

Worthington Explodes Own Theory With Speedy Getaway

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

For several years now—since he became one of baseball's elder statesmen—Allan Fulton Worthington has delivered the same speech every spring.

"I'm a slow starter," was the way it began. And it usually ended with: "I usually get going later in May. Seems like I pitch better when it's hot."

There were times when he spiced it up with a line or two about being wild in the spring: "I try to keep it inside the batting cage," he said in his slow, Alabama way of speaking.

Now Al is a competitor of the first water. He was always willing to pitch in the toughest situations before he was really throwing his best.

"I throw a lot of side-arm stuff before my control is good," he said a year ago. "Seems like it helps me when I don't have my real good stuff. Later on, when I'm throwing good, I cut loose (and he gave an overhanded gesture in delivering a fast ball)."

Whole Plan Junked

Well, all that has been discarded this spring. The whole bit. Never once in spring training did he deliver the "slow starter" lines when questioned by a reporter. He mixed in side-arm pitches, as he always did, but he never resorted to that full time.

He started out throwing better than usual in spring training. And during the cold, damp, windy days of April, Worthington got off to his best start in years.

In his first three appearances, he struck out ten batters in four and two-thirds innings for the Twins. Each appearance was a tough situation and he burned the ball over the plate to leave men on bases. "I don't know why," said Al. "I feel good."

Is the knuckleball helping? "Maybe so," said Al. "I'm using it. I threw several in one inning (of a game against California at Anaheim). It gives them another pitch to look for. But I feel good throwing, too."

Twins' pitching coach Johnny Sain,

Twins Finally Show Profit From Junket to California

TWIN CITIES, Minn.—For the first time since the Angel franchise was formed, the Twins earned enough money in California to pay for their trip out there.

In their first three-game series at the new Anaheim Stadium, the Twins drew 87,098 fans with the Angels. That was good enough to produce about \$40,000 for the Twins' share of the receipts.

Expenses for a three-game series there run about \$16,000 for the Twins. Their highest previous payoff for that type of series was \$11,000.

Part of the difference, of course, is that the visiting teams now get 20 per cent of the money in the park instead of 30 cents on each full paid admission. The three-game attendance was more than the Twins drew in nine games at Chavez Ravine last season.

when asked about the knuckler, said that was just part of Al's fast start.

"He's throwing hard," said Johnny. "There's more to it than just the knuckler. He's throwing the way he did last June and July."

The knuckleball is not new to the 37-year-old Worthington. He's been throwing it for years. But he never really got a chance to make effective use of it last year despite pitching in 62 games for the Twins.

"Seems like every time I was in there, I was in a situation where I couldn't afford to try anything I wasn't sure of," he said. "There were men on base. The game was close. I had to use what I knew would work. I couldn't afford to experiment."

Early Use of Knuckler

In 1965, Worthington started out getting his normal, sliding fast ball and mixture of breaking pitches ready. But he planned to use the knuckler later.

This year, Al started right out at the beginning of spring training throwing his knuckler. He brought

it along with the rest of his pitches. Now he has the confidence in it to make use of it in difficult situations.

Jerry Zimmerman, who caught Al for two and two-third innings at Anaheim, said there is no question the knuckler is helping the Twins' ace reliever.

"That's the pitch I was having so much trouble catching," Zimmerman said. "It was really breaking."

Age Caused Worry

There was plenty of talk this spring about the Twins looking around in case Worthington or 38-year-old Johnny Klippstein should show that age is catching up. They are Mr. W. and Mr. K. of the Twins' staff.

Both Al and Johnny have heard this before. They remained calm as they both got themselves ready for a good start. Klippstein allowed no earned runs in his first two appearances, extending his streak from spring to 22 straight without giving up an earned run.

Whether this talk spurred Al to get ready faster is difficult to tell. He had one of the best years of his life last season, so certainly the job was his as long as he could continue to get the hitters out.

But the Twins had an unusual number of outstanding hard-throwing young pitchers this spring. They carefully groomed Pete Cimino and Garry Roggenburk to help Mr. W. and Mr. K. Dwight Siebler developed quickly this spring to earn a place in the bull pen.

But while the youngsters had difficulties in their first appearances, W. and K. walked in there like it was midseason.

