

Giant Jinx Hitting Again; Whitey Lockman Tripped

On Hospital List



Whitey Lockman

Stellar Outfielder Is Shelved for Several Months by Fracture of Leg

By KEN SMITH
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Hard luck struck the Giants in exactly the spot where they could least afford it when Whitey Lockman, 20-year-old center fielder whose speed and power epitomized the Polo Grounders' transition from a ponderous to a lively team, suffered a fracture of the fibula, six inches above the ankle, April 8, at Sheffield, Ala. Sliding into second base as Clint Hartung grounded to Lou Boudreau, starting a double play, the best base runner on the club snapped the bone.

Dr. G. F. Goodpage, of Colbert County Hospital, said the break was clean and that Lockman would be out of action three months. But it will take considerably longer before he can play like the real Lockman.

Lloyd Gearhart, who took his place, lacks Whitey's batting finesse and throwing ability. Al White, lefthanded batter, will alternate with Gearhart in center when Willard Marshall's cut hand mends and he returns to right field. To replace Lockman on the roster, Joe Lafata, who had been farmed to Minneapolis, was recalled to the Giants. All three are young speedsters who will keep things moving, though they lack Lockman's all-round ability. The Giants had hoped to surprise Eastern fans with their brilliant improvement from last year. The loss of

Sox Find New Homer Punch

Kennedy, Michaels Display Unexpected Power as Long-Ball Hitters

By MILT WOODARD
CHICAGO, Ill.

Through all the laments of what the White Sox did not have in the way of home-run power, out breaks a silver lining which might easily snap the Comiskey's from their role as the powder-puff club of the American League.



Cass Michaels

Such a silver lining has been stitched mainly by Bob Kennedy and Cass Michaels, who together accumulated more than half of the Sox' 17 home runs during spring training. Should Murrell Jones come through as he can, the trio might well furnish the South Siders the power they've been lacking these many, many years. "That Kennedy will keep right on hitting like he has during the regular season," the veteran Luke Appling has predicted. "And watch Michaels. I'm working on him, and he'll be a fine hitter."

Kennedy, now taking his first full-fledged fling at the outfield, has gained a new lease on his baseball life. He hit well over .300 for the spring exhibitions, and during the first 28 games accounted for six homers. Last year he clouted only five homers in 113 games. Bob also leads the Sox in all other extra-base departments with three triples and five doubles. He's taking a full, free swing from his righthanded stance, and there's no choking or lack of timing as of a year ago.

Michaels Finds Homer Knack
Michaels' ascendancy to the role of a home-run hitter has been even more surprising. Last year, he clouted his one and only circuit blow in the majors. This spring, the 21-year-old regular hoisted three over various left field walls, two of which gave the Sox victories over major league opposition. Thanks to Kennedy and Michaels, the Sox were far above their normal spring production of home runs. Their 17 in the first 27 games presaged a huge pickup over the 1946 season, during which they collected only 37 homers in 155 games.

Jones, Jack Wallaesa and Rookie Lloyd Christopher also have revealed ideas of exploring the outer confines of ball parks with their drives. Each contributed two homers to the Chicago total of 17, and undoubtedly would have raised the ante had they played regularly.

Still carrying a complement of 37 players, the Sox last week closed a successful exhibition tour and set up shop at Comiskey Park and Wrigley Field for a week-end stand against the Cubs. Manager Ted Lyons expected to trim his roster by some ten athletes either during or immediately after the Cub series.

Jackie's Trial Costliest Ever Given a Player

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

the International League. A shortstop in college and with the Kansas City Monarchs before the Dodgers signed him in the fall of 1945, he played second base for Montreal in 119 games. He committed only ten errors and Clay Hopper, his manager, said there was no doubt but that he could play the position in the majors.

But Eddie Stanky was entrenched there. Short and third were also closed against him. Only first base was open. His early role with the Dodgers will be a utility position, but he will undoubtedly receive an opportunity to improve himself around the initial sack, since his forte is speed. He stole 40 bases last year. It probably would be safe to say that he will do a lot of pinch-running.

