

# Griff Feels Mild Draft Winds, Doubts They'll Blow Up Storm

By MAX NICHOLS  
TWIN CITIES, Minn.

Calvin Griffith expects his **Twins** to make less noise in the baseball draft this year than at any time since the club started playing in **Minnesota** five years ago.

"We may have one space on our major league roster to draft with," said the **Twins'** president. "And that would be only if one of our players (rookie shortstop Jim Jenkins) is called into military service."

"I don't imagine we will do much drafting this year. I understand almost all the clubs have 38 or 39 spaces filled. We have spaces on our minor league teams to draft enough to replace players we lose."

This means that if the **Twins** are going to do much personnel changing on the major league level, it will have to be done in trading. Griffith has been engaged in trade talk for a regular outfielder and for a utility infielder.

In the past five years, the **Twins** have taken an active part in the drafting. They grabbed five infielders last year to beef up a general weakness in the organization.

## Four Spots Open

"If we do any drafting, it will be for infielders again," Griffith said. But the **Twins** have only four spaces available on their Triple-A roster at Denver and ten spaces open on their Double-A Charlotte roster.

Since the World Series, the **Twins** have acquired rookies catcher George Mitterwald, righthander Danny Morris and shortstop Rick Renick from their farm clubs.

"We will protect these three," Calvin said. "We like all of them very much." A fourth impressive rookie, Rod Carew, is in military service.

So the **Twins** will go into the draft with a full roster of 40, unless Jenkins goes into service.

To make room, the **Twins** sold the



Sherry Robertson

contracts of infielders Ron Theobald and Rich Reese to Denver. Theobald was drafted only a year ago from the Cubs.

After winning the American League pennant, the **Twins** are nineteenth on the draft list.

Griffith and Sherry Robertson, **Twins'** farm director, both feel the **Twins** will lose a few prime prospects.

"If there are any players available we like, we'll draft them," said Robertson. "But remember, play-

## Whitey Witt

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head. Blood gushed all over my face.

"Rewards totaling \$1,850 were offered for leads leading to the arrest of the bottle thrower."

"I didn't play in the second game of that series because my head was swathed in bandages. But in the third game I singled over second, scoring the run that gave us a 2-1 victory and just about clinched the pennant for us. I was carried off the field on the shoulders of teammates, like a big hero, and there was a wild celebration in the locker room."

Another game etched deep in Witt's hall of memories occurred in 1923, when he ruined Howard Ehmke's (then pitching for the Red Sox) bid for a second straight no-hitter.

## Only Hit Off Ehmke

"In my first time at bat, as lead-off man, I rapped a sharp shot to third. The ball took one bounce, hit the third baseman's chest and rolled towards the coaching box. The official scorer credited me with a hit, the only one off Ehmke."

A warm, gracious man, with doughty cheer etched in his lined face, Witt is a fountain of stories. His blue eyes sparkle and his body vibrates as he recounts the golden yesteryears.

Born in Winchenden, Mass., where he was weaned on beans, brown bread, dairy-fresh milk and water right out of the old oaken bucket, Witt, now in his twilight years, is back where life started for him—on the farm.

He's been thinking of selling the farm, but it holds too many wonderful memories for him.

"Besides," he pointed out, "I live close to town, a golf course and three race tracks."

Witt, a veteran of two World Series, is 70, but he appears far from ready for the old rocking chair and slippers bit. He's too busy enjoying life.

## Wildness Plagues Osborne In Making Switch to Hill

TWIN CITIES, Minn. — The **Twins'** farm department has received word that Larry Osborne is having problems in trying to convert from a first baseman to a knuckleball pitcher.

"He's no Wilhelm," Del Wilber, manager of the **Twins'** farm club in the Florida Instructional League, told the Minneapolis Tribune.

"He can't get the butterfly pitch over the plate. He has a lot to learn about pitching."

Osborne, a power hitter in minor league baseball and for a time with Detroit, tried his knuckler on the mound late last season with Denver in the Pacific Coast League. He was 2-1 in his first three decisions in Florida.

ers drafted off our Denver roster cost \$25,000."

Regarding the draft of free agents, the **Twins** do not expect much activity there either. The **Twins** and Phillies were the only two clubs which did not draft their top choices of last June.

The **Twins** failed to sign their top three picks—shortstop Ed Leon, outfielder Del Unser and outfielder John Dow. All three are in college and unavailable for the free-agent draft this winter. Of their top ten choices, the **Twins** also failed to sign pitcher Bill Drummond of Council Bluffs, Ia.

## Signed 30 of 52 Choices

"We saved a lot of money," said Robertson. "Leon and Dow did not have good years. Unser hit about .270 in the Basin League. We also failed to sign shortstops Walter Manuel and Jim Vopicka and they did not have good years either."

Robertson said the **Twins** signed 30 of their 52 choices in the free-agent drafting.

Griffith, meanwhile, continued to talk trade during the general managers' meeting in Palm Springs, Calif.

"In other years, we considered Bob Allison an untouchable," said Griffith, "but he's not in that category now. The general managers mentioned names to take back home, but I don't think anything will be done until the winter meetings."

Boston long has been interested in Allison because of the way he hits in Fenway Park. The **Twins** are interested in Carl Yastrzemski. Griffith also has asked about Dick Radatz, but the relief pitcher evidently is not available.

