Happy Reggie Is Making Enemy Pitchers Moan

By RON BERGMAN

MESA, Ariz.—Reggie Jackson was asked what the difference was between this spring and last spring.

"Well," Reggie said, thinking it over, "I'm here."

Through the first 11 exhibition games at least, this has been a spring poets write about, with sweetness and light and the fancies of young man Jackson turned entirely to baseball.

Last spring is a barely-mentioned memory. For five weeks, Jackson stayed home in nearby Tempe haggling with Owner Charlie Finley over contract terms.

While they eventually got that matter settled, it seemed that very little else was settled between the two during the 1970 campaign.

"I won't go through another season like that again," Jackson said. "I don't think anyone would want to go through that season."

Enough about that season. What about this season?

Less Fanfare Now

So far, it has been ironic. Despite seven home runs and 17 RBIs in his first 11 exhibitions, Reggie has received less notice in camp this year than he did out of camp last year.

"I still think I'm getting enough attention," Jackson said as he pulled a steel comb through his hair. "I want to get attention this year with my bat, not with arguments and run-ins."

Jackson is trying to emulate the attitude of Frank Robinson, the Oriole super star who managed him this winter in Puerto Rico.

"We lived together this winter for seven weeks," Jackson recalled. "He's the greatest and he's his own man. He never loses control.

"He taught me to radiate with confidence, be matter of fact about your ball playing. Don't get mad, get 'em next time."

There has been nothing to make Reggie mad so far this spring. Finley has been kept happily busy with his three-ball walk experiment and was staying away from Arizona. And new Manager Dick Williams hasn't had any problems with the potential super star.

He's Doing His Share

"He's just been one of the guys," Williams said. "He's taken his fly balls, his batting practice, done his running and everything else.

"When the other guys see him doing that sort of stuff, it makes it easier for them. I haven't granted him any special privileges and he hasn't asked for any."

The other players will watch Jackson closely, hoping, of course, that he plays back to his 47-homer year of 1969 no matter what the harassing diversions. That could mean a divisional flag for the A's.

"I want to be a quiet leader and play hard," Jackson said. "Dick pretty well lets me do what I want to do. He treats me like I'm a real pro. I'm not saying I'm a star and that's not to say that I was not treated well by the other managers."

Williams has said he intends to play Jackson every day, against righthanders or lefthanders. Last year, Reggie hit nine of his 23 homers against southpaws.

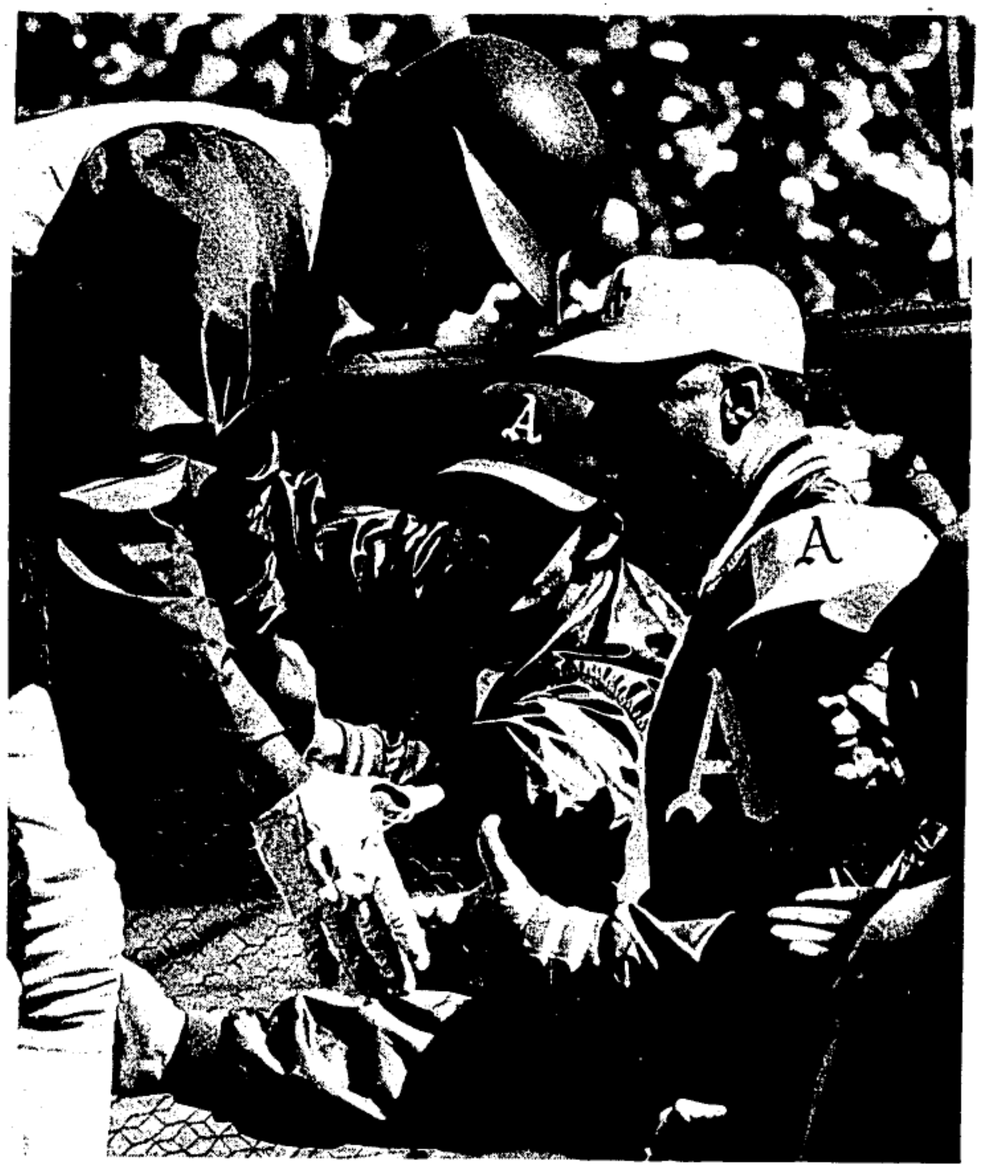
Jackson was going so good during the spring that Williams was asked if his right fielder was in danger of leaving some of his best shots in the desert, like a fighter who leaves a fight in the gym.

"What do you want him to do? Make outs?" Williams replied.

"I don't buy the theory," Jackson said, "that if you hit home runs during spring training, you don't hit them during the season."

A's Acorns: Charlie Finley's three-ball walk experiment appears doomed after this spring. Commissioner Bowie Kuhn doesn't like it and the only team that'll play it now with the A's is the Indians. . . . Are the Athletics trying to trade catcher Frank Fernandez? . . . Non-roster player Tony LaRussa is making a strong bid to stick with the big club as a utility infielder. . . . Non-roster pitcher Darrell Osteen was having a terrible time in Mesa's cozy Rendezvous Park—five home runs in seven innings worked . . . Manager Williams casually announced one day that Dick Green is his regular second baseman, making some wonder what happened to the Dwain Anderson experiment. . . . Commissioner Kuhn had a short and private chat with pitcher Chuck Dobson about greenies and the comish said afterward he's accepting Dobson's second statement —that he'd taken a greenie only once when he had the flu—instead of the original interview in which the big righthander admitted he used them also when he was tired.

The first nine players sent to the minor league camp were pitchers Brien Bickerton and Chris Floethe, outfielders Roger Cain, George Hendrick and Greg Schubert, shortstop Jimmy Driscoll, first baseman Reggie Sanders and catchers Bill Fitzgerald and Tom Cook. Fitzgerald was a non-roster player invited to camp to help out with the pitchers. All others were rookies in camp for the first time, except for Driscoll, who'll be starting his ninth minor league season. Hendrick is a definite "can't miss" in the big leagues.



Reggie Jackson . . . 'Just One of the Guys.'

Stylish Steve Wins Indian Opening-Day Nod

By RUSSELL SCHNEIDER

TUCSON, Ariz.—The question mark that had been next to Steve Hargan's name the past several springs here has been straightened out so that now it forms an exclamation point. And the confidence that had been missing for so long is back, too.

"Yeah, it's a great feeling to be among the living again," Hargan said jokingly the other day as he quietly went about getting ready for the Indians' season opener in Detroit April 6.

The best pitcher on the club the latter half of last season—and, in the opinion of Tribe Manager Alvin Dark, the best pitcher in the American League—Hargan was assigned the opener after only three days of spring training.

High on Hargan

Dark's decision was based partly on the fact that Sam McDowell reported late after a brief holdout, but the main reason was the manager's high regard for Hargan against the predominantly righthanded-hitting Tigers.

McDowell will pitch the home opener against the Red Sox on April 8.

Otherwise, it appears the Indians' batting order for the opener will be this way: Buddy Bradford, cf; Eddie Leon, 2b; Vada Pinson, rf; Ray Fosse, c; Ken Harrelson, 1b; Roy Foster, lf; Graig Nettles, 3b; Jack Heidemann, ss, and Hargan, p.

Naturally, Hargan is pleased by the opening-day assignment, but said, "I'm just happy to be a starter, considering all the troubles I've had in the past."

Hampered by Sore Elbow

He was referring, of course, to the elbow problems that robbed him of his potential the last several years.

Now, for the first time since the spring of 1967, the 28-year-old Hargan is healthy. He underwent elbow surgery in November, 1968, but never regained his old form until after he reluctantly returned to the minors for a brief period last summer.

Steve was disabled last May and when he was returned to the active list, he was exiled to Wichita (American Association), where he could get the chance to work regularly.

Hargan's initial reaction was to rebel, but finally he went and, though he didn't burn up the A.A. (his record was 4-2), the Indians recalled him on July 16.

And suddenly everything fell into place for the slender fastballer.

In 16 appearances after the 35-day sentence in Wichita, Hargan won 10 games and lost only one.

Just that quickly the question mark was erased as Hargan's final season statistics showed an 11-3 won-lost record, with a 2.90 earned-run average.

"I still don't know what happened last year," said Hargan. "There were about three different theories about my trouble, but I think it was just a pinched nerve. It caused a numbness in my hand.

"Sure, the work I got at Wichita helped, but I still think I could have done as much for myself by staying with the big club. All I needed was work—and confidence."

Confidence Enhanced

Now, obviously, the confidence is back, even if Steve admittedly might not have as much raw stuff as four years ago when he was rated as one of the truly outstanding young pitching prospects in the American League.

"I can't throw as consistently hard as I used to, but one thing I have now that I didn't have then is confidence in four pitches," he said.

"I know I can throw my curve, slider, fast ball and change-up over the plate anytime I need to—and I'd rather have it this way than the other.

"I believe I'm a pitcher now, not just a thrower."

Of the "lost" period in his career, Hargan shrugged. "It was very expensive because I took some pretty stiff cuts in pay.

Surgery Necessary

"But I don't know what else I could have done. There never was any doubt that I needed the operation on my elbow, so I certainly can't second-guess that decision.

"Maybe the problem was that I tried too hard and tried too many things to make everything right.

"Too many motions, too many deliveries, too many pitches and too many theories," he said.

But now the "old" Hargan is back, even if he looks a little different.

And the biggest difference is that exclamation point instead of that question mark. It's very becoming.

Tribe Tidbits: Alan Foster has won the competition for the No. 3 position in the starting rotation, but at this writing, Dark still wasn't sure about his No. 4 and 5 pitchers. Leading candidates were Rich Hand, Steve Dunning, Jim Rittwage and Mark Ballinger. Hand, however, was nursing a strained muscle in his forearm that threatened to set him back about two weeks. . . . Dark did a lot of talking about the possibility of trading Larry Brown, but nothing yet appears imminent. Clubs which reportedly are interested in the veteran infielder are Washington, Milwaukee, Oakland, Kansas City and New York Yankees. . . . John Lowenstein continued to be impressive at bat and in the field. The rookie is being examined everywhere except, of course, at catching and pitching.

Ken Harrelson delighted the Los Angeles press corps during a recent visit to Palm Springs with some severe quotes. One of them was this: "If I have a big year, I will play for nothing next season. I've already talked to somebody in the commissioner's office about it, although I've got to get his (Bowie Kuhn's) approval. I want to do it (play for nothing) because baseball has given me so much and I want to show the average fan there are some guys in pro ball who play because they love it, not just for the money." Harrelson didn't specify, however, what constitutes a "big" year.

Steve Hargan

Kuhn Probing Tribe's Verbal Bonuses

TUCSON, Ariz.—Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn indicated recently that the Indians, and Manager Alvin Dark in particular, might be in line for a reprimand.

It concerns Dark's frequent use of verbal performance or incentive bonus agreements to satisfy otherwise unhappy players in contract negotiations, which is in violation of baseball law.

It is known that, at a recent meeting of general managers of Arizona-based clubs, the subject was brought to light and discussed in general terms.

