 to take a 3-1 lead in the series, thanks to Goose and his three-run homer. Although up 3-1 in the series, the Nats dropped the next three in a row to ultimately fall to the Pirates. Goose homered again

in game six, giving him a total of three for the series; a feat he had also accomplished the previous year.

The 1926 season saw Washington drop to fourth place in the American League. Goose contributed 108 RBIs, 17 homers and an average of .354. Incredibly, not one of his 17 circuit blasts was hit in Washington. Goslin was suspended that July for indifferent play, which often coincided with one of his batting slumps. Goose's extreme closed stance was usually the culprit; generally an adjustment, turning him a little more toward the pitcher solved the problem. Upon reinstatement, he promptly became the fielding and hitting star of a contest against the White Sox that July 26, contributing two defensive gems and two key hits.

In 1927, the Senators finished third behind the Yankees and Athletics. Goose batted in 120 runs and hit .334. His 13 home runs led the team and placed him as the only Nat to reach double digits in home runs.

Nineteen twenty-eight dawned with Goslin holding out for a salary increase. The volley back and forth with owner Calvin Griffith continued until the end of February, when Goose signed for a \$1,000 increase, just in time to report. Tampa Florida was again the Nats' training site and the team staged workouts at the fairgrounds, a location providing ample diversion away from baseball for the fun-loving Goose. The clowning included challenging runners on opposing teams to impromptu footraces, which he generally won. A high school track team was conducting a nearby workout, when Goose happened upon a group of teens practicing the shot put. He picked up a 16-pound weight and proceeded to toss it 20 feet further than anyone on the team. For the next 30 minutes, Goose delighted the boys by continually throwing the put like a baseball. The next morning he awoke and his right arm was so strained, he couldn't comb his hair.

The season started and the arm did not improve; it was swollen and discolored. Treatments abounded in an effort to repair the ailing wing. Goose was sent to Atlantic City to soak in the salt water. Next, baking soda was used as a remedy; followed by ice packing; massaging; complete rest; and even a cast, although x-rays showed no break. Another diagnosis revealed his collarbone was out of placement, prompting a trip to Michigan to visit a bonesetter. Nothing worked - - and much to the chagrin of Griffith, Goose's throwing arm remained a liability. It became a ritual for infielders to run deep into the outfield to retrieve Goslin's weak throws.

Fortunately, his hitting was not affected by the arm ailment. In mid-April, against Connie Mack's A's in Philadelphia, Goose hit a ball so hard that right fielder Ty Cobb didn't even bother to look up as the ball rocketed off his bat and fell quickly into the stands.

By late May, it was generally acknowledged that he'd most likely have to sit out the balance of the season, when suddenly an answer was thought to be found: Goose had a bad tooth. The extraction was not a miracle cure and the arm woes continued; he even practiced throwing left handed. Despite his defensive woes, he remained a major offensive force at the plate, with his average topping .400 in late June.

The 1928 batting race went right down to the wire, with Goose's .379 ultimately beating out the .378 mark posted by Heinie Manush of the Browns. In *The Glory of Their Times*, author Lawrence Ritter interviewed Goslin, who provided a little more insight into his quest for the batting championship -- right down to his last at bat in the ninth inning. Goose realized if he got a hit -- he won; if he missed -- he lost; apparently this info was passed along to him by a sportswriter. Confronted with this dilemma, the outfielder asked manager Harris for advice; Bucky completely left it up to the Goose. Goslin thought seriously about sitting it out, but his mates said he'd be accused of "being yellow if you win the title on the bench."

The Goose decided to go up there and take his licks; he quickly looked at two quick strikes. At this point, Goose had an idea: he decided to try and get thrown out of the game! Umpire Bill Guthrie read right through the ruse and told Goslin "he wasn't getting thrown out no matter what he did." The ump added that "a walk was out of the question too." Back in the box, Goslin got what he termed to be a "lucky hit" and won the title fair and square. All told, 1928 was arguably his best offensive season. In addition to the batting title, Goose poked 17 homers, which was nearly half the total of the entire team.

