



Dejection, Anticipation, Abhorrence and Resignation Are Reflected on Eddie Stanky's Face as He Watches the White Sox' Flag Chances Slowly Fade Away.

## Kaat's Muscle Pull Served

### As Kiss of Death to Twins

By ARNO GOETHEL

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

Pop! There goes the pennant.

Just like the musical weasel, Minnesota's pennant hopes popped along with a muscle in Jim Kaat's pitching arm on the next-to-last day of the great race.

It still was early in the opener of the final two-game series between the **Twins** and Red Sox, but Cal Ermer's lads still had a one-length edge over the Bosox and Tigers. Kaat was working on his eighth straight triumph of the month, albeit his margin was a slim 1-0 after two and one-half innings.

Firing a 1-and-2 pitch to Boston hurler Jose Santiago in the third frame, Kaat "heard something pop." It was a muscle in his left forearm. The burly lefty fanned Santiago on a swinging, full-count strike. Then, after several experimental deliveries, he missed the strike zone on two pitches to Mike Andrews and had to leave the game.

"It was just as if I might've been snapping my fingers," he said after the game. "I had enough left to get Santiago, but on those two pitches I made to Andrews, the elbow not only hurt but had sort of a weak feeling."

#### Fast Ball Was Hopping

"I felt real badly because I thought I had good stuff, especially my fast ball. It was moving as it had been all season." Ermer agreed. "He was throwing as well as I've seen him this year. It was a very unfortunate thing."

No one ever will know, of course, if Kaat would have beaten the determined Red Sox. But he was 1-0 over them this season and 14-6 for his career. What's more, he was the **Twins'** money pitcher in their pennant drive with a 7-2 record since they first saw the light of first place on August 13.

Without Kaat, the **Twins** were dead ducks. The Red Sox took a first-game lead with two runs in the fifth on four hits off Jim Perry, who neglected to cover first base on a key play; George Scott greeted Ronnie Kline with a first-pitch homer in the sixth. Short-stop Zoilo Versalles dropped Kline's force throw to second, paving the way for Carl Yastrzemski's three-run homer off Jim Merritt.

#### Chance Routed in Fourth

Dean Chance got his wish in drawing the starting assignment in the pressure-packed finale. When he was chased in the fourth inning of the **Twins'** 5-1 loss to California four days earlier, Chance had said: "I hope something's riding on Sunday's game so I can make up for this one."

Two unearned runs had given the **Twins** a 2-0 advantage when the Red Sox got to Chance in the sixth inning. Four singles and Ver-

#### Twins Set Club Gate Mark At Home and on the Road

TWIN CITIES, Minn. — Although their pennant bid fell short by one victory, the **Twins** were record attractions at home and on the road this season.

The temperature was a cool 49 degrees for their home finale, but 16,523 turned out to boost their season total to 1,483,547 for 76 dates. It was 20,000 over the former record set for 77 dates in pennant-winning 1965.

Boston's largest crowd of the season for the last game of the season — 35,770 — hiked the **Twins'** road record to a new high of 1,282,580 for 71 dates.

salles' unfortunate decision to go to the plate on Ken Harrelson's high chopper put the Sox ahead, 3-2, and left runners on second and first for Al Worthington.

Birmingham Al had trouble getting accustomed to the mound and uncorked a couple of wild pitches that allowed one run and put another on third, from where it scored on Harmon Killebrew's error.

By the time the **Twins** reached the clubhouse after Boston's 5-3 victory, Chance already had departed for the airport en route to his Wooster (O.) home via Cleveland. He left with a 20-14 record, 5-6 since August 13.

To those who had observed the **Twins** all season, neither loss came as much of a revelation.

#### Pitchers' Failures Cited

Four times within the final three weeks, for example, pitchers had forgotten to cover first base on grounders hit to the right side.

Scott's homer was the 11th off Kline in 73 innings this year. Yaz gave Merritt a yield of 22 gopher balls, tops on the **Twins'** mound corps. Versalles' error was his 31st.

Heading home, the general feeling on the **Twins'** plane seemed to be the Red Sox deserved to win the pennant because they swept the important series.

"We had the opportunity," several players said, "but couldn't do it."

Even in defeat, they had their heroes.

Little Cesar Tovar, for example, established an iron-man record of playing in 164 games. This is no mean feat, since the schedule calls for only 162, but the **Twins** tied Detroit on June 21, 5-5, and there was a 1-all deadlock with the Yankees on July 25.

Killebrew tied Triple Crown winner Yastrzemski for the homer lead at 44. His first-game swat

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## Sox Stretch, Then Snap at 11th Hour

By JEROME HOLTZMAN

CHICAGO, Ill.

"The mouse scared the elephant."

So said Manager Eddie Stanky in describing his Sox the night they were eliminated from the great American League race.

"For 157 games we laughed at them," said Stanky. "We embarrassed the whole league."

But at the finish it would have seemed that Stanky and the White Sox were somewhat red-faced themselves.

