

Stigman New Big Man of Twin Mound

'Polish Change-Up All Dick Needs,' Asserts Maltzberger

By MAX NICHOLS

ORLANDO, Fla.

When Dick Stigman was first shipped to the Twins, he was regarded as an extra package sent from Cleveland with Vic Power to clinch a trade. His label read: "Relief pitcher, lefthanded and slightly wild."

That was in April, 1962, when Cleveland acquired Pedro Ramos in the deal. And it was about six weeks after Gordon Maltzberger began working as a pitching coach for Manager Sam Mele and the Twins. Maltzberger has been Stigman's constant adviser since then and he speaks with first-hand information when he says:

"Stigman has learned how to think and pitch like a starting pitcher. I think Stigman has the ability to win 20 games. And he is so close to his peak years that we should be able to expect him to win 18 or more this year."

For the first time, Stigman has no radical changes to make during this spring training. He made great strides in learning to control his curve ball last year and he wound up with a 15-15 record for the third-place Twins, despite losing five games by one run. His earned-run average was 3.25 and he walked only 81 in 241 innings.

"I've still got to improve on getting ahead of the batter," said Stigman. "I made a great stride in this direction last year, but I don't think I have conquered it. I don't think of myself as having problems. I just think in terms of trying to get better at everything, including fielding."

Coach Scientist of Hill Style

Maltzberger, who approaches pitching with the detailed observation of a scientist, explained this much more thoroughly.

"When Stigman first started pitching for the Twins in 1962, he pitched and thought like a reliever," the coach said. "That was his job. He put all of his effort in every pitch."

"Now Stigman realizes he must go into each game with the idea of pitching a full nine innings and taking the victory or loss. He does not try to strike out every batter. He has learned to take something off his curve ball once in a while and that he does not have to throw his Sunday curve every time."

Maltzberger said this is interwoven in Stigman's progress and development with his control, especially control of the curve.

When Stigman first became a starter in July, 1962, he was behind the batters often and frequently was throwing 140 or 150 pitches a game.

Made Curve More Effective

"Last year, Stigman concentrated on learning to control his curve and get ahead of the batter," Maltzberger said. "He did this by learning to take something off the curve. And he learned it so well that he could even throw his curve when he was behind the batter. So the batter could no longer wait for his fast ball when he was ahead of Stigman."

"In this way, Dick cut down on the number of pitches and this made it easier for him to pitch well for nine innings."

Stigman advanced from six com-

Pitching Regularly Secret Of Success, Declares Dick

ORLANDO, Fla.—When a Cleveland writer asked Stigman last season why he never pitched so well for the Indians in 1960 and 61, Stigman was ready with the answer.

"They never let me pitch in Cleveland," said the southpaw. "The Twins just let me pitch regularly."

Stigman had a 3-2 record as a reliever for the Twins during his first 25 appearances in 1962. Then on July 18 of that year he became a starter and won nine and lost three the rest of the season. He started in all of his 33 appearances last year. He has a 5-4 career record against Cleveland.

plete games in 1962 to 15 complete games last year. He walked 64 batters in only 143 innings in 1962, compared to his 1963 mark. He has won 27 games and lost only 20 since joining the Twins, so where does he go from here?

