

# Lynch Backing Buildup Given Yanks by Owen

Mickey Advised Bombers  
to Safeguard Jerry, But  
Pirates Drafted Flyhawk

By LES BIEDERMAN  
PITTSBURGH, Pa.

Jerry Lynch, 23-year-old Pirate freshman outfielder named the standout among National League rookies this spring by THE SPORTING NEWS, "came of age" in the eyes of Manager Fred Haney and his teammates during a nine-run Bucco seventh inning against the Braves in an exhibition game, March 12.

Lynch, who throws righthanded and bats left, had collected a single, triple and homer during his first four times at bat. Then he came up in the seventh with three runs already in and two men on the bases. Phil Paine brushed Lynch back and did it so effectively that he made Jerry sit down. But on the very next pitch, Lynch cracked a second 400-foot triple over Bill Bruton's head in deep left-center and sent Paine to the showers.

"I knew the kid had power and all the other equipment," Haney said later, "but when he got up out of the dirt and whaled Paine's next pitch, I knew he also had the stuff of which future stars are made."

Lynch's work that afternoon was positively incredible. He finished the afternoon with four hits in six trips (single, two 400-foot triples and a 350-foot homer) and drove in six runs.

In what he did that day and what he has been doing all spring, Jerry was making good on Mickey Owen's boast. Owen managed Lynch for the Yankees at Norfolk in the Class B Piedmont League last year and Lynch tore the circuit apart.

## Wicked With Wicket

When the Pittsburgh writers met Owen this spring at Sarasota, Fla., where he was catching for the Red Sox, Mickey asked about Lynch. Then he told his story.

"I'll tell you what I think of him," Mickey said. "I think he can be another Stan Musial with

## Demonstration of Power

PITTSBURGH, Pa.—Jerry Lynch displayed his extra-base power in the first nine hits he made for the Pirates in spring exhibition games. Of these nine safeties, seven went for extra bases, including a pair of doubles, a pair of triples and three homers. His nine hits accounted for eight RBIs.

the bat. His outfielding may need a bit of polishing, but he's a wicked man with the bat.

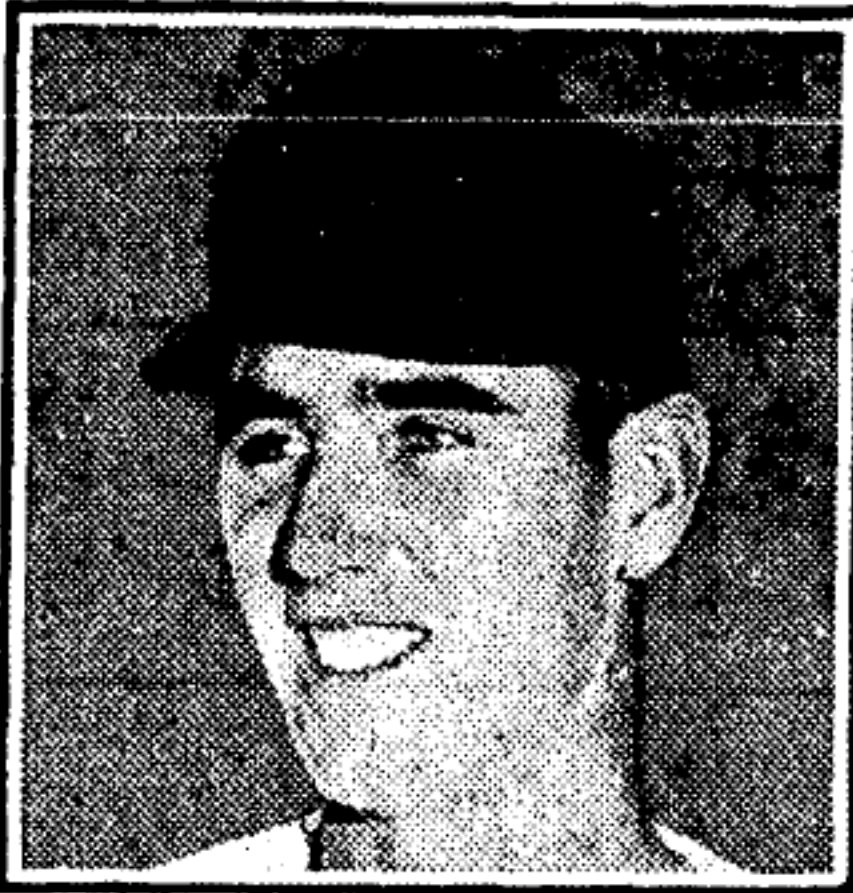
"I gave him the highest praise possible in my scouting report to the Yankees. I told the Yankees he was so good they should put him on their roster and avoid losing him in the draft. That's what I think of this kid's ability.