By 1929 the team's 71-81 placed them in fifth place under manager Walter Johnson. Goslin hit only .288, his lowest figure since becoming a regular in 1922. In the power department he contributed a team leading 18 home runs, the only Nat to reach double digits in circuit blows; he also led the team with 91 runs batted in. The incredible power generated by Goslin's shoulders is illustrated by a home run he hit in the summer of 1929, which traveled over the high right field fence at Griffith Stadium -- clearing it by at least ten feet and traveling an additional 75 feet into the backyard of a home located at 523 U Street. The flying sphere struck the unsuspecting homeowner, who was hanging out her laundry. The ball struck with such force that it dislocated the poor woman's shoulder. Shirley Povich of the Washington Post remarked, "Even when Goslin wasn't meeting the ball, he was an exciting hitter. He emulated the Ruthian

custom of swinging himself off of his feet and depositing himself in the dust when he whiffed. He was the least plate shy guy who ever lived. Umpires used to threaten to banish him unless he stopped crowding the plate." In addition, he had remarkable hand-eye coordination -- so good he once beat the New Jersey skeet shooting champ by hitting 50 out of 50 clay pigeons in a match.

In October 1929, the stock market crash precipitated the Great Depression. From a high of 381, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell to a low of 198, as businesses closed, fortunes were lost and unemployment reached staggering figures. In such dire times, Nats' owner Clark Griffith offered the Goose a contract with a pay cut from \$17,000 to \$10,000, a figure Goslin considered an insult. The situation had been festering since '28 when Goose won the batting title and was awarded a raise of \$1,000 to \$17,000. In 1929, his stickwork suffered and his arm was definitely not back to normal, leading the owner to feel he hadn't gotten his money's worth for two seasons. Add the poor economic times into the mix and Goslin relented, signing just prior to the start of the season. Goslin inked the pact with a pay cut; however, it contained bonus incentives. As a ballplayer who always said he'd "play for nothing," Goslin was a frequent holdout. Griffith knew he potentially had a volatile situation on his hands. Goslin was disgruntled about his pay, plus he had authored a letter to the owner indicating his displeasure in playing for Johnson: How ironic that the team's greatest pitcher and greatest hitter didn't get along. The bad blood supposedly vent back to a golf outing, when a disagreement erupted over the score; as time passed, the feud simmered.

The hard hitting outfielder was ultimately shuttled to the St. Louis Browns in a trade for Heinie Manush and Alvin General Crowder. When the deal was announced June 13, 1930, Goose was apparently the last person to hear the news. Both teams were in St. Louis when Goose went for a walk before the game. The news traveled like wildfire around the Washington clubhouse, and when a relaxed Goslin sauntered in from his constitutional, he was greeted by taunts of "go to your own clubhouse." Goose was surprised and didn't believe the news. Finally, a bellman entered and handed him a telegram, advising him of the trade. Goose read the correspondence and said, "They weren't kidding, were they," as he shook his head.

The trade was considered one sided by the fans in St. Louis, a strong hitting outfielder and starting pitcher were shuttled for the services of solely a hard-hitting outfielder. The alleged circumstances that precipitated the trade may offer a clue to the imbalance. Previous to making the deal, Brownie owner Phil Ball entered the team hotel, intending to speak with Manush. He called Heinie's room on a house phone. An operator indicated that "Mr. Manush was tired and didn't want to be disturbed during breakfast." Upon hearing the news, the short tempered owner of the Browns became so incensed, he turned on his heel and stormed out of the hotel.

Still seething from the Manush incident, Ball and some friends attended the game that afternoon; Crowder was on the mound. After a bad call by the plate umpire, the General dispelled his anger by hurling the game ball into the stands behind first base; the ball hit the railing, just missing owner Ball and his friends, all of whom ducked in fear. Phil got up, left the stands and went directly to a phone in his office and called his friend and fellow owner Clark Griffith. Ball asked if he'd make an offer for Manush and Crowder. The surprised Griffith stumbled to think of a suitable player and quickly offered Goslin. While pausing to think of another player to sweeten the trade, Ball quickly replied -- "deal." And so it was completed -- straight up, with no cash involved. Clark Griffith and Goose Goslin enjoyed what was referred to as a "father-son relationship" and now it was over.

