## Homer-Spree Don a Home-Made Hitter

## Dad Passed Along Tips From Waner

Developed Wrist Strength by Holding Willow Across Shoulder, Down Back

> By BOB BROEG ST. LOUIS, Mo.

The five record - tying home runs handsome Don Mueller hammered in two important games against Brooklyn at New York's Polo Grounds, September 1 and 2, brought a broad smile to a jut-jawed, middle-aged man who had planned hopefully for his off-spring to be a better ball player than his father.

Walter Mueller, who played the outfield for Pittsburgh five years in the early '20s, knew long before his 24year-old son blasted his way into prominence with three homers against the Dodgers one day and two the next that the right fielder of the Giants was a better hitter than he previously had shown.

The senior Mueller, a St. Louis cartage company official, knew because he had seen his boy sprout batting ability before his eyes-and under as careful a bit of coaching as an exmajor leaguer ever had hopefully given a son.

A lon's share of the credit for the young outfielder's success must be the time he placed a bat on his second son's left shoulder at the age of three to see Don's name in a major league lineup.

#### Dad Cracked the Whip

"When I think of the percentage against a boy's chances of getting to the majors, I shudder and wonder why I ever was so stubborn," Walter explained one day here as Don smiled and said:

"Dad cracked the whip, all right. I always liked to go fishing on Sundays, I remember, but to him Sunday meant just two things—church and baseball."

As an outdoorsman living 12 miles from the city limits, Walter Mueller frequently took Don and older brother Leroy on fishing and hunting trips. but never when there was a chance to play baseball. And because he feared an injury might ruin their chances of a professional career, he ruled out football, basketball and soccer for his youngsters.

"I know what an injury can do," explained the father. "I hurt a knee playing in the old Bi-State League at Freeport, Ill., in 1915 after Branch Rickey had signed me for the Browns, and it took me five years to get over it."

A World War I soldier, Walter rested that troublesome knee after his discharge and then needed only one year in the Western League before reporting to Pittsburgh in 1922. For five seasons then, with the exception of 1925, he was an extra outfielder behind Max Carey, Carson Bigbee and Clyde Barnhart, hitting over .300 in '23.

To help with the booming business of a brick-hauling company he and an older brother had formed five years earlier, the senior Mueller stayed out of baseball in 1925 and observed ruefully, "That's the year the Pirates won a pennant."

Walter, called Heinie at Pittsburgh,

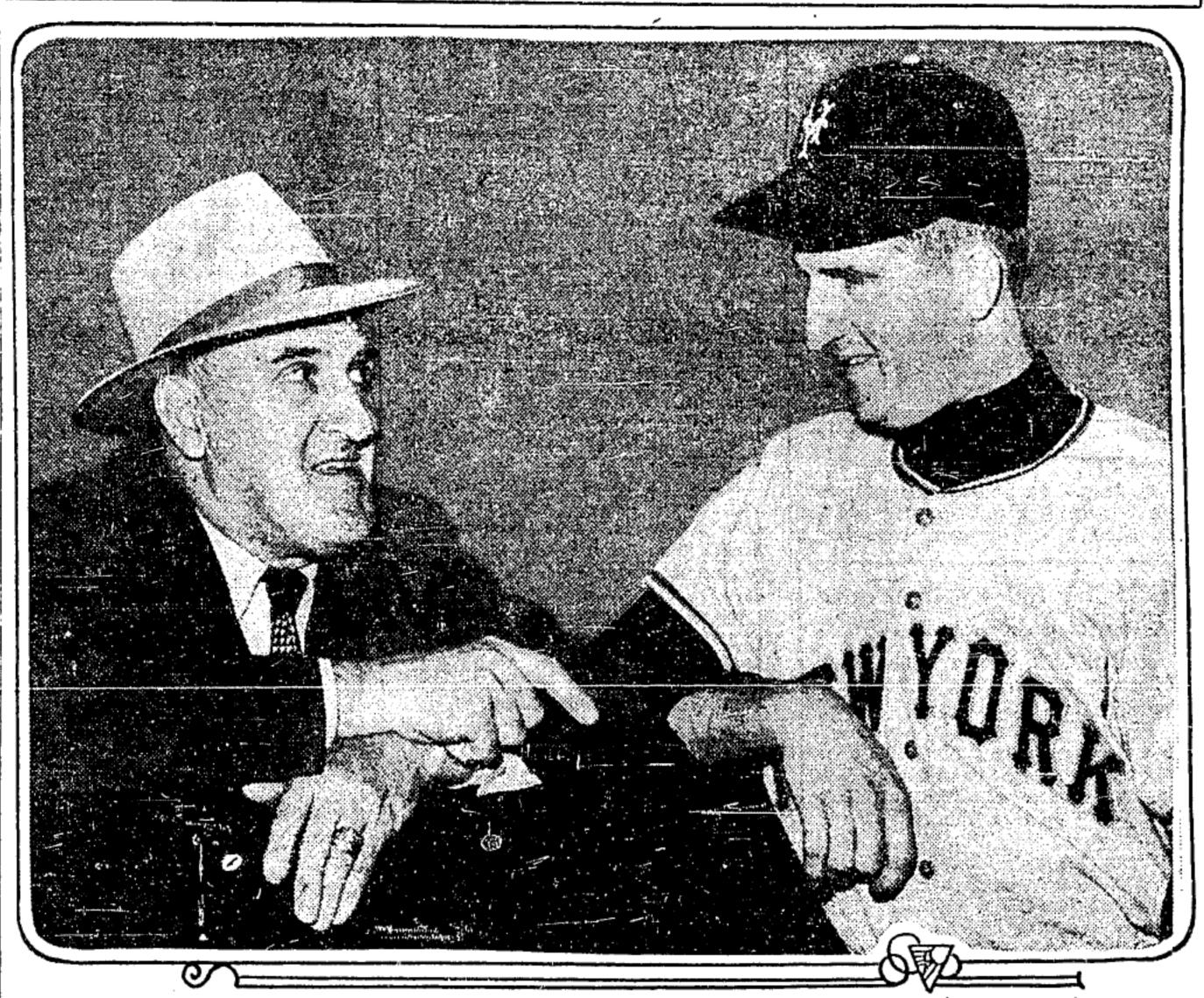
#### No Team at Home School, Mueller Transferred Sons

ST. LOUIS, Mo.-Walter Mueller was so eager to give his sons a chance to play baseball that because the Pattonville (Mo.) Township High School had no team, he transferred them to a St. Louis institution.

"That same year, though, CBC (Christian Brothers College) High gave up baseball temporarily, but it was a good school and my wife and I decided to leave the boys there," he said, adding with a smile:

"They weren't good students. Too much baseball on their minds. Wonder where they got that?"

## He Raised His Boy to Be a Ball Player



DON MUELLER, new sensation of the Giants, and his proud dad, Walter.

### Belted One for Kid to Tie Mark

NEW YORK, N. Y .- Don Mueller, outfielder of the Giants, "hit one for the kid" to tie a major league home run record, September 2.

Just before strolling to the plate in the eighth inning of the Sunday game with the Dodgers, Mueller was informed by a teammate, Monte Irvin, that his wife had given birth to a son in a St. Louis hospital. Thrilled by the news, Don promptly unloaded the home run, his fifth in two days, tying the record shared previously by Adrian Anson, Cubs, 1884; Ty Cobb, Tigers, 1925; Tony Lazzeri, Yankees, 1936, and Ralph Kiner, Pirates, who achieved the feat twice, both times in 1947. Mueller rapped three home runs on the previous day to account for five runs in the Giants' 8 to 1

victory over the Dodgers and his two round-trippers, September 2, also accounted for five tallies in the 11 to 2 rout of the Flatbush crew.

In the September 1 game, Mueller walloped his first barrier blow in the opening inning, clouting his second in the third frame, with Eddie Stanky aboard, and hit No. 3 in the seventh, again scoring Stanky ahead of him.

The following day, Don socked his four-masters in the sixth, with two mates on base, and repeated in the eighth, with Stanky on the runways.

The quintette of home runs gave Mueller, who hit only seven in his best previous season in the big leagues, a total of 15 for the year.

until late in the '26 season and then married his high school sweetheart, | A righthanded hitter himself. Walwas sent to Indianapolis that fall in payment for Pitcher Carmen Hill.

A sprained ankle at Indianapolis hastened Walter's decision to return to the cartage company, a business that has had both good and bad times in its 30 years.

•For ten years he played week-end semi-pro ball and by the time he hung up his glove at 41, older son Leroy was the batboy and Don an interested hanger-on. And he didn't finish until one Sunday he played third base and Leroy wound up the game in right

"I'd always had a crazy notion I wanted to keep going until I played either with or against my sons," Mueller explained.

#### Fever Stopped Brother Leroy Two and a half years older

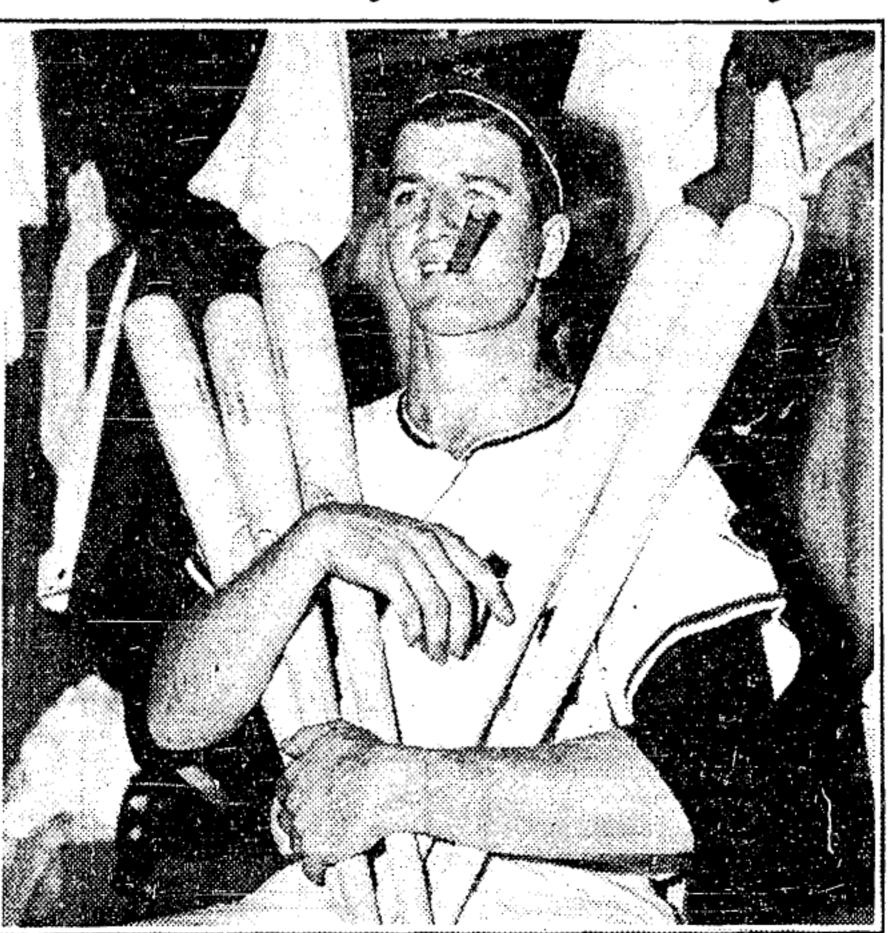
than Don, Leroy was regarded as a better prospect by the time the war came along, but the young shortstop, who could "throw like Marion," put in three years in the South Pacific. And when he came back with jungle fever, he never was the same as a ball player. Leroy signed with the Red Sox, but was kicking around in baseball when his father made him quit and go into the cartage business last year. "At 25 or 26 a boy has no business in Class

C," Walter told him. The older son profited when Don signed, though, because of their father's strong belief that brothers should share one another's good fortune. When the younger son was just past 13, Mueller made the two teenagers promise that if either or both received a bonus, the money would have to be divided.

