

A's Dobson Toiled 270 Innings —All With Tender Right Wing

By RON BERGMAN

OAKLAND, Calif.—Chuck Dobson pitched the entire 1970 season for the Athletics with a sore arm. He didn't miss a single start.

"I can tell you now," said the 6-4 righthander, "because it doesn't matter."

At the end of the season, Dobson visited Harry Walker. Not the Astros' manager, but Dr. Harry Walker, the A's team orthopedic surgeon in Oakland.

"He found some calcium in there," Dobson said, indicating his right elbow. "He told me rest would take care of it."

With that, Dobson took off for his Kansas City home.

"I'm still proud of the season I had," he said before departing. "A 16-15 record, 13 complete games, nearly 270 innings pitched—I'm proud of that with a sore arm."

"I don't want to blame it entire-

ly on the arm. I imagine there are a lot of big leaguers who play with pain, but I could've done better if my arm hadn't been sore."

Dobson first noticed the pain around his pitching elbow early in spring training when he had to leave an exhibition game against the Indians at Tucson, Ariz.

Dobson rested for 18 days and then came back. Only a few of his teammates knew he was having pain around his elbow.

Eight Wins in Row

What made it more remarkable was that there was one period when he was the most effective pitcher in the American League. He won eight straight starts from July 16 through August 14, including four shutouts.

"Most of the year, I'd warm up and the pain would last throughout the warmup," Dobson said. "But then I'd loosen up during the first inning and it would go away."

"During that eight-game winning streak, it hurt through the first inning. Then it started hurting all the way through every game. It hurt every time I threw the ball."

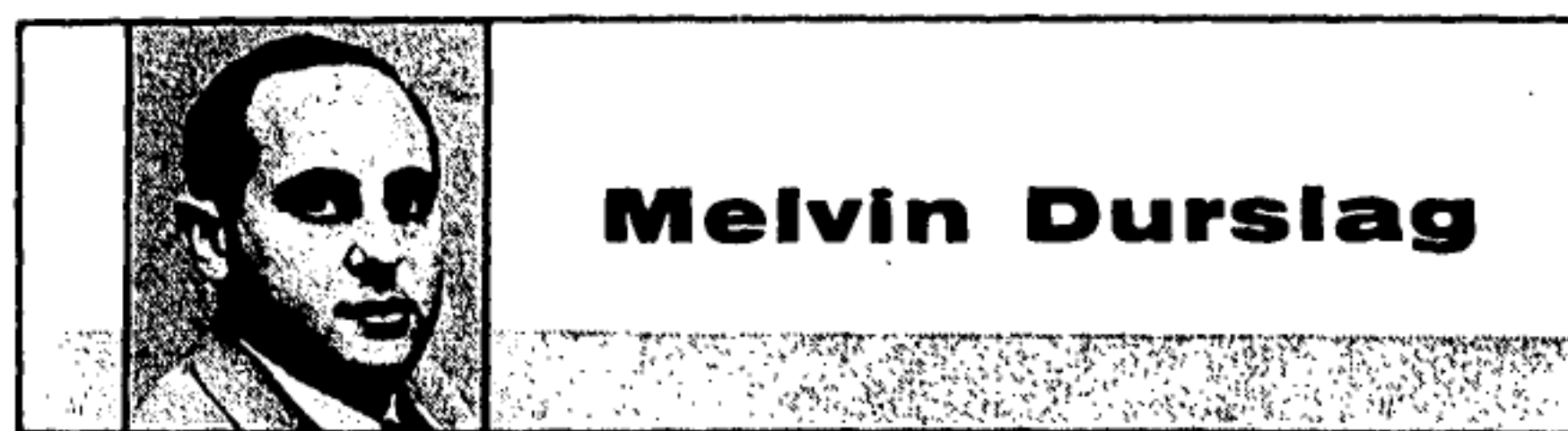
During the season, Dobson stayed away from doctors.

