

Injury Hex Becomes Blessing... Henderson Heats Giant Attack

By HARRY JUPITER

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — It looks like Ken Henderson isn't kidding. A leg injury kept the young outfielder on the disabled list until the season was a month old, but he went to work with a vengeance when the Giants' physicians turned him loose.

The club was stumbling, with a five-game losing streak, when Henderson entered the lineup at St. Louis. Willie McCovey, Willie Mays and Bobby Bonds were among the injured Giants that night, so Clyde King put Henderson into center field and had him bat cleanup.

Henderson collected two hits, the Giants won, snapping their los-

ing streak, and gradually the injury-filled picture improved. By May 13, when most of the wounded regulars were back in action, Henderson was looking more and more like a fellow who intended to keep a steady job.

The Giants won three of the first five games Ken played. He hit safely in all of them, and he had a .435 average. Four of his ten hits were good for extra bases and he was averaging an RBI a day.

Although Henderson won't be 23 until June 15, he is currently serving his fifth tour of duty with San Francisco. Ken collected a large bonus in June, 1964, when he was

graduated from Clairemont High in San Diego, where he played football and basketball as well as baseball.

Henderson, barely 18 at the time, played at Fresno, Twin Falls and Tacoma in '64. The following year, in order to protect him from the baseball draft, the Giants kept him on the San Francisco roster all season.

Glove Whiz in PCL

In 1966, Ken's first really active season as a professional, he hit .272 at Phoenix and .310 in 11 late-season games with the Giants. Managers in the Pacific Coast League voted Henderson the best defensive outfielder in the circuit that year.

Ken divided his time between San Francisco and Phoenix in '67, which wasn't an especially impressive season for him. Last year he was just starting to pound the ball at Phoenix when he injured his heel, rounding first base, and missed two months of work.

His 11 home runs and 60 RBIs, along with 21 doubles and five triples, indicated he was developing the kind of power the Giants anticipated when they signed him back in '64. Ken played at San Juan, Puerto Rico, last winter, trying to make up for the time he lost at Phoenix, and injured a hamstring muscle in his right leg.

Rest Prescribed

Late this spring, while the Giants were barnstorming with the Indians, Henderson felt the leg pop again. Opening day was little more than a week away. Ken flew to Los Angeles, where Dr. Robert Kerlan examined him and told him that the only real cure was rest. Strenuous exercise wouldn't permit the muscle to heal. So Henderson rested, and waited.

It's tough for a 22-year-old athlete to sit around, but Henderson means a great deal to the Giants' future, and it would have been senseless risking further injury by rushing him back onto the field.

The wait certainly paid off in the way Henderson was attacking

the ball when he finally got into the lineup.

Henderson listed three things as the highlights of his career prior to this year.

Two of them came in 1965, his first season with San Francisco: "It was a great thrill to be playing in big league games when I was so young," Ken said, "and it was a tremendous thing to see the Giants' great stretch drive that year and that fantastic year by Willie Mays."

The Giants wound up two games behind the Dodgers that year in the first of what was to become four successive second-place finishes for San Francisco. Mays hit .317 that year, with 52 home runs, his greatest home-run season.

That was the year Willie hit 17 homers in one month, August.

Two Homers Off Jaster

Henderson's third highlight was a personal achievement. It came on April 19, 1967, in a game against the Cardinals at Candlestick Park, when he belted two home runs against Larry Jaster.

Ken hit only two more National League home runs that year and wound up with an average of .190, but that memorable day against the Cardinals, the young outfielder from San Diego gave people an indication of what the future might hold.

Although Henderson is 6-2 and 190 pounds, he is not basically a home-run hitter. He can hit 'em out, all right, but his forte is line drives and speed.

Ken is a switch hitter and, in the words of Hank Sauer, the former MVP who serves as the Giants' batting instructor, "Henderson has one of the finest natural swings I've ever seen."

Righthanded Power

"He has a bit more power righthanded," Sauer added, "but he's good from either side of the plate."

