

'I'll Get That Pitcher Next Time'

Tribe's **Rosen** at Top on Will to Produce

Al Surprised at 100 RBIs, 40 Homers

But He Insists High Plate Mark Is No Fluke, Feels He Will Do Better in '54

By HAL LEBOVITZ
DETROIT, Mich.

Al Lopez, the Indians' manager, likes a "fighting ball player" and he has a particularly high regard for **Al Rosen**, his third baseman, whose phenomenal year kept the Tribe in contention.

"What I like about **Al** most of all," says Lopez, "is his determination. After a pitcher gets him out he'll come back to the bench and say, 'I'll get him next time.' And, by golly, he does. To him, each pitcher is a personal challenge."

Rosen appreciates the compliment. "Actually," he grins, "everything about this game is a challenge to me. I don't want to accept mediocrity. I want to be as good as I possibly can be in every phase of the game."

He takes pride in the fact that, slow as he is, he leads the Indians in stolen bases. Serious concentration gained him this distinction.

He is even more pleased with his fielding improvement. "The change in **Rosen's** fielding is amazing," said Hank Bauer, the Yanks' outfielder recently. "I roomed with him at Kansas City and even Flip will admit he was a poor fielder in those days. Now the guy is polished. If you had seen him before, you wouldn't believe it's the same person."

Rosen became a good fielder through sheer effort. Last spring, when the rookies were invited to Daytona Beach for a pre-spring training session, **Rosen** showed up, too. While the others spent most of their time in the batting cages, **Rosen** fielded grounders, hour after hour, under the tutelage of Coaches Tony Cuccinello, Red Kress and Manager Lopez. Then he took his turn swinging—with a choke.

They Pay Off on Hits

"I'm thrilled with my fielding improvement," says the third baseman, happily, "but after all, hitting is where you make the money. Glove men don't get the big pay and just like the others, I'm out to make as much as I can for my family, so please don't blame me for being so delighted with my hitting."

This, too, **Rosen** improved by studious endeavor. "It's amazing," he confesses, "the little things you can pick up through observation."

"For example, by watching Mickey Vernon I have noticed he goes with the pitcher. That's an important thing. And just by little hints **Al** Lopez gives the men, including myself, I have gained many lessons. And you'd be surprised how you can pick up things by watching the opposing dugouts. I've seen Casey Stengel make suggestions to a hitter by demonstrating a batting motion, and I have absorbed this information, too."

Rosen insists his lofty average is no fluke. In a recent conversation he said, "I'm batting .329 today, which is much more than was expected of me. Yet, if you said to me, 'Will you settle for .329 for the season?' I'd say no. I feel I can do better."

"I hope no one considers me boastful in this respect, but I feel certain

Poor Fielder in Past Years, Raises His Average 10 Points

NEW YORK, N. Y.—**Al Rosen**, considered a poor fielder in past years, has raised his fielding average more than ten points this season. The Indians' third baseman went more than a quarter of the season without being charged with a bobble.

After a span of 39 games in which he fielded flawlessly, he finally committed a boot on September 13 when his wide throw pulled First Baseman Bill Glynn off the bag.

Makes Hurlers Choke With Choke Grip



SHORT GRIP FOR LONG SWATS: That's the system that has been paying off for **Al Rosen** this summer in his bid for the American League triple crown. Most of the major league's famous sluggers gripped their bats at the end for better leverage. But there have been others, like Mel Ott, who choked their grips even more than **Rosen**. The short grip is conducive of better control of the weapon, theorizes the Indians' hard-hitting third baseman.

—Photos by Cleveland Press

my batting average will continue to improve.

"Now, on the other hand, I'm surprised myself that I've hit 40 homers and batted in over 100 runs. These totals are much more than I expected and I don't consider them goals for next year."

"I believe I can hit 30 homers a season and knock in 100 runs. But 40 homers are a lot, especially for the Cleveland Stadium. And with all the night games we play—more than 60 a season—it's difficult to feel fresh enough and strong enough for each game."

Rail-Clicks No Lullaby

"I don't sleep well on trains and often I find myself tired when I go out on the ball field. I have to jerk myself up, drive myself, if you get what I mean."

Rosen is coming close to the triple crown, being a favorite to grab the home run and RBI titles, but the batting championship is moving in Mickey Vernon's direction. Mickey, of course, is a lefthander and ball players are certain a southpaw swinger has the edge. "He's at least two steps closer to first base," is the reasoning.

