## Ross Newhan

**Mota — Anonymous Star**

VERO BEACH, Fla.—In the lexicon of the game, he is underrated.

It is an inadequate word, a way out for the literati.

Manny Mota is a quiet man, an outfielder who is seldom in the spotlight, although his credentials would indicate he seldom should be out of it.

After eight years, his career average is .297. Over the last five summers, he only once has hit lower than .305.

Mota is a platoon player who does not complain. He is a team man, the complete team man, according to Wes Parker, who says, "On the Dodgers last year, Manny was probably the most valuable player."

It was in the Caribbean Series last winter that Mota WAS named the MVP. He also was named manager of the series. His Licey Tigers defeated the Hermosillo Orange Pickers, a team managed by Maury Wills, the man to whom the publicity went.

**He Likes the Role**

It is the way it is for Mota, who would not want it otherwise. Anonymity is his role, on and off the field.

Only during the winter, when he is at home in the Dominican Republic, is there a manner of recognition.

Indeed, in the country that has sent Juan Marichal, the Alous and others to the major leagues, it is Mota who is the idol.

He is on a pedestal not so much because of his accomplishments in the stadiums of America, but because he has not forgotten what it was like for him during his youth.

He came from a poor family, a family that could not afford a bat or a ball or a glove.

Mota played barehanded. He picked a lemon from a tree, wrapped it in paper, tied it with a string and called it his baseball.

Mota does not forget and he is now putting it all down in long hand. He is writing a book, 70 pages of which are finished.

His story is one of poverty and people's disregard for it. The story is of his youth and his current attempt to help brighten the future for the children of the Dominican.

Mota tells you about it only after much prodding.

**Gifts for the Poor**

He reveals how, at Christmas, he purchases over 200 bats, balls and gloves and then drives through the needy neighborhoods, stopping virtually at every house to deliver a present.

He relates how his wife, Margarita, cooks dinners for dozens of poor families and how together they make goodwill visits to churches and hospitals.

He describes the purpose of the Manny Mota Little Leagues, outlets for hundreds of boys, each of whom

Manny Mota

is eligible to play only if he attends school and church and receives a good report on his contributions at home.

Mota sums it up simply.

"If everybody that has the facilities would do this, there would be a lot less poor people in the world."

Unfortunately, there are many people with the facilities, but too few Manny Motas.

Don Drysdale won more games (209) than any pitcher in Dodger history. He is currently a spring pitching coach with the Expos.

Prior to a recent exhibition game at Dodgertown, Big D approached the Los Angeles clubhouse.

**Where's Sandy?**

"You can't go in there," bellowed Walter O'Malley, "You haven't signed your contract yet."

"I'm ready," said Drysdale, laughing.

"What about Koufax?" responded O'Malley.

The Angels' purchase of Jeff Torborg from the Dodgers rekindled memory of last spring when California attempted to trade Clyde Wright for the Los Angeles catcher.

The deal at that time was blocked by Torborg's failure to clear National League waivers. Wright, a winner of one game in 1969, went on to win 22 games. He probably would have been only a relief pitcher with the Dodgers.

Ted Williams conducted a hitting seminar prior to one of Washington's recent exhibitions with the Dodgers. He then asked questions, each of which was answered correctly by Maury Wills.

"I've done some studying," said Wills, laughing. "I finished reading Ted's book just last night."





# Loyal and Devoted Levy— Padres' Indispensable Man

**By JACK MURPHY**

YUMA, Ariz. — He is not one of the famous names of baseball, but he is one of the game's great characters.

Herman Levy is baseball's equivalent of a circus roustabout or the guy who mucks out elephant stalls. If you asked him why he doesn't find an easier job than shining shoes or laundering the uniforms of temperamental ballplayers, he'd probably reply, "What, and get out of show business?"

To say that Levy is the clubhouse custodian for the San Diego Padres is like describing Joe Namath as a bartender. Herman plays all the instruments in the band. He's the guy who raises the flag, sorts the mail, parks the cars, runs errands and represents the club at auctions and swap meets.

For 20 years he was the postman at Dodgertown in Vero Beach, Fla., and each morning he raised the flag with a beautiful little ceremony. He would march to the flagpole with impressive dignity, raise the colors, salute, and then recite the pledge of allegiance in a loud clear voice.

But his real loyalty was not so much to the Dodgers as to trainer John Mattei. When Mattei followed Buzzie Bavasi to San Diego as trainer-road secretary, Levy was close behind. Now he raises the flag at the Padres' training compound in Yuma, usually in lonely splendor.

**No Trace of Deceit**

He deserves an audience. "When I recite the pledge of allegiance," says Herman proudly, "they can hear me a block away."

It's a good thing to have a chance to know Herm Levy because he makes you feel better about the human race. He is without meanness or deceit. His devotion to Mattei and Bavasi is the stuff of legend.

Once he traveled from Vero Beach to Los Angeles on a bus to deliver a set of lamps Bavasi left behind at the conclusion of spring training. Levy carried the lamps to Dodger Stadium, placed them in Bavasi's office, left without a word of explanation or thanks, and then boarded another bus for Brooklyn.