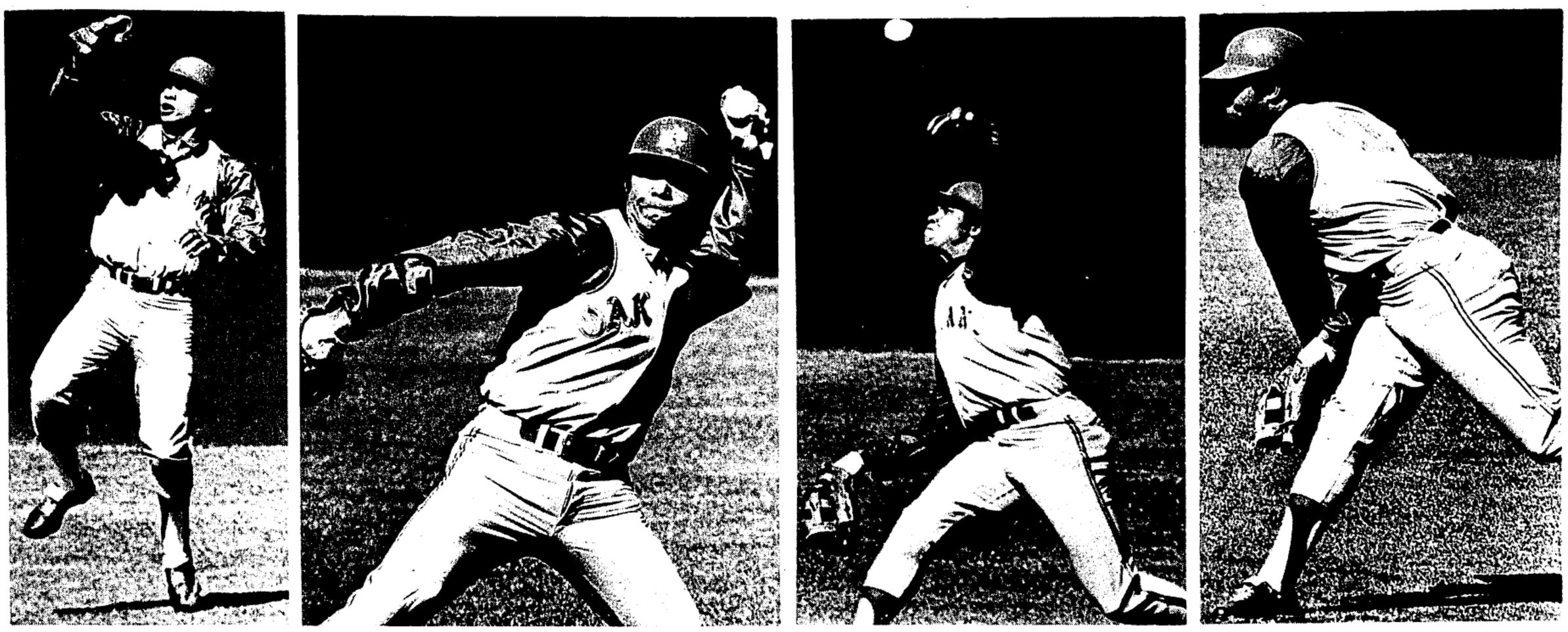
Kuhn was asked if he had queried Dark or other Tribe officials about the performance bonuses, or if he plans to do so.

After about 20 seconds of deliberation, Kuhn finally replied, choosing his words very carefully.

"All I want to say on the matter at this time," the commissioner answered, "is that it is a subject I am looking into."

Then, asked to explain the rule that prohibits such bonus arrangements, Kuhn said, "Performance bonuses are not allowed in any form. It is so specified in major league rule 3A."

Tribesmen who are believed to have bonus agreements with Dark (who negotiates the Cleveland contracts) are Sam McDowell, Ray Fosse, Ken Suarez, Graig Nettles, Mike Paul and Vada Pinson.



Reggie Jackson . . . 'I Feel It Is in My Blood to Hit 50 Homers, Lead the A's to a Pennant and Win the MVP Prize.'

Happy Days Here Again for Reggie

By RON BERGMAN

OAKLAND, Calif. — In triumph or tragedy, there is something about the Athletics' Reggie Jackson that attracts attention.

Call it star quality or charisma or anything you wish. When Reggie shows up, so do the reporters, the photographers, the men with the microphones and the television cameras. This year, he wants to give them something good to write and talk about.

Months before the season started, three national magazines had articles in preparation about him. Remember Reggie Jackson batted all of .237 last year and drove in only 66 runs. He hit 23 homers and, although his official at-bats dropped 123 to 426, he still managed to lead the American League in strikeouts with 135 for the third straight year.

Most players carrying those numbers into their fourth major league season would be ignored. But there also was the season of 1969 when he hit 47 homers and drove in 114 runs and there was the running dispute of last year with Owner Charlie Finley.

Their mutual admiration society of two years ago deteriorated into a succession of insults and epithets that began with a five-week spring holdout.

It ended on Labor Day in a Chicago hotel room with Jackson in tears. He had made a gesture toward the owner's box in Oakland after a pinch-hit grand-slam homer and Finley demanded and got a public apology.

A Request to Be Traded

After the end of the season, Jackson again showed up in Chicago. This time he visited Finley's insurance company office and asked to be traded. The request was denied.

What caused most of the bitterness was Jackson's contention that Finley had ordered him benched. Then Manager John McNamara denied this was true but, after the season, he wasn't so sure. However, it was true that during the season, among other things, Finley had threatened to have Jackson sent to the minors.

How does Jackson feel about Finley now?

"I have no hard feelings," Jackson said. "I just don't. Be a good Christian and forget.

"I was just as much at fault and probably more. I need him to play ball. He needs me to play for him."

Jackson, approaching his 25th birthday, is a young man who recognizes his biggest problem is maintaining personal equilibrium. When he walked into spring training camp, only one day late this year, his teammates were watching closely to see whether he could keep control.

He gave them the answer with his bat, with his feet and with his arm.

It wasn't merely the ten homers he hit. He broke up double plays, he hustled singles into doubles and doubles into triples, even with the ennui of the final exhibition week.

When it was all over, Jackson was feeling good.

"I feel it is in my blood to hit 50 home runs," he said in response to a question. "I think it is in my blood to lead a club to the pennant. I feel it's in my blood to be the Most Valuable Player in the league."

F. Robby Keeps His Cool

If any of those come true, then the Orioles' Frank Robinson can take some of the credit. Robinson, who always has been known as his own man, managed Jackson this past winter in the Puerto Rican League. Jackson admired the way Robinson conducted himself.

"I never saw him get mad," Jackson recalled. "I never saw him make a mistake."

It was while Jackson was breaking the Puerto Rican home-run record that the A's new manager, Dick Williams, paid him a visit.

"I talked to him in Puerto Rico," Williams said. "I had some serious talks with him. But the groundwork was done by Frank Robinson.

"Reggie's in the lineup, batting No. 3. The only thing I try to get across to him is that on days he doesn't get his hits, that he can do it with his arm or legs or something else."

Jackson was a little apprehensive about the new manager. After all, Finley cited Jackson's outbursts as one of the reasons he hired Williams, a man the owner said knew how to keep the players in line.

"I'd heard a lot of bad things about him from other players, unfavorable comments," Jackson admitted. "I heard that when things get tough, he wouldn't stick up for you.

"When he came down to Puerto Rico to see me," Jackson continued, "I thought he looked a little too happy. But when he came to spring training, he really did seem to be enjoying what he was doing. He liked the little things, like hitting fungoes, and he liked taking charge.

"He's been very nice to me, gone out of his way to be nice to me, I'd have to say."

Williams is one man who's seen Jackson at his absolute peak. Williams was managing the Red Sox when Jackson batted in ten runs in a 21-7 Athletics' victory on June 14, 1969.

"Is that your question—do I remember that?" Williams said with a chuckle. "The Red Sox got clobbered that day. He hit 47 home runs that year, so they weren't the only ones who got hurt."

Jackson looks ahead with optimism to this season.

"I had a good spring, I couldn't ask for too much more," he said. "I struck out 14 times in 66 at-bats, or something like one in every five.

"I'd like to do much better than that this year, although I know I'm going to strike out 90 times in a year. I'd like to keep it down to about once every 5½ games.

"Frank Robinson told me that Reggie Jackson has to put the ball in play and he'll hit .300. I'm not concerned with home runs because they'll come.

"I think I can help this ball club with my attitude. It's Dick Williams' job and Finley's job to build a solid ball club."

A Lid on His Temper

This season, Jackson said, he'll get off by himself when he begins to feel tense. He will try to avoid getting angry at others and himself because "it hurts your easy flow as an athlete."

And how will he react when reporters ask him about last year?

"If a sportswriter asks me about what happened last year, he's not competent," Jackson said. "Asking me about last year is like asking who won the pennant or who won the World Series. What happened to me was a nationwide story. If you don't know by now, I can't tell you."

And so Reggie Jackson is once again in pursuit of his dreams.

His beautiful wife, Ginnie, drives him about town in a yellow Jaguar XK-E. It all looks like a magazine ad.

But it isn't just English sports cars and luxury apartments around Oakland's Lake Merritt about which Jackson thinks these days. He's thinking about becoming a doctor in his spare time, taking six hours of courses a year at Arizona State University, near his Tempe home.

"I'm in real estate and I always wanted to be in real estate," Jackson said. "But I figure I'll be in baseball for about ten more years and at six hours a year, two classes a week, I could go right into my internship."

Blue Is Beautiful as No.1 Resident on A's Hill

By RON BERGMAN

OAKLAND, Calif. — It took Manager Dick Williams 42 days to form a pitching staff for the Athletics and, when he was through, he found himself one man short.

So the A's began the regular season with nine pitchers. The rest of the squad numbered three catchers, six infielders and seven outfielders, three of whom could play first base.

The squad makeup temporarily solved Williams' problems. Off-days made it possible for him to carry nine pitchers for about the first two weeks. After that, anyone's guess.

The Athletics' problem is that they have too many outfielders, an outgrowth of the deal last fall that sent relief pitcher Mudcat Grant to the Pirates for cash and promising outfielder Angel Mangual.

None of the rookie pitchers who showed up in camp February 20 turned out to be particularly impressive. The A's farmed out Marcel Lachemann, who made 41 appearances for them last year, and kept Jim Panther, another righthanded, side-armed sinker baller. Panther, a 26-year-old bespectacled rookie, is a high school gym teacher from Highland Park, Ill., 50 miles north of Chicago.

The tenth pitcher on the nine-man staff is Blue Moon Odom, who started the season on the disabled list. However, his recovery from off-season elbow surgery was coming along faster than expected. He would be eligible to be placed back on the roster April 11, but no one expected his return that soon.

Two Choice Starters

Vida Blue and Rollie Fingers emerged as the top two starters on the staff, a surprise.

Blue pitched only in September for the A's last year and was 2-0, with a no-hitter against Minnesota and a one-hitter against Kansas City.

Because of a good spring and Williams' belief that the Senators were more vulnerable to lefthanded pitching, Blue was chosen to start the Presidential opener. He was charged with the 8-0 loss to the Senators.

Fingers, a 24-year-old righthander, had a mediocre 7-9 record for the A's last year as a spot starter and reliever. This winter he was stricken by an intestinal bug while playing baseball in the Dominican Republic and lost 25 pounds.

The lighter weight made him quicker and helped his endurance to the point where he had the best spring record of any A's starter, 4-0, with a 2.23 earned-run average over 36⅓ innings.

Catfish Hunter, whose 18-14 record of last year is amazing considering he didn't win a game in August, slipped to third in the rotation because of his normally poor spring.

Hunter always starts slowly in the spring because of a stiff shoulder. He even holds the ball differently in the spring, across the seams

(Continued on Page 8, Column 3)

Flood Hit Famine Just One Of Nats' Many Headaches

By MERRELL WHITTLESEY

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Spring training is part work-time and part fun-time, good for conditioning and window dressing for baseball. But as soon as the bell rings, Ted Williams throws the exhibition records into the waste basket.

"We've got to find out some things," the manager of the Senators said as his club stumbled into the second week of the season, and he meant finding out under game conditions.

Ted maneuvered and shifted, benched and unbenched and spotted players in the batting order where you'd least expect them.

He had a talk with Curt Flood, who had three hits, two of them bunts, in his first 20 times at bat. In the fifth game of the season, Flood made the last out in the eighth inning. When he looked to the bench for somebody to bring his glove and glasses, he looked in vain. He was being replaced.

Flood did not return to the lineup for almost a week.

"This is no big thing," Williams said. "I told Curt we needed runs and we're not scoring them with him in there. He has a great attitude. He understands. He'll be back."

The Senators by no means were giving up on Flood, but there was disappointment as he seldom moved the ball beyond the infield.

Owner Bob Short had a forlorn look as he watched the regulars take batting practice while Flood was shagging balls with the irregulars.

"He can still do it," Short said, "but even if he doesn't, I'd make the same move again," meaning getting Flood to return to baseball for a $110,000 salary at the cost of three non-roster players.

Rookie shortstop Toby Harrah also was not producing after his great start in the opener, but Williams was more patient with a 22-year-old than with a player 10 years older.

Tim Cullen was the only other shortstop, but more than that, Ted did not want to kill Toby's spirit.

"We may have to suffer with him for a while, for he's the key to our club," Ted said.

Harrah Needs Tutoring

A wise scout noted that Harrah was not doing little things, like moving toward second when the pitchers were working on right-handed hitters by pitching them outside. Harrah could use some help here from the other infielders and the bench.

Tim Cullen and Jim French have been eighth-place hitters most of their careers. About the only time they did not hit in the No. 8 spot was when both were in the lineup.

Williams created a few shock waves when he put French in the sixth spot and Cullen No. 2. When asked about it, Ted snapped, "Who would you have put there?"

The manager's reasoning on Cullen was that despite his .209 and .214 averages of the last two years, Tim gets good wood on the ball, can bunt and hit and run.

Ted had a smug look when Cullen had two hits in each of his first two games as the No. 2 hitter.

Williams said he almost batted Frenchie, his 5-7 catcher, behind the leadoff hitter.

On Base Often

"So he batted .211 last year, he still had the second best on-base-per-time-at-bat ratio on our club because of his walks. He doesn't strike out. He could be a second-place hitter because he can move the ball around and hit behind the runner."

French said he would welcome an advance in the batting order.

"I'll guarantee you that hitting ahead of the pitcher costs you 30 points a season," Jim said. "With a key runner on base, you never get a good pitch.

"Do you mean to tell me I would not get a better selection of pitches to hit if I was hitting ahead of Frank Howard, with Mike Epstein next?"

