

Siebern Sees Happier Future in Cozy K. C.

Hopes to Hit at Fast Clip as Full-Timer

Had Feeling Yankees Would Trade Him Despite .271 Mark and 11 HRs in '59

By RALPH RAY

ST. LOUIS, Mo.

Norman Leroy Siebern, who could become the key man in the latest king-sized swap between the Yankees and A's, relaxed with his attractive wife, Liz, in their cozy new apartment in University City, just beyond the St. Louis city limits.

Yes, he would miss the famed pin-stripes of the Bronx Bombers and the good advice of Casey Stengel, Ralph Houk and others, but Kansas City was no Siberia, the tall blond with the crewcut made it clear.

"I don't know what the figures are, but I've hit well in the Kansas City park," Siebern said as he puffed on a cigarette. Norm couldn't pull the ball enough to take advantage of the chummy right field barrier at Yankee Stadium. However, he feels that, in 77 games at the K. C. park, many of the long shots that became mere outs in expansive left-center in New York will carry out of the park or at least crease the fence in K. C. Norm expects to pick up at bat with full-time duty.

Power-Hitter's Paradise

"Any man with good power can hit the ball out of the park in left-center at Kansas City," said deadpanned Siebern. "But it takes a Herculean poke to get the ball out of the park in left-center at Yankee Stadium. I remember one double-header there when Mickey Mantle hit five balls to center at Yankee Stadium, but all he got out of it was two hits. At Kansas City, he would have had five homers."

A's followers hope Norm does as well for them as he did against the A's at K. C. Last season Siebern batted .500 at K. C. with 9-for-18 and eight RBIs. He was .400 against the A's for the season. His other 1959 marks were: Boston .288, Washington .273, Cleveland and Detroit .271, Chicago .228 and Baltimore .203.

"Yes, we were stunned somewhat

Family Fanning Bee

..

at Norm's Nook



PHOTOS BY C. C. JOHNSON SPINK

NORM SIEBERN, who could prove to be the key player in the Yanks' recent deal with the Athletics, and his wife, Liz, enjoy a mid-winter visit from his parents, Milt and Iva Siebern, in Norm's apartment in suburban St. Louis.

when we heard of the deal," said Liz Siebern, "but we weren't completely surprised. Anyway, my folks live in Denver. They'll be closer to us."

Milton and Iva Siebern, Norm's parents, were in the living room. They beamed when the subject of the closeness of Kansas City came up.

How did the 26-year-old outfielder find out he was Missouri-bound?

"Lloyd Merritt, my old friend who used to pitch for the Cardinals, called me about 6 o'clock that night and asked me how I felt about it," Siebern said. "I told him I didn't know what he was talking about, so then he told me that he had just heard the announcement on Harry Caray's radio program."

Norm and Liz were well aware that all 15 other clubs were eager to take the .271 hitter from Wellston (a St.

Louis suburb) off the Yankees' hands. And, shortly before the big trade was disclosed, Manager Casey Stengel had announced that he was figuring on Siebern as his regular left fielder for the 1960 season.

"I had a feeling, though, toward the end of the 1959 season, that I might be traded," Siebern said. "I wasn't playing too much the last couple of months after we got Lopez from the A's."

"I just had a feeling they weren't counting on me."

Called Off Experiment

"Then Roy Hamey asked me to go to Florida for a two-week period to practice up as a first baseman after the regular season ended. But he called me the next day and said that it was no use going down to the winter league for two weeks, because it would take that long just to get in shape. I played first the last two games of the season, and I had played it in the service."

Asked whether he always got along with Stengel, Norm hesitated a bit, grinned, then said, "Well, Casey gave me every opportunity in June of 1958, and again this past season. He always boosted me. Perhaps I disappointed him a bit by not doing nearly as well as he expected."

Norm never will forget the fine treatment accorded him by Stengel after his horrendous day in left field

Curves Okay, Straight Fast Ones Get Him, Norm Quips

ST. LOUIS Mo.—Norm Siebern, one of the quietest players in the majors, showed he could come up with a quip or two when he spoke at the recent football dinner at his alma mater, Wellston High, just outside St. Louis.

The A's outfielder recalled a high school game in which he took a called third strike with the score tied at 2 to 2, three on and two out.

"I took a curve ball right down the middle," Norm said. "I've learned since then. Now I take the fast ball right down the middle for the third strike."

Norm Rejoins Old Pal Lumpe

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—Norm Siebern will be reunited with his old pal, fellow Missourian Jerry Lumpe, when he checks in at the Kansas City training camp this spring.

Former roommates in the minors and with the Yankees, Siebern and Lumpe also co-starred on the basketball varsity for two

years at Southwest Missouri State in Springfield.

They also roomed together at Southwest Missouri, where their coach was Bob Vanatta, highly-regarded mentor who starred at Bradley, then coached at Army. Vanatta now is head basketball coach at Memphis State.

against the Braves in the 1958 World Series. On opening day, 1959, Siebern partially repaid his considerate pilot by pounding a game-winning homer. Ol' Case, always fond of the bright outfield prospect, frequently had applied his psychological needle to perk up Siebern, and most often

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8, COL. 4)

Siebern as Bomber Biffer



NORM SIEBERN donned specs last season as a member of the Yankees in order to improve vision in his right eye, which checks at 20-50.

'Yep, It's a Perfect Fit'



NORM takes an early gander at how he'll look in his new headgear when he joins the Athletics for training at West Palm Beach this spring.