

Paul Sees a Flag Pillar With Post On Cleveland Pad

By REGIS McAULEY

TUCSON, Ariz.

General Manager Gabe Paul, who has been around long enough to have some of the game's traditional superstition rub off on him, has a special reason for believing his Indians are in for a good season.

Gabe has his good-luck charm back with him again. It is called Wally Post.

"Many of the good things that have happened to me and to Birdie Tebbetts occurred when Wally Post was with us," Gabe said. "There are players who are known as evil spirits on a club. Well, Post is a good spirit. He's a fine player, a fine family man, a fine fellow to have around the club."

Post did not know until recently that Paul looked upon him as a good-luck charm. "That's good," Wally said, "but I hope that isn't the only reason he brought me to Cleveland. I came here to play right field for the Indians."

And from what he has shown in spring training, Post is way out front in the race for the job which is being contested by seven candidates. They are Tommie Agee, Bob Chance, Paul Dicken, Al Luplow, Chico Salmon, Al Smith and Post.

Tebbetts threw the veteran outfielder into the ring early in the fight. He used him for two complete games the first week of spring training.

Homer Off Belinsky

In the first game, Post hit a three-run homer off Bo Belinsky of the Angels. He also drove in a run with a sacrifice fly and in the eighth inning of the game, when 34-year-old veterans are supposed to start showing their age, Post legged out a single.

Against the Cubs in the next full game he played, Post tagged pitcher Wayne Carlander for a two-run homer.

It was believed that when Paul signed Post as a free agent last November 21, he was going to be used as a pinch-hitter, but Tebbetts said Post could be his regular right fielder.

Post first started waving his magic wand for Tebbetts in 1953 at Indianapolis (American Association), where Tebbetts had the team in first place

Wags Passes Up Breakfast Rather Than Pay \$25 Fine

TUCSON, Ariz.—Leon Wagner almost paid \$25 for his breakfast one morning. He came to the team dining room at 8:30, which is the deadline for food.

Manager Birdie Tebbetts, sitting over his second cup of coffee, looked up as Wagner was about to start eating. "Go ahead if you want to, Wags," Tebbetts said, "but it will be the most expensive breakfast you ever ate. I think you might be able to eat for less someplace else."

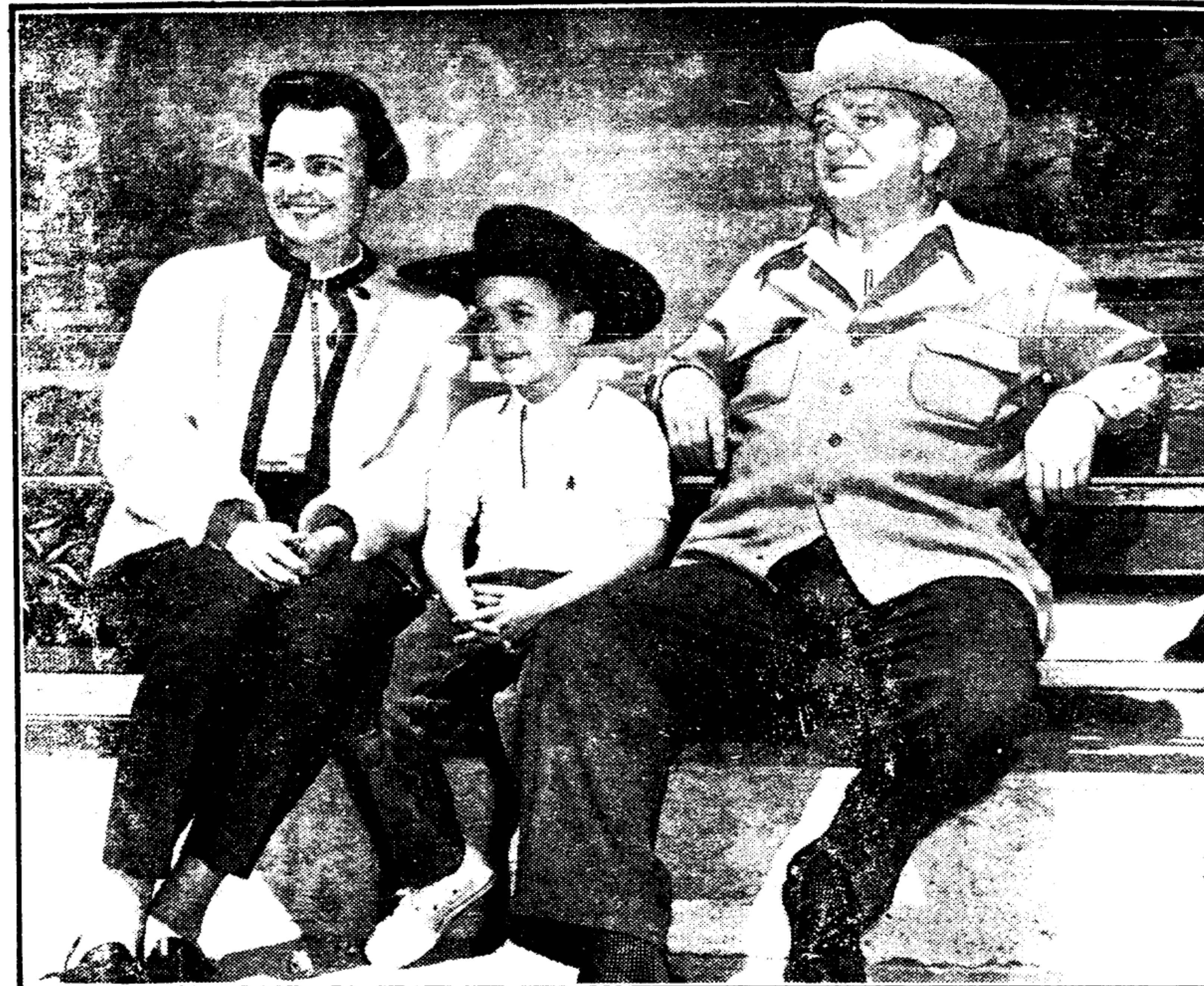
Wagner set the plate aside and walked out.