Williams also wanted to find out about Richie Scheinblum.

"He had one of the best records in the high minors last year, certainly better than anybody in our organization," Ted said. "He can switch-hit, run a little, his arm is okay and so is his fielding. We have to see what he can do."

Unser Back in Action

Del Unser was back in the lineup after sitting out the first five games as Williams tried to keep everybody happy. Ted's dream is to have eight players who would play every day but, in the meantime, he experiments and moves people around and he keeps trying.

"We've got to find out a lot of things, about Denny Riddleberger, about a lot of people," Ted said, as he kept trying.

Senators' Slants: Williams was so peeved when umpire Ron Luciano at first would not help out plate umpire Bill Kunkel on a checked swing strike against the Red Sox that Williams kicked dirt in Luciano's direction. Ted maintained his perfect record of never having been thrown out of a game, however. He was in front of the dugout and Luciano well back of the bag, about 50 feet away. . . . One of the saddest baseball fans in Washington is Ricardo Sosa, 10-year-old son of the ambassador from Venezuela, Julio Sosa. Ricardo was seriously injured in an auto accident and will spend much of the summer in Georgetown Hospital.

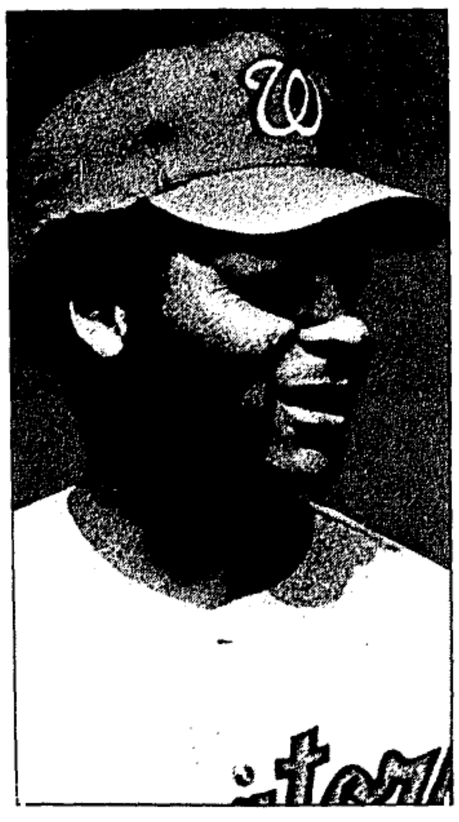
It was 71 games before a pinch-hitter won a game for the Senators last year. In the first week, Tom McCraw won one with a home run and Bernie Allen with a bases-loaded single. . . . Short took the Touchdown Club's welcome home luncheon by surprise when he said he was cutting ticket prices in half and had just completed a big trade with Calvin Griffith. When he added about 10 names to Frank Howard, the audience knew it was a practical joke, but for a couple of minutes Short had them guessing. . . . Denny McLain's second start found the Red Sox getting to him for home runs by Duane Josephson and Carl Yastrzemski, and Denny also balked a run home in defeat. . . . The Senators topped 100,000 for their first four playing dates, including opening day, McLain's debut and a doubleheader with the Yankees.

Frustrated Foy Pleased To See Home Stand End

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Frustrated Joe Foy, anxious to start stockpiling some home runs, was happy to see the Senators' home stand draw to a close April 14.

The Washington third baseman, hitting the ball for distance but still without a homer, drew consolation from a .400 batting average.

Foy was robbed of a homer by right fielder Reggie Smith's super catch in a 5-3 loss to the Red Sox. Smith timed his jump and cleared the fence, banging his left side against the top of the wall as he came down.



Curt Flood

Wells Twombly

The Puzzling World of Reggie Jackson

OAKLAND, Calif.—The atmosphere is so plastic that it has a tendency to turn an already soft young mind into oatmeal mush. The lights are blinding, the crowd so shrill and so fickle. The writers aren't any different. Hit a few home runs and they come clustering around your dressing stall after the game, grinning like savages with some new tribal totem.

They poke and they prod. They act like a squadron of long-lost uncles. They ask so many embarrassing, personal questions that eventually you get the urge to tell them something exotic. You aren't from Philadelphia at all. You never went to Arizona State University. You were captured by Chinese pirates as a small boy. Somehow you escaped. You were raised in the canebrake by an old mama lion. A Tibetan lama taught you how to hit the curve ball.

The only trouble is that some of them would write it that way and you'd be years living it down. Being a super hero has its privileges, too. The public address announcer can make the name Reggie Jackson sound like it has 17 syllables. The customers applaud the minute you get off your haunches in the on-deck circle. The opposing pitcher starts measuring the side of your head for a fast ball in case you get too smart with the bat.

All a young man has to do to get smothered in glory is (a) hit 47 home runs one long, lovely summer and (b) get his handsome features spread all over the cover of the nation's leading sports weekly. And the fame will last just as long as he continues to hit 47 home runs a season and as long as he keeps getting his profile reprinted in THE SPORTING NEWS. But ease up for awhile and endure the agony Reggie Jackson suffered through in 1970 and see how long it takes for reporters to forget what number you wear.

It started with a violent disagreement over salary with Oakland Athletics' Owner Charlie Finley. Somehow Jackson thought all that attention he received was worth $60,000. The man who holds his contract disagreed. Finley pointed out that when Reggie was a senior at Arizona State, he collected over $95,000 in bonus money from the A's and since that time business hadn't been that good. Jackson snorted and held out. Not to be upstaged, Finley did the same. The impasse became public.

Even though Jackson eventually accepted $47,000 in salary, plus a year's lease on a $400-a-month apartment in Oakland, the hassle didn't end. Reggie forgot how to hit and, characteristically, Finley took it personally. There was a lot of lunatic talk about sending the kid down to Des Moines for a couple of punitive rides on a minor league bus.

Depression, Confusion, Rebellion

First Jackson grew depressed. Then he got confused. Finally he became rebellious.

"Baseball isn't all home runs and cheers," he observed one evening last summer at the Oakland Coliseum. "It's strikeouts and boos. I think of leaving baseball. I don't suppose I really have the guts for it, though. There's too much about the game I love. The idea of leaving it makes me sad."

Late in the season, Jackson hit a pinch home run. Angrily, he stomped around the bases. After he crossed the plate, he looked up toward the owner's box, made an improper gesture and told Finley to do something that was not only obscene, but physically impossible. Several days later, the boss demanded a public apology. Jackson agreed that Finley had one coming.

Eventually the whole ugly episode passed. Jackson went off to lick his wounded psyche in Puerto Rico where Frank Robinson spends his winters practicing to be the major leagues' first Negro manager. Whatever the therapy, Jackson snapped out of his trance and broke the league record for home runs. He reported to Arizona full of renewed passion this spring.

"There's nothing I like better than hitting a ball hard—clean and hard," he said. "The feel and the sound of it . . . it's just beautiful. I love putting on that tapered uniform and going out there in front of people."

So, in his first dozen times at bat after the regular season started, Reggie struck out swinging on eight occasions. The clientele complained and the writers stayed away. Well, nobody guaranteed life was going to be perfect.

"There was a time when I dreamed of being part of a dynasty built by Mr. Finley, of being part of a team which would get so strong it could just roll over other teams the way Baltimore does. I could see us filling the Coliseum with excited fans," he said. "Now all I dream of is having a good season and helping the A's get close enough to have a shot at the World Series. We don't have to steamroll anyone as long as we win a pennant."

There is no denying now that the instant heroism of two summers ago created far more agony than joy. Jackson never really wanted it to happen quite that way. It came so fast he had trouble coping with it. The home runs kept flying, usually in pairs, and the writers kept finding new adjectives.

Bad Experience May Be Helpful

"I really wanted to just make steady progress until I was as good a player as I could be. But I was only 23 when it happened. Maybe last summer was good for me.

"Maybe it helped me grow up. I've always tried too hard. Maybe now I can relax and settle down," he said.

"I used to have a problem with my temper. I'd get mad at myself in college and my coach would talk me into using some self-control."

So when Jackson took all that money and turned professional, the tenderhearted instructors in the Athletics' minor league schools put him down for being too easy-going. "Show some fire out there, kid," they said. "Let's see some temper." It is no wonder Reggie Jackson wonders what kind of world he sold himself into.

"It hasn't been all bad with Mr. Finley. People ought to know that," he said. "He invested some of my bonus money for me. The original sum has grown. I could quit baseball at 25 and do well enough in the real estate business."

Now the critics write deep think pieces about Reggie Jackson, stuff that produces those heavy headlines in sports magazines: "Reggie Jackson At The Crossroads!" and "Reggie Jackson—Pro or Con?"

It is the sort of twaddle that used to bedevil Joe Pepitone before the Yankees unloaded him.

"What kind of guy am I?" Jackson said. "I'm thin-skinned and afraid of being hurt. I'm basically a loner and I sometimes pop off to keep people from getting too close. I've hurt a lot of people's feelings."

So now Reggie Jackson struggles again to live the unrealistic life of a super hero. The money is good. The hours are short. But the agony is enough to melt a man's brain. Hit a home run and they cheer. Strike out and they boo. It is all so simple, yet so devastating.

Ex-Commissioner Frick Dead at 83

Ford Frick

Ford Christopher Frick, who served in baseball's hierarchy longer than any other person except some club owners, died in Bronxville, N.Y., April 8 after a lengthy illness. He was 83.

Frick was National League president for 17 years and commissioner for 14 years. Although his reigns were in less turbulent times, he had his share of controversies, but generally emerged the winner.

"I've always been a lucky guy," Frick said at his induction into the Hall of Fame in 1970. "I've always been at the right place at the right time." And that he was.

If it hadn't been for Arthur Brisbane, the New York editor of Hearst newspapers, Frick might have labored all his life as a Colorado sportswriter or college English professor.

Frick, a graduate of DePauw University in Indiana, was writing sports for the Colorado Springs Gazette and also teaching some English courses at Colorado College. He had married and was leading a serene and well-disciplined life.

Somehow, Brisbane saw one of Frick's stories and the prose interested him.

Brisbane wired Frick that he'd like to discuss a New York sportswriting job with him. Frick thought the telegram was a joke played on him by one of the printers. But it was authentic and Frick eventually went to New York and was interviewed by Brisbane.

Although he wasn't convinced that New York was his Big Apple, Frick decided to pull up stakes and head east. It was the start of a new life.

He first worked for the American, one of Hearst's papers, covering the Giants. Then he switched to another Hearst paper, the Journal, and took over the Yankees. That was his beat for many years, but he also found time to be a radio broadcaster.

He was one of the first to have a sports radio show and he did well, according to his colleagues. But writing was still his first love.

He became a close friend of Babe Ruth, serving as his "ghost" in stories supposedly written by Ruth. He and the Bambino also were golfing and bridge partners and this close association perhaps led to one of Frick's biggest controversies. It involved Roger Maris and the 61 homers.

Frick, then commissioner, ruled that an asterisk should appear next to Maris' name when his 61 homers were listed as a record because he collected his in 162 games and Ruth amassed his in 154.

Some writers accused Frick of doing this because he was such an admirer of Ruth.

"That's a lot of bunk," said the old English professor. "I did it because I thought it was right. Maris had eight more games to break the record. He didn't do it in 154, did he?"

But several writers still thought Frick was up to his old tricks of artfully dodging major decisions.

While his New York journalistic career rolled along in a set pattern, an opportunity suddenly arose. It was a chance to become public relations director for the National League. Frick—again in the right spot at the right time—took the position in 1934.

John Heydler was then N.L. president and his health was failing. In 1935, Frick was elected the new N.L. president.

He assumed command in troubled times. It was the height of the Great Depression and the franchises in Brooklyn, Philadelphia and Boston were in serious financial difficulty. Frick scrounged around and found some backing for the teams and they managed to weather the bill collectors' storms.

"I had all kinds of problems in my early days as the league president," Frick once recalled. "But, when I looked back on everything, taking that press agent job for the league was the smartest move I ever made. It just changed my life completely."

When Kenesaw Mountain Landis, the first commissioner of baseball, died in 1944, Frick was said to be the top candidate as the old judge's replacement. It was reported that he had 11 of the 16 clubs supporting his candidacy. But somewhere along the line it was decided that A. B. (Happy) Chandler, the shrewd and outgoing Kentucky politician, should have the position.

Frick showed no signs of disappointment. "I didn't seek the job," he said. "Some of the owners came to me and I expressed my willingness to go along."

But, in 1951, Frick was elected commissioner when the owners became disenchanted with Chandler.

In the meantime, Frick continued to rule the N.L., perhaps not with an iron hand, but with the skill of a broken-field runner.

"Ford likes the status quo," said one club owner. "He doesn't like to rock the boat."

That might have been good philosophy. Some of the players, however, managed to do otherwise.

In 1937, the great Dizzy Dean incident occurred. Frick was something less than a winner.

Dean had been involved in a rumpus with umpire George Barr over balk calls and beanballs in a Cardinal game with the Giants. A few days later, Dean was guest at a church supper in Belleville, Ill., near St. Louis.

Dean was quoted as saying, during his little speech, that "George Barr and Ford Frick were the two biggest crooks in baseball."

When Frick heard about this, he almost fell out of his chair in his New York office. Dean was called in to defend himself.

Frick presented Dean with a paper which he ordered the pitcher to sign. It was said to be an admission that Dean threw dangerously close to the noggins of some Giants, that he was aware of the balk rule and that Barr and Frick were not crooks, even small ones.

"I ain't signin' nothin'," said Dean. Frick promptly suspended Dean.

For 24 hours the Cardinals and the league office hurled statements at each other, the Redbirds citing, among other things, that Dean was one of the league's best drawing cards.

Frick decided on another hearing, an open one attended by newspaper men.