Goose was having a subpar year when he left Washington and the move to St. Louis invigorated the slugger, as his average climbed to .322 and his homers increased to 30. All told, he hit 37 for the two teams, the highest seasonal total of his career; it placed him fourth overall in the American League. On August 19, Goose hit three consecutive homers in a 7-0 shutout victory over the A's. Meanwhile, Johnson and the Senators improved to a second place finish. The Browns finished sixth under Bill Killefer.

The 1931 Browns improved to fifth in the standings; the Goose's 24 round trippers were fifth in the league, and he also hit .328 for the season.

Always on the cutting edge of innovation, Goose made headlines during the 1932 season when he attempted to use a camouflaged bat. The war club was unique in appearance, sporting black and white zebra stripes that ran the entire length of the bat. It was designed by Browns' secretary Willis Johnson to specifically annoy opposing pitchers. Goose could do that anyway; once riling Burleigh Grimes to the point where "Ol Stubblebeard" tried to hit him while perched in the on deck circle. Umpire Harry Geisel ruled the bat illegal, as Goslin came up in the first inning of an April 12 contest against the White Sox at Comiskey Park. Switching to a more conventional piece of lumber, Goose proceeded to go 3 for 4 on the day.

The Goose had a whale of a day on June 23 in St. Louis, contributing three homers and 7 RBIs in a 14-10 rout of the Yankees; this was the day Lou Gehrig tied Joe Sewell for second place on the all-time list of consecutive games played, at 1,103; the record holder at the time was Everett Scott at 1,307. This was the third three-homer game in Goose's career. All told, he produced 104 RBIs for the 1932 Browns.

Goslin was reportedly relieved when dealt from the Browns December 14, 1932. He was sent back to the Senators along with lefthander Walter Stewart and outfielder Fred Schulte; the Browns received outfielder Sam West, Carl Reynolds and Lloyd Brown. He was in a jovial mood as he traveled to Washington to sign his 1933 contract, estimated to have been cut to 12,000. He nonetheless joked with office staff at once again becoming a member of the Senators; he even affectionately referred to Clark Griffith as "Pop." The light atmosphere was likely a byproduct of everyone realizing Goslin's popularity would bring out the Depression-weary fans.

Goose was candid about his return to the nation's capital. Reportedly, the minute he heard about the dismissal of manager Walter Johnson, he knew he'd be back. Goslin never minced words about his dislike for the Browns, yet Goose had changed during the St. Louis years. The press corps picked up on the new Goose right away; apparently the 2½ years away from Washington matured him. He was no longer quite as loud or boisterous as previously remembered; plus he'd lost a lot of hair, as the scribes liked to point out. The stint in St. Louis had sobered up the Goose, in a manner of speaking. He wanted to make a new tart in the city where he made his "clownish" debut almost "half a generation ago."

Goose fancied himself a managerial candidate and reportedly thought he'd been in line for the Nats' top job; however Joe Cronin was the new skipper as the team began spring training in Biloxi, Mississippi. Defensive plans for 1933 included moving Goose to right field; the "roller skating fly-chaser" was ready for the challenge and figured he'd benefit being away from the tough sun field in left. During a March 15 pepper drill, Goose's bat tipped an errant throw, which veered off and struck a young woman nearby on horseback; she had stopped to watch the Nats' workout session. Fortunately, the girl was not hurt, much to the relief of a concerned and apologetic Goslin.

In early June, Goose was benched when his average slipped to .296. In the lineup again, he caught fire during a series against the league leading Yankees. When the dust had settled, the Yanks saw a six-game lead evaporate to a 2½-game margin, while Goslin had raised his average to .323, helping to suddenly propel the Nationals into a bona fide pennant race.

