

Top Rookies Tagged in Major Camps

Pitchers Predominate in Selections Made by Scribes Covering 16 Big Time Bases

A Jim Dandy



Jim Hearn

By J. ROY STOCKTON
Of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Jim Hearn, six-foot-three-inch righthander from Atlanta, Ga., wins the nod by a slight margin over Charley Diering as the outstanding 1947 rookie of the Cardinals. Opportunity is a fickle thing and it could smile on Diering and give him a chance to prove that the pickers were wrong. But if Terry Moore's knee permits him to play with any degree of regularity, Diering may not get into the lineup very often.

Hearn is the No. 1 pitcher among all the young candidates who went to St. Petersburg hopeful of breaking into the Cardinal staff. Forget his minor league record. He won only four and lost five at Columbus. The war, you know! Jim knows how to pitch. Big and strong, he has ample speed and sufficient stuff. If Eddie Dyer were hard pressed for pitchers, this young righthander would be a good bet to win 20 games. However, Eddie is richer in hurling talent than he was a year ago. But Hearn, this year, or the next—perhaps it will take him two years—will be an ace on the Cardinal staff. Just you wait and see.

A standout when camp opened, because he had reported early to get in shape, Hearn improved as training progressed. In his first game he gave the Yankees three hits and two runs in three innings. Against the Phils he yielded eight hits and two runs in five. Then he tightened. In a five-inning stretch against the Tigers, he hurled two-hit shutout ball. Against the Reds, he hurled two scoreless frames, giving up two hits.

Another Waner?



Paul Lehner

By L. A. McMASTER
Of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The name Paul Lehner on the Browns' roster meant little to fans this spring—except that a half-pint outfielder had appeared in a few games with the club last September and had shown speed and a good arm. It had been the same way in Toledo a year ago, when the ex-GI obtained a trial with the Mud Hens, his first experience in pro ball. All he did at Toledo in the American Association was to win the center field job and bat .317.

This spring, Jerry Witte, from the same Toledo club, was to be the prize of all prizes picked up from the minors. Jerry has done what he was expected to do. In four weeks of exhibition play, splitting first base duties with Chuck Stevens, Witte belted out five home runs.

But little Lehner—he's five feet nine and weighs 165—has proved a windfall for the club. He hit safely in nine of the first 17 games in which he played, most of the time having only one or more times at bat. He has proved a brilliant fielder, with great ground-covering ability. He has an accurate, rifle-like arm.

Some day fans may be chanting "Like Paul Waner, like Paul Lehner."

Four Southpaws Among Yearlings Ticketed as Most Likely to Succeed

By DAN DANIEL

From Miami to Honolulu, from Havana to Tucuman, hundreds of players new to the major league scene have been training since mid-February. Now their period of preparation is drawing to a close. Many will be sent back for more polish, more know-how, and many will achieve the high accolade of the rookie who has made the grade.

Already the topnotchers among the freshman classes of the 16 big league camps have established their skills, and their rights to the grand adventure, so expressively and firmly that the writers are able to set them up as the first-year paragons.

At least in the descriptions sent in by correspondents of THE SPORTING NEWS covering the 16 camps, these recruits par excellence boast a brilliance and versatility, and withal an allure for the fans that bodes well for the game on the field, and the box offices in the stands.

These 16 standout yearlings enter the major leagues at a time when the game offers returns richer than ever before, opportunities more opulent than the past ever boasted.

These rookies are to be the leaders in baseball's campaign for greater power, greater pitching strength, for the consummate repair of the ravages of war.

Will all 16 stand up to the test when the chips are on the baize and play is for keeps? No. Certainly not. If half of them come through with anything like the brilliance promised for them by the literati of the diamond, the bonanza will be rich enough.

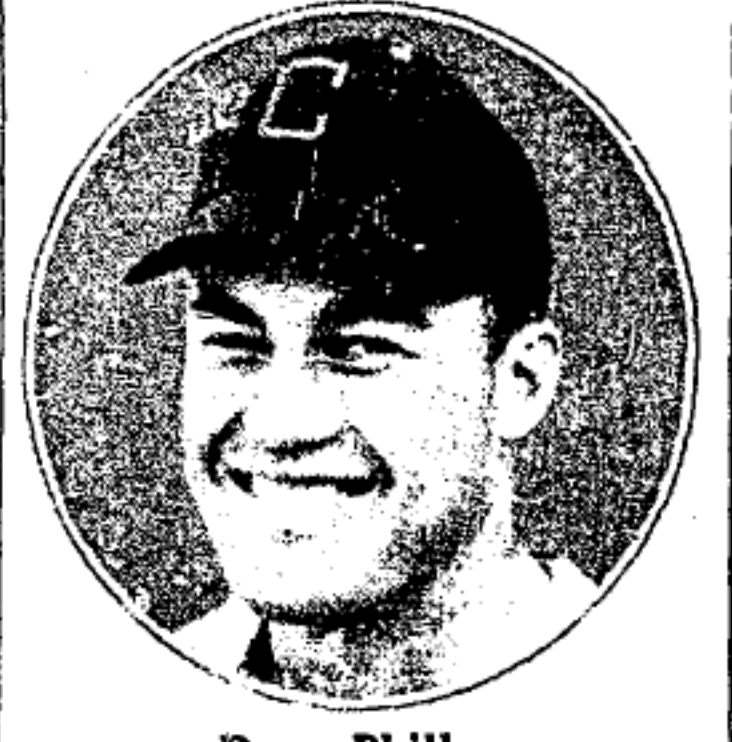
It will be interesting to see if, while concentrating on their choices, the writers did not overlook a Ralph Kiner, who hit 23 homers for the Pirates last season, but got no tremendous press in March.