Dean, denying everything, again refused to sign the document, but the suspension was lifted.

"I learned one thing from that incident," Frick said years later. "Never hold a public hearing on such matters. If clubs want to make individual announcements on fines and similar matters, it's up to them."

One of the strongest and best stands Frick ever took was in the Jackie Robinson case, when Frick was president of the National League.

Robinson, who broke the color barrier when he joined the Dodgers in 1947, was the subject of much verbal abuse and threats from players, including some of his own teammates.

There was talk of strikes and threats of injury to Robinson.

Frick warned all that "the National League will go down the line with Robinson, and I don't care if it wrecks the league for five years . . ." He said he would ban forever those who would use race discrimination to halt baseball's efforts to end its all-white policies.

When Frick was elected commissioner—at a salary of $65,000—in 1951, it was not without a battle.

Originally there were 11 serious candidates, then five and finally two—Frick and Warren Giles, president of the Reds.

To elect the commissioner, 12 favorable votes were required from the 16 club owners. For 11 hours, vote after vote was taken with no clear majority for either Frick or Giles. No less than 20 times the owners cast their ballots.

As the stalemate continued, it appeared there might be an alternate selection. However, Giles decided to withdraw as a candidate, clearing the way for Frick.

Giles wasn't a 100 percent loser, however. He became the president of the National League.

During Frick's reign as commissioner, franchises were moved, new teams were added and baseball took on a new look. The reserve clause and other legal skirmishes were in the future.

Frick continued, as best he could, not to rock the boat. It became something of a standing joke when disputes occurred. Frick's attitude was often expressed in his statement: "It's a league matter, not for the commissioner's office."

He was quick to recognize the gold mine in television and succeeded in getting generous contracts for baseball. The deals, of course, are even better now.

Frick's years as a sportswriter made him quick on his feet with old colleagues who would try to back him into a corner on thorny issues.

"If you think you can coax me into talking out of turn with that sweet stuff, you may as well quit now," he told one writer. "The same goes if you think I'll pop off. I've found out that people get themselves into trouble by talking too much. I'm not planning to make the same mistake."

Frick, a tall angular man with curly gray hair, was given the commissioner's chair for seven years when first elected. He was rewarded with another seven-year term that took him to retirement.

While some accused him of being a tool of the owners and less attuned to the needs of the players, he was not afraid to take swipes at the men who elected him.

He was a staunch advocate of the reserve clause, since assassinated by the courts, but he wasn't against players making big salaries.

In his book, "Games, Asterisks and People," published by Crown in 1973, Frick wrote:

"In these wild days of inflation, any workman—common laborer or baseball personality—is entitled to all he can get. Nor do I imply that club owners are by nature so generous or philanthropic that they offer huge contracts as a sympathetic gesture with no thoughts of financial return. I do point out that the reserve clause . . . has given baseball a continuity of action that has developed better competition . . . than would have otherwise been possible."

Frick, who is reported to have been wealthy through solid investments and a handsome salary—$100,000 a year at the finish—said he never lost sight of the fact he was "a small-town boy from Indiana."

He also said he found the commissioner's job to be a "lonely one." But through it all, he added, "I always remained a dreamer and an eternal optimist."

Raymond E. French, 81, a former major league shortstop and minor league manager and umpire, died in Alameda, Calif., April 3.

French was with the Yankees in 1920, with the Dodgers in 1922 and with the White Sox in 1924, playing in a total of 82 games. His batting average was .193.

French had a long career in the minors and spent most of it in the Pacific Coast League. He was with Sacramento for 10 seasons and while there figured in one of the PCL's greatest rhubarbs.

In 1933, when Joe DiMaggio of San Francisco was working on his 61-game hitting streak, French fielded a DiMaggio grounder and got off a bad throw. The official scorer ruled it a hit, extending DiMag's streak to 57 contests, and the Sacramento fans nearly rioted. The scorer needed a police escort to leave the stadium.

French, who managed Mansfield and Ashland in the early 1940s, turned to umpiring in 1946. He worked in the Three-I League, the American Association, Southern Association, California League and the Western International League before retiring in 1951.

Foster P. (Babe) Ganzel, an outfielder who played for the Senators in 1927-28 and was a long-time player and manager in the minors, died recently in Jacksonville, Fla. He was 76.

Ganzel came from a family of baseball men. His father, Charles, was a catcher in the majors for 14 years and his uncle, John, was a major league first baseman and later manager of the Brooklyn Federal League team. Two brothers also were in the minors.

Ganzel said he was the only player ever put out of a game by a dog. The incident occurred when he was with Minneapolis and was chasing a stray mutt that was disrupting play. Ganzel tackled the dog, which responded by biting the outfielder on the hand.

After playing in the high minors for nine years, Ganzel turned to managing and directed Selma, St. Paul and Jacksonville.

While piloting Selma, fans heckled him because his players seldom bunted. Ganzel figured he'd show the fans, so he ordered the first nine batters in a game to bunt. All nine reached base.

Vernon E. Taylor, once considered a bright pitching prospect in the Cardinal organization but who was washed up at 22, died in Bryan, Tex., recently. He was 67.

The Cardinals signed him after his graduation from the University of Texas in 1934. A 6-1 righthander, he was the strikeout king in the Southwest Conference and twice was selected to the all-conference team.

In a spring exhibition game with the Tigers in his junior year, he struck out 10 of the major leaguers.

Arm trouble plagued him during his brief pro career with Tyler, Houston and Asheville and he then turned to managing, piloting New Iberia and Kinston before quitting in 1938.

Edward H. (Dutch) Zwilling, who spent almost 60 years in baseball as a player, manager, coach and scout, died in La Crescenta, Calif., March 27 after a long illness. He was 89.

An outfielder, Zwilling played for the White Sox in 1910 and the Cubs in 1916. He also played two years (1914-15) with Chicago's Federal League entry and led that cir-

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People React to Reggie

(Continued From Page 5)

"I never small-talk with anyone, I don't feel that anyone cares to talk to me. So I kind of shut up. I'm always the one who has to initiate the conversation. Sometimes I hear my voice in the locker room, and I want to take it back. I don't want anyone to look at me or feel uncomfortable around me."

These words are hard to hear and harder, perhaps, to say.

AND THEN THERE is a game to play. He is at peace playing baseball. He starts in right field and plays five innings, going to bat three times. Two outs and one RBI single. The people who react to him as they react to no other Yankee—loud boos, even louder cheers—are satisfied. He has been held down, but not out.

With permission to leave early, Jackson showers, dresses and goes to his car for the drive home. There is a crowd, as usual. He signs autographs and discusses the car, its paint job and the reason he likes to park it in the shade instead of the sun. Before leaving he takes a towel and wipes it down, wiping even the inside carpeting, making sure it is perfectly clean.

Forty miles outside Fort Myers he is playing his tape deck, and the chorus of the song repeats, "We're all in this together." Jackson is singing along. "All my life," he says, "I wanted a car like this. I know it's a rich man's car; I'm proud I can afford it."

"He should be happy," says Chris Chambliss. "He has everything he could want."

"Are you happy?" Jackson is asked. "For print?" he answers as the car moves almost silently past the swamps on Alligator Alley.

Sometimes Reggie Still Feels Like an Outcast

By TONY KORNHEISER

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.—Reggie Jackson is holding a cup of coffee in his right hand and a doughnut in his left hand. The first two fingers of his left hand are on the steering wheel of his silver and blue Rolls-Royce. He is backing the $80,000 Rolls—"six different positions on the seat; it's like sitting in your living room"—between a bus and a metal fence, working with a six-inch margin for error. He is doing this casually, the way a man might pour a glass of iced tea from a pitcher. With confidence, with don't-you-just-know-it confidence.

Jackson is on his way to Fort Myers for a game against the Royals, a three-hour drive from the Yankee camp at Fort Lauderdale. He has permission not to ride the team bus, not so special a privilege inasmuch as Billy Martin has given Thurman Munson, Graig Nettles, Sparky Lyle and Dick Tidrow, among others, the day off.

Jackson never gets a day off. He is the Yankee who packs the house. He makes all spring training trips, plays in every spring training game, so the manager doesn't quibble with how he gets there. Anyway, the manager is also not on the bus; he is driving to the game with his pitching coach, Art Fowler.

"Needs gas," Jackson says, pulling into a service station.

The attendant's eyes dilate. It isn't often he sees an $80,000 Corniche. He fills the tank and begins washing the windshield.

"SIR, NONE OF that soapy water, please. It's bad for the finish; it streaks." Jackson knows what's good and what's bad for this car. He washes it clean and wipes it down every day and waxes it every month. Himself. This car says just about everything about Reggie Jackson. It's big. It's expensive. It performs. And it has to have tender, loving care.

"Yes sir," said the attendant. "This is purified water. Don't use the soapy stuff." He wipes a windshield blade. "I believe I'm about as good in my profession as you are in yours, if I can judge by your car here."

Jackson smiles. "Yes," he says, looking out through a window now so clean as to suggest no window at all. "Yes, I'll bet you are."

In minutes, he is heading west on State road 84—Alligator Alley—cutting through a 75-mile stretch of Big Cypress Swamp. His eyes are scanning the trees for eagles and hawks. Suddenly he fixes on a patch of gray, hulking birds.

"See them?" he asks. "Vultures."

He rolls down the window on the driver's side and stares.

These are not pretty birds. They sit and wait for misfortune to happen. Jackson thinks about vultures. In the last seven seasons he has played for six division winners and four world champions. In the last 10 seasons he has averaged .270 in batting, 28 home runs and 84 runs batted in; last season the numbers were .286, 32 and 110. Maybe not automatic Hall of Fame, but, at the very least, impressive. The record shows that the man wins. "You'd think once in a while they might say it," Jackson says. "After 10 years, some of it ought to come back to you."

JACKSON IS easily hurt—too easily, most people suggest. But he had never felt quite the hurt he felt last season, his first in New York. Most of his teammates—and his manager—had a dislike for him, and they showed it by leaving him virtually alone on one side of the clubhouse. They had won a pennant without him, and they treated his coming and all the attention he received from the news media like an invasion. The press quickly got on him for his terrible defensive play and his mediocre offensive play early in the season. The fans gave him a booing unheard of in New York since the days of Roger Maris. Until the final game of the World Series, Jackson was the villain.

"Is 'hell' the right word?" he asked.

"Double it," he answers.

The Rolls moves on, eating up road.

"They look at the money I made, and they say, 'The nigger don't deserve it; he never hit .300,' " Jackson says, beginning a monologue that lasts three miles, his voice rising and falling like that of a tent-city evangelist. "They see me working hard on my defense, and they say, 'The nigger's a showboat.' They see me sign autographs for two or three hours, and they say, 'The nigger just wants his name in the papers.'

"DO THEY ever say, 'The nigger can play'? That he wins? That he performs under pressure? Do they look at what I withstood and say, 'That nigger has fiber'? Just once I'd like to hear that; I'd like to hear someone say, 'Thanks, thanks for playing your butt off.' No, it's always, 'What's wrong with Reggie? He's a phony, a fake, not real, a glory hound, a man-ip-u-la-tor.' Why doesn't anybody say, 'The man can do it; he goes out and does it'?"

Jackson's reputation throughout the league baffles him.

"The worst in baseball," said Claudell Washington, a teammate on the Oakland championship squad of 1974. "Guys who don't even know him don't like him. They don't like his style. Most players are quiet; Reggie is always talking. The press goes to him for comments about players before going to the players themselves. And some of the things Reggie says. In my first year at Oakland, Reggie told the papers that I played outfield like I was trying to catch grenades. I don't think he means to hurt people, but he talks so much that he can't help it."

The consensus is that Jackson has the biggest ego, the biggest mouth and the most impeachable credentials of any superstar in baseball. For all his money, you can find few players who say they would trade places with him. What's more damaging, they don't think he cares.

"THERE'S REGGIE Jackson lovers and Reggie Jackson haters," says Billy Hunter, the Texas manager, who coached him in Baltimore. "I don't think he cares which way they go as long as they shout, 'Reggie!' "

Jackson listens. This is not making him happy. Vultures. He's hearing words and seeing vultures. He is surprised at the extent of his reputation. He doesn't want to acknowledge it.

"I'd like to say it isn't true," he says, conceding how it may well be. "Because I know I'm a good fella. I'm a good, clean, honest guy trying to be a good human being. If someone would take the time, he'd see it, but I'm resented, and apparently my way is abrasive. They doubt my motives. They don't believe me anymore."

His teammates—those who'll talk about him—say he has only himself to blame. They also say they respect the way he plays the game.

Munson, Nettles, Lyle and Tidrow refused to talk about him, but Chris Chambliss suggested that what had probably happened to Jackson was that, in his desire to be unique, he created a monster that alienated his peers.

Mickey Rivers said last season, "Everything Reggie did was all right with everyone but the players." And Bucky Dent's observation was: "Reggie put himself in a position where he was damned if he did and damned if he didn't." But Dent also said:

"I was really happy for him when he hit the three homers in the last game of the Series. It was a real nice ending for him, especially after what he went through. I was new here myself, and, as quiet as I am, I even felt like cracking up last season."