"Another thing," said Mickey, "I'll bet Jerry leads the National League in triples this year. He's that type of hitter."

The story of how the Pirates drafted him from the Yankee chain at Kansas City is a good one. One Yankee official agreed the kid was a bright prospect and they knew all about him. But they didn't dream that a big league club would draft a youngster from Class B, knowing the major league team would probably have to keep him all year.

But who are the Pirates to be choosy? Didn't they sign 18-year-old Catcher Nick Koback out of Hartford (Conn.) High School and promptly put him in a Pirate uniform? Didn't they bring the O'Brien twins right out of Seattle University, change Eddie from an outfielder to a shortstop and use

## Long-Ball Hitter



Jerry Lynch

## 8 Brothers, 3 Sisters Give Jerry Big Rooting Section

PITTSBURGH, Pa.—Jerry Lynch, who prefers his name spelled with a "J," instead of a "G" because Gerry sounds too feminine, has a large rooting section back home in Michigan.

The Pirate rookie comes from a family of three girls and nine boys, most of whom have played ball.

this double play combination right away? And didn't they sign Dick Groat right out of college as the Buc shortstop?

After looking over the scouting report on Lynch, drafting him for immediate use was one of the easiest decisions ever made by the Forbes Field brass.

Lynch is moulded in the typical Yankee tradition. He's six feet, one, weighs a solid 190, can run, throw and hit. He broke in with Greenville in the Class C Cotton States League in 1950 and hit .329. He had 28 doubles, 14 triples, ten homers and drove in 75 runs.

Scout Atley Donald bought his contract for the Yankees but before Lynch had a chance to report, he went into the Army. When he was discharged, he was sent to the rookie camp of the Yankees at Lake Wales, Fla., last spring.

## Treated Fine by Yankees

"I owe the Yankees quite a bit," the modest Irishman declares. "They treated me fine. I learned plenty of baseball at that rookie camp, plenty of inside baseball. And when the Pirates drafted me, the Yankees sent me a nice letter saying they were sorry to lose me but wishing me luck."

Sometimes, he's modest to a fault. When writers tried to corral him for an interview the first week of spring training, he almost begged off.

"I'm just a busher trying to make good," he pleaded.

"Why not write about some of the others? Wait until I do something to justify a story."

Lynch already is being tabbed as a strong candidate for rookie of the year honors in the National League—some outlook for a youngster who had witnessed only one major league game in his life, at Briggs Stadium in Detroit, prior to this season.

Jerry lives on a farm in Munger, Mich., about 100 miles from Detroit.

He's a live one, this kid, and may prove to be one of the few live ones to ever get away from the Yankees.

## Brother, in Vatican City, Wished Jerry Luck as Buc

PITTSBURGH, Pa.—When Jerry Lynch was acquired by the Pirates last winter, he received numerous letters wishing him well in the major leagues.

The Yankees, Jerry's old organization, expressed regret at losing him to the Bucs, while the Pirates assured him they were glad he was going to join them.

But perhaps the letter that Jerry cherished most of all came from the Vatican City, where one of his eight brothers is studying for the priesthood.

# Regalado, Moon Among Recruits Hailed by Spink

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

hitting all kinds of pitching consistently.

"He looks to me like a player who could be a real star for a long time to come and I'm very happy we've got him instead of the Yankees," said Manager Eddie Joost of the Athletics.

Power makes it plain that he also is mighty happy to be with the Athletics. All spring he has been doing a slow burn over reports from the Yankee camp that he didn't show too much hustle at Kansas City.

"They're just looking for excuses," he complained. "And I'm a heck of a lot better off over here with this club. They're going to give me a chance to show what I can do, and I'm going to give it everything I've got. All you have to do is look up my record, no matter where I played ball, and you'll see I must have hustled, because I've always been a good hitter."

"What did they want me to do? Mow the lawn in the outfield after the game was over?"

Joost asked a writer at the A's training camp, in praising Power, "How can a guy do all the things he has done as a ball player and not be a hustler?"

