

# THE ANGEL AND THE ASTRO

## Fred Lynn Gets A Ticket Home

By JOHN STREGE

PALM SPRINGS, Calif.—This is something new and Fred Lynn is excited. Sure, he has played in his home territory before, but always as a visitor, as a member of the Boston Red Sox.

Lynn played center field for the Red Sox for six years. But Boston was not his home, it was his office. He only worked there.

Home to Fred Lynn is Orange County, Calif., where he visited twice each summer with the Red Sox and lived each winter. Home was Placentia, Calif., and now is in Anaheim Hills.

So it is easy to understand why Lynn, at age 29, is excited, why he is approaching the 1981 season as enthusiastically as his rookie year of 1975.

For the first time in his professional career, Lynn will spend both his summers and winters at home, by virtue of a trade and a four-year, \$5.25 million contract Lynn signed with the California Angels.

"I would say he's an absolutely happy guy," said Rod Dedeaux, University of Southern California baseball coach who is Lynn's friend and former coach. "He's thrilled to be here. This is Utopia for him."

It is Utopia in that Lynn is able to play so close to where he chose to live. He can see Anaheim Stadium from the street on which his house is located. He can drive there in 10 minutes.

"It's going to be different," Lynn said. "I've never been able to do that."

Already, he is counting the benefits, his contract among them. He sets goals of playing in 150 or more games a year and batting .300 or better. Usually one leads to the other. "Every year I've been healthy I've had a good season," he said. By playing in Anaheim he has a better chance at both, he said.

"It's got to add points to my average. I'll stay stronger longer, because I'll be more relaxed. In the backyard at home we've got a swimming pool and waterfalls. It's very relaxing. It's like being up in the mountains."

Sans the East Coast cold.

"Playing in the cold leads to little nagging injuries," Lynn said. "This will be a big plus. Opening day in short sleeves. That never happens in the East."

Maybe most beneficial is the fact he no longer must concern himself and his family with moving three times a year: from California to Florida for spring training, to Boston and back to California.

With the Angels, he does not have to move. When spring training begins here, he has only to make an hour-plus drive to his second house in nearby Mission Hills.

"I would say he will be a lot happier person and will perform better as a result," Dedeaux said. "The fact that he is happy and can be home and have all the conveniences of home is a big factor, particularly for Fred. He's a homebody. He will play with real contentment."

It's not that Lynn ever was discontented in Boston. Not so, he said. But Boston fans were discontented with Lynn, at times.

There was 1976, the year after he batted .331, with 21 home runs and 105 runs batted in, and was named the American League's Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year. He began the season without a contract, seeking either more money or free agency. The Red Sox conceded and gave him a five-year pact reportedly worth \$2.1 million. He nearly won the A.L. Triple Crown in 1979, when he won the league batting title with a .333 average, hit 39 homers and had 122 RBIs.

In 1977 and 1980, when injuries prevented him from performing to the levels of excellence the fans had come to expect, there was grumbling that he wouldn't play hurt, or worse, play hard. "He won their respect, but not their heart," Ray Fitzgerald wrote in the Boston Globe recently.

"It was never a problem for me," Lynn said. "It was manifested by the press. I would never speak unless spoken to. I don't talk about my private life. I don't make a lot of statements. People don't know what I'm thinking because I don't show emotion."

"Sometimes fans are kind of fickle," Dedeaux said. "He's had some untimely injuries. He wants to play in the worst way. In college, you'd have to cut off his legs to keep him from playing."

"He isn't a type of ballplayer that's always in the paper for good or bad. He does his job in a super way, but in a quiet way."

"But this is a new era. He comes out here (to Anaheim) as a star. I predict he'll be a crowd favorite here. He's a Steve Garvey type. Steve Garvey is probably the most popular player in baseball. Fred will be the Angels' answer to



Fred Lynn... Angel in the outfield.



Astros Don and Daron Sutton.

Steve Garvey."

Maybe, but in a different way. Garvey tends to cultivate his image; Lynn comes by his naturally.

It is natural that Lynn be accepted and appreciated in Southern California. His background dictates it. He attended high school in El Monte, a Los Angeles suburb, and starred for three years at USC.

Lynn just as easily could have joined the Los Angeles Dodgers. At the winter meetings last December, the Dodgers had conditionally agreed on a trade for Lynn, the condition being that they sign him to a long-term contract.

Lynn, who had one year left on his Boston contract, said he was interested only in renegotiating the one year. The deal was nixed.

Less than two months later, while in the midst of a contract grievance hearing (had he not dropped the grievance he would have won his free agency, as Carlton Fisk did), he had a change of heart.

Red Sox General Manager Haywood Sullivan contacted

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## Sutton Changes Color, Loyalty

By HARRY SHATTUCK

COCOA, Fla.—Don Sutton knew the routine well. Board a plane. Fly to Melbourne, Fla. Rent a car. Drive toward Interstate 95. Turn left. South. To Vero Beach. To Dodgertown.

For 15 springs, he had traveled to Dodgertown. For 15 summers, he had toiled effectively enough for Los Angeles to become the winningest pitcher (230 victories) in the Dodgers' storied history.

But those days are over. Sutton is with the Houston Astros now, thanks to a four-year, \$3.1 million contract he signed as a free agent last December.

"The first time the change really hit me was just after the airplane landed in Melbourne," Sutton says. "I drove toward that expressway and I almost automatically made the left turn to go to Vero Beach."

A right turn sent him to Cocoa-instead. To Astrotown. And he wasted no time letting everyone know his loyalty belongs to Houston now.

Oh, he did wear a blue T-shirt to his first Astros running drill. A Dodger blue T-shirt. And across the front, the inscription read: "I luv Dodgers." But crossing out the last word was a bold, dark line. And underneath, the new word in bright orange was "Astros."

"Understand, when I say 'we' now, I'm not talking about the Dodgers," Sutton said. "Those days are over."

He says he will not miss playing for Los Angeles. "But there are people over there I will miss. You don't spend 15 years in an organization and not create some vital relationships."

Already, however, he is building new relationships in Houston. From his first day at spring training, he was joining veteran Astros in their continual good-natured kidding. Taking and receiving.

"These are my heroes," he said as he put one arm around Joe Sambito, the other around Dave Smith and pointed to a third Astro reliever, Frank LaCorte. "These are the guys who are going to bail me out all year. Where am I taking you men to dinner tonight?"

"Jack, it's not fair," he prodded pitcher Joaquin Andujar, who hates the name Jack and was 11 days late reporting to camp. "It's not fair that Reggie Jackson showed up late and 97 reporters were waiting for him and you show up and there's only two writers and a cab driver. Wait a minute, Jack, I'll go call the TV stations."

There were the days when Sutton, having completed the team's required 12 minutes of running, continued without breaking stride toward a country road and another 20-minute jog. "He's really running to Vero," pitcher Joe Niekro said.

And there was the afternoon when a youngster handed Sutton a Joe Niekro baseball card to autograph. "I'm not Joe Niekro," he said. "Joe Niekro's old."

"I don't feel awkward here at all," he said even on the first day. "It almost feels natural because I've known most of these guys in the past and I've spent time with some in Houston this winter."

Sutton and his family have purchased a home in Houston and he will host a weekly television show there during the season. "I've always liked Houston," he says. "You can wear jeans there without people thinking you're trying to be stylish."

If his banter is light, his approach to playing baseball is all business.

"My training program for this season did not begin with the first day in Cocoa," he says. "It began Tuesday, October 7, the day after the Astros beat the Dodgers to win the West Division championship. I've found I have to work hard year-round. I do Nautilus work three days a week all winter and I run at least five out of seven days. I never take any time off. I average 30 miles a week running during the winter and the closer to spring training we get, the more I run."

"There seems to be more interest in conditioning now among athletes," he says. "There is more of an awareness of what exercise and diet and vitamin supplement can do. Baseball has come out of the dark ages. The old-fogey theories used to say never pick up a weight or you might pull a muscle."

"I got a letter from management several years back suggesting we do lots of walking in the off-season. I was somewhat of a radical in off-season conditioning. Now, most athletes realize an off-season program is vital."

"For me, spring training is not a time to get in shape. It's a time for enjoyment and to work on things that can help you during the season. I have fun at spring training. And maybe one reason is that I'm ready for it."

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# Healthy Nettles Settles Yank Doubts

By PHIL PEPE

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.—Graig Nettles stuck his hand in the freezer, pulled out a can of soda and proudly announced, "They named a candy bar after Reggie, but they named a soda after me."

The name of the soda was "Mello Yellow," and Nettles' reference was to the hepatitis that sidelined the New York Yankees third baseman for 67 games last season, the first time in 11 seasons he has played fewer than 145 games. Coming at the age of 35, it was an alarming turn of events. Only Nettles was unconcerned and the fact he could make jokes about his ailment is proof that he is back in form.

"My liver has cleared up and I feel good," said Nettles, 10 pounds lighter than he was last spring. "I played some tennis and a lot of golf during the winter. I didn't overdo it, but I felt good enough to know that I'll do okay. I'm glad I came back at the end last year. Otherwise I would have spent the whole winter wondering if I could come back. Now I have no doubts."

Nettles got into the last two games of the regular season and played two of the three playoff games against Kansas City, even legging out an inside-the-park home run. It was the way he came back that convinced Nettles he could return to his position without losing a stride.

Still, the Yankees could not take a chance and loaded up on third basemen. The hot corner in training camp was more crowded than the hottest disco in Fort Lauderdale.

There were Aurelio Rodriguez, Elliott Maddox, getting a look as a free agent; Joe Lefebvre, told to work out at the position; Tucker Ashford, purchased from Charleston (International), and Eric Soderholm, who still hadn't joined the crowd after injuring his right knee in early February.

"It's like a butcher shop," Nettles commented on the crowd. "You've got to take a number and wait your turn."

Nettles could understand the team's concern, however.

"I guess they just want to insure themselves in case I'm not healthy," said Nettles, adding quickly that he knew from the first day of training that he was in good form.

"I could tell my reflexes are there," he said. "Everything's the same as it's always been in spring training and this year I reported in better shape than I have in a long time."

Nettles' plan was to take things easy, gradually preparing himself for the season. Whatever program he adopted would be fine with new Manager Gene Michael.

"He knows how to get ready. I'm not worried about

him," said Michael. "I can't tell him how many ground balls to take. He knows how many he needs. I only want him to get in enough running. He looks good."

Pushing 37, Nettles is still an important member of the Yankees, "the key man," Owner George Steinbrenner calls him. That's because he is still among the best defensive third basemen and he is a bona fide home run threat, especially in Yankee Stadium. Playing only 89 games last season, he finished second on the team with 16 homers, the first time in his Yankee career he failed to hit 20. He drove in 45 runs and after committing seven errors in his first 20 games, he made only three errors in his next 69 games.

It was the combination of his age and the hepatitis that made the Yankees think about the day when they won't have a Graig Nettles to hit home runs and suck up ground balls at third.

But Nettles thinks that day is nowhere near and he welcomes the competition for his job and the chance to prove that he still has some good baseball left.

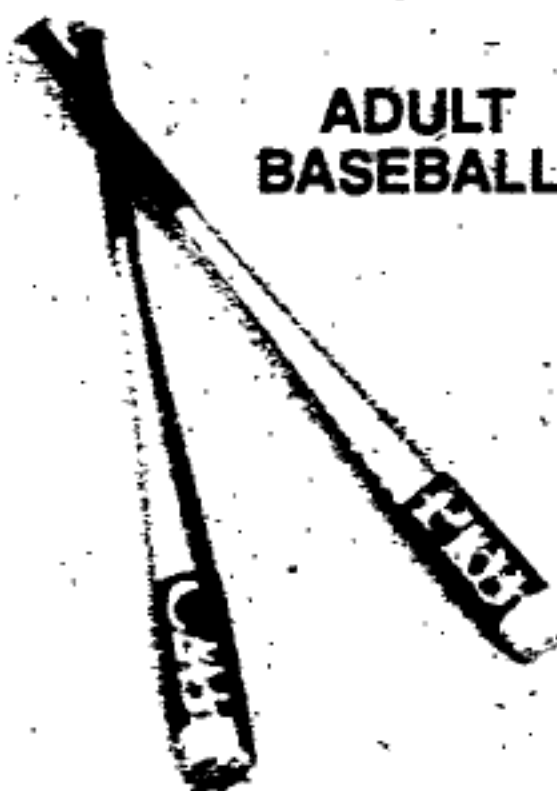
**Yankee Doodles:** The Yankees opened the exhibition season by playing in Gainesville against the University of Florida before a sellout crowd of over 5,200. Steinbrenner, who donated lights to the university, was elected to the University of Florida Athletic Hall of Fame. On the same day, in a "B" game, Bobby Murcer had six hits in six at-bats. "I can go hitless in my next 54 at-bats," Murcer said, "and still be batting .100." Reggie Jackson and Steinbrenner continued to wage a cold war with no words passing between them and no planned meetings to resolve the \$5,000 fine imposed against Jackson for reporting late to camp or for negotiations on a new contract.

## A special message for coaches.

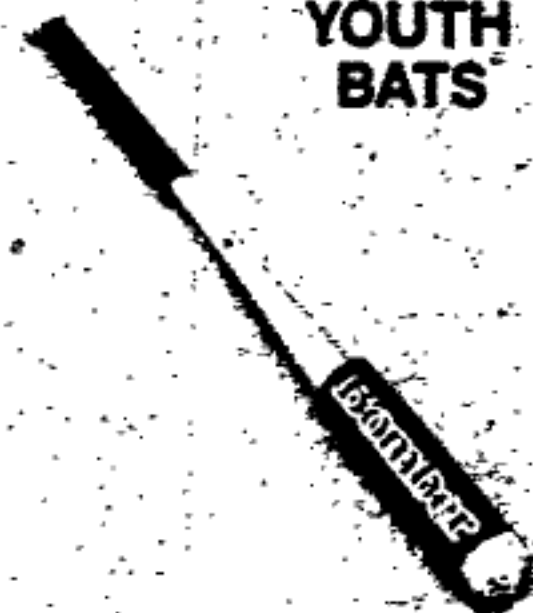
Louisville Slugger has recently made several extremely significant breakthroughs in aluminum bat technology. The result is a lineup of bats for all levels of play, from youth leagues to adult baseball to softball, that is truly outstanding.

