

# LOOPING THE LOOPS

By J. G. TAYLOR SPINK

(Second of a series on **Minnie Minoso**, tracing his rise to diamond fame in the U. S. after tough days in the Cuban sugar cane fields.)

CHICAGO, Ill.

## Dad's \$100 Started Minnie to Fortune

**Minnie Minoso** said goodbye to formal education when he was 11 and had completed the fifth grade. During the years until early in 1943, when he joined the Ambrosias in Havana at the age of 19, he divided his time among his father, his dad's good friend, Juan Llins, and his sisters in Havana.

**Minnie** was 15 when his father gave him \$100 to seek his fortune in Havana. That was the end of their close family tie, except on visits. After **Minnie** was established in pro ball, he implored his father to come to Havana and live with him.

So it was that the elder **Minoso** made the jaunt from Manolo Serano in Camaguey, 500 miles from Havana, where he lives today on a chicken and hog ranch.

"He come to Havana and in two week he went back," **Minnie** told us. "I afraid he get sick. He wake up at 6 in the morning and starts saying, 'I must work. Must go back to the ranch.' I don't want to force him to stay. He 57 and still very strong, so he went home."

As **Minnie's** fame grew with the Ambrosias, he had other offers which dwarfed the \$7 a week he was paid to work part time in a garage and the "two or three dollar" he got for playing.

"I go to Rene Mideston (who ran the Ambrosias) and tell him I want to quit. 'You been good to me,' I tell him. Then I tell him I have offer from Paragas, se'enteen fifty a week year round making cigars and \$5 for every game."

He went with Rene's blessing and occasionally he pitched for the Paragas.

"Now I even forget how to throw the cur'e," says **Minoso**. "By this time my friends tell me to forget pitching. 'You good hitter, runner, fielder, and can steal bases,' they say."

## First Salary \$100 a Month in '44

Early in 1944, Rene recommended **Minnie** to a scout for the Cuban Miners of Santiago, who played in faster competition, but the scout was unimpressed.

"Look," Rene told him. "I'll give Orestes \$20 to make the trip. If he don't make the team, I'm out the \$20."

"So I go to Santiago," recounts **Minnie**. "We play double-header my first day and lose the first one. I strike out a couple of times. But in second game, I hit four for five, one a triple."

"I go to the manager and tell him, 'I think I do my job already.' He agrees. I get \$100 a month, all expenses. My dad hear about it and write telling how happy he is."

But **Minnie** suddenly was overpowered by a desire to return to the sugar cane fields.

"I write my father I'm leaving for home to work. I get a letter right back. He tell me, 'You getting \$100 a month to do what you always want to do. If you come back I not your

## Dykes' Greatest Mistake—When He Passed Up Minoso

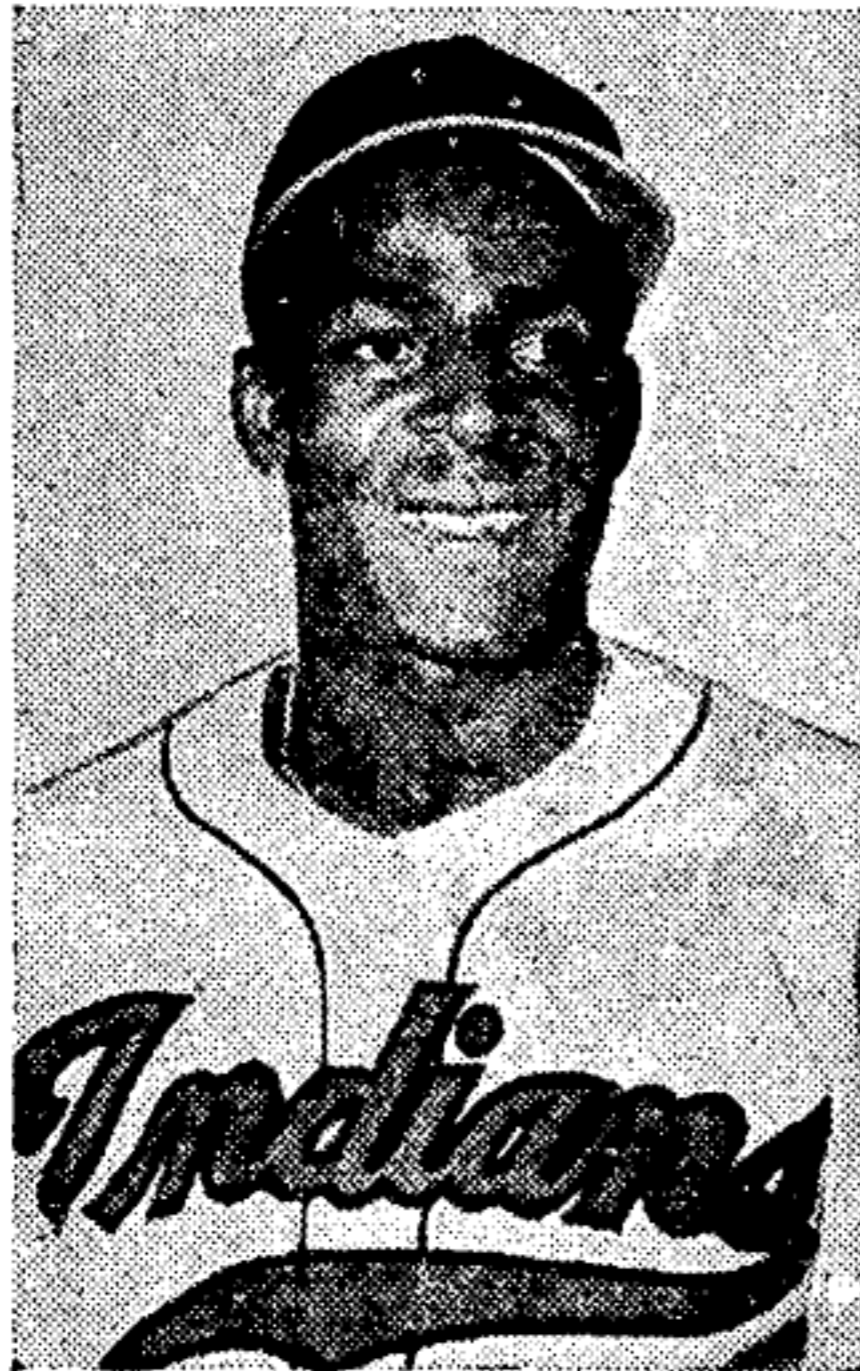
BOSTON, Mass.—Jimmie Dykes, manager of the Orioles, admits that the greatest mistake of his career was refusing to keep **Minnie Minoso** after he had acquired the flashy Cuban from the Indians in April of 1951.