"I wasn't afraid to find out what was wrong," Dobson said. "But doctors have to put it on the line."

"What are they going to say? 'Rest it.' I've got four months to get it back now."

Before going in to see Dr. Walker, Dobson said, "We're going to see whether there are any one-eyed rats in there eating away at it." He also said that former Manager John McNamara had known about his ailing arm.

"I knew he had a stiffness in his elbow," McNamara said. "He told me so. But the determinant is what he says and he said he could pitch."



Melvin Durslag

Polite Richie Oozes Charm

BALTIMORE, Md. — You talk to Richie Allen and you are impressed instantly by his charm. He is not rough. He is polite, effusive and surprisingly articulate for one who left high school and ran off to join a baseball team.

After 10 years he would just as soon forget, he is a member of the Dodgers, or at least presumed to be, depending upon whether the team comes up with a sum not regarded by Richie as an affront to his art.

Last year, the Cardinals insulted him. They refused to pay him \$155,000, which would have been maybe \$70,000 more than he was paid by the Phillies the previous year for playing in 118 games and batting .288.

Richie responded by missing a large part of spring training in 1970, a curious decision in view of the unbridled joy he expressed at the prospect of leaving Philadelphia.

As general manager of the Dodgers, charged with bringing Allen to gaff, Al Campanis suspects that Richie may not like spring training, which isn't entirely the truth.

He may like it for \$155,000, but not for eighty-five.

Asked how he felt about training, Allen answered quietly:

"There is nothing about spring that Campanis can't straighten out."

How much straightening Campanis will be able to do isn't known at this hour, inasmuch as the currency he is working with belongs to Walter Francis O'Malley, who once told a pair of holdouts named Koufax and Drysdale to forget it.

I mean, when you start making encroachments on O'Malley's money, your chances aren't dead. All you have to do is show him how one dollar will produce two.

Allen Isn't Dealing With a Ninny

In a business transaction, Allen will discover he is dealing with no retarded child, and he will come away richer for the experience.

While Cincinnati was losing its knickers here, Campanis was meeting with Allen for the first time. Al was impressed by his eagerness to play in Los Angeles.

"He has promised 100 percent cooperation," Campanis said.

"Did you talk money?" he was asked.

"Just briefly," he said. "We will have more serious sessions later."

Allen is wounded by the reputation that has followed him through baseball. In maybe six of his seven years, he has led the majors in rumbles.

He doesn't exonerate himself completely, which is to say, he doesn't cry that he is an innocent victim of circumstances. But he minimizes the troubles that have visited him, claiming that most stories are either exaggerated or wholly inaccurate.

Some in baseball don't concur. A member of the Phillies confided:

"Richie isn't really a villain, but he breaks down a ball club in little ways. It's an accumulation of the little things he does that soon has a team upset."

Outwardly, he was no problem in St. Louis, which leads people in the sport to wonder why the Cards would trade a batsman of this quality for two lesser players. Make no mistake about Allen's skill. This is one of the genuine hitting stars of baseball. At 195, he has the iron physique of a heavyweight fighter, and his power is awesome.

Five Reasons for Taking the Gamble

Asked why the Cardinals unloaded him after only one season, he confessed he doesn't have the slightest notion. Nor, for that matter, do the Dodgers.

But they figure that the gamble they are taking is a good one for five reasons.

First, they are not dependent upon the two players (Ted Sizemore and Bob Stinson) they gave up.

Second, they are a club desperately in need of extra-base power.

Third, they are hopeful that a seasoned manager such as Walter Alston can earn the respect of Allen.

