

# Angels Cause Furor By Turning 'Single' To Right Into Putout

By DICK GORDON

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

The notation in the square beside the batter's name in the scorebook read: 9-3. And it prompted a lot of baseball graybeards to look back on memory lane, with recollections including the fellow who was thrown out at first 23 times in one season on hits off the right field fence.

The 9-3 combination of figures in the book is distinctive in the modern era of the long ball because it signified that the batter had been thrown out at first on a "grounder" to right field.

Certainly the July 17 play on which the Angels' Lu Clinton nailed the **Twins'** Earl Battey on his apparent single to right with a perfect throw to Joe Adcock, touched a chain reaction such as booing by the fans, Battey's insistence he wasn't loafing, Manager Sam Mele's defense of his big catcher (although he fined Rich Rollins the next day for getting picked off first) and Clinton's admission he had never worked such a play before.

It also prompted a lot of conversation about other cases where a batter was thrown out on an outfield liner, remembering that here was no special defense with the right fielder playing abnormally in close for a virtual five-man infield alignment.

In fact, with Battey still carrying the threat which produced 26 homers last year, Clinton was in his customary position and only came in slightly to take the well-hit ball on the second bounce.

## Principals Have Their Say

Before looking into baseball's backlog regarding where and when this play has happened before, let the principals in the latest incident have their say:

Battey—"I sliced the ball and my follow through got me off balance so I had a bad start. I know a lot will be made of it, but I wasn't loafing."

Clinton—"I wasn't thinking of the play at all until I saw Battey get a bad start out of the box. I've picked men off before after they made the turn but never that way, before they got to first. Fortunately, just as I was ready to throw, I saw Joe (Adcock) breaking for first."

Adcock—"It's not a usual play. But it's a good one. And he was clearly out. I was probably ready for it because Hank Aaron used to try it quite a bit, especially when opposing pitchers were batting, when I was with the Braves."

On further inquiry, Adcock said he remembered at least two times when Aaron was successful in robbing batters of hits in that manner, but hesitated to name the victims "because I don't want to embarrass anyone."

## New Play to Rigney

Bill Rigney, Angels' manager who used to play and pilot in the National League, said he had never seen such a play succeed in eight years in the majors "although you had to hustle at Ebbets Field or Carl Furillo would pick drives off that fence in right and throw you out."