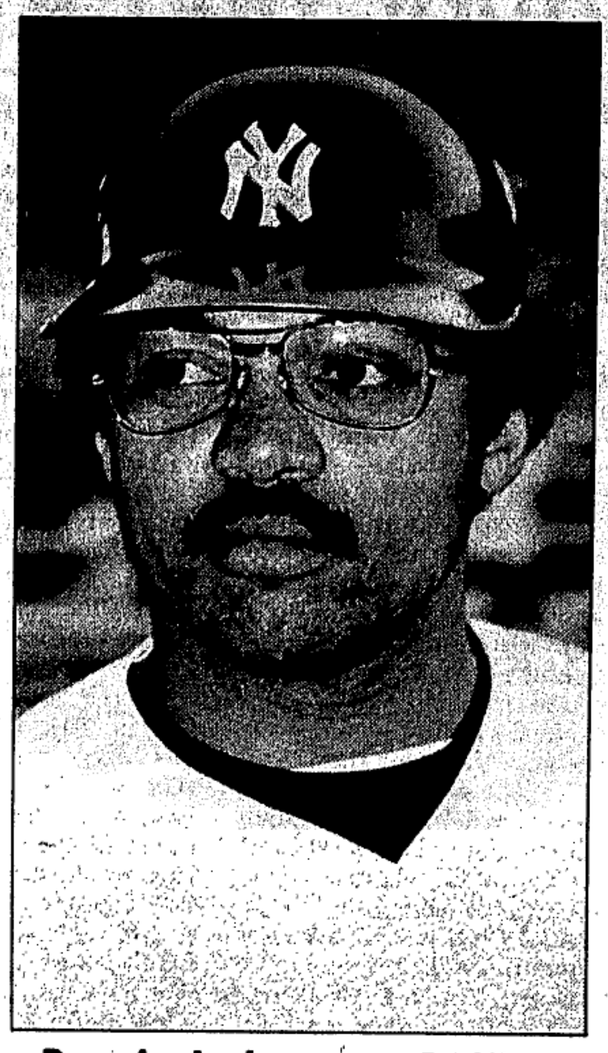
For the first time in 30 miles, Jackson is smiling.

"THANK YOU," he says, as if Dent were in the back seat. "I am very appreciative that someone else saw it like that."

Jackson will talk about last season, but he must walk into it very slowly. The words are chosen carefully. They must be correct.

"Honest to God in heaven, I didn't think it would be like that," he says. "You think I'd have gone to the Yankees if I knew? Think a person wants to be disliked? I thought guys would say: 'Here's a man who played in the Series. He can help us. Let's go along with his program, because he's been there.'

"I missed it by 180 degrees. But it would've been easy to lie down and die, and I didn't. Those homers, they told me there's a God in heaven. They told me more about my character than my talent. You can't believe the pressure. You can't believe what it's like putting on that 44 and hearing them say, 'Go.' "



Reggie Jackson . . . Baffled

The easiest question in baseball is: What do you think of Reggie? Outside the Yankees, almost everyone has an opinion. Almost everyone prefaces his answer with this disclaimer: "I've always gotten along with him. When you get to know him, he's not a bad guy.

"The chocolate hot dog?" says Dock Ellis, briefly Jackson's teammate last season with the Yankees. "It's fashionable to knock Reggie, but down deep most guys are jealous of him."

"When it gets down to the nitty-gritty," says Paul Lindblad, a teammate at Oakland, "he comes to the top. There isn't a better pressure player in baseball."

"He can carry a team on his back," says Billy Hunter, "for a week to 10 days all by himself. The thing is, he doesn't adapt to a team; the team has to adapt to him."

"R. J., R. J.," says Claudell Washington, shaking his head. "He only cares about distance. Reggie never talks about the homers that just clear the fence; he's got to hit the longest ball ever. Got to be airport with Reggie, got to be out there on the airport runway. All he wants is for people to tell him, 'Buck, you're the strongest man that ever was.' Tell him that, and there's nothing he won't do for you. When he's going good, he's the best there is."

JACKSON ALTERNATES between calling these critiques compliments and knocking the men who speak evil of him. He begs to be understood for his complexities, yet he seems to need to put others into tidy boxes.

The criticism that bothers him most is Washington's—that he cares only for distance, that he could be a more nearly complete player if his ego weren't so invested in going downtown. Washington is not alone in this feeling; Billy Hunter, Jim Palmer and Catfish Hunter say the same thing.

"It's hard for me to grasp," Jackson says, turning the Rolls off Alligator Alley onto Route 29 North, to Fort Myers. "I think it's my job to hit the long ball; whether I want to hit it 500 feet instead of 350, I struggle with. I'll take 40 or 50 homers that just clear a fence. But I can't hit .350 with 17 homers and 75 RBIs and be the asset I can be at .285 with 35 homers and 110 RBIs. That's me, what I want to do.

"But I'll tell you this: For me to play nine innings a game and play every day for a manager like Billy Martin, I have to be a more complete player; he demands that. I've been working my butt off this spring to show him that I know I'm not too big to work on my defense and bunting. He makes me a better player."

Billy Martin, the magic name. The manager who almost fought with Jackson on national television in a dugout in Boston.

"Compared to last year, this year is heaven," says Martin.

Amen, says Jackson. All he wants to do is play ball.

This year his relationship with Martin is better. His relationship with Munson is better, by so much that they talk now; they could even go to dinner together should either care to. His relationship with all the Yankees is better. They've had a full season to realize who he is and how he acts and to get used to him.

WHAT MOST OF them learned in one season, Holtzman and Hunter had known for years. Holtzman and Hunter like him.

"Last year the players didn't understand how Reggie could have the kind of first half he had and still keep talking," says Hunter. "It was the same at Oakland."

"At Oakland, and at Baltimore," says Holtzman, who has spent the last six seasons as Jackson's teammate.

"You've got to disregard two-thirds of what you read in print that Reggie said," Hunter finds. "If you don't, he can really play with your head. Only about one-third matters anyway. The rest is just Reggie talking. What I think is that he tries too hard to be liked, and somewhere along the line it comes out wrong."

Jackson hears the words and seems to go into a trance.

"Yeah," he says. "Yeah, Cat's right."

This year, he says, it won't happen.

"I don't want turmoil," he says. "I'm going to do all I can to avoid turmoil, even if it means not standing up for my rights." He pauses for emphasis, in a sort of Jesse Jackson style. "First and foremost, I'm looking to stay out of trouble. Don't want nothing to do with it."

"But it'll find you, won't it?" he is asked.

"Always does," he says, exhaling ever so slightly as the Rolls pulls into the stadium lot at Fort Myers.

THE UNIFORM IS tight and tapered, and he is into it in 15 minutes, ready to go. But the ride and the conversation have done his insides dirty. Too much past dredged up. He needs something to keep his stomach down.

"There's the man," calls Dave Nelson, the Royal infielder, coming over to Jackson. "Congratulations, congratulations on a helluva World Series. You deserve it."

Behind Nelson comes John Mayberry, then the Royal slugger.

"Reggie!" Mayberry shouts.

"Rope, what's up?" Jackson says.

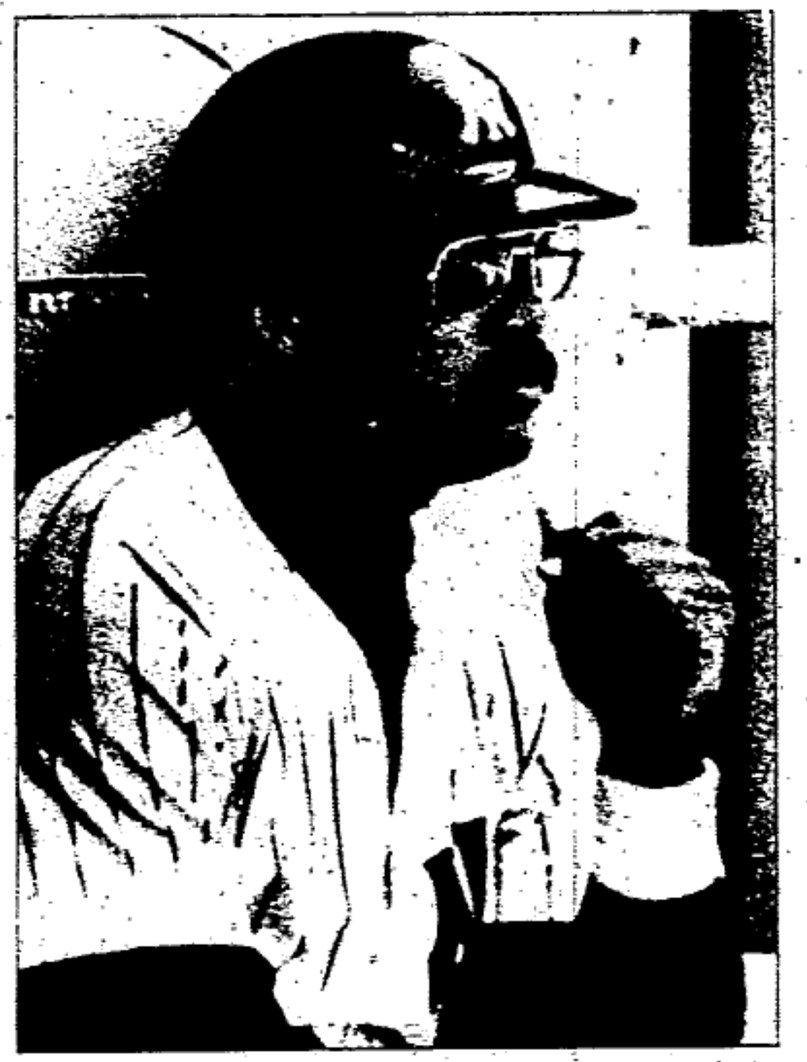
"You, man. You, with your bad self."

It is curious, but he seems most comfortable with members of other teams. With the Yankees, he is at his most comfortable at the batting cage, before games, when the other team's players are close. You sense that he is searching for vocal respect that only opposing players are willing to give him. It seems likely that still, even after his Ruthian World Series, some of his teammates are either too jealous or too stubborn to admit that they were wrong about his ability as a player.

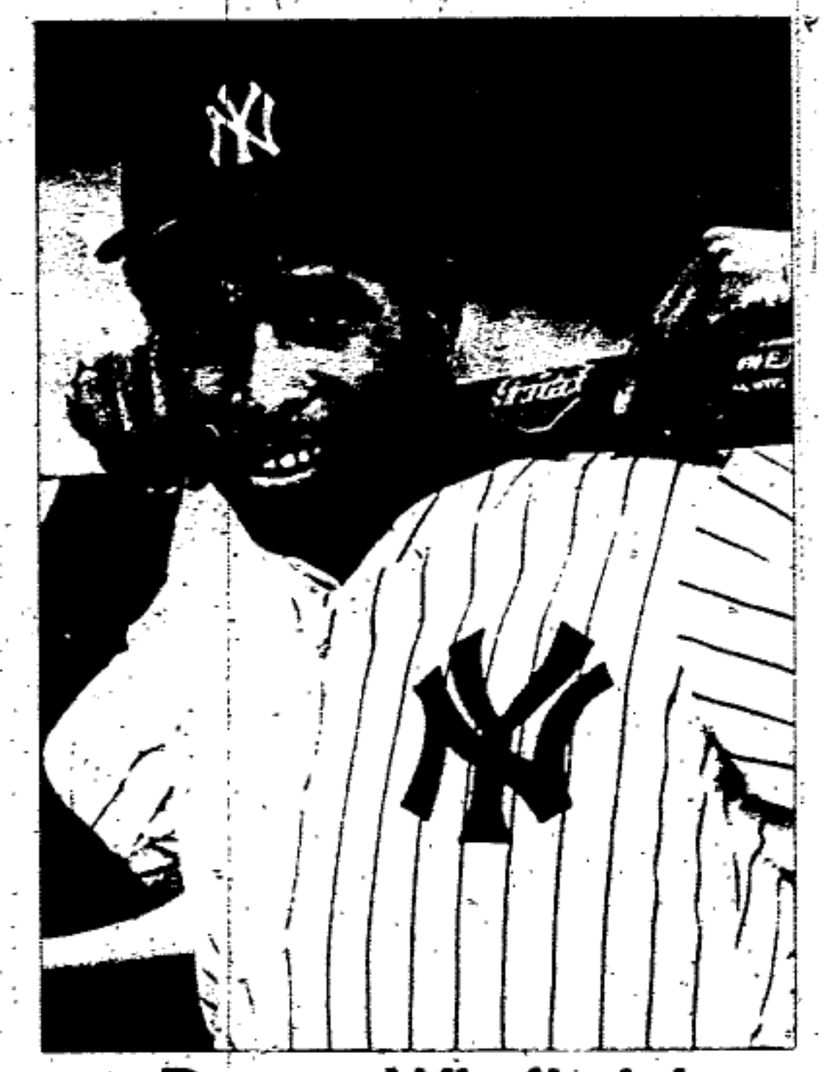
IN THE CLUBHOUSE Jackson is hesitant. Even now there is a tenseness between him and many other Yankees. Yet, it may well be that he implies more hostility than actually exists.

"In the locker room I don't feel like I'm one of the guys," he says. "It's hard for me to say this. I'd like to fit in, but I don't. I don't know if I'll ever really be allowed to fit in. I need to be appreciated, even praised. I like to hear: 'Nice going. Great going. You're a helluva ballplayer.' But I walk in feeling disliked. Maybe I'm overdoing it. Like I never get on anybody in the clubhouse unless it's a situation where it's obvious that it's okay for me to say something. I stay in the background. I never talk to too many people, except maybe Fran Healy or Ray, the clubhouse attendant, or the press.

(Continued on Page 22, Column 1)



The Battle Of New York



Reggie Jackson Vs. Dave Winfield

By JOSEPH DURSO

NEW YORK—The Battle of New York is about to unfold on a manicured, windy spring-training field 1,100 miles from Broadway when Dave Winfield arrives for work with the Yankees and asks Reggie Jackson to move over.

But the opening rumbles were heard the other day in Manhattan while Winfield raced through a series of business meetings, clearing the decks for his debut as the richest baseball player in the world: $1 million down plus $1.4 million a year for the next 10 years plus cost-of-living raises. And the message he sent was clear: he is not awed by New York, and the Yankees did not make him rich—only richer.