Leroy, therefore, received half of the \$6,000 the Giants paid Don seven years ago, and the Mueller brothers since days against the Dodgers. have bought two county acres from which the young major leaguer,

though he was not related to colorfu \* vielding an axe through fall and win- Genevieve Babor, in June, 1949, and Clarence (Heinie) Mueller, who was a ter, cleared timber and brush for a the couple recently had their first contemporary, did not rejoin Pittsburgh artificial lake and homesites. Don child, a son.

### Five Boundary Belts in Two Days



DON MUELLER, sitting on a stool in the locker room, September 2, proudly displaying one of the cigars which he passed out after the game, in which he clouted two homers, the second after being informed Mrs. Mueller had presented him with a son. The Louisville Slugger bats represent the five homers he hit in two

## Turned Lad Into Portside Bat-Swinger

Pop's Own Experience Had Taught Him the Value of Saving One Step to First

ter had been thrown out by a halfstep so often that he made righthanded-throwing Don hit lefthanded at an age so early that the kid doesn't remember. And as an exercise to strengthen wrists, the father encouraged the son to lay the bat across his shoulder and down his back as a preliminary gesture at the plate. The motion required to bring the bat off the shoulder and into hitting position helped develop strong wrists.

"I learned that one from Paul Waner, who was breaking in at Pittsburgh about the time I quit," Walter said. "It helps assure as level cut at the ball. I urged bunting in pepper games, too, because to bunt properly a hitter has to hold his but level, and that helps him to swing on an even plane."

#### He Uses Dad's Old Choke Grip

Now a trim, six-foot, 180-pound athlete. Don was a skinny kid just 13 when he began to play ball with companions five to seven years older, and, in his father's opinion, he actually was helped by the unfair competition. Because older pitchers threw so hard, immature young Mueller couldn't pull the ball and, using Walter's old choke grip, he learned early to punch outside pitches into left field.

When Don batted better than .600 in each of two years he played for an American Legion Junior team still coached by his father, eight major league clubs sought his services. The Cubs offered \$2,000 more than the Giants, but in the late summer of 1944 they had no place to put a 17-yearold eager to get a start before he reached military age.

Young Mueller signed with the Giants and finished the '44 season at Jersey City. He spent more than a year in the Merchant Marine and then batted .359 in 28 games with the International League club in 1946.

Shipped to Jacksonville of the Sally League in '47 as a converted first baseman who needed to improve his fielding, he hit Class A pitching for .348. Back at Jersey City three years ago he averaged .328 and, called up by the Giants in September, he hit .358 in 36 National League games.

Riding the New York bench in 1949, Don appeared mainly as a pinchhitter in 51 games, batting only .232, before finishing with Minneapolis in the American Association, where he regained familiar figures (.311). Because of the St. Louis boy, the Giants confidently traded away Willard Marshall and Sid Gordon. Last year Mueller hit .291 for 132 games.

Playing his father's old position, Don appears to be one second-generation major leaguer who is better than his dad, who's now a happy man who planned it all the way it has happened.

#### Dad Favored the Red Sox, They Were Not Interested

ST. LOUIS, Mo.-Because of a friendship with Joe Cronin that began when the Boston general manager was a rookie shortstop with Pittsburgh and Walter Mueller, a Pirate outfielder, the father hoped the Red Sox would sign his younger son, Don, as they had his older boy, Leroy.

"We weren't just looking for all we could get because Don eventually signed for \$2,000 less with the Giants than the Cubs offered," the senior Mueller said. "I liked Joe very much and even though there were offers from the Cardinals, Pirates, Reds, Browns, Indians and Yankees, I would have given Cronin the break."

But a Boston scout who must be red-faced now didn't think Don Mueller had major league possibilities.

# Don Lengthens Average on Short Hits

## Mueller of Giants Moves Up After Dropping Homer Swing

# of Job Until Passing .300

Son of Former Big Timer Follows Pitch With Quick Shift of His Shoulders

> By JOE KING - NEW YORK, N. Y.

Home run? Don't mention it to Don Mueller, hit-'em-wherethey-ain't right fielder of the New York Giants. By rejecting his unwanted role as a pseudo slug-ger, and turning to old-fashioned batting craftsmanship, Mueller made himself more valuable to his team, clinched a job which was threatened perenially, and gained a chance to be the first Giant to win a hitting championship since Bill Terry in 1930.

Credit Mueller for the switch. He made his own decision. In fact, it was not easy. As he sums up four previous years as chief Giant right fielder: "All the way I had that fence psychology going against me." He referred to the homer illusion which sometimes sweeps the Giants' organization from top to bottom, because of the short foul lines in the park, even though the great hitter of the club, Terry, was not fooled by fences.

Mueller did not hit a homer this season until July 11, when he made it the climax of a feat of hitting virtuosity, as he achieved the cycle against four different Pittsburgh pitchers. He whacked a double to left off Vern Law, a triple to right center off Bob Friend, and a single to center off Jake Thies. Then, with the crowd demanding a homer, Don made it into the right field seats off Paul LaPalme.

#### Going for the Long Ball

Of course, he tried to hit the homer that time, and he has on other occasions, too many occasions for him. After the Giants lost a bitter 12-inning, 1 to 0 decision to Harry Perkowski in Cincinnati, July 19, I charged Mueller with going for the homer two or three times. He admitted to two attempts, which he regretted.

How many times all season had he shot for those fooling fences? He replied: "Too many. I guess about 40 times, and I wish I had the chances back again, I only kid myself when I try for a homer because I know I am not a homer hitter. That's been proved. But when you get up in a close game, a tie or one behind, with nobody on base and one or two out, well, you figure the only hit which will help is the homer.

"When I think it over, I know that 'homer or nothing' theory is wrong for me, except in the most desperate spots. My chance to hit a homer is very poor, and my chance to hit a single is good. If I hit a single I save a chance for Monty Irvin or Willie Mays, who do have the power, and who have a better possibility of making two runs than I have of making one."

Scoring makes the wins, and Mueller, ting to break the seats, will tally far more runs than in any of the past four years. From 1950 through 1953, Don scored between 56 and 61 runs. This year he went beyond that figure be-

#### Record Homer Bats Retired by Don as Son's Souvenirs

NEW YORK, N. Y .- Don Mueller's most productive period as a major league slugger was on September 1-2, 1951, when he poled five homers in two days against the Dodgers.

After clouting three round-trippers on September 1, Don shipped his bat to St. Louis so it could be kept as a souvenir for his new-born son. On the second date, Don belted two more out of the park with a different bat and because the five homers in two games tied a major record, Mueller also packed the second shillellagh and sent it home for his souvenir shelf.

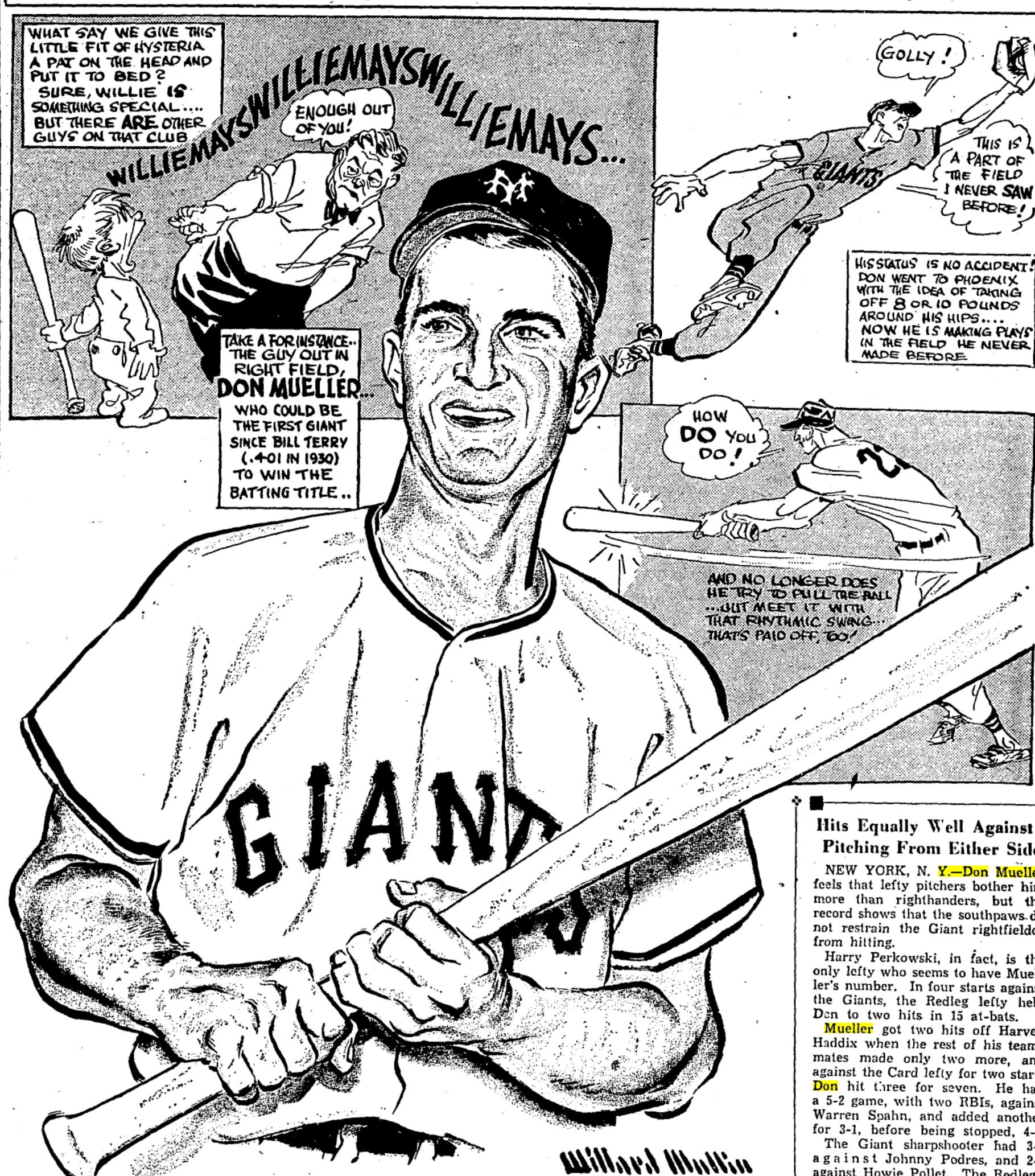
Never Certain The Face Is Familiar

By Mullin

PART OF

NEVER SAW

THE FIELD



fore the 100th game, and he could reach the century total. As of August 18, he had scored 67 runs.