Each line of bats is designed differently to meet the specific needs of that group, from the

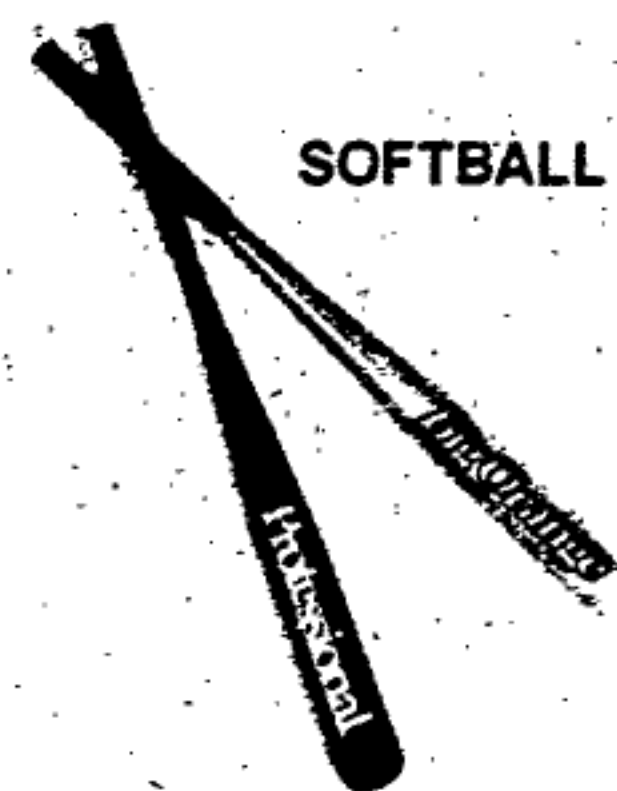
Tee ball player to the 250-lb. world-class softball player. The common denominators are first, performance, because this is what a good bat is all about; the second is durability, which has become increasingly important as inflation eats so heavily into team budgets.



ADULT  
BASEBALL



YOUTH  
BATS



SOFTBALL

## Fred Lynn

(Continued From Page 3)

Angels Vice-President Buzzie Bavasi and a trade was agreed on—Lynn and pitcher Steve Renko to California for Frank Tanana, Joe Rudi and Jim Dwyer.

Why did he agree to go to Anaheim, but not to Los Angeles? He didn't want to leave the American League, some said. Others guessed that he was in danger of losing in his grievance hearing.

The real reason probably had something to do with Dave Winfield.

"Fred probably wanted to test the waters to see what he was worth," Dedeaux said. "He is not greedy, but I would imagine that once he decided what his value was, he made a determination."

Winfield signed with the Yankees for 10 years at \$1.3 million a year. Lynn followed suit shortly thereafter. A source said that Lynn has done well in investments, and at one stage asked a former teammate, "How much money do you need?"

His Angels contract insures that he has enough. And, too, he is at home, and that is worth something in itself.

"Sometimes, if you remain in one place too long," Lynn said, "it doesn't matter where you are, but you get in a kind of rut, especially if you're not winning."

The Angels must rate a better chance of winning the American League West title this season than the Red Sox do of winning the A.L. East crown.

"I'm in a lot easier division now," Lynn said. "That East Division was tough. There were five teams challenging every year."

Hitting behind Rod Carew and in front of Don Baylor in the Angels' batting order should help Lynn. And playing near home should create enthusiasm.

"It's pretty much akin to my first season," he said. "I'm approaching it the same way, although people are expecting more from me now. The first year was easiest because no one was expecting much."

By using a special alloy and a unique, patented manufacturing process the new P103 and C243 bats represent a real breakthrough. Never before has anyone been able to offer big barrel bats so light without an end plug. And with the price of bats today, replacement because of end plug pop-outs can get quite expensive.

One of the nation's leading college players this past year was so impressed with them that he actually asked us if they were really legal. Although all the reports from the field aren't all that enthusiastic, they are very favorable.

If you watched the Little League world series finals on television last summer, you saw one bat used almost exclusively by the winners and runners-up. Both had their choice of bats to use. They chose the Bomber series from Louisville Slugger. These amazing high performance bats offer youngsters just what they need: a big barrel, lightweight bat. So lightweight, in fact, they are an astounding five ounces less than the length. It's no wonder the Bomber has become so popular so fast. Faster swing speed with better control. You can't offer much more. Not only are we sure your team will love them, we're sure they'll hit better.

The long barrel "Professional" style PLB bat has been highly engineered to produce every inch of carry your players can put into a swing. And it is weighted and balanced to make sure the ball explodes off the bat.

On the light end, we're offering a bat that is creating real attention. It is making people think again about which is better—light or faster swing speed. Our "Big Orange" is a full six ounces less than length. Talk about whip. This bat can make a place hitter feel like a slugger. You owe it to your team to try a couple of these out. You'll be glad you did.

(Both bats are approved for team play by the ASA and USSSA.)

Model	Description	Lgth.	Wt.
P103A	2-5/8" Barrel 1-1/16" Handle	32", 33" 34", 35"	29 oz. 30 oz. 31 oz.
C243A	2-5/8" Barrel 31/32" Handle	32", 33" 34", 35"	29 oz. 30 oz. 31 oz.

Model	Description	Lgth.	Wt.
625	Bomber 2-1/4" Barrel 31/32" Handle	27", 28", 29" 30", 31", 32"	22 oz. 23 oz. 24 oz. 25 oz. 26 oz. 27 oz.

Model	Description	Lgth.	Wt.
125LSB	Big Orange 33" 27 oz. 34" 28 oz.		
125PLB	Professional Style Long Barrel	33" 38 oz. 34" 38 oz.	

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# Lynn Named Top A. L. Player-Rookie

By PETER GAMMONS

BOSTON—Sometime it'll all hit **Fred Lynn**. "Maybe I'll be out in the middle of a lake fishing in November," **Lynn** said, "and all of a sudden I'll jump up and shout, 'Am I this good? Did this really happen to me?' But for now, I'm kind of oblivious to everything. It's too much of a day-to-day game to have time for any perspective."

What has happened to **Lynn** has happened to no man before him.

Whoever led the Red Sox to their first divisional championship, batted .331, became the first American League player since Carl Yastrzemski in 1970 to both score and knock in 100 runs in one season, produced more runs than anyone in baseball, played center field with a graceful and daring brilliance, made so few mistakes you could count them on the fingers of one hand and, in the end, not only be THE SPORTING NEWS players' poll choice as Rookie of the Year, but also its A.L. Player of the Year? No man before him!

He is the pride of the old-timer, a quiet, straight 23-year-old from the University of Southern California who says the best thing that's happened to him was the Red Sox' winning the A.L. East. And from those old-timers he has received the inevitable comparisons, with DiMaggio, with Musial, with Kaline and with his teammate, Yastrzemski. As the 36-year-old Yastrzemski suffered through a trying, injury-dominated second half, **Lynn** took his place as Fenway's heroic figure. It was fitting, for not only does **Lynn** physically look like a 23-year-old Yaz, but they share the same middle name.

Looking back over what **Lynn** did, third base coach Don Zimmer probably stated it best: "In my 27 years in baseball," said Zimmer, "in terms of runs produced and runs taken away, I've never seen one man do so much for one team as **Fred Lynn**."

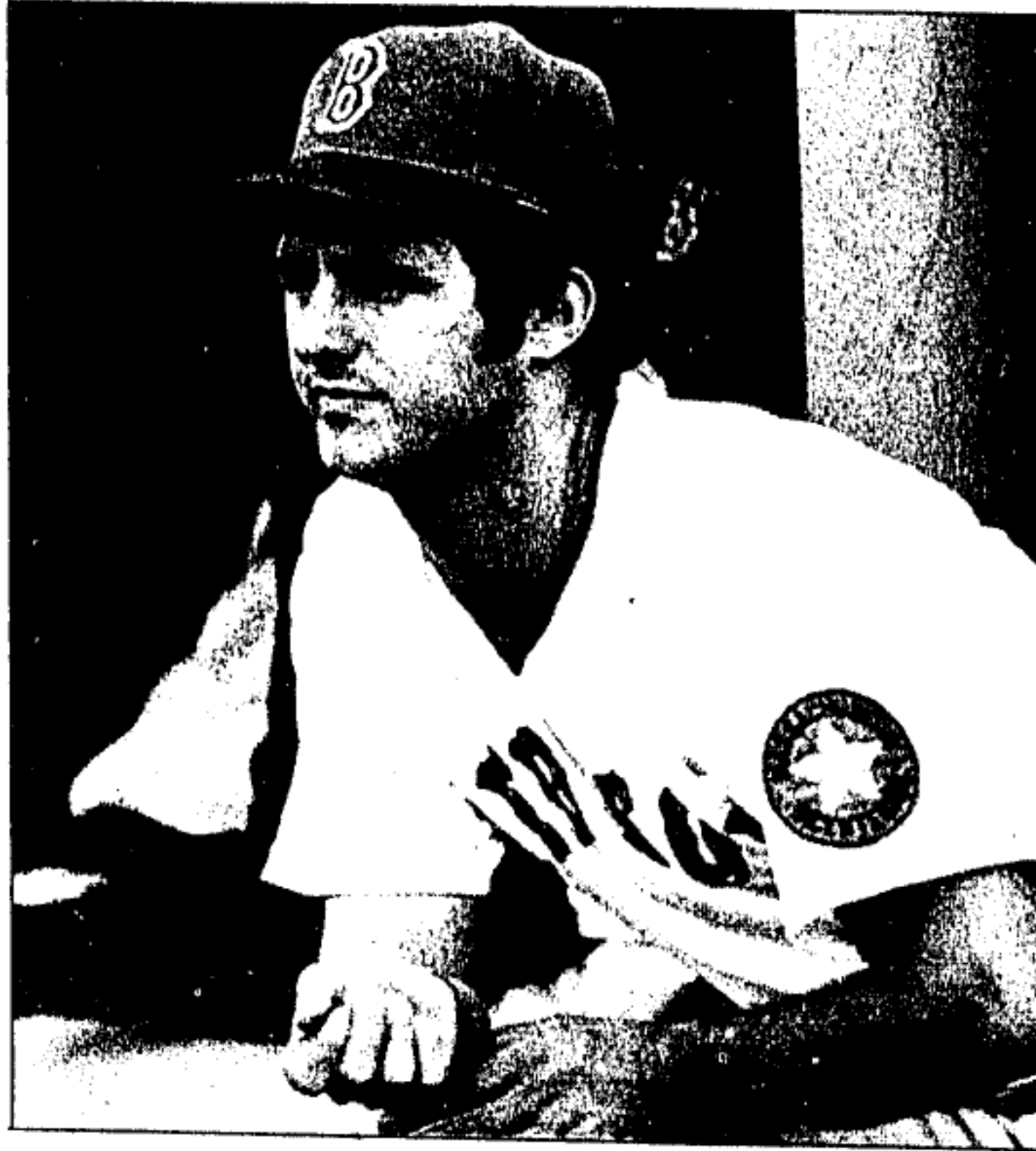
AS A HITTER, it seemed every time he'd start slipping—down under .330 toward .320—he'd make adjustments in his stance and go 4-for-5. The pure statistics say something.

He led the A.L. in runs (103), doubles (47, a rookie record and most in 25 years) and slugging percentage (.566). He was second in average and third in both RBIs (105) and total bases (299).

He is a Fenway Park hitter, not a power hitter, per se. Although, were he employed by Detroit or Minnesota or Cleveland, he might have hit more than his 21 homers. He is an alley hitter, spreading base-hits around from the left field corner to The Wall to the deep spaces of center and right.

Defensively, the first two things you notice about him are his glide and his arm. The more you watch him, the more you realize he is different from most other outstanding center fielders. A Paul Blair plays shallow and dares hitters to go over his head. **Lynn** plays deeper and dares them to hit in front of him. If there became a trademark to the kid, it was his diving catches, utilizing his remarkable body control. The powerful, accurate arm eventually became assumed. Because of the glide, though, people underestimate his speed.

If there was one play over the regular 1975 season which people in Boston best remember, it was his ninth-inning race from right to left center and the ensuing dive, completed with three bounces and a somersault, to rob the Yankees' Graig Nettles of a sure triple and save a 1-0 Boston victory in Shea Stadium that was the spike that in reality



**Fred Lynn . . . A Twin Triumph**

ended the Yankees' season. And drove the stake deeper into Baltimore's hopes.

What amazed those around him was **Lynn**'s innate ability for detail. He hit cutoff men and backed up plays. One time in Fenway, a fly ball that Jim Rice leaped for hit the ladder that runs up The Wall.

THE BALL ROLLED toward the left field corner. **Lynn** came over from center for the ball, which was 15 feet from the foul line, spun and threw the batter-runner out at third. And, except for three or four times on the bases, he didn't make a mistake. "When he came back to the dugout after those mistakes," said Bill Lee, "You should have heard him. But he learned about mental mistakes at USC." Coach Rod Dedeaux' walking recruiting poster is **Fred Lynn**.

"I don't make throwing mistakes too often," he said, laughing, "because I give the ball to the cutoff men and let them make the decisions."

For all that's happened, for the awards that have come (he even won a car from a local television channel as the fans voted him "the 10th player award") and those to come, he said he's still not overly surprised.

"I believe the term in psychology class was 'delusions of grandeur,'" he said. "Really, the RBI totals surprised me, but I always believed I belonged here. People talk of what I hit at Bristol (Eastern) two years ago (.259) or at Pawtucket last year (.282), but at Bristol, I was dead tired after the college year even then and was hitting .380 at one point. At Pawtucket, I was over .320 when I got hurt two or three times."

But people believe it now. In a year in which there was as many good rookies as any year in memory—Jerry Remy, Jim Rice, Dennis Eckersley, Duane Kuiper, Rick Manning, Jim Hughes, Dennis Leonard—**Lynn** was easily the Rookie of the Year. In a year in which there were a number of outstanding players—Rollie Fingers, Thurman Munson, George Scott, John Mayberry, Reggie Jackson, Jim Palmer, Catfish Hunter—**Lynn** was THE SPORTING NEWS American League Player of the Year.

And to top it off, he hasn't changed from the day he arrived from Pawtucket last September. He still plods along, head down, and is always courteous and polite. He still prefers Levis and fishing and time off with his wife, Dede, who claims she's never heard him say a bad thing about anyone.

"I don't think I'm ever going to change," said **Lynn**. "She won't let me."

Even after it all sinks in?  
You can bet on that!

# Johnson Wins Pilot Poll as Top Manager of Year

By LARRY WHITESIDE

BOSTON—The Red Sox cruised along most of the year through the American League East Division like the Queen Mary crossing the Atlantic. Icebergs near New York and Baltimore were the only hazards and they were navigated with a comparative minimum of difficulty.

Yet, not until one day before the season ended could Darrell Johnson sit back and enjoy the fruits of his labor. Now he shares in some of the accolades that have been heaped upon his exciting ball club.

Johnson, in only his second full season at the helm, has been named the major leagues' Manager of the Year by THE SPORTING NEWS.

The vote really wasn't close. Johnson won by a substantial margin over Sparky Anderson of the National League East champion Reds in a poll of the managers of both circuits.

"He did a damn good job," said Red Sox Owner Tom Yawkey.

AND THAT'S really about the most praise you heard all year about the 48-year-old Johnson, who was quiet and hardly an inspirational leader. He lacked the brashness and cockiness of an Earl Weaver. He had none of the glamor of a Dick Williams or the outward toughness of a Billy Martin. But he got the job done and, in Johnson's book, that's all that really counts.

"I couldn't blame people for not picking us to win," he said, with almost an apology. "But we always felt we had a very good team. Our

players went out and showed that we were the best team in this division and played the most consistent baseball. We never did have that slump that Earl (Weaver) and everybody was looking for."