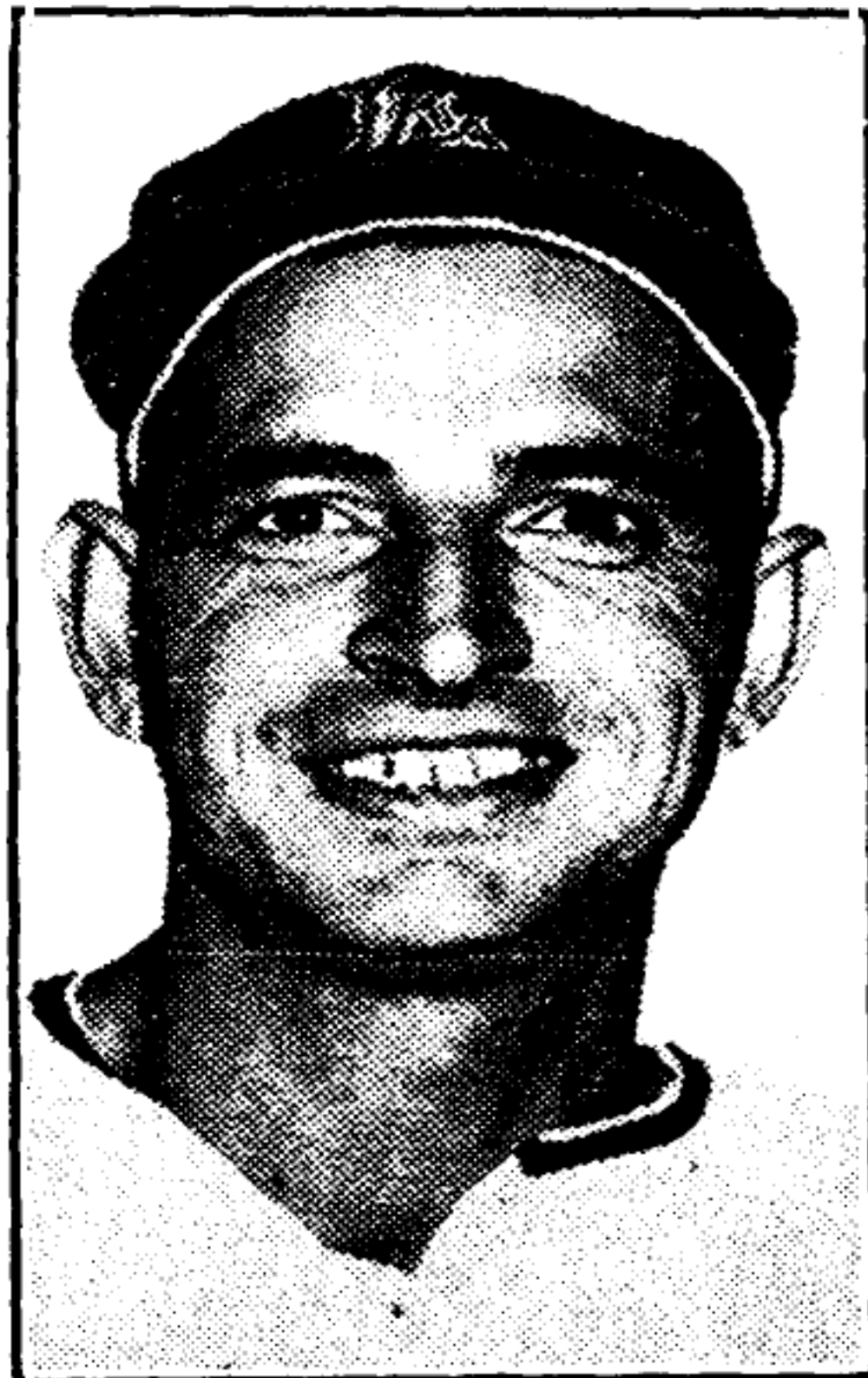
This also moved Rigney along nostalgic lines to his days in the minors, pinpointing on the 1938 season when

## Banzai! Jim Marshall Tops In Japanese All-Star Game

NAGOYA, Japan — Jim Marshall, never able to make an All-Star team in the majors, decided a Japanese all-star game, July 21, with a pinch two-run double that paced the Central League to a 5-1 victory over the Pacific League.

A capacity crowd of 30,000 at Chunichi Stadium saw Marshall's fourth-inning blow bring the Central leaguers from behind and score their second straight victory in the three-game all-star series.

The former major league first baseman left the game after his pinch-double, but he was voted the outstanding player in the contest and received numerous gifts.



Lu Clinton

he was with Vancouver in the old Western International League. "We were playing on a soccer field where the right field fence was so short it was only a two-base hit when you hit one over it. We had one fellow, Wayne McCue, who was a pretty good hitter (the records show he hit .313 that season). But he was thrown out 23 times on hits off the fence in right. And another player, Ralph Samhammer, was caught that way 18 times."

The combination of Furillo's fine arm and the short Ebbets Field fence would indicate he must have thrown out quite a few at first on hits to right. But Gil Hodges, Washington manager, who was a Furillo teammate for many years in Flatbush, said, "I know he tried it a number of times, but I can only remember his catching a man that way once."

On the other hand, Johnny Klippstein, now a **Twins'** pitcher but a National leaguer for a decade, remembers seeing him work the play "two or three times."

## It Happened to Nats in Past

In the early 1950s, both Jimmy Roberts, **Twins'** concessions boss, and pitcher Camilo Pascual recall the Senators' Connie Marrero, a short, stocky hurler, was thrown out twice on hits to right.

