

# Mighty McCraw Makes Bat Sing Hot Chisox Tune

By JEROME HOLTZMAN

SARASOTA, Fla.

Utility infielder-outfielder Tommy McCraw, who will have two more mouths to feed when he's back home in Chicago this summer, is doing his best to see that his kids grow up on filet mignon, with a little Bearnaise sauce on the side, please.

A two and a half-year major league veteran, McCraw has been among the most pleasant surprises here in the White Sox spring training camp. He's been tearing up the Grapefruit League and, despite a 1-for-9 slump, was still swinging away at a .423 clip after the club's first 11 exhibition games.



Tommy McCraw

This is one of those make-or-break springs for McCraw. He apparently feels that, at long last, he's going to break into the White Sox starting lineup.

"I don't care where I am—first base or left field—but I'm going to be in that starting nine," McCraw said.

Eddie Stanky, the new Chisox manager, has been quite impressed

with McCraw's all-round play, both in the field and at the plate. "I love his enthusiasm," Stanky said. "He's putting out 120 per cent all the time."

McCraw insists he's doing nothing different this spring. "It's the same old stroke," he said, speaking of his batting swing. "But I'm going to have more mouths to feed. It's about time Daddy started crashing the big money."

## Tommy Will Become Papa of Twins Next Summer

The big incentive, McCraw explained, is that he's expecting to become the father of twins in August.

"I don't know," McCraw added. "We might even have triplets. The doctor said it's at least twins."

McCraw is married to the former Marlene Cox of Gary, Ind. His wife is a White Sox fan. He met her through Floyd Robinson, his teammate and buddy.

McCraw has been White Sox property all the way (he was signed by West Coast Scout Hollis Thurston) and, except for a month during the 1963 season, never has been a regular in the majors.

The Sox brought him up in June of that year when Joe Cunningham, the club's starting first baseman, broke his collarbone. McCraw finished that season with a .254 average. He was in 125 games (.261) the following year and batted .238 last season in 133 games and 273 official at-bats.

"This is going to be my year," said McCraw. "I don't expect to keep hitting .400, but if I can have a good spring, maybe a .300 average, they should be able to find a spot for me in the opening-day lineup."

McCraw, who is one of the most popular men on the club, says he has more confidence in himself now than he ever had before.

"I used to worry," he admitted. "Now I know I can do the job." McCraw had an exceptionally good opportunity to show Manager Stanky what he could do because Bill Skowron, the club's veteran first baseman, was forced to miss eight consecutive starts. Skowron has been nursing an ankle injury and McCraw was making the most of his opportunity.

## McCraw Fits Into Stanky Plan for More Speed

In addition to McCraw's enthusiasm, which is boundless, Manager Stanky was pleased with the fact that McCraw has exceptionally good speed. Stanky has been making a determined effort to add more go-go to the Sox attack and there was no question that McCraw adds considerable speed to the offense.

"I like the way things are going here," McCraw said. "He (Stanky) is playing my kind of ball. I like to be stealing and running."

In addition to McCraw, rookie outfielder Tommie Agee has been among the early Sox sensations. Stanky has been using Agee in both right and center field and Agee has responded with fine all-round performances.

**Sox Yarns:** In an effort to see to it that his players don't go stale during the spring training grind, Sox Manager Eddie Stanky has been giving his players days off. However, the enthusiasm has been such that not all of the players want a day of rest. One day, Stanky told Don Buford and Gene Freese that it was their turn for a day off, but both declined with thanks.

... Pitching coach Ray Berres was out of uniform for two days because of the flu. ... J. C. Martin, who underwent an emergency appendectomy on February 27, made his Grapefruit League debut against the Orioles on March 20 and knocked out two hits in two trips. ... Relief pitcher Bob Locker, who has looked good, left camp on March 19 to attend the funeral of his grandmother, who died in Des Moines, Ia. ... Ken Berry, the club's regular center fielder, broke out of an 0-for-17 slump with two consecutive extra-base hits, a double and triple, against the Reds on March 16.

## The Brat Ready to Ignore 'The Book'

SARASOTA, Fla.—White Sox Manager Eddie Stanky says that, if the situation warrants, he would put the potential winning run on base with a walk.

"I know it's supposed to be going against 'the book,'" Stanky said. "But I did it twice when I managed the Cardinals and it worked both times."

Then Stanky added: "Besides, I still haven't found out who wrote 'the book' that says it's bad baseball to put the winning run on base."

# In Stanky's Book, Buford Rates As All-Star at Second or Third

By JEROME HOLTZMAN

SARASOTA, Fla.

Manager Eddie Stanky, who is still learning his White Sox personnel, has already made one discovery. So far as Stanky is concerned, Don Buford is a potential American League All-Star.

Whenever Stanky mentions Buford's name, he says "... Buford, my All-Star."

Stanky, however, has been careful not to mention whether Buford is his All-Star second baseman or third baseman.

Buford has been playing both positions in spring training. Stanky has been using several experimental lineups in an effort to give the club more versatility.

## Sweet Music to Don

Buford, who led the Sox in hitting last season with a .283 average, is delighted to hear that his boss regards him as an All-Star and hopes to make a prophet out of the White Sox skipper.

"Maybe I could make the All-



Don Buford

Star team," Buford said. "It all depends on whether you have a good first half. There's no All-Star Game after the second half."

Buford said he doesn't like to set goals for himself, but revealed that he does hope to add about 20 points to his batting average in 1966.

"Just knowing the pitchers better was worth 20 points to me last year," Buford said. "I hope it's worth 20 more again this year."

