

Reds Are a Team on Rise; Reason Is Howsam

By PAT HARMON

CINCINNATI, O.—Champagne spilled all over the Cincinnati locker room. People poured it on other people's heads. Some people shook up a bottle and squirted it on other people.

They drenched people. Suddenly a young man ran up to Bob Howsam and said, "I thank you for putting me on this ball club."

Just as suddenly another player turned to me, and said, "You know why we won the National League pennant? Because there were no cliques on this ball club."

"Everybody had a common purpose."

It reminded me of a statement the manager, Sparky Anderson, made at the Cincinnati Club last month. "Bob Howsam traded away 80 percent of the people he found when he came here, and 60 percent of those were clubhouse lawyers."

"Clubhouse lawyer" is the name baseball players have for agitators. They find trouble, they look for dissension. They're never happy. They always knock.

Bob Supplied New Parts

Howsam did it. He took a club that had come close to the pennant year after year, and he put in the new parts that made it a champion.

I've written many pieces about Howsam since he came to Cincinnati. The first was a recital of his baseball background as I knew it—the Western League, the association with Branch Rickey, the Howsam family history from Colorado.

The second piece had an introductory sentence that asked, "What kind of baseball man is Bob Howsam?" And I tried to write what he had told me at a meeting in Tampa in spring training, on his first year here.

"The kind of baseball man I want to be," he had said, "is to have the kind of team that people will say, 'This is the best.' I want people to say, 'There are three kinds of baseball players. Good baseball players, major league



Bob Howsam . . . Something Special.

baseball players and Cincinnati baseball players. I want people to say—Cincinnati baseball players, they're something special, they're the best."

"I can do that with the right managing, the right scouting and the right organization."

Howsam has done it. All things considered, the star of the three-game sweep over Pittsburgh was Bobby Tolan. He drove in the winning run in the 3-2 finale. He had three hits the previous day.

Howsam brought Tolan to the Reds two years ago in a trade. He gave up Vada Pinson, who's 10 years older. He got the Cardinals to throw in Wayne Granger, who's a relief pitcher par excellence.

Howsam got Woody Woodward for shortstop in exchange for a mediocre pitcher, Milt Pappas, and got the Atlanta Braves to throw in Clay Carroll, another top reliever.

Rookie Pilot Leads the Way

He made trades to bring in Jim Merritt and Jim McGlothlin, starting pitchers. He invented Sparky Who? You know, Sparky Anderson, who came from obscurity and is a rookie manager with a pennant winner.

The club has roots in the farm system. Many players, such as John Bench, were scouted and signed in the Bill DeWitt era. Some stars, such as Pete Rose, go back to the scouting and signing of the Gabe Paul regime.

But Howsam put it all together. He is the reason a player can look around the clubhouse and say, "There are no cliques here."

He is the reason Anderson said the night after the clinching victory, "People ask why our young pitchers are so ready. It's because they've got a philosophy all through the system. When you are ready to put on that uniform that says 'Cincinnati' across the front, you are with the best."

I looked at the Cincinnati roster. This is a team on the rise. It is going places. Pete Rose, 28, is the oldest.

The Pirates, who went down in three straight games, 3-0, 3-1, 3-2, hardly believe the good pitching of the Reds is so young. Don Gullett is 19, Milt Wilcox 20, Wayne Simpson 21, Gary Nolan 22.

Unassisted Triple Play, First Series Slam in '20

(Continued From Page 5)

pany the team on its last visit to Cleveland as "a matter of sentiment," according to a Yankee official.

Another tangential but absolutely intrinsic factor in the Indians' drive to a world championship involved the White Sox, an immensely talented, though pitifully discordant, club.

The poorly paid Chicago White Sox threw the 1919 World Series to the Cincinnati Reds. In his book, "Eight Men Out," author Eliot Asinof contends that the White Sox remained under control of gamblers and purposely lost several games in the 1920 season as well, including their first game of the year in Cleveland and the entire three-game series in Boston August 30-September 1.