Don is drawing more fan mail than ever before, since he became established in the top five batsmen. "Many inquire why I do not hit homers, and by getting on base instead of attemp- some advise me to go for homers, although they are all kind about it. In the Polo Grounds, though, some of the fans used to get on me pretty good to get the homer."

He grinned and quipped: "Well, I showed 'em. I got one. Then I didn't get my second until July 30, but my third was a pip, when I hit for a grandslam in the game with the Pirates on August 20."

Mueller made his decision to go allout for hits instead of homers when he reported at camp at Phoenix.

Here is how he put it: "I have been told to try for homers ever since I came up here. But in my best year (1951) I hit only 16, and had to get five, if I recall correctly, in one week, to reach that figure. And then I hit only .275.

"The way I see it I can do more scores more often, too." good for the team and myself by going for hits. There are a lot of players who can make ten to 20 homers decided he was wasting his time as a a season, but only a few who can fence-buster. In a closing rush he hit over .300, and I think I can if I pushed his average up to .333 for the go back to batting the way I was season. In the winter he dieted to

#### And Next Will Be Son Mark, Maybe Lefty, Maybe Righty

NEW YORK, N. Y .- Don Mueller laughingly confesses to a difficult family problem, regarding his son, Mark, who will be three years old in September.

The Giant right fielder dolefully remarks:

"I don't know what will become of him as a ball player. He is trying to bat cross-handed now, and he hasn't quite made up his mind which hand he will use to throw, and I can't guess."

If young Mark finds out how to bat and throw, and gets to be a star, he will be the third generation of his family to make the big leagues. Don's dad played with the Pirates.

try to murder it. A single will score a run, too, with more chance of making it, and a fellow who gets on base

Mueller explained he had sat down with himself in July a year ago and brought up, to meet the ball, and not lose five pounds, mainly about the

hips, where he had a tendency to put on weight.

"If I am not going to slug," he reasoned, "the weight will hurt me, instead of helping. I figure slimming down will help me as a base-runner and fielder, and may help, too, at hitting."

Mueller dieted "hard" because he likes the gravy and potatoes, but took off five pounds, and got down to 177. After the first two months of the season he found he could eat what he wanted and hold to that weight. The tendency is to lose weight in the second half of the season, when the steady grind begins to wear down the regular, and he generally does not worry about eats.

usual "fight" for his job. Every year | As he averaged .426 for the 15 games, one or two phee-noms show up who are ticketed to succeed the right fielder, and this season was not an exception. But the battle was shortlived when "Dead-Eye-Dick" began ship means the defense has to play

He went out again after two-for-eight to be propelled towards that gap. He in two more tries. Then he pinch-hit

#### Hits Equally Well Against Pitching From Either Side

NEW YORK, N. Y .- Don Mueller feels that lefty pitchers bother him more than righthanders, but the record shows that the southpaws do not restrain the Giant rightfielder

Harry Perkowski, in fact, is the only lefty who seems to have Mueller's number. In four starts against the Giants, the Redleg lefty held Den to two hits in 15 at-bats.

Mueller got two hits off Harvey Haddix when the rest of his teammates made only two more, and against the Card lefty for two starts Don hit three for seven. He had a 5-2 game, with two RBIs, against Warren Spahn, and added another for 3-1, before being stopped, 4-0.

The Giant sharpshooter had 3-1 against Johnny Podres, and 2-2 against Howie Pollet. The Redlegs, who use lefties frequently against New York, couldn't stop Mueller with Joe Nuxhall, who was hit for five safeties in seven tries, and Fred Baczewski, who was tapped for seven hits in 13 tries. Mueller had 4-2 and 2-2 days against Curt Simmons.

He has been stopped now and then by lefties, but no more often than by righthanders, and he figures up to his averages no matter which hand the pitcher employs.

eighth-inning winning rally and started in No. 7 and has been there since. He didn't give Leo Durocher a second guess as he reeled off a 15-game hitting streak into May, to soar up among the leading hitters to stay. The Despite his resolution, Don had the streak was typical of Don's hitting. he made ten hits to center, seven to left, only five to his "power" in right, and four in the infield.

That kind of "seeing-eye" batsman-Mueller "honest." They can't over-Mueller was benched after he hit shift on him as they do for some of one-for-seven in the first two games. the sluggers. He isn't typed, and if In the third game the Giants were the opening is given him in left, or shut out and Don got another chance, over the middle, the pitch is likely

a single in game No. 6 to key an (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4, COL. 4)

# Rickey Just Plans to 'Ease Up', Place-Hitter Mueller Shifts Will Stay on With Bucs After '55

## More Cash Put Into Club, Prexy Galbreath Reveals

### Rickey Also Increases His Investment



PITTSBURGH, Pa.-John Galbreath, Pirate president, said the two principal stockholders and Branch Rickey had poured more money into the operation of the Pirates on August 17, while discussing the future of the Top Branch as general manager.

"Within the last 24 hours, Tom Johnson and his family, along with myself, my son, Dan, and daughter, Joan Galbreath Phillips, have put more money into the operation," said Galbreath.

"Rickey has also made another investment, prorated with his holdings.

"There is no secret that we have been putting up cash to carry this program, and we will continue to do so, to see it through.

"I personally have never taken a dime from the club, either from our early profits, or for any expense. This city and its people have been good to me, and I want to see them win,

"It's been a helluva worry, but I'm not going to quit now. "As far as Rickey retiring, I thought that was plain when we announced the length of his contract back in 1950.

"But after November of next year, he can continue for five years in an advisory capacity. We all know how inactive he can be. "No one has even thought of his successor, if that day does come."

Galbreath did not disclose the amount of the new investment, but it was reported that an additional \$250,000 went into the operation.

## Bucs Stir Up Hottest Blaze in Five Years

Rickey Had Predicted Loop Wouldn't Realize Pirates Were Around 'Til August

> By JACK HERNON NEW YORK, N. Y.



The Pirates were showing a bit of enthusiasm over their future after continuing their winning ways for another week ending in Philadelphia, August 15.

That week-end was the most profitable in quite some time. They won four straight

from the Phils and Preston Ward gained a tie in the fifth one, which will be completed on September 21, their next visit to the city which proved its name-Brotherly Love-to the Bucs.

The rapping they did against the Phil pitchers-and there were 18 called on during five games-brought the Pirates back home, for a mid-week series with the Dodgers, holding a string of eight for ten and 12 for 17.

There hadn't been anything to match that since 1949 in Pittsburgh, when the Pirates ran up an eight-game streak and took 17 of 23 games at one stretch in July.

Max Surkont, the big righthander who hadn't assisted greatly in the run of good fortune, niade one pointed comment.

"Maybe the Old Man was right," he January, he told me this team might | Thomas. go until August before the rest of the league knew they were around.

where, but someone would remember of Frank, the opposition wasn't getting the Pirates. Maybe the youngsters are frisky with "strategy." just starting to come around."

A Bit of Experience Helps

belting the ball.

Sure, he was playing only against because Gordon would be up next righthanded pitching, but they knew he was around.

gories.

A lack of outfielders compelled Man- and the four home runs among his hits. this to buoy our hopes in the three

#### Crosby Reassures Rickey of 'Wholehearted Support'

PITTSBURGH, Pa.-Bing Crosby, reportedly on the "outs" with Pirate General Manager Branch Rickey, indicated just the opposite in a telegram to Rickey from Hayden Lake, Ida., August 15.

Crosby, one of the owners in the Pirates, was reported to have said he would not put any more money into the Pittsburgh operation with Rickey at the helm.

Questioned about Crosby's investments, Pirate President John Galbreath said the Crooner had not been asked for, nor had he given, any more money since his original purchase of stock in 1947, along with Frank McKinney, Tom Johnson and Galbreath.

Crosby's wire to Rickey said: "It's doubtless unnecessary for me to tell you this but the completely false newspaper stories of recent date compel me to reaffirm my wholehearted support of you and your policies. I have never at any time made any comment to anyone about the operation of the club under your guidance. Even if I had a critical opinion, which I definitely do not, I would have told you and not someone else. I regret your decision to retire as disclosed in the papers, especially now that your efforts are beginning to be fruitful. But if you do I want you to know that you do so with my warmest regards and respect."

ager Fred Haney to give the first base job to the youngster, Bob Skinner, and this brought the move of Ward back

to the outfield post some time ago. Gordon, who reached his thirty-sixth milestone on August 13 and celebrated piration of five years, in an advisory with a three-run homer that night in capacity to a new general manager, if his first trip to the plate against Robin one were named. Roberts, sounded off quite a bit during with 14 RBIs and three nomers.

said. "When I talked with him last the burden carried mostly by Frank put in print he would retire in 1955.

Proof of the added assistance lies in the fact that, with Ward batting in "Mr. Rickey said we wouldn't go any- front of Thomas, and Gordon in back generally from 12 to 14 hours a day.

It showed up in the number of times damaging to his health. Thomas went to the plate during the That could be, but a couple of "old- stretch. He was up there 69 times, sters" had lent quite a big helping which would indicate that with Gorhand in the streak-Sid Gordon and don's bat in the fifth notch, and a bit gate some of the more arduous duties Preston Ward. The latter especially was hot, too, Thomas was being pitched to with extreme care not to walk him,

Thomas, riding along with the ten top | ger) and me. hitters in the league, rattled along at Ward played in 11 of the 17 games a 333 gait, despite one stretch when he in the face of his critics in Pittsburgh, mentioned and had a nifty .410 aver- had nothing for 15 official trips. He but he's used to that, and gets over it age for that period with 16 for 39. He rapped four homers and drove in 15 in a hurry. drove in 12 runs and his hits included runs. The outfielder was swinging at two in each of the extra-base cate- a better than 50 per cent extra-base future because of the successful minor clip, having eight doubles, two triples league clubs this year. We never had

Asserts Decision to Retire definitely places 'em, and is on the as G. M. Was Made in '50 ting-'em-where-they-ain't.

#### By JACK HERNON PITTSBURGH, Pa.

Branch Rickey didn't consider it as startling news when stories were written that he would retire as general manager of the Pirates in November, 1955.

"This decision was made four years ago when I came to Pittsburgh," he said. "My contract expires at that time, and it was my decision in 1950 to retire after next season.

"I hope to continue with the club in some other capacity.

"I want to be here when the Pittsburgh club wins the pennant and plays in a World's Series."

Rickey, who is 72 years old, said that nothing which has happened in the or-



#### **Branch Rickey**

ganization had anything to do with his retirement, nor has public criticism.

"I shall continue to work for the Pittsburgh club, and without salary, after the 1955 season, if so permitted," trick defense deployments. he said. "If I stay here, and I hope to do so at least until a World's Series on one style of swinging," he says, is played with Pittsburgh as a contest- | "and if they don't stay with it they ant, I will confine most of my work to are likely to foul up their timing. player personnel.

rough on me. I'm not getting any like to hit to the opposite side, and younger, but my health is fine.

breath will be satisfied with the or- or delaying the swing hurts his timing ganization as it is set up, with a few when he goes back to a power swing." changes in detail.

"I have pushed a lot of work along good fast-ball pitcher, because you canto Branch, Jr., and Harold Roettger.