"**Minoso** is one of the best players in baseball today," mused Dykes, "and I could have had him. In fact, I did have him, but failed to keep him. And this is what makes me so mad. Paul Richards (Chicago White Sox manager) told me to keep **Minoso** because he was a great player. But I wouldn't listen."

"Cleveland needed pitching and they offered me (Dykes was then manager of the Philadelphia Athletics) Catcher Ray Murray, Pitcher Sam Zoldak and a rookie bench-sitter named **Minoso** for Lou Brissie. I happened to mention the deal to Richards and he said to make it just for **Minoso**. I thought he was kidding, because he was trying to do business with us, too. So I told Paul I'd make the deal, then give him **Minoso** for Gus Zernial and Dave Philley. He nearly rammed my cigar down my throat trying to complete the deal."

When the trade was finished, Philadelphia got Murray, Zoldak, Zernial and Philley; Cleveland landed Brissie and Chicago got **Minoso** and Paul Lehner.

## As Injun Rookie



**MINNIE MINOSO** in Cleveland uniform, which he wore briefly. He was traded to the White Sox early in his freshman season.

father.' I think, well, I better stay. I no want to lose my father!"

**Minnie** doubled as manager of the Cuban Miners.

"I tell the man I no want to manage," says **Minoso**. "I tell him I meet a man who can do better job, man named Soli. 'I getting paid to play, not manage,' I told my boss, man named Sain. 'I think I do good job, but I don't think I know too much about it.'"

**Minnie's** recommendation stuck and Soli became the skipper. After watching him play, Soli told **Minnie** he was good enough to play professional ball in the Cuban League.

"I tell him, 'Look, that's a lot different. I ha'e what I want. I satisfied.'" Soli wrote all the clubs in Havana and received a telegram from the Mariana team offering a tryout.

"He show it to me," recalls **Minnie**, "and say, 'You better go.' I kiss him, I so excited."

The telegram was from Eloy Garcia, manager of the Marianas.

"I know Mr. Sain will not want me to lea'e the Miners, so I tell him my sister sick. He offer to gi'e me \$200 to send to her. I said, 'Sometimes money not mean ever'thing. My sister want to see me.' I had \$100 coming. He let me ha'e \$20 and keep the \$80 for when I return."

## He Knew About Bargaining

Manager of the Marianas was Armando Marsans, first of the Cubans to star in the majors.

"He watch me pra'ti'e. I hit two out of the ball park. I field ground balls good. He say, 'Yes, I like you,' and offer \$120 a month. I tell him I ha'e good job in Santiago and must get \$150 and expenses."

Mariana had a weak club, says **Minnie**, and he made his first appearance with them when they were playing the Alemendares.

"I not ever ha'e number on my uniform," says Orestes. "That day our thir' baseman hurt and Marsans put me in. Everything seems planned to gi'e me good breaks. We are ahead, 1 to 0, in seventh. If they no tie, I no get chance to bat."

"They tie it in ninth. In tenth, we get base-hit and a bunt to put man on second and I come up. I hit first pitch a sharp grounder between fir' and second and the ball game is over. People start to talk about me."

"Next day we play Almendares again.

## He Raised His Boy to Be Ball Player



A CLOSE BOND exists between **Minnie Minoso** (right) and his father. When **Minnie** was 15, his dad gave him \$100 to seek his fortune in Havana. He has never ceased to appreciate it.

We behind, 6 to 0, then tie it. Two on base, the count 3 to 2 on me. Pitcher throw knuckle ball. I hit big hopper to second. He take time fielding it and when he look up I past fir' base and we win."

The second baseman, added **Minnie**, was Bob Avila, now starring with the Cleveland Indians.

During 1945, **Minnie** hit .300 and was named Rookie of the Year. Two days after he joined Mariana his contract was upped to \$200 a month.

He was offered \$300 a month for the season of 1946 by the New York Cubans, with his income tax to be paid by the club, and he agreed to terms. However, before he left Cuba, **Minnie** was approached by an agent of the Pasquel brothers who were making fabulous offers at the time to players to jump to their Mexican League.

## "Sometimes Money Nothing"

"The man take me to hotel," **Minnie** said in reconstructing the incident. "He tell me he want me to go to Mexico. I say, 'Look, I no want to. I just getting started. I ha'e plan to go to United State with chance to see the great players. There I play every day, in Mexico two or three time a week.' He show me all the money in the bag. 'I know you rich man,' I say, 'but sometimes money mean nothing. I don't have any.' I did show him \$50 bill and he say, 'You do ha'e something.' I say, 'Not compared to money you got.' He offer me \$5,000 a year, \$15,000 for three year. I tell him 'no.'"

So **Minoso**, showing rare judgment in the light of the financial woes which later engulfed the Mexican League and which brought long suspensions to many big leaguers, joined the New York Cubans.

Actually, according to **Minnie**, the St. Louis Cardinals had the first shot at him among the major league clubs. He attended a tryout camp in 1947 in a New York town, and lost interest when he was told that he would have to take a test at another camp.

**Minnie** kept blasting the ball and

## Left School at Age 11, Reads to Master English Language

CHICAGO, Ill.—**Minnie Minoso's** quick, inquiring mind has helped him overcome the disadvantage of leaving school at the age of 11.

