

COMMY REVIVES BLACK SOX TALE IN JACKSON SUIT

BY IRVING VAUGHAN.

Milwaukee, Wis., Jan. 31.—[Special.]—Charles A. Comiskey, owner of the White Sox, took the stand as an adverse witness today in the suit of Joe Jackson against the ball club for \$15,000 and for two hours was a target for questions hurled by Ray Cannon, attorney for the plaintiff.

In the cross-examination, which at times grew so heated that the Old Roman prevented his own counsel from breaking in with objections, the whole story of the 1919 world's series scandal was gone over, starting with the morning of the second game and continuing up to the time of the suspension of the so-called "Black Sox" in September of 1920.

"Slaves" of Baseball.

In addition to his version of the investigation of the crooked series, Comiskey gave answer to numerous questions pertaining to the conduct of baseball. He admitted that the "ten day" release clause in a player's contract left the player no alternative and that the reserve clause tied a player to one club for as long a period as that club saw fit to keep him. Commy's customary wit didn't forsake him on the stand. Cannon asked him if he was a sick man during the 1919 series and Commy nodding his head, replied:

"Yes, very sick."

Later the attorney for the plaintiff asked as to the worth of the White Sox players in 1919 and Commy drew a laugh from the crowded room by saying:

"Well, not very much in the fall of 1919."

Thought Jackson Was O. K.

The salient feature of Comiskey's cross-examination as it affects this case was that with one exception he observed nothing suspicious about Jackson's playing during the crooked 1919 series or at any time during the 1920 season. He said that in one of the games with the Reds, Jackson appeared to be playing too close to the infield and that a ball was batted over his head.

Commy testified that the first intimation he had of something being wrong in the 1919 series came to him over the phone from a man named Tennes, early on the morning of the second game in Cincinnati. Commy sent Tip O'Neil to see Tennes and O'Neil reported back. Gleason, the Sox manager, was called and the story told to him. Then Comiskey said he sent for John Heydler, president of the National league.

"No Faith in Johnson."

When Heydler's name was mentioned Cannon asked why Ban Johnson, president of the American league, hadn't been called. To this Comiskey said that he had no faith in Johnson. He stated he wasn't on speaking terms with the league executive.

When Commy told Heydler the story, the latter said he didn't believe it. The Sox owner said that Heydler had been a member of the national commission conducting the games and that he (Comiskey) felt it his duty to tell him. They agreed to investigate. Comiskey continued, but upon leaving Heydler remarked, "I believe you are underestimating the Reds."

Under further questioning Comiskey admitted that after the tip from Tennes he was on the lookout for suspicious signs in the second game, but saw nothing wrong with Jackson's work.

Talked with Other Players.

Asked if he had talked to any one after the series was over, Comiskey said he had talked with Gandil and Felsch. He told the latter of rumors floating around and said he would investigate. Cannon then asked whether Comiskey had called in Felsch or any one else in the spring of 1920 and the club owner admitted he hadn't.

Letters exchanged between Jackson and the club after the 1919 world's series were mentioned and Comiskey said that the letters had been turned over to the state's attorney's office in Chicago and had never been returned to the club, despite numerous requests.

Cannon then asked how it happened that the Cook county grand jury records were in the hands of counsel for the defense and Comiskey said that he didn't know.

Cannon went no further along this line of attack. Comiskey also told of the hiring of detectives who failed to uncover a clew to the 1919 series conspiracy.

Secretary Harry Grabner, who signed Jackson to the three year contract, now in dispute, will be called to the stand tomorrow as an adverse witness.