

WE HOPE TO GATHER UP steam for the 13th Annual Old Timers Night by giving you a short biographical sketch of Walter "The Great" Mails, who will be one of those honored at the baseball night, Tuesday, Feb. 11, in Christian Brothers Auditorium.

Mails was noted principally for the part he played in winning the pennant for the Cleveland Indians in the middle of the 1920 season when his contract was purchased from Sacramento Solons.

Walter won seven successive games down the stretch to put Cleveland in the World Series against Brooklyn. Mails went on to pitch 15 consecutive scoreless innings in the fall classic and Cleveland took it all.

Mails came back in 1921 to win 14 games and lose eight, which kept the Indians in the pennant race until the fag end of the season. His last year with Cleveland was in 1922, when he had a 4-7 record and a ticket back to the Pacific Coast League.

Walter came back to the majors as a member of the St. Louis Cardinals in 1925. His record that year was 7-7. The following year he again started with the Cards, but was again sent to the Coast where he concluded his colorful career with San Francisco and Oakland.

Mails was born within the reservation at San Quentin on Oct. 1, 1896. We would say that he is the most handsome 67-year-old man in the country.

On today's baseball market, with television, Mails could have been one of the most colorful performers of all time with the possible exception of Jerome "Dizzy" Dean. He had a record of 15 strikeouts against the immortal Babe Ruth, until the Bambino unloaded on him one day in 1921 with the bases loaded.

Aside from his great pitching, Mails has the unique distinction of being the only pitcher in history who hit three home runs with the bases loaded.

While living in Sacramento his home was located on the corner of 18th and G Streets. Mails attended Christian Brothers College in 1911 and cavorted in the local leagues until he was picked up by Seattle in 1914. At the end of the season he was sold to the Brooklyn Dodgers when he was only 20.

Mails was with the Dodgers until 1917, when World War I interrupted his baseball career. Upon the cessation of hostilities, in 1919, he was sold to Seattle Rainiers, where he was just a so-so pitcher. During that year, Bill Clymer, the Rainier manager, traded Mails off to Sacramento Solons for Harry Gardner.

He had an 11-0 record with the Solons in 1920, when the Indians purchased him for \$50,000 and three ball players. He joined Cleveland about the same time that Ray Chapman, Cleveland shortstop, was killed when hit by a pitched ball thrown by Carl Mays. Hard pressed for a shortstop, Cleveland bought Joe Sewell from New Orleans. He and Mails were the spark which put Cleveland into the World Series.

The Cleveland players, in cutting up the World Series melon, voted half shares to Mails and Sewell. This so enraged the Cleveland owner that he gave the two players a \$2,000 bonus each from his own pocket.

After Mails' career as a player was concluded, Charles Graham, San Francisco owner, realizing Walter's promotional ability, hired him as a front man for the Seals. Walter stayed on until the Seals were no longer in the Coast League. When Horace Stoneham came west, he sent for Walter and gave him a similar job with the Giants, a position he still holds.

Stoneham often says, "Mails is good for baseball and there will always be room for him in my organization." This, apparently, is not a sentimental gesture, as Mails can do a job. He is busy, night and day, taking care of special events and doing boy promotion work.

After Mails receives his La Salle award, please bear with him if he gives you a pitch on this year's edition of the Giants. He is just trying to do his job. We hope that many of the local baseball fans will sit in on the ceremonies which, not only will pay Mails tribute, but also Henry Clark and Dan Donovan as well.