Last player to capture the triple crown was Ted Williams. The Splinter turned the trick in 1947, and 1942 as well.

"My experience this year makes me admire Williams all the more," says **Rosen**. "Winning the triple crown seems like such an impossibility. I never gave it any thought until I realized I had a chance. Now, I'll admit I'm trying for it, but I don't expect to win it. You know, being as close in the race as we have been, we face the best pitchers day after day."

Rosen is certain he will remain an improved hitter because of his change in thinking and, as a consequence, his batting style.

"In 1951," he says, "I concentrated on homers. I didn't swing for average. I swung for the fences. You see, after the 1950 season, in which I hit 37 homers, I received more pay than I ever dreamed of. I figured, 'Gee, if I have

Casey Says **Rosen** Delayed Yanks' Pennant-Clinching

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Casey Stengel, manager of the Yankees, paid **Al Rosen**, Cleveland third baseman, a fine tribute when he said:

"That fellow is responsible, single handed, for keeping my boys from doing their pennant-clinching earlier this year."

"In one game," Casey went on, "he goes up in front of the shortstop, and a pretty good shortstop it is, too, and makes a play on Bauer. Now, Bauer's a fast man and I never think they'll get him, what with the winning run going over the plate. But that **Rosen** does, and we lost the run. Later, we lose the game."

"Another time, he comes up with two men on base, one first and second, that is. He aims to do the right thing. He aims to hit behind the runners, that is right field. He does. He hits to right field. On a line. Right up there," Casey said, pointing to the stands. "Three runs. We lose that one, too."

another good home run year, no telling how much I can make."

By trying to swing for distance he suffered his worst season: only 24 homers and a .265 batting average. It was a lesson.

"I don't try to overpower all the pitchers, any more," he now confesses. "Of course, there are certain occasions when it's proper to go for the long ball, and sometimes the short one is more sensible. Sometimes you go up to the plate feeling awfully good; you feel the sweep and rhythm in your swing. Other days you don't feel powerful and you just concentrate on the base-hit."

"When I first came up to the majors, I was strictly a pull hitter. Now I go to right field if a pitcher pitches me that way. Or I'll try for the hole over second."

"I'm not a guess hitter, but I try to

figure out the thinking of both the catcher and the pitcher. You get to know them after a while. Really, there's very little guesswork to hitting. I think I know better, now, how the different clubs will try to pitch to me. For example, if I hit a home run today off a high fast ball and tomorrow I'd face a high, fast ball pitcher, I'm sure he'd still go to his strength regardless of what I did the day before."

Plans How to Hit

Rosen admits he does plenty of thinking about his batting. "If I'm playing third base and coming up in the next inning I give some thought to it," he says. He even thinks about his hitting a day in advance. "Suppose," he reveals, "we were riding a train to New York. I'd be thinking about the pitcher for the next day. Suppose it were to be Vic Raschi. I'd plan my method of hitting against him. I'd decide, I'm sure, that he'd throw high, fast balls at me. Then if I saw I guessed wrong, I'd change my approach."

"You know," he grins, "it's tougher for the hitter to get a base-hit than it is for the pitcher to get him out. It takes some thinking. That's one of the things that makes Ted Williams so great. I honestly think that Ted knows what's coming, nine out of ten times. I don't mean the type of pitch, whether it's a slider or curve ball, but he knows the location. He knows where each pitcher will try to pitch to him. He's made a study of it."

Close observation of **Rosen** the batter reveals that he often changes his position in the box and also the position of his hands on the bat. He never holds the bat at the very end and he'll move way up on his club on certain occasions.

"I shift both my feet and hands according to the pitcher and the count," he admits. "Just for instance," he illustrates, "there's a runner on first and

Stengel Tabs Flip Loop's Best Player

Improved in Field, at Bat on Changed Stance; He's Tribe's Top Base Stealer

second and you're the pitcher. Your best pitch is a low fast ball. If **Rosen** is going to be dumb he'll stay back in the box as usual. But if he's smart, **Rosen** will move up—a step closer to the ball and a step closer to first base."

Rosen agrees that it sums up to this: "I go with the pitcher's power, if possible, just as Vernon and some of the other hitters I consider very intelligent do."

Rarely, he says, does he think about a home run. "I concentrate on hitting the ball," he puts it. "If I hit the ball I'm physically equipped to make it go somewhere."