Vic puts his ambitions squarely upon the line.

"There is only one place to play ball and that is in the majors," he said. "And I want to be up there as soon as I can so that I can have as many years there as possible."

## Lynch "Stolen" by Deacon Rickey

Lynch, top N. L. recruit, represents a "steal" from the Yankees by the astute Branch Rickey, general manager of the Pirates. Mickey Owen, Lynch's manager last season at Norfolk, the Yankees' farm in the Piedmont League, advised the champions to protect him from the draft by placing him on the New York roster. However, the Yankees assigned him to Kansas City, thus leaving him eligible to selection and Rickey snatched him.

Jerry, who is six feet, one inch and weighs 190 pounds, broke in with Greenville (Cotton States) in 1950, when he hit .329. The Yankees then bought his contract, but the youngster went into the service. Following his discharge, he was sent to the Bombers' rookie camp last spring.

Assigned to Norfolk for 1953, Lynch won the batting title with a mark of .333, and also led the league with 180 hits, 21 homers, 22 triples, 33 doubles and 133 RBIs, while striking out only 35 times. During this spring's exhibition games with the Pirates, he has shown a long ball punch.

Of his first nine hits for the Pirates this spring, Lynch whacked seven for extra bases, including two doubles, two triples and three homers.

Despite a slow start in Florida, resulting from sore ankles and shin splints, Jerry is a real speedster on the bases. Last season he was seldom thrown out going to third on extra-base hits. "Once I thought sure I was safe, but I didn't argue about it," he said.

Like Power, Lynch is happy he no longer is with the Yankee organization because he now has an opportunity to play regularly.

"As a result I feel that I have a better chance of staying up," he says.

## One of Best Crops in Years

In their selection as the prize freshmen in their respective leagues, Lynch and Power overshadowed one of the most impressive rookie crops in years.

Among the more promising rookies is Bill Skowron of the Yankees. A first baseman up from Kansas City, Skowron was one of the hot-shots with the bat this spring, compiling a .438 average in the Florida games before the Yankees' trek homeward from St. Petersburg.

Henry Aaron, who was the Sally League's batting king last year with a .362 mark for Jacksonville, was scheduled to join the Toledo (American Association) Sox this season. But the young Negro was so impressive, despite his shift from second base to the outfield, that when Bobby Thomson fractured his ankle, Manager Charlie Grimm turned over the responsibility as the Scot's temporary successor to Aaron.

Rudy Regalado, the slugging sensation of the Indians, may be converted into a first baseman if Luke Easter fails to measure up. Ordinarily a third baseman, the Californian hit .318 for Reading (Eastern) and .325 for Indianapolis (American Association) in '53. Tom Brewer, young righthander, suc-

# 'He'll Hit for Us,' Verdict of Joost on Versatile Vic

## Four Times .300



Vic Power

## Vic Ran and Ran, Right Past Base-Runner Ahead of Him

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—Vic Power's most embarrassing diamond experience happened at Syracuse in '51.

"I lined the ball with the bases loaded, and I could see it was going to hit the fence," Power laughed. "So I started running. I ran and ran—and all of a sudden, at second base, I found I had run right past the runner ahead of me, and I was out at third."

Power successfully jumped from Class D in 1951 to the Red Sox, following a two-year Army hitch. Tom won 19 and lost only three for High Point-Thomasville three years ago, but Manager Lou Boudreau believes he's ready for the Big Time, despite his youth and lack of experience.

The St. Louis Cardinals' brass is hailing Outfielder Wally Moon as "a typical Cardinal," possessing speed, a strong arm and fine batting eye. With Rochester last year, the former Texas A & M athlete batted .311.

Alex Grammas, another Redbird rookie, was regarded so highly by Eddie Stanky and his lieutenants that the Cardinals shelled out the equivalent of \$100,000 for the shortstop last winter.

The Braves have every reason to believe that Gene Conley, 23-game winner at Toledo in '53, will take up the slack caused by the sale of Johnny Antonelli.

The Giants are leaning on three newcomers to bolster their bid for pennant contention. Catcher Ray Katt hit .326 with 98 RBIs at Minneapolis last year, while Forest Castleman and Bill Gardner have shown to good advantage on the infield.

## Yanks' Grim Real Dark Horse

Bob Grim, a righthanded hurler from Brooklyn who won 16 and lost five for Binghamton in 1951 before starting a two-year hitch with the Marines, is a real dark horse who might prove a sensation with the Yankees.