According to **Twins'** Owner Calvin Griffith, whose baseball-watching days go back to the 1920s, "It's happened a lot of times, although I can't remember to whom."

Of course, in the days of the dead ball, when the right fielder was stationed much closer to the infield, the play was not so unusual and Ty Cobb personally is supposed to have thrown out five men in one season.

Bob Bullock, who has been umpiring in the Minnesota state amateur leagues for 41 years, goes that a couple better. He saw one batter thrown out by a left fielder when the basepaths were slow and also read a story about a major league right fielder who tossed three batters out at first in ONE game.

So if nothing else, former All-Star catcher Battey got the conversational ball rolling—even though the handicap of an injured knee didn't permit him to "roll" to first in time to beat Clinton's throw.

# Battey Peels Off Poundage To Fatten Twin Plate Mark

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

## Braves' Power Wiped Out By 6 Twin Round-Trippers

TWIN CITIES, Minn. — The **Twins** followed an example by Manager Sam Mele and won a homer-infested slugfest against the Braves, 12-7, in an exhibition benefit for youth baseball, July 20.

Mele hit a ball out of the park to win a pre-game homer contest with Milwaukee Manager Bobby Bragan and the **Twins** followed suit by clouting six round-trippers to four for the Braves.

The **Twins'** Jimmie Hall and the Braves' Mike de la Hoz each hit a pair of solo homers, but a three-run blast by Frank Kostro broke the game open in a five-run sixth inning.

Harmon Killebrew and Tony Oliva added two-run homers and Earl Battey a solo clout for the **Twins**, while Ed Bailey homered with a man on and Rico Carty with the bases empty for the Braves.

## Rich Rollins \$100 Poorer After Pickoff

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

Manager Sam Mele resorted to a \$100 fine and a session on fundamentals in an effort to snap the **Twins** out of their losing ways.

Third baseman Rich Rollins was slapped with the fine after getting picked off first base by Angel pitcher Aubrey Gatewood. Two men were on base, two out and Harmon Killebrew batting. "There was no excuse for it," said Mele, "with the league's



Rich Rollins

leading home-run hitter at bat."

A snap throw by L. A. catcher Bob Rodgers caught Rollins and Joe Adcock applied the tag.

## Play Ends Threat

It ended the inning and, as it developed, the **Twins'** scoring.

It was the second fine levied by Mele since President Cal Griffith's notorious TV blast in June. The earlier victim was pitcher Jim Roland, who was punished for lingering too long in the clubhouse before a game.

The fundamentals practice was triggered by a fouled-up rundown which cost the **Twins** and pitcher Camilo Pascual a victory against Washington. In 90-degree heat, Mele put the **Twins'** infielders and pitchers through spring training type drills.

"I told the guys to relax and have fun playing ball," said Mele. "They know how to make these plays. But maybe it's good to review them now and then."

The **Twins** lost eight of nine games to second-division clubs.

After half a season of trying to play on a knee that pained him when he was hitting, running and throwing, Earl Battey finally has started to look like the All-Star catcher he was only a year ago.

The catcher of the **Twins** is down to 228 pounds, lower than he was all last season, which was his best in the majors. And his batting average, down to .216 during the last week in June, rocketed to a respectable .265 on an eight-game streak.

"For the first time this year, I can handle the bat, do anything I want with it," said Battey. "The other day we had a man on first base in a hit-and-run situation. I held up and hit the ball to right field for a base hit just as the second baseman moved to cover second. I couldn't do anything like that before."

Whether his weight has anything to do with his improvement is subject to debate. But his knee definitely is stronger than it has been all season, and the pain in it bothers him less.

"I can throw naturally now," said Earl. "And I can shift my weight onto my knee when I am catching. When my knee was hurting me so badly, I had to throw off my left foot instead of pushing off my right. It took something away from my throwing and my arm is just now getting strong."