Will the freshmen of 1947 match the feats of such 1946 rookies as Bruce Edwards, Dodger catcher; Joe Garagiola, Cardinal backstop; Del Ennis, Phil outfielder; Montia Kennedy, Giant pitcher, and Hoot Evers, Tiger outfielder?

Will the fates of the diamond knock down some of these 16 choices, and lift up the Negro Jackie Robinson, or Golden Boy Bobby Brown, new third baseman of the Yankees?

The answers are not too far off. And, in the meantime, here are the selections of THE SPORTING NEWS' correspondents as the 16 outstanding rookies of the training season.

Texas Tornado



Dave Philley

By MILT WOODARD
Of the Chicago Sun

Dave Philley, the switch-hittin' Texan, appears destined to rule the White Sox rookies of 1947, if not the entire freshman class of the American League. Having already clinched the left field spot in the Chicago lineup, Philley could easily lead the club in hitting, stolen bases and assists from the outfield.

Philley produced a sample of his potential greatness last fall by hitting .353 for the White Sox in the final 17 games. His fielding, alleged to be his chief weakness prior to 1946, was close to sensational, and his speed and arm had few equals in the American League.

In preparation for his big chance this year, Philley hit .329 for the Milwaukee Brewers and proved one of the standout fielders of the American Association. He rocked 13 home runs for the Brewers, along with ten triples and 33 doubles.

Philley faced a double handicap during spring training with the White Sox. He was the last of the Comiskey clan to report, holding out for a reported \$15,000 until early in March. On March 24, along with Outfielder Thurman Tucker, he contracted an acute case of ptomaine poisoning and both wound up in a Pasadena hospital for three days.

Philley, at 26 years of age, has all the prerequisites of major league greatness. He derives fine power from both sides of the plate, especially when hitting righthanded. He is one of the three fastest players on the Sox roster. His arm is equalled only by Bob Kennedy on the Chicago squad and by few others in the American League.

Nagy Natty Buc



Steve Nagy

By CHARLES J. DOYLE
Of the Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph

Any observer would have to hesitate when, after watching three youngsters like Pitcher Stevy Nagy, Outfielder Wally Westlake and Catcher Leroy (Chic Sale) Jarvis for seven weeks, he is asked to name the outstanding rookie on the roster of the club they grace.

Southpaw Nagy, who had 17 wins and only four losses for the champion Montreal club of the International League; Westlake, a better than .300 hitter, whirlwind outfielder, fine baserunner and remarkable thrower, for the Oakland club of the Pacific Coast League, and Jarvis, pink-cheeked 20-year-old catcher with a rifle arm and a punch at the plate, have been the talk of the 40 players in training with the Pirates.

I am naming Nagy as the top rookie after much deliberation and after consultation with other members of the Pittsburgh contingent.

Before being floored recently with a vicious liner off the bat of Johnny Berardino of the Browns, Nagy had pitched three tricks of three rounds each. He not only hurled shutout ball in the nine rounds, but faced only 29 batters and gave up only two hits. Steve had retired the first batter in the fourth inning of the third game when felled by the liner.

The consummate skill displayed by this 26-year-old rookie who served several years in the Army adds to his stature. He uses a low-breaking ball with deadly effect. All in all, he looks the part of a finished pitcher, in contrast to the "thrower" type of recruit.

Nagy learned the rudiments of pitching under a tutor who, as a youth of 21 about 30 years ago, started the National League by winning 21 games for the Pirates—Al Mamaux, a Pittsburgh sandlotter and student at Duquesne University. Nagy fell under the Mamaux influence when he attended Seton Hall College, where Al coaches.

Steve started with Durham in 1942 and moved to Montreal before the season ended. But Uncle Sam took him for three years and now he is making his first real start.

With four other brilliant lefthanders on the Pirate staff, Nagy is fighting a hard battle to be a regular, but his showing up to the point of his hand injury was marvelous. Steve is Jersey born and still lives at his Franklin, N. J., birthplace. He is five feet nine inches and weighs 174.