One of **Rosen's** secrets is that he isn't afraid to copy someone who has been successful. When he first played third base for the Indians he followed George Kell's fielding style down to the minutest motion. "I figure he was the best," explains **Rosen**. Slowly, Flip's own style developed.

"Sometimes," confesses **Rosen**, "it takes a long time for advice to sink in. When **Al** Simmons was with us as a coach about three years ago, he said, 'You have to hit each pitcher differently.' For me, that was hard to believe, because at that time I thought I was hitting good with my one set style. Now, I realize he was perfectly correct."

Confident of Better '54

Because of the experience of one more year, **Rosen** feels he'll go into next season an even more confident hitter.

"I'll get better," he declares, "if for no other reason than that I'll get better pitches to hit. You see, I believe I'll have acquired enough confidence in myself that I'll be able to take advantage of all three strikes offered a hitter. I'll be able to let a strike go in order to wait for my pitch. 'Sounds great,' he laughs, 'doesn't it? Hope it works out that way.'"

This season has brought **Rosen** many rewards: He has heard Casey Stengel call him the best player in the league. He has heard other managers and players praise him equally. He is a good bet for the most valuable player award.

But he also is disappointed in the sad fact that the Indians failed again to win the pennant. "That," he insists, "is my greatest ambition . . . to play in the World's Series."

Rosen has achieved stardom in his fourth full season in the majors. He hopes he can maintain his reputation. He says, "I never wanted to be just a ball player. I always wanted to be as good as I possibly could. I've worked hard to attain some stature in this game. If I find myself going downhill one of these years, I think I'll quit. I wouldn't mind if I were a Johnny Mize, but the Mizes are few and far between."

When **Rosen** does call it a career he hopes to switch to the radio and television field as a sports announcer. One thing you can bet—he'll be a good one. Because he'll work at it. That's **Rosen**.

Shops for Groceries, Cooks Breakfast for Wife and Self

CLEVELAND, O.—Whenever **Al Rosen** is asked to what he attributes his successful 1953 season, he says, "Much of it is due to peace of mind." Marriage has been the major contributing factor, he insists. He has been married for nearly a year. "I feel so much more contented now," he says. "This is living." The Rosens are expecting their first child just prior to the 1954 spring training. **Rosen**, the solicitous husband, does the shopping and now that his wife, Terry, doesn't feel too spry in the mornings, he admits, quite happily, that he makes breakfast for both of them.

Rosen's Hot Bat Sparks Tribe Flag Spurt

Leads Indians in Homers, and in Driving In Runs

Pair of Strong Wrists Give Him Distance on Swats; Club Was Forced to Keep Him After Three Options

By HAL LEBOVITZ

CLEVELAND, O.

Al Rosen, his mother and stepfather (Mr. and Mrs. Sol Gould) and a few close friends were seated in front of the television set in the Goulds' cozy apartment in Forest Hills, N. Y.

The group had just finished a Southern fried chicken dinner cooked in super fashion by Al's mother. It was a most pleasant evening. It was dessert to an afternoon in which the Indians had trounced the mighty Yankees, 16 to 2, Al having contributed his share with three hits.

Now to relax before the television screen. It was a sports program. The announcer went over the events of the day and in the midst of his ad lib he asked his unseen audience, "And who do you think will be the American League Rookie of the Year, Walt Dropo or Luke Easter?" Had the set been a two-way device, the announcer would have had to muster a rebuttal, for immediately one of Al's friends yelled, "What about Al Rosen?" How could you forget him? What about his homers and RBIs?

"Calm down, Eddie," Al told his buddy. "I'm used to being ignored—at the start of the season. It doesn't bother me so much any more. Wait till the end of the year, when all the chips are in. Then they always seem to have reason to remember me."

With that one paragraph, Al (Call Me Flip) Rosen summed up his annual history as a ball player.

However, three previous trips to the Tribe, when he played seven games in 1947, five in '48 and 23 in '49, eliminate him as a candidate for consideration as Rookie of the Year.

The Year of Decision

Flip was virtually crammed down Manager Lou Boudreau's throat at the start of this season. He had been optioned out three times. Now the Indians had to keep him on the roster or turn him over to one of the many bidders.

Rosen's minor league batting record was splendid, but his fielding uncertain. Most important, Boudreau had never seen Flip hit. Strangely, the rookie's hitting was weak each spring the Indians took him to camp. Even in '48 and '49, when he spent short spans with the Tribe during the regular season, he was unable to do anything impressive.