The man who led the Red Sox to their first title since the miracle year of 1967, when they won the American League pennant, might seem a strange breed at first. Strange, because in this age of rebels with any kind of cause, he is a loyal, dedicated organization man whose only goal since joining the Red Sox eight years ago was to complete the task assigned him, and do it well.

WHEN HE was named to replace Eddie Kasko after the 1973 season, the appointment surprised some people. Johnson insists until this day he didn't learn about it for sure until a winter meeting of Red Sox minor league managers and scouts.

"But the way I figured it," he said, "the Red Sox knew more about me than I knew about myself. And they must have figured that I was the best man for the job, or they wouldn't have picked me."

And it seemed for a time they had made an excellent selection. Coming off excellent seasons at Louisville (American Association) and Pawtucket (International), Johnson had his Red Sox in first place by 7½ lengths by August, 1974. Then the roof caved in, or more accurately, the Red Sox got swept aside by the Baltimore gold rush, and finished a dismal third.

"But this year's team was a different team," he said. "We knew what happened last year wasn't going to happen again because we were better. We had comebacks by Rick Wise and Carlton Fisk. We had Fred **Lynn** and Jim Rice and they were better than any trade we could have made. We were consistent all year. And we won nine of 12 when the time came that we had to win—late."

JOHNSON never tried to win a popularity contest.

"A manager often doesn't have

time to be a friend," he said. "I work close with all my coaches, and they're good coaches. We get along very well."

And he was never accused of trying to dazzle his opponents. He was a classic textbook manager with a slow trigger finger. And he was an impersonal, no-nonsense boss.

Yet most of the Red Sox would tell you that Johnson was a players' manager. He put his people on the field and backed them until they proved they couldn't do it any longer. Sure, maybe a lot of people could have looked good with a **Lynn** and Rice to manage. But his handling of their situation can only be called excellent. When **Lynn** got tired, Johnson gave him a couple of days of rest. When Rice was having trouble playing left field at Fenway, Johnson used him as the designated hitter for a month, while coaches Don Zimmer and Eddie Popowski hit the rookie 2,000 fly balls. Then they gave him a glove and forgot about him.

"WE DID everything we could during the season," said Johnson, "to take some of the pressure off those two young men. We knew that the fact that they were here playing every day would make us a better team. We had no idea that they'd both be that good, but it did make it easier for us. Neither really faltered when it got heavy. And it was never really a question of their ability to handle the pres-

sure. They did.

"They never got overpowered or in a long slump. For a couple of first-year players to have that consistency for a whole season was . . . amazing."

Wise was only one member of a wacky pitching staff. After a brilliant start, his arm suddenly looked like it was screwed on the wrong socket. Bill Lee was being quoted more about social issues than he was about his blooper pitch. Reggie Cleveland at one point considered eating his way into the Hall of Fame. And Roger Moret went for a 4 a. m. ride in the hills of Connecticut one August night that caused as big a commotion as if it had been Paul Revere.

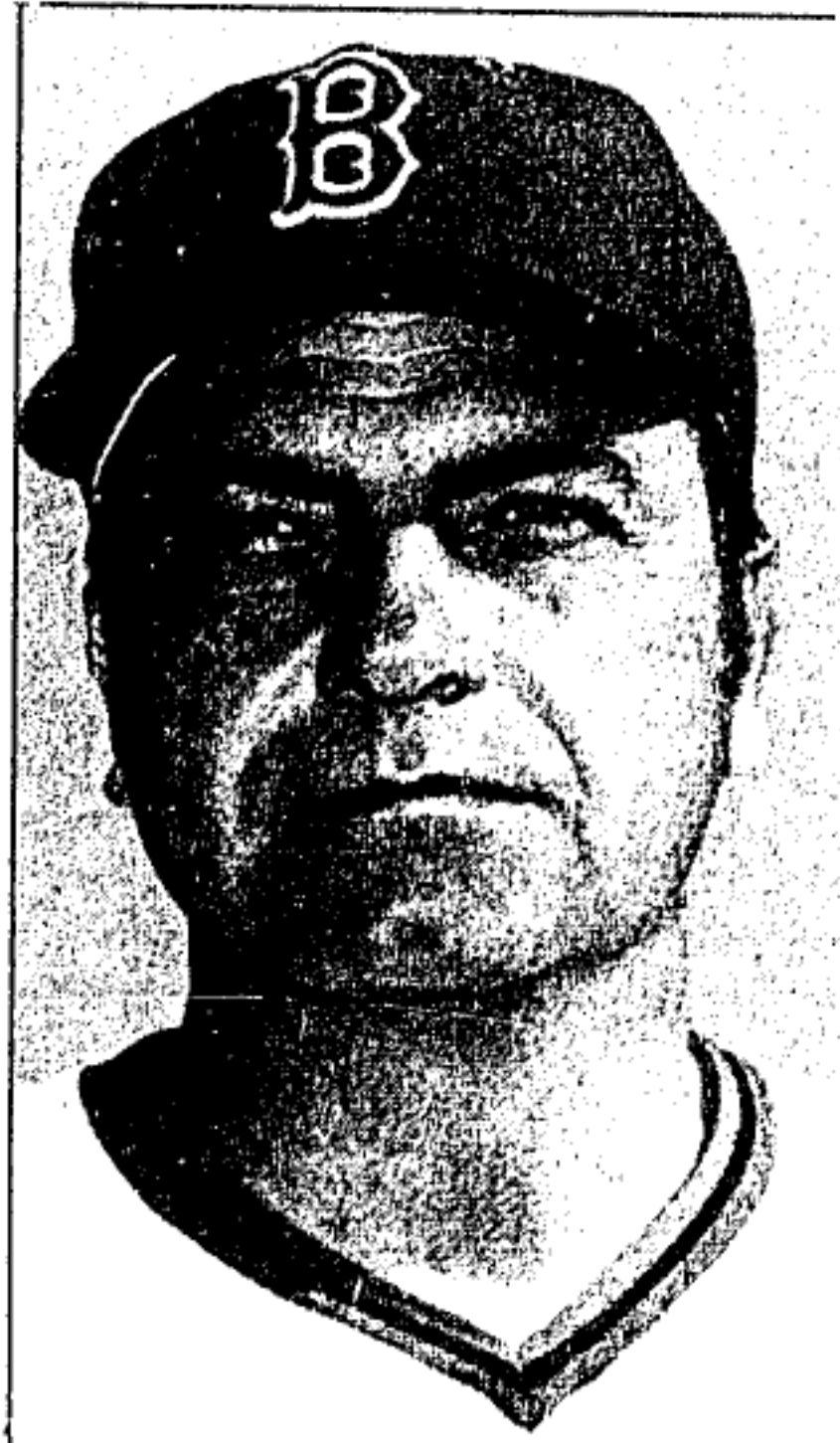
But nothing seemed to rattle Johnson, who stuck with Wise (19-12) as his motion slowly came back.

"It was a problem of mechanics," he said. "And he and our pitching coach (Stan Williams) worked it out." Lee wound up winning 17 games for the third straight year. "Find me a lefthander eight games above .500 who is as good a competitor as Lee is?" asked Johnson.

CLEVELAND in the last six weeks became the Red Sox' most effective pitcher.

"His was a problem of mechanics, too," said Johnson. "But he worked hard and put himself back into the right perspective. He

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**Darrell Johnson**



# New Muscles Putting Mayhem in **Lynn's** Bat

By JOSEPH DURSO

BOSTON—When Fredric Michael **Lynn** checked into spring training in March, the Red Sox immediately sensed that something new had been added.

"When he walked into camp," Manager Don Zimmer remembered, "everybody looked up and said: 'Damn, is that really **Fred Lynn**?'"

"It was very noticeable. He was bigger all through the shoulders and arms and across the chest. We don't push that sort of thing with the players, it's up to them. But he was bigger and, right from the start, even though he missed 10 days with a sprained ankle, he began hitting the ball deeper than ever."

"I was bigger," **Fred Lynn** was saying the other day in his apartment in the suburbs of Fenway Park, "because I had spent the winter working out with weights. I didn't do it to build muscles to hit home runs. I did it because I looked back on my career and realized that I always lost strength in August, I'd get tired, mentally and physically."

"I realized that strong men have a tremendous advantage in baseball. It's a game for strong men."

Two months into the 1979 season, though, the spotlight was crowded by guys delivering virtuoso performances, with or without new muscles.

**THERE WAS DON BAYLOR** of the Angels, knocking in 28 runs in April for an American League record. There was Bobby Bonds of the Indians, making it to 300 home runs and 300 stolen bases, the only man in history to do it except for Willie Mays. There was Ken Forsch of the Astros pitching his no-hitter, and a bunch of others pitching their one-hitters, and old Gaylord Perry of the Padres winning for the 270th time.

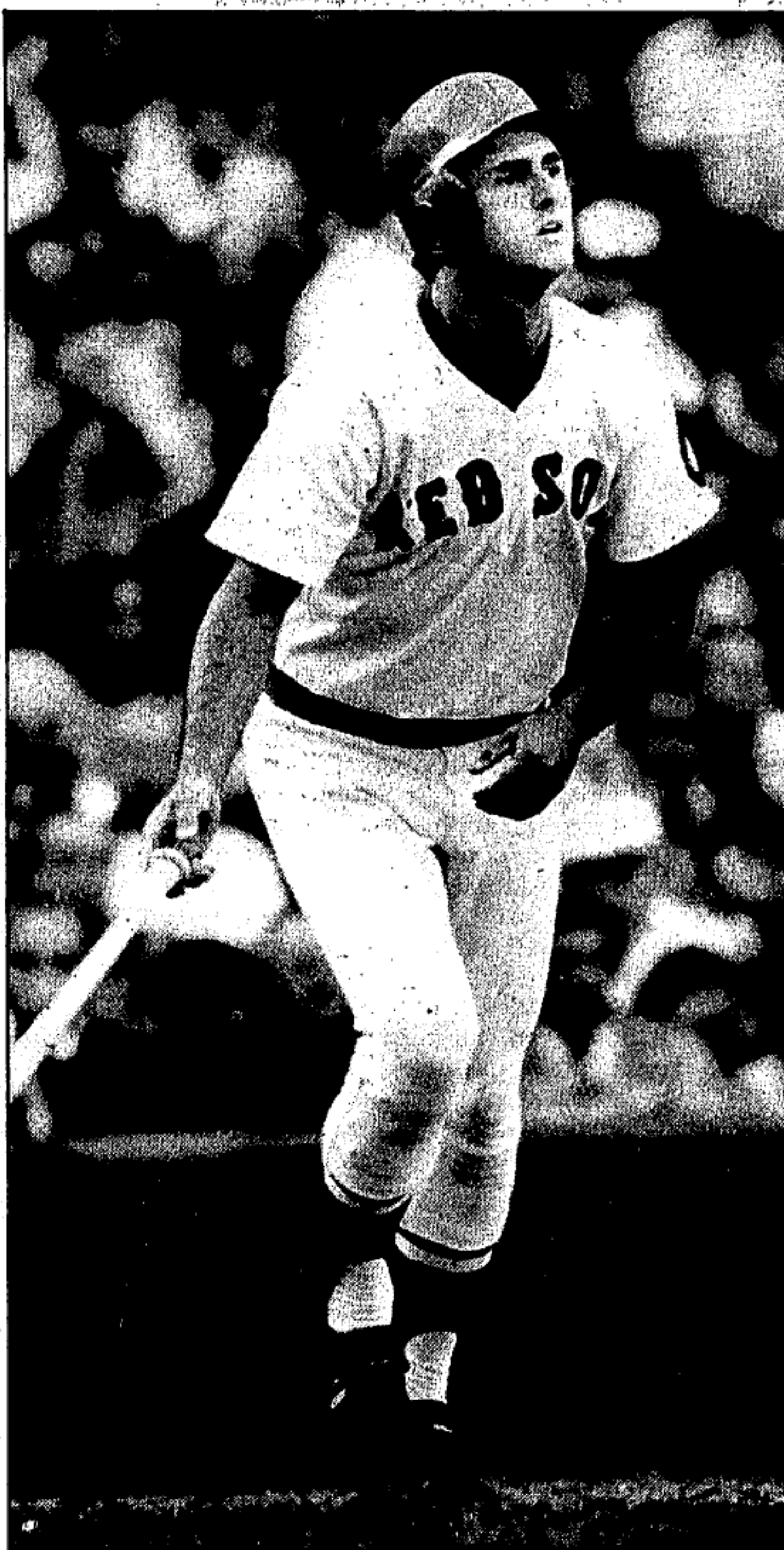
Don Sutton of the Dodgers collared Sandy Koufax in strikeouts and Don Drysdale in wins, which is nice work if you can get it. Mike Caldwell of the Brewers winged through 25 scoreless innings against the Yankees, Red Sox and Orioles, which is positively frightening. And Jerry Koosman, who won three games for the Mets all last summer, promptly won seven straight for the Twins at the age of 35.

The Angels won 10 straight, Warren Cromartie of the Expos hit safely in 19 straight and the Orioles snatched 19 of 22. With two out in the ninth, the Cubs scored five runs and beat the Braves, 6-5. With two out in the ninth, the Tigers scored seven runs and ruined the Rangers, 11-6.

Rusty Staub missed all of spring training plus all of April because of his contract hassle with the Tigers, took 15 minutes of batting practice and then went 6-for-11 with five doubles. Butch Hobson nursed his right elbow after surgery last October, then banked one off a speaker in the Kingdome, 110 feet high and 320 feet from home plate.

**MAYBE THE BALL WAS** juicier in 1979. Or maybe everybody was unhinged by the presence of the substitute umpires, who set a record themselves by presiding over a 28-minute debate between the Mets and Giants. Maybe the world spun off-axis after San Diego's virtuoso chicken got fired in a contract dispute. Or maybe everybody started the new season with new muscles, like **Fred Lynn** of the Red Sox.

Whatever the reason, **Lynn** muscled his way into the crowded spotlight when he whacked one downtown on opening day at Fenway Park against the Indians. A couple of days later in Cleveland, he parked two over the fence. In the next series, in Milwaukee he beat the Brewers with a



**Fred Lynn . . . Stamina Is the Key**

career-high of only 22 in 150 games the season before.

**Lynn** said he did two things that might explain this rampaging start: he lowered his hands at bat and swung up at the ball, and he attacked it with new strength after a winter of building his body with Nautilus equipment.

"It took me four years," he said, "to appreciate what a physical grind a major league season is. It takes that long to appreciate how difficult it is to stay strong over the grind. I'm not a home-run hitter. But I know I'm capable of hitting them. And I wanted to play up to my capabilities for the whole season."

He may not be a home-run hitter, even though he hit 73 in his first four summers while averaging .303. But he has been hitting them so often and so far in his fifth season that even the rousing Red Sox are impressed. And it's not easy to impress a club that already owns Jim Rice, who hit 46 last year; Dwight Evans, who hit 24; and Carl Yastrzemski, George Scott, Carlton Fisk, Butch Hobson and enough other knockers who totaled 172 despite some horrendous slumps.