On an early summer morning in 1933, an unnamed Washington Post reporter witnessed a not-so-uncommon sight. Goslin hastily backed his tan sedan out of the garage and sped across the Taft Bridge to the Corinthian Yacht club, where the screech of tires accompanied his arrival. Goose would quickly board a craft, gun the engine and spray water everywhere, while making boat figure eights around buoy markers. Goose liked speed on land and sea; however, his speed on the base paths left something to be desired. Although fast, the Goose was not a smart runner. It was not uncommon for him to steal a base already occupied! When asked about it, he'd remark, "I had a good lead."

The 1933 pennant race was capped by an important victory over the Yankees; Goose was once again instrumental in bringing down the bombers. Washington led in the bottom of the ninth when Lou Gehrig and Dixie Walker each reached safely. Tony Lazzeri creamed one into right center, as Goslin raced over to field the almost certain extra-base hit. Gehrig wasn't sure and hesitated at second, as Walker approached the bag. When the ball dropped in for a hit, both Gehrig and Walker passed third and headed home, almost in tandem. Goose's strong throw to shortstop Cronin was relayed home to catcher Luke Sewell who caught the bullet and tagged out Gehrig sliding into one side of the plate --- then tagged Walker sliding into the other side, making it a most unusual double play.

The Nats ultimately won the 1933 AL pennant for Cronin, but went down to defeat in the World Series at the hands of the New York Giants, four games to one. Goslin never agreed with Cronin's management style and the differences were a reason the Nats chose to deal Goose after the season.

The Tigers acquired Mickey Cochrane as player manager for the 1934 season. Next, they set their sights on adding a strong lefthanded bat to compliment the righthanded-hitting Hank Greenberg. On December 13, 1933, Goose was obtained by the Tigers for outfielder John "Rocky" Stone. On the surface, the edge in the deal appeared to go to the Senators. Both outfielders were lefthanded hitters; however Stone was a few years younger and considered to be a better fielder. Coming off a subpar 1933 season, Goslin was thought to be washed up and Washington fans thought the Tigers must've received a bucket of cash to sweeten the deal, but it was a straight-up player exchange.

During the 1934 season, Goslin helped the pennant-bound Bengals in more ways than one. As the Tigers fought the Yankees for the American League flag, it was evident the Detroit pitching may not hold up. Goose recommended Cochrane deal for Alvin Crowder to strengthen the mound corps. The addition of the General made the difference, giving the Tigers their first flag since 1909.

Teammate Elden Auker later recalled Goose as always one to clown around and keep the players loose. "He was some character, a really great guy. He was just happy-go-lucky, always laughing and joking and pulling pranks." Over the years, he and Ernie Lombardi, catcher on the Cincinnati Reds, "waged an ongoing feud over who had the bigger nose." Goose would tease Lombardi that his nose was long enough to keep his cigar dry in the shower. Remarks like "you could get by on one breath a day" continually went back and forth. The teams generally barnstormed north together. "One spring in our final exhibition in Cincinnati, Goose swung so hard, he turned himself completely around as a runner was stealing second. Lombardi went to throw the ball and his right hand hit Goslin's nose. As the Goose lay on the ground "bleeding like a stuck hog", Lombardi said, "That settles it; you've got the bigger nose. You've got such a big nose; I can't even throw to second base. You can't get that nose out of the way." Goose went to the hospital to get his nose set and the two remained close friends.

On April 28, Goose set the unenviable record of hitting into four consecutive double plays in a game against Cleveland, although the Tigers beat the Indians 4-1. Goose hit .305 with 13 home runs during the campaign. He also enjoyed a productive 30-game hitting streak, stopped June 6 by Bob Weiland of Cleveland. The Tigers finished a strong seven games ahead of the Yankees, with the G-Men (Greenberg, Gehringer and Goslin) leading the way for manager Cochrane.

The 1934 World Series pitted the Tigers against the St. Louis Cardinals. The "Gas House Gang" defeated the Bengals four games to three; Goose drove in the winning run in Game 2. Just prior to the start of the seventh game, Goose remarked: "Everybody seems to be mad at everybody else in this series, with all hands sore at the umpiring, which has been terrible, so watch out for fireworks today." That prediction came true in the sixth inning when Joe Medwick slid hard into Tigers third baseman Marv Owen, causing a near-riot among Detroit fans. When Medwick took his position in left field, the fans showered the field with debris. Judge Landis, watching the game from his third base box seat, summoned the involved parties to his box seat and removed Ducky Joe from the contest, to keep the game from being forfeited. The Cards went on to win 11-0 and take the title.