The White Sox star is an avid reader. On every trip he carries a bundle of Spanish language magazines. He admits most of his reading of American literature is confined to the sports pages.

Cowboy and detective stories are his favorites on television. "I no like comedians," he adds.

**Minnie** goes to movies sparingly because of the belief they are tiring on the eyes.

**Minoso** talks fast in a musical Spanish accent. He makes a good choice of English words.

## Hit by Pitches 59 Times—Does Minnie Forget to Duck?

CHICAGO, Ill. — "**Minnie** never whines," says Paul Richards, manager of the White Sox. "He doesn't know the meaning of getting hurt."

In three full seasons with the White Sox and with the half-way mark nearing in this campaign, **Minnie** has been hit more than 50 times. Rivals suspect that sometimes **Minnie** just forgets to duck in his determination to become a base-runner.

Despite an inflammation of the bursa in his left shoulder suffered in a slide on June 16, last year, **Minoso** missed only two games after the physician said he'd be out several days. Despite the recurring pain, **Minnie** played under a handicap the remainder of the season.

there came a day in the summer of 1948 when the Cubans were playing in Birmingham, Ala.

"A Cleveland scout come to look at Jose Santiago, our pitcher," **Minnie** explained.

"Jose told him I the best player, that I was in all-star game in Chicago, but would be in New York in few days."

"Jose fill out the scout's card with my name. I hit two doubles in New York and the scout sign me."

Owner of the Cubans was Alex Pompey.

"I think he get \$12,000 for me from Cleveland," says **Minnie**. "I ask him for \$1,000, or I no report. I tell him I want to buy a car. He think it over. I got it."

In 11 games with Dayton, O., in the Central League at the end of the 1948 season, **Minnie** made 21 hits in 40 at-bats for a fat .525 average.

**Minoso's** manager there was Joe Vosmik, whom **Minnie** always will think is an understanding and tolerant fellow. In Cuba, the equivalent to the "take" sign given a batter means to swing.

"We behind two runs in seventh inning," says **Minnie**. "Two on, nobody out and me at bat. The count is 3 ball and no strike and Vosmik tell me 'take.' So I hit the ball and knock it out of park. We win, 4 to 3. I tell one of the players, 'He think me a Baby Ruth. Tell me to hit with 3 and 0.'"

Vosmik waited until the season was almost over to explain to **Minnie** that "take" meant to let the next ball go by.

"Then I been wrong all year," I tell Joe," related **Minoso**. "Maybe, but you doing great," he tell me. "But you play somewhere else next year. I don't want you to be wrong on the sign."

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NEXT WEEK: **Minnie** wins a salary row with Hank Greenberg, but the Big Time still is two years away.

## All-Star Game May Shift To Milwaukee Next Year

MILWAUKEE, Wis. — Milwaukee may be host to the 1955 All-Star Game, though it isn't the Braves' turn. Milwaukee technically lost out on its turn last year. The Braves had been scheduled to be host for the 1953 classic, but because their franchise was shifted from Boston, the All-Star Game was awarded to Cincinnati instead of going to a new city in major league baseball.

However, in recognition of Milwaukee's great contribution to major league baseball, the magnates are said to feel kindly toward the idea of moving this city in ahead of others for the 1955—or 1956 classic. Ordinarily, the game is moved around on a regular rotation basis, meaning that if this program were followed, it would be 14 years before the midsummer classic would fall here. However, the feeling is general that Milwaukee will be given the baseball show it deserves within a year or two.

## FRICK

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

a stop to it. One club very recently had a lot of trouble in the bleachers and the melee was stopped in a hurry when a few cops were put out there. "We've got to give our players better protection. The fellows in the bull pen frequently are targets for the fans, because they generally are situated so near the stands."

Frick revealed that it was the first time he ever had issued a bulletin on fan rowdiness, since he has taken the commissioner's office. But he explained that the commissioners before him had taken cognizance of it several times.

"Several clubs have been fined for inadequate police protection," said Frick. "There is ample precedent for disciplinary action. But actually there is none necessary."

## Cites Commissioner's Authority

"Rowdiness by fans resulting in serious injuries, because of inadequate policing of the ball park, would give the commissioner the right to apply the power given him under the 'conduct detrimental to baseball' clause."

"The commissioner has authority under that clause to mete out any fine or suspension he believes is required. There is no limit for the fine or the suspension of the ball club or its officials."

"With the pennant races in both leagues getting more tense, added precautions should be taken because there seems to be a lamentable decline in sportsmanship among many of our fans."

The bulletin labeled "Notice No. 14" and addressed to all club presidents, reads:

"This office has been disturbed by recent reports of rowdiness on the part of the fans in our ball parks. In at least two instances knives have been thrown at ball players. There also have been cases of fans throwing cans of beer and various other articles."

"In many instances the men in the bull pens have been particular targets and there seems to be developing a complete disregard on the part of the fans for law, order and sportsmanship."

"This problem and responsibility definitely belongs to the clubs. Proper policing must be maintained. We cannot permit rowdiness to go unstoppped, nor can we permit players to be subjected to such treatment."

"This matter is notice to you that in all such cases of rowdiness the club will be held responsible and unless proper precautions are taken the club will be subject to fine and such discipline as may, in the opinion of the commissioner, be required."

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## Marion Finds Single Word to Laud Minoso—'Terrific'

CHICAGO, Ill. — Coach Marty Marion of the White Sox thinks he can sum up **Minnie Minoso** in one word—"terrific."

The former manager of the Cardinals and the Browns is one of the Cuban Comet's loudest rooters. "I've never seen another man who could find so many ways to beat you," Marty declared. "He'll beat you with his arm, with his feet, with his glove and with his bat."

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## From Cane Field to Big League Fame

CHICAGO, Ill.

(This is the first of a series on **Minnie Mino**, the Cuban Comet credited with keeping Chicago White Sox near the top.)

This is not the story of **Minnie Mino**.

