

Bond's Twin Stock Rises Behind Specs

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

Walt Bond heard the umpire growl, "Ball," and then he was startled out of the batter's box when the umpire tapped him on the shoulder.

"Did you see that pitch?" the umpire asked.

The 67 Bond stared blankly down at the man in blue. He felt like a driver stopped by a cop. He didn't know if he had been speeding, running a stop sign or thinking out loud where umpires should go.

"Yeh," he said. "I saw it."
"Then why didn't you hunch?" the umpire shouted. "The ball almost hit you in the head."

When Bond realized what it was all about, he confessed:

"No, I didn't see it." The umpire called Denver Manager Cal Ermer out and told him to "get this guy outta here." The next day, Bond's eyes were checked, and he was ordered to wear glasses.

That happened last July, when Bond was playing for Denver in the Pacific Coast League. He had been traded by the Houston organization to Minnesota's Denver farm club for catcher Ken Retzer.

Another Comeback Bid

And now, ten months after he started wearing glasses, Walter Franklin Bond is back in the major leagues. At 29, he's making another in a series of comeback attempts: this time as a pinch hitter for the Twins.

This long, tall native of Denmark, Tenn., still expects to duck more than just the overhanging decks of major league parks. He figures the pitches will whiz around his head and shins, as they often have since he was a rookie for Cleveland in 1960.

But, at least, he can see them now. And he can see strikes, too.

"With these glasses," Bond said, "I'm a different man. I think they help my fielding, too. I've had trouble fielding before. But just before I started wearing glasses, there were times I didn't see the ball until I saw the other outfielders running after it."

"I knew I was having trouble seeing signs and things when I was driving. But I thought it was just shadows and such things. I never thought my eyes would bother me in baseball. At first, last year, I thought I just wasn't used to the lights of minor league parks."

"But after I put on the glasses,

Ja Wohl! Bratwurst Breaks Into Menu at Met Stadium

TWIN CITIES, Minn.—Jimmy Robertson, concessionaire at Metropolitan Stadium, is introducing a new line of comestibles for Twin fans this season. It should make him a truly big man in the area's German communities.

Jimmy is offering bratwurst, sauerkraut and draft beer this year.

Before any Scandinavians rise up in protest, demanding equal chance to get heartburn, Jimmy says he'd try lutefisk—if he thought it would sell at the old park.

"We're going to try out the bratwurst," Robertson said, "to see if the people want it. If they do, we might branch out."

Prospects are unlimited. Instead of just the traditional hotdogs, Jimmy might try tortillas, pizza, fish and chips, chow mein and who knows what. Cleveland, the White Sox and other ball clubs already have ventured into these lines.

But right now, he's just concentrating on the bratwurst.

"We'll try a bratwurst and sauerkraut stand on the first level behind first base," Robertson said. "And we'll have a draft beer station nearby, where you can buy 16 ounces of suds for 50 cents."

Mele Sees Twins, Tigers As Top Bird Challengers

TWIN CITIES, Minn.—After seeing all of the American League clubs training in Florida, Manager Sam Mele gave his Minnesota club and Detroit the best chances to catch Baltimore.

"Right now, Baltimore still is the club to beat," Mele said. "A lot depends on how Baltimore's pitching holds up, of course. I like Detroit. I think they probably can score enough runs to carry Ray Oyler as a defensive shortstop."

"And with our pitching, I think we're as good as anyone. I think Chicago has a chance, because of all that pitching. I haven't seen California, so I didn't include them in my thinking."

I never had any more trouble seeing the ball."

Bond batted .316 for Denver last year. Ermer recommended him to the Twins as a pinch hitter, a man who seems to be able to walk off the bench and hit. He went 9-for-15 as a pinch hitter at Denver.

Bench Is Untested

And this year, with Don Mincher and Jim Hall traded to California, the Twins are opening their bid for the American League pennant with a young, inexperienced bench. Mele is hoping Bond can help the reserve strength with his lefthanded pinch-hitting.

"He's swinging the bat real well," Mele said after Bond hit his second home run of spring training. "We can sure use him. That's why I've been giving him a lot of chances to play this spring."

Bond is one of those players who seem to have been around for decades. Calvin Griffith remembers well when Bond was a Cleveland rookie in 1960. He had a big day at Washington's old Griffith Stadium, blasting two of the longer home runs ever hit there.

"I think he went 4-for-4 that day, or something like that," said Griffith. But Bond ran across numerous difficulties. And he still needs more than 60 days in the majors to qualify for the baseball pension.

He says one of the most important difficulties he ever encountered started soon after his big day in Washington.

"I guess I started too fast as a rookie that spring," Bond said. "We went into Yankee Stadium, and I hit the first pitch Ryne Duren threw to me into the upper deck—foul. His next one got me—right here."

He pointed to his right forehead. "That pitch by Duren destroyed me," he said. "I used to step into the pitch as a young player. But after that pitch by Duren, I started stepping back out of the box



Walt Bond

on every pitch. The word got around.

"Everyone started throwing at me, figuring they could brush me back and I would be through. I remember once Don Mossi threw one between my legs. After that, you could have sold me for a nickel that day."

Bond never made it with Cleveland. He hit .320 for Salt Lake City in 1962 and .380 in 12 games for Cleveland that year. But, in 1963, he was sent to Jacksonville.

He made it back to the major leagues in 1964 with Houston, but he says he had whipped his mental block about inside pitches long before that.

"I learned to use that brushback pitch as a tool," he said. "I learned to step back and hit it. I needed a miracle to stay in baseball, and that was it. There was nothing else I could do."