This spring the story was the same. In fact, it was beginning to appear that Ken Keltner, the veteran third baseman, would be back at his old hot corner on opening day.

But on the night of April 11 in Topeka, Kan., the decision was made to release Keltner on the assumption that the veteran had slowed down too much to help the club sufficiently through a full season. There was some talk that General Manager Hank Greenberg pushed the move to open the way for Rosen. But Boudreau, in announcing Keltner's release, said: "The position is Rosen's, for the time being at least. If he fails, my ace in the hole is Bob Kennedy (the converted right fielder)."

Escapes Ken's Shadow

Rosen was told of Keltner's release that night in the coffee shop of the Hotel Kansan. The next day he began to hit—and he hasn't stopped.

Al has been a fixture since the start of the season. His home run output of 25 as of July 5 led both major leagues, one more than Ted Williams and three more than Ralph Kiner. He is, by far, the Tribe's leading RBI man.

It's always the custom to rationalize when there is such a sudden change, as in Rosen's case. His explanation is: "I was always in Keltner's shadow. Everybody was comparing me to Kenny, one of the really great third basemen. I worried so much about my fielding it affected my hitting."

Another possibility is that once the way was cleared for Rosen, he returned to the batting style which made him a constant scourge of minor league pitchers. During the early part of the past spring he kept repeating, "If I could only hit one home run, I could win the job." So he went to spring training at Tucson with a two-tone war club. It was much heavier than his former bats.

The day after Keltner was released,

AL ROSEN,

THE INDIANS' 25-YEAR-OLD SLUGGING THIRD BASEMAN HAS NOT ONLY MADE TRIBE FANS FORGET KEN KELTNER, BUT HE IS GUNNING FOR HAL TROSKY'S TEAM BATTING RECORDS... 42 HOMERS AND 162 RBIS....

SINCE HIS DEBUT IN PRO-BALL AT THE AGE OF 17, AL WAS A CONSISTENT .300 HITTER WHILE IN THE MINORS.

THIS GUY LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN AROUND

LOU VARVAS

Rosen returned to his lighter model, a 35-inch bat weighing 33 ounces. Furthermore, he choked up on it a few inches. Rosen isn't a big man, weighing only 180 and standing five-11. But his tanned body ripples muscles.

That Rosen's hitting is no fluke can be attested by Honus Wagner, one of the game's immortals. When the Tribe played a recent exhibition in Pittsburgh, Honus carefully studied the batting practice. As Rosen was stroking the ball against the Forbes Field scoreboard, Wagner, who didn't know Al from any other Cleveland player, said, "Now, there's a hitter. Watch him whip into that ball the last second. That's where it counts. That snap in there, just when you connect."

Tribute From Williams

Only the other day Ted Williams was analyzing Rosen to Rosen. "You have a strong, quick pair of wrists," observed Ted. "You're a natural hitter."

Al was always an athlete and—his record shows—a good one. In elementary school he pitched for his classroom softball team. The kids called him "The Flipper" because of his pitching ability and this soon was shortened to "Flip." The nickname stuck with him and even his immediate family calls him by it. Those

He's the Idol of Cleveland Kids

CLEVELAND, O. Cleveland's youngest sandlot league, known as Club F, has a regulation which requires each team to name a kid after a major league player. Of the nearly 400 teams, consisting of kids from under 15 years of age, the **green** majority chose to be called the "Al Rosen's." In fact, so many teams at each park selected Flip, name that the directors were forced to toss coins to decide which club could retain the name.

Al Rosen's debut in a Cleveland uniform came in September, 1947, when the Tribe called him up from Oklahoma City at the close of the Texas League season. His first plate appearance was in Yankee Stadium, "before the largest crowd I ever saw," recalls Al. "I was one of those guys who hit a homer his first time up. In fact, I didn't hit anything. I was just plain scared to death."

"Both my knees were shaking as I walked up to the batter's box. I looked up and saw Joe D. Maggno out in center, Joe Page almost in front of me and about 60,000 people sitting right on top of my forehead. I was all right after I took my first swing and missed, but I still managed to strike out."

When Al Rosen hit his fourteenth home run Saturday, June 15, in Philadelphia, he took about four steps after the ball left his bat, stopped, and as if fascinated, watched it soar into the upper left field stands.

"Look," pointed one of his teammates in the dugout, "the guy still can't believe it!"