"A FEW DAYS AGO," Zimmer said, "I was sitting with Haywood Sullivan and we watched **Lynn** take six swings in batting practice in Fenway. Five landed in the bleachers, and the sixth reached the net in left field. Look, sometimes a lefthanded swinger can go a week here without hitting a ball into the bleachers. Now Rice is calling him 'Tarzan.'"

"We got a lot of guys who hit the ball a long ways, and they're all big guys. Freddie always looked smaller than them. But not anymore."

**Lynn** not only seemed smaller, he also seemed more fragile. He went to Southern Cal on a football scholarship, played wide receiver and defensive back for Coach John McKay for one year and then quit the squad in order to play baseball under Coach Rod Dedeaux. If you ask him what he did in football at USC, he smiles and says:

"I mostly sprained my ankle." He still has somewhat fragile wheels—in fact, he missed six weeks in 1977 with a damaged left ankle—but he no longer looks modest in a lineup of giants. His main concern now is stamina. He was batting .323 last August, then ran out of gas and tailed off, hitting .257 during those last nine weeks when the world fell apart for the Red Sox. That's

when he went home to Placentia, Calif., and began working out to build his strength.

**THREE TIMES A WEEK** all winter, he worked with weights. He even surrendered his favorite pastime, fishing. But when he reported to Winter Haven, he had 190 pounds packed onto his 6-1 frame, and guys in the locker room began to ask: "Damn, is that really **Fred Lynn**?"

He turned 27 in February, the same age that Carl Yastrzemski reached in 1967 when he exploded. In 1966, Yaz hit 16 home runs in 160 games. In '67, he hit 44 in 161 games, batted .326, knocked in 121 runs and was voted most-valuable-everything for leading the Red Sox from ninth place to the pennant on the final day.

Now Yaz sits in the clubhouse, the old pro at 39, enthroned on a folding-chair across the room from where **Lynn** and Evans keep their lockers. And he remembers the year that he reported with new muscles, too.

"I'd never worked out with weights until the winter before the '67 season," Yaz said. "I'd just graduated from Merrimack College, so I started working out at the Colonial Health Club in Lynnfield. We didn't have Nautilus equipment then, just weights. But I worked with a man named Gene Berde, who had trained the Hungarian Olympic team and then escaped from Hungary during the revolt 10 years earlier."

"I DIDN'T LIFT massive weights, just did stretching exercises, doing things in sets. My weight went up by only eight pounds, but I got bigger across the chest, and I no-

**"He is more like Stan Musial than anybody I can remember. . . . He's a good kid, not a popoff or loud-mouth in the clubhouse. He's got some humility like Musial."**

ticed the difference in spring training. The difference was strength. I used to hit fly balls, but now they were going out of the park.

"Without a doubt, **Lynn** is stronger this year. Just look at him. He also should be better mentally. I'd been up six years in 1967, and I was undoubtedly better mentally. In hitting, the mental part is even more important than the physical part. And the situation forces you. In '67, it seemed that every time I was up at bat, it was a situation where I couldn't be pitched around."

After reaching his own "maturity" that year, Yastrzemski hit 147 home runs during the next four summers and batted in 408 runs. But now, the critical question:

"How do you keep from becoming home-run-happy?" he asked, tackling the issue that **Fred Lynn** may be raising with his new power. "Well, he's a good hitter, to begin with, that's how you overcome the temptation. He might be pulling the ball a bit more. On the West Coast late in April, I thought he was. But he's too good a hitter to be ruined by power."

"On the road, in California," Zimmer agreed, "he was pulling the ball more. I asked him about it, and he said he was a little more conscious of home runs. Trying to jerk the ball more."

**"BUT NOW HE'S JUST** hitting it, which is what he does best. And his average hasn't suffered too much. He's too good a basic hitter to get turned around."

"He can hit to all fields," said Johnny Pesky, who hit .307 in 10 seasons before becoming a coach with the Red Sox. "He is more like Stan Musial than anybody I can remember. He can't run as well as Musial maybe, he might be a step and a half behind him. But he's a good kid, not a popoff or loud-mouth in the clubhouse. He's got some humility, like Musial. You never see him throw a helmet or bat when he doesn't do well."

Eddie Yost, who played 17 seasons in the American League before becoming a coach, is reminded of the The Man, too.

"His style is more like Musial's than anybody else's," Yost said. "Lynn's always been a good hitter. Now he's hitting it farther. There's no question: his physical appearance is much bigger."

Al Jackson, who pitched in 302 games in the National League and now the pitching coach for the Red Sox, said: "You can't compare anybody with Musial. He'd come out of that crouch and murder you. But Lynn's like Musial in an important way: I never saw Musial pull a change-up. He'd wait, he wouldn't commit himself. And I've seen him almost knock the third baseman down on a change. But it shows you what kind of hitter Lynn is that he can still hit the long ball and carry his average."

To escape the commotion he has created, Fred re-

(Continued on Page 8, Column 1)

**"It took me four years to appreciate what a physical grind a major league season is. It takes that long to appreciate how difficult it is to stay strong over the grind."**

two-run shot in the ninth inning. And a few days later in Seattle, he became the third player to reach the third deck inside the dome.

Everybody knew he could hit, ever since he came out of the University of Southern California and, in his first full season with the Red Sox in 1975, batted .331 with 21 home runs, knocked in 105 runs and was Player of the Year and voted Rookie Player of the Year by the THE SPORTING NEWS and Most Valuable Player by the BBWAA for a team that won the pennant and nearly knocked off the favored Reds in a memorable World Series. He could hit, all right.

But nobody assumed that he would rise up from the ashes of Boston's collapse of 1978 and in the first six weeks of the next season accomplish these things:

**PLAY EVERY INNING** of all 32 games; get 35 hits in 120 times at bat; draw 24 walks; score 30 runs; knock in 31 runs, or almost one a game; get 78 total bases for a slugging percentage of .650; drive home the game-winning run six times; and hit 13 home runs. That's right, 13 home runs in 32 games for a man who previously had connected for a



# New Lifestyle Smooths Tug's Course

By HAL BODLEY

PHILADELPHIA—Life for Tug McGraw always has been in the fast lane. Live today and the hell with tomorrow is the style for this blithe spirit.

"I'll probably play until I get run over at 6 o'clock one morning by a street cleaner when I'm laying in some gutter outside a bar, sound asleep, with an empty bottle of John Jameson in my hand," Tug McGraw said one day last summer. "And that will be the end."

He won't exactly admit it, but maybe McGraw saw the end of his wacky, but brilliant, career coming up and decided to let up on the accelerator. Maybe.

This may come as a surprise to the millions who have watched his antics, but when it comes to throwing a baseball with his left arm, McGraw is dead serious.

AND THIS YEAR, McGraw has approached his job with the Phillies more seriously than usual. The results back up that belief. Through May, McGraw had appeared in 17 games, had a 2-0 record and a 2.70 earned-run average with three saves.

The amazing thing about that is the fact that on May 4, McGraw fell while chasing a fly ball during batting practice in Dodger Stadium and suffered a strained elbow and a slight fracture of the right forearm. Four days later, he was back on the mound and has continued to pitch as the injuries heal.

McGraw says he gradually

began to change his life-style after he arrived in Clearwater, Fla., for spring training. During the off-season, he had been involved in a myriad of activities, including running promotions, providing athletes for public appearances, writing his weekly newspaper column, selling his Scroogie comic strip and writing children's stories. He topped all those activities with his second charity bicycle ride—one on the East Coast and one on the West Coast.

"By the time spring training arrived, I was mentally tired, just exhausted," McGraw said. "So, I decided to cut way back on my outside activities. I wanted to devote as much time as I could to baseball and my family. I feel much better now. I still do the column, but I used to do public appearances on Saturdays and off-days."

"I'VE ALWAYS known what I was capable of doing. I just wanted to maintain my health and enthusiasm for the game. The other things took away from both. If I maintain my enthusiasm and stay healthy, I think I can pitch for five or six more years. I know what I can do when I'm healthy. I think my record speaks for itself, but I just wanted to focus as much attention on baseball as I could."

McGraw, who will be 35 in August, said he approached 1979 differently after realizing where he was heading.

"I had a long talk with my wife and a close friend in spring training and came to the conclusion the

best way to prepare for '79 was to get in the best possible shape. I wasn't apprehensive about my age, career or anything like that. I was just mentally tired. I worked as hard as I ever have in spring training and now I'm off to one of the best starts of my career. I'm closer to my family than ever before and baseball's as exciting as it ever was for me."

McGraw, of course, became a matinee idol with the Mets when they were winning National League pennants in 1969 and '73. But after the 1974 season, he was shipped to the Phillies where he continued to thrive—and make life more pleasant for their starting pitchers.

LAST YEAR, HE jumped out to an 8-3 record and a 2.29 earned-run average in the first half. Between May 27 and August 17, he won six straight games. He ended with an 8-7 record and a 3.20 ERA.

"The second half of the year, Danny (Manager Danny Ozark) went more with Ron Reed," said McGraw. "I think I lost my edge. Most managers go with their hot hand. Reed was having a great year, but the lack of work really hurt me. Because of open dates, rainouts and all that, Ron never got burned out. When you have four relievers, it's hard to keep everybody sharp."

Ask Tug, who really has had just one bad outing this year, what his role is and he looks puzzled.

"I really don't know," he said. "I don't know how Danny looks at me. I know Reed's his No. 1 man."

Danny saves me for last. I honestly don't understand the way Danny looks at his bullpen. I have a hard time figuring his thoughts about how he uses it.

"I don't know how I'll be used in a game and I've stopped trying to figure it out. My responsibility is to be ready when he calls for me. I learned that from Gil Hodges (late Mets' manager).

"I'M NOT TRYING to tell Danny how to do his job, but the ideal way is to alternate Ron and me as short men. I've made my living off righthanded hitters and Ron (a righthander) is effective vs. lefthanders. You see, the 'book' doesn't apply to us. The ideal thing is to give us both enough work. But, I'll admit it's easy to sit back and decide the best way to handle a pitching staff. Actually, it's a difficult part of the manager's job. That's why you have to be patient. "As I said," Tug repeated, "I am concentrating on baseball. I don't want other things to clutter my mind . . . but don't get me wrong. I feel a lot better laughing than crying. It's always going to be that way."

PHILS Notes: The Phils were hoping to have shortstop Larry Bowa and second baseman Manny Trillo back in the lineup for the start of a homestand on June 8. They were on the disabled list because of a fractured thumb and forearm, respectively. . . . Warren Brusstar, on the DL since spring training with a strained right shoulder, started throwing the first week in June. He was told not



Tug McGraw

to pick up a baseball the entire month of May.

Bernie Shifrin, known to Philadelphia-area fans as "Yo-Yo"—a gnomish, cigar-chomping character who danced in the aisles during Phillies' home games, died of a heart attack on May 26 at the age of 70. . . . June could be a make-or-break month for the Phillies. They play only nine games at Veterans Stadium.

## August Fadeout Stirred Lynn to Build Stamina

(Continued From Page 3)

treats to his home outside Boston and baby sits with 14-month-old Jason Andrew while his wife, Diane, goes shopping. He has been in the big leagues for four years, has played in four All-Star games

and one World Series, and has signed one blockbuster contract. That was in August of 1976, a turbulent summer for the Red Sox, when Yawkey died, Darrell Johnson was fired and the Yankees finally arrived. He signed for five

years for a total of \$2,100,000, with \$875,000 up front, and his option year will be 1981.

He still has the curly black hair and even features that he had as a rookie prodigy, and he is still an uncommonly private person. He is

so private that nobody knew what was on his mind when he gathered his gear after the team's nightmare last summer and headed home to California.

"After my disastrous August," he said, piecing together his state of mind, "I felt I had to do something. I always thought I was strong enough. But looking back, I realized that I'd gotten tired late in the season. I'd wilt in August when it was hot and humid; then I'd bounce back in September when the weather got cooler."

"So I began to appreciate the fact that it's a game for strong men. Jimmy Rice, for example, never gets tired. He's got the strength for a solid second half."

"I LIVE NEAR Anaheim, not far from a place called Sports Conditioning and Rehabilitation. They have two sets of every piece of Nautilus equipment, mainly for athletes. I began to drive over there three times a week. A lot of pro basketball players train there, guys like Jim McDaniels. And I'd run into Dwight Stones, the high-jumper."

"It meant some sacrifices in my off-season life. I do a lot of fishing, but I skipped it, didn't take an extended fishing trip until February. But it was okay. I was really confined to my home with my family, and I got to see more of my baby son."

"I didn't do it to get bigger. In fact, I'd look at myself in the mirror every day and say: 'When am I going to change?' But I felt stronger, if not bigger. And I noticed it when I went up to San Francisco in February with some ballplayers from the area and played a kind of all-star game against some college players. Then when I got to Florida for spring training, I started hitting

the ball deeper with less effort."

"Home runs can become a curse," Lynn said, "and they did hurt me on our early trip to the West Coast. We were in first place when we went to Seattle, which is notorious for home runs, and I got to trying to hit them out, jerking my head out. I got one hit in three games there, into the upper deck. One hit in three games in Anaheim, maybe five or six in Oakland."

"BUT IT WAS A very poor display of hitting," Lynn admitted. "Especially because I'm not that type of home-run hitter. I've got to hit to all fields. But when we got back to Fenway, I took a look at that left-field wall and knew what I had to do."

He did it, too, at a time when Pudge Fisk was out of the lineup with his sore elbow and when strong men in Boston baseball uniforms were still gripped by the haunting memory of you-know-what.

"I don't think about last year," Lynn said. "That's history. It's past."

He also doesn't think too much about his so-called "slump" of 1977, when he was hobbled by the bad ankle and batted only .260 with 18 home runs in 129 games.

"If I had had my first year in my third year," he reasoned, "nobody would have noticed. My first year was a pretty good one, really a great one. I'm not going to have more than a few of those. Even the greatest players had maybe three super years when they were the MVP. And, besides, 1975 was the only season I've had free of injuries. It's a game of stamina."

"A game of stamina," Fred Lynn repeated, mentally flexing his new muscles. "And it takes you a few years to realize it."