Ironically enough, in his first appearance in Brooklyn, in the Dodger-Royal exhibition tilt on April 10, he made his poorest showing at the plate. In three official trips, he failed to hit a ball out of the infield. He walked once and scored on Don Lund's homer.

A Mark-Off in Red Ink

Thus has the most costly trial ever given a player come to an end. Because of the segregation laws in Florida and other southern states, the Dodgers had to leave the country. They were forced to do most of their training sans guarantee in Havana at an average cost of \$25 per day per player and had to fly 2,600 miles to Venezuela in order to get in three games against major leaguers, namely, the Yankees.

On the ledger, the approximate \$50,000 loss will be itemized as spring training expenses. But to the directors of the Brooklyn club and others interested in Dodger financial matters, the red ink will always spell Jackie Robinson. It will be an indelible mark that baseball will never forget.

Certainly there never was a trial like it before and it is doubtful that the future will produce anything to match it, what with the principal figure never even donning the uniform of the club he was trying to make during spring training and only casually meeting less than half his potential teammates. More unusual was the Montreal club's 2,000-mile flight from Havana to Panama for a \$6,000 guarantee when it knew even before it left that it was going to lose at least \$2,000.

The main idea was to give Robinson as many games as possible against the Dodgers, and to hell with the cost. It was Rickey's theory that the more games the Negro played against the Flock, the better he would look and the less resentment against him. No man ever had greater faith in the ability of a ball player. We believe that it was Branch's honest opinion that the Brooklyn players would come rushing to him and shout:

"Let's have that fellow. He can win the pennant for us."

To put it mildly, it didn't happen that way. However, a quiet poll conducted by the Flatbush Secret Service revealed that no one would quit the club if Robinson were made a member. A few said that they would ask to be traded. What little resentment was openly expressed came from unexpected sources.

If there were any clubhouse meetings to discuss the issue, none was admitted. Leo Durocher had said that one would be held to ask the players if they would object to Robinson joining the club, but later changed his mind. Rickey said he welcomed the opinions of all players on new men joining the club, often asked for them, but that

Dixie Walker Draws Boos at Jackie's Flatbush Bow

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—At Jackie Robinson's debut at Ebbets Field with Montreal, April 10, certain members of the Harlem delegation among the 14,282 fans vociferously booed Dixie Walker on his appearances at the plate. This was something distinctly new in Flatbush, where the People's Choice has been the big hero for years.

Walker has made only one comment on Robinson. That was last winter when he declared that he didn't have to worry about Robinson so long as he was in a Montreal uniform.

Now that Jackie's a full-fledged member of the Dodgers, Dixie will probably accept him with the same grace as the other players have done. Here recently the tide set strongly in favor of Robinson among the Brooklyn players. BURN.

A's Keep Foes From Plate --Stay Away Themselves

On Relief Line



Russ Christopher

A's to Stress Bunt Attack; Dietrich Injury Fails to Dim Rosy Hill Picture

By ART MORROW
PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

The Athletics returned from training in Florida, primed for the opener at Yankee Stadium, with no fewer than five players who batted over .300 in the 21 exhibition tests against major league opposition.

Don Richmond and Hank Majeski, rivals for the job at third base, headed the list with respective averages of .343 and .320, Richmond in 35 times at bat, Majeski in 50 tries. Left Fielder Sam Chapman, whose 26 hits included

four homers and a triple, not to mention 17 runs-driven-in, hit .317; Second Baseman Gene Handley, up 77 times, .312, and George Binks, the outfielder-first baseman acquired from Washington, .305 in 59 stabs.

Nevertheless, game-by-game developments offered venerable Connie Mack no reason to re-estimate the A's run-making potential, for the club, crossing 85 times to the opposition's combined 83, wore out no home plates. Only one team beaten by the Philadelphians scored more than three runs (the Browns' "B" club losing once by 18 to 6, the varsity by 12 to 6), and of the A's nine victories, three were shutouts and two others achieved by one-run margins.

