

Lau's Ailing Wing Furrows Birds' Brows

By DOUG BROWN

MIAMI, Fla.

The Orioles are becoming increasingly concerned about the condition of catcher Charlie Lau's arm. After four months of rest and therapy, it still bothers him.

Even before Dick Brown underwent brain surgery and was lost for the season, the club feared that catching might be a weakness. Lau's trouble compounds the problem.

Now, it develops, Charlie's arm is not merely stiff—as he had maintained all spring—but sore, just as it was most of last season.

Even after X-rays and an examination by an orthopedic surgeon, no one is able to say exactly what is the matter with the 32-year-old receiver's arm.

Trouble in Elbow

"The pain is in the inner part of the elbow," said the doctor, who asked that his name be withheld. "It's not an unusual complaint. What is unusual is the persistence of the pain."

Convinced that the trouble must be muscular, the doctor gave Lau a shot of what he called "one of the most potent of the cortisone-type drugs."

"I've never known one of these things not to get well eventually," the doctor said. "Usually, rest does it. But now we've reached the point where he can't rest it—not if he's going to play."

During the early part of training, Lau nursed his arm along.

Strictly Pinch-Hitter

But as the exhibition season passed the halfway point, Charlie had done little but pinch-hit.

With Lau an uncertain quantity, the Orioles are left with two sound catchers, rookie Andy Etchebarren and Camilo Carreon, both of whom spent most of 1965 in the minors. It seems unlikely that the Orioles would try to struggle through the season with only Etchebarren and Carreon.

But at this writing, Harry Dalton, director of player personnel, was inclined to sweat it out a while longer for the club may need pitching even more than catching.

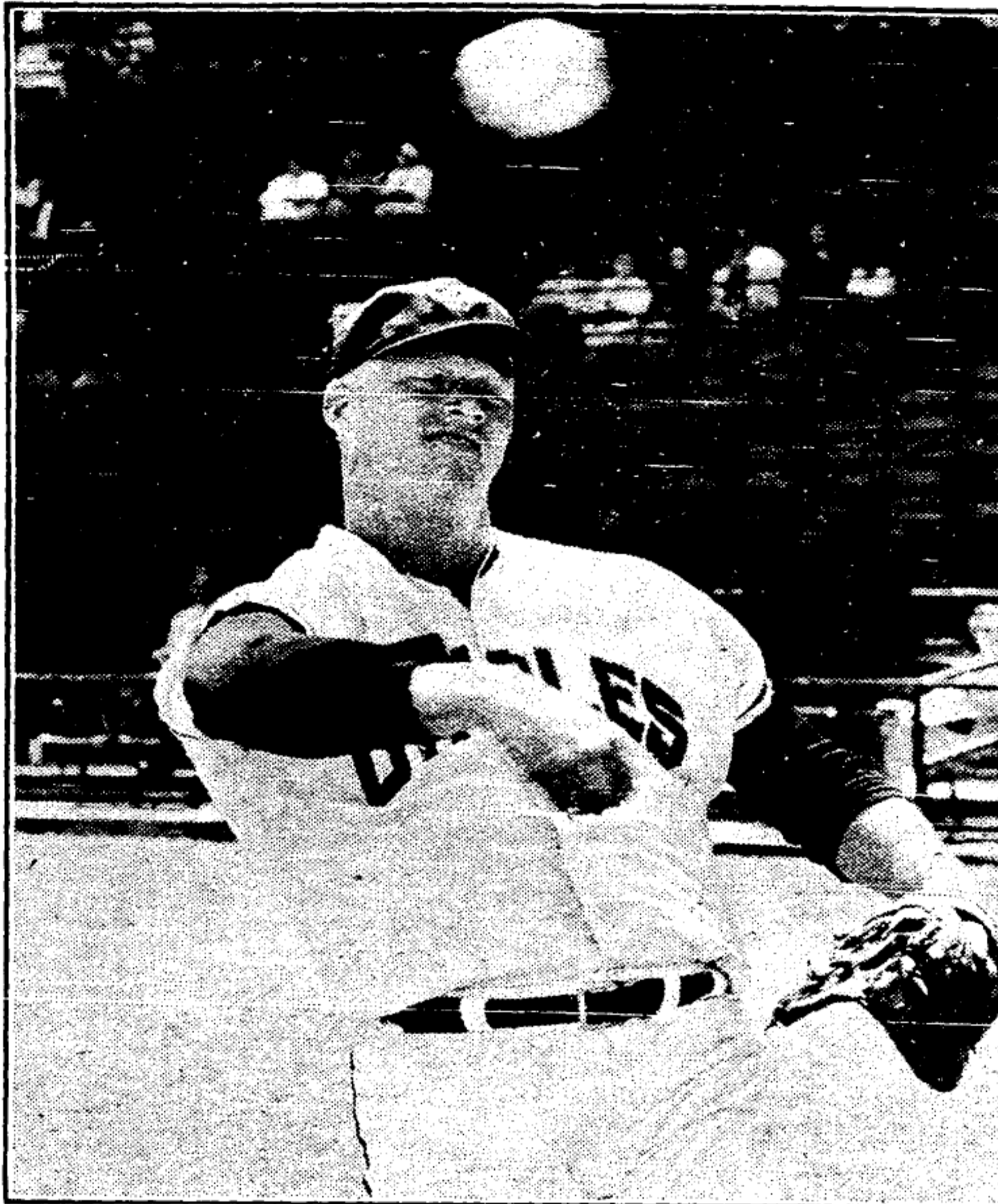
Birds Bolster Mitt Corps With Trade for Roznovsky