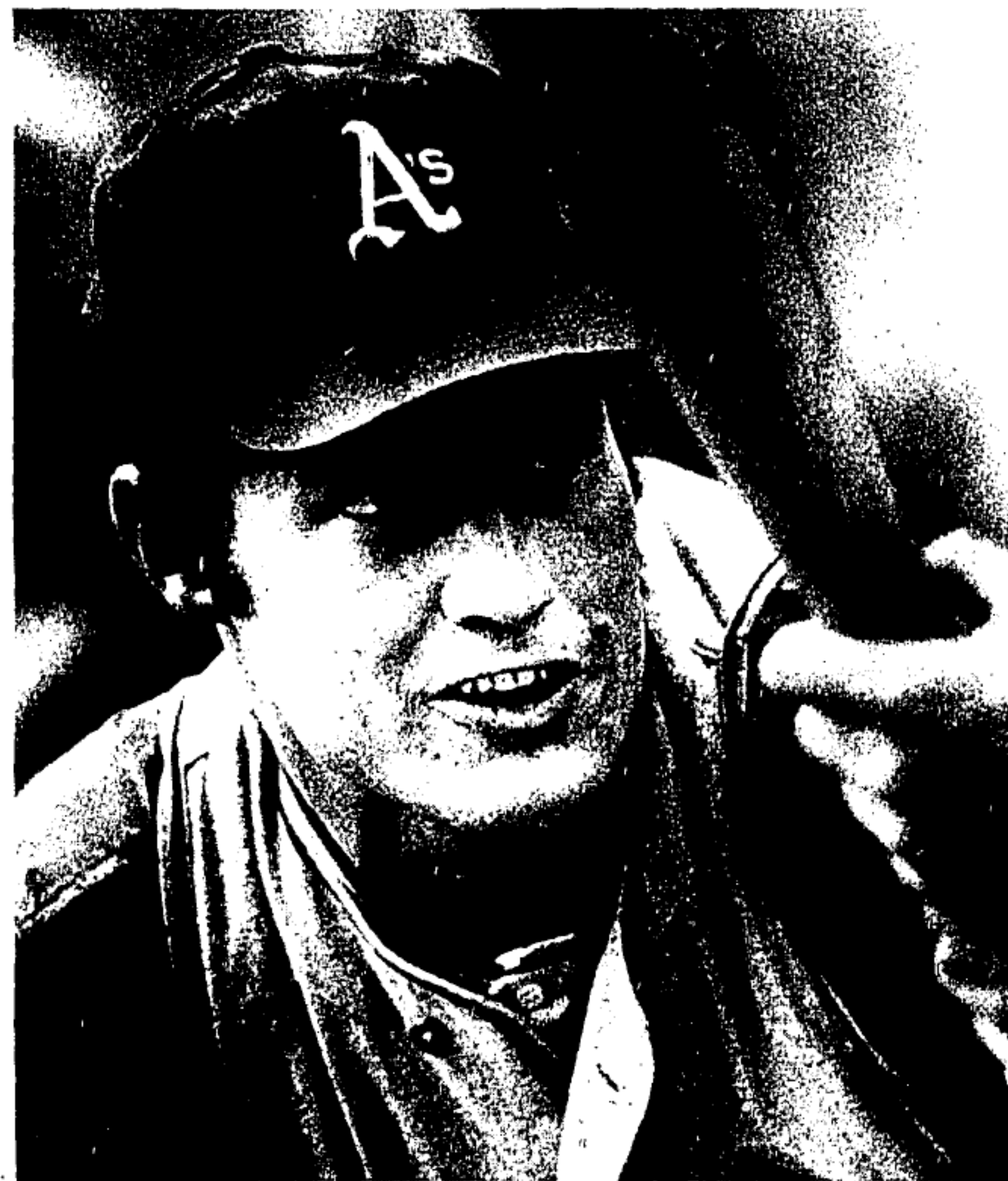
Fourth, they suspect that when St. Louis traded four players (Tim McCarver, Curt Flood, Joe Hoerner and Byron Browne) for Allen, tossed in two top minor league prospects when Flood failed to report—and then traded Richie to the Dodgers, this must leave the slugger with a sobering view of his future in baseball unless he settles down.