#### Would Stay as Adviser

"No longer is everything concerning the organization funnelled viously from his average he hits directly through me. Naturally, lefties, too, admits the portsiders they consult me on things they bother him. "They seem closer plan to do, especially when it concerns the Pittsburgh club.

capacity of adviser, on major mat- handers. However, I don't swing ters especially, after my contract expires. But this is entirely up to the me an advantage in better timing." owners.

will make the decision when the time comes."

Rickey came to the Pirates after look at the pitch." leaving Brooklyn, in November of 1950, when he signed a five-year contract, reportedly at \$100,000 per year.

The contract had an option clause that Rickey could continue at the ex-

Rickey contends that everyone knew the successful run of business. Old Sid he would retire after the five-year had a .303 mark during the full stretch, period. But it wasn't until a series written by Joe Bradis, Associated Press This pair, of course, gave a big lift to sports writer in Pittsburgh, that it was

> The Twig went a little further into his dad's plans, saying:

> "Dad works awfully hard at his job Another year or two at this pace, plus all the worries he has had, might be

"He realizes this and it's about time he slowed up. He believes the club is on its ways now and would like to deleto someone else.

"Dad, more and more, has been giving some of his work to Harold (Roett-

"He has been a little glum at times

"Dad feels much better about the previous years we've been in Pitts-★ burgh."

# Shoulders, Instead of Feet

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

old-time Willie Keeler strain of hit-

Mueller twice made two hits in an When He Joined the Club inning. Against the Cubs, June 13, in the eleventh inning, he opened with the single which became the winning run, and hit another to drive in the sixth run of the rally. Against the Cards, May 2, when he reached his peak performance with five-for-five, he tripled and singled in one inning, to drive in a run and score each time.

He had his cyclical four-for-four against the Pirates, July 11, a four-forfive against the Cubs, May 14, another four-for-five against the Dodgers, July 8, and then turned the trick again in the opener with the Pirates July 11. From that day through August 18, he hit safely in 29 of his 34 games.

Mueller uses a 32-ounce tapered bat, and he stays with it all season. As a would-be slugger he had a thin-handled, top-heavy stick, also of 32 ounces, but which was not as wieldy as his present lumber. He chokes the bat, varying his grip slightly above and below the two-inch mark, depending on the pitcher, and his ideas on where he should try to hit.

#### A "Statue" Hitter

When he takes his place in the box, he does not fidget, but is ready, and appears as much the "statue" as Stan Musial while awaiting the pitch. He explains that he has made up his mind where he would like to hit when he takes his stance, and can change with the pitch, not by shifting his feet, but by moving his shoulders to give a new direction. If a different hole develops between the time he takes his stance and the pitch, he says a shoulder shift permits him to shoot for the hole.

Therefore, he is not committed to one mode of swinging, the way the big sluggers are, and is not vulnerable to

"The big guys have to concentrate was talking to Frank Thomas the last "The long hours are getting a little time we played Pittsburgh. He would has tried it. But he feels it doesn't "Perhaps Mr. Johnson and Mr. Gal- pay off, because poking at the ball,

Mueller's chief problem is a very not monkey around with that type.

#### Bothered by Portsiders

Southpaw Mueller, although obon you when they throw, and you "I would like to continue in the ball all the way as against rightas hard as many, and that may give

bat, and his modest square stance with leave at Jersey City. heels just about even with the centerline of the batting box, believes he has the plate under command at all times, even on extreme low, outside-corner pitches. The shoulder move, or lean, takes care of those.

Mueller often is asked how he de-

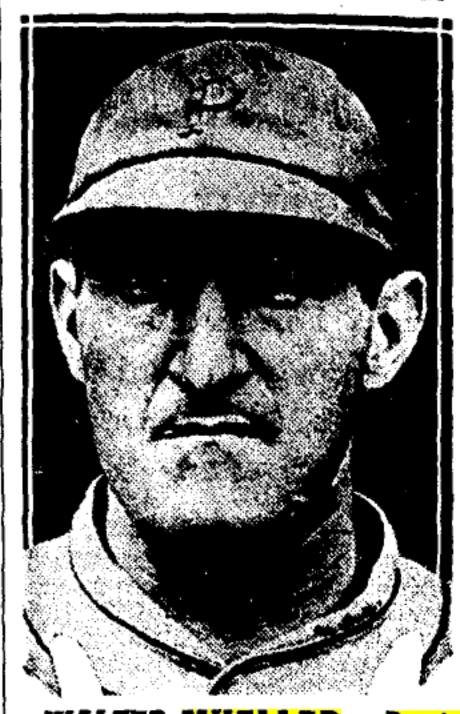
#### Rickey, in Canada, Missed Stories About 'Retirement'

PITTSBURGH, Pa. - The stories on Branch Rickey's retirement as general manager of the Pirates in November, 1955, came as a "great surprise" to him, Rickey reported on his return here from a trip into Canada.

"I have been out of town for sometime and have not seen the stories," he said. "I spent eight days where there was no telephone within 18 miles and no newspapers, I certainly had no idea anything big would be made out of it. Now, in reflection, I cannot understand why the story has not been written a long time ago.

"The next story, I suppose, will be an answer to the question, 'In what capacity, if any, will I continue for the Pittsburgh club after November, 1955?' That answer will probably be a spot story."

### Don's Dad



dad-played with the Pirates in 1922, '23, '24 and '26.

veloped his polished craftsmanship with the bat. Who helped him? Nobody. It's a natural.

"I have been conscious of left field. and of trying to place the ball, ever since I started playing ball as a kid," he recalls. "I got a chance to play ball with bigger and older boys at Creve Coeur, near St. Louis, when I was about 12," he continues. "I did not have the power to match those big fellows and began to fool around with the bat. I realize I couldn't overpower pitching by fellows three-fourfive years older than I, and just naturally, I guess, began to meet the ball and hope for the best. I can't remember when I didn't choke the bat and go to left field."

Don's father, who was an outfielder for a while with Pittsburgh, was a place-hitter, too, but he stopped playing before the youngster was old enough to copy his style.

#### Polo Grounds the Clincher

However, Dad approved of Don's technique, and advised him to sign with the Giants because of his place-hitting, when eight clubs made offers to the sharp-

shooting youngster in 1944. "Dad used to like the Polo Grounds, because the outfielders there couldn't play the lines too closely, and had to bunch in the center, and he figured it was a good spot for me." Mel Ott, as manager, was another lure drawing Don to the Polo Grounds, but don't get as good a view of the he missed playing for him, because Durocher had taken over when Mueller first wore Giant livery in 1948.

Don was signed for the Jersey City farm in August of 1944, got in a few Don is not a guess hitter. "When I games there, and went back to school "I am only a stockholder and a mem- stopped swinging for fences, I stopped in St. Louis after the baseball season, ber of the board of directors. They guessing. I hardly guess at all, and the In 1945 he went to spring training with way I hit now I can wait longer be- Jersey City at Lakewood, N. J., and fore starting the swing, and get a later | had only a few times at bat until he was called into the Merchant Marine Mueller, even with his choke on the in June. In 1946 he spent a month's

#### "Got Fence-Busting Fever"

In his first full year, 1947, he hit well at Jacksonville. "But I got that fence-busting fever," he recalls. "and lost about 20 points in a week before I went back to my natural style."

He got to Jersey City for the 47 playoffs and stayed there in '48, with an end - of - the - season spell with the Giants. In 1949 he played at Minneapolis before being summoned to the Giants as a pinch-hitter.

Mueller's record is a striking example of the difference between controlled batsmanship and homer-nutty swinging.

From 1946 through 1949, his minor league averages were .359, .348, .328, .311, and in his brief 81-at-bats trial with the Giants as a place-hitter in '48, he had .358.

Then, as a Giant, from 1949, the "fence psychology" murdered his average. From '49 through '52 it ran .232, .291, .275, .281. When he made his crucial decision to forget the demand for homers and resume his natural style last July, he went up to .333.

Mueller is a striking case history for kids who are over-glamorized by the homer, and who come into baseball swinging for the fences and dreaming of breaking Ruth's record, even though they may weigh 162 wringing wet.

## Mueller Beefs Up His Batting Figure by Paring Pounds

Don Also By-Passes Homer Glamor to Concentrate on Steady Drumfire of Hits

> By JOE KING NEW YORK, N. Y.



streamlined Don Mueller, hitting with the precision of a Wee Willie Keeler, was the talk of the team as the Giants escaped from the perilous West to embrace the comforts of home.

Mueller sparkled on the tour with batting marksman-Bob Hofman ship which may

give him the chance to be the first Giant to lead the league since Bill Terry in 1930.

The right fielder's climbing average is not due to chance, but to design and diet. Last season, when a closing spurt put Mueller at .333, he resolved that he did not have the power to help the team with homers, and that a steady .300 hitter would be of more value than a .275 chap who hit the seats occasionally.

If he did not worry about homers, then he did not have to tote extra weight in hopes of added power, was Mueller's reasoning. Slimming down might aid his fielding as well as his base-running, and possibly would not cut down his extra-base production, either.

Therefore, Don adopted a diet to lose about six pounds around the hips, to pare him down to 177, a weight he has held after daily battles at the chow table.

The change seems to be noticeable. Observers believe Mueller is more nimble in the field, and faster to first without that awkward poundage about the middle.

#### Increases Doubles, Triples

And no one could reasonably ask more of him at bat. Don pelted steadily over .350, once reaching up to .378, and while he did not hit a homer, he did lead the squad in extra-base hits with six doubles and two triples for the first 18 games. Also, he drove in nine runs, second only to deadly Monty Irvin.

The right fielder beat out three infield hits in a week's time, indicating he might have speeded up a half-step or so to first, and he sprayed hits to all sectors, so that no defense could overshift against him. His place-hitting gives Mueller an equal chance anywhere on the field.

In Milwaukee, Don hit two singles to center and beat a rap to the second baseman. In another game in Chicago to right and a single to center. In St. a triple to left-center, a double to left, and singles to center, left and rightcenter.

Mueller is paying off for the Giants on a long session of deep thinking back home in St. Louis in the winter. As he explained it, he got out the record, and made a self-appraisal.

#### Homers Hurt Average

In his best homer year, 1951, he hit 16, but averaged only .275. Five of his homers came in two successive games against the Dodgers, to tie the record which Stan Musial equaled May 2.

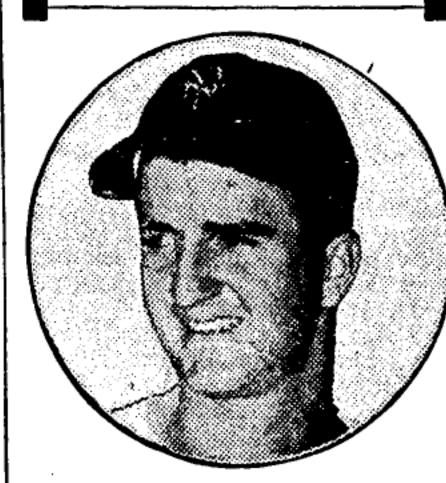
In 1952, Mueller had 12 homers and 281. Last season, when he finally decided he was hurting team run production by futile attempts to pull the ball with power, he made only six homers,

but batted .333. Therefore, Mueller figured it this way: "In my best season, even with a lucky streak of five homers in two days, I hit only 16. There are lots of players who can hit 19-15 homers, but few who can top .300. Certainly it would be better for the team if I hit the way I knew best, and stopped trying to do something which hardly can pay off. I am going to have a much better chance to score a run with a single or double than I would trying to put power on the ball which I do not have.