The suprise showing of Joe Lonnett has strengthened the Phillies' catching department while Mickey Micelotta is regarded as ideal insurance as a second or third baseman and shortstop.

The Tigers boast two stickout freshmen, Outfielder Bill Tuttle, former Bradley University star who hit .276 with Buffalo (International) in '53, and Second Baseman Frank Bolling, who was a .318 swatter for the Bisons last season.

Harry Agganis, a .281 hitter with Louisville in '53, shapes up as a possible first base replacement for Dick Gernert on the Red Sox, while the Cubs are relying heavily on a Negro second base combination, Shortstop Ernie Banks, formerly of the Kansas City Monarchs, and Gene Baker, a .284 hitter at Los Angeles in '53.

Other top rookies include Catcher Jim Robertson, Infielder Spook Jacobs and Pitcher Bob Trice of the A's, Second Baseman Curt Roberts and Pitcher Nelson King of the Pirates, Pitchers Dick Tomanek and Don Mosi of the Indians, Pitcher Corky Valentine of the Reds, Outfielder Bob Talbot of the Cubs and Pitcher Hamp Coleman of the Dodgers.

Any of them, perhaps some youngster not even mentioned in the annual spring ballyhoo, could make the grade ahead of Power or Lynch. But right now, from this corner, they seem to be the logical choices as the two major leagues move into their 154-game marathons.

## Power a Year-Round Player Since He Was 15; Takes Over Center Field on A's

By ART MORROW  
PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

Eddie Joost was saying that he would not trade the six men he got from the Yankees even to get Harry Byrd and Eddie Robinson back, and the Athletics' fledgling manager pointed toward Vic Power in center, THE SPORTING NEWS selection as the American League's outstanding rookie of the spring.

"There's a good ball player," he said, "He is not the fastest runner in the world, nor the greatest glove man, but he's better than average—and really a top hitter."

Power was in the throes of a slump at the time. He was meeting the ball well, and slamming it to distant parts of the park, but there was always an outfielder camped under it.

"He's just hitting in tough luck," Joost shrugged. "But I'm not worrying about that. I know he'll hit."

Power went out and paced the Athletics with four hits that afternoon.

"What did I tell you?" Joost demanded on the train that night. "You know Vic's going to hit for us because he's hit every place he's played."

A rundown of the records discloses the truth of Joost's remark. This is Power's fifth season of Organized Ball, and only once has he averaged less than .331, his mark at Kansas City in 1952.

Vic hit .334 at Drummondville in 1950, dropped to .294 at Syracuse the following season and he regained his form at Kansas City last year, winning the American Association batting championship with a mark of .349.

## Key Player in Deal

The A's had their eyes on him then, and if the Yankees had not called him up for their own roster they had planned to draft Power at Atlanta. From their viewpoint, he was the key player in the wholesale deal they finally arranged with the Bronx Belters in December.

"I don't understand how all those stories got around about Vic," Joost

## 'I'm Vic No-Power'

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—Vic Power, the A's new center fielder, enjoys a laugh even at his own expense.

"Vic Power," a teammate greeted him one day when he happened to be in the throes of a slump.

"Vic Power?" the outfielder repeated. "Not me—I'm Vic No-Power."

said in response to tales from the Yankee organization that the Puerto Rican is a trouble-maker. "He certainly hasn't been any trouble to us. He's been a perfect gentleman."

His white teeth gleaming in an ever-ready smile, Power is one of the A's most popular players.

"He's on the quiet side," reported his roommate, Bob Trice. "Never says much, never gives anybody any trouble. He was the same way when I played with him at Drummondville."

Jim Robertson, a catcher who came from Kansas City with Power, further vouched for the personable outfielder.

"He's all right," Robertson attested. "Only thing I can figure on how those stories started is that he won't take a lot of guff. He doesn't bother anybody, and he doesn't want anybody bothering him."

"This is as it should be. I think those stories that got around about him are the bunk. He had only one fight last year, and that was with a pitcher on the Toledo team who had been yelling at him from the bull pen. I'd say Vic won that fight—I wouldn't advise anyone to tangle with him."

Power is six feet tall, weighs 191 pounds, but doesn't look it. "All muscle," he grins.

Although he never played baseball in North America until Quincy Troupe—now of the Cardinals' scouting staff—induced him to play at Drummondville in '50, Power has been performing for

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