He came to the Padres almost as unexpectedly. In the summer of 1968, after San Diego was awarded a National League franchise for the following season, Mattei contacted Levy in Spokane to say he'd be needing an equipment man.

"Be sure to send me a written application by the first of the year," Mattei instructed Levy.

**An Early Arrival**

Three days later Herm arrived in San Diego with his suitcases.

At that point, the Padres had no equipment or ballplayers.

The organization consisted of Bavasi, General Manager Eddie Leishman, farm director Peter Bavasi and Mattei. But they created a job for Levy.

Such men as Herm Levy are indispensable. Bavasi first became aware of Levy when he was parking cars at the Dodgers' old home at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn. Herman made a slight miscalculation with an automobile owned by a customer named Carmen Montifore. The Montifore car blocked a passageway and Levy got in and pressed his foot on the accelerator, unaware the vehicle had no brakes.

When the car leaped forward Herman was unable to stop it and it smashed into a billboard, sending a four by four support through the windshield and out the back window. That lifted the car off the ground, with its wheels spinning free.

Herman Levy

Levy got out and left it there. After a while he turned in the parking receipts and went home on the subway, mentioning nothing of the problem. When Carmen Montifore came for his car after the ball game, he was rather surprised.

The innocence of Herm Levy is a source of endless delight to his friends. On one occasion, he submitted receipts of $420 when the Ebbets Field lot had a maximum gross of $200 at $1 per car.

"Everything's all right," he explained, "I took care of them."

It developed, however, that he had turned in his own pocket money with the $420 collection. He didn't even have change for the subway so he walked home, a six-mile trip. Naturally, he didn't complain.

The sweetness of this man is such that it once cost him $9.12 to have a pair of pants pressed for a prominent Japanese visitor at Vero Beach. Levy cheerfully complied when the guest handed him a dollar bill and asked him to have the pants pressed.

After a while he returned with the pants and 12 cents in change.

"But I gave you a $10 bill," said the Japanese, a wealthy man and the owner of a team then touring America.

**Saves Face With $9.12**

Herman blinked but said nothing. Rather than embarrass Bavasi's guest, he borrowed $9 from Mattei and handed over $9.12 in change.

For 36 years, Levy worked in the Brooklyn Post Office at 271 Washington Street and did his job so well he became the chief dispatcher and finally, No. 1 assistant to the inspector. Seven years ago, he retired from the postal service and now, at 64, his life is baseball, Mattei and Bavasi.

He shares an apartment with Mattei and his loyalty is so strong he won't even answer a reporter's questions unless Mattei is present. Levy's duchy during the season is the visiting clubhouse.

He shines shoes, takes care of the uniforms, buys and prepares the food (chicken, pizza, cold cuts) for postgame snacks, stocks the cooler with beer and soft drinks, and performs all sorts of personal services. If a ballplayer wants to send flowers to his wife for an anniversary, Herman handles it. Or he might shop for toys or other gifts for an athlete's children. He is endlessly resourceful, patient and cheerful. His material reward is the tips he receives from those he serves. It might be $3 per day per man, it might be more or less. That's his secret.

## Melvin Durslag

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come the first $250,000 player in baseball.

But Sandy is a complicated individual with whom pride always has been a large factor. Many developed the feeling that since the elbow wasn't functioning as it should, he departed the sport rather than stagger through with performances he would judge as second-rate.

The standards he set for himself wouldn't allow this. He wasn't a person who would hang on with a repertory of tricks, winning a few and losing a few.

Today, he insists his standards were totally beside the point.

**Danger of Lasting Injury**

"The problem I faced was simple," he said. "I had to decide whether more pitching would leave me with a permanent injury. I have second-guessed myself over the years. I have wondered what would have happened if I had tried to keep going."

It is doubtful we ever will find out, because it isn't likely Koufax will snap at the anchovies the Dodgers toss out, trying to bring him to gaff.

Sandy is now 35. He resides quietly in the Santa Monica Hills with his wife, Anne, still tilling an oar for NBC, which signed him to a 10-year contract at the time of his retirement from baseball.

Part of his job involves customer relations. And, on the air, he works what is known as the back-up game, which is the one going into the cities of the two principals in the primary game.

In other words, if Boston is playing Baltimore, their game would be blacked out in those two communities, which would get the back-up match.

**Sandy and Don Combined**

Koufax and Don Drysdale shook baseball like a massive tremor five years ago by asking $1 million between them for three years of labor.

Holding out for that sum, they both missed spring training and wound up settling for much less. But it is pretty clear, in the light of what salaries are paid today, that their concept of super-star pay wasn't amiss by much.

"You can understand better what is happening in sports today," said Sandy, "when you look at the money given Joe Frazier and Muhammad Ali in their recent fight.

"They not only got $2½ million apiece, but the promoter said he was happy to give it to them. That made three happy people—Joe, Muhammad and the promoter."

An owner in baseball may not be enraptured giving a player $160,000, but at least he is coming up with it.

"If nothing else," said Koufax, "it proves one thing. Drysdale and I weren't as far out of line as some people thought."