## "How to shut out Athlete's Foot."

by Jim Palmer



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# Lynn's Power Show Lights Up New England

By LARRY WHITESIDE

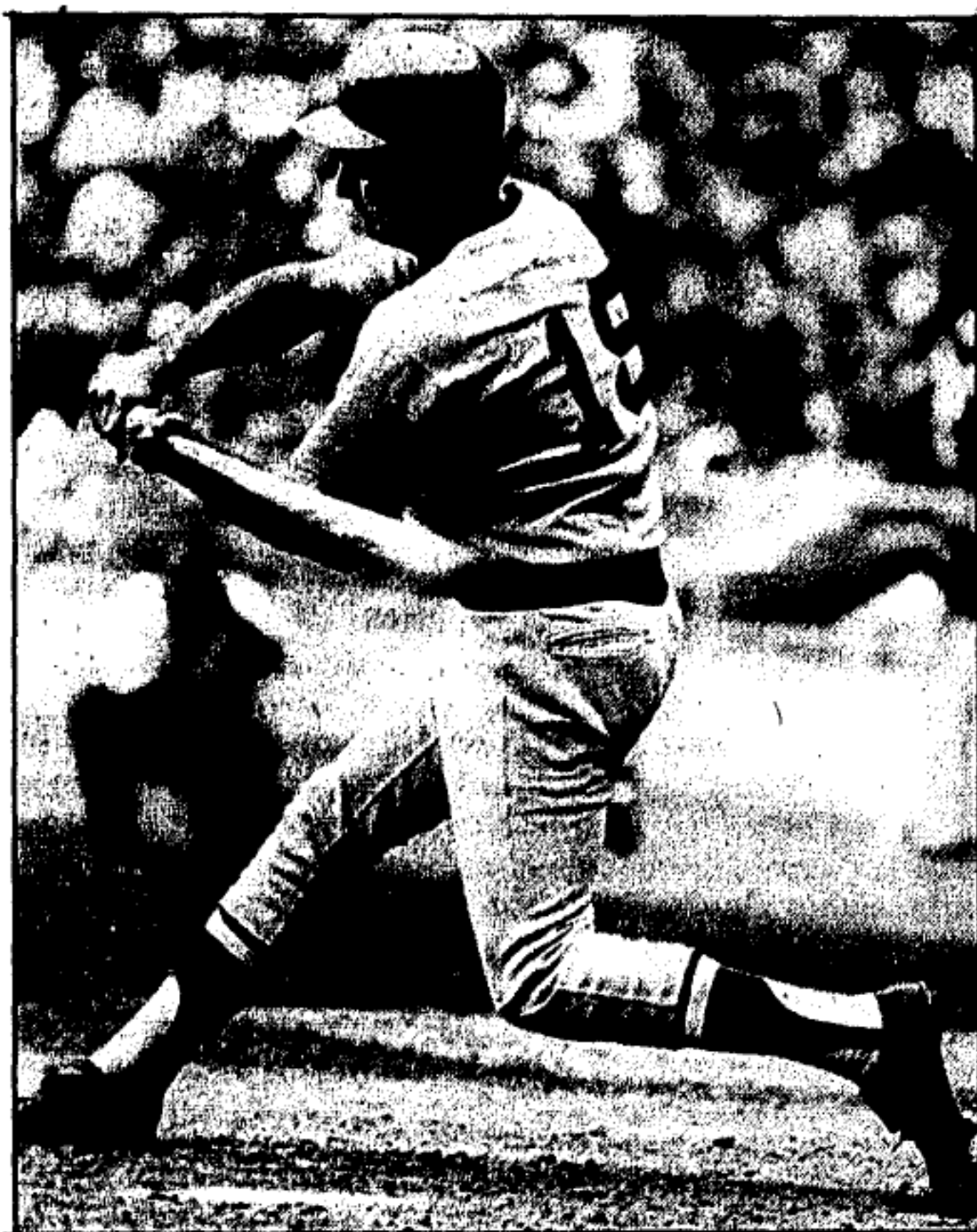
BOSTON—What comes to mind first is a flashback to 1975. It is August and both Fred Lynn and Jim Rice are tearing up American League pitching. One or the other is a sure bet for Rookie of the Year and possibly Most Valuable Player honors. Rice got hurt in September and Lynn wound up winning both awards.

What comes to mind these days is a flashy rerun. Lynn is in the midst of a marvelous season, which is not only putting him high in the running for MVP honors but also finds him bidding for a Triple Crown, something unheard of in a league with a Jim Rice or a Rod Carew. And Rice, once again, is not far away.

"I'm just glad they're both on my side," said Red Sox Manager Don Zimmer. "It's great to have two hitters like this. I only wish I had nine of them. I can't recall anything like this outside of Roger Maris and Mickey Mantle. Possibly, Duke Snider and Gil Hodges back when I was with the Dodgers. Of course, Duke would always hit for a higher average."

With the Red Sox still chasing Baltimore in the A.L. East, the duel between Lynn and Rice has taken a secondary position in the story of a club some say will wind up with hitting records that surpass even the potent 1977 Red Sox. Also, it will be hard for Lynn and Rice to hog the limelight, with Carl Yastrzemski closing in on 3,000 hits to go along with his 400 home runs.

BUT THE FACT remains that Lynn has shot to the top of the American League in home runs (36), batting



Fred Lynn . . . In Spotlight

average (.344) and is second to California's Don Baylor in runs batted in (104), which even on an ordinary team would give him a shot at MVP consideration. But even Lynn is aware that Rice (.333) is too close in home runs (33) for him to feel comfortable. And the fact that Rice is just behind last year's total-base pace (295 in 117 games) is a constant reminder that he, like Lynn, is one of the league's remarkable hitters. And, yes, if you ask Rice, he'll say he really hasn't had one of those wild tears that seemed commonplace last year.

"There is no competition," said Rice. "Not between Freddie and me. I think it's more of leadership than competition. Fred is having a great season and leading the club. I'm having a good season and trying my best to provide leadership by example. I'm doing the best I can. I'm sure Freddie is doing the same thing."

Lynn is doing his best, and then some. He added nearly 20 points to his average in three weeks and hit safely in 20 straight games (32-71-.565). With men on base, Lynn was hitting .408 (80-196). He hit 12 home runs after the All-Star Game.

But this is August, the month Lynn has feared in other years because he lacked the stamina and played poorly for several weeks.

"AS FAR AS endurance," said Lynn, who engaged in an extensive weight-training program in the off-season, "I actually seem to be stronger. I'm not tired and I've stayed reasonably healthy. That's a key for me and for both of us having good seasons. Of course, it isn't just the two of us. We've got the kind of lineup with Fisk, myself, Jimmy, Yaz, Watson, Hobson and Evans that can explode at any moment. If you try to pitch around Jimmy and me, you've still got to deal with the bottom half of the order that can crush you just as much as we can."

Lynn said his weight training and his early-season

success has convinced him that he might have a 1975 kind of year. He batted .331 that year and drove in 105 runs.

"But I had no idea my power totals would be up like they are," he said. "In 1975, I hit for average and drove in runs consistently. But my power dropped way off late in the year. I'm not a home-run hitter as such. I mean I don't go up there looking to pull everything into the seats. That's not the way I hit."

"I'M BETTER OFF when I hit the ball to all fields, and luckily some of them have gone for home runs. I guess the thing that is really helping me now is that my concentration is so good. You could shoot off a firecracker around home plate and it wouldn't bother me." Lynn leads the Sox with 11 game-winning hits. Rice has nine.

Some comparisons on Lynn and Rice after 117 games: Lynn—First—average (.344), runs (96), home runs (36), slugging percentage (.664), on-base percentage (.430). Sec-

ond—total bases (286), RBIs (104). Fourth—hits (146).

Rice—First—total bases (295). Second—hits (160), home runs (33), slugging percentage (.613). Third—RBIs (100).

"It's nice to be having a good year," said Lynn. "But you'd rather see the team win the division, first. If that doesn't happen, all the awards don't mean that much."

Red Sox Notes: The planned comeback of second baseman Jerry Remy continues to drag along. Remy's left knee gave out after only one game, and the Red Sox signed the Cubs' Ted Sizemore. Dennis Eckersley's streak of seven straight complete games ended when he left after six innings of a 12-1 Red Sox victory over Minnesota August 14. But Eckersley picked up his eighth straight victory to run his season log to 16-5, with a 2.74 earned-run average. Eckersley admitted that a four-man rotation puts some added pressure on him in terms of stamina, and Zimmer said he'll give him an extra day whenever he asks for it.

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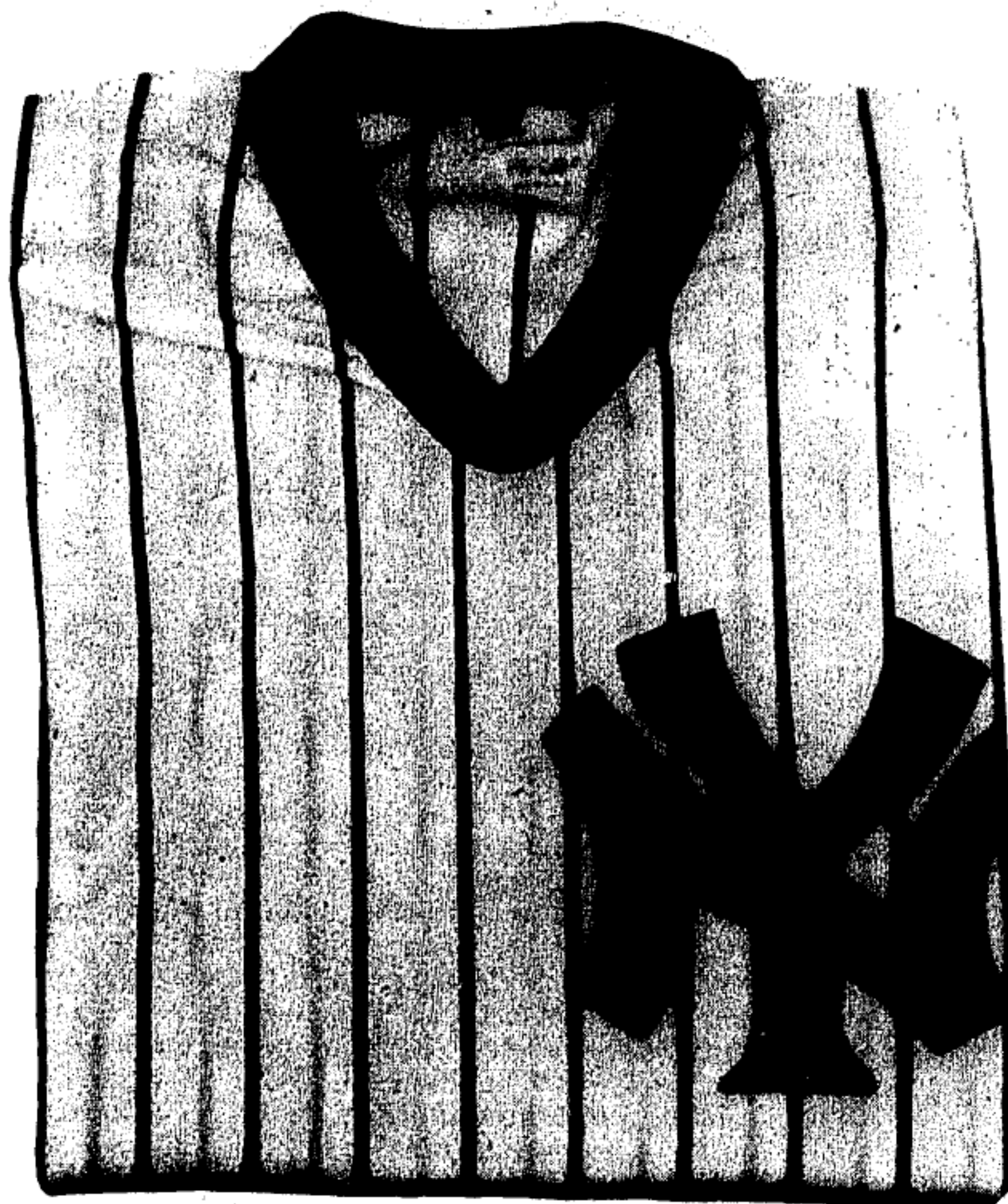
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# Lynn Like a Fictional Hero in Merriwell Mold

By PETER GAMMONS

BOSTON—Somehow the whole Fred Lynn story still seems like something from an old Saturday Evening Post serial, conceived from a Norman Rockwell painting.

For here is this shy, 23-year-old rookie, two years out of college, crashing into Boston and ranking at or near the top of almost every American League offensive statistic. He has had one near-record night, been compared with Stan Musial and overall played the role of Joe Hardy (Damn Yankees) for the Red Sox. Or Frank Merriwell? Lynn played in 57 of Boston's first 63 games. During this time, he was tops in the league in RBIs, total bases, slugging percentage and runs scored, third in batting, fourth in doubles and two behind the league-leader in home runs. Added on to this is his 15-game trial last September, when he hit .419 and slugged .648.

Yankee Manager Bill Virdon has called him the "best young player I've seen in my two years in this league." Chicago's Chuck Tanner has compared him with Musial. Someone else made the comparison with Roger Maris and, because of a physical resemblance, he has been compared by Bostonians with Carl Yastrzemski.

"HE'S SUCH A natural hitter," said Red Sox batting coach Johnny Pesky, who worked with Lynn at Pawtucket (International) last year. "He just lays the bat out on

the ball with that slight uppercut."

"You have to be surprised any time a young player comes in with the impact Freddie has," said Manager Darrell Johnson. "You never dream a rookie can do what he has done. Surprised? I knew he had outstanding ability, but what has surprised me is how rapidly he adjusts to things. That's what made this all possible. That's why he's gotten better statistically at each successive level."

Third base coach Don Zimmer said that in his 27 years in baseball, he never has seen any player accomplish over a two-month period what Lynn has done for the Red Sox. It goes beyond the hitting. He has been a ranging, solid center-fielder who has made several spectacular diving catches. He has an outstandingly strong arm and, with Dwight Evans in right, the Sox have one of the best-throwing outfielders in the game. Lynn instinctively does the little things from hitting cutoff men to backing up plays.

The most amazing facet of Fred Lynn is that he got to the majors in less than two years. And, in addition, he was Boston's second-round draft choice in 1973, the 41st player chosen in the entire draft.

That draft came in his junior year at the University of Southern California, his second year as an All-America and third playing for a national championship team.

"I knew David Clyde would be the first pick that year," said Lynn, "but I felt I was going to be next. It went on and on, and I was a little disgusted."

Apparently what had happened was that Lynn had not had a great junior season. One club's scouting reports indicated he bailed out against lefthanders, got down on himself and sometimes didn't hustle and was a long-range case. Baseball is a game of opinions, and most of those were wrong. USC shortstop Roy Smalley was right. He wrote his uncle (Gene Mauch) advising the Expos to make Lynn their No. 1 choice. Sox scout Joe Stephenson was right. And when Boston scouting director Haywood Sullivan returned from the college World Series after the draft, he was convinced Lynn couldn't miss.

AND THEN it took a short time to get to Boston. He signed at the end of June, 1973, played a half-season at Bristol (Eastern) and played until September 1 for Pawtucket, where Joe Morgan repeatedly said he was the best all-round player he'd ever managed. Lynn was soon in Boston. To get to the majors in a hurry is nothing unusual for USC kids. Teammate Bill Lee, Tom Seaver, Steve Busby, Dave Kingman and Smalley all needed less than two years in the minor leagues.

"There's no question that going there

helped me," said Lynn. "When I got drafted out of high school (No. 3 by Yankees) I wasn't ready to sign." Actually, he went to USC on a football scholarship and played the left corner as a freshman ("a few of those Sam Cunningham sweeps were enough") before concentrating on baseball as a sophomore.

"Coach Rod Dedeaux drills you so much on fundamentals, over and over in such monotony until they're habit, it has to help you. There's also that feeling you get there that you can't lose, and you play that way."

This was an attitude he needed. Lynn is hardly what an Easterner conjures in his mind as the archetype Southern Californian. He travels on the road in Dow Jones business school suits, uses "shoot" for expletives and is very quiet.