Change of Speeds Important

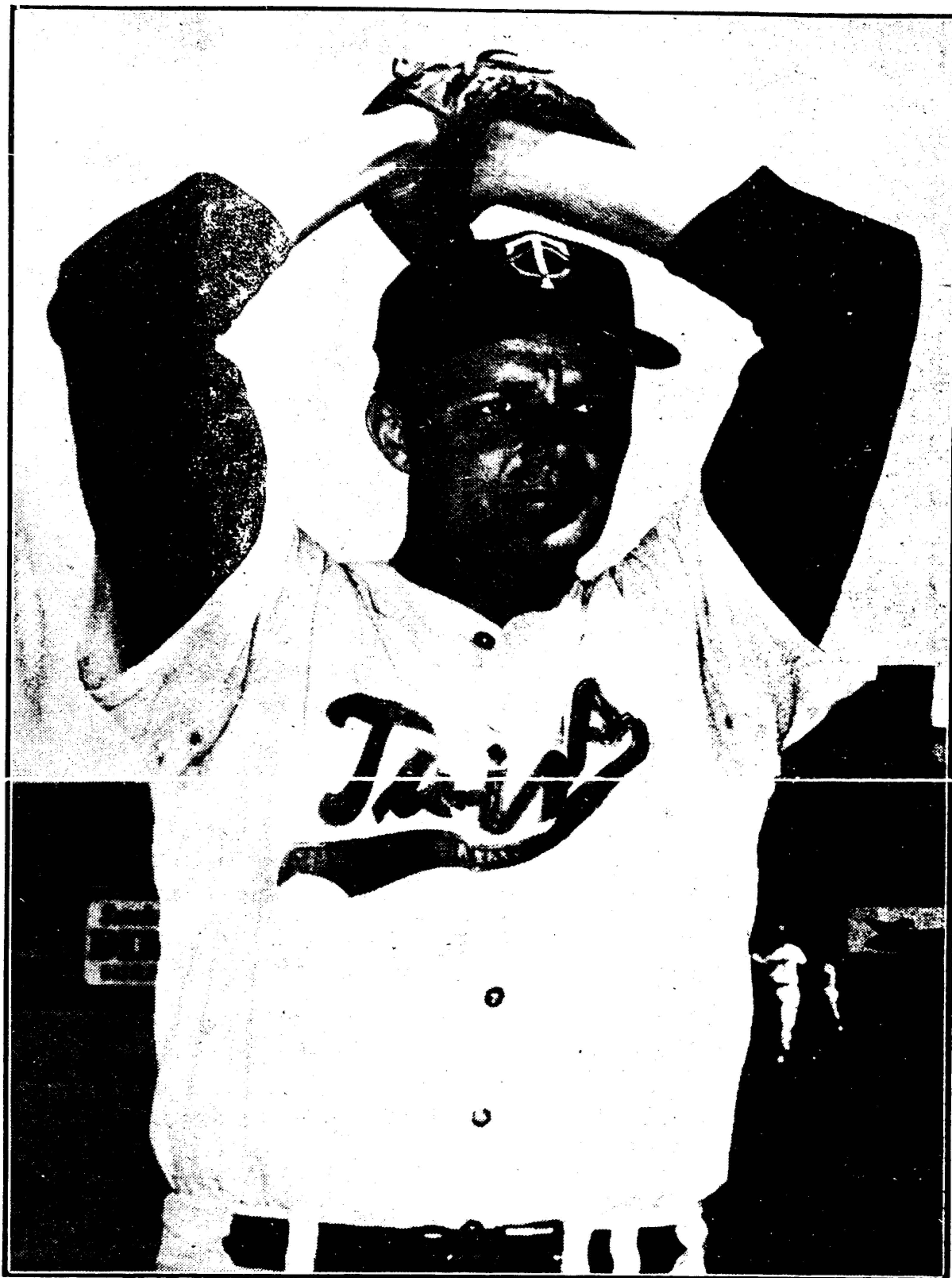
"For Stigman's future, I think he now has to polish his change of speeds on the fast ball," said Maltzberger. "It's a good sign that he set out to learn to control his curve last year and then did it. If he can learn to change speeds more on the fast ball, he'll be that much tougher to hit."

Stigman, a native Minnesotan from the town of Nimrod, is a strapping 210-pounder who stands 6-3 with broad shoulders. He has "filled out" since reaching the majors, starting out at 195 in 1960 with Cleveland.

And though he no longer works at striking out every batter, he has continued to improve in this department. He fanned 193 last year.

Stigman's first four losses in 1963 were by one run. He lost 3-2, 1-0, 4-3 and 2-1 and by May 14 he had a 2-4 record that could easily have been 6-0.

But Stigman never lost heart. He continued starting even in spite of a muscle spasm in his back during mid-season. His best record during the season was 12-10. His strikeout total was third in the American League behind teammate Camilo Pascual and Detroit's Jim Bunning.



DICK STIGMAN . . . Using Head and Arm to Achieve Mound Skill

Twins Got Tony in Right Field --His Throws Are Hair-Raisers

By MAX NICHOLS

ORLANDO, Fla.

Memo to American League baserunners:

If Tony Oliva earns the regular right field berth for the Twins, beware of his arm. He throws hard and accurately. He has learned his lessons from Del Wilber, who managed the Twins' entry in the Florida Instructional League.

"When I first left Cuba to play ball in the United States," said Tony, "I used to throw from out here (side-arm). But during my two seasons in the instructional league, Wilber taught me to throw from up here (directly overhanded)."

"I could always throw hard, but when I threw side-arm, the ball sometimes would bounce to one side. Now I throw it low and it bounces straight."

The 22-year-old Cuban has built a name for himself with his bat every-



Tony Oliva

where he has played in the minor leagues. He has never hit less than .304 and, in 1961, he registered a .410 average in the rookie Appalachian League.

Tony homered for the Twins' only

two runs during their first Grapefruit League exhibition game, a 3-2 loss to Detroit at Lakeland. He singled sharply during the Twins' 9-6 victory over Detroit the next day. But he caused more eyebrows to lift during an intrasquad game a few days before.

Line Peg Nails Banks

Oliva threw a line drive from right field to nail George Banks at home plate. Banks was trying to score from third on a fly ball into foul territory. Oliva has a reputation of being weak defensively, but his first chances in the spring camp were handled crisply.

"I think I improved a lot in my fielding last year," said Oliva. "I had to play on a rough field at Dallas-Fort Worth, so I had to play well to

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Never Committed Boot, But Dick Must Improve Fielding

ORLANDO, Fla.—Dick Stigman, Minnesota lefthander, has yet to be charged with his first fielding error in major league baseball, but he says he must improve his fielding.

"That record is a farce," said Stigman. "I still have to learn to cover first base better. I have to learn to think about it quicker."

Stigman pitched in 41 games for Cleveland in 1960 and in 22 for the same club in 1961. He appeared in 40 for Minnesota in 1962 and in 33 last year—a total of 582 innings.

He has handled 73 chances cleanly in 136 American League games. Every other active pitcher who has been in the majors for at least three full seasons has been charged with at least one error. No other active pitcher has gone without an error over the last four seasons. Bob Turley, now a coach for the Red Sox, committed his last major league error on April 17, 1959.