"I'm not coming here cold like some country bumpkin looking at the tall buildings," Winfield said in between huddles with bankers and real estate people. "I don't feel I'm visiting here. I'm here.

"I was doing okay before. When I went to negotiate my contract, I had my mink. I wasn't begging. I already had my Mercedes, my raccoons and coyotes, and my diamonds."

Not bad for an opening salvo. But now, for David Mark Winfield: the time has come to put it all together, words and music. Having made financial history, it's the hour for making some baseball history. And he must make it in the town where the Yankees won 32 American League pennants and 22 World Series without him, and where Reggie Jackson became the "straw that stirs the drink."

"The word," Winfield said, assessing his situation in clinical terms, "is challenge. I accept it readily. I know they can either love you or hate you here. But I'd rather face the challenge every day than not have the opportunity every day.

"In San Diego, I was the dominant player, the captain, the leader, the attraction. But we never had a good team in seven years, never. I only played 11 games of consequence for San Diego: seven opening-day games and four All-Star Games.

"But people in New York ask, will it work out? That's it. People here don't really know if I can play baseball. It's like Bob Watson: He hit and he did it all in Houston. But when he came to the Yankees, he had to do it all over again to prove the point. As for me, we'll find out."

People also will find out if Dave Winfield can play the money game and the celebrity game. Every month for the next 10 years, he will receive a check for more than $116,000. Every day during the baseball season, he will be reminded of it.

He will play near Jackson in the outfield. He will probably bat in front of Jackson or behind him in the lineup. He will compete with Jackson in the locker room, in the public eye and in the cast on stage for the ultimate rank: No. 1 man on the New York Yankees.

"Dave Winfield is my utility player," Manager Gene Michael quipped at the New York baseball writers' dinner. "He plays anyplace—anyplace he wants."

The Yankees greeted Winfield this winter like a hero, and why not? He executed the most clamorous walk in free-agent history, leaving the Padres at the age of 29 and auctioning his services for the biggest bundle on record. For an established star like Jackson, who has created World Series legends for the Yankees, all this figured to strengthen the team and skyrocket the salary scale.

Now the signing and the ceremony are past, and the time arrives to make it work. And there's the question, hanging over the Yankees as they gather for another spring: Is New York big enough for both Jackson and Winfield?

Winfield, 6 feet 6 inches tall, crisp and cool, considered the question in his suite in the Summit Hotel in Manhattan as he whirled through his final day of business transactions before taking a roundabout route to Florida.

Before he could answer, he was beaten to the punch by his agent, Al Frohman, 54 years old, 5 feet 4 inches short, somewhat rumpled, somewhat weary and indisputably emotional.

"Reggie has his way," Frohman said, leaping to the mark, "and that's his privilege. Dave has his own way. This city had Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth and John McGraw at the same time. New York has always harbored the key. It's strictly an attitude of getting along."

Winfield, sounding diplomatic but again not shrinking, then gave his own answer:

"New York is tremendously big, big enough for Reggie and me both. I don't see any hard in-fighting or animosity. I don't want to skirt the issue. But let me contribute to the team first."

Make no mistake: the situation is sticky, despite the brave words, and money makes it so. Dave Winfield did not sign for just a little more than Reggie Jackson; he signed for twice as much. And Jackson promptly made it clear to George Steinbrenner, chief dispenser of Yankee gold, that Winfield's treasure was now the model. So there they stand, only four years after Steinbrenner courted Reggie in the town's fine restaurants and paraded him through the midtown streets to stoke the ego of the man who became the Yankee honcho of the 1970s.

Now it's the 1980s, and here comes Dave Winfield with all that class, all that respect, all that money. After playing at the University of Minnesota, he was drafted by the Padres in baseball, the Vikings in football and both the Utah Stars and Atlanta Hawks in basketball. Eight years later, he again makes history with the granddaddy of contracts. But now the battle begins for the passion and the purse of New York, where Reggie reigns.

"When I became an athlete," Winfield said, tracing his route, "I became a businessman. I've known for a long time that this was the place to be. New York is the greatest.

"I felt it in 1973, when we were here in the NIT, our basketball team. We were playing Alabama or somebody in Madison Square Garden. Then suddenly Walt Frazier walked into the arena and stole the show, just by walking in. I thought: 'This is their man. They storm for him. Walt Frazier owns this town. This is the stage.'

"When I started coming here with the Padres, I got the same feeling. In 1979, we were playing the Mets in Shea Stadium and the scoreboard announced the results of the All-Star voting. I had the most votes, and I got a standing ovation. You identify with that.

"Then, when I came to New York back before the free agent draft in November, I went to the Garden one night for a basketball game and bought some ice cream. But the vendor recognized me and wouldn't take the money. The guy just threw me the ice cream and said: 'Remember the Mets on Thursday.' Then a kid shouted: 'Either the Mets or the Yankees, but come here.'

"I know fans are fickle, and there's no amount of money worth the abuse the media can hand out here. You can make a guy or break a guy. In San Diego, when it got bad, I didn't read the newspapers for a while. Here, it's a challenge, and I accept it."

Winfield has what you would call an extravagant track record in accepting challenges. At Minnesota, he won 13 games and lost only one as a pitcher in his senior year, hit more than .400 as an outfielder and was voted the most valuable player in the College World Series. He also starred on the basketball team and, although he skipped football, he still was drafted as a tight end by the Vikings.

"Football was out of the question," he remembered. "It just wasn't my game. I contemplated pro basketball but, from the time I was a little boy and people asked me what I wanted to be, I always said a professional baseball player."

That was fine with the Padres, who promptly picked him in the amateur draft and ticketed him straight to San Diego with no detour to the minor leagues.

"Two days after I signed," he said, "I was in a uniform in center field. It was strange because I'd always been an American League fan, growing up in St. Paul and following the Twins. You know, Harmon Killebrew and Zoilo Versalles, they were my guys."

The first three times he went to bat in the National League, he grounded out. The fourth time, he drilled one to third base and the ball knocked the glove from the third baseman's hand. He outran a high throw to first, and had his first hit in the big leagues. The next day, he went 3-for-4 with a home run, and then hit safely in four more games for a streak of six.

No dice. Life isn't that simple. After that, the hot rookie took an 0-for-21 collar, and "they sat me down." So for a while, he ran up some big telephone bills calling his mother and brother back in St. Paul, agonizing over the long and short of life in the bigs.

But he survived that challenge, too. He finished that brief summer with 39 hits in 56 games, became a regular the following year, hit 20 home runs and agonized no more. That was in 1974, two years before the free agent revolution. At about the same time, something else happened to Winfield. He met Albert S. Frohman, a onetime musician and kosher-food caterer from New York, and a remarkably close relationship took shape, player and agent, almost father and son.

"In 1977," Frohman said, describing a milestone on their road to riches, "David's contract was up for renewal, and we figured we were going from $47,000 to $100,000. But people said, 'Don't rock the boat.' He could've become a free agent then. We finally asked for three years at $525,000. They offered three at $500,000, and said, 'Not a penny more.' We signed for four years at $1.4 million."

"A long time ago," Winfield said, "Al told my mother, 'Your son will be making millions.' We knew we'd be dealing in millions."

Now they are in New York, dealing in many millions.

"Now," Winfield said, "I've got to put all this behind me and play ball. But I can do it. The reason for a lot of my success as an athlete is that I could separate things in my mind and body. It's an old philosophy: separate your home from your work. And I'll start doing it now."

"New York is a Mecca," Frohman intoned. "It's a Mecca."

Also a gold mine, and maybe soon a battlefield.

Flood Hit Famine Just One Of Nats' Many Headaches

By MERRELL WHITTLESEY

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Spring training is part work-time and part fun-time, good for conditioning and window dressing for baseball. But as soon as the bell rings, Ted Williams throws the exhibition records into the waste basket.

"We've got to find out some things," the manager of the Senators said as his club stumbled into the second week of the season, and he meant finding out under game conditions.

Ted maneuvered and shifted, benched and unbenched and spotted players in the batting order where you'd least expect them.

He had a talk with Curt Flood, who had three hits, two of them bunts, in his first 20 times at bat. In the fifth game of the season, Flood made the last out in the eighth inning. When he looked to the bench for somebody to bring his glove and glasses, he looked in vain. He was being replaced.

Flood did not return to the lineup for almost a week.

"This is no big thing," Williams said. "I told Curt we needed runs and we're not scoring them with him in there. He has a great attitude. He understands. He'll be back."

The Senators by no means were giving up on Flood, but there was disappointment as he seldom moved the ball beyond the infield.

Owner Bob Short had a forlorn look as he watched the regulars take batting practice while Flood was shagging balls with the irregulars.

"He can still do it," Short said, "but even if he doesn't, I'd make the same move again," meaning getting Flood to return to baseball for a $110,000 salary at the cost of three non-roster players.

Rookie shortstop Toby Harrah also was not producing after his great start in the opener, but Williams was more patient with a 22-year-old than with a player 10 years older.

Tim Cullen was the only other shortstop, but more than that, Ted did not want to kill Toby's spirit.

"We may have to suffer with him for a while, for he's the key to our club," Ted said.

Harrah Needs Tutoring

A wise scout noted that Harrah was not doing little things, like moving toward second when the pitchers were working on right-handed hitters by pitching them outside. Harrah could use some help here from the other infielders and the bench.

Tim Cullen and Jim French have been eighth-place hitters most of their careers. About the only time they did not hit in the No. 8 spot was when both were in the lineup.

Williams created a few shock waves when he put French in the sixth spot and Cullen No. 2. When asked about it, Ted snapped, "Who would you have put there?"

The manager's reasoning on Cullen was that despite his .209 and .214 averages of the last two years, Tim gets good wood on the ball, can bunt and hit and run.

Ted had a smug look when Cullen had two hits in each of his first two games as the No. 2 hitter.

Williams said he almost batted Frenchie, his 5-7 catcher, behind the leadoff hitter.

On Base Often

"So he batted .211 last year, he still had the second best on-base-per-time-at-bat ratio on our club because of his walks. He doesn't strike out. He could be a second-place hitter because he can move the ball around and hit behind the runner."

French said he would welcome an advance in the batting order.

"I'll guarantee you that hitting ahead of the pitcher costs you 30 points a season," Jim said. "With a key runner on base, you never get a good pitch.

"Do you mean to tell me I would not get a better selection of pitches to hit if I was hitting ahead of Frank Howard, with Mike Epstein next?"

Williams also wanted to find out about Richie Scheinblum.

"He had one of the best records in the high minors last year, certainly better than anybody in our organization," Ted said. "He can switch-hit, run a little, his arm is okay and so is his fielding. We have to see what he can do."

Unser Back in Action

Del Unser was back in the lineup after sitting out the first five games as Williams tried to keep everybody happy. Ted's dream is to have eight players who would play every day but, in the meantime, he experiments and moves people around and he keeps trying.

"We've got to find out a lot of things, about Denny Riddleberger, about a lot of people," Ted said, as he kept trying.

Senators' Slants: Williams was so peeved when umpire Ron Luciano at first would not help out plate umpire Bill Kunkel on a checked swing strike against the Red Sox that Williams kicked dirt in Luciano's direction. Ted maintained his perfect record of never having been thrown out of a game, however. He was in front of the dugout and Luciano well back of the bag, about 50 feet away. . . . One of the saddest baseball fans in Washington is Ricardo Sosa, 10-year-old son of the ambassador from Venezuela, Julio Sosa. Ricardo was seriously injured in an auto accident and will spend much of the summer in Georgetown Hospital.

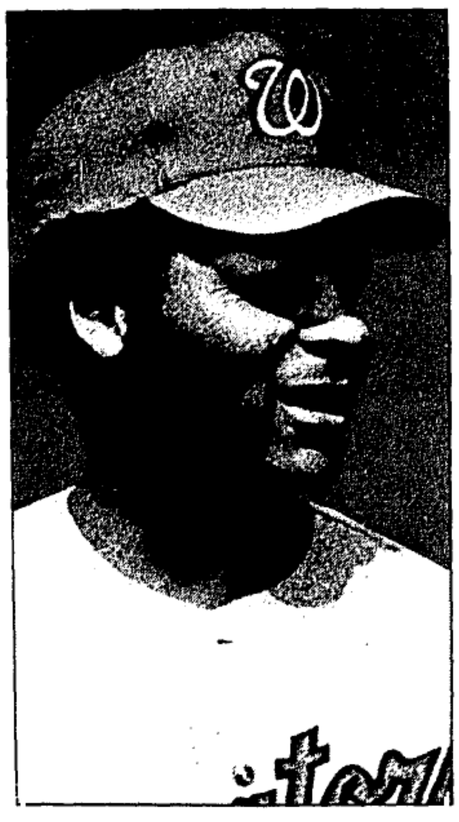
It was 71 games before a pinch-hitter won a game for the Senators last year. In the first week, Tom McCraw won one with a home run and Bernie Allen with a bases-loaded single. . . . Short took the Touchdown Club's welcome home luncheon by surprise when he said he was cutting ticket prices in half and had just completed a big trade with Calvin Griffith. When he added about 10 names to Frank Howard, the audience knew it was a practical joke, but for a couple of minutes Short had them guessing. . . . Denny McLain's second start found the Red Sox getting to him for home runs by Duane Josephson and Carl Yastrzemski, and Denny also balked a run home in defeat. . . . The Senators topped 100,000 for their first four playing dates, including opening day, McLain's debut and a doubleheader with the Yankees.

Frustrated Foy Pleased To See Home Stand End

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Frustrated Joe Foy, anxious to start stockpiling some home runs, was happy to see the Senators' home stand draw to a close April 14.

The Washington third baseman, hitting the ball for distance but still without a homer, drew consolation from a .400 batting average.