On the final Wednesday night of the season, and with only five games left on the Chicago schedule, the White Sox appeared to have the best chance to win the pennant.

Both **Minnesota** and Boston had been beaten in afternoon games. These defeats put the White Sox one game up on both the **Twins** and Tigers in the loss column and two up on the Red Sox.

A double-header victory for Chicago at Kansas City would have catapulted the Sox into the American League lead.

But the tenth-place Athletics whipped Gary Peters and Joe Horlen, 5-2 and 4-0, to take both ends of the double-header. The Sox, with Tommy John, Peters and Horlen working in that order, then lost all three games of their weekend series against Washington and thus finished with a five-game losing streak.

Had the Sox been able to win but two of these five games, they could have tied for the flag. Three victories and the pennant would have been theirs.

#### Ortega Slammed Door

But this 0-for-5 slump dropped the White Sox to fourth place, three games behind the champion Red Sox. Oddly, the cross-town Cubs, who didn't really challenge during the second half of the season, finished third and thus won the intra-city title, so to speak.

Mathematical elimination for the White Sox came on September 29, in Comiskey Park, when Phil Ortega of Washington blanked the Hose, 1-0, on a four-hitter. The next afternoon, the Sox suffered their third successive loss by a shutout, bowing to Frank Bertaina, 4-0.

The night of the Ortega loss, Stanky had a brief, closed-door meeting with his players and told them he was the man most responsible for the team not winning the pennant.

Several players later admitted they agreed with him.

"I told the players," Stanky announced to newsmen "that of all the games lost, the manager had lost the most, more than anybody individually."

Stanky also said he had had a taste of three World Series but "... would have traded in all three of them just for this one. To play in a World Series is so thrilling. You're the champs. Well, now the thrill is gone."

#### Unearned Run Galls Stanky

What hurt the most, Stanky admitted, was the loss to Ortega—the result of an unearned run.

"I just wish we hadn't lost it this way," said the little skipper. "I hate errors. A good clean base-hit is not bad, but to lose on an error is hard to take."

Then Stanky told reporters "I don't care who wins the pennant now because my boys didn't. I'm not bitter. But I've seen enough of those Buffaloes (apparently this was in reference to Carl Yastrzemski and Harmon Killebrew) and I couldn't care less about the World Series."

Later, however, Stanky changed his mind and said he would attend the World Series.

It was, of course, a disappointing finish to a hectic and exciting season, and though the club failed to draw a million at home, Owner Arthur Allyn was duly impressed and gave Stanky a new contract—this one to run through the 1970 season.

Though no terms were disclosed, Allyn indicated Stanky received a salary boost, which probably boosts him into the \$40,000 bracket.

It was the second time in Stanky's two-year managerial tenure here that Allyn gave him a new con-



THE PLAY that hurt the most. Tom McCraw leaps for Don Buford's errant relay to first base, permitting Hank Allen to reach base and set up the only run in Washington's 1-0 win over the White Sox September 29.

tract. The Brat originally was signed for three years, from 1966 through 1968, but in midseason last year, Allyn extended the contract through 1969.

So much for the future.

As for the season just ended, it was in many respects a rousing success, despite the dismal finish.

Moreover, there was one factor which even Stanky couldn't control. This was the Kansas City weather which forced postponement of what was to have been a single night game on September 26 and thus created the disastrous September 27 double-header.

An hour before this twin bill, the Sox' chances never looked better and there was much confidence as the club sent Peters against Chuck Dobson in the first game of this twin-bill.

#### Four-Hit Diet for Sox

But Peters was beaten as Dobson and two ninth-inning relievers held the Sox to a total of four hits. Dobson had a shutout for eight innings.

Then Jim (Catfish) Hunter concluded the sweep by beating Horlen in the second game. Hunter held the Comiskey to three hits as Horlen suffered his first loss since August 28.

This second-game shocker was perhaps the toughest blow of all since it eliminated the possibility of the Sox winning the flag outright. The Sox went into the Washington series with the knowledge that the best they could do was finish in a first-place tie.

After the Kansas City debacle, a reporter asked Stanky if he thought the Sox still had a chance for the flag.

Replied Stanky: "I've seen this team in first place and I've seen it in sixth or seventh place. I've seen them lose, and I've seen them put together a ten-game winning streak."

"Now, all we have to do is win three, and you stand there and ask me if I still think we have a chance. I was hired to manage 162 games and both the club and I will be around until the finish."

Obviously, Stanky will be around even longer yet.

**Sox Yarns:** Pitcher Joe Horlen, sad to report, did not make the 20-game victory circle. He had two shots for No. 20, but failed in both instances. Prior to Horlen's loss at Kansas City, he had a 0.51 earned-run average for 53 September innings and, in a stretch of four starts, yielded a total of only 12 hits.

... Veteran southpaw Gary Peters finished with more than 200 strikeouts, the second time in his major league career he has exceeded that figure. Only other White Sox pitcher with 200 or more Ks in one season was Ed Walsh, who did it five times. ... The White Sox played 63 one-run games, winning 38 and losing 25.