

Bonds Sets Sights on 40 Homers, 50 Steals

By PHIL PEPE

NEW YORK—Less than 24 hours after he was traded to the Yankees, Bobby Bonds was sitting in the temporary offices of his new team, telling the press how happy he was with the trade. Since actions speak louder than words, you knew Bonds was happy.

He had taken a midnight flight out of San Francisco, flown all night, grabbed three hours' sleep on the plane and arrived in the Yankee offices at 10:30 the next morning, New York time.

If Bonds was happy, his new manager, Bill Virdon, was ecstatic.

"I liked the trade (Bobby Murcer for Bonds) before," Virdon said. "After talking with Bonds, I like it even more."

THE NEW YANKEE, who will play right field, bat third and wear his old No. 25, made promises of fidelity, loyalty and production to his new employer, suggesting that it is not outside the realm of possibility that he will hit 40 home runs and steal 50 bases.

He never has done either, achieving highs of 39 homers and 48 steals, but he pointed out, "I'm happy and a happy ballplayer performs. Jimmy Wynn proved that. I hope I have my best season in 1975."

While here, under strong questioning, Bonds also laid rest, to everyone's satisfaction, ugly rumors about his personal life. He was not only willing to talk about them, he even seemed eager to have things out in the open.

The rumors, which circulated when it was learned the Giants were looking to dispose of him, said that Bonds had a drug habit and a drinking problem.

YES, BOBBY SAID, he had heard the rumors. No, he insisted, they were not true.

"I don't know who started it," he said. "I'd like to find out. I heard it this spring. Charlie Fox came to me and asked me, 'Do you mess with drugs?'"

"I said, 'Do I what? Are you kidding?'"

"I have never in my life had any type . . . I will not let the doctor give me any type of medicine with a drug in it. I have never smoked a marijuana joint. I have never taken a pill. When I heard it, it kind of shook me. I'd like to know who in the heck started it."



Bobby Bonds . . . Squelching Rumors

Why, Bonds was asked, had he never spoken out before? Why didn't he deny it publicly?

"I KNEW IT wasn't true," he said. "As long as I know it, as long as I know I've never done it, I didn't think it was anything for me to be upset about. I have never taken any type of drug. Never in my life. You can ask the team physician. He would give me a tablet when I was sick or something and I would ask him did it have any drugs in it, because if it did, I wouldn't take it."

"I have never in my life messed with any kind of drug. I never fool with it and I never will."

There was another story, out of San Francisco in 1973. Bobby Bonds was arrested for drunken driving. It was on the police blotter and it was out and once it got out, there was a stigma, a reputation. The newest Yankee was willing to discuss that, too.

"It was after a doubleheader," he explained. "I went to my brother's for a picnic. My wife didn't want to go, but I told her I'd be home that night. We had the picnic and we played dominoes, I like to play dominoes, and we drank beer. A lot of beer. Too much beer, I guess."

"I SHOULD have stayed overnight at my brother's, but I promised my wife I would be home. I drove home when I shouldn't have. I almost made it: I drove 60 miles and a mile away from my house, I fell asleep at the wheel and had a wreck. I was wrong. The judge fined me \$360 and I was embarrassed."

"But I don't have a drinking problem. I haven't had a drink all season, except a beer after a game."

Bonds has had his problems, domestic and otherwise, "but they're gone," he said. "They are GONE. They are all the way behind me . . . and that's the truth. This (the trade) is like having a new life. I'm so thrilled. I'm just overjoyed."

So, it might be added, are the Yankees.

Phils Had Bonds All Wrapped Up—Well, Almost

By RAY KELLY

PHILADELPHIA—Last summer it was "yes we can." This fall, it's "I can't believe it." Such are the ups and downs of the baseball business with the Phillies.

Right now, the Phillies are lower than a snake's belly, and the reason is that the Giants traded Bobby Bonds to the Yankees for Bobby Murcer.

That's what started the "I can't believe it" routine.

The Phillies had it all figured out. They were going to get Bonds themselves in a trade. According to one of the local papers, it was all set and due to break any minute during the World Series.

A PHILADELPHIA radio station had Steve Carlton going to the Giants even-up for Bonds, and it sounded like the gospel . . . over the air waves, anyway.

No doubt of it. The Phillies had talked a good trade. Remember

earlier in the year when Paul Owens, their director of player personnel, said he turned down a chance to get Bonds in exchange for Wayne Twitchell and Bobby Boone? Paul said he didn't sleep much that night after rejecting the offer. Small wonder.

