

# Neun Pledges 'Open Mind' on Every Red Job

New Pilot Outlines Policies to Squad Prior to Start of Formal Training

By TOM SWOPE  
TAMPA, Fla.



Johnny Neun

Johnny Neun may or may not make a success of managing Cincinnati's Reds, but the way he went about his new job the first week of spring training here has convinced observers that it will not be his fault if the club is a flop.

Neun sold himself to his players before any of them took a single workout. Johnny's first selling job came on March 1, which was to have been the first day of organized training at the club's Plant Field camp. But on that day Tampa was hit by a rain and wind-storm. Outdoor work was impossible. So, while the storm raged, Johnny sat on a table in the clubhouse and addressed his club for 45 minutes, explaining his policies and methods. Veterans characterized his talk as being "one of the best baseball talks we ever heard a manager make to his squad."

He made no threats about what he would do to any member of the squad not adhering to his rules or showing a lack of effort to play to the best of his ability, but at the same time left the impression that he can get tough if the need arises.

"Our rules will be simple," Johnny said. "You will be called each morning while here at 8. You will be in the

## Galan Makes Hit

TAMPA, Fla.—Augie Galan has made a big hit with his new bosses, President Warren Giles and Manager Johnny Neun of the Reds. Asked by Giles where he thought he would best fit into the team, Galan said:

"I'll play wherever the manager thinks I can do the most for the club. Playing in the outfield is easier than the infield, but all I ask is that I be allowed to play some place, whenever the manager thinks I can help the team."

dining room by 9. You will be in uniform and ready to take the field by 10:30. You will be in your rooms by midnight. Conduct yourselves like big leaguers on and off the field at all times. Do nothing at any time to embarrass yourself or your club. The youngsters in the communities from which you come look up to you because you are members of a big league team. Don't let them down.

### "Fight—But Not Umpires"

"This will be an aggressive club and by aggressive I do not mean fighting the umpires, especially over rules interpretations when you are in error, but aggressiveness directed toward getting the best results from every play. A team which keeps on its toes can accomplish something extra day after day, both individually and collectively.

"I have an open mind regarding every job on this team. Each of you must feel you have a chance to play regularly on this club. Nothing would please me more than to have every one of you show enough ability to be a regular. If that happens I'll have to make some tough decisions in deciding which of you to keep. But I'll welcome the opportunity to make those decisions."

Neun began carrying out his program the following afternoon. He not only has George Kelly and Phil Page assisting him as coaches in going into detailed instruction on all points, but has Manager Jewel Ens of the Syracuse Chiefs, Manager Gerald Walker of the Columbia Reds and Manager Cecil Scheffel of the Lockport Pony League team, all Red farms, also taking a hand in the painstaking instruction.

On top of that, he has Scout Frank O'Rourke, annually a visitor at the Reds' camp, but never before employed steadily there as a teacher of baseball, in uniform daily working with the infielders and with all hands on sliding technique in the two sliding pits the Reds started using March 3.

Page has been given full charge of getting the pitchers into condition. Neun has shown he is a stickler for routine and system. He carries a watch on the field and clocks the periods devoted to different phases of training.

# Big Bobo Bills Find as 'New Newsom'

Vet, as Talent Scout, Unearths Lefthanded Wonder in Home Town, Hartsville, S. C.



BOBO NEWSOM GIVING ROOKIE RUFÉ LEONARD THE LOWDOWN ON PITCHING

## Rufe Leonard Brings SO Mark as Passport to Senator Camp

By SHIRLEY POVICH  
Of the Washington Post  
ORLANDO, Fla.

Buck Newsom has a protege in the Nats' camp, a rookie lefthander named Rufe Leonard, and to hear Newsom tell it, the lad is a hot article, which is another way of saying Newsom is a great talent scout.

"I don't say he'll be the fastest lefthanded pitcher in the American League, because I'm not quite sure that he can throw harder than Newhouser," said Newsom, "but he's faster than all the rest. I'm teaching him what to do with his curve ball."

Newsom virtually led Rufe into the Nats' fold by the hand. He brought Leonard, a fellow-ownman from Hartsville, S. C., to Washington in the dead of winter to show him off to Clark Griffith in a special workout at Griffith Stadium. A couple of weeks later, Griffith sent him a contract.

It wasn't complete altruism or hometown pride that moved Newsom to fetch Leonard to the Nats. Griffith thought well enough of the fellow to pay him a small bonus, and there will be a larger bonus for Newsom if Leonard stays with the club.

Where did Newsom come up with this young man? "That's easy," says Buck. "I kept hearing about this fellow

## When Bobo Outfoxed Mack

Passing through Hartsville, S. C., on the way to training camp, Red Smith, sports columnist of the New York Herald Tribune, was reminded how that town once was the private training ground for Bobo Newsom. Smith told of how Buck called on Connie Mack one winter, took over the big swivel chair, while the A's leader sat on a bench, and addressed Mr. Mack as "Bobo."

