

Pafko Shakes Off Injury Kayo of '46 and Comes Back Punching for Cubs

Biffing Andy



Andy Pafko

Andy's Homers Help to Trim Tribe; Borowy Shows Old Form on Mound

By ED BURNS
LOS ANGELES, Calif.



Hank Borowy

Andy Pafko, that fine young bridegroom, has been giving his charming Missus plenty of heroic stuff to read about as she waits back there in frozen Chicago. And some of the most exhilarating of these tidings for Mrs. Andy and other Cub fans back home were based on the way Andy gummed up the first visit a Cleveland Indian team ever made to the golden area, which sometimes is designated as California.

On March 15, in the first game a Cleveland American League team ever played in California, the dramatic Veeck troupe hopped off to a four-run lead in the first inning and by the time the Cubs came to bat against Roger Wolf in the fifth inning, the Indians were ahead, 5 to 1. By the time there were two outs in the fifth, Cleveland still was leading, 5 to 1, but the bases were loaded. It was at this juncture that Pafko busted a grand-slam homer to tie the score and Bill Nicholson followed him up to the plate and also busted a homer to give the Cubs a lead they never relinquished, going on behind shutout pitching by Johnny Schmitz to win, 7 to 5.

Sure, the Indians were disappointed. But they were to start Bob Feller the following day. The largest crowd that ever saw an exhibition baseball game in Southern California, 23,500, was on hand to see the Indian ace get revenge over the Cubs. On this occasion, though, Andy didn't wait until the fifth inning to do his stuff. With two out and two on in the first inning, Andy whanged another homer. The Cubs carried on to an 8 to 1 victory.

In eight times at bat in the two games against the Indians, Andy made six hits and played bangup fielding and throwing games besides.

More important than this specific accomplishment was the fact that Pafko had played in every game of the exhibition schedule until Manager Charlie Grimm excused him from the trip to San Bernardino for the San Diego Padre game on March 17. All last season, Andy appeared in only 65 games and was the victim of an unbelievably persistent series of physical mishaps, including two fractures in widely spaced accidents.

Pafko, thus far, has been very philosophical about his misfortunes of a year ago. He merely says he filled his lifetime quota for bad luck last year and approaches the new season with great eagerness, unafraid that a whammy will pursue and overtake him again this year.

Happy as this observer is to be able to report lusty health for Pafko, Nicholson and a few others, good physical luck has not been the theme of recent exhibition successes of the Cubs. We had decided not to mention the Cub shortstop situation this week, just for a change. But how, in the spirit of earnest reporting, can we avoid it? In the Cleveland series, for instance, Coach Bill Jurges had to play short throughout, the reason being that the three listed shortstops all were on the shelf—Len Merullo and Ace Parker with sore arms and Bob Sturgeon with two

Giant Mauler



Willard Marshall

Senators Still Listing to Port

Efforts to Add Righthanded Strength to Batting Order Have Failed Thus Far

By SHIRLEY POVICH
ORLANDO, Fla.



Gil Coan

On at least one basis, the Senators are beginning to look deplorably like the same Washington club of last year that was a push-over for lefthanded pitching. All of the efforts to get more righthanded hitting into the batting order have failed thus far. When the Senators go to bat this season, everybody in the lineup, with the exception of Shortstop Gerry Priddy and whoever is catching or pitching, will be lefthanded. That was the club's trouble last season, when they were licked too often by even the second-string southpaws of the league.

Manager Ossie Bluege and Owner Clark Griffith are maintaining a high optimism despite the suspicion they are too lefthanded, but deep down they remember the anguish of last year, when the Senators couldn't get up a gallop against southpaw hurling.

The two additions to the club in regular positions, George Myatt at second base and Rookie Gil Coan in the outfield, are both lefthanded swingers. The club's determination to give young Coan a full shot at a garden job assured a picket line of three lefthanded swingers, with Stan Spence in center and Buddy Lewis in left.

On the sidelines is George Case, the only righthanded outfielder with the club, whose chance to break into the lineup depends on the success of Coan.

Lyons Bids for Keystone

The chief possibility that the club may add another righthanded hitter lies at second base, where the veteran Myatt is now favored, but where Eddie Lyons is a strong candidate. Young Lyons is a righthanded hitter, and if he proves to be competent as a fielder, he may yet oust Myatt from the regular job.

Nevertheless, there is a rising optimism in the Washington camp. It stems from the dashing play of Priddy in his new shortstop position, the promise of Cecil Travis to make a sensational comeback at third base, and the manager in which the pitching staff is shaping up.