Battey, a big man with a thyroid gland problem in keeping his weight down, appeared to be approaching his peak in 1963. He hit 26 home runs, drove in 84 runs and led the catchers of the American League for the fourth straight season.

He did all of that with a brace on his right knee. And early last fall he had an operation on the knee. The cartilage was removed and he had hopes of the knee getting stronger.

## Injured on Opening Day

Earl showed up for spring training at about 265 pounds. He got down to around 240 when the season opened but, on opening day at Cleveland, he wrenched his knee. Three days later, in Washington, the knee was banged in a collision at home plate.

Battey takes pride in catching more than 140 games a season and he stayed in the lineup. The knee was injured again on May 3. And he had other injuries, but he rested little.

By the middle of May, it was obvious Earl was handicapped by the knee. His batting average fell below the .250 mark and base-runners started taking liberties seldom seen with Battey catching.

"He's got a knee that's going to be painful," said Dr. Bill Proffitt, **Twins'** physician, "but he won't hurt it by playing on it."

Though Earl was letting wild pitches get by him because he could not throw all of his weight on the knee, he continued to hit well when called upon with runners on base. His batting average with runners on second and third was never lower than .290. At that point, he had tallied 19 of 48 runners in scoring position.

## Blasted by His Boss

But he allowed 19 stolen bases in the first 28 attempts when he was catching. And he made six errors in 60 games, as many as he made all last season. His play finally brought a public blast from Calvin Griffith, **Twins'** president.

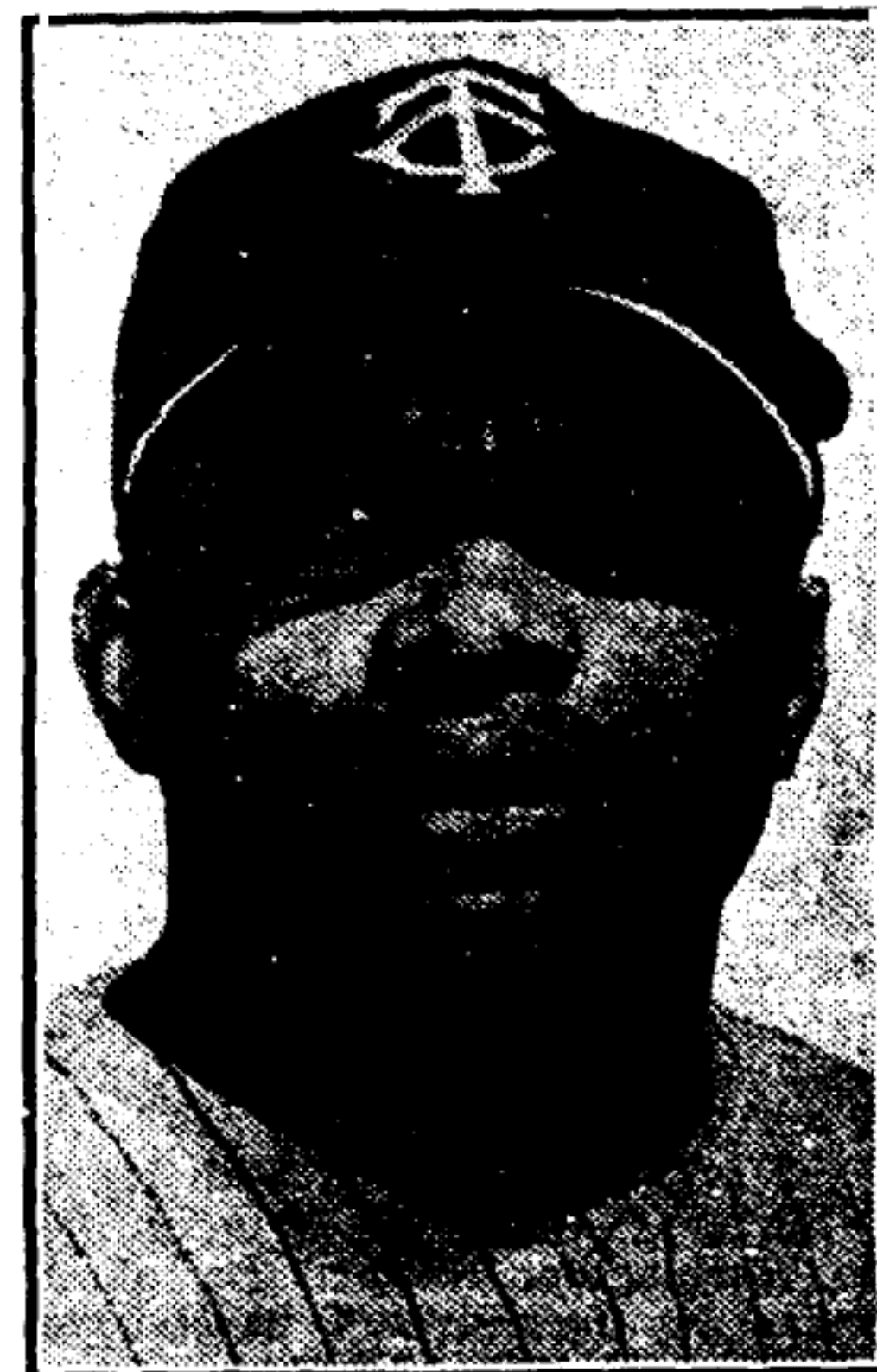
"That's the worst I ever played," said Earl. "It got to be more than just the knee. I was in a slump. I knew I could play better than I was playing, but I just couldn't seem to do it. I was trying too hard."