HAL LEBOVITZ

who don't know the background of Al's name are inclined to believe it stemmed from Al's challenging attitude. The rookie—usually ready to speak his mind with the confidence resulting from a lifetime of athletic success in which his actions always

proved his words often gives the impression of being flippancy. "Sometimes I talk too much," says Al apologetically.

Flip obtained his first real baseball

experience in the American Legion league in his home town, Miami. Flip, then a two-day-old, was only 13 years of age and under and another boy, 14 to 17. When Al was 11 he made the Havana team. But he was 66 years old in the younger age group. The following year he was elevated to the 17-year class, and was playing at shortstop on several teams.

Starred in Legion Play

"American Legion ball," declares Rosen today, "is the greatest thing in the world for kids."

By 14 his reputation in Miami was good enough to make him a semi-pro, unofficially. He was signed by the Merrill Stevens, Shipyard's team of the Dade County League. He played second base and received \$2 a game. Meanwhile, he had lost on various softball teams in the neighborhood. There were depression days and every back helped his mother support the family.

Flip entered Miami High and in his first season made the All-City baseball nine. He completed his junior and senior years at Florida Military Academy on a scholarship and won four varsity letters each season. He was

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Little Injuns Ripening New Peach in Lemon

By JOHN CRONLEY

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.

Now that **Al Rosen** has finally made the grade, fans out this way are beginning to wonder how long it will be until Belting Bob Lemon, Oklahoma City's home run kingpin, is displaying the Cleveland flannels.

If Lemon has to sweat it out in the manner that **Rosen** did, then the big blonde, now gunning for an all-time Texas League homer record of 55, will not be hitting them for the big Injuns until 1953.

After **Rosen** mopped up nearly every individual hitting mark in the Texas League in 1947, observers here argued that he was ripe for the big league plucking by the parent team.

But such was not the case, not as long as Ken Keltner was around, and for the next two campaigns **Rosen** still had to "prove" himself, with strong years at Kansas City and San Diego. **Rosen** never had much of a look-in until General Manager Hank Greenberg of Cleveland stepped in this spring and disposed of Keltner, with Lou Boudreau then handing **Rosen** the third base job.

Since then, **Rosen** has come through handsomely, and some of the folks out here persist in asking: "Wouldn't he have done the same thing back in 1948?"

The rookie road from Oklahoma City to Cleveland is a rocky one, even though the little Indians have boasted the Texas League hitting leader for the past four years.

Only Outfielder Dale Mitchell and Mike Garcia have shot to the majors and stayed—and Mitchell needed an assist from Commissioner

A. B. Chandler, who, because of rules, refused to permit Cleveland to return big Mitch here in '47, when the Indians attempted to re-farm him. Once Mitchell made the regular Cleveland lineup, he followed through with three fine seasons.

Pitcher Garcia came on strong late last year to nail down a regular berth.

Two years ago, Ray Boone was called in before he had enough times at bat to qualify for the official Texas League batting title. He was a Cleveland bench warmer until only recently.

Last season First Sacker Herb Conyers hit .355 for the Texas League batting title. But he still hasn't played a game for Cleveland, and this season is with San Diego.

Cleveland's second-string catcher, Ray Murray, also took his lumps, shuttling back and forth for three years before finally being taken up for keeps.

So it is small wonder that fans here are speculating on how soon Outfielder Bob Lemon will make the grade with Cleveland. Meantime, Oklahoma City's Bob is a cinch for Texas League homer honors, even if he does miss a new all-time high, and the league batting championship.

Lemon is not a polished outfielder, and that fact may work against him as to big league employment in 1951. But he can improve a lot from now until September, he can pick up much more with Cleveland next spring, and, judging from the manner in which Cleveland finally is moving the youngsters into regular duty, the second Bob Lemon may be a big part of a new youth movement in 1951.

FCC Is Asked for Ruling on 'Recreating'

Texas Broadcasting Firm Charges Liberty Chain Is 'Deluding' Its Listeners

By FRED W. HENCK

WASHINGTON, D. C.

The Federal Communications Commission, which has a lot of problems of its own in the television, broadcasting, telephone and telegraph fields, has been asked to enter the sports picture and probe "reconstructed" baseball broadcasts.

Actually, the FCC already has some experience in the field, gained from a case last year in which it ordered the Western Union Telegraph Co. to delete a charge that the telegraph company had been making for stations on a baseball broadcast network receiving program service from an originating outlet basing "re-created" baseball games on Western Union's ticker service.