They'll Stress the Sacrifice

The pattern to be followed by the A's became increasingly apparent as the exhibition tour waned. Forced to play their cards close, they laid increasing stress on sacrifices. Dick Adams, substitute first baseman, led in this department with five, but even the hetter hitters figured in the strategy. Binks, for instance, sacrificed twice, and Chapman, Majeski and Richmond also were called upon for bunts.

Pitching is paramount with the A's, and in this respect Connie Mack has every cause for satisfaction, even though in the last week of Florida drills his club suffered a jolt. In watching one of his fast curves pop high and drop harmlessly into Shortstop Eddie Joost's glove during a game with the Pirates, veteran Bill Dietrich cricked his neck too sharply and tore a muscle in the upper reaches of the back.

Dietrich had to leave camp early and return to Philadelphia for treatment by the team physician, Dr. Illarion Gopadze. No definite report is available yet as to how soon he'll be able to take his turn, but for the present, he is eliminated from the list of starting pitchers. So is Everett Fagan, who has a sore arm, while young Carl Scheib, who allowed only two singles and no earned runs in eight innings, needs more work.

Christopher in Relief Role

However, this leaves seven capable righthanders ready and willing, so many, indeed, that Connie and his advisers have about decided to use long lank Russ Christopher solely in relief. Being so thin—six feet three and one-half inches, and only 180 pounds, Russ, winner of 14 games in 1944 and 13 in '45, warms up quickly, a prerequisite for a fireman.

"Christopher is capable of a great deal of work, if given in small doses," says Mack. "Every day, maybe."

Ever since Jittery Joe Berry went to the Indians last year, the A's have needed a fireman, and the current crop of potential starters offers a timely opportunity to experiment with Chris.

Jesse Flores, Bob Savage, Bill McCahan, Joe Coleman, Phil Marchildon and Dick Fowler all were at or near their peak on the basis of late Florida performances, and none yet has been discarded from the group of possible starting pitchers.

Marchildon allowed 13 earned runs on 27 hits in 32 innings this spring, while Fowler was nicked for seven runs on 30 hits in 33 rounds. Four of the hits and two of the earned runs permitted by Marchildon came in the first two innings of the A's final big league exhibition in Florida, against the Pirates at Miami Beach. But after that the French-Canadian did not give up a hit, retiring the Bucs in order.

the management would make the decisions, regardless.

That Rickey had made a definite decision was first indicated on Wednesday, April 2, when he returned to Havana after an all-day fishing trip. There was no doubt that he had given considerable thought to the Robinson problem while casting about for the elusive tarpon, from the very minute he entered the room where the newspapermen sat awaiting his return.

Without even taking time to change from his fishing clothes, he announced: "Robinson will return to first base tonight and play there every remaining game with Montreal." It was the second time he had made such an announcement, for a few days previously the Negro had been taken off the initial sack to give the Royals an opportunity to eliminate Kevin Connors and break in Lou Ruchser.

Rickey Gone, But Robbie Back
But this time he indicated to the assembled scribes that he meant business by asking one of his aides to make sure that his instructions were conveyed to Clay Hopper, Montreal manager. Then the fun started. Hopper not only resented such indirect orders but told the boss about it in no uncertain manner in a star chamber battle that lasted well into the morning.

The next day Rickey was gone and, much to the amazement of all concerned, Robinson was back at second base for Montreal. Hopper acknowledged Rickey's orders but insisted that his duty to the Montreal club came first. Ruchser was his first baseman, and he wanted to give him a chance to play.

What was said over the telephone that night is not a matter of public record, but the next time the clubs met Robinson was back at first base. That was Saturday, April 4, and it proved to be the Negro's last game until the skirmishes at Ebbets Field. Bruce Edwards slid into him in getting back to first base in a run-down and Robinson, forced to leap for a high throw, tumbled over the runner.

He wasn't seriously injured, but was shaken up, had a pain in the back and was unable to play the next day. It was the second time in his short and strange trial that he was forced out of the lineup. Earlier he was laid low by a stomach disorder and there is small doubt but that he was still feeling its effects in the few games he played in the interim.