

BASEBALL

Greenwell Enjoying Life at the Top

BOSTON—Mike Greenwell was in the middle of a hot streak, and he was enjoying every minute of it.

The Boston Red Sox left fielder went on a tear at the plate in late June, hitting in a personal-high 19 straight games, pounding eight homers, with six coming in seven games, and knocking in 31 runs. He had 22 runs batted in during a nine-game stretch June 19-27.

Greenwell's surge pushed him past the Yankees' Dave Winfield for the league lead with 61 runs batted in through June 29 and earned him Player of the Week honors. It also put him among the top seven in eight of the league's offensive categories, including batting, with his .346 average.

"I look at guys like Dave Winfield, and I don't think I'm in that category," Greenwell said. "But I look at my numbers, and I'm right there. It hasn't sunk in yet, but I guess there are other guys looking at my numbers like I look at Winfield's and others'."

"I don't look back at what I've



Mike Greenwell

done. I just want to keep doing better and better," he said. "I don't look at yesterday. As soon as you get to the ballpark you have to start thinking about today. If you do that for 162 games, at the end you'll look back

and see you have pretty good numbers."

Greenwell, who hit .328 with 19 homers and 89 RBIs in 412 at-bats as a rookie last year, does not believe he will ever challenge for a batting championship. But that doesn't stop him from trying.

"I think I'm too much of a free swinger to win a batting title. I'm going to hit a lot of balls in the air that are going to be caught," he said. "But as soon as I got to .300 I wanted to get to .310. When I got to .330 I wanted .340, and when I got to .340 I wanted .350."

"I want to keep going and keep getting better. I know there's a limit, and I want to reach that limit. I want to keep working and keep my name up there, and I just want to enjoy playing baseball."

"I know things can't keep going at this pace, and I know I'm going to have days where I can't buy a hit. But this is fun, and I'm enjoying every minute of it while it's here."

JOE GIULIOTTI

Winfield: All Hail MVP

NEW YORK—The subject was New York Yankees right fielder Dave Winfield. The speaker was Detroit Tigers Manager Sparky Anderson.

"You show me another player who's more qualified for the Hall of Fame than Winfield," said Anderson, whose Tigers were pitted against Winfield and the Yankees in a three-game series June 27-29. "Year after year, the man goes out there, drives in his 100 runs, never fails to hustle in every phase of the game, and beats you in every way a player can."

"Even when the man puts down his bat, he's a weapon out there because of what he does with his glove, his speed and his arm in the outfield," said the dean of American League managers. "What makes it more impressive is that he does it in New York, where there is more pressure on a ballplayer than anyplace else."

Yankees Manager Lou Piniella didn't argue with Anderson's assessment of Winfield. After all, it was Piniella, then general manager, who had steadfastly refused to trade Winfield earlier this season, despite the rift between the right fielder and Yankees Owner George Steinbrenner.

"Right now," said Piniella, "Dave's the MVP. There's no one even close. What's he hitting?"

A league-leading .355 through June 28, he was informed.

"Yeah, and then you throw in his RBIs (60 through June 28)."

Piniella was asked if he thought Winfield was trying to prove something this season.

"Yeah, I think so," Piniella said. "He told me that in spring training. He said he'd worked especially hard and that he planned to have a big year."

"One reason (for his hitting



Dave Winfield

success) is that he's using the whole field this year," Piniella said. "He hasn't done that since '84."

But Winfield said spreading out his hits has come more by accident than design.

"You don't think about going to right field," Winfield said. "What happened was I got off to a good start, and things just kind of happened where I'm using the whole field."