Griffith and Bluege, who have been maintaining that pitching will be the least of their worries, are elated over the form shown by Sid Hudson in the spring games. In a recent outing, Hudson breezed through three innings against the Tigers, gutting away nine men in order and scarcely working up a sweat.

There was a flurry of trade talk in the Washington camp when Maddy Ruel brought his Browns to Orlando and supposedly it centered about an attempt by the Nats to acquire infielders Russ Peter or Mark Christman in exchange for a catcher or an outfielder. But the deal apparently is cold, although it could easily be revived after the start of the season.

Ott Squad Hits Hawaii in High Glee Over Hits

Display of Power Against A. L. Clubs Gives Happy Sendoff to Giants

By KEN SMITH
HONOLULU, Hawaii.



Lloyd Gearhart

With the waves of Waikiki lapping against the shore in the gorgeous South Pacific twilight, the scent of pineapple and the strum of the ukelele and sway of the hula hula to distract them, the pioneering Giants, first major league team to visit the Hawaiian Islands, settled down to five night exhibitions with Lefty O'Doul's San Francisco Seals.

The National Leaguers brought to Honolulu a record of five victories and four defeats in nine consecutive exhibitions with American League opposition. In three straight wins, two against the Cleveland Indians and one against the Chicago White Sox, on March 13 at Bisbee, March 14 at Phoenix and March 15 at San Diego, Mel Ott's boys cut a wide swath with 40 hits, including four home runs, three triples and two doubles, not to mention 16 bases on balls.

The outfielders took turns celebrating special days for themselves. Willard Marshall lambasted two Ruthian home runs, a triple and two singles, knocking in eight runs in a terrific afternoon on March 13 at Bisbee. The next day, Lloyd Gearhart socked a home run and a triple, driving in three runs and scoring the other for a 4 to 2 victory and on the following day, Whitey Lockman slammed a homer, double and single and drew two walks. Clint Hartung, who was forced to the sidelines for three days by a lame thigh, had his day on March 9, when he collected three two-baggers and a single, also stealing a base and throwing out a runner.

All This and Hurling, Too

With good pitching by Bill Ayers, Earl McGowan, Monte Kennedy, Gene Thompson, Dave Koslo, Herb Andrews and Mike Budnick and the brightest

Bucs Get Promise of Catcher --But There's a Catch to News

Knee Operation Successful, But Smith Won't Be Able to Report Until June

By CHARLES J. DOYLE
MIAMI BEACH, Fla.

Unable to pry a front-line pitcher from either the Dodgers or Braves during almost a week of earnest conversation, the Pirates settled for a cheering bit of news from Catcher Vin Smith.

Smith, currently sidelined at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, with what he hopes is the last of a series of operations on his knees, phoned Manager Billy Herman and told him he had had some good news for him.

"The doctors here tell me I'll be able to report to the Pirates by June 1," Smith said. "They've promised me I'll be completely cured by then. And it's about time."

Smith was due to leave the hospital at the end of the month and go to his home in Richmond, Va. When his legs begin to feel stronger, he is to work out with the Baltimore Orioles.

Smith's career thus far has been a smash in bad luck. He was injured by the Pirates in 1941, and the Navy believe he had much of a chance to display his skills.

Catcher Feller in Service

Smith managed to get in some baseball in the service and was Bob Feller's ace catcher at Norfolk. He returned in 1946 and was right behind Al Lopez as the Bucs' first-string backstop. Vin displayed a rifle arm, was smart and could hit. In fact, he opened the season as the No. 1 man with the mask and pad.

However, in April, Smith tore a ligament in his knee sliding in a game against the Reds and from that point on underwent one operation after another. He spent most of the 1946 season watching the Pirates from the stands and walked on crutches.

Smith wasn't being counted on for 1947—until he had that talk with Herman. Clyde Klutz is currently listed as No. 1 catcher, with Bill Salkeld No. 2. Leroy Jarvis, 20-year-old rookie, is the only other backstop in camp and he may need more seasoning. Jarvis, no doubt, will stick with the club until Smith comes back.

Meanwhile, Herman refuses to become disturbed over the failure of Ralph Kiner to hit the ball in his accustomed fashion.

"I understand Kiner played a lot of winter ball a year ago in California," Herman said, "and when he came to training camp in 1946, he was far ahead of the others. Remember how he hit

Heading Back



Vin Smith

these home runs in spring training a year ago? Then he slumped off when the season started.