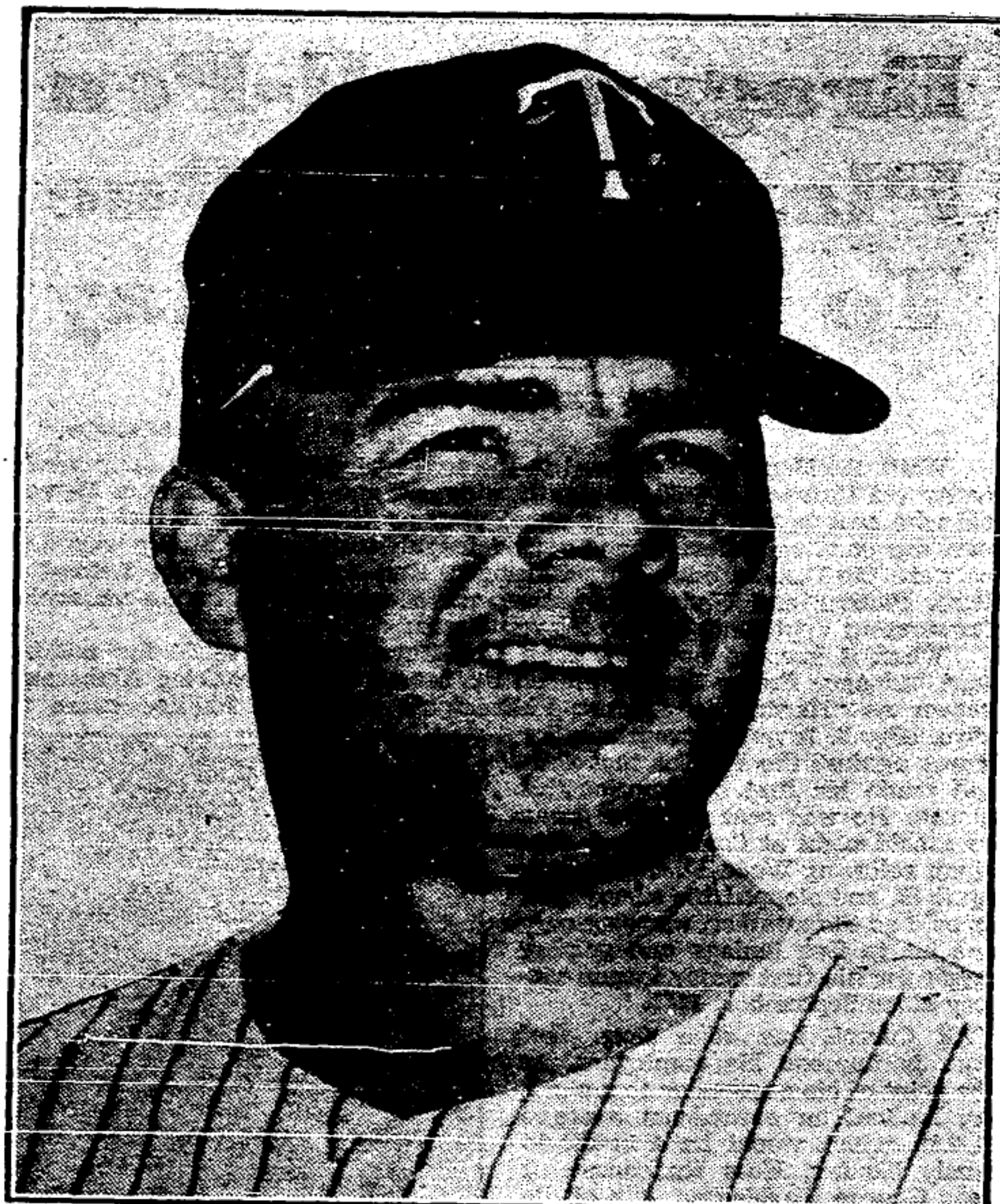
Whiffed Two in '66 Bow

In his first appearance, Al struck out two batters. But the Twins were already behind, 3-2, and they couldn't catch up.

His second time out, the Twins were behind California, 1-0, with the bases loaded.

Al gave up an infield grounder, which was misplayed into a hit. Then he struck out two.

In his third appearance, the Twins were leading, 5-2. California had two runners on base. Al struck out the side. Then he finished the last two innings to get his first save. He



AL WORTHINGTON . . . Fast Out of Starting Gate

even overcame a fly ball which was misplayed into a triple by striking out the side.

Last season, Worthington pitched 80 innings in earning a 10-7 record for the pennant-winning Twins. He had a 2.14 earned-run average and saved 14 games. He appeared in more games than ever before.

His arm was strained in September because of the heavy burden he and Klippstein had to carry. But there is no sign of that now.

"The arm feels good," said Al. "It has all spring. That wasn't really a sore arm. It was just a strain in the forearm. There was nothing wrong with the elbow or shoulder."