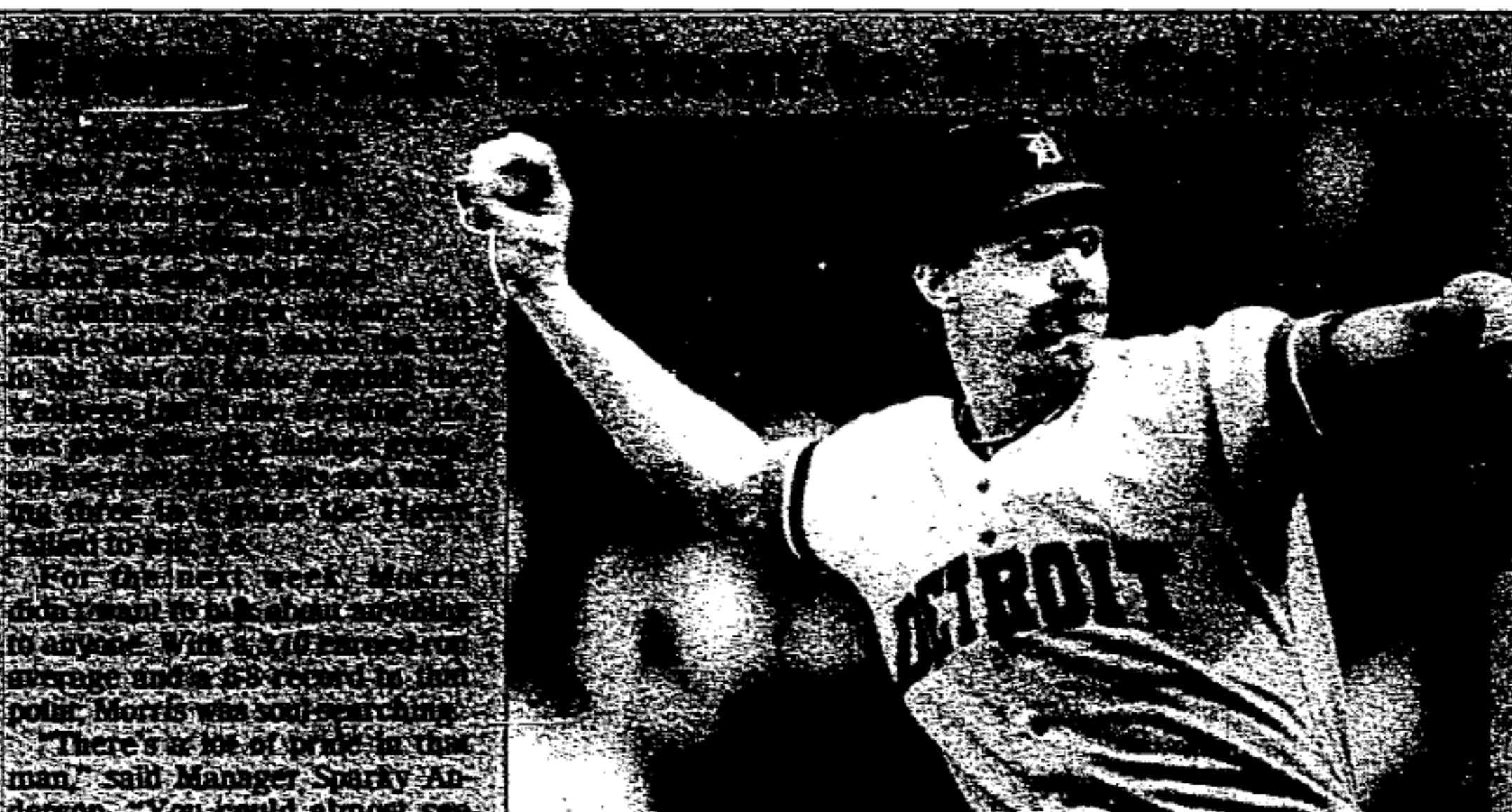
"If somebody said to me, 'You can hit home runs to right field,' I'd say, 'Forget it.'"

And what of Anderson's remarks? Does Winfield say forget them, too?

"Nah," he said. "I appreciate it, especially coming from a guy who knows baseball."

"Of course, I can't help but notice he's saying all those things while he's beating us. I know where Sparky's coming from."

BILL MADDEN



Jack Morris: "Whatever happens, happens"

For the next week, Morris did not seem to take anything to anyone. With a .310 average and a .350 record in that polar Morris was not searching.