After the 1934 World Series, Goslin became responsible for the first ever fine to be levied against an umpire, by Commissioner Landis. The fined umpire was the colorful Bill Klem, who was accused of using "overripe language" directed at the Goose. Klem had lectured Goslin on proper field conduct. The brouhaha erupted when Goose referred to the ump as "Catfish," a name Klem detested. Reportedly, Klem never forgave Goslin, even years later when the Goose tried to apologize for the incident.

1935 saw the Tigers repeating as American League champs. The team started slow, lagging in sixth place through May, when suddenly the defending champs got hot. Although Goslin hit only .292 during the season, he definitely provided a spark in the World Series against the Chicago Cubs. The Goose brought a rabbit into the clubhouse as a good-luck charm, thinking it would work better than just a rabbit's foot. Indeed it did, as the Bengals prevailed over the Cubs, four games to two

Elden Auker recalled the decisive hit and series win: "I was sitting on the dugout steps at the start of our half of the ninth and Goose was sitting beside me. Goose hadn't had a hit all day and was the fourth hitter due up that inning. He turned to me and said something I'll never forget. 'I've got a hunch I'm going to be up there with the winning run on base and we're going to win the ballgame.'" Mickey Cochrane got on base and was moved to second on Charlie Gerhinger's ground out -- bringing up Goslin to face lefthander Larry French. Goose fouled away a pitch -- then lined the next offering to right center, scoring Cochrane and giving the Tigers a 4-3 victory and their first World Series title. Auker and Goslin embraced, with Goose shouting, "What'd I tell ya? What'd I tell ya?"

The home plate umpire for the final game of the Series was none other than Goslin's old pal, Bill McGowan. Reportedly, when Goose went up to hit in the ninth, he also remarked to McGowan -- "go in and get your shower -- I'm gonna dust one."

Detroit was bedlam after the Tiger's victory and Goose Goslin was the man of the hour. Mobbed by teammates, Goose was literally beaten by members of his squad; a torn uniform, bloody nose and mussed hair accompanied the back slapping and glad handing. After all, it's not every day a series that looked lost is swept to victory in the ninth inning. Cochrane called it his greatest thrill ever.

Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis termed it the greatest Series ever. The subdued mood in the defeated Cubs clubhouse was tempered by manager Charlie Grimm's assessment of being proud of his players. Catcher Gabby Hartnett was asked what kind of pitch Goslin hit. "That's easy," Hartnett replied. "He just hit a \$50,000 pitch." After a wait of 34 years, the decisive hit by Goslin brought the Tigers their first ever world championship. The Detroit club had made four previous appearances in the Fall Classic; however, this was their first sweet taste of victory.

Navin Field was crammed with more than 48,000 jubilant fans, wildly running onto the field in a postgame celebration of jubilant ecstasy. Those left in the stands were content to repeatedly chant: "Yea Goose, Yea Goose, and Yea Goose!" After more than an hour of on-field celebrating, the fans took the festivities to the streets, where horns blared and confetti flew. The crowd was so big that the players had to be surrounded by police as they left the ballpark via waiting taxis. The fans celebrated all night long, representing residents of a city particularly devastated by the effects of the Great Depression, in many respects, this was just the ticket to raise the spirits of a discouraged populace.

Sadly, Frank Navin would only savor the excitement of being at the top of the baseball world for a short time. The Tiger owner suffered a heart attack while horseback riding and passed away that November 1935. Walter Briggs assumed the position of club presidency and principal owner.

Detroit hosted the Chevrolet dealers' convention soon after the 1935 series ended. Naturally, members of the world champion Tigers were invited to attend; however, Goslin was one of only six members of the team to accept the invitation. In addition to receiving the ubiquitous pen and pencil set, each of the six in attendance received a certificate entitling them to a brand new Chevrolet!