Broken Arm Forced Philley to Take Up Switch-Hitting

Dave Philley, highly-touted member of the White Sox, took up switch-hitting when he was but ten years old. A lefthanded hitter, Dave broke his right arm in a game on the sandlots of Garretts Bluff, Tex. While it was on the mend, he learned to bat in the orthodox manner, and he has been switching ever since, depending on whether a righthander or southpaw is working for the opposition.

Bosox Bender

By JACK MALANEY
Of the Boston Post

The Red Sox training camp was splintered with brilliant rookies this spring. There were outfielders, infielders and pitchers who, though some may be a year or so away, will see their names in the headlines many times before they hang up their spiked shoes.

They took turns in shining in the camp work and in exhibition games, but when the training trip was analyzed as a whole, the verdict was that Harry (Fritz) Dorish, a pudgy righthander, was outstanding among all the rookies. Manager Joe Cronin looked over.

Dorish came to the Sox from their No. 1 farm team at Louisville. The son of a Russian father and a Czech-Slovakian mother, Dorish, who hails from Swoyersville, Pa., is five-feet 11 inches tall and weighs close to 200 pounds.

His 11 wins and four defeats last season with the Colonels wasn't as brilliant as some other hurling rookies, but the fact is that Dorish didn't convince his bosses last year that he could pitch winning ball until nearly mid-summer. When he got going, there wasn't any stopping him. He was especially brilliant in the playoffs and Junior World's Series.

Dorish, Mel Parnell, young southpaw, and Tommy Fine, 32-year-old righthander, who won 23 and lost only three last year, showed they should be retained as Red Sox pitchers, but Dorish has the finish that suggests he could be used either as a starting pitcher or become the No. 1 relief worker of the team.

Harry has plenty of stuff, but no special fancy pitch, and he specializes on control. That control and his savvy impressed Cronin. Dorish will be 25 years old in July.



Fritz Dorish

A Lively Topic



Red Lively

By TOM SWOPE
Of the Cincinnati Post

Twenty-one players with little or no major league experience, eight of them pitchers, reported to Manager Johnny Neun of the Reds in Tampa around March 1.

Of the entire 21, the least ballyhooed was Everett Adrian (Red) Lively of Gardendale, Ala., a 22-year-old pitcher who hadn't been in a professional uniform since he hurled in three games for Birmingham of the Southern Association early in the 1943 season. He had pitched only one full professional season, 1942 for Montgomery in the Southeastern League and Salem in the Virginia League.

But before the Florida end of the Reds' training season was completed, Lively was the liveliest topic of conversation in camp. Scouts, players, managers and scribes who had watched him hold the Red Sox, Senators, Phillies and Cardinals—all hard-hitting teams—to nine hits and one unearned run in 14 innings, were touting him as a sure-fire big leaguer.

They liked the way he fired the ball over the plate with almost perfect control—he walked only two in his first four tests, even though forced to pitch through a high wind each time—and they also liked the coolness he displayed under fire.

Standing six feet one and one-half inches and weighing around 200, Lively has all the natural attributes of a pitcher. He also is showing he absorbed the teachings of his dad, Everett (Jack) Lively, who was a pitcher for many years before he hung up his glove in 1913. In 1910, Jack roomed with Ty Cobb on Detroit's team. He also pitched his spitter for the Athletics and in numerous minor leagues. At an early age, he took young Red in hand and impressed upon him that he could become a big league pitching success by mastering control and a change of pace.

"Dad required that I practice throwing at a target on a board after school each day for quite a few years," Red says. "Now and then he caught me to see how I was progressing. He schooled me until the Birmingham club picked me off an amateur team in this city in 1942 and sent me to the Montgomery club, where Dad also had started his professional career."

Of the nine hits made off his delivery in the first 14 innings he pitched for the Reds this spring, only one, a double, was for extra bases.

Southpaw Star



Bob Kuzava

By ED McAULEY
Of the Cleveland News

Bob Kuzava, 23-year-old lefthander, is rated the Cleveland Indians' outstanding rookie. The tall, blond veteran of three years in the India-China-Burma theater reported to Manager Lou Boudreau late last season and turned in two excellent performances against the Detroit Tigers.

Kuzava, a native of Wyandotte, Mich., entered pro ball in 1941 at Mansfield, O., where he won five and lost seven. At Charleston, W. Va., the following season, he won 21 and lost six, a performance which earned him promotion to the Tribe's farm at Wilkes-Barre.

At Wilkes-Barre last season, Kuzava won 13 and lost six, but appeared in 216 innings. He had an 18-inning 2 to 2 tie and several close games in which he was not the pitcher of record.

Kuzava credits Jack Knight, his manager at Charleston, with teaching him the pitching fundamentals, but also has a high regard for Mel Harder, the Indian veteran, who has tutored him in the knack of throwing a change of pace. The newcomer specializes in control.

Kuzava is married and has two children.

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