BALTIMORE, Md.—In a bid to bolster their catching department and give Manager Hank Bauer more maneuverability, the Orioles traded outfielder Carl Warwick to the Cubs for catcher Vic Roznovsky, March 31.

Last season, Roznovsky batted .221 in 71 games, while Warwick failed to hit safely in 14 trips to the plate for the Orioles.

Ailments made heavy inroads into the Bird backstop corps this spring. Dick Brown was shelved for the season when he underwent surgery for the removal of a brain tumor. Charlie Lau has arm soreness.

Andy Etchebarren, up from Rochester (International), where he batted .247 in 140 games, is the club's No. 1 catcher.



BOOG POWELL . . . Hard Work at Gateway, Followed by a Welcome Respite.

Boog Pulls in Belt, Lets Out Belts

By DOUG BROWN

MIAMI, Fla.

After 14 exhibition games, the Orioles' Boog Powell was carrying 246 pounds, a first baseman's mitt and a .391 bat.

Somehow, there seemed to be a connection. Last year, when he was encumbered by extra suet and two gloves, Boog wasn't even hitting his weight.

To be sure, it was substantial—on August 3, it had risen to 251½—but a batting average in that area was not what the Orioles expected from their chief source of power.

Take Powell's word for it: It's mighty comforting to know he'll play only one position this year—first base. This is an admission he never made while lumbering between first and left field in the past.

"It's good to be in one spot," he said. "Left field or first base—either one, but only one. You can't get yourself together when you're playing two positions."

"My arm used to be stiff from making two different kinds of throws—one from the outfield, the other around first base.

New Moves at First

"I think that affected me at the plate, too. The moves around first base are different from those in the outfield and . . . well, the body never gets accustomed to one set of moves."

There are more than just flimsy spring training figures to support the belief that Powell's hitting is affected by weight and number of defensive assignments.

Of course, no one will ever prove it because there is no way to determine what he would be hitting if he were carrying, say, ten additional pounds and an outfielder's glove along with his first baseman's mitt.

But there are signs that one likes to consider as evidence.

On September 2 of last season, when he was batting .229, with 11 homers and 48 RBIs, Boog played in the outfield for the final time.

Thereafter, he hit .326, clubbed six homers and drove in 24 runs. On September 15, he was finally hitting his weight—243—and wound up with a .248 average.