Buford says that two years of regular play with the Sox have

given him the confidence he needs to bat .300.

"It takes a while," he explained. "A fellow needs a couple of years up here just to settle down and relax."

Buford led the Sox with 17 stolen bases last season and thinks he could double that total this year.

## Buford Goal: 40 Thefts

"With my speed, I should steal 35-40 bases. And the way he (Manager Stanky) has us running, I think I can reach that goal."

As far as playing second or third base, Buford says it makes no difference to him.

"I used to prefer third, but I don't feel that way any more. I've been improving at second base to the point where I feel I've caught up."

"I do just as good a job at second as I do at third."

Then Buford added: "Anyway, it's nice to know that he (Stanky) thinks I'm an All-Star. I'm going to try to prove that he's right."

# Charton Fights Woes to Stick With Red Sox

By LARRY CLAFLIN

WINTER HAVEN, Fla.

Every day of his life, a young Red Sox pitcher from Tennessee named Pete Charton wears a medal on a chain around his neck. It is not a religious medal, although he is a very religious boy.

What Charton wears is a medical medal, if there is such a term, and on it is a simple four-word inscription which reads:

"Allergic to horse serums."

To the layman, those four words probably don't mean much. But to a doctor, an intern, a nurse or a biologist, those words stand out like a flashing red beacon on a dark highway. They mean simply: Danger.

Five years ago, Charton wore no such medal because neither he nor anyone else knew he needed to wear it. Not until he stepped on a rusty nail one day did Charton learn of his allergy under circumstances that almost ended in the tragedy of his own death.

To this day, Charton believes he owes thanks to God, not only for his baseball career, but for his very life.

This year, a healthy, strong Charton stands an excellent chance to stick with the Red Sox. In fact, he stands a good chance of becoming one of the Boston starters, unless some of the pitchers find sudden cures for their variety of arm troubles.

## Headed Honor Society

As a high school youth in Nashville, Charton was a talented youngster, both on the athletic field and in the class rooms. He was president of the National Honor Society while in his senior year. He was a star baseball player and was selected most valuable player of his league. He was a top-notch football player as an end and linebacker.

Charton decided to enter Baylor University after his high school graduation. Before he went to Baylor, he took a construction job and that nearly cost him his life.

"I stepped on a rusty nail one afternoon while I was working, and they took me to the hospital for anti-tetanus shots," Charton recalled. "No one had any idea I was allergic to them. After I got out of the hos-

## New England Gets Gander At First Spring Television

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — A Red Sox pre-season exhibition game was televised for the first time, March 20, when Manager Billy Herman's club played the Reds at Al Lopez Field in Tampa.

Boston's Channel 5 carried the game live back to New England with Mel Parnell, Ken Coleman and Ned Martin at the microphones.

pital that afternoon, I went back to the job.

"A couple of hours later, I went into convulsions. I was lucky that we were working right near the hospital and the other guys on the crew got me there in a hurry."

For weeks, Charton remained in the hospital. At times, his heartbeat was so weak it could hardly be heard. Eventually, he was discharged from the hospital, but his career as an athlete appeared to be over.

There is, in the Charton family, a deep religious belief and practice. Pete's father is music director for a large Baptist group. Even in his despair, Charton believed he might be healthy and strong again because of his faith.

"I promised God that if He gave me a chance to live a normal life again, I would dedicate myself to Him for the rest of my life," Charton said.

## On Road to Recovery

A few weeks later, Charton returned to the hospital for further examinations. To the surprise of some of the medical men, his heart was beating stronger. He appeared to be on the mend and soon was.

Within two years, Charton was again playing baseball so well that Boston scout George Digby of New Orleans signed him to a bonus contract. That amazing recovery has done nothing to shake the always-firm religious faith Charton had.

With a tone of respect—much as the Pirates hold for Vernon Law—Red Sox players call Charton "Deacon."

Charton, possessor of a fine curve ball at the time he signed with the Red Sox, reported to Winston-Salem (Carolina), where he won eight and lost ten with a good earned-run average of 3.07.

The Red Sox were faced with the difficult decision that faced all clubs in those days: Which players to protect from the first-year rule? But



Pete Charton

Charton was one of the pitchers they protected, which meant he would be carried by the major league club all season with little expectation of pitching very often.

For almost the entire 1964 season, Charton sat in the Red Sox bullpen watching an inept Boston pitching staff carry the club to eighth place. He appeared in only 25 games for a total of only 65 innings. He didn't win a single game and his ERA was a high 5.26. There was, however, one little hint of promise in his unimpressive figures. Despite all the inactivity, he fanned more batters than he walked. That, at least, demonstrated that he still possessed the good control which was one of the things scout Digby and others liked in him so much.

## Seldom Fired Curve

Perhaps the most puzzling thing about Charton's 1964 season was that he threw very few curve balls in the very few times he got to pitch. To this day, if you are around Red Sox executive personnel, you hear murmurs against certain individuals who were in the organization at the time and persuaded Charton to abandon his curve in favor of a slider.

Last year, Charton went to Toronto (International). Again, bad luck followed him, but this time it was mild compared to what happened to him in Nashville. In midseason at Toronto, Charton had an 8-5 record and an impressive ERA of 2.37. He was about to be recalled by the Red Sox when he came up with a sore arm.

"I pitched a shutout in Atlanta one Tuesday night," he recalled. "The next time I was scheduled to pitch, I couldn't throw."

Charton spent the rest of the summer in Boston having his arm treated while his Toronto teammates went on to capture the International League playoffs.

Charton went home to Tennessee

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