

Remy Eager to Reclaim Bosox Job

By JOE GIULIOTTI

WINTER HAVEN, Fla.—There was a time when the Boston Red Sox would report to their spring training home prepared for a six-week vacation. Jobs were decided before camp opened, and except for a bench job or a spot on the pitching staff, there wasn't much competition.

But that was before the departure of the Rick Burlesons, Butch Hobsons and Fred Lynns and the arrival of the Dave Stapletons, Joe Rudis and Mark Clears.

Manager Ralph Houk, who came out of his two-year retirement, will have some big decisions to make in the next six weeks. There's plenty of competition except for third base (Carney Lansford), shortstop (Glenn Hoffman), left field (Jim Rice) and catcher (if Carlton Fisk is signed and healthy).

Houk is not expecting a rebuilding year or a second-place finish. "I didn't come back for that," he said. "I came back to win it and I think we've got the people to do it."

Houk isn't alone in his optimism. There are 25 other major league managers brimming with confidence as baseball begins again.

There are also the players who can't wait to get started and right at the top is Red Sox second baseman Jerry Remy, who missed the second half of the 1980 season with a knee injury that required surgery.

Remy, who reported to camp two days early, is one who has competition this season. He and Stapleton, last year's rookie sensation, are both second basemen and both have the credentials to claim the job.

Remy was off to his best start in six years when he went down in Milwaukee just after the All-Star break. He was hitting .313 with 14 stolen bases and 11 bunt hits. In came Stapleton as his replacement to hit .321 and finish second behind Cleveland's Joe Charboneau for the American League Rookie of the Year prize.

There have been reports that Remy and Stapleton would be platooned, but Houk is not saying anything until he's seen both in action.

Remy has read all the stories and heard all the rumors about the platoon plans. He doesn't particularly want to be

platooned, but he's not worrying about something that hasn't happened yet.

"I expected to hear talk like that. That's what happens when you're injured," he said. "But I'm not going to spring training thinking about platooning or being traded. I'm just going there to play baseball."

After his surgery, Remy was a frequent visitor to Fenway Park. Being unable to play taught him a valuable lesson. "I realized I wasn't doing the thing I enjoyed most. I missed being able to go out and get a base hit or steal a base. Hell, I missed being able to go out and make an error. I was miserable."

During the off-season, Remy worked as hard as he'll ever work in the spring. He ran, lifted weights, played racquetball and, since the first of the year, hit and threw in the Tufts University indoor cage.

"The knee is fine," said Remy. "The difference between now and the last two years is enormous. I can tell because the little things that used to aggravate it don't bother it a bit now. I've tested it and put more stress on it than I ever will playing. I'm past the point now of even thinking about it."

Sox Footnotes: The Fisk free-agent-sweepstakes continued right up to the 11th hour before spring training. Offers were made, and counterproposals presented. The Red Sox said Fisk rejected a four-year, guaranteed pact that, with incentives, would have given him the opportunity to earn as much as any other catcher in baseball. . . . The Toronto Blue Jays said they wanted Fisk and the Cincinnati Reds said no thanks. Because of the publicity, most Boston fans developed a "who cares?" attitude.

Stapleton signed his 1981 contract two weeks before leaving for camp. . . . Rico Petrocelli, the former Red Sox third baseman, dismissed as color man on the Red Sox radio station after the 1979 season for making critical remarks about the club, said he could sympathize with TV color commentator Ken Harrelson, who really unloaded on Red Sox ownership in early February. "We were both players and are fans and get frustrated when the team doesn't win," said Rico. "I hope the Red Sox show some class and sit down with Kenny to work things out."



Carlton Fisk, a recent addition to the free-agent ranks, keeps in shape by playing a little basketball at Tufts University in Medford, Mass.

Robby's Problem: Giants Loaded With Vets

By NICK PETERS

CASA GRANDE, Ariz.—Decisions, decisions. That's what's in store for Frank Robinson as he embarks on his maiden season as manager of the San Francisco Giants.

The eager Robinson, who arrived February 20 to supervise the first two weeks of training at this desert spa between Phoenix and Tucson, will have plenty on his mind as he scrutinizes a shuffled 40-man roster.