It also seems significant that Pow-

Palmer's ERA Gaudy 0.00-- But 16 Men Reached Base

MIAMI, Fla.—Although Oriole pitcher Jim Palmer is only 20 years old, he is no dummy. But he didn't have the answer to the question Manager Hank Bauer asked, "Why don't you pitch with nobody on like you do with men on?"

Halfway through the exhibition season, statistics revealed an amazing thing about Palmer's pitching. They said he was the most effective member of the staff with an ERA of oh-oh-oh—no runs in nine innings.

Nary a run, but nine walks and seven hits. That's like pitching a shutout despite putting 16 men on base.

Small wonder Bauer was asking the question. Palmer could only shake his head in reply. He was not deceived by his perfect ERA.

ell's weight was down during his closing rush. In August, when Boog ballooned to 251½, Hank Bauer ordered him to lose ten pounds. The manager considered it a triumph when Powell dropped to 243.

It seems strange how some people can build a case for Powell weighing anything he darn well pleases. Babe Ruth got away with it, but logic says it's a difference of being in shape and not being in shape.

John Mize, who hit 359 home runs during his major league career, was commenting on the effect of overweight when he was in Baltimore in January for a banquet.

Mize Gained Weight

Mize said he weighed 225 when he was playing regularly, then went to 235 when limited mainly to pinch-hitting late in his career.

"I didn't have any trouble at 235," "but if I got any heavier, I felt I wasn't as effective. When you get too heavy, you pick up weight around the shoulders and chest and I don't think your swing is as free. It restricts your arms."

In 1960, when Larry MacPhail first set eyes on Powell, he said the only thing that could prevent Boog from becoming a great hitter was "the knife and fork."

The former major league club owner is still saying it. As he watched a recent Oriole workout from the dugout, MacPhail remarked that Powell looked about ten pounds lighter than he had been a year ago. MacPhail was right.

There is something else worth not-

ing about the Boog Powell of 1966. In the past, he invariably was hobbled by shin splints some time during spring training.

Not this year. He has been bounding around first base without a sign of discomfort.

This could be the result of two things:

He is lighter and his legs aren't being subjected to the pounding

that they were when he was running in and out from left field on the hard Florida fields.

Bird Seed: Boog Powell was the Orioles' leading spring hitter after 14 games. Brooks Robinson led in RBIs, with ten, while Frank Robinson was high in home runs, with five. . . . During one stretch, the Orioles' pitching was so shabby that Bauer was moved to growl: "They are throwing like a bunch of old maids." . . . Dick Brown, who underwent brain surgery on March 7, has been placed on the voluntarily-retired list. . . . Sure sign it's spring training: Scoreboard operator runs out of twos and ingeniously uses upside-down fives. . . . The Orioles trimmed their squad to 33 by assigning 11 players to Daytona Beach, Fla., the training base of their Triple-A Rochester (International) club. The players: Pitchers Delano Hill, Bob Darwin, Bob Scott and Steve Cosgrove, Catchers John Burrows and George Farson, Outfielders Dave May and Mike Fiore and Infielders Mark Belanger, Frank Peters and Mike Epstein.

Eckert Breaks Deadlock In Vote on Player Limit

FT. LAUDERDALE, Fla.

Unlike Ford Frick, Commissioner William Eckert has indicated that he will not go along with the "status quo" when the two major leagues split on a matter of legislation. Customarily, Frick declined to cast a tie-breaking vote, as the commissioner is authorized to do, if there was a major league disagreement.

Eckert was confronted with his first division of opinion when the National League voted for and the American League voted against a proposal to increase the Triple-A club player limit from 20 to 21.

After studying the matter, the new commissioner announced on March 30 that he had cast a tie-breaking vote in favor of the increase, putting it into effect for the 1966 season.

The proposal also amended the regulations on Triple-A working agreements to provide that the major league organization pay "the entire salary of the twenty-first player if a selectable player." The payment for the 20 other selectable players remains at \$600 per player per month.

However, the major league club is not required to furnish the twenty-first player unless it wishes to do so.

THE SPORTING NEWS learned that the vote in the N. L. was 10-0 for the proposal, while the A. L. voted against it, 7-3.