The plea for an FCC investigation came from attorneys for the Texas Star Broadcasting Co., charging that the Liberty Broadcasting System of Dallas, key station of a baseball network, is deluding the public into thinking that its "reconstructed" baseball broadcasts are actually live programs coming direct from ball parks.

Texas Star centered its complaints on charges that Liberty, in feeding the baseball programs to a group of stations in the Southwest, uses crowd noise recordings, and comments by the announcer to the effect that "We're now in the ninth inning at the Polo Grounds at New York," to make listeners believe that the games are being reported by announcers watching the game in the Stadium where it is being played.

Distorted "Picture" Alleged

This result, Texas Star says, is insulting the intelligence of informed listeners, since it is announced that the games are "reconstructed" and such members of the audience know what that means. It also spawns "petty rackets and gambling," the complaint contended, because "unscrupulous operators have taken advantage of unknowing listeners by inducing them to bet on games the outcome of which is already known to the operators."

Furthermore, the complaint argued, listeners get distorted pictures of the games, as "For example: the announcer will call the play as a hit into the outfield, with the outfielder catching the ball for the putout. In reality, the play will consist of an infielder picking the ball up off the ground and tagging the runner out." Another contention was that fewer and fewer live baseball broadcasts are being put on the air, because of the economy of the "recreated" ball games.

Taking the complaint somewhat less than seriously, Liberty Broadcasting System President Gordon B. McLendon merely commented that his name had been misspelled in the document.

Actually, the FCC already has considerable information on the subject in its files as the result of the Western Union case last year. The complainant in that hearing, Station WIND of Chicago, put into the record a 15-minute transcription of a portion of a

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Rosen Was Snubbed by Pilot After Hitch-Hiking to Camp

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varsity end in football, third baseman in baseball, forward in basketball and a member of the boxing team. In fact, he won the high school middleweight title for Florida. Altogether, he engaged in 50 amateur bouts and lost only two on close decisions. His nose remains slightly wavy from some caught leather.

In his senior year, **Rosen** was named one of Miami's outstanding griders and as a result received his first close contact with Cleveland. An All-Star Cleveland team was sent to Miami to play its All-Stars in the Kuntaquat Bowl. **Al** was the quarterback and his team lost, 29 to 0.

Despite **Al's** versatility, he decided to concentrate only on baseball in the future. "I made up my mind baseball was going to be my profession," he says flatly.

Foxx Recommended Flip

That spring, 1941, he hitchhiked to the training camps in Florida and had a long talk with Roger Peckinpough, then manager of the Indians, at St. Petersburg. Peck had heard of Flip's high school exploits and sent him to work out with the Wilkes-Barre team at Sumter, S. C. There, Owner Mike McNally offered him a Class D contract to play with Thomasville, N. C., at \$75 a month. But **Al** decided to accept a scholarship to the University of Florida, instead. He won varsity letters as a freshman this being possible during the war years, but when spring came around he got the pro baseball bug again. He confided his burning desire to become a major leaguer to Lloyd Gullickson, a friendly golf pro.

"I know Jimmie Foxx. I'll introduce you," promised Gullickson. Foxx turned Flip over to another friend, Herb Penneck, then chief of the Red Sox scouting system.

Penneck asked **Rosen** to report to Bradenton, where the Red Sox' Louisville farm was in spring training. Flip hitchhiked there for a tryout.

"I didn't get much of a chance to bat," he recalls. "I stood around the batting cage waiting for a turn. If it hadn't been for Joe Vosmik I might never have received a turn. He was with Louisville then and he said, 'Get in front of me.'"

"I must have looked pretty good, because some of the fellas there said,

Al's 25th Homer Equals

His Best Previous Output

CLEVELAND, O. — **Al Rosen** needed only one more home run after July 3 to establish a new lifetime high for himself.

His twenty-fifth of the season on July 3, making him the major league leader, one ahead of Ted Williams, equaled his previous high. He hit 25 at Oklahoma City in 1947 and the same number at Kansas City a year later.

It is curious to note that, although the Indians have faced more southpaws than right-handers, he had hit 18 homers against the latter and only seven off left-handers. He had clubbed 13 in Cleveland and 12 on the road.

Party for **Rosen** at Miami on Return Home in Fall

MIAMI, Fla. — **Al Rosen**, Cleveland third sacker, will be honored with a party at the Westview Country Club here, upon his return home at the end of the season. And host for the occasion will be Ross Sobel, Westview golf pro.