"Well, maybe the poor start he's making now will make all eyes that much more keen when the season opens."

Precatcher Kiner, who has been working out with the Pirates on a tentative contract depending on his physical condition, has signed a document calling for the same figure as in 1946.

Herman planned to pick a tentative starting team of Elbie Fletcher, Ed Basinski, Bill Cox and Frankie Gustine in the infield; Greenberg, Kiner and Jim Russell in the outfield and Klutz as the catcher and use them for at least the first five or six innings of each exhibition.

The Bucs' farm at Indianapolis continued to receive surplus material from the Pirates. Hank Gornicki was sent to the Hoosiers recently and last week Herman sold Outfielder Stan Wentzel back to Indianapolis and dispatched Pitchers Jim Walsh and Lee Howard there on options.

Another Pafko Coming Up

CLINTON, Ia.—Another Pafko—Ed, a younger brother of Andy, Chicago Cub star—will get a trial in O. B. this spring, the young outfielder having signed with Clinton of the Central Association.

crippled fingers, trophies of two different accidents.

Second Baseman Don Johnson, who suffered a leg muscle injury on "Johnson Day" in Fullerton, tried to get back in action for the Cleveland series, but aggravated his injury and gave way to Henry Schenz. Schenz, by the way, has been doing well and is assured of retention as "infield insurance."

Waitkus Retires After Five Innings.

First Baseman Eddie Waitkus was another incapacitated player who tried to get back into action for the Cleveland series. He did play five innings, then gave up. On March 17, he went to Bay City for treatments by Denny Carroll, former wizard healer of the Detroit Tigers. Eddie is suffering from back pains on his throwing side.

Phil Cavarretta, out several days with a sore arm, replaced Waitkus at first.

The pitching staff appears in fine shape in most cases and on the mend in others. Hank Borowy was pitted against Feller in that March 16 game and rounded out a total of 15 exhibition innings with a yield of only one run. That one run started to bloom with two out in the second inning of the battle with Feller et al. Hank hit his old Yankee teammate, Joe Gordon, with a pitched ball and Joe later got home with the only Cleveland run of the contest.

Schmitz, leading National League pitcher last year on the earned-run basis of reckoning, looked great in finishing up the first Cleveland game and the same was true of Bill Lee, who took over after Borowy finished his stint in the Feller-vanquishing enterprise.

In summing up things, it may be said that the Cubs are coming along mighty well, but still should give some thought to strengthening certain spots in the infield.

9 Cents a Word on Stories

HONOLULU, T. H.—It costs 54 cents for newsmen covering the Giants here to cable, "Lombardi hit into a double play." The rate for filing stories of the New Yorker's Honolulu games to the mainland is nine cents a word.

base running by any Giant club in at least a score of years, the lads earned themselves a holiday and it was the understanding they could eat all the pineapples they wanted to in Hawaii.

"Some of these rookies may not be quite ready," said Ott, as he boarded one of the two DC four-engine planes for the ten-hour hop into the Hawaiian sun, "but the point that pleases me is that every one of them has talent. They can do things with a bat, a ball and a glove and they can run."

When the squad is finally peeled down, players will be let out because there isn't room, not because they are not able to play. In Joe Lafata, Dick Lajeskie, Jack Maguire and Sid Gordon, Jack Lohrke or Bob Thomson, Ott has a third-string infield that could make a good showing, not to mention a No. 2 infield of Babe Young, Mickey Witke, Bill Rigney and one of the three third basemen.

The camp surprise is Jack Maguire, from the Trenton farm, who stole 15 bases last year. To relieve some of the infield congestion, Bob Thomson, fastest man in camp and one of the heaviest thumpers, was planted in the outfield, between third base assignments.

The entire squad of 40 players flew to Hawaii with the exception of Larry Jansen, who, in his first try on the mound, was struck in the face by a line drive off Bob Feller's bat, breaking his cheek bone. He was expected to rejoin the team on March 29.

Hartung, Lockman and Marshall comprise the regular outfield, with Minnie Blattner, Kerr and either Gordon, Thomson or Lohrke at third base forming the No. 1 infield. Rigney and Young are in fine form. Cooper is showing his old St. Louis style. Kerr has an annual sore shoulder. Voiselle, Hoover and Grissom have been slammed around in brief appearances.

The team was due to open a five-game series in San Francisco with Lefty O'Doul's boys on March 26, then to turn to Phoenix.