After moving from Chicago at the age of one and losing his mother, Lynn grew up as an only child with his father, now a retired textile service executive. He was a three-sport hero at El Monte High School, but hardly the super personality.

"I always was shy, at the back of the crowd, the last one to wear flares. And I'm still not the kind who likes to be a public personality. I believe in signing autographs and I like to talk to people, but public appearances? No way."

HIS PRIME obsession, aside from hitting ("which he'd rather do than eat," said Tim McCarver), is fishing. "I just want to make enough so I can retire when I'm done and fish every day. I like it because it gets me away from everything, lets me put things in some perspective." Baseball by nature is a lonely game, which probably explains why the Ted Williamses, Yastrzemskis and Lynns look to the solitude of fishing.

While he seems to lope through it all, through two home runs in games in New York and the incredible night of June 18 in Detroit, when he had three home runs, a triple that missed a homer by two feet, a single and 10 RBIs, he still is surprised by one thing. "It's not so much by what's happened, because one doesn't really stay aware of that kind of thing. You go day to day, and don't think about anything else."

"What does surprise me is how difficult the game really is, how much work it takes. It looks so easy, but it's not."

"There are things in the majors that make it easier than the minors. I remember two years ago at Bristol. I was tired near the end of the season and in a slump and thinking, 'Isn't this thing ever going to end?' Here, not only are conditions better, but with the crowds and situation, it is easier to get yourself geared mentally to get up every day."

What has surprised many people is that the Red Sox are in the first-place fight in what might be the strongest A. L. East in years. But the answer is simple. You take what his sidekick Jim Rice (close to .300, in the top 10 in RBIs) and Lynn himself have done, and it is obvious.

Even if it does seem like a piece of fiction from an old Saturday Evening Post.



Fred Lynn Slides Into Second to Prevent Royals' Cookie Rojas From Completing a Double Play

## Return of Fisk Buoyed Red Sox for the Long Haul

By PETER GAMMONS

BOSTON—It had been almost a year since anyone had seen Carlton Fisk catch, and it seemed strange.

It was strange to him, too, even with a standing ovation that rocked the old Fenway courtyard June 23. "It was just like getting married," he said after his five-inning debut. "You plan for it, you know it's coming. And when the day arrives, you're still nervous."

Fisk had plenty of time to plan for it. The 27-year-old three-time All-Star had suffered a knee injury in a home plate collision in Cleveland June 29, 1974. Then, after a five-inning exhibition performance, March of last spring, he was

hit by a pitch the next day and sustained a broken right forearm.

He had rationalized that perhaps the broken arm was a disguised blessing, because it gave his knee more time to recover. Anyway, he went on a two-week trip with the club, caught in batting practice daily, and got himself ready for the June 23 return.

"I KNOW IT'S going to take time to build up, especially my hitting," he said. "It's one thing to hit in batting practice, but there's a little difference between live pitching and what the Bear (coach Don Bryant) throws to me."

A year ago, he missed the first three weeks of the season as the re-

sult of being struck in the groin during an exhibition at St. Petersburg. He hit .150 for two or three weeks, then went on a tear that raised his average to .299 with 11 homers at the time of his injury in his 52nd game.

"He should just be hitting his stride when we most need him in August and September," said Manager Darrell Johnson.

So Fisk played five innings the first two days, six the third and each time was relieved by Tim Blackwell, who in Fisk's absence had established himself as a major league catcher. The first inning of the first night, the Indians' Rick Manning took off stealing, and

Fisk's first throw was there—only shortstop Rick Burleson dropped the ball in a sweep tag. Fisk had a couple of hits, a single to right and a bunt, the second day.

"I WAS REALLY stiff the day after my debut," he said. "I didn't think I would ever get loose."

"It felt good just being on the field. And it was really nice the way people treated me. You can say a lot about the fans around the country, but none are more appreciative than those in Boston."

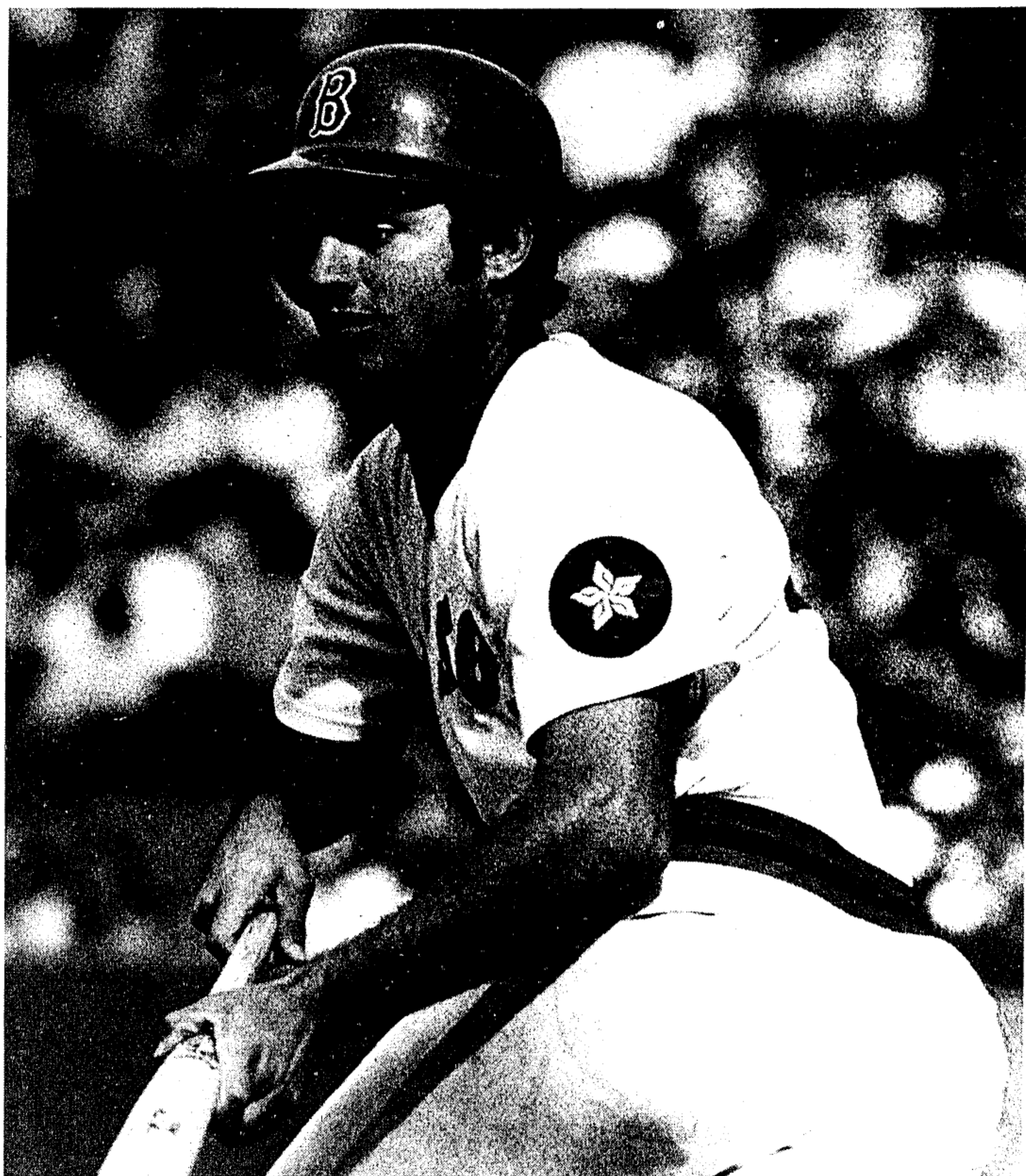
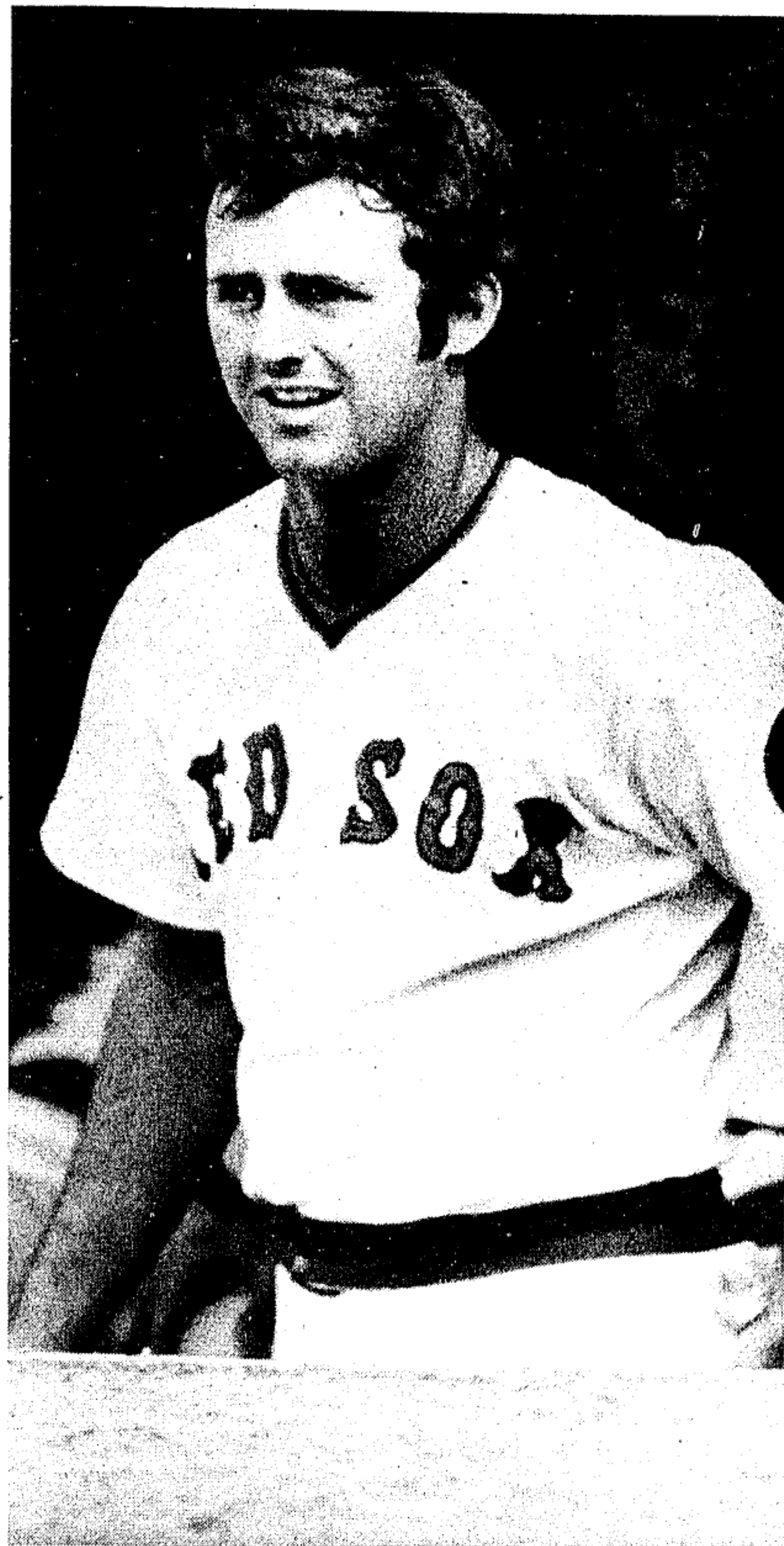
Fisk's return, however, sparked clubhouse discord. First, when

(Continued on Page 5, Column 1)



Carlton Fisk





**Fred Lynn . . . 'I Can't Start Putting Pressure on Myself to Do Better Than Last Year'**

# Super in '75—Can **Lynn** Do It Again?

By **PETER GAMMONS**

BOSTON—When you look back, how absurd it all seems. **Fred Lynn** was a year and a half out of the University of Southern California. He'd spent a season and a half in such obscure baseball outposts as Bristol and Pawtucket, compiling uninspiring batting averages of .259 and .282.

If you'd predicted last March that he'd become the toast of baseball in 1975, you'd have been consigned to the loony bin.

Halfway through 1975 spring training, this 23-year-old rookie was merely a candidate for the left field job in Boston. On opening day, he was in the Red Sox lineup as the center fielder.

**FROM THERE HE WENT** on to become the only rookie ever to win a Most Valuable Player award in the major leagues. He socked 21 homers, batted .331, drove in 105 runs, scored a league-leading 103 runs and compiled a .566 slugging percentage.

In addition to his MVP laurels, he was named THE SPORTING NEWS American League Player of the Year, and, of course, earned rookie honors by a country mile. And he carried the Red Sox to the seventh game of the World Series before they finally yielded to the Reds.

Just how plausible is it to ask **Fred Lynn** to repeat what he did in his debut season?

"There are areas in which I can improve," said **Lynn**. "But I can't start putting pressure on myself to do better than last year."

"I'M NOT SUPERSTITIOUS and I don't believe in what people call a sophomore jinx, but I also know everything will be harder to accomplish in 1976."

Lynn's stock winter answer has been to talk about cutting down on his 95 strikeouts, stealing more than the 10 bases he stole in 1975 and realizing he has to rest once in a while.

"I know I don't have great speed, but I can work more on

taking leads, knowing pitchers," he said.

"I also know I got tired that last month (he hit only one home run after August 20). I have to know when to take a day off once in a while, to stay strong."

"I also want to go to a lighter bat when I start to feel tired. The one I used is relatively light (32 ounces), but I could have used an even lighter one."

Because he has had just that one big year, after ordinary performances in the minors, some fans are suggesting **Lynn** still has something to prove. But there are many in the game who feel he won't have any trouble doing it.

"**HE'S SO INTELLIGENT** about the adjustments he makes," said Johnny Pesky, the Red Sox first base and batting coach, "that he won't run into too many problems. He's the most intelligent young hitter I've seen since Ted Williams."

As **Lynn** tired in August, his home-run production dropped, but not his average. In the last 100 games of the year, his average never dropped below .320 as he made slight adjustments in his stance.

"The thing about Freddie," said teammate Carlton Fisk, "is that he can concentrate on hitting because the defensive part of the game is so natural for him. He does everything so instinctively in the outfield, he doesn't have to worry about that part of the game."

"I guess the toughest thing will be living up to what people demand of him."

It will never be 1975 again for **Fred Lynn**. He will never be the rookie again.

"**I THINK THE ONE** thing that worries me is the reaction of the press and the fans if I do get off to a relatively poor start," said **Lynn**. "I mean, let's say I've got some small, nagging injury that isn't visible, or I just start off poorly, hitting .250 for a couple of weeks."

"Are people going to start calling me a one-year flash?"

"It's possible that I could hit .280 and still do as much for the team as I did last year. I naturally don't think I will and hope I won't hit lower, but it is possible. It won't necessarily mean I'm a worse player."

"The pressure that goes with it, I guess, is tremendous, but I think I'm prepared for it. I just won't change. I'll still be off on my own."

