

Rookie Rod Carew Stakes Out Claim To Twin Keystone

By MAX NICHOLS

ORLANDO, Fla.

All the way from Wilson in the Carolina League comes Rodney Cline Carew, 21-year-old second baseman, with an outside chance to land non-stop in **Minnesota** and play for the **Twins**.

Only the highly talented can make such a flight up the baseball ladder and make it stick. President Calvin Griffith says Carew has the talent to do this, if he can just continue to apply himself.

If he makes it stick, Carew probably will join pitcher Jim Ollom, first baseman Rich Reese and third baseman Ron Clark as rookies with the **Twins** of 1967. Ollom, Reese and Clark are given better-than-even chances to make it. And if all four stick with the club through the mid-May cut-down date, it would be one of the largest crops of rookies the **Twins** have had since they started playing in **Minnesota** in 1961.

"Carew can do it all," said Griffith. "He can run, throw and hit. He has had some growing up to do, but it looks like he has made some great strides."

"He could be the American League All-Star second baseman if he sets his mind to it."

Carew has more than just a few hurdles to get that far. First, he has to make the club. Second, he must beat out Cesar Tovar for the second base job. But he might get some help on the second part, if Tovar is needed to plug a gap in left or center field.

Martin High on Rod

"I say Carew has a chance," said Billy Martin, **Twins** infield coach. Manager Sam Mele is less overboard with his statements.

"I'm considering him," said Mele. "but I want to see more of him before I say more."

Mele, of course, has plenty to think about. He must choose between Clark and Rich Rollins at third base. He must make up his mind whether or not he feels Bob Allison can make a comeback in left field and Ted Uhlaender can hit well enough to stay in center.

And he must figure out how much he can use Ollom, if the lefthander stays with the **Twins**. As a 20-game winner at Denver (Coast), Ollom feels he deserves a chance to win a starting job.

But there are a few hurdles around — named Jim Kaat, Dean Chance, Dave Boswell, Jim Grant, Jim Perry and Jim Merritt.

Decisions Lie Ahead

It all adds up to a spring training jammed with new faces and new decisions at Orlando's Tinker Field. Why the big change in a club that has kept most of its nucleus the last few years?

It was the trade of Don Mincher and Jim Hall, plus pitcher Pete Cimino, to the Angels for Chance. That opened up the way for Reese and Clarke.

"This trade will give us a chance to develop a lot of our young players," said Griffith the December morning after the trade. And his words are coming true in spring training.

Griffith became excited about Carew during a visit to the Florida In-



Rod Carew

structural League last fall. But, even so, it's surprising that a player so far down in the minor leagues could cause so much fuss.

Carew admits he has had problems at times.

"I would get down on myself," he said. "And I would have trouble getting out of it. Vern Morgan (Wilson manager last year) worked with me an awful lot."

Majors Are Goal

"He taught me that the only place to play is in the major leagues and that the only way to get there is to work hard. That's what I'm trying to do now—work as hard as I can."

Carew, a 6-foot, 170-pounder, was born in the Panama Canal Zone. His family now lives in New York City. He hit .303 and stole 52 bases for Orlando (Florida State) in 1965, and he stole 28 bases last year at Wilson with a .292 average.

Morgan enjoys describing him. "When he runs, it's pretty," said Morgan. "He seems to glide—to his left or right at second base or on the base paths. You don't mind working with a kid like that. He's got it."

Clark doesn't cause quite so much excitement, but he and Reese are the most likely of all the rookies to wind up in **Minnesota** this spring.

That's because there is the most need for Clark—either as a third

Twins' Payroll Could Reach \$700,000, Griffith Admits

ORLANDO, Fla. — President Calvin Griffith said the **Twins** payroll "has a good chance of going as high as \$700,000" this year.

Griffith and Ron Kline agreed to terms on March 7. That wound up the **Twins** signing problems for 1967. Kline signed for about \$35,000—about a \$5,000 raise.

If the payroll for the 25-man squad after May 15 goes over \$650,000, it will surpass last year's club record. And the **Twins** might replace the Yankees as the highest-salaried club in the American League.

The **Twins** lost Jim Hall, Don Mincher, Johnny Klippstein and Camilo Pascual—all paid more than \$20,000. But they gained Dean Chance and well over \$40,000, plus Kline. Griffith said the raises he gave would push the payroll beyond last year's level.

baseman or as a utilityman—and a special need for Reese as a back-up man behind first baseman Harmon Killebrew and as a utility outfielder.