It's the story behind the story of **Minnie Mino**.

And maybe that's not truly accurate, either, because his name actually is **Orestes Arrieta**.

Be his name **Mino** or **Arrieta**, this recital is not meant to set



CLASS ON THE FIELD . . . .



. . . . OR OFF THE FIELD

down only the exploits of the hard-hitting, fleet outfielder who is a flashing, neon-like advertisement for the pennant-minded Chicago White Sox and Ted Williams' nominee as the individual who could become the greatest player of modern times. It rather is the story of the poor little Cuban Negro boy who came along fortunately at a time when racial barriers had been broken and by intensity of purpose fought his way into the big leagues. Until now the background of this great athlete has never been probed or projected. To American sports fans, **Minnie Mino** just happened to come along. But he had his heartaches, his ups and downs, his moments of decision, as much so as any ball player since Pop Anson's time.

This documentary of Minnie's career will be as close to the facts, the names and the dates as his own memory dictates.

**Minnie** essentially speaks Spanish, though he has made rapid headway in mastery of the English language. In several sessions with the White Sox star, we had the advantage of the presence of **Elegant Ed Short**, the club's publicity director who perhaps is quicker than we in digesting the rapid-fire and delightfully accented words of our subject.

It is best, perhaps, as a foundation, to introduce Minnie's family and go on from there. His father, **Carlos Arrieta**, is 57, and presently working on a ranch in the province of **Camaguey**, some 500 miles from Havana.

### Quit School at 11

To **Arrieta** and his first wife were born two sons and two daughters. They were **Francisco Mino**, 34; **Sirlo**, now dead, who would be four years **Francisco's** senior; **Tuana**, 39, and **Flora Maria**, 32. **Minnie** is the son of **Arrieta** and his second wife, who died in 1941 when the Sox star was 18. **Tuana**, a widow, has a 17-year-old son, **Damasco**, and a 14-year-old daughter, **Miriam**. But **Minnie's** favorite is 17-year-old **Julia**, daughter of his deceased brother.

**Minnie**, we had best hasten to record, is a bachelor.

**Minnie Mino** was born in **Perico**, in the province of **Matanzas**, some 100 miles east of **Havana**. At the age of 11, he was so smitten with the baseball bug that he ended his formal education, much to the chagrin and disappointment of **Papa Arrieta**.

"I tell my father I quit school because I want to grow muscles so I can play ball," says **Minnie** of his abrupt disassociation from the class room. "I think I will never be big enough to play except by working and putting on weight. He tell me: 'You losing out on a lot if you miss school. I want to give you the best I can. You find out. Some day you fall in love, have to write letter. You feel bad when you can't.'"

The parental objection was overcome and **Pop Mino's** fears were groundless, because his son can write a letter in beautiful style to the best of feminine tastes.

In those early years at the "central" in **Perico**, **Minnie** had worked in the sugar cane fields, loading the giant sticks which were pared to a third of their 12-foot length, then tossed into box cars. He and his dad and brothers worked for a man who controlled some 15 plantations. Even now, after the

### Helped by 'Brother, Minnie Now Plans to Aid His Niece

CHICAGO, Ill.—When **Minnie Mino's** brother, **Sirlo**, died, **Minnie** talked his sister, **Tuana**, into giving **Sirlo's** 1-year-old daughter, **Julia**, a home.

At the time, **Minnie** was only 14. Since then, the bond has deepened between him and his niece.

"So'e day," **Minnie** told his sister in **Havana**, "I ha'e enough money to take care of her. My brother helped me. I want to help her."

Today, **Julia**, 17, is a budding artist, and the letters **Minnie** receives from her from **Cuba** are an inspiration to him.

riches enjoyed from big league baseball, **Minnie** feels the urge to return to the rugged life of his youth.

**Minnie**, winning his battle over parental objection, labored in the cane fields and played baseball. He had his own kid plantation team and was the pitcher for the **La Lonjas** until he made the break to **Havana** for good.

What of the equipment? "My bro'er, **Francisco**, play with the central team at **Perico**," says **Minnie**. "He give me his old glove and bat. We chip in to buy baseball. When the cover come off, we wrap the ball in black tape."

There came a day when **Minnie** was old enough, and strong enough to play on the big plantation team.

"They call my brother **Mino**," he says. "So this day when I play with the team I'm **Mino**, too, not **Arrieta**. I keep t'inking I tell them my name **Arrieta**. But then, by this time **Mino**, so I never change."

### Wrist Broken by Bull

When he was 15, **Minnie** met with an accident that almost ended his baseball career. He was working in the cane fields one day and, while trying to finish his chores, it started to rain. The bull which was hitched to a wagon suddenly became enraged and lowered the boom on **Minnie**, first tearing his pants as it hit him in the thigh. As **Minnie** turned, the animal, head lowered, connected with his left wrist, breaking it.

"Francisco take me to the bus for the three-hour trip to **Havana**," recalls **Minnie**. "On the way the bus hits a man riding a horse and kill him. I in the hospital for a mon'h."

It was about this time that **Minnie's** diamond ambitions envisioned competition in **Havana**. His father, now heartily in accord with the boy's desires, gave him \$100 for the big adventure. Though there's still a strong bond between the two, they have seen little of each other in intervening years.

**Minnie** found out he wasn't ready for the swift competition of semi-pro baseball in **Cuba's** capital, but he lived with his married sister and did odd jobs to remain solvent until 1943, when he made his first dollars in baseball.

A close friend of his dad, **Juan Llins**, now enters the picture. **Minnie** still regards him as a second father. He

### Minnie 'Can't Lie'; Admits He 'Came From Nothing'

CHICAGO, Ill.—The truth comes first with **Minnie Mino**.

"I cannot tell a lie," he says. "Why say I a lawyer or from a rick (he pronounces "h" as "k") **Havana** family? I came from nothing. I still nothing."