With his long stride and keen eye for a batted ball, Henderson is a graceful outfielder, able to make difficult plays look easy. He

has a fine arm and tends to challenge runners on plays where they might not normally expect a throw. Ken has contributed some surprising pegs for stunning put-outs.

Ken Ripped Blueprint

When the season began, Clyde King planned to keep Jim Ray Hart in left field. But Henderson was playing so well there was no way to bench him when Hart, Mays and Bonds were ready to return to work in Pittsburgh in early May. So King shifted Henderson over to left and brought Hart back in to third base. The added punch gave the Giants an 11-8 win that night.

Henderson had three hits, including a home run and a triple. It was just the second Giant home run in 11 games. The youngster obviously had a hot bat, and King was happy to ride it for all it was worth.

Giant Jottings: King used six men at third base in the Giants' first 31 games: Bobby Etheridge, Don Mason, Cesar Gutierrez, Jim Davenport, Ron Hunt and Jim Hart. Even though he's 35, Davenport still owns the best glove at the hot corner. . . . The Giants won 12 of their first 15 day games, only five of their first 15 under the lights. . . . Frank Linzy, who saved ten games last year, notched his fourth of 1969 against the Pirates on May 13. It preserved Ron Herbel's second win. Ron didn't have a decision last year.

Joe Gibbon, who didn't allow a run in his first eight relief assignments, ran into trouble against his old teammates, the Pirates, got tagged in the ninth inning May 12 and suffered his first defeat. . . . Juan Marichal missed two pitching turns with a pulled muscle in his side. He said he got the strain with a sudden, strong sneeze. . . . The Giants finally erupted, scoring eight runs in the fourth inning at Pittsburgh May 13. In 30 previous games, there were only five contests in which they scored that many runs.



Ken Henderson . . . Line Drives, Speed Are His Specialties.

Hannan Hopes to Help Set Up Players' Mutual Fund

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minors last year to win ten games in a part season with a last-place club. Jim has been just around the corner from being an outstanding pitcher for years, but there was a period where he was beating himself. He has had atrocious luck and has pitched for a club which doesn't score an abundance of runs.

Investment Guidance

Hannan hopes to see the day when the Players' Association or the commissioner's office, preferably the latter, will assist ball players with investments out of common offices.

"Ball players have been making the quick money over the years and there have been too many cases where they have made bad investments," Hannan reasoned. "They've been taken for the fast buck."

The Senators' righthander intends to pursue this field, and hopes to assist in setting up a mutual fund.

He is interested in getting a hitter out one day, and helping him the next.

Senators' Slants: Frank Howard made it a home run in 23 major league parks when he connected in Seattle, and that moved him to

within two of Joe Adcock for second place on the list. However, he gained only temporary ground on Frank Robinson, the leader, who figures to make it 26 on his first visit to Seattle. Howard did not hit a homer in Shea Stadium the only year the Dodgers played there. He played only in the All-Star Game in the Astrodome, where he singled and struck out in his two times at bat last year. . . . The Senators have first pick in the June free-agent draft, so they went through the red tape of gaining permission to invite Jeff Burroughs of Long Beach, Calif., to work out on a recent visit to Anaheim. The 18-year-old outfielder hit against Nellie Fox and Joe Camacho, which was comparable to the usual batting practice pitching, and he crashed homers out of the Big-A to left, center and right.

The Senators gave only a quick look to Frank Kreutzer, who was traded to the Pirates for lefty Jim Shellenback. Kreutzer appeared in four games and did not impress Williams. . . . The Senators went through a spell of facing 17 straight righthanded pitchers, which only intensified Williams' search for another lefty hitter. Ted would like to have Roger Repoz from the Angels, but a Repoz-for-Mike Epstein deal fell through.



CATCHER PAUL CASANOVA, Washington, puts the tag on Tom Egan, Angels, trying to score the tying run in the May 13 game,

won by the Senators, 2-1. Egan, attempting to score on Bobby Knoop's double, was nailed by left fielder Frank Howard.