"And I'm not pessimistic. There's an awful lot I have to learn for I don't feel I've reached my full potential. Maybe I can be a .360 hitter."

It will be hard for **Fred** to avoid the media. They all want to interview him now.

**LYNN HAS BEEN ABLE** to stay off in the distance this winter. He attended a couple of auto shows and press conferences, as well as the Boston and New York dinners. But most of the invitations he turned down.

His agent, Jerry Kapstein, estimates he turned away at least \$50,000. **Fred** and his wife, Dede, have been living with her family. "And," she said, "they protected him as if he were a little kid."

But it's going to be a lot harder now. When things do not go well, the good people of Boston have been known to turn against quite a few of their favorite sons.

"The one thing that could make a difficult year an easy one is winning," said **Lynn**. "That's all I really care about. I'm asked about individual goals, but winning is the only thing that's important."

"It isn't as if I'm the only person here. With Jim Rice, Dwight Evans, Yaz, Rico Petrocelli, Pudge Fisk, Rick Burleson and all the pitching we have, everybody doesn't have to have a banner year for us to win."

So the implausible dream year is over. What is important for **Fred Lynn** now is 1976.



# Lynn's New Style Triggers Homer Barrage

By LARRY WHITESIDE

BOSTON—It was no accident that Fred Lynn hit six home runs in his first eight games. It was a direct result of an experiment that had been going on all spring.

In fact, it goes back to a year ago when Lynn found himself winning every home-run hitting contest he entered.

"I'm not a home-run hitter," said Lynn, off to a flying start at the plate. "But I know I'm capable of hitting them, even if I go for them in certain situations."

"IT GOES BACK TO last September when I was really struggling. I had to try something. After batting with my hands high all my career, I tried something that I did in those home-run contests. I dropped my hands and began to swing up at the ball instead of down. I'd do that in the contest and I'd never lose."

"I had pretty good success last fall, so I experimented this spring (.348) and decided to stick with it for the regular season."

What Lynn is talking about might offend the likes of Harry Walker. A lefthanded hitter with a Fenway Park stroke? Impossible, they'd say. Not with the bullpen walls 380 feet away.

But you must consider that this is the new-look Fred Lynn, slightly bigger in stature and certainly much stronger than in the past. Many feel he finally is on the verge of coming back to that 1975 form which earned him THE SPORTING NEWS A. L. Rookie of the Year and Player of the Year honors.

"I KNOW I'M STRONGER," said Lynn. "Balls that used to go for doubles are now going out of the park. I came into spring training around 190 pounds. In other years, I'd be at 180 by the end."

"I'm still around 190 and no way am I going to lose 10 pounds. I feel good, the best I've felt in years. I've had some problems with my health in other years, but if I have a poor season, I can't use it as an excuse now."

Lynn admitted his change last September was mostly out of necessity. He developed stomach problems in August, when he missed five games and batted just .218. He was running out of gas and came upon the idea of dropping his hands, which produced an amazing turnaround.

IN THE LAST 17 GAMES, Lynn batted .379. He finished with a .298 average, just under his career .303 average.

"I'm not surprised," said captain Carl Yastrzemski. "Fred can do anything he wants to do."

Lynn is surprised. What he's doing is a radical de-

parture from his hitting style of 1975, but one thing is the same. He now has big Jim Rice hitting behind him again.

"I was there in 1975," recalled Milwaukee's Cecil Cooper, "and it was a hell of a thing with Lynn batting third and Rice fourth. Fred's such a solid hitter. Jimmy can handle the cleanup spot and Fred will see a lot better pitches. They should have done this last year."

LYNN ISN'T QUITE AS sure as Cooper of continued success. For one thing, the better pitches didn't come during spring training while he hit .348. And he figures the hotter he gets, the fewer good pitches he'll see.

"At this point," said Lynn, "I'm not even happy with the way I'm swinging. I have 16 hits, and it's true seven have been for home runs and two for doubles. But I'm not really a guy who swings for the fences. I'm a guy who hits the ball hard and tries to move it around."

"I haven't been consistent at all. Fortunately, the ones

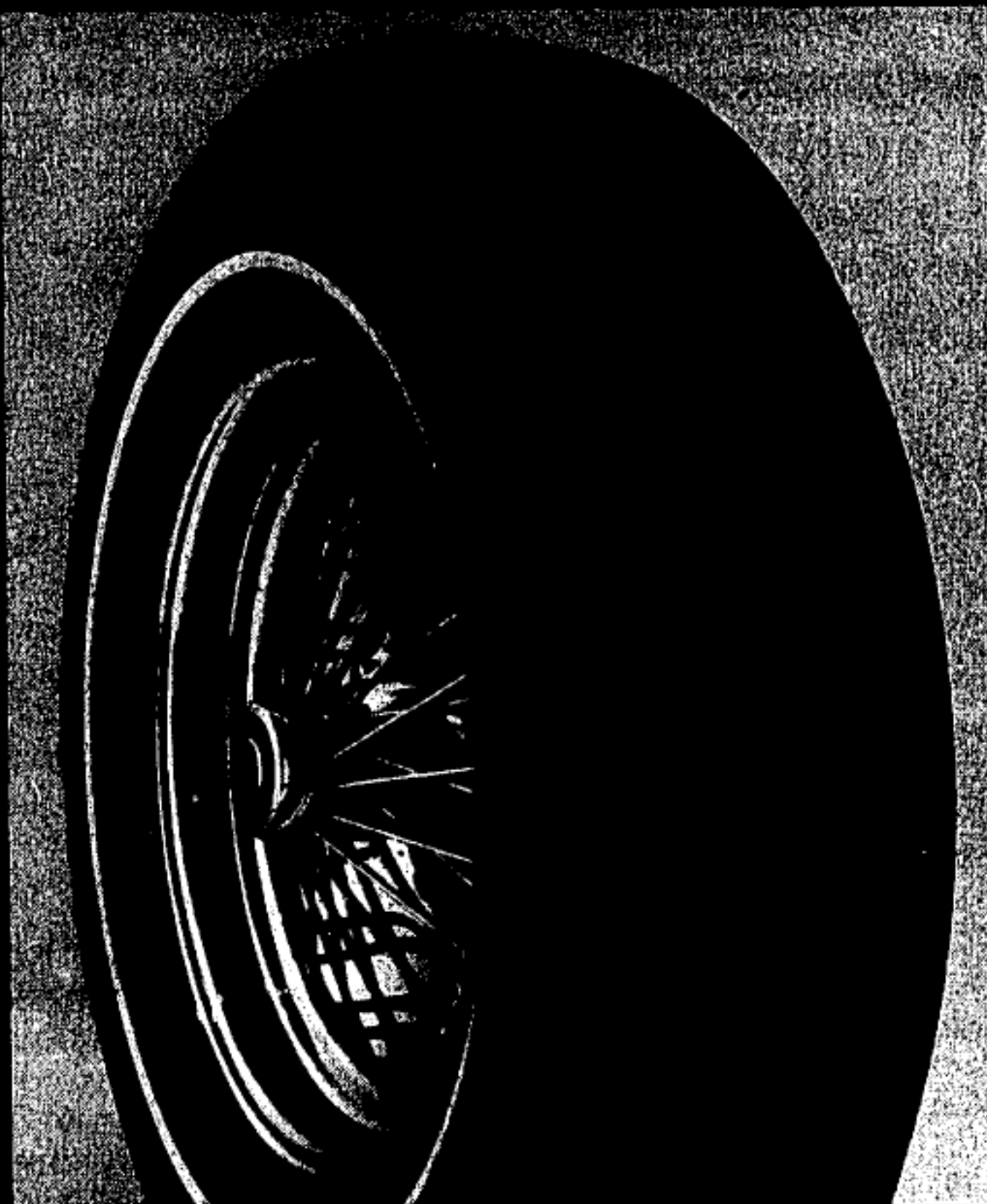
I've hit have gone out of the park.

"I like this style, but this doesn't mean I won't adjust if I have to. I'm not going to make any predictions. Every time I do, I fall right on my face."

Red Sox Notes: The saga of Carlton Fisk goes on. He flew to California to see Dr. Robert Kerlan. The verdict on his sore arm was the same as given by Boston doctors, but Kerlan recommended a new treatment—electro-shock treatments and the swinging of a leaded bat to break down the adhesions holding the scar tissue of his torn muscle. Fisk remains on the disabled list until April 29, with rookie Gary Allenson slated to do the majority of the catching.

Pitcher Jim Wright was expected to take Fisk's spot on the Red Sox roster. Television voice Ned Martin took a day off from work April 17, a first for the former Red Sox radio man, who had worked every day of the baseball season since the 1950s, when he did the Phillies' games.

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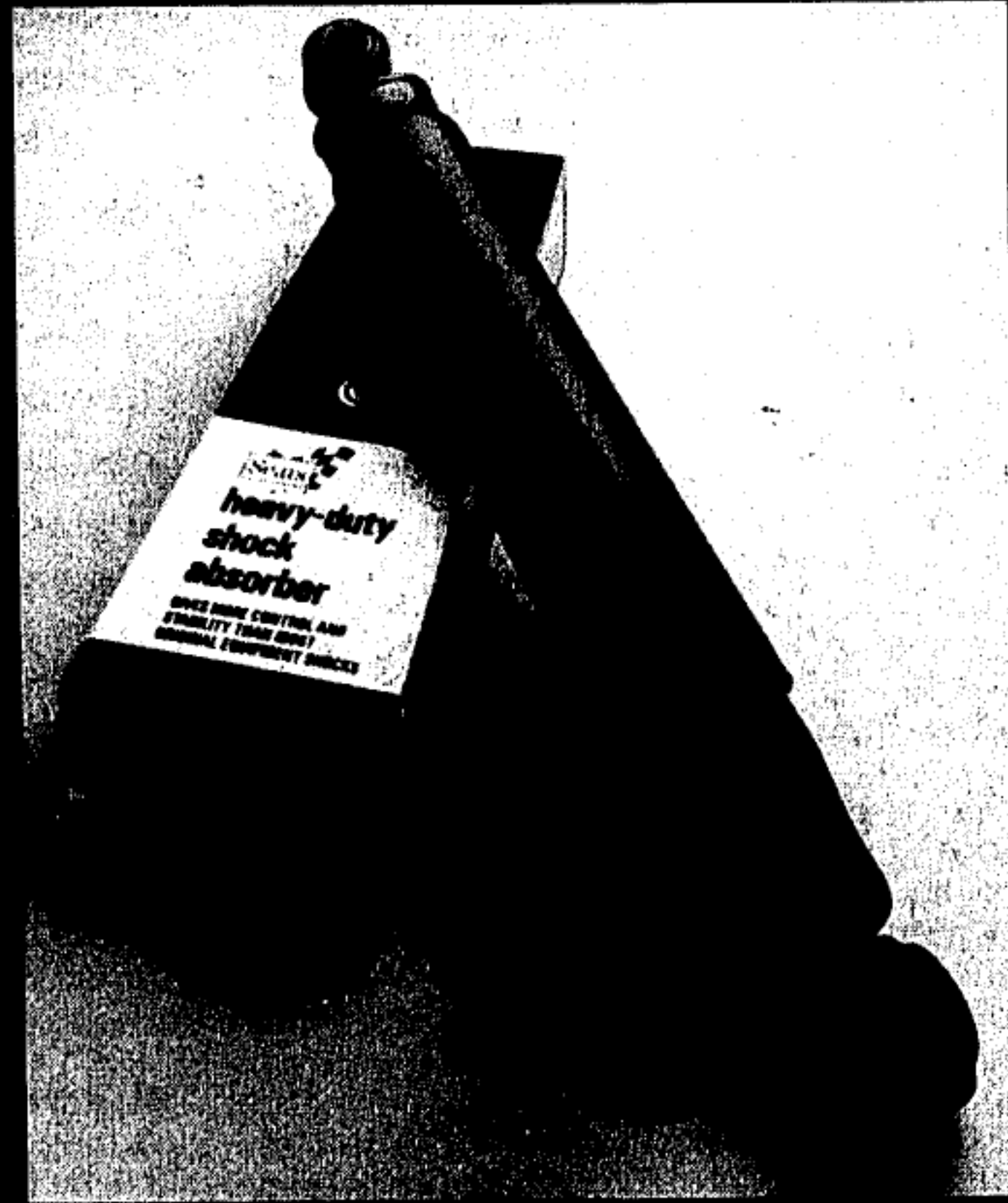
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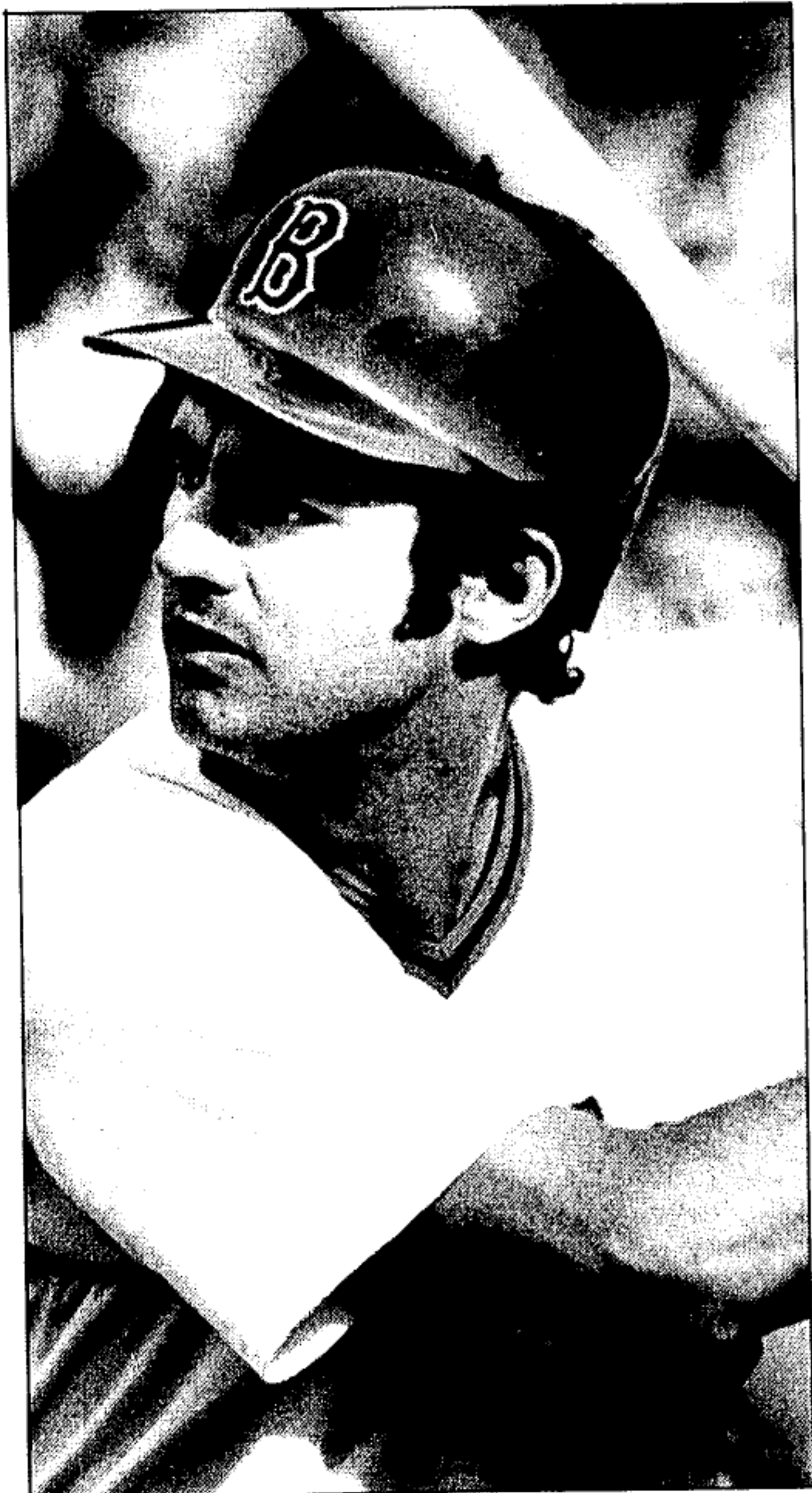
## Deadline May 26<sup>th</sup>

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Fred Lynn . . . 'I'm Stronger'



# Red Sox' **Lynn** First Rookie to Land MVP Prize

By JACK LANG

NEW YORK—What worlds are left for **Fred Lynn** to conquer? Considering all that happened to **Lynn** in 1975, his rookie season has to rate right up there on a par with Babe Ruth hitting 60 home runs, Roger Maris hitting 61, Ted Williams batting .400, Nolan Ryan or Sandy Koufax pitching a pair of no-hitters.