So now the Phillies were thinking Bobby Bonds again. Thinking of Bobby Bonds playing right field at the Vet, stealing all those bases, hitting all those home runs and teaming with Greg Luzinski and Mike Schmidt to drive in all those runs.

They were probably also trying

to figure out why Owens ever turned down that Twitchell-Boone for Bonds deal.

OUT OF THE blue comes the news that the Yankees got Bonds in a swap for Murcer.

Then the Phils started to explain to the fans that they made a much better offer than the Yankees.

"We would have given them a pitcher and another player," said Owens. "There were two or three ways we could have gone. Player for player—the Carlton thing, or a player and a pitcher. They (Giants) kept insisting they had to

have a pitcher."

This was after Owens had come off his swivel chair when the trade was announced and bellowed: "I can't believe it."

Manager Danny Ozark said the same thing over the telephone from his home at Vero Beach, Fla. "I can't believe it," he muttered. "I am very dejected. We talked to the Giants and they said they would get back to us. They never did."

LARRY BOWA, the Phils' shortstop who likes to stay on top of off-season developments, also had visions of playing with the mercurial

Bonds.

"The way they (front office) were talking, we thought it might happen," he said. But on Bonds even up for Murcer, he said: "I can't believe it."

Larry said he called Dave Cash on the phone and told him about it. The hard-hitting second baseman's reaction? "He said he couldn't believe it, either," Bowa reported.

Now the Phillies are looking elsewhere for a power-hitting outfielder and they are not about to let themselves get carried away this time.

Maddox' 1974 Decline at Dish Blamed on Ailments

By PAT FRIZZELL

SAN FRANCISCO—For the National League's No. 3 hitter only a year earlier, the 1974 season proved disappointing.

Garry Maddox, the Giants' slender center fielder, plagued by leg and back miseries, dropped 35 points, from a .319 average down to .284.

"If I'd stayed healthy," the soft-spoken Vietnam veteran said, "I think I'd have batted over .300 again."

Close observers of the Giants almost unanimously agree. And a good many of them didn't realize how much pain Maddox was experiencing.

"I FIRST had trouble when we were playing the Dodgers at Candlestick Park in May," Garry recalled, "but I didn't have a real problem until we were in Philadelphia early in June."

"I woke up one morning in Philadelphia and couldn't straighten my leg. The doctor diagnosed the pain as tendinitis in my left knee. I asked Charlie Fox if he needed me in the lineup, and he said, 'Yes.' So

I told myself I could play, and did."

"I favored the leg, I guess, so much so that pain got up into my lower back. Eventually it ran down into my right leg. I had this all the rest of the season. It was worse at night games, when the weather was chilly. At the end of the season, I still was having trouble sleeping."

So this month Maddox was to undergo a complete physical checkup at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

"ON THE doctor's advice," Garry disclosed, "I've been getting a certain amount of exercise this fall. I'm taking karate lessons three times a week. This is something I've always wanted to try. Aside from the physical part of it, karate requires so much concentration it can help a person mentally. I think I may learn to increase my concentration in baseball from this."

Maddox and his wife, at home in the San Francisco Bay area this off-season, are enjoying their first offspring. Garry Lee, named after

his father, was born at Stanford University Hospital October 24.

"I'll miss Bobby Bonds," said the 25-year-old Maddox, who has teamed with Bobby, now a Yankee, the past three seasons in the outfield.

"I just hope Bobby Murcer can do the kind of things Bonds did for us. He could win games by himself. I often looked to Bobby for help in the outfield. So did Gary Matthews. Now I hope I can help Murcer get to know National League hitters."

BEFORE THE somewhat mysterious injuries began bothering him, Maddox was hitting as consistently the past season as in 1973, possibly even more so. An early splurge pushed his average above .350 in May.

This shaped up as Garry's greatest year.

Swinging in the No. 3 spot in the batting order for the Giants' first 53 games, Maddox rarely missed his daily hit, or two or three. On

April 30, against the Phillies, he went 4-for-4. The next day it was 3-for-5.

Yet just over a month later, the double-R Garry was forced to the bench for six games by leg pain. He played most of the way thereafter, getting into 135 games, but he had to sit out several days on a couple of other occasions and was severely frustrated. Still, Maddox had as high a batting average as either of the players who finished ahead of him in 1973, Pete Rose of the Reds (also .284 this year) and Cesar Cedeño of the Astros (.269).

Garry led the Giants in doubles with 31, placed second to Matthews on the club in hits with 153 and was runner-up to Bonds in steals with 29.

Giant Jottings: Mike Caldwell underwent successful surgery for removal of a bone spur from his left elbow in Los Angeles late in October and hopes to be free of pain in his pitching arm by spring training.



Paul Owens