"I play good in **Washington** today. Tomorrow I ha'e to play good in **Philadelphia**. Ever' day I try. In this ga'e you ha'e to produce. When you let publicity go over your head, you through. Some friends ask you why I tell reporters I come from sugar fields. I tell 'em I can't lie."

went to live with **Juan** at the **Central Espana**, some 100 miles east of **Perico**. By this time his father had moved to a rancho in the province of **Camaguey**, some 400 miles east of the island capital.

"Papa **Juan** wa' good to me," says **Minnie**. "One year we working in the corn field and I tink how much easier it would be to play baseball. So I go to the **Central Espana** (headquarters in the district) and ha'e a friend of mine write me a letter. I know it not right, but I ha'e him tell me in the letter to come to **Havana** for tryout. I ha'e him tell me that **Rene Mideston**, who run the **Ambrosia** team, want me to play for him."

### "I Kin' o' Bashful"

There was much excitement, says **Minnie**, when the letter arrived, all of it generated by **Minnie**. In mock surprise and elation he showed it to **Papa Juan**.

"O," he tell me when he read the letter, 'you gotta go right now.' 'How about all the corn we have to clean out?' I asked him. He say, 'Here \$5, you see the man right away.'"

So **Minnie** lost no time going to **Havana** and arriving at the diamond where the **Ambrosia Candy** team was working out.

"I ha'e my old uniform on," says **Minnie**. "But I kin' o' bashful. I jus' watch the players till the fellow who run the park comes up and ask me if I supposed to work out. I tell him yes. He turn to **Rene** and tell him, 'This boy want to see you.'"

"What you play?" he ask. I tell him I pitch and catch, then notice the t'ird baseman look kinda old and stoop-shoulder. I say I also play t'ird base, figuring he couldn't be much."

**Rene** ordered one of the players to hit grounders at **Minnie**.

"I stop 'em and t'row good to first," says **Minnie**. "**Rene** say he going to hire me."

### First Game for Money

A day later, **Minnie** played his first game for money, "\$2 or \$3, plus \$7 a week in the candy factory."

"We behind two runs and the bases full," says **Minnie**. "The guy comin' up fan the first three times. **Rene** motion to me and say, 'You tink you can hit? Look, let me tell you this: This guy been pitchin' a lon' time. (**Minnie** pronounces "N" for "M.") He may t'row fast ball first time. If ball's in the dirt or over your head, you swing and it's all right with me if you miss.'"

"So I take a big heavy bat and heet the first pitch jus' inside .first base to the fence, 375 feet, for a treuple. I so happy when I stan' there."

That season **Minnie** hit .364, missing the batting championship by just two points. He was to play in this fast semi-pro league for two years before moving along toward baseball's Big Time.

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**NEXT WEEK:** The fame of **Mino** grows over the island of **Cuba** as he moves into faster competition. But the major leagues still are just a remote dream.

### Richards Locates Minnie

at Park—'Our Club's Here'

CLEVELAND, O. — When the **White Sox** were here for a recent series with the **Indians**, Manager **Paul Richards** of the **White Sox** started to count noses as the team's bus left the hotel and headed for **Cleveland Stadium**. He discovered that several of his athletes were missing, but he told the driver to keep going.

"Those guys know when the bus leaves," **Richards** commented.

Upon arrival at the park, **Richards** observed that **Minnie Mino**, who hadn't been a passenger on the bus, already was in the clubhouse. **Paul** heaved a sigh of mock relief and told his coach, **Marty Marion**: "Well, our ball club's here, anyway."

# Lane Points Out Inter-League Play Would Ruin All Records

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

National League was opposing them every inch of the way. But within a few years the National leaguers fell in line and a good healthy rivalry was the result.

"Now, some of these fellows want to come along and destroy all that. I just can't understand what they possibly can be thinking of."

"I suppose some of them regard me as an old-timer who doesn't believe in progress. On the contrary, I do believe in progress, but this just isn't progress."

"I'm for anything that will help build up the game. I'm in favor of any liberalizing features that will benefit baseball. But this isn't constructive. It's destructive."

"Look what it would do to the All-Star Game and the World's Series. The All-Star Game certainly would lose some of its importance and what inter-league competition would do to the World's Series is something too shocking to think about."

"That's the climax for the entire season. It's the one great final test between the champions of the two major leagues. And some of these fellows want to water this great event down to a point where it hardly will have any meaning."

### Taking Edge Off World's Series

"Certainly a lot of interest would go out of the World's Series if clubs from the two leagues played each other during the season," continued **Griffith**. "It could be that the **Yankees** might play the **Cardinals** two games late in August and then they might be **World's Series** adversaries a month later."

"If the **Yankees** beat the **Cardinals** decisively in those regular season inter-league games, how much interest would be left in the **World's Series**?"

"Another point to consider is the fact that with inter-league competition you would have a seventh-place club playing a seventh-place club occasionally, to say nothing of a cellar team meeting another cellar team."

"How much do you think two last-place teams would draw?"

"Yes, when the **Yankees** go into a **National League** city or the **Brooklyn** club visits an **American League** city, they will draw. They are the top clubs. But they don't have to go to the other league to draw. They draw if they stay in their own league."

"In the end, the whole business wouldn't mean anything more financially even if it weren't ridiculous to begin with."

"I have always believed that baseball is good enough to stand on its own as a sports attraction. It doesn't need any artificial stimulants or side-show attractions."

"Inter-league competition definitely is circus stuff as far as I'm concerned and it will not help the game. Anyhow, what is all the calamity-howling about, anyhow?"

### Attendance up in Each League

"Attendance is up 350,000 in each league over last year. And any club that is intelligently and soundly operated will make money this year even as it did in any other year."

**Griffith** was given rousing support on his views by **Frank Lane**, general manager of the **White Sox**, who was in the **Washington** president's office working on the three-club deal involving the **White Sox**, **Senators** and **A's**, when **Chicago** wound up with **Morrie Martin** and **Ed McGhee** and **Washington** landed **Gene Keriazakos**.