Finally, the Dodgers see box-office possibilities in Richie if he does his work faithfully. With an excellent team, Los Angeles dipped in attendance this year. O'Malley likes interesting box-office people around. Remember, in 1961, it was he who brought Leo Durocher back to baseball.

If authors in Chicago have forgotten this, they now know whom to blame.



Richie Allen . . . He Leads the Majors in Rumbles.



Chuck Dobson . . . Pain Was a Companion.

Dodgers Bet on Comeback by Hurlers

By BOB HUNTER

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — The Dodgers, serious candidates for major league team batting honors until the final out of 1970, think they have added more wallop for next season.

Despite their .2702 average to Cincinnati's .2703, the Dodgers launched the winter trading season by going for offense in Rich Allen, instead of pitching, as might have been suggested.

Apparently, the brass finally came to some sort of agreement that the pitching might "come from within," so they went outside to obtain a recognized bat.

Of course, the first pitching hypo for next season figured to come from Bill Singer, who twice went on the disabled list, first for 52 days with hepatitis, then at the end of the season with a broken finger.

Top and Bottom

Youngsters such as Ray Lamb, Mike Strahler and Sandy Vance, along with Joe Moeller and Alan Foster, are expected to help the Big Three make the staff stronger.

For the Dodgers to finish last in home runs, yet come within a decimal of being the best hitting team in baseball, is almost unbelievable.

In 1970, Allen hit 34 block busters for the Cardinals, while the entire Dodger club manufactured only 87.

Ironically, the Dodgers had the

hit, for a period of 24 hours, that would have given them the batting laurels.

It was a smash to San Francisco's Tito Fuentes, who threw to Willie McCovey, who juggled the ball. The scorer called it a hit. The next day, he changed the ruling to an assist for Fuentes and an error for McCovey.

Allen will be stationed in left field, because Walter Alston wisely declines to move Wes Parker off first.

Howard Last Bomber

Frank Howard, who was traded to Washington in the winter of 1964 after having smashed 121 home runs in five seasons with the Dodgers, was the biggest bomber Los Angeles had until the acquisition of Allen. Oddly, the Dodgers had considered a deal to reacquire Howard from the Senators before Al Campanis and Bing Devine maneuvered the Allen swap.

With Parker established as a 100-RBI man, Alston will have, at least on paper, quite a one-two punch in the middle of his batting order. Runs should come a little easier.

Other sock is expected from Steve Garvey, the strong-armed rookie who gets another shot at second base, and hard-hitting Bill Sudakis, who is playing winter league ball in the Dominican Republic to improve on his catching skill.

Willie Davis might be moved into the No. 2 spot behind Maury Wills. Billy Grabarkewitz, who was among the leaders most of last season, will hit eighth and play second base in place of Ted Sizemore, who went to St. Louis in the Allen deal.

When advised of the Cardinal trade, Parker enthused, "It's not a good deal; it's a great deal."

Dodger Dope: Outfielder Bill Russell not only is in Arizona to convert to a shortstop, but the righthanded batter also started switch-hitting, getting a homer and a double the first game from one side, then a homer and double the second game from the opposite side. . . . Campanis and Red Patterson continued to buzz with all the other clubs at the World Series, inquiring about the availability of a lefthanded hurler. . . . Patterson's winter speaking bureau will consist of Jim Gilliam, Moeller, Don Sutton, Lamb and Grabarkewitz. . . . Parker underwent an appendectomy. . . . Don and Patti Sutton are vacationing in Hawaii. . . . Bobby Valentine, who suffered a broken cheekbone in the final Pacific Coast League playoff game, received the go-ahead to play in the Arizona Instructional League. . . . Al Dawson, the Bakersfield righthander who will report to the big club at Vero Beach, was signed by Rudy Rufer, who commented, "He looks the best of any free-agent pitcher I ever saw."