The frosting on the cake for the 23-year-old Red Sox rookie came November 26. The Baseball Writers Association of America, in an announcement by President Dick Dozer of the Chicago Tribune, named **Lynn** the first rookie ever to win the Most Valuable Player Award.

In capturing the American League honors for 1975, **Lynn** not only became the first freshman in

either league to gain that distinction, he also won by the greatest margin ever accorded an MVP.

CINCINNATI'S Joe Morgan, earlier established a record when he won out by 163 points over Greg Luzinski in this year's National League MVP voting. One week later, **Lynn** came along and captured the honors by 169 points, over runner-up John Mayberry, Kansas City's big slugger.

The honors **Lynn** piled up this year amount to a small mountain. The BBWAA earlier had named him Rookie of the Year and THE SPORTING NEWS selected **Lynn** as both No. 1 rookie and Player of the Year. In addition, he was named to THE SPORTING NEWS Gold Glove team as the league's finest defensive center fielder.

Only one other rookie ever came close to winning the MVP. He, too, was a center fielder, who burst on the major league scene in 1941 and led the Brooklyn Dodgers to their first National League pennant in 21 years. His name: Pistol Pete Reiser.

In the MVP voting that year, Dolph Camilli, the slugging Dodger first baseman, was the winner, with Reiser the runner-up. No other rookie ever finished that high until **Lynn** came along and won it all this year.

For his brilliant .331 season that

was second in the batting race to Rod Carew's .359, **Lynn** gained 22 of the 24 first-place votes from the select BBWAA committee charged with naming the MVP. He was named second on the remaining two ballots and thus became the only player of the 31 named to be placed on all 24 ballots.

THIS GAVE **Lynn** a total of 326 points to 157 for Mayberry, who was on 22 of the 24 ballots, including eight second-place mentions.

The remaining two first-place votes went to Oakland relief ace Rollie Fingers, who came in fourth behind **Lynn**, Mayberry and **Lynn's** rookie running mate at Boston, Jim Rice.

**Lynn** led the league in runs scored (103) and doubles (47) and was third in runs batted in (105). He is the first Red Sox player to win the MVP since Carl Yastrzemski walked off with the honors in 1967, which coincidentally was also the last time the Sox won the pennant.

Yaz, the old pro of the Sox, drew

one 10th place vote this year and finished in a 30th place tie with New York's Bobby Bonds.

**Lynn's** victory continued the domination of outfielders in the American League MVP voting. The award has gone to flychasers the last three years. Reggie Jackson won in 1973 and Jeff Burroughs in 1974. Jackson, the league's home-run leader, finished fifth this year but Burroughs did not draw a single mention.

FINGERS AND Cy Young Award winner Jim Palmer of Baltimore were the only pitchers to finish in the top 10. Palmer wound up in sixth place, with Thurman Munson of New York, George Scott of Milwaukee, Rod Carew of Minnesota and Ken Singleton of Baltimore rounding out the top 10.

In all, 31 players received votes. Every team had at least one representative among the 31 except Detroit and California. Boston and Oakland, the two division champs, claimed four of the first five places.

## Results in Landslide by **Lynn**

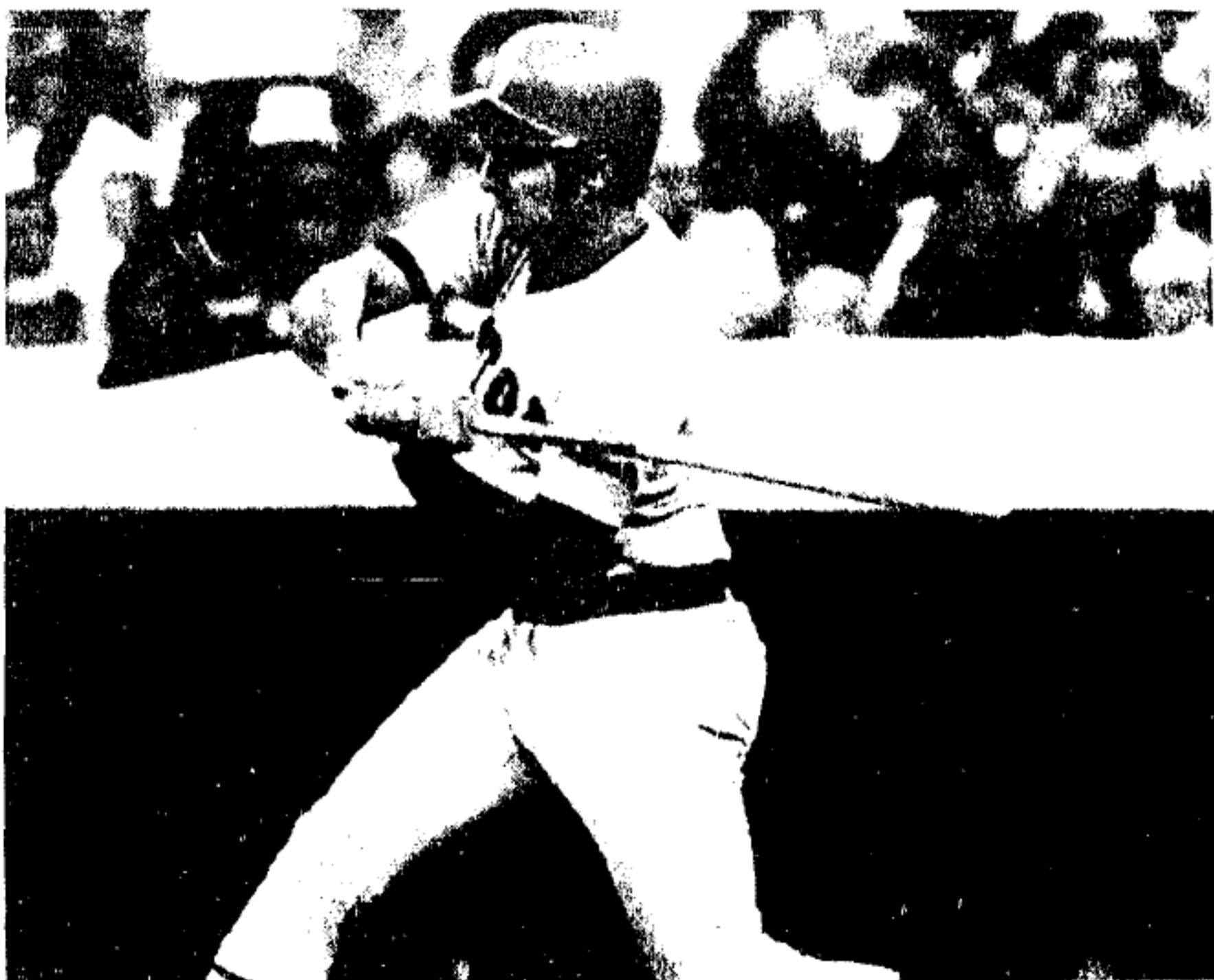
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pts.
Fred Lynn	22	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	326
John Mayberry	—	8	4	4	3	—	—	2	—	1	157
Jim Rice	—	4	6	4	3	1	4	1	—	—	154
Rollie Fingers	2	4	4	2	—	1	2	2	—	—	129
Reggie Jackson	—	2	3	3	2	5	2	2	2	—	118
Jim Palmer	—	2	—	1	5	3	2	1	—	1	82
Thurman Munson	—	—	3	1	1	3	1	2	3	1	69
George Scott	—	1	1	1	1	1	5	4	2 1/2	64 1/2	
Rod Carew	—	—	—	2	2	1	1	3	2	6 1/2	54 1/2
Ken Singleton	—	1	1	1	1	1	2	—	—	1	44
George Brett	—	—	1	—	1	1	3	1	1	1 1/2	37 1/2
Jim Hunter	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	2	1	31
Rick Burleson	—	—	—	—	1	2	1	1	2	1	28
Claudell Wash'ton	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	1	—	22
Toby Harrah	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	1	1	16
Mike Torrez	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	12
Rich Gossage	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	1	11
Paul Lindblad	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	7
Gene Tenace	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	7
Boog Powell	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1 1/2	6 1/2
Don Baylor	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	6
Bert Campaneris	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	6
Bill Lee	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	5
Jim Todd	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	5
Denny Doyle	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	5
Rick Wise	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	4
Joe Rudi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	3
Jim Kaat	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2
Lee May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2
Bobby Bonds	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Carl Yastrzemski	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1

### Each City Is Represented In Balloting for the MVP

NEW YORK—Committees for the selection of the Most Valuable Players are named by the president of the Baseball Writers Association of America. He selects two writers from each league city to participate. The committees responsible for the voting this year included the following baseball writers:

AMERICAN LEAGUE  
Jim Henneman and Ken Nigro, Baltimore; Peter Gammons and George Bankert, Boston; Dick Miller and Don Merry, California; Jerome Holtzman and Bob Verdi, Chicago; Russ Schneider and Bob Sudyk, Cleveland; Jim Hawkins and Dan Ewald, Detroit; Sid Bordman and Steve Cameron, Kansas City; Lou Chapman and Mike Conring, Milwaukee; Pat Reusse and Bob Fowler, Minnesota; Murray Chass and Phil Pepe, New York; Ron Bergman and Glenn Schwarz, Oakland; Randy Galloway and Mike Shropshire, Texas.

NATIONAL LEAGUE  
Wayne Minshew and Frank Hyland, Atlanta; Dick Dozer and Joe Goddard, Chicago; Bob Hertz and Earl Lawson, Cincinnati; Harry Shattuck and John Hollis, Houston; Gordon Verrell and Bob Hunter, Los Angeles; Red Foley and Jack Lang, New York; Allen Lewis and Ray Kelly, Philadelphia; Bob Smizik and Luke Quay, Pittsburgh; Jack Herman and Neal Russo, St. Louis; Phil Collier and Bill Weurding, San Diego; Pat Frizzell and Bucky Walter, San Francisco.



Fred Lynn . . . A Clean Sweep

# Astros Eye Slugger Johnson as No. 1 Catcher

By HARRY SHATTUCK

HOUSTON—Cliff Johnson was standing behind the batting cage one evening during the final week of the 1975 season.

The muscular Houston first baseman-catcher had played almost every day for six weeks, his first lengthy stretch of starting duty in four big league seasons. He was asked if this opportunity had altered an oft-expressed wish that the Astros trade him unless they planned to play him full time.

"I feel even more strongly now than ever before about wanting to play or go somewhere else," Johnson said. "I think I've proven I can hit and be an asset in the lineup every day. If this club will play me, I want to stay here. I'm not going to sit on the bench again."

"THEY DIDN'T put me in the lineup until the season was over for us, until we were 30 games out of first place. Don't you think I could have helped us win some games earlier?"

The problem with Johnson is that he should be a first baseman. And Bob Watson, Houston's best hitter (.324 this season), holds that position and performed well there in 1975.

So that leaves catching, and when Bill Virdon replaced Preston Gomez August 19 as Houston manager, Virdon determined he needed to find out if Johnson has the ability to catch daily in the major leagues. More often than not, Johnson was behind the plate under Virdon.

The jury still is out.

"HE IS A major league hitter," Virdon says, "and when we go to spring training, Cliff will be the No. 1 catcher. One of my main jobs will be to convince Cliff that he should want to catch. He isn't an avid fan of catching and hasn't applied himself to becoming a good catcher as well as he should. But he has good hands, agility and a good arm."

"Now I'm saying that is the way we are going to start (in the spring)," Virdon says. "It is possible we will have to change, but I hope not."

Johnson is playing winter ball in the Dominican Republic in hopes of improving his catching. Houston General Manager Tal Smith recently watched him perform for almost a week.

"He was hitting the ball well

down there," Smith said. "But it's hard to tell about his catching because his knee (injured slightly near the end of the season) is bothering him defensively."

JOHNSON SAYS he thinks he could be more valuable as a first baseman because "I could concen-



Cliff Johnson

trate more on my hitting. But I like catching, I've always liked catching. My arm is good. And most of our pitchers like to work with me."

Larry Dierker, Houston's biggest winner (14-16), complimented Johnson during the recent season. "Cliff calls a good game because he is such a good hitter that he thinks like a hitter when he is catching," Dierker said.

Indeed, nobody questions Johnson's hitting prowess. His 20 home runs led the Astros even though he started only about half the games.

If he can make the grade as a regular catcher, where does that leave Milt May, Houston's No. 1 catcher for two seasons but a disappointment offensively and defensively in 1975?

"HE'S A MAJOR league catcher," Virdon said of May, whom he managed previously at Pittsburgh. "He has not progressed as far as I had expected from the time I had him at Pittsburgh. We will have to wait and see how things turn out."

Also not to be forgotten is Skip Jutze. The scrappy Jutze is much like Johnson in that for three Astro

seasons he has never been provided an honest opportunity to prove his worth. He batted .300-plus in Class AAA and when he gets into the Houston lineup for more than a day or two, he hits for average. But those "more than a day or two" chances are rarities.

Jutze's defense is exceptional. "The pitchers love to throw to him because he is always in the game, always keeping them on their toes," ex-manager Gomez said. "One thing you can be certain about Skip is that he will give you everything he's got."

Astronotes: Manager Virdon says he believes his team has the ability to win half its games without making any personnel changes. Houston was 64-97 last year. . . . The Astros lost 42 one-run verdicts in 1975 and Virdon says that is an indication a team does not make the key late-inning defensive play or get the one big hit when needed. . . . General Manager Smith says the club is reviewing and assessing the broadcast situation but no decision has been made.