Hearing **Griffith** expound his opposition to an inter-league schedule, the blunt, aggressive **Lane** declared:

"I agree with **Griff** that inter-league competition would be a phony business all around."

"In addition to damaging the importance of the **World's Series** and **All-Star Game**, it would ruin the meaning of all the records we now have in the books. All the records since the major leagues began are based on performance in one circuit."

"Now, start scrambling the whole thing up and you've got nothing. The averages henceforth couldn't be compared to those of past years."

"Look at the schedule difficulties that might arise, too. If a game or two of the inter-league competition has to be postponed, it might be impossible to fit them in anywhere else. Then you've got some club winning the pennant playing 152 games. Maybe the two cancelled games would mean the pennant."

"As for the drawing power of the inter-league games, it might help in the one-club cities when the top teams come in. But the second-division teams won't lure any added customers."

"As far as I'm concerned the best promotion in baseball is to get one more run than the other fellow."

### Old Fox to Fight Every

Move for Inter-Loop Play

WASHINGTON, D. C. — **Clark Griffith**, president of the **Nationals**, indicated that he would fight every and any movement for inter-league competition that may be instituted, such as the proposal by **Hank Greenberg**, general manager of the **Cleveland Indians**, to have each club of the **American League** play each club of the **National League** four games.

It was **Greenberg's** idea to make these games an integral part of the schedule to be figured in the regular standings in each circuit.

# ATHLETICS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

a fantastic offer that would enable them to get out of the club, each with a \$600,000 profit. **Roy** denied not only publicly, but also privately, that he had received such a bid, but from other sources it was learned that it probably was not imaginary.

If **Roy** never received the offer, it was perhaps because the bidder was not yet ready to lay his cards on the table. But he had confided his intent to other businessmen.

Information was all vague and fragmentary, but the latest individual to be identified with an ambition to own the **Athletics** is **Abe Saperstein**, owner of basketball's world-famed **Harlem Globetrotters** and pioneer promoter of **Negro** baseball.

The story was that as soon as he recovers money due him from other projects—it was explained he had lent some to the **St. Louis Browns**—he would be ready to bid for the **A's**.

### Family Wants to Keep Control

But his idea, presumably, was to shift the franchise to some other city, and fans here hope **Philadelphia** financiers would marshal their financial strength to resist such a move. A **Philadelphia** investment broker, supported by **New York** capital, was ready to submit a plan that would change ownership but keep the club here, with **C. Mack** remaining as president. Out of civic spirit as much as love of baseball, **Albert M. Greenfield**, wealthy realtor, was willing to participate in any plan he deemed feasible, if asked.

But **Roy Mack** was concerned primarily with the scheme that would keep his family in active control, and since neither can sell out his stock without the permission of the other, **Earle** went along with him.

The plan was secret, but it was believed to center around the stock the two had pooled within the club treasury as a corporate asset. More than 700 of the corporation's 1,500 shares have been kept out of circulation, but could be sold, according to **Philadelphia** lawyers, and the proceeds added to the working capital.

Insiders spoke of the latest move, however, as a "reorganization," and this could mean almost anything—including a complete refloating of stock in a different form, like preferred and common, whereby the **Macks** could sell some of their interest without danger of losing control.

In some details, the **Mack** plan still was in mere advisory stages; so that even if he were willing to talk, even **Roy** could not predict what final shape it will take.

His avowed intent is to keep the franchise, wherever it may go, but to keep it in **Philadelphia**, if possible.

### 154-Game Inter-League

Chart Called Inequitable

MONTREAL, Can. — An inter-league schedule could be arranged by the majors, but not in 154 games, declares **Harry Simmons**, secretary of the **International League**, who drafts the playing chart for **Frank Shaughnessy's** circuit and also assists in the preparation of the schedules of the two majors.

"Without plumbing too deeply, I do not think there would be any great hardship in the drafting and playing of an inter-league schedule along the lines proposed by **Hank Greenberg**," said **Simmons**.

"However, no equitable schedule could be arranged in 154 games. Thirty-two inter-league games, plus 126 intra-league games (18 x 7) total 158. In short, it can be done, but not in 154 games."

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# LOOPING THE LOOPS

By J. G. TAYLOR SPINK

## Minnie 'Won' Pay Hassle With Hank, But—

(This is the third and last in the series on **Minnie Minoso**, who came out of the Cuban sugar-cane fields to become one of the outstanding stars in the long history of the American League.)

CHICAGO, Ill.

In the weeks leading up to the 1949 season there was a steady exchange of conflicting opinion between **Minnie Minoso** and Hank Greenberg, general manager of the Cleveland Indians.

"He offer me a \$400 a mont' contract to play with Dayton," says **Minnie**. "I tell him if I play in Dayton it will be for \$800 a mont'."

Finally, says **Minnie**, Greenberg sent him a Cleveland contract calling for the then \$5,000 minimum major league salary. **Minnie** signed it.

More complications came when **Minnie** was late in reporting. He gave a reason which has become standard for the Latin contingent, who seem to think it's a baseball sin to report for spring training on time. The reason? Illness in the family.

"Lot of people not believe me when I say my father sick," explains **Minnie**. "But he really is. So I show up late in camp and Greenberg say he goin' to fine me \$500: I tell him I don't think it fair."

"Put yourself in my place," he says, "What would you do?"

"So I tell him in fir's place, if you late, I no fine you. In secon' place, you play baseball year 'round, always in shape. In thir' place, you nice fellow and good hustle. Put on uniform an' go to work."

When the club failed to slap a fine on **Minnie**, it was thought that Hank had yielded to the three arguments, but there was no Cleveland uniform for **Minnie** that year. Nor the next one, either. He spent both seasons with San Diego, but he again was in the camp of the Cleveland Indians in 1951.

Before **Minnie** showed up at Cleveland's Tucson base that spring, however, the forces were at work which would bring him into Comiskey Park. The dominant characters in bringing this to pass were Frank Lane, White Sox general manager, and Paul Richards, boss man on the field.