All my minor league teaching was that way. Why not go back to that, and take | game which eventually was won.

the homers as they come?" swinging constantly for homers. And, you have to have on second base? Or The bunt, on normal thinking, seemed

#### Dieting Don



Don Mueller

if a rookie is alive and breathing and weighs 165 soaking wet, he automatically visions himself a homer slugger.

Many teams would do a lot better if they got the kids on the Mueller style. At 27, he finally has reached his peak because he was able to ignore the glamour of the occasional homer, and figure out how he would help most.

As Mueller waxed strong at bat, other Giants weren't doing so well. Irvin, although his average had a fight to reach .275, was producing the runs. But Al Dark, Willie Mays, Hank Thompson, Whitey Lockman, Dave Williams and Wes Westrum were struggling to reach .250, in a mass slump.

#### Lone Big Rally Against Cards

Only in an eight-run inning in St. Louis, sparked by Bob Hofman's threerun homer, Mueller's triple and Thompson's double, had the Giants made a big rally all season. Their runs have come singly or in pairs, the hard way, and pitching was their chief hope.

Even the pitching, or the plans for same by Leo Durocher, manager, went snafu in St. Louis. Durocher had held out Johnny Antonelli a week for the Cardinals, presumably on the lefty-versus-lefty theory, to stop Musial.

Musial slammed two homers (of five in a double-header) off Antonelli, who was far from sharp after his long layoff, and Don Liddle, another lefty, lasted only three innings in the nightcap, which was, however, won by the Giants on their eight-run inning.

It is clear the Giants will have to make their bid on pitching, which seems competent if it is only organized by Durocher soon.

Giant Glints: Quick-thinking by Herman Franks, coach, probably saved Wes Westrum from Ump Barlick's ire in St. Louis. Barlick chased complaining Westrum to the bench, apparently intent on giving him the thumb. Franks butted in and was tossed out by Barlick, "I figured it was better me than him." . . . he walloped two-baggers to center and The Giants must catch up with two tough rookies. Bob Skinner of the Pi- tremendous burden on a brave and Louis he had a five-for-five game with rates had a four-for-four day against them, including a double and triple. Tom Alston of the Cards made them wince with seven-for-ten and seven RBIs in a three-game series. . . . Secretary Ed Brannick stilled player repugnance for a night getaway in St. Louis by having a diner on the train. ... The Giants finally regained the homer touch, with seven for ten runs in five western games, but the opposition in same period whacked 11 for 18 runs. . . . Al Dark twisted his ankle in the first inning against the Cardinals, May 3, but finished the game. Treatment by Trainer Doc Bowman the next day enabled Dark to remain

### Durocher Debates --Bunt or Swing?

in the lineup.

By JOE KING NEW YORK, N. Y.

Leo Durocher is having quite a wrestle making up his mind whether the bunt belongs in today's haseball, and is causing a debate with his repugnance toward the bastinado.

The Giants' manager snubbed the Giants trailing, 4 to 3, Mueller led off bunt as a last resort in two defeats in the ninth with a single. This was "I was brought up to meet the ball. on the western swing, and ignored it the spot for Leo's bunt. However, in another spot in an extra-inning blaster Monty Irvin was up and Leo

In Milwaukee, the Giants trailed, 3 Irvin flied out, and the rally col-Years ago, a craftsman such as Muel- to 2, in the ninth, when Hank Thomp- lapsed. ler would be copied by all the kids. But son walked to lead off. Now, what In both defeats, Durocher had to ning-ending double play. But until now and then might help. nowadays the young fellows come up do you do? Bunt, to put that run have a run-one run-or he was dead.

# Oriole Hurlers Flap Wings--But All Hitters Can Do Is Flop

Nine Defeats in First 14 Games, Five by One Run; **Dykes Off Coaching Line** 

> By HUGH TRADER, JR. BALTIMORE, Md.

After using eight different lineup combinations in a futile effort to inject some life into the Oriole batting attack, Manager Jimmie Dykes took his mos "drastic" measure during the third week of the season. He benched himself as third base coach.



Jimmie Dykes

"I wasn't doing anything out there, anyway," said Dykes, sarcastically. "We seldom got a base-runner that far, and I was getting lonesome. Every face I looked at close up was hostile, the opposing third baseman's and the third base umpire's.

"For a little while, I'll try Tom Oliver out there. He licks me at hearts. Let's see if he can lick this batting

Dykes had reason to be bitterly disappointed. His Orioles, who had slugged the ball at a team average of .287 during spring training, were patting the ball at .209 after the first 14 games of the season.

"Maybe it was the thin air out in Arizona," said Dykes. "Maybe it gave some life to the balls we were hitting during the spring.

"It sure fooled me. I thought we could hit. I don't know what to do -I can't go up there and swing that bat for them."

Although obtaining the tightest pitching in the league, the Orioles had lost nine of their first 14 games and were in seventh place. Five of their defeats were either by 1 to 0, 2 to 1 or 3 to 2.

#### All Types of Platooning

Dykes had tried half-platooning, fullplatooning and no platooning. most novel attempt to break the draught occurred in Philadelphia on May Day when he sent nine righthanded hitters against Lefty Alex Kellner. It was to no avail, the Orioles losing, 2 to 1, in ten innings.

One of the most disappointing Orioles was First Baseman Eddie Waitkus, obtained from the Phillies in March with the reputation of being a slap hitter, but one who could maintain a .290 average.

The lefthanded swinging Waitkus was locked in a horrible slump. In one eight-game stretch, he made only two hits in 28 trips to the plate, and on May 1, with Kellner pitching. Waitkus was benched. Eddie was batting .180. Don Lenhardt, who hadn't played first base since 1952, was given a clawed mitt and told to take over.

Some of the others who placed a Diering, .091: Left Fielder Sam Mele, .143; Pinch-Hitter Dick Kokos, .250; Center Fielder Gil Coan. .257, and Right Fielder Vic Wertz, .257.

The club's general slump was rub-

swing away hoping for a big inning? Durocher had Willie Mays, an excellent bunter, swing away, and a double play and defeat resulted.

In Chicago, in Sal Maglie's brilliant 14-inning win, Thompson led off in the twelfth with a walk. This time Leo tried to outfox the opposition, rather than go for a safety play to get Thompson into scoring position. He had Don Mueller hit away, and the marksman hit the third baseman's glove with a double-play liner.

After this experience, Durocher conceded that he would have to reorient his thinking, and concede the bunt belonged in baseball, because pitching was so uniformly rugged. One run would do, he proclaimed, and stated he would even depart from custom to bunt in middle innings on the

In Chicago the next day, with the forgot his lecture of the previous day.

### Orioles Name Burkart Ticket Chief; Big Rush for Yank Duçats for May 16

By JESSE A. LINTHICUM

BALTIMORE, Md.-While Manager Jimmie Dykes and General Manager Art Ehlers search for a cure for the lack of hitting of their Orioles, Elmer Burkart, a former Bird pitcher, has moved into the front office to take over as ticket manager.

The lack of a modern ticket system has been as big a problem as the futile Bird bats on the field. Burkart faces a man's-size task in smoothing out the muddle.

Ticket experts from the Phillies have been here to set up a modern system. The Orioles decided to take advantage of the cut in federal admission taxes, and new tickets were printed, increasing the established price.

Burkart, who recently resigned as general manager at Richmond, believed he would have the situation under control before the Orioles arrived home for their first long stand. There is a terrific demand for seats for the first appearance of the

Yankees here, May 16, and one would think the World's Series were starting here on that Sunday afternoon. All reserved seats have been sold for days, and only general admission and bleacher tickets will be available the day of the game.

The Orioles are running neck and neck with Milwaukee on the basis of average attendance, and local club officials still insist that Baltimore will equal or beat the Braves' figure for the season.

The fans of this area seem to be more interested in how many fans the Orioles will draw this season than where the club will finish. It is a foregone conclusion in the minds of the fans that Baltimore's position in the standing will be a vast improvement over the Browns' finish in 1953.

There is some doubt about the total attendance. Some are talking in terms of beating Milwaukee's draw last year, but they are optimists to the extreme. Others are wagering the Birds will hit the 1,500,000 mark, but the basis for argument appears to be 1,250,000.

The average attendance for the first five games here was 26,102. If that figure were maintained, the season draw would be close to a million and three-quarters.

Meanwhile, work is continuing on the stadium construction. The inside of the park is in fine condition but workers are still engaged in completing two ramps leading to the upper decks and brick-layers are completing the facing on the outside. Two new steel light towers are being erected and will be in place within a couple of weeks.

bing off even on Third Baseman Vern got another starting chance. For nine Stephens, who made a sparkling start. | innings, he yielded only one run and In one week, Stevie's average slipped seven hits, but the best he had was 57 points to a still respectable .327. a 1 to 1 tie. In the tenth, an error Catcher Clint Courtney was at .323. by the usually reliable Hunter paved The Orioles had only 30 runs in two weeks.

"The worst thing about this is our guys aren't hitting the ball hard," Dykes said. "Usually, when a team is in a slump, the boys are hitting the ball solidly, but directly at the low, with the help of Pitching Coach fielders. On our club, the only ones | Harry Brecheen, had evidently overmeeting the ball well are Mele and Courtney, sometimes."

There's no question the Orioles are anxious to deal for a power hitter, but to succeed they'd have to give up a front-line hurler and Dykes declares, "I'll never let Bob Turley go, for any player, at any time, and I want to keep Don Larsen, who also has top potentialities. So that usually shuts off a deal."

#### Pitching Strong Point

On the brighter side of the picture was the way the pitching was holding up. Joining the Big Four starters (Duane Pillette, Turley, Larsen and Joe Coleman) on the impressive list was Lou Kretlow. The tall righthander frem Edmond, Okla., always promising but perenially a bust, looked great in his first two starts.

to hit were Second Baseman Bobby eighth. However, when he served up Young, batting .213; Shortstop Billy a home run ball to Chico Carrasquel Hunter, .130; Center Fielder Chuck and a walk to Nellie Fox in the eighth, Kretlow was yanked by Dykes Reliever Howard Fox gave up two runs and the Orioles lost.

On May 1 in Philadelphia, Kretlow than three only twice.

the way for an A's run and a 2 to 1 Oriole defeat.

Kretlow still hadn't been able to add to his 14 victories in seven major league seasons, but Dykes was hopeful that he would and soon. Kretcome his inability to get that good fast ball and curve over the plate.

