

Family Celebrates Yank Deal for **Randolph**

By PHIL PEPE

NEW YORK—Christmas came early to 360 Dumont Avenue in what is known as the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. It came with a telephone call to the home of **Willie** and Minnie **Randolph** about three weeks before Christmas.

The news was good. **Willie** and Minnie's oldest child, **Willie**, Jr., had been traded by the Pirates to the Yankees.

Lamar **Randolph**, the third of five **Randolph** children, will not soon forget the day, and the joy that telephone call brought to the **Randolph** home. Santa, himself, couldn't have done more.

"EVERYBODY WAS glad **Willie** was traded," said Lamar, who is 17 and a senior at Samuel J. Tilden High. Lamar is also a first baseman on the baseball team with professional aspirations of his own. He's six feet tall and everybody calls him Shorty. Shorty?

"I got that name when I was little," Shorty explained. "Then I started growing and it was too late to change the name."

The reason everybody was so glad **Willie** was traded should be obvious. He was born and raised in Brooklyn and now he'll be playing in the Bronx and his friends and family will get a chance to see him play.

There are five children in the **Randolph** family. **Willie**, 21, is the oldest. Then comes Terry, 20, a junior at American International College and a safety on the football team who already has been contacted by two NFL clubs. Shorty, 17, a baseball, football and basketball player at Tilden High, is next. Then Debbie, 14, and Timmy, 11.

THE DAY OF the trade, Shorty recalls, the telephone never stopped ringing. Friends and well-wishers kept calling to express

their joy. Even Dutch Deutsch, who signed **Willie** for the Pirates, called to wish the young man luck.

"**Willie** called that night from Venezuela, where he's playing winter ball," Shorty reported. "He was very happy about the trade. He said he hoped it meant he'd get a chance to play more next year."

Shorty said he had been hearing the rumors that the Pirates would trade his big brother since the World Series. The whole family had heard it.

"But we thought it was just talk," Shorty said. "We didn't think it would happen."

When it did happen, there was joy on Dumont Avenue.

"I USED TO BE a Met fan and, of course, a Pirate fan," Shorty said. "Now I'm a Yankee fan. I expect **Willie** to play a lot for them. I expect him to be Rookie of the Year."

The youngster's pride was understandable. So was the pride of **Willie Randolph**, Sr., when he went to work the day after the trade on the construction site in Brooklyn.

"The guys on his job," Shorty

said, "used to kid him about **Willie**. They used to say they didn't see much about **Willie** in the papers. Dad tried to explain to them it was because he was in Pittsburgh and because he was playing behind Rennie Stennett. They're going to see a lot about **Willie** in the papers, now."

They already have.

Yankee Doodles: Gabe Paul promises a decision on the team's pitching coach soon. . . . Roy White is working in group sales with the club's ticket department. . . . Dock Ellis visited with Gabe Paul before Christmas and reiterated his joy at being traded to New York, promising to win 15 games. . . . So unprepared was Bobby Bonds for the trade, he had come to New York a week before to be checked out by the doc and did several radio and television shows, boosting the Yankees' chances for '76.



Willie Randolph

Red Sox Rejoicing . . . Medics Okay Rico to Play

By PETER GAMMONS

BOSTON—Boston fans can forget about all those deals the Red Sox might try to make to offset the loss of Rico Petrocelli. Rico has his doctors' clearance to play in 1976, so third base once again is in capable hands.

General Manager Dick O'Connell said he had expected all along that Petrocelli would be able to return, but doubt had persisted in some minds. Rico was beamed by Milwaukee's Jim Slaton in September, 1974. The effects weren't evident until last August, when he had to leave the team in the midst of a trip because of severe headaches.

All last season Petrocelli struggled with eyeglasses to help his vision and was bothered by headaches. Until August, he never realized it all stemmed from an inner ear imbalance caused by the beaming.

HE TOOK medication which allowed him to return to action in September and through the World Series, but received no assurance about 1976 until mid-December.

Rico said that if he had to play with medication, he couldn't play, but a December examination showed his equilibrium is restored and he will be able to play in '76. That is the best news in Boston since the Red Sox acquired Fergu-

son Jenkins.

Rico is not going to hit .297 with 40 homers as he did in 1969, but for what Boston needs, he is perfect. He has become one of the game's best defensive third basemen. He is remarkably consistent, and in terms of starting the double play and getting rid of the ball, only Brooks Robinson is Rico's peer.

Petrocelli is not the power hitter he once was, but like Sal Bando, his value is not measured in his average. Like Bando, he makes his hits count. Look at what he did after he returned last season. The first night, September 3, he made one superb defensive play and knocked in the tying run as the Red

Sox scored a 10-inning, 3-2 victory over Baltimore and Jim Palmer, one of the biggest games of the season.