"They started getting me out with change-of-pace pitches. I imagine I'll get plenty of those coming back to the American League."

Predictable Dodgers

"But I had learned every club in the National League and how the pitchers handled me—when to expect the brushback pitch. Dodger pitchers always throw the brushback on the second pitch. I once hit two homers in a row off Don Drysdale on the second pitch—both inside."

"Jim Bunning of Philadelphia was the best. He always worked it so the umpire was on his side. He would throw two or three around the plate, then nail you. It was hard to tell when to expect it. He hit me five times in 1964."

Bond had his best major league year ever in 1964, driving in 85 runs with 20 homers—eight in Houston's pre-Dome park with a deep right field.

"They told me if I hit three homers over that fence against that wind, I would get a raise. I hit eight," said Bond.

In 1965, he played in only 117 games and still drove in 47 runs for Houston. But, last year, he was sent to Oklahoma City, which traded him to Denver. Now that he's back in the majors, he expects the "brushbacks" again. It's like going back to the same firing squad to earn a living.

"If they want to hit you they throw a slider behind your head," Bond said. "Your first reaction is to duck back, and you duck right into it. If they just want to brush you back, they throw right at you, and you can get out of the way."

Bothered By Sore Back

This spring, Bond was slowed at first by sore back muscles. But everything was all right as the Twins opened their season. And Bond was on the 28-man squad that arrived from Florida.

"I was anxious to come to Min-

Old Pals Boswell, Pascual Now Enemies on the Field

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

Two former roommates met on the baseball field in Orlando this spring—Dave Boswell of Minnesota and Camilo Pascual of Washington.

It's a story as old as baseball itself, but somehow it never lacks irony or pathos: Two fellows who have been forced by circumstances to become foes.

"There's the man who taught me how to throw the curve," said Boswell, "and I strike him out with it."

The roles of the little drama are familiar. Boswell is a 22-year-old pitcher with his whole career ahead of him—possibly one of the brightest futures in baseball. Pascual is a veteran, a two-time 20-game winner making a comeback at 33.

Pascual is an artist at pitching. He had his best years in Minnesota before Boswell ever reached the big leagues. The Twins traded him because they have so many starters: Dean Chance, Jim Kaat, Jim Perry, Jim Merritt, Jim Grant—and Boswell.

Boswell roomed with Pascual on trips during two of Camilo's most difficult years—the pennant season of 1965, when Pascual suffered through an operation he thought might end his career, and last year, when critics started wondering if he had lost his fast ball.

Boswell is known as a clubhouse funny man, a guy who likes to make people laugh with jokes, noises and wisecracks. Undoubtedly, Pascual knows more about Boswell than any man in major league baseball today.

There was the day before the 1965 season opened two years ago, when several Twins were gathered in a special room for head table guests at a luncheon. Boswell saw a set of drums and sat down to play, inviting others to join him.

"Look at that rookie," said Pascual with a big laugh. "Boy, he's some rookie. He acts like he's been here all his life."

But Boswell didn't feel very comical that day in Orlando this spring. Dave won the game. Camilo was still concentrating on getting into shape.

"I felt funny," Boswell said. "I hated to do it to the man."

The fortunes of baseball are bound to bring these two together again as opponents. Boswell has the years on his side. But Pascual has plenty of pitching talent—knowledge, fast balls and the famous curve that made him El Curvo—to have his moments.

And no one is pulling for him more than Boswell.



DAVE BOSWELL



CAMILO PASCUAL

nesota," he said. "I think I'll like it here. I've been making my home in Houston. That's where my wife and boy are. And that's where I worked out all winter to get ready for this chance."

Twin Tracks: Tony Oliva missed more than a week of exhibitions with a nagging injured side muscle late in spring training. . . . Rich Rollins survived a bruised knee, a sore foot and an infection in his hand to take the lead over Ron Clark in the Twins' third base race. . . . Ron Keller, Charlie Murray and Bob Castiglione, all pitchers, plus catcher George Mitterwald, were the last four players cut from the Twin squad to reach the 28-player limit.

Andy Kosco jumped into the Twins' center field picture during the final two weeks. Manager Sam Mele was considering platooning him with lefthanded-hitting Ted Uhlaender. This would allow the Twins to keep Rod Carew at second base. . . . Kosco can go back on a fly ball over his head and has an outstanding throwing arm, but he does not have the range and speed of Uhlaender. . . . The Twins still were talking trade—hoping to pick up a lefthanded-hitting outfielder.

Depth in starting pitchers is Minnesota's No. 1 asset, the Twins brass agree. With a lineup that includes 25-game winner Jim Kaat, former Cy Young Award winner

Grant Out for Two Weeks, But Twins Have Able Subs

TWIN CITIES, Minn.—Minnesota's depth in starting pitchers already has made a big difference.

Jim Grant was struck on the forearm by a line drive in the final week of spring training, taking him out of action possibly for two weeks, even though X-rays revealed there was no fracture.

And Grant was supposed to pitch the Twins' home opener on April 14 against Detroit.

This would have been a big blow to many clubs. But the Twins had a choice of Jim Perry, Jim Merritt or rookie Jim Ollom to join the starting rotation.

Dean Chance, Jim Grant, Jim Perry, Dave Boswell, Jim Merritt and Jim Ollom, the Twins can throw first-class pitching at the opposition for 162 games. The staff should be able to absorb injuries and weather the avalanche of doubleheaders. It has the quality to win 1-0 and 2-1 games during the batting slumps any offense must have. "And above all," said President Cal Griffith, "we should be able to avoid long losing streaks. We have a stopper in there every day."