### Paul's Pitch for Minnie

"In 1950, Richards, who managed the Seattle club that year, saw **Minoso** doing incredible things with San Diego," Lane recounted. "In the winter of '50-'51, when Paul whom we had hired to manage our team, came over to St. Petersburg to talk over plans for the new season. I asked him where we'd play **Minoso** if we could land him."

"I don't give a damn where he plays—if you get a fellow who can run and throw and with his determination—get him. I'll find a place," Paul told me.

"A few days later, as we were preparing to go to spring training, I offered the Indians players we considered worth \$50,000, but Greenberg wouldn't hold still."

"We trained in Pasadena the spring of '51 and every time we had a chance, Paul and I went over to watch the Indians in Tucson or Phoenix, usually against Leo Durocher's Giants."

"While **Minnie** was having a hell of a time with ground balls at third base, he

### Minnie Couldn't Find Any 300 Averages for Lane

CHICAGO, Ill.—**Minnie Minoso** had been a trifle shaky in the outfield on a fly ball when Frank Lane, White Sox general manager, stopped him after a game.

Lane, a great kidder, said: "Minnie, maybe you should put some grass in your cap for protection if you get hit on the head by a batted ball."

**Minnie**, looking solemnly at his front office boss, said: "Look, Mr. Lane, I never see where you hit .300!"

was blasting the theory that a bad fielder would kick in more runs than he'd bat in. He was driving in three, four, five runs a game, hitting the ball up against or over the fence. Each time we'd leave the park, I'd say, "They'll never let that guy get away."

"As a matter of fact, Durocher said later, 'I never thought they'd trade that fellow. We couldn't get him out.'"

"That spring, **Minnie** played a few games at first base, too.

### Lane Gives Inside of Deal

"I tried three or four more times to make a deal for **Minoso**," continued Lane, revealing the inside details for the first time.

"Finally, Richards and I agreed on a pattern for our club in Comiskey Park," said Frank. "It would be designed to conform to the field's spacious confines, 352 feet down the foul line and 415 feet to center. We had made the decision to sacrifice power for speed and consistent hitting. Gus Zernial was our No. 1 slugger and we flinched a little at what would happen from the fans if we sent him away."

"I knew the Indians were interested in a lefthanded pitcher. They had tried to get Bill Wight before we swapped him to the Red Sox. During the winter meetings of '50 in St. Pete, Jimmie Dykes, then managing the Athletics, had inquired about Gus Zernial, who had hit 40 homers for him in 1948 at Hollywood. The puzzle was taking a pattern when Greenberg told me he'd be interested in Lou Brissie, the A's southpaw pitcher. In big letters I saw 'Minoso, Zernial and Brissie.'"

The rest is history. The story often

## Presidential Welcome



AFTER HIS sensational rookie year with the White Sox in 1951, Orestes **Minoso** (right) received a presidential welcome on his return to his native Cuba. Here **Minoso** is presenting an autographed ball to President Carlos Prio Socarras in a special audience at the presidential palace. The program followed a parade from the airport to the palace.

has been told of how Lane, in a 36-hour telephone marathon from his room in New York's Commodore Hotel, finally closed the big deal on April 30.

It went like this: The Athletics got Pitcher Sam Zoldak and Catcher Ray Murray from Cleveland, and Outfielders Gus Zernial and Dave Philley from the White Sox; the White Sox got **Minoso** from Cleveland and Outfielder Paul Lehner from the Athletics; the Indians got Brissie from the A's.

"Each team got what it wanted," says Lane. "The Indians acquired a good lefty reliever, the A's set up their outfield—and we got **Minoso**!"

In his first game with the Sox, **Minoso** drove a terrific homer into center field off the Yankees' Vic Raschi, the first of a thousand thrills he's given Chicago fans.

The year was a remarkable one for the youngster who through his natural ability as a player had jumped all the way from Cuba's sugar-cane fields to national fame in the United States. He batted .326 and was named the Rookie of the Year by THE SPORTING NEWS. He had played in six different positions. Prio of Cuba and in turn had presented His Excellency with an autographed ball.

However, there was one honor **Minnie** missed which rankled Lane more than it did **Minoso**. The 24-man committee of the Baseball Writers of America gave the Yankees' Gil McDougald a 13 to 11 edge over **Minoso** for the Rookie of the Year Award. **Minoso** had out-hit McDougald by 20 points, had led the American League in triples, 14, and stolen bases, 31.

### The Man and Lou—Combined

It perhaps is appropriate that **Minoso's** favorite ball park, for hitting purposes, is Washington's Griffith Stadium, where so many south-of-the-border players first were given their opportunity in the big leagues.

"My bat style?" he asked in repeating the question. Then he said: "Some say I like Boudreau, with bat hel' high. But sometime I change to crouch and they say I like Musial. I change for differen' pitchers."

This brought a query on which hurlers give him the most trouble.

"When in fir's' division you see a good pitcher most the time," he answered. "That Lopat run you crazee. You look relax to him—he gi'e you fas' ball. You look ready to hit one a mile, he gi'e you what you call it—junk! He look easy to hit, but you no know what he goin' to throw you."

In a game in Philadelphia on their

### 'Don't Lose Fast Ball or We Sell Papers,' He Told Pierce

CHICAGO, Ill.—Billy Pierce, star lefty of the White Sox, likes to kid **Minnie Minoso** about his hitting.

"**Minnie**, don't ever lose your glove," Pierce told him. "You're strictly a leather man."

"Don't ever lose your fas' ball or we sell papers together," replied Orestes.

"Do you have your corner picked out?" asked Billy.

"Yes, 63rd and Cottage Grove," answered the outfielder, referring to a busy intersection in Chicago.

### Minnie's Peacemaker Role Left Him in Catcher's Togs

CHICAGO, Ill.—One of **Minnie Minoso's** biggest baseball thrills came last winter when he was playing with Marianas against the Cienfuegos in the Cuban winter league. He was in center field when a fight started near home plate.