on the Fourth of July. Post hit .289, drove in 120 runs and hit 33 homers that year.

"We were going along great," said Post, "but the Indians took Al Smith up to Cleveland in the last half of the season and that killed us. Smitty was having a great year for us."

Smith, who is now fighting Post for the right field job for the Indians, hit .332 for Indianapolis in 86 games before being called up to the parent club.

"This is a great game," said Post. "I'm awfully glad I played for the 1961 Reds. That team showed me what can happen in this game when 25 fellows stick together and play



GABE PAUL, looking every bit the prosperous southwest rancher, can afford to smile this spring now that his good-luck charm, Wally Post, is with the Indians. The Tribe G. M. is watching the club work out at Tucson, Ariz., with his wife, Mary, and son, Henry Lee, 5.

ball with everything they've got in them.

"We won the pennant in 1961, but we weren't the best team in the league. There were two other teams that were better.

"The Dodgers and Giants were better than we were on paper, but we had fellows who really wanted to play ball. I know the same thing can happen here," Post said, adding weight to Gabe Paul's feeling that this could be a big year for the Indians.

Post started out as a pitcher in 1947 with Muncie, where he had a 19-7

record. The following year, he was 8-11 at Columbia and then in 1949 he pitched two games for Charleston, W. Va., and was 1-1 before going back to Columbia with Manager Gerry Walker, the former Tiger outfielder, who planted Post in the outfield, where he has stayed.

"I actually preferred the outfield from the start," Post said, "but I could throw hard and so they decided I should pitch."

Tebbetts says Post has one of the most accurate throwing arms in the business today.

"Accurate, yes," said Post, smiling. "But I don't throw that ball as hard as I used to. Yet, my arm feels good. I feel that I can play an entire season in right field and that's what I intend doing."

"I could have joined the Athletics or some other club, but I studied the Indians' roster and when I saw all those lefthanded hitters in the outfield, I knew I could make this club."

Five Southpaw Swingers

The Indians have the following lefthanded hitters, Bob Chance, Vic Davalillo, Tito Francona, Luplow and Leon Wagner.

In a camp where the stress has been on heavy exercise and walking, Post has more than held his own with the youngsters.

