

HANK AARON . . . The Shot That Shook Philly

Carroll Stakes Out Top Spot in Tepee Bull Pen

By FURMAN BISHOP

ATLANTA, Ga.

The Braves really weren't dead after all. What they needed was a trip to Philadelphia, where they rediscovered life—in contrast to the late W. C. Fields' caustic appraisal of the "Cradle of Liberty" and its docility.

"I spent a week in Philadelphia yesterday," Fields said.

The way the Braves felt about it, three games there weren't enough. They swept the series with the Phillies, rain-shortened by a game, got a streak going and came home to a rousingly-prosperous weekend reception from the Southland. Encouraged by a three-day audience of 75,681, they won three of four from the Mets in a sort of rematch of vindictiveness, if you can imagine anyone swearing revenge on the Mets.

A Few Distractions

During their three days at Shea Stadium, April 15-17, the Braves had been distracted by sideline interruptions, such as questioning about legal matters involving baseball and Wisconsin, the size of attendance on their second night in Atlanta Stadium (April 13, when only 12,721 came to see them play the Pirates) and, "How do you really feel about Milwaukee?"

In Philadelphia, they got their minds back to baseball and set off a six-game winning streak that ended in the second game of a double-header with the Mets on Sunday afternoon, April 24, witnessed by 43,046, including 2,569 guests. Their bats came alive on the

Atlanta's Attendance Hits 75,681 for 3-Day Series

ATLANTA, Ga.—The South turned out to make the Braves their own on Sunday, April 24, as they split a double-header with the Mets. The paid crowd of 40,477 brought the three-day series total to 75,681 and the season total to 139,063 for five playing dates. (Just by comparison, the Atlanta Crackers drew 156,000 in their final season last summer.)

When 15,665 turned out for a Friday game, April 22, after an all-day rain, there was some feeling that critics of the Braves' second-night draw (12,721) were answered. But the Sunday crowd was a clincher. A total of 26,155 tickets was sold at the gate, largest gate sale in the history of the Braves—anywhere.

second night at Connie Mack Stadium, when they rapped Phillies' pitching for eight runs, including Lee Thomas' second home run as a Brave and Henry Aaron's 400th. This was Aaron's second home run of the 8-1 game, and a shot to remember. No. 400 traveled all the way over the left-field stands and the ball was found 700 feet from home plate at the far end of a parking lot.

The usually stoic Henry was somewhat moved by the occasion. "The only other home run that can match it was the one I hit in St. Louis that won the pennant for us in '57," he said.

Bo Belinsky, his victim, was not so stoic. "They'll probably pick him up on a manslaughter charge," said the shellshocked Phil.

In the same series, the Braves made a profitable pitching discovery. When Wade Blasingame's arm tightened on him in the first game,

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Little Guys McAuliffe and Wert Add Up to Big Plus for Bengals

By WATSON SPOELSTRA

DETROIT, Mich.

It was obvious that Dick McAuliffe was talking primarily about the left side of the Detroit infield.

"I'm glad baseball is the small man's game," said McAuliffe, the black-browed Tiger shortstop. "I'd be lost trying to play football or basketball, but baseball has a spot for the guy who isn't so big."

McAuliffe lacks physical stature and so does his pal, third baseman Don Wert. Clearly, they hold important spots in Detroit's campaign to stay in the American League race all season.

It was just three years ago that Bob Scheffing, then the Detroit manager, scrawled McAuliffe's name on the lineup card with the designation of shortstop. Up to that point, the slender fellow with the sound batting stroke had largely played second base for the Tigers.

"This is an important day," a dug-out visitor announced at Tiger Stadium. "It is the first day of McAuliffe's ten-year career as Detroit shortstop."

"I hope you're right," said Mac gratefully. "I'd like ten years of that."

Starter in All-Star Game

Three years have slipped by and McAuliffe has wide acceptance in the league as a shortstop. People forget that he beat out Zoilo Versalles, Luis Aparicio, Jim Fregosi and the others as the All-Star starter last July.

"I wouldn't mind playing in another one," said McAuliffe after a good start at the plate. "Maybe that's asking too much. This league has some mighty good shortstops."

Manager Charlie Dressen, whose National League background is authentic, agrees on the high quality of American League shortstop play.

"There are more good shortstops in this league," said Dressen. "They all pick Maury Wills as the best one over there. He is the best for getting on base and stealing. Wills is not a good fielder. There are better fielders and hitters over here and some who can run pretty good, too."