"See you in Frederick on March 1," one of the newspapermen said (this was wartime when the club trained in the North) as the gathering broke up. "No, you won't," Newsom said, "I'll be along in early April." He turned to Connie: "That

right, Bobo?" The old gentleman, obviously startled, said: "Why, why, er, yes, I guess so, Bobo." So Bobo stayed home in Hartsville.

When Newsom reported, he presented a bill for secret training expenses. The sum involved was also secret. He stayed home again the following spring when the A's again trained in Frederick and again he brought a bill north with him. Connie took this one to his hotel room to read in private, so he could be alone with his grief. After a time he emerged.

"If," the old gentleman said, "I had to train 30 ball players at those rates, I'd be bankrupt in a week."

named Rufe Leonard. "What a name for a pitcher," I says to myself, so I went around to have a look at him, and I saw he had an arm to go with his name. There were plenty other scouts around, but we Hartsville fellows have got to stick together so I got him to go to Washington with me."

Rufe is no kid. In fact, he's the father of two. He just turned 26 and lost a couple of years of baseball experience while he was with the Seventy-seventh Division as a gun sergeant in the Pacific. Richmond had him once, in 1941,

but sent him home from its training camp when he came down with pneumonia and didn't bother to call him. "He just rears back and throws hard," was the report of the Richmond scout who signed him.

Leonard thought he was still Richmond property until late last season. Then he got an offer from the Atlanta Southern Association club and learned during the war he had been certified as a free agent.

The Atlanta offer didn't interest him "I could make more money pitching

around home and working at my mill foreman's job," he says.

It wasn't much of a league Leonard was pitching in last season—the Palmetto State League, a semi-pro outfit. But Leonard had a prodigious record in that circuit. He won 18 games and lost only four during the regular season. At the end of the playoff games, he had 22 wins against six defeats. He was the strikeout king of the league.

"Tell them about your control," interjected Newsom.

"I had good control, I think," responded Leonard shyly.

"How good?"

"Wa-al, I only walked 13 batters all year in those 28 games I pitched."

"Tell 'Em, Bobo," Says Bobo  
"Tell him the rest of it," said Newsom.

"Wa-al, two of those 13 walks I gave were intentional. That's the whole story."

With Newsom prompting him, Leonard confessed, too, that he was the strikeout king of the league. "I fanned 364," he said.

Newsom: "Tell him how many strikeouts you averaged a game."

"I figured it out like I averaged 15 strikeouts every game I pitched."

Rufe is a big boy. He weighs 194 and stands six feet. Says he prefers to pitch three or four times a week, like he did in the Palmetto League. "It's good exercise," he said. "Keeps my weight down, and helps my control. I thought I had a pretty good curve ball until Mr. Griffith said I didn't."

"There's nothing the matter with his curve ball," said Newsom. "Mr. Griffith liked his curve ball, but he didn't like the way he threw it. He wasn't hiding it. Everybody in the stands would know when he was going to throw his curve. He started curling his wrist from the minute he wound up, that's all. I'll straighten that out for him, and the Washington club will have another Newsom."

"There were some good ball players in our league," said Rufe. "Our outfielder, Puddinhead Jones, was signed by the Phillies. He murders every pitcher. The Yankees wanted him too, but the Phillies signed him."

Puddinhead Jones? What's his real name?

"I don't know. He gets mad if you don't call him Puddinhead."

## Miller and Reds Part; Shortstop Berth Up in the Air

By TOM SWOPE



Eddie Miller

TAMPA, Fla.

Shortstop Eddie Miller watched the Cincinnati Reds train here, March 6, conferred with President Warren Giles of the club, said he still was undecided whether to attempt to play any more baseball or go into retirement and was advised by Giles that he had eliminated himself from the club's plans for 1947.

Miller later learned he must play two more years to become eligible for the full benefits under the players'

pension plan and termed that "something to think about."

"If Miller later decides to play ball, we will endeavor to make a deal for him, advantageous to both him and our club," Giles said.

### Refused to Don Suit

Their meeting and parting was friendly. Various Reds sought vainly to persuade Miller to get into uniform but he resisted all attempts, content only to watch his old mates practice.

With Miller eliminated from the club's plans, Manager Johnny Neun said he would pick his opening day shortstop from among Virgil Stallcup, Benny Zientara, Kermit Wahl and Claude Corbitt. Stallcup started training here, March 6. He showed good fielding skill.

Miller drove here from Cincinnati,



Benny Zientara



Virgil Stallcup

accompanied by his brother-in-law, Al Ott, and planned to leave for Lake Worth to take Ott, a pitcher, to the Toronto club's camp, where he is scheduled for a trial.