"There's a lot of pride in that man," said Manager Sparky Anderson. "You could almost see the concentration and determination building up inside him after that."

"But I always say, quality returns to quality. Morris will have 18-20 wins by the end of the season. He never fails to do it." First, Morris had to get his seventh victory. And that he did, six days after his June 21 pasting, beating the very team that had applied the glue.

"Maybe I've been thinking too much about what I was or wasn't doing right," Morris said, after defeating the Yankees, 6-3, on June 27. "But this time, I just came out aggressive. I said to myself, 'Whatever happens, hap-

pens, but they'll have to hit my Morris gave up just one run on five hits in 6 1/2 innings before leaving with a blood blister on his pitching hand. He struck out four and gave up only two walks.

Although it wasn't his best game, the victory pointed him in the right direction.

"I've always known success," said Morris, who posted a 162-105 mark in his first 11 years in the majors. "Since 1978, I haven't done a whole lot other than win. A slump of this extent is new to me."

"The problem isn't confidence. I still know I can beat anyone if I make my pitches. But I haven't been making enough of my pitches."

Morris said his victory over New York, which was the Tigers' fourth in four meetings with the Yankees to that point, was a big confidence booster.

"Beating the Yankees is important to me because it could be just the thing to get me going. I expect it to be. If I can beat these guys, I can beat anyone."

TOM GAGE

Flanagan In Groove With 150th Win

TORONTO—Toronto Blue Jays lefthander Mike Flanagan, who is in his 14th season in the major leagues, said he has found his winning groove.

"I guess you could say I've found (it)," he said after notching the 150th win of his career June 28, beating the Detroit Tigers, 4-1.

The win was Flanagan's second against the Tigers in 11 days

and improved his record to 7-5.

"I felt strong earlier in the year," Flanagan said. "Maybe I got carried away with throwing the ball hard, rather than paying attention to where I was throwing it."

Flanagan issued 44 walks in 68 innings before giving up just one base on balls in two starts June 21 and 28.

"Not walking people, that's my track record," he said. "I don't feel overpowering by any means, but that's the way I like to feel. It makes me concentrate better."

"I'm very proud to have my 150th (win)," Flanagan said. "It denotes I've been around for a while and that hopefully I'll be around a while longer."

NEIL MacCART

Gantner No Old-Timer

MILWAUKEE—At age 34, Jim Gantner ranks as one of the senior citizens of the Milwaukee Brewers.

Only Odell Jones, 35, is older. Only Robin Yount has been wearing a Brewers uniform longer.

But Gantner, in his 13th year in the major leagues, isn't ready for the old folks home yet.

"This is the best I've seen Gantner play," said Manager Tom Trebelhorn.

Offensively, Gantner was having a solid year, keeping his average around .275 through the first three months of the season. And defensively, he made enough diving stops in a week to star in his own highlight film.

Not bad for a guy who was a big question mark going into spring training. Gantner played in only two games the second half of last season because of a torn hamstring and continued having problems with his leg during the off-season. But he didn't seem bothered when this season rolled around.

"I don't think I'm playing any different," Gantner said. "My approach to the game is always the same. Play hard and what hap-

pens happens.

"I go out and play hard and have a bad game, I can still go home and look in the mirror," he said. "As long as you play hard, there's nothing you can do (about a bad game)."

Gantner, who played 81 games and had a .272 average last season, said he hoped to be able to push himself more this year if he could stay healthy.

"Last year wasn't a real test. I was nursing that leg injury until I finally tore it," he said. "My main concern this year was just being healthy. Coming off a hamstring injury, you don't know what's going to happen."

Gantner, who has spent his entire major league career with Milwaukee, is in the final year of a \$3.5 million contract that will pay him \$850,000 this year. He said he would like to continue playing for the Brewers after this season.

"If my leg's healthy, I don't see why I can't play another couple of years," Gantner said. "I'd like it to be here. I don't know what their plans are, but my No. 1 team will always be Milwaukee."

TOM FLAHERTY