Foy was robbed of a homer by right fielder Reggie Smith's super catch in a 5-3 loss to the Red Sox. Smith timed his jump and cleared the fence, banging his left side against the top of the wall as he came down.



Curt Flood

Wells Twombly

The Puzzling World of Reggie Jackson

OAKLAND, Calif.—The atmosphere is so plastic that it has a tendency to turn an already soft young mind into oatmeal mush. The lights are blinding, the crowd so shrill and so fickle. The writers aren't any different. Hit a few home runs and they come clustering around your dressing stall after the game, grinning like savages with some new tribal totem.

They poke and they prod. They act like a squadron of long-lost uncles. They ask so many embarrassing, personal questions that eventually you get the urge to tell them something exotic. You aren't from Philadelphia at all. You never went to Arizona State University. You were captured by Chinese pirates as a small boy. Somehow you escaped. You were raised in the canebrake by an old mama lion. A Tibetan lama taught you how to hit the curve ball.

The only trouble is that some of them would write it that way and you'd be years living it down. Being a super hero has its privileges, too. The public address announcer can make the name Reggie Jackson sound like it has 17 syllables. The customers applaud the minute you get off your haunches in the on-deck circle. The opposing pitcher starts measuring the side of your head for a fast ball in case you get too smart with the bat.

All a young man has to do to get smothered in glory is (a) hit 47 home runs one long, lovely summer and (b) get his handsome features spread all over the cover of the nation's leading sports weekly. And the fame will last just as long as he continues to hit 47 home runs a season and as long as he keeps getting his profile reprinted in THE SPORTING NEWS. But ease up for awhile and endure the agony Reggie Jackson suffered through in 1970 and see how long it takes for reporters to forget what number you wear.

It started with a violent disagreement over salary with Oakland Athletics' Owner Charlie Finley. Somehow Jackson thought all that attention he received was worth $60,000. The man who holds his contract disagreed. Finley pointed out that when Reggie was a senior at Arizona State, he collected over $95,000 in bonus money from the A's and since that time business hadn't been that good. Jackson snorted and held out. Not to be upstaged, Finley did the same. The impasse became public.

Even though Jackson eventually accepted $47,000 in salary, plus a year's lease on a $400-a-month apartment in Oakland, the hassle didn't end. Reggie forgot how to hit and, characteristically, Finley took it personally. There was a lot of lunatic talk about sending the kid down to Des Moines for a couple of punitive rides on a minor league bus.

Depression, Confusion, Rebellion

First Jackson grew depressed. Then he got confused. Finally he became rebellious.

"Baseball isn't all home runs and cheers," he observed one evening last summer at the Oakland Coliseum. "It's strikeouts and boos. I think of leaving baseball. I don't suppose I really have the guts for it, though. There's too much about the game I love. The idea of leaving it makes me sad."

Late in the season, Jackson hit a pinch home run. Angrily, he stomped around the bases. After he crossed the plate, he looked up toward the owner's box, made an improper gesture and told Finley to do something that was not only obscene, but physically impossible. Several days later, the boss demanded a public apology. Jackson agreed that Finley had one coming.

Eventually the whole ugly episode passed. Jackson went off to lick his wounded psyche in Puerto Rico where Frank Robinson spends his winters practicing to be the major leagues' first Negro manager. Whatever the therapy, Jackson snapped out of his trance and broke the league record for home runs. He reported to Arizona full of renewed passion this spring.

"There's nothing I like better than hitting a ball hard—clean and hard," he said. "The feel and the sound of it . . . it's just beautiful. I love putting on that tapered uniform and going out there in front of people."

So, in his first dozen times at bat after the regular season started, Reggie struck out swinging on eight occasions. The clientele complained and the writers stayed away. Well, nobody guaranteed life was going to be perfect.

"There was a time when I dreamed of being part of a dynasty built by Mr. Finley, of being part of a team which would get so strong it could just roll over other teams the way Baltimore does. I could see us filling the Coliseum with excited fans," he said. "Now all I dream of is having a good season and helping the A's get close enough to have a shot at the World Series. We don't have to steamroll anyone as long as we win a pennant."

There is no denying now that the instant heroism of two summers ago created far more agony than joy. Jackson never really wanted it to happen quite that way. It came so fast he had trouble coping with it. The home runs kept flying, usually in pairs, and the writers kept finding new adjectives.

Bad Experience May Be Helpful

"I really wanted to just make steady progress until I was as good a player as I could be. But I was only 23 when it happened. Maybe last summer was good for me.

"Maybe it helped me grow up. I've always tried too hard. Maybe now I can relax and settle down," he said.

"I used to have a problem with my temper. I'd get mad at myself in college and my coach would talk me into using some self-control."

So when Jackson took all that money and turned professional, the tenderhearted instructors in the Athletics' minor league schools put him down for being too easy-going. "Show some fire out there, kid," they said. "Let's see some temper." It is no wonder Reggie Jackson wonders what kind of world he sold himself into.

"It hasn't been all bad with Mr. Finley. People ought to know that," he said. "He invested some of my bonus money for me. The original sum has grown. I could quit baseball at 25 and do well enough in the real estate business."

Now the critics write deep think pieces about Reggie Jackson, stuff that produces those heavy headlines in sports magazines: "Reggie Jackson At The Crossroads!" and "Reggie Jackson—Pro or Con?"

It is the sort of twaddle that used to bedevil Joe Pepitone before the Yankees unloaded him.

"What kind of guy am I?" Jackson said. "I'm thin-skinned and afraid of being hurt. I'm basically a loner and I sometimes pop off to keep people from getting too close. I've hurt a lot of people's feelings."

So now Reggie Jackson struggles again to live the unrealistic life of a super hero. The money is good. The hours are short. But the agony is enough to melt a man's brain. Hit a home run and they cheer. Strike out and they boo. It is all so simple, yet so devastating.

Yanks Have New Leader–Reggie

By PHIL PEPE

NEW YORK–The change has occurred slowly, almost imperceptibly. It was not planned, it just seemed to happen. Right there, before your very eyes, Reggie Jackson has begun to emerge as a leader for the New York Yankees.

Leadership is not something that comes in the morning mail. You can't buy it at the supermarket or order it from a catalogue. It just happens. And it seems to be happening to Reggie.

In his fourth year as a Yankee, Jackson is quietly taking on leadership qualities. It dovetails, not coincidentally, with the passing of Thurman Munson and the departure of Billy Martin.

At first Reggie didn't understand. At first he resisted. But in three years, Jackson came to accept, and respect, Munson as the Yankee leader. And Martin's personality suppressed Jackson, keeping him from total emergence.

Reggie's coming-out party came this year, starting with his involvement in the player union as the team's player representative. And it reached its peak on a warm and lazy Sunday afternoon in Minnesota.

Batting in the second inning, Jackson hit the deck as an 0-2 fastball from Jerry Koosman came hurtling toward his noggin. Two pitches later, Jackson answered Koosman back with a shot into the center-field seats, some 443 feet away.

The feeling, Reggie said, as he glided around the bases, was "very exhilarating." The feeling as he came into the Yankee dugout was even better. There, pouring out of the dugout to greet him, were all of his teammates. They were paying him homage, showing their respect for his courage in picking himself off the ground and hitting a home run. That's leadership.

It was their way of acknowledging what Reggie means to this team and it was a startling contrast to a dugout scene three seasons back. Jackson refused to shake his teammates' hands after a home run one night, and they practically ignored him.

But Jackson has come a long way, leading by example, and the dugout scene in Minnesota proved it.

"I was thrilled by it," Jackson admitted. "It showed what Reggie Jackson and the Yankees are now."

The word "now" was a pregnant punctuation. Decide for yourself what it meant. Did it mean without Billy Martin? Jackson was not saying.

By their actions, said Manager Dick Howser, the Yankees were showing their respect and appreciation for Jackson's effort.

"The good ones," said Howser, "Frank Robinson, Al Kaline, Mickey Mantle, they're better hitters when they get knocked down. Reggie is like that."

The idea of a Jerry Koosman knocking him down, Jackson says, "is to try to intimidate me, to break my concentration, to disrupt me, because I've been swinging the bat well."

He says he can recall hitting "seven or eight" homers after being knocked down. By now, you'd think, the word should have circulated that you don't intimidate a Reggie Jackson by knocking him down. It makes him better. He responds to a challenge as if he likes it.

"Reggie's such a money player," said pitcher Tommy Underwood. "He gets himself psyched up."

There is no question Reggie was psyched after Koosman's knockdown, ready to respond to the challenge. But like it?

"I don't LIKE it," he said, dismissing as absurd the idea anyone can like being thrown at. "I'm just glad I do well in a challenge. But I must not have convinced them. They keep putting me through the test."

The tests, he knows, will never stop, largely because he puts himself to the test. Self-motivation is one of his assets. Jackson knows what he means to the Yankees. So does Howser.

"We need Reggie," the manager says. "He's got to have a good year for us to win. He and a few other guys."

To Jackson, a good year would be 30 home runs and 90 to 100 RBIs. Those numbers would also help him reach personal goals. He wants to hit 500 homers and drive in 1,500 runs in his career and he'd like to reach 400 homers this season.

"If I get my 30 homers and 90 to 100 RBIs," he says, "that will put me at just about 400 homers (he started the season with 369) and it will help us win."

Winning has become very important for Reggie, even more so this year because last year he did not win. It's the old story of missing that which you no longer have and that's why he wants so badly to win again. It's also what comes from being a leader.

Yankee Doodles: Jackson's sixth homer of the season was No. 375 lifetime, passing Rocky Colavito and putting him in 23rd place on the all-time list. Norm Cash, at 377, is next. . . . Rick Cerone's inside-the-park homer in Minnesota was the Yankees' first since Mickey Rivers did it in 1978. . . . When Rudy May got a save against the Orioles in Baltimore, it was his first since May 3, 1974, also in Baltimore when he pitched for the California Angels.

Tommy John's victory in Minnesota was his first there since April 26, 1968. . . . Ron Guidry got his first decision of the season, a victory, in his fifth start, but he did not pitch especially well in beating the Twins. Asked if he was discouraged, Guidry said, "Not yet, but I'm getting there. I feel like I don't like to win those kind of games (9-6). For so long, it didn't happen to me and now that it's happening, I don't know what to do. I'll just have to keep on throwing, I guess.". . . The Pirates reportedly turned down a deal which would have sent Ed Figueroa in trade for disenchanted Bert Blyleven and asked for Guidry or John instead of the disenchanted Figueroa. . . . Oscar and Juanita Gamble became parents of a baby girl, their first child. . . . On the same day, Bonnie Guidry gave birth to a boy, the Guidrys' second child and the couple's first son.

Former major leaguer Bill (Moose) Skowron, who averaged .282 and hit 211 home runs and drove in 888 runs in 14 seasons with the Yankees, Dodgers and White Sox and played in eight World Series, has been elected to the National Polish-American Hall of Fame in Orchard Lake, Mich. Other 1980 honorees are Zig Czarboski, an All-America at Notre Dame in 1947 and a member of the Collegiate Football Hall of Fame; and the late Bob Gutowski, silver medalist in the pole vault at the 1956 Olympics. They are to be inducted June 13 on the campus of St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake.

Jake Gibbs . . . Best No. 2 Catcher in Baseball?

Gibbs' Bat Mark Rises As His Weight Shrinks

By JIM OGLE

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — When Jake Gibbs was a football and baseball All-America at Ole Miss, he never even thought about being second best at anything.

Now that many rate him the "best No. 2 catcher in baseball," Gibbs thinks about it, but doesn't relish the idea. Gibbs is giving it his best shot.

"Except for the fact that I didn't catch as much," Jake admitted, "last season was perhaps my most enjoyable in pro ball. It's been a battle right from the start, but I got going good last year and managed to keep going all the way. It was a fun year, although it would have been more so had I played more."

Ralph Houk, who rates Gibbs highly as a defensive catcher, feels that Jake's batting average went up in proportion to his weight decline. Be that as it may, Gibbs hit .300 for the first time since college as he dropped his poundage to 176.

"I became weight conscious," Gibbs admitted. "I stopped eating fats and starches to drop four or five pounds. I felt so good at that point that I just kept the weight down. During the season, I dropped 14 pounds down to 176, which I had not hit since my college days.

No Loss of Strength

"I noticed that my reflexes were quicker, but that I hadn't lost any strength. I still felt strong and, in fact, my legs felt better than in many years. I don't think catching less had anything to do with that, but just carrying less weight.

"I had become quite discouraged about things in general," Gibbs said. "I had started to think about packing it in and working fulltime as assistant football coach at Ole Miss. In 1968 and 1969, I did pretty well at bat until September, then tailed off badly. It's no fun to be a .213 or .224 hitter.

"For some reason, I came to spring training in 1970 in a good frame of mind. I knew Thurman (Munson) was going to be the catcher unless all signs were wrong. I told myself that this was it, so either be happy with it or get out.

"Things went along in great style all through spring training. I left Florida in a great frame of mind, especially because of the way I had been hitting. I found I had stopped pressing, perhaps for the first time since I became a catcher.

"I refused to worry when I didn't get a hit," Jake continued. "I just tried to keep swinging, but to be more selective in the pitches I swung at. I was relaxed and happy.

"There were a lot of things that made me happy last year. Hitting .301 was a personal thrill, primarily because I always had told myself I wasn't as bad a hitter as my record said. Hitting a career high in homers (8) was also a kick, but get-

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Deron Sees Sharp Power Pickup in Phils' New Park

By ALLEN LEWIS

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Connie Mack Stadium was rated a right-handed power hitter's paradise. Its double-decked left field stands, 334 feet from the plate at the foul line, provided an inviting target.

You might think the Phillies' leading slugger, righthanded first baseman Deron Johnson, would be shedding a few tears over the club's move from the old park to new Veteran's Stadium, where the distances to the fences are greater.