On a trip north recently, Sobel saw Ben Hogan win the National Open in the playoff, and he saw **Rosen** sock his fourteenth home run of the American League season.

That fourteenth home run was a special gift from **Rosen**. Ross went to Shibe Park in Philadelphia to see the Athletics play the Indians, carrying greetings from Bill Klem, the Old Arbitrator, to Connie Mack. He talked to **Rosen** from behind the dugout before the game. He asked **Al** to hit a home run for him. When **Rosen** smacked No. 14, he yelled to the golf pro, "That was for you." Now Sobel plans a party for **Rosen**.

"Don't take anything less than a Class B contract," but Penneck told me to go to Danville, Va., which was Class C. Penneck said he'd be up in a few days and we'd talk terms.

"I reported to the manager. I stayed there three days, worked out and waited for Penneck. Finally, the manager called me into the office and said, 'I just talked to Penneck over the phone and I told him you'll never make a ball player. Now I'm telling you the same thing.'"

"Go home and forget all about baseball," he advised me.

"For the first time in my life I was speechless. Honestly, I had to fight back the tears. I was heartbroken. Then the words came.

"You're wrong," I told him. "I aim to prove it to you some day. Some day I'll make you eat those words."

No. 17—and Secret Came Out

Rosen kept this episode in his life a secret until June 15. That night he hit his seventeenth homer with a runner on base to beat the Red Sox, 3 to 1.

He wanted to be certain that the former minor league manager, now a major league scout, would read about it and remember how a 17-year-old kid once vowed: "Some day I'll make you eat those words."

But the Indians almost lost **Rosen**, too.

Flip in his anxiety to prove the Danville manager wrong, immediately rushed out of his office and asked fellow players if they knew of any teams where he might catch on. One suggested Frank Stein, a Y. M. C. A. director in nearby Schoolfield.

The Y. M. C. A. director advised, "Go to Thomasville, N. C. Look up Jim Grudzis, and tell him I sent you."

Although **Rosen** had turned down Thomasville the year before, he jumped at the chance. It was a three-hour ride and Flip reached the town at 5 p. m. He asked the first citizen he saw, "Where can I find Jim Grudzis?"

The gent looked at the small hand-grip Flip was carrying and said, "What position do you play?"

"Third base," Flip replied.

"Don't leave," said the excited cit-

izen, and rushed away. He returned shortly with Grudzis. Before **Rosen** could present his credentials, Grudzis declared, "Boy, you've got a job. I will give you \$90 a month."

Only after he accepted did **Rosen** learn that the regular third baseman had just been sent to the hospital with a broken leg.

That night, and for the remainder of the season, **Rosen** played third base for Thomasville, finishing with a .306 batting average.

At Okinawa on D-Day

Then the war interrupted and **Rosen** enlisted in the Navy, navigating an assault boat on D-Day in the first wave at Okinawa. He also built up his baseball confidence in the Navy. Before going overseas he played in several exhibitions against major leaguers and did well. "After that I never doubted for a minute that I could play major league ball," he says.

Upon discharge, he wrote George Trautman, head of the minor leagues, to learn which team now owned his contract. The reply was, "Thomasville belongs to the Cleveland Indians' chain and they have assigned you to Wilkes-Barre."

Along with 101 other players, mostly war veterans, **Rosen** reported to the spring training base at Suffolk, Va. **Al**, war-rusty, couldn't make the Wilkes-Barre club so he was bundled into a bus with the rest of the cast-offs. The driver of the bus was Laddie Placek, the Cleveland who now is Hank Greenberg's righthand man in operation of the Tribe's farm setup.

Placek's destination was Harrisburg, Pa. "You'll be the regular third baseman on this club," he promised **Rosen**.

But upon arrival they learned that Les Bell, the manager, had another player, Andy Anderson, all set for third base.

Rosen asked for his release, but Placek finally nudged him into an automobile and drove him to Pittsfield, Mass., an Indian farm in the Class C Canadian-American League. "You'll play here for sure," said Placek.

Persuaded to Stick

But at Pittsfield, too, there was another candidate ahead of him, so when Buzz Wetzel, the Cleveland farm chief, arrived and said, "Anybody who does not want to play for Pittsfield can have his release," **Rosen** was first in line.

Wetzel looked up **Rosen's** .306 average at Thomasville and refused, but Flip raised such a holler that Buzz got tired of listening and made out the papers.