"I run in to stop it," he says. "I tell the players, 'We ball player, not fighter.' Our catcher is throw out so I go behin' bat. Mike Fornieles fan the las' man with bases full. I keep the ball for keepsake."

**Minnie** says he received a letter of congratulations from the league president for acting as peacemaker.

recent trip east, first base was open, one was out and Manager Eddie Joost of the Athletics ordered Nellie Fox passed to fill the bases for a double play situation—with **Minoso** next up. **Minnie** took a lot of ribbing on that one, even if he did hit a sacrifice fly.

"That Joost is smart," Nellie told **Minnie**. "It's always proper to walk a wood man to get to a leather man!"

### Comes Into Own in Field

Fox wasn't just kidding about the leather part. **Minoso**, who never played in the outfield until sent there in his early days as a Cleveland rookie, has been spectacular this season, having developed a terrific jump in fielding a ball.

"In a year or two **Minnie** might be a great center fielder," says Manager Richards.

**Minnie** has taken his baseball fluency in style. Though he often has been pictured as the owner of several flashy and high-powered automobiles, he's down to one—a green Cadillac convertible.

He dresses in good taste, even if the combinations are not exactly on the subdued side. He is partial to up-turned felt hats. A gigantic diamond he sports—almost as big as your thumb—surrounded by a generous serving of gold, is known in his homeland as a "pineapple sparkler," he says. A gold-banded wrist watch and key ring chain are part of his equipment.

On all road campaigns he carries a toy water gun, which he particularly presses into action in railroad stations when the team is jumping to another city. Even newspapermen are not spared as targets as he squirts with an innocent expression. But if the Sox are losing, associates are safe from his pranks. **Minnie** doesn't like to lose.

**Minoso** is partial, of course, to Spanish food. During the season he's a frequent visitor at the apartment of a doctor friend at 34th street and Cottage Grove avenue in Chicago.

"We have chicken and yellow rice, black beans and fried bananas," he says. "Last time I there ha'e good meal. I cook it."

And so, as they say in the travelogs, we bid farewell to the picturesque career of the Cuban Comet—until we meet again.

Soon his life story—in both Spanish and English versions—will be published, and the author will be **Minnie's** 27-year-old cousin, Bienzenido **Minoso**. Good luck to **Minnie**—and his next biographer!

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## Outfield Picnics for Fans Before Tribe's Arc Games

CLEVELAND, O.—The Cleveland club has a strange gimmick which is without parallel in major league history. Before night games in its big park, it operates picnics in the area behind the outfield fence, and in front of the bleachers. Next thing, there will be a Ferris wheel.

The picnic idea caters to shops and organizations. Each picniker gets a grandstand seat and his dinner, al fresco. His dinner could run from \$2.50 to \$4.50. Cleveland players take time off to come into the enclosure and mingle with the folks, signing autographs.

A group of Yankee writers, seeing the gimmick for the first time on June 25, called it prime bush. Nate Dolin, of the front office, said, "Call it bush, call it anything you like, but those things bring fans closer to the club, and besides, we cater to some 35,000 fans a season out there." DAN.

## YANKEES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

the best in the league, our guys have what it takes, and let me say this, it makes me proud," Casey said.

"Now, if only we would perk up against the second-division clubs. That baffles me. Why we can't do as well against the lower four as we do against the other first-division teams is a mystery to me, which I have seen baseball for many years and never anything quite like this."

Invited to continue his critique, Casey said, "I am delighted the way Joe Collins has been hitting. Last winter, when our roster had a bunch of other first basemen, including Vic Power, which went to the Athletics, I said, 'Collins is in possession.' Some of the writers figured I was prejudiced in favor of Joe, and he did not merit my enthusiasm for him on account of how he sagged toward the end of the 1953 season, and in the World's Series."

### "We Have a Lot of Pros"

"Well, Collins is class. He fights back. He never accepts personal or club defeat. He is well, like I said, we have a lot of pros."

"Now, on the subject of pros, which you have to be or you don't make this club, there is Gil McDougald. He did not look too good around third base, and it affected his batting."

"Shifted to second, McDougald began to smile. He improved on defense. He began to hit like he used to, and drive in runs. He fought back."

Stengel ruminated a while. "How about Bobby Brown, which he is finished with baseball, as of June 30? There is a guy who will make a great doctor. He is a student."

"When Brown came back to us on his return from Korea, I imagined some of the critics said, 'There's a guy which wants the Yankees to pay him for a vacation.'"

"That wasn't in Brown's mind. It wasn't in my mind. I knew that right up to the day he left for the hospital in San Francisco where he will be a resident, he would give us his best. Which he did, and I want to thank him, and if I ever want an appendix out, Doc Brown will get my business."

"You know, when I said, on June 16, that I was glad we did not make a deal, and would go right on fighting with the players then on our roster, many writers said, 'Sour grapes. This bird wanted to make a deal for a pitcher and now he makes believe he is glad he didn't.'"

### "Glad We Maintained Our Family"

"Sure, the club tried to make a deal. I would have been glad if we had landed the right kind of help."

"But to bust up an organization merely to make a 24-hour headline on the sports pages—nuts to that. I really am glad we maintained our family as it was on June 15, because this club is going to win again."

"I think we have put the worst behind us. Gene Woodling's shoulder and toe trouble, Andy Carey's many Charley horses, Harry Byrd's hives, Tom Morgan's slump, Mickey Mantle's strikeouts, plus his bad knee—all behind us."

"I think we have picked up a winner in Bob Wiesler."

All of which might lead one to believe that Charles Dillon Stengel is full of confidence, sure that he finally has headed his defending world's champions in the right direction.

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## Hailed as Prize Rookie of '51



PUBLISHER J. G. TAYLOR SPINK presented a gold clock to **Minnie Minoso** in recognition of his selection as the American League Rookie of 1951 by THE SPORTING NEWS. The presentation was made at the annual dinner of the Chicago writers. Will Harridge, president of the American League, is shown in center.