Bird Bunts: The Orioles can hardly wait for First Baseman Dick Kryhoski to recover from his cracked rib so he can swing that long ball bat of his into action. Kryhoski accompanied the team on its recent eastern swing but was watching the games from the stands in civilian clothes. . . . Some of the Orioles are claiming Umpire Ed Hurley is picking on them. A week after he chased Coleman, Dykes and Ray Murray in Chicago (Murray was fined \$100 and suspended three days and Dykes was fined \$25), Hurley warned Outfielders Dick Kokos and Jim Fridley for allegedly fraternizing with the A's before a game in Philadelphia. Kokos and Fridley protested that they weren't frat-Against the White Sox on April 24, ernizing, that they were merely speakwilling pitching staff by their failure he had a three-hitter going into the ing with TV Producer Gene Kirby near the batting cage during the A's batting practice. . . . In the first 14 games, Oriole pitchers had ten complete games to their credit. Oriole to protect a 3 to 2 lead. In the ninth, foes had been ablecto score more than three runs in only four games, but the Oriole hitters had scored more

#### Double Switch Beats Stanky; Taylor Big, Hofman Terrific

NEW YORK, N. Y .- Tom Sheehan's listeners thought the Giant scout was exaggerating when he praised Bill Taylor in spring training by saying the huge rookie would intimidate pitchers just by walking up to that plate. Mebbe so, and mebbe not.

But sure enough, Taylor's appearance as a pinch-hitter in St. Louis seemed to frighten Ed Stanky. at least. When Taylor came up, Stanky popped up on the scene to relieve Righthander Joe Presko with Lefthander Royce Lint, to face Southpaw Taylor.

Taylor, having done his job by frightening the foe, then sat down and Bob Hofman, righthanded hitter, took his place and walloped a clinching three-run homer.

the best way to go about it. Oh, sure, run in most cases and does not have the other side after a sacrifice can the overwhelming power to crash pass the next man to set up an in- through defenses at will. An Ott bunt

the lead man reaches second, he is vulnerable to the double play and is not in optimistic position to score against good pitching.

Then there is the old axiom of playing for two runs on the road, and for one with the bunt at home, if one run means a tie or a lead. But that hardly applies to the last chance. when lack of a run will end the game in defeat.

Durocher always has been daring in trying for the big inning, relying on hit-and-run rather than a give-up bunt to advance runners. But his consistent failure to bunt in desperate circumstances raised eyebrows.

Ironically, the Giants seem to have hired Mel Ott ten years too soon. With a heavy-footed club which set the all-time homer record of 227, Ott would settle for a bunt when he needed a big inning as a safeguard against his wretched pitching.

With the present Giants, Ott's technique would fit just right. The squad does have good pitching to protect a

THE SPORTING NEWS, MAY 12, 1954

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# 'Giants Win... and the Place Is Going Crazy'

## Russ Hodges' Broadcast Captures Excitement of Thomson's Homer

EDITOR'S NOTE: The explosive excitement of Bobby Thomson's homer, which won the National League playoff and pennant for the Giants, was captured by Russ Hodges, Giants' play-by-play announcer, in his broadcast of the game. The following narration of the dramatic climax was taken from a recording of the broadcast by Hodges, named by The Sporting News as the No. 1 National League announcer of 1950 and the senior major's outstanding television announcer of 1951. The account starts with one out in the ninth inning for the Giants, Alvin Dark on third base, Don Mueller on first, and Whitey Lockman at bat,

Well, light up a Chesterfield and we'll see what will happen here. Whitey Lockman has one hit today and a sacrifice. Newcombe's out talking to Reese and over talking to Robinson, They're talking about the way to pitch to Lockman. Bobby Thomson is off to the right of home plate. First and third occupied, one down.

Lockman is the fellow who has to get on. He represents the tying run. Big Newk stretches. The pitch to Lockman and he swings and fouls it back as he went for a high, fast ball. That's the kind of ball that Whitey can hit for distance.

It's 4 to 1 Brooklyn. This is the last of the ninth inning, and with one out. It's the last of the ninth inning in more respects than you've ever seen. It's the last of the ninth inning of 1951.

Mueller with his lead, Alvin Dark going wide down the third base line. The pitch to Whitey. There it goes -a line drive base hit to left field. Here comes Al Dark scoring. Don Mueller tries for third, Lockman tries for second. Lockman is in

there. He represents the tying run and the Dodgers' lead now is 4 to 2. Don Mueller might have hurt himself sliding into third. Whitey Lockr - doubled into the left field corner and Bobby Thomson will be the Giant batter. Don jammed his ankle sliding into third. and Doc Bowman is out there. Whitey doubled over third base. Chuck Dressen walks out slowly. Whitey Lockman, with time out, goes over to look at Don Mueller, the boy that the Giants and Giant fans liken to Mandrake.

Bobby Thomson, with the score 4 to 2, will be batting with runners at second and third, and Lockman, at second, one of the fastest of the Giants, represents the tying run. I've never seen anything like this one in a long, long time. It's something like a hundred years, and I've been around for only 99.

#### Mueller Carried Off Field

Mueller seems to have hurt himself and Doc Bowman is working on him. Are they go-, ing to bring the stretcher out? Yes, they are. They're going to have to take Mueller out of the game. Dr. Anthony Palermo, the Giants' physician, down to look Mueller over, along with Doc Bowman. Mueller seems to be suffering quite a bit. It's really a tough break to have this happen in the last inning.

Well, it might not be the last inning. If the Giants tie it up, we'll certainly go on into ten. But it's the last ball game of the year. Don is going to be removed from the field on a stretcher.

The Dodgers have another conference out there. Chuck Dressen is making up his mind whether to bring in Powerhouse Ralph Branca, Carl Erskine or Clem Labine. And he is going to make the pitching change. Don Mueller is

'Don't Go Away'



Russ Hodges

being carried off the field and he will get a tremendous ovation from this big crowd at the Polo Grounds. And Ralph Branca will come in. They're going to put Clint Hartung in to run for Mueller. Hank Schenz returns to the bench, and Ralph Branca makes the long walk from the bull pen.

Don Newcombe has come up with a tremendous effort. The Giants have the tying runs at second and third as they have come up with three hits in this inning. Alvin Dark beat out a hit off the glove of Gil Hodges. Don Mueller singled Dark to third. Monte Irvin popped to first. Whitey Lockman got his

second hit of the day-a line drive double to the left field corner.

Then Newcombe leaves the game. As he leads by a score of 4 to 2. he cannot become the losing pitcher, although the tying runs are his responsibility. And big Ralph Branca is in to pitch for Brooklyn.

Newcombe worked a total of 81/3 innings and has given up a total of seven Giant hits. Newcombe, in his time out there, struck out two men and walked two.

Clint Hartung is at third base. Whitey Lockman is at second, the Dodgers lead, 4 to 2, and Ralph Branca, who has won 13 ball games, is on the hill-13 and 11. He's given up 18 home runs. Bobby Thomson against the Brooklyn club has hit a lot of the long ones this year. He's had seven homers.

So don't go away. Light up that Chesterfield, stay right with us and we'll see how Ralph Branca will fare against Bobby Thomson and then Willie Mays to follow.

Jim Hearn goes into the bull pen. Jack Lohrke runs down to the bull pen to warm up, indicative of the fact that if the Giants tie it and go into the top of the tenth inning, they'll put Bobby Thomson into the outfield and Lohrke will play third base. Jim Hearn warming up in the bull pen. He has not appeared in relief this year. Clem Labine throws in the bull pen, along with Carl Erskine.

Bobby Thomson is on the biggest spot of his entire baseball career. He'll be up there against Ralph Branca swinging. A home run would win it and win the championship. A single to the outfield would more than likely tie up the ball game and keep the inning going.

So Leo Durocher runs over and talks to Bobby. The Dodgers' lead is 4 to 2. Willie Mays walks slowly out of the dugout to be the next Giant hitter. Branca's on the spothe knows it. The big boy from Mt.

Vernon, N. Y., with a slight cold, wipes the perspiration from his brow and the Dodgers play their infield deep. There's no double play possibility on a ground ball. Billy Cox is deep.

Bobby Thomson has two out of three. Jim Hearn in the Giants' bull pen. Bobby Thomson up there swinging. He's had two out of three-a single and a double-and Billy Cox is playing him right on the third base line. One out and the last of the ninth.

#### "It's Gonna Be, I Believe . . ."

Branca pitches and Bobby Thomson takes a strike called on the inside corner. Bobby's hitting at 1292. He's had a single and a double and he drove in the Giants' first run with a long fly to center. Brooklyn leads, 4 to 2. Hartung down the line at third, not taking any chances. Lockman without too big a lead at second, but he will be running like the wind, if Thomson hits one.

Branca throws. There's a long fly-ii's gonna be. . . . I believe. . . . the Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant!

Bobby hit into the lower deck of the left field stands. The Giants win the pennant and they're going crazy, they're going crazy. I don't believe it, I don't believe it, I will not believe it.

Bobby Thomson hit a line drive into the lower deck of the left field stands and the place is going crazy. The Giants-Horace Stoneham's got a winner. The Giants win it by a score of 5 to 4. And they're picking up Bobby Thomson and carrying him off the field. And the Dodgers cooled off-and if you want to put a little frosting on the cake-Bobby Thomson drove in three runs for a total of 100.

Thomson's Blow Frosting.

on Cake for Russ Hodges

ing baseball season, I'll have to go

along with Bobby Thomson's mil-

lion-dollar homer as the frosting

on the cake," says Russ Hodges,

broadcaster of Giants' games. "But

there were so many big moments

crowded into the last two months

of the campaign that I'm just like

a kid on Christmas morning-just

too darn many surprises. THE SPORT-

ING News' TV award came along to

make me delirious with pride and

joy-right at the time the Giants

were on their 16-game streak that

startled the entire baseball world.

Then I wound up as one of the an-

nouncers at the World's Series.

But I must admit that when Bobby

apparently being through because of

"Looking back on my most thrill-

## Season's High and Low Spots

Traders Missed on Fain, But He Didn't Miss Bag -By BOB BURNES -

Of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat ST. LOUIS, Mo.



Worst Trading Guess - Tigers, Yankees, maybe some others who had a chance to get! Ferris Fain of the Athletics last winter. A's had Lou Limmer, home runhitting first sacker, coming

up from St. Paul, offered the expendable Fain as trading bait. Other teams rejected offers, saying: "A's demands are too high; they must think Fain is a great ball player." Known previously for his fielding. Fain went out and won the league batting championship.

Silliest Accident - Same guy, Fain. Disgusted when he popped out in a game at Chicago, Fain aimed a kick at the first base bag when he took his position, broke a couple of bones in his foot. Out over a month, he barely got in enough games and times at bat to claim the hitting championship.

Most Embarrassed Players - Tie between Whitey Lockman of Giants and Willie Jones of Phils, both of whom were victims of baseball's old gimmick, the hidden ball trick. Perpetrators were Connie Ryan of the Reds (against Lockman) and Earl of Braves (against Jones). (against Lockman) and Earl Torgeson

Worst Start-By New York Giants, who won one, lost one, won another, then lost 11 in a row.

.... And Best Finish-Same club, which won 16 in a row in August and 39 of its last 47 to come from 131/2 games back to pull out National League

## Nothing Like It in 40 Years'-- Salsinger

<sup>′</sup>^

H. G. Salsinger, Detroit News: "It was the third and final game of the National League playoff, at the Polo Grounds in New York, on the sunny and balmy afternoon of October 3.

"The Giants had won the first game, 3 to 1, and the Dodgers the second, 10 to 0, and now in the third game the Dodgers were leading, 4 to 1, going into the home half of the ninth inning. Brooklyn was beginning to celebrate another pennant victory.