"Look, I'll admit I'm no spring chicken," he said, "but my legs are strong and I feel good. Don't forget I had a good rest last year."

Post played only five games at Cincinnati last season and appeared in 21 games at Minnesota, usually as a pinch-hitter. He beat the Indians in a game shortly after putting on a Twins' uniform, by whacking one out of the park.

With Harmon Killebrew, Bob Allison and Jimmy Hall in the Twins' outfield, Post had few calls to duty. Hall, who hit 33 home runs last season, credits Post with helping him develop his swing.

In the Indians' camp, Post spends considerable time helping the outfielders to play their position properly and make the throws to the right base or cut-off man.

But while he helps them, he lets them know that the job in right field is not open. He intends to make it his own.

Tribe Tidbits: Leon Wagner alternates between being apologetic about the "Khrushchev" tag he hung on General Manager Fred Haney of



Wally Post

the Angels and ripping his former boss anew. After complaining about the way the story was blown up, Wagner shook hands with the reporter who wrote it originally and gave him a big smile. It was Ace Bailey of the United Press International. . . . Birdie Tebbetts put the squad through a drill that he predicted would turn a few of the boys green around the gills, but they came through the galloping ordeal barely puffing which prompted Tebbetts to admit, "This is the best conditioned team I have ever managed." . . . Tommie Agee owned the "best catch of the season" rating after dashing in and making a somersault catch of Joe Amalfitano's short fly to rob the Angel infielder of a hit. . . . George Culver, the young pitcher the Indians drafted from the Yankees, did not allow a run in his first two relief appearances, both in the ninth inning. He gave up one hit. . . . Willie Mays is still the big thorn in the Indians' side. In 11 appearances at the plate in three games, Willie was on base seven times with a home run, two doubles, two singles and two walks. . . . Early Wynn is getting soft. He pitched in batting practice and allowed Tony Martinez to whistle a line drive through the box and didn't even brush him back.

Held Plays It Cool, Says He'll Land Job After Phenoms Fade

By REGIS McAULEY

TUCSON, Ariz.

There's one fellow in the Indians' spring training camp who isn't worrying about the annual question, "What are we going to do with Woodie Held?"

"When they let me know what position they want me to play, I'll adjust to it in two days," said Held, who is concentrating on getting into shape.

He faced the same situation last spring, being shifted from one position to another while youngsters scrambled for his infield job. When the regular season started, Held managed to play in 133 games, with a couple of weeks out for a broken finger.

Power Hitters in Demand

"Today, everybody's looking for long-ball hitters," said Woodie, "and I haven't seen any second baseman in this camp who can hit a long ball."

Asked if second base was the position he wanted to play, Held said, "It doesn't matter much. Second base and shortstop are about the same to me. The ball reaches you at just about the same speed at either position."

"It comes at you faster at third



Woodie Held

base. If you play back too far, a fellow like Al Kaline will bunt against you. So you have to play in and Kaline hits that ball at you awfully hard.

"On the other hand, the third baseman doesn't have to worry about a slow man. You play back and, if he bunts, the pitcher can field the ball and still throw him out."

"As for the outfield, well, after the second fly ball bounces off my head, I'm ready."

Chico Salmon, the impressive-looking rookie who hit .325 at Denver to lead the Pacific Coast League last season, has been playing second base for the Indians in spring training. Held was asked

what he thought about this situation.

"Let me see your press book for a second," he said. He leafed through it to Salmon's record. "In 1962, he hit one home run at Denver. In 1963, he hit eight and that's a hitter's ball park. Dick Howser could hit eight home runs in that park. Let's see what I did when I was there."

Record Speaks for Itself

He flipped the pages to his own record and pointed without comment to where it read: 1955—18 home runs, 87 runs batted in; 1956—35 home runs, 125 runs batted in.

So Held is not frightened by the young phenoms. But his name popped up in trade talk all winter long. How does he feel about that?

"It used to bother me, but not any more," he said. "I've seen it happen often enough now that I know it's all part of baseball. I like it in Cleveland and I like training in Tucson. Some fellows complain that they can't sweat out here, but I can. And it doesn't tire me the way it does when I sweat in Florida."

But the perspiration on Held's brow is strictly from the weather. The rookies aren't causing it.