Twin Tracks: After giving up six hits and three earned runs in his first start, Dave Boswell came back ten days later to allow Detroit's sluggers only two hits over seven innings at Tiger Stadium. He went

out of the game trailing, 1-0, on Norm Cash's homer and took the loss. . . . Despite a 4-6 start, Twins' pitchers had a 2.62 staff earned-run average in the first ten games. The problem was hitting. Sluggers Harmon Killebrew, Bob Allison, Don Mincher and Jim Hall had only three homers and six runs batted in among them. . . . Earl Battey had to overcome a weak knee and a foul-tipped finger in the first two weeks. Jerry Zimmerman rapped three hits in replacing him. . . . One-run decisions, the Twins' winning specialty last year, were their big downfall in a slow start. They had a 1-4 record in their first five. "Last year, we were getting the base-hit we needed to win one-run games and we made the defensive plays we needed," said Manager Sam Mele. "This year, so far, we're not."

Nephew Sam, Uncle Tony Match Wits in Pilot Duel

By MAX NICHOLS

CHICAGO, Ill.



Sam Mele

It finally happened. Minnesota Manager Sam Mele and his uncle, Tony Cuccinello of the White Sox, hooked up in a family-style managing duel.

It's been more years than either cares to remember since Sam used to go see uncle Tony manage at Jersey City in the International League—in the late 1930s. Those were big nights for young Sam.

With Chisox Manager Eddie Stanky confined to his apartment because of Asiatic Flu, coach Cuccinello became Manager Cuccinello. And Tony, not exactly overjoyed with managing, was anxious for Stanky to return to the dugout.

"I'm getting ulcers," he said. "I would rather coach third base." He had a 2-1 record as a manager when Mele and the Twins came to Comiskey Park for their first two-game series of the year.

Mele was still a boy in the Astoria section of Queens, New York City, when his uncle Harry took him to see Tony manage. Harry Cuccinello played for the Cardinals.

Cuccinello took over the managing of the White Sox in Boston. After his first game as pilot, he told a Chicago writer why he didn't like it. "See all those writers asking questions?" he asked. "That's what I don't like about managing."

So how did Sam and Tony come out?

The Twins won, 4-2, on a four-hitter by Camilo Pascual, leveling Cuccinello's record off at 2-2.



Tony Cuccinello

Rain Idles Twins Five Games --But It's Not Griffith Record

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

Without putting on their uniforms for five straight games, the Twins had the experts diving into the record books.

In fact, that's the reason the records were researched. For the first time since they started playing in Minnesota in 1961, the Twins had five consecutive games postponed.

However, that is not a record for the Calvin Griffith organization. Griffith's Washington Senators were postponed in seven consecutive games from April 23 to April 29, 1952, according to "ONE FOR THE BOOK."

That's the American League record. And the Senators share it with the 1945 Tigers and the 1945 Philadelphia Athletics. The National League record is nine—set by Philadelphia in 1903.

They Could Use Rain Later

"We're going to want that rain later in the season," said Harmon Killebrew as he stared at the drizzle in Washington. The Twins had just been postponed for the fifth straight day. But that's just part of the story.

Including that fifth straight postponement, the Twins had been off nine of 14 days. And they had managed to win only one game of five during that time.

"We'll have to start all over to get into shape," said Manager Sam Mele.

"It would help if we could at least work out. But the field has been too wet everywhere."

It all started with a postponement at home against California, April 17. The Twins were off the next day. They lost to a soggy field in Kansas City after a tor-

nado on April 19 and cold weather forced a postponement the next day.

After another day off, April 21, the Twins won one of three games at Anaheim. They lost one at Detroit, April 25.

Then the five consecutive postponements started—April 26 at Detroit, April 27-28 at Baltimore and April 29-30 at Washington.

All this means a jammed schedule for the Twins in June and July. They will have to play 22 games in 18 days beginning June 15, including five double-headers. And they will have to play 12 games in 11 days beginning July 14.

Big Three Backed Up by Trio

We're lucky we have six starters," said Mele. "We'll need every one of them." Jim Kaat, Jim Grant and Camilo Pascual are the top three starters. They are backed up by Dave Boswell, Jim Perry and Jim Merritt.

At one point, the Twins will have to play 13 games in nine days.

They now must play a makeup double-header against California at home on June 15, a makeup twin-bill at Detroit on June 24, a scheduled double-header at Detroit on June 26, a makeup double-bill at Baltimore on July 1 and a scheduled double-header at Baltimore on July 2.

The Twins also have to makeup a double-header at Washington, July 19, and play a makeup single game at Kansas City, August 8. All that does not include one makeup game at Baltimore—which was to be scheduled later.