When Placek learned the news, he rushed around town seeking **Rosen**. He finally found the irate youngster in a diner, taking out his temper on a pinball machine.

Rosen recalls, "Laddie stood beside me and kept repeating, 'You'll be a great player some day, a big star. Stick it out.' He said it over and over. Finally I said 'Okay.'"

So, because of Laddie's persuasiveness, **Rosen** today is a blossoming major league star. He won the third base job at Pittsfield, batted .223 and captured the most valuable player award in the Canadian-American League. That was in 1946. Next season it was the Texas League batting championship at Oklahoma City. In '48 he was optioned to Kansas City, where he became the most valuable player in the American Association. Last year the Tribe kept him around awhile looking at Keltner, and then optioned him to San Diego where, in 83 games, he hit .319 and 14 homers. In the meantime he obtained his B. A. degree at the University of Miami.

Taking the place of the popular Kelt-

Indians Blast Stengel's All-Star Snub of **Rosen**

CLEVELAND, O.—Casey Stengel's failure to place **Al Rosen**, Cleveland Indians' rookie third sacker, on the original All-Star list drew a burning blast from the Tribe brass.

Rosen, the major leagues' leading home run hitter, placed second to George Kell in the voting, but Stengel decided not to name a No. 2 third baseman on his original list. He indicated that if Kell needs help, Stengel's own Gerry Coleman, the Yankees second baseman, can fill in at third.

Said Indians' Manager Lou Boudreau: "**Rosen** definitely should have been selected. He's leading the majors in home runs and he tops our club in RBIs. I don't know what else a fellow has to do to get on. I think a mistake has been made in not naming him to the squad."

Hank Greenberg, the Tribe's general manager, was even more vehement. "That **Rosen** was left off the All-Star team is an injustice to his performance, especially when Gerry Coleman and Tommy Henrich are on the squad," he pointed out. "It reveals a flaw in the selection system."

"The inclusion of eight players in the Yankee lineup smacks of favoritism."

"**Rosen's** play this year has been most outstanding and his fine hitting record would make him valuable to the American League squad if only as a pinch-hitter. The surprising thing about **Rosen** is that his fielding is better than any third baseman's in the American League, including George Kell's."

"As a solace to **Rosen**, who must be disappointed by the news, he can take heart in the knowledge that he'll definitely be on many future All-Star squads."

ner was a handicap which Flip quickly swept aside by hitting a home run against Detroit in the opener at Cleveland's Stadium in the presence of 65,744 fans. "That was the biggest thrill of my life," admits **Al**. He hit another the following day. And he has kept right on hitting 'em ever since then.

Al's stance is somewhat reminiscent of his softball days. His feet are only 18 inches apart and he sticks close to the dish, not more than a foot away. He pulls his sleeves up high, showing muscular biceps, and he swings his bat often as he awaits the pitcher's motion. Then he gets set, wiggles his fingers just before his final grip and gives the pitcher an "I'm ready for anything you've got" look. His power is in left field, but he's not averse to hitting to right field behind a runner.

On the field, he's a holler guy, and his voice carries into the stands. "Hustle is the greatest single factor," he advises, "next to work. The third is the willingness to take advice."

Rosen came to Cleveland with the reputation of being a below-average fielder. To date he has done everything possible to correct that impression. By constant practice under the tutelage of Coach Oscar Melillo he has developed into an adequate infielder. His errors have been at a minimum and some of his plays have bordered on the sensational.

Flip's arm, reputed to be of the shotgun variety, has been surprisingly accurate. "I used to have a good arm," he explains, "but I hurt it in the Navy. Now it seems to have come back."

No wonder, with his surprise hitting and fielding, he now is being referred to as "Flip the Fantastic."

Jets File \$100,000 Damage Suit Against Radio Station

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—Suit for \$100,000 has been filed by the Grand Rapids (Central) Jets against Station WGRD as a result of alleged announcements over the air that James T. Williams, owner of the club, has prohibited the broadcast of Detroit Tiger games in the Grand Rapids area while the Jets are playing at home.

In his declaration, Williams stated that he is prevented by National Association rules from granting or denying permission to the radio stations for the airing of major league games. Only the Ties or an accredited agency can make such a deal with the Jets, Williams said.

League President Thomas J. Haligan approved the suit, saying, "There were other clubs in the league seeking similar action, but now they are lying low until such time as some adjustment in the Grand Rapids suit has been made."