"I started pressing. I was trying to pull everything. I kept saying if I could just get a couple of hits tonight, maybe everything will be all right."

But the hits never came. And Manager Sam Mele finally benched Earl for a three-day rest, then a four-day rest two weeks later.

"That helped my knee," said Earl. "I finally told myself to heck with that pain. I didn't try to lose weight, but I lost it playing. Maybe I worried it off."

"I knew people were talking about my play. They always do. But I did



Earl Battey

not care about that. I just knew I could play better and help the team more."

About a week after his second rest, Earl started to hit. Then everything became easier for him.

"I felt good for the first time on the Friday night before the All-Star Game in New York," said Battey. "Dick Stigman pitched a 1-0 game. I didn't get a hit, but I felt good swinging and I hit the ball exceptionally good."

## On His Way at Last

Two days later, Battey started on his streak. He rapped two doubles against the Yankees and he was on his way.

Then, the next day he came back with a score-tying home run, ending a string of 16 scoreless innings for the **Twins**.

During his streak, he rapped 16 hits in 29 times at bat for a stratospheric .552 average.

**Twins' Tracks:** The **Twins** returned to Metropolitan Stadium where they were scheduled for 25 of their next 34 games. But although 'The Met' is known for its susceptibility to home runs, the powerful **Twins** hit home runs just as well on the road. While continuing to slug their way toward a new major league record for teams, the **Twins** have pounded 76 out of enemy parks in 48 games and 64 in 41 home games. That's an average of 1.8 homers per game at home and on the road. . . . Kansas City pitchers have borne the brunt of the **Twins'** home-run bombardments. Minnesota has hit 31 against the A's, 23 at Kansas City's Municipal Stadium in seven games and eight at the Met. They have hit 20 against the White Sox, 18 at home. . . . Harmon Killebrew hit 20 of his league-leading 32 homers on the road. Bob Allison hit 12 of 23 on the road and Tony Oliva hit 12 of 19 on the road. . . . Of the **Twins'** big hitters, only Jimmie Hall hit his biggest share at home—11 of 16. . . . Meanwhile, the **Twins** had a 22-19 won-lost record at home, and a 25-23 record on the road. . . . After winning 11 of 15 games, the **Twins** blew a big opportunity to get into the pennant race. While the league leaders were losing each day, the **Twins** lost eight of nine games to second-division clubs.