Clark is an ex-Golden Glove boxer and former rodeo bronco buster who walked into spring camp in cowboy boots with the label of "outstanding defensive third baseman; improved hitter."

But that's just part of Clark.

He's a 5-10, 165-pounder with supple, wiry muscles that evidently adjust quickly to his orders.

"He has played shortstop and second base for me," said Cal Ermer, who managed Clark at Denver last year. "He even has played in the outfield when I needed him. And one day he caught six innings when I ran out of catchers."

"He volunteered for that—said he caught as a kid."

"I think he adjusts pretty well."

Possible Utility Role

This means Clark might work well as a utilityman if he fails to beat out the solid-hitting, five-year veteran Rollins at third. Mele remained conservative during the first two weeks of training.

"I have heard that Clark is a terrific defensive third baseman," said Mele. "But I haven't seen him. Until I do, I won't know for sure. I want to see how well he comes in on the slow-hit ball, how well he moves to his left and how he handles all of the hard plays."

In general, the **Twins** want to see if Clark can hit major league pitching. He batted .294 at Denver last year, collecting 94 RBIs and 16 home runs. That's quite a bit of power for a 24-year-old with a 30½-inch waist.

But Clark slammed a home run in the **Twins** first intrasquad game, plus a double. Then he singled twice in the next one.

"It's up to me to prove that I can do it," said Clark.

Rollins, having a good spring, is trying to win back his old job, but has only admiration for Clark.

Clark Wants to Play

"He's a good ball player," Rich said. "I like his attitude. It's the best part about him. He wants to play."

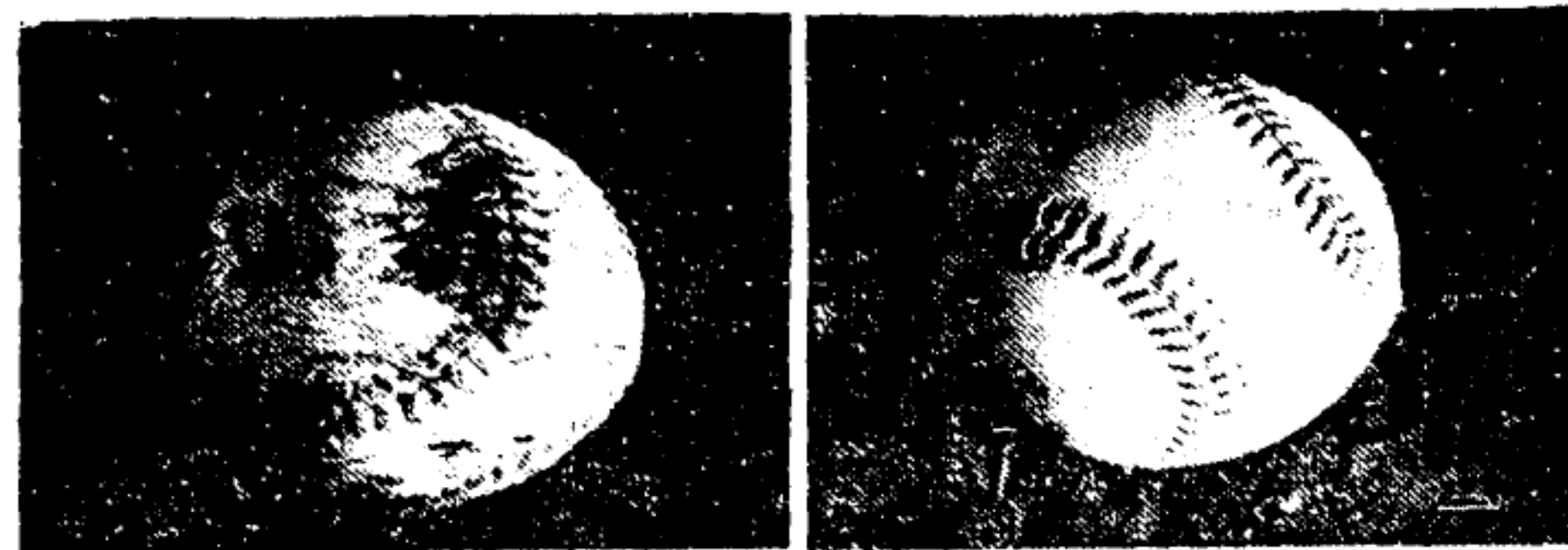
Ollom brings the most impressive minor league record into camp. But he brought it in late, holding out until March 4 in asking for \$12,000 to \$15,000. He wound up signing at Griffith's price of about \$9,000.