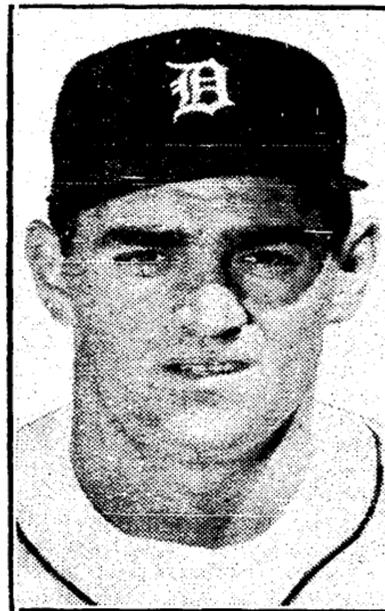
The point is that McAuliffe is receiving more attention every year for his Detroit performance. Here is an explosive power hitter, particularly against righthanded pitching, and he has the drive and the skill to do the rest of it, too.

Don Honored by Writers

Wert used to be an unsung man at third base, but he was voted "Tiger of the year" by the Detroit writers last winter. Usually, Don isn't impressive as a spring hitter. He didn't do much in Florida, but he got in some good licks once the season opened.

Dressen calls Wert the No. 2 man at third base in the league.

"Everybody picks Brooks Robinson and I do, too," said Dressen. "After that, I'll take Wert. Some-



Dick McAuliffe

times there are sloppy .300 hitters, but Wert is a solid man at .260. He hits the ball hard."

Dressen wishes Wert would make a little more noise on the field.

"The third baseman is the policeman of the infield," the manager insisted. "Don doesn't say much. I wish he was more peppy."

This doesn't mean that Wert does not give 100 per cent of himself. Dressen likes the big picture, but he wants his third baseman to turn up the audio.

Best Since Kell

Wert's defensive skill is never unnoticed. He has quick, soft hands and a true arm. He is considered Detroit's best guardian of the position since George Kell, now the play-by-play man on Tiger telecasts. Kell's playing days in Detroit ended nearly 15 years ago.

Many believe Wert is the most significant factor in Detroit's lowest staff ERA since the 1946 era of Hal Newhouser and Dizzy Trout.

This was last year, when the Detroit pitching worked its way down to a 3.35 ERA. The Tiger pitchers faltered a little at the start of the new season. But nobody seemed panicky about it.

"I've been in Detroit six years," said coach Mike Roarke, "and this is the best pitching staff we've had. Over the long haul, we're stronger than we were last year. We have enough bull pen if the starters do their job."

It will be recalled that Roarke did a good share of the catching for Frank Lary, Jim Bunning and Don Mossi in the 1961 challenge of the Yankees. The Tigers finished a strong second.

"There are some more good arms this time," replied Roarke.

It turned out that Joe Sparma and Hank Aguirre were not as far advanced as the others when the season began. Dave Wickersham, assigned to the bull pen, moved up for

Dressen Hates the Slider, But Sherry's Is Exception

DETROIT, Mich. — Larry Sherry has known Charlie Dressen a long time and maybe that is why he can get away with it.

Sherry's most effective pitch as a relief man for the Tigers is a slider.

Dressen hates sliders.

"Only Sherry's is different," the manager said grudgingly. "He doesn't throw one of those dinky sliders that slides right out of the park for a home run."

When Sherry throws an overhanded curve, then he's really Charlie's guy.

"It's easier throwing a slider in cold weather," explained Sherry. "That's why I use it in April and May. Mine breaks the width of the plate (17 inches) sometimes and I'm staying with it."

Sherry usually makes a good start with Detroit and this year is no exception. He won one game and saved two others in the first two weeks of the season.

two starts before he pulled a muscle in his right knee in the first visit to Boston.

By this time, Sparma and Aguirre were ready for duty.

Tiger Tales: Denny McLain went 3-for-7 in a two-game hitting streak at the start. "This is something I worked on in Florida," said Denny, whose average was .054 last year.

Manager Charlie Dressen has told Mickey Lolich to forget about his high-arc blooper pitch. Don Lock singled off the delivery to start a rally at Washington. "That isn't Lolich's way of pitching," said the manager.

Norm Cash's first home run of the year was off lefty Mike McCormick, and Detroit has put platoon play out of mind at first base. Dressen grew tired of trouble with the bull-pen phone and acquired a walkie-talkie to communicate from the bench with pitching coach Stubby Overmire.

Someone put up a noose in Bill Monbouquette's locker after the Red Sox had knocked Monbo out in two innings in his first hostile visit to Boston. The noose was a gag and Detroit players told Monbo that Carl Yastrzemski put it there.

Don Demeter's arm is sound again and he's relieved. Demeter injured his shoulder in a head-first slide last year in Boston and it took quite a while to build the arm back.

Cash was struck on the right arm by Jim Northrup's line drive in batting practice. Cash resolutely stayed on the job and played a double-header in Boston.

John Hiller became sick on the eastern trip and returned to Detroit, where he was bedded down with pneumonia and pleurisy.

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