That's not the case, however. In fact, Johnson thinks Philadelphia's new all-purpose stadium with its AstroTurf surface will help hike his 1970 totals of 27 homers, 93 runs batted in and a .256 average.

"I'd like to hit 30 homers, bat in over 100 runs and hit about .280," Johnson said shortly after his arrival in training camp. "And I think I can do it, especially in the new park.

"AstroTurf should help me get more hits because ground balls really go through the infield. I hit a lot of balls up the middle and more of them should make it this time.

Temptation to Pull

"I think the new park will help me in homers, too. In the old park, that left field caused you to try to pull the ball too much.

"I'm a better hitter when I just hit straightaway instead of trying to pull everything. In the new park, I can hit balls out in right center. The scoreboard stopped a few in the old one."

As for the runs batted in, Johnson thinks he'll have more chances this year.

"I think our guys will get on base more this year. (Larry) Hisle is going to have a better year and we'll have (Tim) McCarver all season, which is going to help. We can't have all those injuries again.

"The main thing for me is to keep from getting hurt. Except for a few minor things, I didn't have any injuries last year, and that's the first time that's happened in a long while.

"I'd like to play every game, but I think I can play 150 easy if nothing happens," said Johnson, who played in 159 last year, equaling his career high.

Fast Start Essential

"There are a couple of other things I'd like to do this year, too. One is to get off to a good start. I had the bad start last year when I hit the ball pretty good, but all I got in the beginning were home runs. Then, too, I'd like to cut down on my strikeouts."

Johnson, who had the unusually high total of 15 game-winning RBIs in 1970, batted under .200 while hitting 10 homers in 47 games through May. For the season, he struck out 132 times.

"That's too many strikeouts," he said. "If I can cut that down, it should help my RBIs. I should get a few more hits, too."

An added aid this season may be the presence of hitting coach Wally Moses while the Phillies are at home.

"He's my man," Johnson said. "He was a coach with the Yankees when I was there. Elston Howard, Wally and I used to sit around a lot and talk hitting. And we spent a lot of time in the cage, too. He can spot what you may be doing wrong."

Always Ready to Play

The pride Johnson takes in his job is demonstrated by his physical condition upon reporting to training camp. He began working out at the start of January.

"I weight 200 right now," he said at the start of spring training. "That's 10 pounds under what I played at last year and what Frank (Manager Frank Lucchesi) set for me to report at, too.

"Maybe I'll steal about 10 bases this year," added Deron with a laugh. "Might give me one or two infield hits anyway."

Although he's been playing baseball for 15 years, Johnson won't be 32 until midseason, and he expects to play for a good while longer.

"They're going to have to cut the uniform off me," he said. "But if I can have five more good years, I'll be happy. When you get over 30, you have to start thinking about the future because you can't play forever.

A Great Occupation

"I'd like to be a coach when I can't play any more," said Johnson, who is well-fixed financially from outside interests. "Baseball is a great way to make a living. This has to be the greatest life in the world."

Johnson feels that way even though he's now playing in Philadelphia, a city which has been called a bad place to play.

"I know a lot of guys have knocked Philly," Deron said, "but I can't. I like playing there.

"The Phillies have treated me good, too," Johnson added. "Now with the new stadium, it's going to be better than ever."

Phillie Fodder: Infielder Terry Harmon banged out six hits on his first six trips to the plate in the Phillies' first Grapefruit League game, but was upset because of his two errors, the second helping the Pirates score the winning run in the 11th inning of an 18-17 slugfest. . . . Veteran Jim Bunning was sharp in his first outing of the spring, although he said he never did get really loose in the cold weather. . . . Rookie Roger Freed made an immediate hit with the Phillies. He not only swung a strong bat, but showed he knows how to play right field, too. . . . Pitcher Billy Champion, one of the club's borderline hurlers, could be the spring surprise.

Deron Johnson, Phils, Slides Home Safely Ahead of a Throw to the Pirates' Manny Sanguillen.

A Fluke? Tenace's HR Bat Is for Real!

By RON BERGMAN

OAKLAND—He exploded onto the national sports scene last October.

His first two times up in the World Series, he homered. Before it all was over and the Athletics had tensed their way to the world championship of baseball, he had two more homers and nine runs batted in, eight more than any other player on his team, or for that matter, his more famous counterpart on the Reds, Johnny Bench.

Whatever happened to Fury Gene Tenace?

Well, to paraphrase an old one-liner about W. C. Fields, Tenace is alive and sober in Oakland.

IN FACT, SO FAR this season, he's proved to be more genuine than the team itself. That might be somewhat of a surprise.

After all, the compact, muscular catcher hit only five homers and batted .235 as a part-time player last year for the A's before catching fire in the Series.

Then, during the winter, Charlie Finley dealt away A's home-run leader Mike Epstein to the Rangers and announced that Tenace would become his first baseman. Finley also predicted that Tenace could hit 35 homers this season.

The pressure was on. But Tenace didn't seem to feel it. At the beginning of May, he was hitting .300 and leading the American League with eight homers.

"I don't worry about pressure," Tenace said. "What I did in the World Series is something I've just got to forget and put out of my mind entirely.

"THE WORLD SERIES was last year. This is this year. Of course, there are times when I can't help myself and I think back to it. I'm sure with the way things are going with the team now, a lot of guys think back to the Series."

As the official, car-winning hero of the 1972 World Series, the 26-year-old Tenace hasn't exactly been deluged with endorsements or offers for personal appearances.

He remains an affable, small-town young man, as pleasant and sincere a person as he was before nationwide television made him a recognized sports star. About the only special request he's made since then is for a change of number from 38 to his high school 18. Granted.

Actually, he doesn't need any more of a reminder of what the Series meant to him than the words, "Tenace 3," written daily on the A's lineup card.

"I don't think I'd be playing regularly here if it hadn't been for the World Series," Tenace said.

"YOU DON'T KNOW what a great feeling it is to come to the park every day and know you're going to play. All I ever wanted was the opportunity to play every day and now I've got that opportunity.

"It's just a completely different feeling knowing I'm going to be in the lineup instead of on the bench for maybe half a game and then in there maybe pinch-hitting.

"I never knew what to do with myself on game days, whether to rest or go swimming or something. Now I get my rest."

Tenace always has been agreeable and cooperative. He started out as an infielder in 1965 and moved to the outfield when it was decided that would be better for him. But the A's were well-stocked with outfielders and Gene wasn't making the world forget about Tris Speaker.

IN 1968, HE SHIFTED to catcher and immediately made the Carolina League All-Star team.

Because Dave Duncan was in the Marine Reserves in 1969, Tenace began making monthly weekend appearances with the big club. Hank Bauer, then the A's manager, liked Tenace's swing so much, he tried to keep him in the majors.

"I remember the first three pitchers I faced when I was called up," Tenace said. "First there was Sam McDowell when he still was throwing good for the Indians. He collared me. Then Luis Tiant. I got a single off him for my first major league hit.

"Then there was Denny McLain, who'd won 30 games the year before for the Tigers. He collared me. Then there was Earl Wilson. I hit my first major league home run off him in Tiger Stadium."

THEN CAME 1970, the mental turning point for Tenace. Duncan went away for a month of reserve summer camp duty and Tenace stepped in. During the last month of the season, Gene hit .305 with seven homers and 20 RBIs.

"That's when I knew I could hit up here," Tenace said. "I had that good month and I caught Vida Blue's no-hitter."

Duncan had put the blast on Finley near the end of the '70 campaign and some felt that marked the end of the line for the big catcher. But Dick Williams took over as manager and quickly patched up the situation.

Nevertheless, Tenace managed to emerge later in the season to catch both Blue's and Catfish Hunter's 20th victories. He hit .274 with seven homers and 25 RBIs in 179 at-bats.

Before the 1972 season, Williams laid down some qualifications for his starting catcher to fulfill during spring training. Tenace met every one, but Duncan opened the season behind the plate.

THE TWO CATCHERS alternated for a few games, then Duncan took over with a home-run spree. Tenace patiently bided his time, although he wasn't happy about it.

"I don't want to go through this one more season," Tenace said one day. "If I can't play, I want to be traded."

Two or three times, Tenace went into the manager's office to ask for more playing time.

"Even when he wasn't playing," Williams remembered. "Geno didn't moan or gripe. He's always had a great attitude. When he came into see me, he just wanted to say that he wanted a chance to get in there a little more."

TENACE FINALLY got his chance one month from the end of the season when Duncan went into a slump that Williams thought also affected his catching. Tenace didn't set the world on fire, but the A's regained their division lead with him behind the plate.

When the season ended, Finley said a sore right shoulder Tenace had played with made it impossible for him to catch at the start of the season. Hence, the trade of Epstein.

When Duncan was holding out this spring, however, Finley announced that Tenace's shoulder had healed and he could catch. And catch Tenace did for a few exhibition games, which didn't please him because he wanted to learn his new position.

When the A's sent Duncan to the Indians along with George Hendrick, Tenace returned to first base. He's looked more comfortable there with every passing day.

"I feel good playing at first base," Tenace admitted. "It was just a matter of getting out there and playing the position.

"THE ONLY THING that's bothered me is getting over to the bag fast enough. I'll have to work on that. The infielders want to get rid of the ball as fast as they can and I want to be over there so they don't have to wait to make their throws."

But no one is worried about Tenace's fielding. It's his bat that does the loudest talking.

"It's too early to say I'm surprised by his hitting so far," said his roommate, Sal Bando. "He's capable of hitting over 20 homers and .280 with 80 ribbies.

"We haven't been bothered by a lot of phone calls to the room. There hasn't been the same sort of concentrated media as there was in the Series.

"At the Series, they always expect someone like Johnny Bench to do something big because everybody knows he can do it. That puts the pressure on him because he tries so hard. Guys like Geno, who're capable of doing it without many writers knowing about it, can go about their business without the pressure of being bothered."

WILLIAMS CALLS ANY homers Tenace hits "a plus because you don't consider him a home-run hitter. He's a line-drive hitter."

Tenace just laughs at comparisons with sluggers such as Richie Allen, Henry Aaron and Bench.

"Those guys will get their 40," Tenace said. "I'll take what I can get.

"But I'll tell you something. Ever since that last month in 1970, I've known I can hit up here. I've always had the confidence I could hit. As long as I'm in the lineup, I'm going to produce."

Tenace thought about that for a moment as if a little embarrassed when he said it.

"Well," he said "that's the way I feel."

Gene Tenace . . . He Doesn't Look Back.

New Rule, New Role: Johnson Enjoying Both

By RON BERGMAN

OAKLAND—"Deron Johnson is the designated hitter we've been looking for," said A's Manager Dick Williams.

In the first four games with the A's after coming over from the Phils, the 33-year-old veteran was 8-for-19, or .421, with seven runs batted in.

"I guess I'm sort of getting used to it," Johnson said about his new role with the new rule. "It seems I'm coming up to bat every inning here and there are men on base.

"I didn't see much of that with the Phils. It's fun."

IT TOOK A short time for the righthanded slugger to adjust. He reported to his new club in Cleveland and started heading for the outfield when batting practice started.

"Hey, Deron," coach Irv Noren yelled, "regulars hit first here."

The first time he came up, Johnson singled in two runs. It wasn't much of a hit—the soft liner barely made it past a drawn-in infield—but it was a lot more than what was happening with the A's before he arrived.

Johnson was stranded on second and waited there momentarily.

"I EXPECTED someone to come out with my mitt," said Johnson, now a first baseman by fielding trade. "I just kept looking for someone to throw my helmet, too. Then I realized I could take it to the dugout myself.

"I talked to a couple of guys. They said if you're the designated hitter, you've got to do more running before games. Normally, you can keep in pretty good shape just running to and from your position."

Johnson said he would like to play in the field on occasion just to keep his hand in, but that seemed unlikely unless something happened to either league home-run leader Gene Tenace or catcher Ray Fosse. If Fosse were injured, then Tenace would catch.

DERON'S DEBUT almost was overshadowed by Williams' latest innovation in musical second basemen, a ploy that sprung last year from the fervid mind of Owner Charlie Finley.

Before the game, a few of the A's Latin-American players gathered around the lineup posted in the clubhouse.

"Hey, Marky! Look at this!" one of them shouted to Gonzalo Marquez.

"What's this?" Marquez said. "This some sort of a joke. Where's the skipper?"

Marquez was listed as batting in the No. 2 spot and playing second base. Marquez is a lefthanded first baseman. Visions of him trying to make the double-play pivot danced in a few minds.

WHAT WILLIAMS had in mind was to bat Marquez and then send Dick Green out to play second base. Then he would pinch-hit for Green and send Dal Maxvill out to play second, then pinch-hit for Maxvill and end up with Ted Kubiak at second base.

"Of course, you can do this only on the road," Williams explained. "I first saw this used by Bobby Bragan when I was in the Texas League (1948 through 1950). And I used it in the minors when I was at Toronto in 1966."

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Billy C. to Have Knee Surgery

By RON BERGMAN

OAKLAND—Athletics' outfielder Billy Conigliaro went on the disabled list May 8 in order to have an operation on his right knee to repair damaged inner cartilage.

Billy C., obtained in a delayed-action swap with the Brewers for Ollie Brown, began the season as the A's regular center fielder and was hitting .295. He said he hurt himself sliding into second base April 21 in a game against the Angels in Oakland.

"Hopefully, he can pinch-hit sometime between July 1 and July 15," Manager Dick Williams said, "and be available full-time in August."

Conigliaro said that the operation "will take a load off my mind. I couldn't play in the field with this knee and there was no use limping around out there.

"The doctor in Oakland says I'll be out for two months," Conigliaro said. "The doctor in Boston says one month. I think it will be more like five weeks but, of course, I've never been through this type of thing before."