He struck out 137 and walked only 64 in 247 innings for Denver last year. And even more important, he gained 11 of his victories in Denver, a hitter's park.

And Griffith likes his attitude about pitching.

"I'm not worried about getting the opportunity to pitch," Ollom said. "I'll make the opportunity. And I'll win. I know I can pitch well enough to win in the major leagues."

But those six veterans have the advantage of experience. If Ollom



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Dean Holds His Fire In War With Angels

By MAX NICHOLS

ORLANDO, Fla.

Dean Chance is playing it cool, man, after reading Jim Piersall's charges and the remarks of ex-Twin Don Mincher.

Piersall said, in effect, that the Angels will be better off without Chance pitching for them this year. But that failed to stir the anger of the right-hander with the **Twins**. Mincher was quoted in THE SPORTING NEWS as

saying that the **Twins** "traded too much talent" to get Chance. But Dean merely conceded that "we did give up a lot."

There was one point, reported by a wire service, on which Chance differed completely with opinions from the California camp—his spring home the last five years.

Mincher and Jim Hall, another ex-Twin, were quoted as saying they never had been worked so hard by the **Twins** as they have by the Angels of Bill Rigney this year.

Twins Manager Sam Mele went to Chance when he heard that.

"I wanted to find out what we might do differently if there is something I've been missing," said Mele. But Chance said the **Twins** camp is similar to ones he had gone through with the Angels.

"We run far more drills on fundamentals here with the **Twins** than we did for the Angels when I was with them," Chance said. "I think that's good."

Youngsters Pushed Along Fast in Minors

"Young players come up faster now than they once did. They don't learn fundamentals in the minors as well as they once did."

"We run the same drills that the Angels did; we just do more of them."

But Chance refused to get drawn into a verbal war. "I don't let remarks bother me," he said. "When I was younger, I might have, but not now."

"I don't care what Piersall has to say. And I hope Mincher and Hall both have good years with California. They are good guys. And that Pete Cimino could be a good pitcher. That is quite a bit of talent to give up."

"But even with the loss of Hall and Mincher, the **Twins** have the Angels of last year beat by a long way in run-scoring power. If Rich Rollins plays third base all year, he can help make up for the loss. And Bob Allison might have a good year and make up for the rest of it."

Any chance of a rivalry when he pitches against the Angels?

"I'll try as hard against them as I will against the other eight clubs," Chance said. "I hope I don't make the mistake of trying too hard and get beat. I've seen that happen."

is unable to earn a starting job, the **Twins** must decide whether it's best to use him as a spot starter and part-time reliever or send him back to the minors.

"It could be a tough decision," said Mele. But Ollom figures he'll make it easier by winning a starting job.

There are other impressive rookies in the **Twins** camp. Graig Nettles has hit long line drives, but he has an injured ankle. Mele "likes the actions" of shortstop Greg Werdick, drafted from the Cubs as a possible utility shortstop.

Curt Murray threw hard in the bull pen and appeared to be a "potential relief pitcher." Bob Castiglione pitched three sharp innings in an intrasquad game.

Twin Tracks: It was a boy for out-

fielder Andy Kosco and a girl for Tom Mee, **Twins** publicity chief. Kosco's wife gave birth to 11-pound Bryan. They now have two boys and two girls. The Mees now have two girls with four boys. Mee's new daughter is Elizabeth.

Curt Sauer, rookie pitcher who lives in Royalton, Minn., was sidelined with hepatitis early in spring training. . . . Ron Keller signed his contract after getting out of service. . . . He was with the **Twins** briefly last year after pitching at Charlotte and Denver. . . . Bob Allison and Ted Uhlaender were the most impressively improved hitters in early spring practice. . . . Tony Oliva has been taking treatments for a sore neck, which bothered him the second half of last season. Oliva also had headaches last summer.

Arm Hurting, Versalles Says

ORLANDO, Fla. — **Twins** shortstop Zoilo Versalles is undergoing his usual spring handicap—a sore arm.

"I thought I hurt my arm only a little bit, but I guess I was wrong," the Cuban said.

Versalles said the injury occurred, March 10, during the exhibition with the Orioles at Miami.

"I threw out Frank Robinson from deep in the hole," he recalled, "and felt a twinge. But, the next day, I thought my arm would fall off, it was so sore."

"The arm is weak. It needs a rest."

Several weeks ago, Versalles said his arm was "tired." He continued to throw, however, using an overhanded motion, instead of his usual underhanded flip.

Last year, Versalles hurt his arm near the start of the American League season.

He feels it's better to have a sore wing early in training than near the end.