

Angel Derby-- Nine Entrants At Hot Corner

By BRAVEN DYER

PALM SPRINGS, Calif.

Bill Rigney can field an entire team of third basemen, if he so desires, but right now he hasn't the foggiest idea which one will be at the hot corner when the Angels open the season against Cleveland in Chavez Ravine.

Farm Director Roland Hemond thinks it will be Julio Gotay.

Many armchair experts say it will be Paul Schaal.

Some of the Cherub coaches claim it will be Vic Power.

Others are sure the job will be manned by Felix Torres.

Listing the nine candidates alphabetically, we find:

Tom Egan, 18 years of age; Gotay, pronounced Go-tie, 25; Les Kuhn, 23; Ed Kirkpatrick, 20; Winston Llenas, 21; Power, 33; Tom Satriano, 24; Schaal, 21, and Torres, 32.

For a spare, Rigney has Jose Cardenal, 21, secured from the Giants. For the time being, however, the fleet Jose will be used only in the outfield.

Egan to Get Mitt Test

Signed for \$100,000, young Egan, who stands 6-4 and now weighs better than 220, will be tried behind the plate and also at first base, although as a prep his position was third base. He batted .285 in 47 games at Quad Cities last year, knocking in 31 runs and hitting eight homers. The strapping kid is a year away, of course, so don't look for him to open with the varsity.

Gotay is on the Seattle (Coast) roster, but he is one of eight non-roster players Rig has in camp. He came to the Angels last winter from Columbus in exchange for outfielder Bob Perry. With Columbus last season, Julio hit .277, clouting 11 homers with 30 RBIs during 85 games. Born in Puerto Rico, Gotay played one full season (1962) with the Cardinals. His major league average for 147 games is .257.

"Gotay has good hands and has shown that he can hit the long ball," said Hemond. "Right now I'd have to say that he has an edge on most of the others who want to get the third base job. Julio has more experience than Schaal, who is a fine rookie, and I think he's faster, too."

"Al Widmar, pitching coach with the Phillies, managed in the winter leagues and tells me that he feels sure that Gotay can develop into a major league third baseman."

"Normally, you figure you must



Tom Satriano

have a lot of hitting power at third base. But in our case this might not be. We have power with our shortstop—Jim Fregosi—so we might be able to sacrifice a little power to gain speed and defensive ability in a man like Gotay. Yes, he's played mostly at short. But a good shortstop shouldn't find it too hard to play third."

California-born Kuhn may be a sleeper. He hit .301 in 133 games at Tri-Cities (Northwest) last year and then continued this pace against good pitching in the Arizona Instructional League.

Llenas was born in the Dominican Republic and also had a fine year with Tri-Cities. His average was .346 with 71 RBIs, 11 homers and a league-leading total of 168 hits in 128 games. Both he and Kuhn, of course, quite likely need more experience. But they're nice kids to have around.

Ed Played in Garden

Kirkpatrick played left field last season, first at Hawaii (Coast) and then with L. A. for 75 games. He did not bat to his potential, though. And with others available for flychasing, Spanky will get a thorough trial at third. He drilled there every day in winter ball.

Power, Satriano and Torres all played third for the varsity last season. None batted well enough to hold the job permanently. Torres probably was the biggest disappointment. Unless he hits, he shouldn't play regularly because Felix doesn't go to his left too swiftly and is anything but a gazelle on the paths. After he was acquired from Minnesota, Power opened a lot of games at third and then moved to first to replace Joe Adcock and rest Joe's dogs in the late innings.

In addition to Gotay, the other non-roster candidates for the hot corner job are Torres, Llenas and Kuhn.

Cal and Sam Take Separate Roads on Twin Trade Route

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

As spring training began for the Twins, Manager Sam Mele still felt the Twins must trade while President Calvin Griffith has changed his opinion.

Last October, when the Twins finished in a tie for sixth in the American League, Mele and Griffith agreed that the Twins were in need of better defense in the infield and righthanded pitching.

"I'll try to get a second baseman in the trading market this winter," Griffith was quoted as saying during the World Series. "We'll get into improving the pitching help later. We've got to straighten out our infield first."

Griffith made one trade—lefthanded pitcher Gerry Arrigo for Cesar Tovar, whom Griffith expects to be a utility infielder. The only change expected right now in the regular infield will be Harmon Killebrew in place of Bob Allison at first base.

Bernie Allen, is expected to return to the regular job at second, with Zoilo Versalles at shortstop and Rich Rollins at third, where they have been since 1962.