The Indians did not recover quickly from the loss of Chapman, who had played 1,303 games at shortstop. By August 30, they had lost 13 of 18 games and had fallen to third place, 2½ games behind the streaking White Sox. The Yanks were second, 1½ behind.

Two Games in Front

As a result of the White Sox' "slump" in Boston, however, the Indians bounced back into the lead and held it except for two days in mid-September to win the pennant by two games over Chicago and three over New York.

With the Black Sox scandal so fresh in the public's mind, wagering went on with the greatest of caution. Nevertheless, the Indians were the favorites to beat the Dodgers in the best-of-nine Series. The reasons were fourfold.

According to the late Franklin (Whitey) Lewis in his historical book on the Tribe: (1) The Dodgers agreed that Joe Sewell should be eligible for the Series; (2) the Indians had six regular .300 hitters or better, while the Dodgers had only three regulars at that plateau; (3) the Indians' front-line pitching was considered superior, and (4) Cleveland had a great inspirational leader in Tris Speaker.

Each reason proved to be significant.

Sewell was purchased from New Orleans on September 11 to succeed Chapman at shortstop, a position he played eminently well for the next 13 years. Known as the man who never struck out, Sewell hit .329 in the last 22 games of the 1920 season and compiled a career batting average of .312.

Under the circumstances, it was virtually impossible for the Dodgers to bar Sewell from participating in the World Series. The rule was the same then as it is now: A player must be on the roster by September 1 to be eligible for the World Series.

Sewell Made Eligible

Because of Chapman's death, the Dodgers agreed to waive the rule. Although he hit only .174 and committed six errors in the Series, Sewell made three outstanding plays and was far superior to anyone else the Indians had who could play the position.

Although on paper the Indians were not a devastating team when the season started, all but two regulars enjoyed the best year or one of the best two seasons of their careers, a typical pattern with one-shot winners. The Indians had a team batting average of .303, which was second to fourth-place St. Louis' .308. Speaker, the 32-year-old player-manager, hit a robust .388, second to George Sisler's .407, and the Gray Eagle drove in 107 runs, one of three Tribe sluggers to reach the 100-RBI level.

Dodger left fielder Zack Wheat, who was destined to join Speaker in the Hall of Fame eventually, led the Brooklyn attack with a .328 mark. Center fielder Hi Myers played every game and topped the Dodgers with 80 runs batted in. As a team, the Dodgers hit .277, which was not unusual for the era.

Cleveland's pitching appeared superior and proved to be so in the Series. The three regular starters—all righthanders—recorded 75 of the Indians' 98 victories. Jim Bagby posted a 31-12 record. Stanley Coveleski and Ray Caldwell followed with 24-12 and 20-10, respectively.

The Brooklyn ace was spitball-

ing righthander Burleigh Grimes, who was 23-11 that year and just entering the peak of his career. Beyond Grimes were good but not outstanding hurlers, including Rube Marquard, who was 10-7 and in the twilight of a brilliant career.

Cleveland had a fourth pitcher, however, who was an ace in the hole. Although the Indians' Big Three showed no signs of faltering, it was felt all season they needed a lefthanded starter. That's why they purchased southpaw Duster Mails from Portland in August.

Ironically, Mails had failed twice in previous trials with the Dodgers, but he had a perfect 7-0 record for the Indians and then hurled a shutout victory over the Dodgers in the Series and pitched scoreless ball in 6½ innings of relief in the second-game loss.

Change in Site

A snag in the plans of Cleveland Owner Jim Dunn and Speaker occurred before the first Series game was played. Originally scheduled to open in Cleveland, the first three games were hastily shifted to Brooklyn, when it appeared the additional seating Dunn was installing in League Park wouldn't be completed in time. The contractor needed four extra days. The contractor was Jim Dunn himself, a construction mogul.