"Don Newcombe, the Dodgers' giant righthander, had held the Giants to four hits and one scratch run in eight innings and he looked big and strong enough to handcuff them one more inning, protecting his three-run lead.

"Alvin Dark opened the home ninth with an infield single. Don Mueller singled cleanly to right, sending Dark to third. Monte Irvin, the Giants' strong man, went out to Gil Hodges unassisted at first base. Whitey Lockman followed with a double to left, a hit that scored Dark from third and moved Mueller ahead two bases, but Don was injured sliding into

third and Clint Hartung ran for him.

Poor base-running and inept fielding 🕈 📱

by the Flying Scot had helped Dodg-

ers to 4 to 1 lead in final playoff game.

game and all was forgiven.

Then he hit the homer that won the

Silliest Rhubarb - Came during

Giants' losing streak and involved Leo

Durocher (who else?), Eddie Stanky

and Umpire Lee Ballanfant. At the

end of an inning, Stanky (for no known

reason) took ball in play with him to

dugout. Ballanfant demanded Giants

return it. Giants said they couldn't

find it. Ballanfant insisted on a base-

ball, any baseball. Giants countered

by tossing their beat-up infield prac-

tice ball, liberally coated with dirt

and red paint. Ballanfant put the ball

in play. Durocher said he would hold

Ballanfant personally responsible if

ball sailed and hit a batter. Stanky

settled the whole deal by fouling off

the first pitch into the stands, thereby

giving some fan the most disreputable

Most Embarrassed General Manager

-Hank Greenberg of the Indians, who

had to answer daily inquiries from

Cleveland fans about "Why did you

trade Orestes Minoso?" Minoso was

batting around .350 for the White Sox

when nobody on Cleveland was over

souvenir served up in many years.

"The Dodgers were still two runs ahead, but the Giants had a runner on third and the tying run on second, so Charlie Dressen removed Newcombe and substituted Ralph Branca, who had started and lost the first game of the playoff when Bobby Thomson, the Giants' third baseman, hit a home run with a runner on base.

"In came Branca, one of the game's unluckiest pitchers, and the first man who faced him was this same Thomson. Branca threw a called strike. He tried another. This time Thomson swung and the ball landed in the lower deck of the left field pavilion. Three runs scored on the hit and the Giants were champions of the National League.

"It was a minute or more before the crowd realized that one hit had' turned defeat into victory, one pitched ball had lost a pennant and the same pitched ball had won one. Then, as the reporters are fond of saying, pandemonium broke loose.

"I have watched major league baseball for more than 40 years but never a more dramatic game than this one."

#### the Hawk exploded, all my baseball dreams came true."

illness and injury.

Biggest Disappointments-Two husky first basemen, Walt Dropo of Red Sox. Ted Kluszewski of Reds, neither of whom approximated 1950 work in 1951. In teams, the Red Sox, as usual, and the Phils, who never threatened to repeat.

Best Manager--Leo Durocher, easily, with low bows to Casey Stengel, Paul Richards and Jimmie Dykes for fine

Most Improved Player-Solly Hemus of Cards, who hated to see the season end; Nelson Fox of White Sox.

Most Distressed-Chuck Dressen of Dodgers, who called his team "the greatest" in June, still doesn't know what happened.

Best and Briefest Description of Year -By Martin Haley of Globe-Democrat staff who, after Steve Bilko, Don Bollweg, Glenn Nelson and Nippy Jones had failed with Cardinals, summed up the whole thing in one word: "Stan Musial made his ANNUAL return to first base last night."

Year's Best Explanation - By Glenn Nelson, formerly of the Cardinals, while with the Pirates. Attempted to steal home one night with Pirates several runs behind in late inning. Pressed for an explanation by harassed man-Best Comebacks - Bill Nicholson in ager, Bill Meyer, Nelson simply said: -Ed Hurley of the American League to the mound trailing a long rope back National, Hank Majeski in American, "That's why they call me 'Rocky,' I

Stiles Saw His Pets, Rams, Win Title on 50th Birthday

Maxwell Stiles, Los Angeles Mirror: "There's no thrill in sports quite the equal of having a man or a team for whom you root, with whom you live and whom you count among your closest friends, win the highest honors within reach. I live and travel with and root for the Los Angeles Rams, for they are my job from early July until mid-December of each year.

"On December 23 I was able to celebrate my fiftieth birthday by watching the Rams defeat the mighty Cleveland Browns for the football championship of the world. That was my sports thrill of the year.

"No team ever before had beaten the Browns in an important game when the blue chips were down. Jumbo Joe Stydahar's team was the first to do that. It was, indeed, a Merry Christmas for Joe and his men, and a happy birthday for one whose golden years ended on a golden moment."

Most Harassed Unipire (Concentrated) Johnny Tobin of Browns was walking Top Quick-Change Artist — Bobby in three games over two days at Sports- of him. ("To ring a bell to let this guy both of whom had good seasons after guess." Thomson of Giants, who moved from man's Park. At third base on Satur- know he's done," was Tobin's answer.)

The Hurley, at first base, had to stop proceedings while he untangled Coach Max Patkin, who had tied himself in a knot and couldn't get loose. Second game, back of home plate, had to make decision whether to allow Midget Eddie Gaedel to bat.

Most Horrible Defeat-Cards' 2 to 1 loss to Brooks on June 14. They had 15 hits, 18 base-runners; one inning Cardinals put first five men up in frame on base, failed to score. Two were picked off second during game, another forgot to run out a ground ball. At that, Cards were leading, 1 to 0, going into ninth when Gil Hodges put them out of their misery with two-run homer.

Biggest Blowup (Individual) - The same Hodges, who was believed, on July 1, to have great chance to beat Babe Ruth's home run record. Hit only a handful rest of season; didn't even win league home run crown. The old master, Ralph Kiner, went to work.

The Best-In anything you want to make it, Stan Musial; top pitchers, Allie Reynolds, Preacher Roe, Sal Maglie, Larry Jansen, Ned Garver, Murry Dickson; top rookies-Gil McDougald and Orestes Minoso in American, Willie Mays in National.

Boat to hero with one swish of bat, day, he had to inquire why Coach First game of Sunday double-header, \* THE ALL-SPORTS NEWS, JANUARY 2, 1952 \* Sect. 2 3

## Combs Will Brush Up Old Mueller Phils in Old Specialty --Hitting Line Drives

O'Neill Sees Former Hub Aide Curing Homer Craze; Sandlock Could Make a 15-Game Winner of Lindell

By STAN BAUMGARTNER

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

Perkins' Secret in Catching

Knuckler--'Go With Ball'

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. - Cy Per-

kins, veteran catcher-coach of the

Phillies who successfully handled

one of the most baffling knuckle-

balls in baseball—Eddie Rommel's—

says that the secret of catching

the deceptive delivery is to go with

follow you. Wait that additional

second until the ball commits itself

which way it is going," said Per-

not only to teach the Phillies to hit

on a line but make them want to be

power to hit home runs," said O'Neill.

"No one will attempt to change them.

It is the youngsters we will try to

The acquisition of Sandlock to han-

Sandlock could make a 15 to 18-

game winner out of Lindell. If he

does, the Phillies should be in the pen-

Sandlock, a switch hitter, batted only

.231 for the last-place Pirates in 64

games last year. He was brought up

from Hollywood mainly to catch Lin-

dell. In the Pacific Coast League Lin-

dell won 24, lost only nine with Sand-

Had Catching Troubles on Phils

But Lindell, harried by a series of

tough breaks, was no ball of fire with

Pittsburgh and was traded to the Phil-

lies on waivers in August. With the

Phils, Lindell pitched several great

games but lost when his devastating

trick delivery got away from Stan

Lopata and Smoky Burgess at critical

reached the ninth inning either tied

or ahead, then lost when strikes es-

months younger than the six-foot, five-

inch, 220-pound Lindell, admits he does

not catch all Johnny's knuckleball

"My job is to try and block the ball

in front of me," he says, laughingly.

"This keeps the base-runner from

"It would be impossible to catch

In the off-season, which he spends

in his native town of Old Greenwich,

Conn., Mike roughs up his hands by

and wrists bear imprints of Lindell's

will be married this month. He re-

ports he has completely recovered from

his appendectomy and will be ready

for a full 154-game schedule. Right-

hander Bob Miller also is to be mar-

ried soon. . . . Robin Roberts is keep-

Christmas cards were received from

Del Ennis, Bennie Bengough and Cy

Perkins; also from Frank McCormick,

former Phils' first sacker. . . . The

Phillies' alumni, Lee King, former out-

fielder; George Columbia Smith (a

knuckleballer) and Righthanded Pitch-

er Cecil Causey, also sent season's

ing busy with his TV program. . .

Phil Bits: Shortstop Ted Kazanski

Sandlock, who is a jovial fellow two

caped Lopata and Burgess.

In two successive appearances he

nant scrap all the way.

lock behind the bat.

moments.

pitches.

straying too far.

hopping heaves.

dle Lindell's tantalizing knuckler may

show more immediate and tangible re-

"Some of our men have natural

"Don't try to go after it. Let it

the ball, not against it.

kins.

line-drive hitters.

Tying "loose ends" into a pennant knot is Manager Steve O'Neill's latest wrinkle in trying to lead the Phillies to the 1954 championship.

Balked in making major league trades of importance, O'Neill plugged up two weak spots in the Phils' lineup the past two weeks by signing Earle Combs, former New York Yankee outfielder and batting star, as a coach and buying Catcher Mike Sandlock from Pittsburgh.

Combs will coach the Phillies in batting while Sandlock will handle the difficult knuckleball

pitches of Johnny Lindell. At first glance these seem minor moves, not to be compared to the acquisition of Danny O'Connell by the Braves from the Pirates. But often

smallest moves prove to be the most important changes. O'Neill expects the Phillies' moves to provide the oil for a smooth machine. "We need hitting with men on bases," said O'Neill on a recent

visit to the club offices. "If our !hitting had kept pace with our pitching last season, we would - have been in the race until the final day."

Combs was the type of hitter O'Neill likes-a line drive hitter with power. A fellow who in his heyday could rifle the ball over the infield or between the outfielders. Combs made only 58 homers in his 12-year career in the American League, but he had 309 doubles and 154 triples, leading the circuit on four different occasions in three-baggers.

O'Neill's chief complaint against the hitting of the Phillies is that one or two of his men were "home run crazy." "We have a few men," said the skipper, "who could be great hitters if they would level off on the ball instead of trying to hit into the stands."

Tried to Help Jones on Hitting

Several times last season O'Neill tried to help Willie Jones by urging him to level off. The third sacker would make the try for a week or ten | help most." days, then give up.

"Gran Hamner proved last year that a batter does not have to swing from his toes and aim for the fences to hit sults. home runs," said O'Neill.

"Hamner even choked up on his bat and still hit 21 home runs and drove in

**92** runs. "Rogers Hornsby and Paul Waner were other fellows who levelled off with their bats-instead of uppercutting-and made many long-distance wallops. Hornsby had 302 homers in his career and, according to his own words, never tried to hit a home run."

One of O'Neill's doubts about the major league hitting ability of Stan Palys, spectacular recruit now playing with Ponce in the Puerto Rican League, is that the youngster uppercuts the ball.