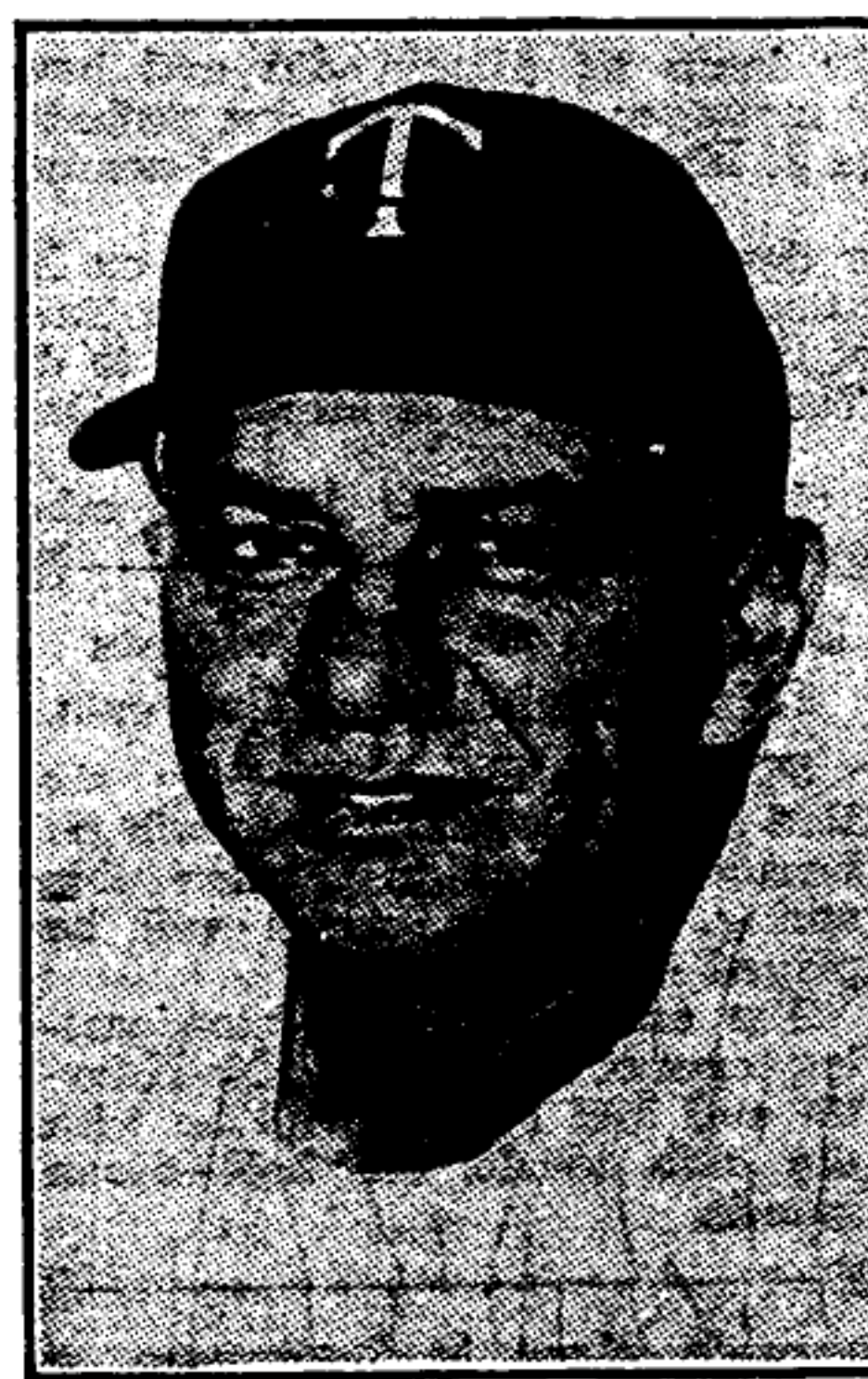
Pitching Lone Question Mark

But now Griffith is saying the Twins do "not necessarily" need to trade to improve.

"I don't think we must make changes," Griffith said. "The only thing questionable in my mind is the pitching because of arm problems in relief pitchers Bill Dailey and Garry Roggenburk."

Mele, meanwhile, told a reporter: "The only way we can improve is to make a trade. We have to. We have got to make some decisions on trading. Definitely. There has to be some changes."

"Our new coaches are good men,



Sam Mele

but I don't see how they alone can be expected to cut down significantly on the errors that hurt us so much last year."

Griffith has often said he tried hard to make a trade during the winter, but that the players he wanted were not available. He and Mele sought infielder Wayne Causey of Kansas City, catcher John Romano (now with Chicago), catcher Bob Tillman and second baseman Chuck Schilling of Boston.

"I really went out to make a deal," said Calvin. "I tried harder than I ever have tried in the winter." But Griffith normally makes his bigger trades near the end of spring training.

And he expects now to scout the players in spring camps.

Few Players Available

"There aren't many players available at the positions we need to help," Griffith said. "We have a better club than we played last season. There is no way we can have that bad a season again."

