



**HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA
INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION
CIF-SOUTHERN SECTION**

100th historical “tidbit.”
Dr. John S. Dahlem

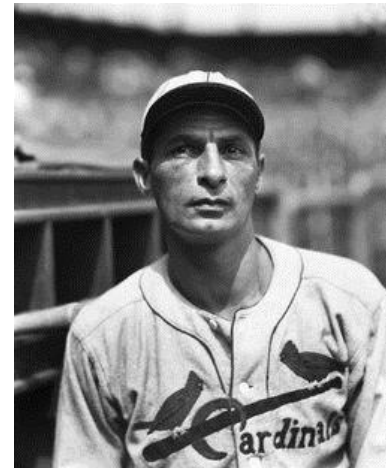
**VICTOR MANUEL ORSATTI – MANUAL ARTS HIGH SCHOOL
“The \$1.265 million Babe Ruth Bat”**

In 1942, the CIF-SS created the Helms Athletic Foundation Southern California Prep Hall of Fame. In 1945, a committee led by Commissioner Seth Van Patten and Bill Schroeder of the Helms Athletic Hall, decided to recognize those star high school athletes prior to 1942. One of those recognized was Victor Orsatti from Manual Arts High School (a CIF-SS school at that time prior to the creation of the Los Angeles City CIF Section in 1935). Victor was a star in football, baseball and basketball graduating in 1924.

Victor’s 1923 football photo



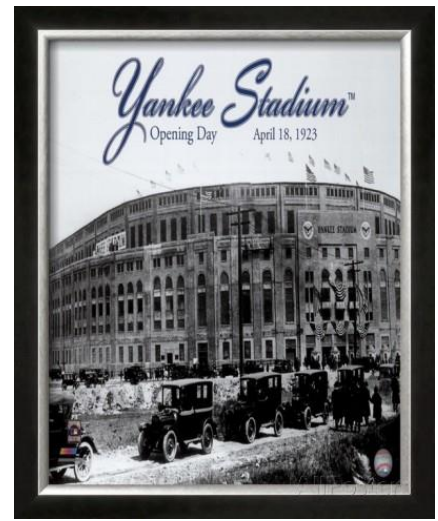
**Victor’s Brother Ernie
St. Louis Cardinals 1927-1935**



Victor was captain of his team as the third baseman, named the best all-around high school athlete in Los Angeles and was the prep home run king. He starred in baseball and football at USC (one of his teammates was Marion Morrison-John Wayne) and had tryouts with the St. Louis Cardinals where his brother Ernie had a long career. He turned his attention to being a talent agent for some of the biggest stars in Hollywood including Judy Garland, Betty Grable, Edward G. Robinson and director Frank Capra. He later became a television producer and passed away in 1984.

USC photo





\$1.265 MILLION FOR A BASEBALL BAT

Opening day of Yankee Stadium was April 18, 1923. The cost of the stadium was \$2.5 million and Babe Ruth said before the game, “I’d give a year of my life if I could hit a home run in the first game of this new park. He got his wish in the 3rd inning when he hit the first home run in Yankee Stadium or what became known as, “The House That Ruth Built.” Christy Walsh, who worked at that time for the “Los Angeles Evening Herald,” came up with a plan to have a contest to give away the bat that Ruth used to hit his first home run of the season starting in 1923 and running for six years. Ruth loved children and young ballplayers and was very interested in supporting the contest. Victor Orsatti, captain of his Manual Arts High School baseball team, won the home room contest in his Los Angeles City League (he was 16 years old) and was awarded the bat. The bat is a hefty 46 ounces and a full 36 inches of solid ash. The inscription reads, **“To the Boy Home Run King of Los Angeles, ‘Babe Ruth’ May 7, 1923.”** There is a brass plate in the middle of the bat that reads, **“Presented to Victor Orsatti at Manual Arts H.S. by the Los Angeles Evening Herald.”** As Victor got older he willed the bat, a scrapbook and other personal belongings to his caretaker whom he regarded as family. The caretaker, wanting to help orphaned children, as Ruth once was, put the bat and scrapbook up for auction. The auction for the bat started at \$400,000 and eventually the bat was sold for \$1.26 million. In the scrapbook was a telegram which reads,

“To Vic Orsatti...Glad to hear you win Evening Herald home run bat but sorry there was not a trophy for all the boys. In my home run experience I have found a fellow frequently fails when he tries the hardest. Therefore send my regards to the ones who tried and congratulations to you for winning. George ‘Babe’ Ruth”



RUTH BAT PRESENTED AS POLY AND L. A. CLASH

SCHOOL 'SWAT KING' GETS TROPHY

Boy Fans Out to See Orsatti
Receive Herald Prize
from Mayor



While a crowd of students and alumni numbering well up in the thousands looked on, Los Angeles and Polytechnic high schools, traditional athletic enemies, crossed bats at Housh field this afternoon in the final contest of the City league.

Immediately preceding the game Vic Orsatti, captain and third baseman of the Manual Arts nine, was to be presented by Mayor Cryer with the "Babe Ruth" bat for having annexed the title of "Home Run King" of Los Angeles.

SEASON'S FIRST HOMER

The Babe Ruth trophy which was used by the famous "Bambino" to knock out his first four-baser this year was put up by The Evening Herald for home run competition in the city circuit this season.

The bat, which is made of finer wood and is shaped differently from the ordinary club, is 36 inches long and weighs 46 ounces. The club is much heavier than the average, being made of the finest second growth ash. The largest crowd to attend a baseball game since the beginning of the national pastime witnessed Ruth's first homer in the Yankee stadium.

CHANCES OF TIE

In the event Los Angeles high emerged victorious in this afternoon's tilt the Blue and White forces would be tied with Jefferson for first place and a postponed game would have to be played to decide the championship. On the other hand if Poly won, Coach Lopez' Presidents would have been crowned the pennant winners for 1923.

Due to the intense rivalry between the schools, the Pioneers were not expected to have an easy job in disposing of the Mechanics despite their standing in the league.

Evening Herald's Sport Pages

Amateur Professional Foreign

Scene as Boy Home Run Slugger Receives Babe Ruth Bat from Herald



Mayor Cryer presenting The Evening Herald-Babe Ruth Home Run bat to Victor Orsatti of Manual Arts, champion circuit drive player of City High School Baseball league for 1923. Members of the Poly and L. A. Teams are witnessing the Presentation.

Los Angeles Mayor George Cryer presenting Babe Ruth bat. "Evening Herald"
June 7, 1923 – Victor Orsatti

Trophy referenced in telegram from Ruth to Orsatti