## Tony, Zoilo Not Available

Listed as unavailable from the pennant-winners are outfielder Tony Oliva, shortstop Zoilo Versalles, third baseman Harmon Killebrew and pitcher Jim Grant, plus first baseman Don Mincher and pitchers Jim Kaat and Camilo Pascual.

**Twin Tracks:** Calvin Griffith returned from the general managers' meeting as a member of the four-man committee to investigate ways of speeding up the game. "We will talk about eliminating the throwing of the ball around the infield after strikeouts, things like that," said Griffith. "We want to put more motion into the game." Calvin feels the new rule allowing a club two seasons to look at a player drafted and signed as a free agent is a good one. "We went over the interpretation of that rule," he said. "I think it will help everyone." . . . Griffith is interested in a third-string catcher as well as an infielder in trade talk.

Patricia Duffy, 18-year-old daughter of former Metropolitan Stadium Commissioner Joe Duffy, was killed in a car accident recently. Joe is well known still among American leaguers as owner of Duff's restaurant in Minneapolis.

# Versalles Rolls Up Big Margin to Cop MVP Prize in A. L.

By LARRY CLAFLIN  
BOSTON, Mass.

It was Zoilo Versalles of the **Twins** in a landslide.

That was the result of the American League's Most Valuable Player voting, announced in Boston by the Baseball Writers' Association of America, which conducts the balloting.

Versalles, the speedy shortstop who was outstanding in the World Series for the **Twins**, picked up 19 of a possible 20 first-place votes to easily outdistance teammate Tony Oliva, who finished second and got the only first-place nod Versalles did not receive.

Versalles had 275 points, only five short of a perfect score. Oliva had 174 points.

As expected, the pennant-winning **Twins** dominated the voting with four men in the top ten. Mudcat Grant, the 20-game winner, finished sixth and catcher Earl Battey came in tenth.

Brooks Robinson of Baltimore, the defending champion, finished a healthy third with 150 points. Relief wizard Eddie Fisher of the White Sox was fourth and slugger Rocky Colavito of the Indians finished fifth.

## Stu Miller Seventh

Rounding out the top ten were Grant in sixth place; Stu Miller, Baltimore pitcher, seventh; Willie Horton, Detroit outfielder, eighth, and Tom Tresh, Yankee outfielder, ninth.

Two other members of Sam Mele's club received votes. Jimmie Hall finished thirteenth and Harmon Killebrew fifteenth.

Informed of the voting, a happy Mele said: "That's terrific. Zoilo certainly deserved it. In fact, he could have got all 20 first-place votes. He inspired the **Twins** to a pennant."

"I guess that \$300 fine I hit him with in spring training means nothing compared to the money he's going to make now."

Mele was referring to a bitter argument between manager and player in spring training. Mele hit the Cuban shortstop with a \$300 fine for insubordination, but during the season there were no signs of discord between the two. Instead,



Zoilo Versalles

Versalles played the best ball of his career.

Versalles missed only two games during the season and batted .273. He led the major leagues in runs scored with 126, led the American League in total bases with 308 and tied Boston's Carl Yastrzemski for the A. L. lead in doubles with 45.

Batting leadoff, Versalles drove in 77 runs and hit 19 homers. He also stole 27 bases.

## Two Straight Bat Titles

Runner-up Oliva led the league in batting with an average of .321. It was Oliva's second batting crown to show for his two years in the majors.

Those who voted in the poll were Larry Claflin and Roger Birtwell of Boston; Lou Hatter and Neal Eskridge of Baltimore; Ed Munzel and Jerry Holtzman of Chicago; Russ Schneider and Hal Lebovitz of Cleveland; Joe Falls and Watson Spoelstra of Detroit; Ernest Mehl and Paul O'Boynick of Kansas City; Phil Collier and Ross Newhan of California; Max Nichols and Arno Goethel of **Minnesota**; Til Ferdenzi and Tommy Holmes of New York; and Bob Addie and Merrill Whittlesley of Washington.

# Bouton and Haynes Help Hail Sain in Hometown

By JAMIE WALLACE

WALNUT RIDGE, Ark.

"It was no accident what happened to the Yankees and **Twins** when John Sain was there."

These were the words of Yankee righthander Jim Bouton at a banquet honoring businessman-pitching coach John Sain in his hometown of Walnut Ridge.

The young Yankee hurler labored under Sain's tutoring for three years until John left the Yankees after a contract dispute.

Also on hand for the occasion, attended by a capacity crowd, was Joe Haynes of the **Twins'** front office, who said, "We feel awfully fortunate to have Sain. He did a great job for us this year."

Sain, who is an automobile dealer in Walnut Ridge, retired from baseball for one year after he left the Yankees, but he credits Cal Griffith with luring him back into the game.

## John Inks Blank Contract Before Feed

Just to show his faith in the Twin organization, Sain signed a blank contract just before the dinner and said that Mr. Griffith can just insert the salary figures he desires for the coming season.

During the festivities, Sain was presented a plaque by Chamber of Commerce President Lawrence Nichols and heard himself lauded as not only an outstanding baseball player and coach, but as a civic leader and "great American."

Appearing almost overcome by it all, Sain spoke briefly and said that this past year with the **Twins** had been equally as enjoyable as the pennant years with the Yankees.

He credited better communication as a key to helping coach young ball players during the present generation and gave Casey Stengel credit for putting him into the coaching business.

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