Dodger Manager Uncle Wilbert Robinson pulled a surprise move by nominating the veteran Marquard to open the Series. Admitting he was trying to take advantage of the contours of Ebbets Field, Robinson perhaps was counting on the emotional aspects evidenced by Marquard's early history.

Born and raised in Cleveland as Richard William Lemarquis, he was a product of Cleveland's sandlots. The Indians, however, had turned thumbs down on the lefthander 13 years earlier because of his poor move to first base and his shabby fielding. Marquard won 205 games in the National League. He did not beat the Indians, however.

Coveleski, the big Pole from Shamokin, Pa., was Manager Speaker's choice to open the Series and he won the first of his

three victories, each of them five-hitters, 3-1.

The second game matched the top pitchers from each league—Grimes and Bagby—and the Dodgers became disagreeable. Brooklyn scored single runs in the first, third and fifth innings and Grimes' snaking spitball baffled the Indians for a 3-0 decision.

The next day was much the same as Sherry Smith, a journeyman lefthander from Georgia, who had compiled a 1.85 earned-run average in 1920 while posting only an 11-9 record, allowed only three hits for a 2-1 Brooklyn victory.

Speaker Confident

And so the favored Cleverlands returned to their Lake Erie base trailing, two games to one, but they were hardly discouraged.

"Damn it, Spoke, I hate to think about coming all the way back to Brooklyn," complained Dunn. "If we could have just won one of those two games. . . ."

Speaker interrupted his boss. "You won't have to go back, Jim," Speaker assured him. "We are going to win four straight at home."

"You think so?" asked Dunn. "I'm sure," declared Speaker with conviction.

Coveleski started game No. 4 and recorded his second Series triumph, 5-1, as the Indians laced four Dodger pitchers for 12 hits. The Series was even, two games each, and the momentum had changed.

Game No. 5 produced three of the most remarkable individual feats in World Series history, each of them firsts, only two ever repeated.

Cleveland bombarded Grimes with nine hits for seven runs in 3½ innings, including the first grand-slam homer in Series history and the first home run by a pitcher, en route to an 8-1 victory for Bagby and a 3-2 lead in the series.

Elmer Smith, the outfielder who had hit .316 and driven in 103 runs that season, hit the grand-slammer in the first inning. Appropriately, the native Ohioan had led the Indians with 12 homers during the regular campaign. Then in the

fourth inning, pitcher Bagby lofted a three-run homer into owner Dunn's new wooden seats in right field.

Fifty years later, George Uhle revealed a little-known fact. The Indians had discovered a tipoff to Grimes' pitches.

"We hit those home runs because we knew what Grimes was going to throw," Uhle says now. "In those days, we always were looking for little signs. They don't do that today. George Burns was the one who noticed it. When Grimes was going to throw his spitter, their second baseman would pick up some dirt. That was so if the ball was hit to him, he could handle the wet ball. Well, we knew what was coming."

Before the day would end, however, one more memorable feat would be accomplished.

Famous Triple Play

Indians' second baseman Bill Wambsganss, known as Wamby, who had hit only .244 that year, emblazoned his name in baseball history with a unique play—an unassisted triple play.

It occurred in the fifth inning after Pete Kilduff and Otto Miller singled in succession. Brooklyn relief pitcher Clarence Mitchell followed with a line drive to Wambsganss, who speared it in the air, stepped on second and then found himself standing face to face with Miller, who was off and running from first base.

"I intended to throw to Johnston to nail Miller after I'd stepped on second, but when I saw Miller was so close, I instinctively tagged him for the third out," said Wambsganss, who still lives in the Cleveland suburb of Lakewood.

The starch was taken out of the Dodgers, who scored only eight runs in the entire Series and none in the last two games.

Mails, who had provoked Speaker's ire when he complained of a sore arm in the third game, fashioned a three-hitter for a 1-0 verdict in the sixth game and Coveleski bested Grimes, 3-0, in the seventh as the Indians made a prophet of their manager by sweeping four at home.