Saw Improvement in Palys

When Palys returned from service and joined the Phils at Clearwater in the spring of 1953, O'Neill took one look at the boy and shook his head. "He uppercuts," he said. When the youngster returned in the fall, O'Neill again stood behind the batting cage and gave the lad the once-over.

"He's better," said the Phils' pilot, "but he still uppercuts a bit." O'Neill hopes that Combs will correct the fault.

The Phillies had one sad experience with "uppercutting." A few years ago they had a promising first baseman with Utica. He was a clever fielder and hard hitter. He looked like the logical successor to Eddie Waitkus.

past if I even tried to." But he got home run crazy, began to uppercut and became a .240 hitter. Bill Glynn drifted to the minors, then came back with the Indians, for whom he hit .240 last year.

O'Neill hopes Combs will be able



who like rare quality may escape pressure of city living. Mouth-watering cooking. All sports in Nation's sunniest winter climate. For details, write

JACK STEWART, Manager Phoenix, Arizona greetings. Camelback Inn

# Puzzle Still Haunts Lippy

Despite Fine '53 Mark, Don Will Be in Familiar Role of Substitute Next Spring

By ARCH MURRAY

NEW YORK, N. Y.

Another spin of



time's wheel has been completed and the Giants, like everybody else, get a fresh start and a clean slate. For one thing, at least, the Giants were grateful as they moved into 1954. The terrible year of '53 is over and has moved into the history books. They don't

need to talk any longer about next year. This is it. And the big hope is that it will prove a year in which they can wipe out the memories of last year's

dismal doings. There'll be a lot of new faces when Leo Durocher barks his initial orders at Phoenix next month-new pitchers, catchers, in fielders and outfielders. There'll be new problems, too. Some of them will concern the rookies. There'll be a talented batch of them and it'll be Leo's problem to see how many of them are ready to fit into the Giant picture. There'll be the problem of replacements in the front-line pitching. There'll be the problem of finding the men to back them up in the bull pen. That last was one of the Giants' besetting weaknesses a year ago. There will be the problem of choosing between Wes Westrum, the old pro with the weak bat, and Ray Katt, the young slugger from Minneapolis. Leo must decide early who is to be

his first-string catcher. Davey's Back a Question Mark

There'll be the job of finding out whether Davey Williams' back is strong enough after a winter's layoff to hold up under the pressure of every-day play. If Davey can't do it every day, Leo will have to find out if Ronnie Sanford, the kid with the quick hands, has come far enough and fast enough to take over the vital post. Leo will have to find this out early so that he can start looking around for replacements if neither of them can do the job. The Giant skipper will have to make sure that Willie Mays didn't lose any of his superlative speed when he chipped a bone in his ankle at Fort Belvoir, Va., last summer.

These will be some of Leo's newer problems. But he still has the perennial problem of how to fit Don Mueller into the Giant scheme of things. This is the same problem Leo has had to face every spring since he took over the helm of the sagging Giant craft six years ago this coming July. Always there's some brash young man, brandishing a heavy bat or packing that extra speed, who is ready to take over Don's job. But Don, lean and tall and silent, always winds l up as the Giant right fielder.

"Good Hitter-But Too Slow" "Sure, Mueller's a good hitter," the scuttlebutt goes, "but he's too slow. He isn't a good fielder and he's a singles hitter. He doesn't hit the long ball for you. And he doesn't drive in the runs. You just don't win a pennant with a Mueller in the regular lineup."

That last, of course, is thoroughly fallacious. The Giants have won just one pennant in the last 17 years. And the them all. Many pitches would get guy who played right field every step of the way down that miracle run in '51 was a fella named Donald Frederick Mueller. He was batting in the No. 3 spot down the stretch and his bat beat working as a carpenter. His left arm a steady tattoo along the way. Almost single-handedly he beat the Dodgers in a crucial September week-end series at the Polo Grounds when he banged out in the course of two games.

Thomson's big blow came.

games in 1952. There was another fac- | switch writers,

#### Led Club at Bat



Don Mueller

tor in Mueller's decline that year. With Willie Mays away in the Army and Monty Irvin sidelined with a smashedup ankle, Mueller tried too hard to take up the slack of the absent power.

"I made a mistake," he explained later. "With Willie and Monty both out, I felt it was up to me to help Bobby Thomson supply the long ball. As a result, I was swinging from the heels and going for the fences. My average fell away off and Leo had to bench me. I realized then that I'm not cut out to be that type of a hitter. As long as I try to hit the ball where it's pitched, I'm all right."

Returned to His Former Style

So Mueller went back to his old way of hitting and his average rose steadily over the last two months of that season. He went from around .220 to .281 and he was just beginning to hit his peak when they ran out of games. But even this remarkable spurt didn't assure Mueller of a regular job in '53 any more than his work during the Miracle Run had locked up his position the spring before. When the Giants opened the defense of their National League championship in '52, Henry Thompson was in right field and Mueller on the bench. Last spring Mueller was the opening day right fielder, but it had taken long weeks of spring training and a hot hitting streak along the long trail home from Arizona to lock it up for him. Fellows like Big Bill Taylor, Dusty Rhodes and even Clint Hartung had been tried out there, and it wasn't until 1947-48 after Frankie had had a great they had been found wanting that Mueller got his real shot.

So what happens in '53? All Mueller does is lead the club in hitting with a gaudy .333 mark. Of all the regulars in the league, only Carl Furillo, Red Schoendienst, Stan Musial and Duke Snider topped him. But once again the old albatross of lack of power was draped around his neck. As far as the long ball was concerned, this was Mueller's worst year. Out of his 160 hits, only 19 were for extra bases-11 doubles, two triples and six homers. Batting for the most part in the sixth slot in the lineup. he drove in only 60 runs. The truth is that Mueller is much more valuable up toward the top of the order. The flaw there, however, is his lack of speed on the bases and his failure to draw many passes. He drew only 19 walks in 500 trips to the plate last year.

So now, with Willie Mays returning to his center field chores, the belief is that Bobby Thomson will move over to right. Or if Leo prefers to put Bobby back at third, where he shone so brilliantly in '51, Henry Thompson will be the No. 1 man in right. Thus Don, after his best year as a Giant, finds himself back in the same old role of a guy looking for a job. And once again you'll hear the scream of anguish from Mueller's legion of loyalists, "What's this the Christmas rush," said Frankie. "But guy have to do to get a regular job? How can Durocher keep a hitter like a few days. that on the bench?"

Durocher on the Hook

Despite' these wails, it isn't an easy problem for Durocher to solve. With his pitching woes, Leo needs all the power he can muster in his hitting lineup. Then, too, he wants as tight a defense as he can get. At the moment, the best guess is that, barring a trade, this time Don will hit the bench.

But don't be too sure of it. Don always rides the bench in the winter. But in the summer he's out there in right

Giant Glints: When Leo Durocher five homers and drove home ten runs launches the spring training session, he will have with him only six survivors It was Mueller, too, who helped keep of Mel Ott's managerial regime. They the big final rally alive in the sudden are Dave Koslo, Sal Maglie, Whitey death ninth inning of the historic Bobby Lockman, Bobby Thomson, Larry Jan-Thomson playoff game. His slashing sen and Wes Westrum. . . . Bobby single to right sent Al Dark around to Thomson asked for six things in his third from where he scored the first Christmas stocking. They included a run of the big frame. Mueller subse- white cashmere sweater, a pair of quently sprained his ankle sliding into gloves, a bizarre bow tie, a sports shirt, third on Whitey Lockman's double to a baby sitter and a new Giant contract. left and he was in the clubhouse when | . . . He got the first four, but so far the two others haven't shown up. . . As a matter of fact, that bad ankle There will be some new faces among hobbled Don through the early going the Giant writers when the club arthe next spring and it was one of the rives at Phoenix this spring. Rumor here reasons he hit no higher than .281 in 126 now is that at least two papers will

#### Kraly Named ERA Leader in Reversal by Richardson

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. - Steve Kraly, young lefthanded pitcher of the Binghamton club who was called up by the parent New York Yankees, August 1, has been named the Eastern League's No. 1 pitcher in the earned-run ratings for 1953 by President Tommy Richardson in a reversal of his original decision.

When the official records were released, the honor was credited to Ed Zinker, Schenectady relief artist, who had an average of 2.07.

However, when it was pointed out that Kraly, not Zinker, was the official leader under 10.18 (b) of the Official Rules, which provides a hurler must pitch at least as many innings as games scheduled for his team, Richardson decided that Kraly was entitled to the top position.

Zinker pitched 152 innings, two under the required number, but his team played only 151 games.

Richardson said he was not in accord with the rule, asserting he felt the number of innings necessary to qualify should be no more than the number of games played by the pitcher's team.

Kraly, who had a 2.08 ERA and a 19-2 won-and-lost record, pitched 190 innings. Binghamton played 151 CHARLES YOUNG. games.

### Baumholtz

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17)

out of the regular lineup in 1954, he will be paying the penalty of being on a club that has both Sauer and Kiner in the outfield.

Frankie probably figures it's a cruel world. His greatest talent was on the basketball floor and, though he signed with Cincinnati in 1941 and began the climb through the Red farm system, he always played as a pro cager in the winter.

Warren Giles, presently National League president but then general manager of the Reds, persuaded Baumholtz to lay off basketball in the winter of freshman season, batting .283 in 151 games. The following year, however, they frequently yanked Baumholtz against lefties and he got into only 128 games. In June of 1949 he was traded to the Cubs along with Hank Sauer.

Dropped Cage Game Again

Baumholtz never got going during the 1949 season and ended with a .229 average, the worst of his career. Frankie Frisch, then manager of the Cubs, and Personnel Director Wid Matthews suggested that Baumholtz drop his basketball competition during the off-season.

Frankie, though unconvinced that basketball "burned him out" for the long baseball season ahead, once more agreed to forego the sport. What happened? The following spring he was shipped to Los Angeles by the Cubs even before the training trip was over.

But Baumholtz didn't sulk about it. He bore down that much harder and led the Coast league in hitting with a .378 average and a total of 254 hits.

He isn't sulking now, either. Frankie is working in the men's clothing department of the May store in Cleveland to augment the exchequer a bit. But one thing is sure: He's not going to lay off basketball this winter.

"I haven't had time to play so far because I had to work nights during I'm joining a semi-pro team again in

"And don't be too sure I'm just going to be a substitute outfielder next season, either. They'll have to beat me out of a job on the field."

#### Gilliam Figured Haddix Would Win Rookie Prize

BALTIMORE, Md. — When Junior Gilliam, Dodger second baseman, was informed that he had been voted National League "Rookie of the Year" by the Baseball Writers' Association of America, he revealed that the honor came as a surprise because he figured Harvey Haddix, Cardinal southpaw, would gain the award.

"I certainly thought Harvey Haddix would get the award," Junior said. "He won 20 games, you know." Gilliam declared he doesn't fear

the "sophomore jinx" that has plagued many winners of "Rookie of the Year" honors in the past. "I simply don't believe in jinxes or

bad luck or such things," he said. "As a matter of fact, I believe I ought to have a better year in '54, for I know the pitchers and how they pitch to me."

THE SPORTING NEWS, JANUARY 6, 1954