RICO KNOCKED in 17 runs in September, had key hits in games two and three of the playoffs, then hit .308 in the World Series, all the while not making an error.

His return means that 24-year-old Butch Hobson, his heir-apparent, can be worked in slowly. Petrocelli may be a 110-130 game-a-year player now, which is one opportunity for Hobson.

O'Connell has expressed concern about the righthanded designated hitter spot. So the kid from Alabama, reputed to be a power

hitter, could get 80 games under his belt, one way or another.

But Hobson is a secondary concern right now. What is important to the Red Sox is that Petrocelli, at age 32, does not have to retire.

THE NOTEBOOK: O'Connell said he is disappointed at failing to land a little more righthanded bench power at the winter meetings. He offered catcher Tim Blackwell and reliever Diego Segui to Montreal for Bob Bailey, but the Expos traded him instead to Cincinnati for pitcher Clay Kirby. . . . Jim Burton spoke at religious revivals in the South before going to Puerto Rico. . . . The Red Sox, who never have had much truck with player

agents, expect to be doing business with at least one this winter. Jerry Kapstein represents Fred Lynn, Rick Burleson and Carlton Fisk.

Bill Lee, recently elected the alternate player representative of the American League, agrees with Major League Players Association Director Marvin Miller that there is almost no chance of a strike. . . . Whose record did Lee tie by winning 17 games three consecutive years? Answer: Wild Bill Donovan, Brooklyn and Detroit, 1902-04. . . . Ramifications of the Catfish Hunter decision a year ago: His contract enabled Jenkins to price himself right into the Boston market.

Moves by Padres Make Frisella a Happy Fella

By PHIL COLLIER

SAN DIEGO—In Danny Frisella's view, the Padres presented San Diego pitchers a fitting Christmas present in December when they acquired third baseman Doug Rader in a trade with Houston.

A forkball specialist who gets batters to hit the ball on the ground, Frisella was a victim last season of a San Diego defense that finished last in the National League in fielding percentages.

Though the 29-year-old righthander compiled a 3.12 earned-run average and notched nine saves, he lost six of his seven decisions. In addition to their fielding deficiencies, the Padres also were last in the N.L. in batting, runs scored and homers.

Now, during leisure hours at his new home here, Frisella writes out lineups for next season and is comforted to pencil in center fielder **Willie** Davis as the third man in the order and Rader as No. 6. The Padres obtained Davis in a recent trade with St. Louis.

"WE'VE HELPED our defense, our speed and our hitting," Frisella reasoned. "We can put a pretty tough lineup on the field."

After suffering for six seasons because of a weak bullpen, the Padres greatly improved their relief pitching in 1975. Frisella, acquired a year ago in the trade that sent outfielder Cito Gaston to Atlanta, teamed with Bill Greif, Dave Tomlin and Rich Folkers to carry most of the bullpen load.

"I felt like I pitched well," said Frisella, who set a career high with 65 relief stints. That was only 13 fewer appearances than he logged with Atlanta in 1973 and 1974, when he had arm problems. Greif, who was in 59 games, had a 4-6 record, a 3.88 ERA and tied

Frisella for the club high in saves (9).

LEFTHANDERS Tomlin and Folkers also were busy. Tomlin was in 67 games, tops on the staff. He was 4-2 with one save and a 3.25 ERA. Folkers, obtained from St. Louis in a trade a year ago, was in

45 games (30 of them in relief), had a 6-11 record, no saves and a 4.18 ERA.

The Padres, who had been last in the majors in pitching in 1974, finished fifth in the N.L. and eighth in the majors in 1975. The improvement would have been even more dramatic, Frisella feels, if the Padres hadn't made what he regards as a tactical error.

In June, they lost righthander Alan Foster for the rest of the season with a shoulder problem.

"WHEN ALAN left, we went six weeks with only nine pitchers and it put a burden on the entire staff," Frisella said.

Now the Padres are thinking of returning Greif to the starting rotation to replace young righthander Joe McIntosh, who went to Houston in the Rader trade. If Greif starts, even greater pressure will be put on Frisella as the club's No. 1 righthander in short relief.

"I like to pitch a lot, that doesn't bother me," said the 6-0, 195-pounder who pitched frequently last season while trying to overcome a pulled hamstring high in his left thigh.

"We had a few players who haven't learned to play with pain."

It cheers the Padres that Frisella was more effective the second half of the season (five saves and a 3.00 ERA) than he was in the first

(Continued on Page 35, Column 1)



Rico Petrocelli



Danny Frisella . . . 'A Pretty Tough Lineup'