There have been myriad changes on a club that finished a distant fifth in the National League West and lost 86 games in 1980. The roster had been bolstered by six new veterans and Robinson will have to determine where they fit into his plans.

He'll have more decisions than most managers because he not only is learning about his personnel after being away from the National League almost 10 years, but also faces a stockpile of vets in the outfield and infield.

"I'm going in with an open mind," Robinson stressed. "I'm not making any judgments until I see what everyone can do. All I know now is that if hard work means winning, we'll have a winner."

Robinson spent the first week working with pitchers and catchers. The rest of the squad was due March 1. The Casa Grande phase of training concludes March 10. Then the club shifts to Phoenix and begins exhibition play against the Chicago Cubs at Mesa March 11.

"We're going to spend a lot of time on fundamentals," said Robinson. There's no question the Giants could use some work in that area.

"We won't be doing much experimenting," Robinson said, "but some people will be bouncing around because we have to find out if they can play more than one position before we think about moving them."

The 40-man roster includes eight veteran outfielders, with the addition of Jerry Martin and Jesus Figueroa from the Cubs. At least two of them will have to go.

Ditto in the infield, where there are eight vets following the addition of Enos Cabell and Joe Morgan from division champion Houston. The possibility of Darrell Evans shifting to left field further clouds the outfield situation.

Robinson purposely shied away from position evaluation in the early camp. He wanted to have a good look at everyone.

Robby's decisions won't be easy, as the following position-by-position rundown suggests:

First base—Evans is a candidate, now that Cabell figures to start at third, but if Mike Ivie bounces back to his 1979 form, it would be difficult to keep his bat out of the lineup. There's also Rich Murray, who showed flashes of brilliance



Darrell Evans . . . First, third or left?

last year before he was injured.

Second base—The addition of Morgan will make incumbent Rennie Stennett work harder or else Stennett will ride the bench because of Little Joe's leadership qualities and clutch hitting.

Shortstop—Johnnie LeMaster's job isn't threatened, because backup Joe Pettini is more of a utility type.

Third base—The position apparently is Cabell's, with Evans waiting in the wings.

Left field—The deal with Houston for pitcher Ken Forsch apparently has fallen through, so Larry Herndon is expected to be back, staving off the challenge of Evans for regular duty. Terry Whitfield and Jim Wohlford are fill-ins.

Center field—Martin is the leading contender, a situation that leaves Billy North out of work. An alternative may be to platoon Martin and North, or to put Martin in left field when North is playing center.

Right field—Jack Clark territory. He's the heart of the batting order and will play 150 games or more because of

his super star qualities.

Catcher—Milt May is the incumbent and he'll be backed by Mike Sadek and Dennis Littlejohn or George Bjorkman. If the club doesn't keep Bjorkman, he goes back to the Cardinals.

Starting pitchers—The Giants still are looking for a veteran to augment the rotation now that the Forsch deal is off. Vida Blue, Ed Whitson and newcomer Doyle Alexander are a solid threesome. The other starters will be Al Harger-shimer, Allen Ripley and possibly Tom Griffin, the most underrated and versatile member of the staff in 1980.

Bullpen—Possibly the deepest and the best in the league with Al Holland, Greg Minton, Gary Lavelle and Griffin. If Randy Moffitt regains his previous form, it will be a bonus.

Bench—The influx of veterans can't help but provide improvement. Evans may become the most versatile player on the squad as a replacement at third, first and left. Cabell also has those capabilities. Players like North and Stennett also would give the club bench strength.

Decisions, decisions. Robinson faces some tough choices.

Giants: ABC's Al Michaels is the narrator for the Giants' first highlights film since 1972. The 25-minute film, "Tradition for Today," contains considerable footage from the past, including clips of Carl Hubbell, Mel Ott, Juan Marichal, Willie Mays and Willie McCovey. The film is sponsored by the U.S. Army. . . . LeMaster won his salary arbitration case, and Minton lost his. LeMaster was awarded \$155,000 and the club offered \$135,000. The shortstop got \$110,000 last year. Though Minton's pay jumped from \$90,000 to \$180,000 after his 19-save season, he didn't get the \$265,000 he requested. . . . Tom Zimmer, son of Texas Manager Don Zimmer, has been named the Giants' Caribbean scout, succeeding the late Chick Genovese.

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