In 1936, the Tigers finished second to the New York Yankees. Goslin was still solid, contributing a .315 average and a team-leading 24 home runs, one of them coming September 18, 1936, when Goose welcomed Bob Feller to the big leagues by becoming the first player to hit one out against the young fireballer.

That fall, Goose became a different kind of hero, when he rescued two stranded boaters on the Delaware River. The men had gone missing more than 12 hours, while the Coast Guard searched until dusk. A decision was made to cease the operation and try again in the next morning. The men were brothers, and their father contacted Goslin at daybreak and set out with the Goose to continue the search. The brothers were found by Goslin and safely towed back to shore.

Spring training 1937 started off on a good omen for Goose in Lakeland, Florida. Apparently he took a side trip to Miami Beach, where Leonard Lyons of the Washington Post reported that "rolling the dice cubes at a gambling club, [Goslin] won more in one week than he'll receive from the Detroit Tigers for a full season's play." Unfortunately, it would be the last season he'd draw a salary from the Tigers, receiving his unconditional release from the club October 3. Owner Walter Briggs thanked the Goose for his contribution to the team and acknowledged he'd become one of the city's most popular players. Briggs hinted at helping the veteran find a spot as either a coach or manager. All told, the Tigers finished second to the Yankees, while Goose played in only 79 games, hitting .238 as a part-time outfielder.

The early part of 1938 was a very different time for the veteran flyhawk. Released by the Tigers and seemingly out of a job, Goose left New Jersey for sunny Florida in hopes of catching on with another club. He packed his warm-weather duds; his golf clubs -- and his scissors. The former farm boy had become quite a fashion plate and habitually donned a different outfit for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Golf was his second favorite sport, following his love of baseball. The scissors were quite another matter; he needed these to clip coupons. Although considered to be one of the wealthiest players in the game, the thrifty Goslin was frugal, and saving an extra few cents could keep his expenses down as he looked for a job. During the heyday of his career, he earned a top salary figure of 17,000 and no less than \$10,000 a year since his breakout season of 1924. The Goose was estimated to have pocketed more than \$35,000 alone from money earned through his World Series appearances. These funds were carefully invested in profitable stocks, enabling him to make his farm into a South Jersey showplace. Goose readily admitted that if he couldn't find another job in baseball, he'd have enough to keep him busy on his spread.

The subject of managing came up again in a 1938 interview with Shirley Povich of the Washington Post. Apparently, the Goose was bitter over the Tigers preventing him from talking to Cleveland about a managerial spot. "I'm sore at the Detroit club. You'd think after the time I spent in the league they'd give me a break if I could land a manager's job. And then after the season closed, they let me go without any warning at all. That wouldn't have been so bad, except that they gave me my release a day after I had buried my father. That seemed kind of harsh to me." In true Goose fashion, the interview ended abruptly when a porter approached and said, "Mr. Goslin, your car waits without." "Not without gas I hope," cracked the Goose as he said goodbye.

Signed by the Washington Senators April 3, 1938, Goose began his third -- and last -- stint as a Nat. Reunited with skipper Bucky Harris, also back in D.C., he pinch-hit a home run for the fifth time in his career April 24; at the time, it set a new American League record.

On June 8, 1938 Goose delivered on a promise made to a traffic judge in Washington. While paying a fine for speeding, Goslin told Judge Hobart Newman

he'd hit a homer and actually delivered. But hits and homers were few; he compiled only a .158 batting average before age and injury finally caught up with him. While at bat against Lefty Grove, Goose swung so hard he wrenched his back and was unable to complete his plate appearance. It was the only time in his entire career a pinch hitter was sent up to hit in his place.

At the end of the line, Goose retired, as the only player to have appeared in every inning of all 19 World Series games played by the Senators. He posted a lifetime average of .316, while collecting a total of 2,735 regular season hits -- more than Joe DiMaggio or Lou Gehrig. He hit an even 500 doubles during his career, exceeding the numbers posted by Jimmie Foxx and Mel Ott. His 1,609 runs bettered Hornsby and Speaker. His 173 triples and 248 home runs, along with those 500 doubles put him into a rather exclusive club of ballplayers exceeding 150 in each category.