Griffith said Detroit and Cleveland still are interested in the Twins' wealth of lefthanded pitchers.

Meanwhile, Calvin himself has been convalescing in Orlando, Fla., after four weeks in bed.

"My leg is better, but it still is swollen," Calvin said.

Griffith has been taking whirlpool treatments for his leg, which had a blood clot as an aftermath of pneumonia.

Twins' Tracks: Bernie Allen reported early to the Twins' camp at Orlando and started taking treatments for his left knee, which underwent an operation in October. George Lentz, Twins' trainer, has been having Allen lift weights with the knee. Allen wants desperately to get off to a strong start and hopes to get the knee into condition as quickly as possible. . . . Bob Allison arrived in Orlando early as usual and signed his contract for 1965 at more than \$30,000. He will be the No. 3 Twin behind Harmon Killebrew and Pascual in pay. . . . Allison's chief aim this year is to avoid that long slump that seems to cut down his chance for a high batting average every season. Until last year, Allison hit a slump in May or June, then came out of it. Last season, Allison hit a streak in late May and was batting .336 until July 5. He held on at .320 until July 25 then started a slump that included only seven hits in 49 times at bat. He batted only .221 in his last 70 games. . . . First baseman Don Mincher inked a pact for about \$15,000.

Army May Keep Hands Off Oliva For Six Months

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

There is a good possibility that Tony Oliva will not be required to enter the U. S. Army before the close of the coming season.

The .323-hitting right fielder, batting champion of the American League last year and THE SPORTING NEWS' Rookie of the Year, has taken his pre-induction physical. But, so far, he has not been required to take his mental qualification test because of poor comprehension in reading and writing English.

The final decision on whether Oliva will be allowed to wait will be up to the Department of the Army. But Oliva said he was told he may be allowed to wait six months or a year to become more familiar with English.

"It is not sure that I can wait six months or a year," Oliva said. "But it is possible. They will let me know."

Oliva, a Spanish-speaking Cuban, still uses an interpreter when being



Tony Oliva

interviewed by newspapermen he does not know well.

The Twins' right fielder went through his physical smilingly, posing for pictures and signing autographs for soldiers and employees.

"I don't think they found anything wrong with me," Oliva said. "At least they didn't tell me anything was wrong. I weighed 192 pounds. At the end of last season I weighed 180."

Cal Forbade Winter Ball

This is the first time Oliva has gone through a winter without playing baseball. Twins' President Calvin Griffith refused to let the right fielder play winter ball this year.

"I'm going to spring training a week early," Oliva said. "I've got to get in shape."

Tony also never has been overweight before. But he feels he can take care of that once he begins to run in Orlando. His right ring finger, sore four months of last season, is not so painful now.

"It still is swollen, but not too much," said Tony.

Merrill McCabe, chief of the Hennepin County draft board, confirmed that it is possible Tony can wait six months or a year before taking a mental qualification test for the Army. Tony is a 23-year-old bachelor.

"The decision is up to the Department of the Army," McCabe said. "All of the tests he has taken here will be sent to them. If he is to take any more, it is up to them. If he is allowed to wait, that is up to him. He will be notified."

Proud Angels Far Ahead of Other Expansion Clubs on Victory Path

By BRAVEN DYER

PALM SPRINGS, Calif.

All major league clubs understandably are optimistic in spring training. Many rookies look good during vernal drills. And the comeback hopes of countless veterans sound much more plausible before their aging muscles and joints are subjected to the rigors of the regular-season grind.

But when the Angels look ahead, they can do so with considerably more confidence than the other major league expansion clubs. Not only are the Cherubs better fortified than before, but their record in the past four seasons is far ahead of the Senators, Astros and Mets.

As a starter, the Angels finished above .500 in two of their four years and actually were in first place at one time in midseason. No other expansion club can make either claim.

The Seraphs were 86-76 for third place in 1962 and 82-80 for fifth last season.

Los Angeles has played at a .477 clip since the



Gene Autry

American League expanded in 1961. Washington's pace has been .370.

During their three seasons, the Houston Astros have traveled at a .405 pace to .298 for the lowly Mets.

Big Edge Over Houston

The Angels have a won-lost mark which is 31 games better than Houston, 69 better than Washington and 83 ahead of the Mets.

In the matter of average victories per year, the Angels show this superiority: 77 games won to 59½ for Washington, 65½ for the Astros and 48 for the Mets.

The Angels not only far surpass the other expansion clubs, but they also have a better record during the past four seasons than two non-expansion teams in the American League.

The four-year standings show Boston seven and one-half games behind Los Angeles and Kansas City 4½ games in the rear.

Yes, Gene Autry & Co. has good reason to point with pride and face the future with something more than the normal rash of spring training hoopla.