Goose was named player-manager of the Interstate League Trenton Senators in 1939; however he soon announced he wouldn't play the following season. "Next year, I want to be on the bench where I can see everything that goes on. A manager has no business being out in left field." He did interject that although he'd be in the dugout, he'd still be able to "outhit the young buckaroos on the field." In 100 games, Goose batted .333. By August 1941, he'd had enough and abruptly quit as manager of the Trenton club, while the team was in the midst of a 15-game losing streak.

After Trenton, Goose essentially retired from the game, devoting all his time to the farm and boat business. All work and no play was certainly not the order of the day. Goose continued to golf, fish and play the ponies, often frequenting venues such as Laurel Park in Maryland.

In 1953, the Washington Post polled 22 members of the press corps to elect the all-time team of greatest Nats players. Goose Goslin collected the highest number of votes for any outfielder at 21; Sam Rice collected 20; Heinie Manush polled 11. Also selected were Muddy Ruel as catcher with 15 votes; Joe Judge held down first base with 17; Bucky Harris received 18 votes for second; Ossie Bluege garnered 19 at third and Joe Cronin was the top shortstop on 21 ballots. The pitchers were Walter Johnson and Firpo Marberry, each with 22 unanimous votes.

The Hall of Fame balloting in 1954 caught the attention of Washington Post sportswriter Povich. He noted with dismay how, incredibly, after 252 ballots were counted, only one contained a vote for Goslin. Povich recounted how "Goslin drew more concerted cheers than any other player in Washington history." The chant of "Come On-n Goose, thundered from the stands whenever he poked his ample nose from the dugout to take his turn at bat. He was the Nats' big guy, their home run hitter and fence rattler, and he conceded nothing to any pitcher."

After his wife died in 1960, Goose became reclusive, spending most of his days fishing and living alone in a small house located on the Delaware Bay. He reportedly was disappointed when his contemporary, Heinie Manush, was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1965. The Veteran's Committee rectified the oversight by electing Goose January 28, 1968, along with Kiki Cuyler -- who was the hero of the 1925 Series when the Bucs upset the Nats.

The induction took place July 22, 1968. Goose arrived on the day before with family and friends. At ten in the morning on induction day, Commissioner William Eckert introduced Goose and presented him with a replica of the plaque that would be displayed in the Hall of Fame for posterity. In starting a stirringly emotional speech, Goose literally broke down when he recounted, "I have been lucky." His eyes wet with tears, he tried to continue -- "I want to thank God, who gave me the health and strength to compete with these great players." He then began to cry uncontrollably, until he felt the steady hand of the commissioner on his shoulder. Heartfelt applause from the audience gave him the confidence to continue, "I will never forget this. I will take this to my grave."

Goose passed away May 15, 1971, in Bridgeton, New Jersey, at age 70. He was buried at the Baptist Cemetery in nearby Salem. He'd been in declining health since 1969 when he was hospitalized for burns resulting from a lit cigarette while asleep on a sofa. Ultimately, he had to close his boat rental business as his physical woes mounted. In 1970 he was operated on for the removal of his larynx. Coincidentally, his death followed the passing of Manush -- whose career statistics closely paralleled Goslin's -- by three days. He was survived by his two brothers, Russell and James, along with his sister, Mrs. Mary Trentham.

Although a member of the Hall of Fame, Goose never truly earned the respect due a player of his caliber. He was generally acknowledged as a "money player," evidenced by his remarkable run of World Series appearances; the Goose played in the fall classics of '24, '25, '33, '34 and '35. Goose always referred to himself as a big farm boy, having fun, playing the game he loved. His contemporaries felt he hadn't taken the game seriously and never lived up to his full potential, content to clown around and have a good time as if it were all a lark. Even on the day of his induction to the Hall of Fame, he wasn't shown the proper respect. On what should've been the greatest day of his life, he and his party were summarily ushered out of the hotel right after the ceremony -- since management needed the bank of rooms. Apparently Goose never responded to an inquiry from the hotel in regards to the number of nights he and his party

intended to stay.

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