

You Find Some Mighty Strange Items in Ball Players' Lockers

By ARNO GOETHEL

ORLANDO, Fla.—It's amazing how a little peek into a baseball player's locker can provide an insight into his thinking about his vocation or avocation and sometimes can add a human touch to the men who live and play in the fish bowls of sports.

So let's take our annual snoop around the Twins' clubhouse at Tinker Field. Remember—you can look, but don't touch.

Jim Kaat and Dean Chance were the last of the hold-out pitchers, but their lockers weren't bare before they signed.

In Kaat's, for example, there's a chair and an accumulation of mail. Chance's locker holds five pairs of shoes—all dusty.

When shortstop Leo Cardenas made his belated appearance, he was greeted by two uniform shirts, one for home and the other away, two pieces of mail and a Hall of Fame book.

In Rich Reese's locker, there's a Bob Allison bat. Allison, however, doesn't have a Rich Reese bat in either of his two regular lockers or two footlockers. But there are a rubber sweat suit and two king-sized shoe boxes.

The platooning versatility expected of Manager Billy Martin is apparent in the lockers of two catchers. John Roseboro has several foam rubber palm cushions in his gear. George Mitterwald's stuff includes four catching mitts.

Both also have regular fielding gloves.

The "long hairs" are apparent because of their locker litter. And they're all pitchers.

Bob Miller has a tube of hair grooming. Danny Morris has a business card for a local barber. Dave Boswell has a hair brush.

Boswell also has a little towel decorated with the Playboy Club's rabbit emblem.

Jim Roland, surprisingly, has a bat in his locker. His name is on it but printed in block letters, befitting a pitcher's mace.

Bat Has New Owner

There's a bat in catcher John Sevcik's locker, too. His name has been written with heavy black ink, covering the "Dempsey" etched into the wood. Apparently, it once belonged to rookie shortstop Rick Dempsey, who departed from camp for four months with the Army Reserves.

Rick Renick's locker holds six sweatshirts—all new, because he's out with a fractured ankle.

Pitcher Ron Perranoski, who was feeling a mite below par, still has some throat lozenges in his locker.

Beauty aids are among some oddments. Bachelor Rod Carew, for example, keeps assorted toiletries. Graig Nettles, who can rock some pitchers and rattle some fences, has a can of baby powder.

On each side of his locker, looking like the lions guarding the public library, Tom Hall has a bottle of after-shave lotion.

Tony Oliva, from sunny Cuba, gives his mute opinion of recent chilly workouts by hanging long underwear drawers in his locker.

Hurler Jim Ollom is of the same mind, even though he's

from the Northwest—Everett, Wash. Showing a pitcher's concern for "drying out," the lefty has five sweatshirts and two windbreakers.

Farmhand Bill Zepp carries a pair of sneakers, so you know he was last week's blister victim.

According to his locker, Harmon Killebrew is mixing business with business. There's a long box labeled: "Harmon Killebrew's Power Stride Batting Trainer." Also, there are five gloves, three for first basemen and the others for infielders and outfielders.

Ted Uhlaender's private cache includes a whole carton of chewing tobacco. Ron Clark has four cases of sunflower seeds. Joe Grzenda has an envelope from a telephone company in Dallas, Pa.

Frank Quilici's locker carries Christmas colors—a red bandana and a green shoehorn.

Frank Kostro has the only red windbreaker in camp. The prize for bewilderment goes to Jim Perry, whose locker contains a fish net.

Pitching coach Early Wynn and bullpen coach Charlie Silvera have ledger books to keep tabs on the twirlers.

John Goryl, who raps hundreds of grounders every day as the first base coach, naturally has a fungo bat.

Art Fowler, who was 46 when he made the last of 28 pitching performances at Denver last year, carries only one glove—tattered and battered, torn and worn.

Vern Morgan, the new third base coach, carries a deposit bag from the Northwestern Bank and Trust Co. in St. Cloud, Minn., presumably a souvenir from his days (1962-64) of managing Bismark-Mandan in the Northern League.

Sands Has One Eye, Fighting Heart

ORLANDO, Fla.—It's difficult when you're equipped with only 50 percent vision, but rookie Franklyn Sands sees a baseball career in his future.

Sands was among the first Twins cut from their spring training squad. As he departed for the farm camp at Melbourne, he was wearing wrap-around sun glasses over both eyes as well as a big smile.

"If I had to lose an eye," he philosophized, "I'm glad it was the right one. I've always been right-handed. So the left eye is the one I need most, both for hitting and for pitching."

A catcher only recently past his 20th birthday (December 2), Sands was the victim of a freak accident while performing with the Twins' entry in the Florida Instructional League at St. Petersburg last October 6.

Lefthander Tommy Hall uncorked a breaking pitch while warming up with Sands. It broke too much and went into the dirt, caromed off Sands' big mitt and crashed into his right cheekbone.

A splinter of bone pierced his eye from inside.

Sands never will forget that moment of impact:

"When I got hit, I knew I had lost my eye. I put my hand to my face. It came away full of blood, but there wasn't a cut.

"The doctor was afraid to tell me, but I told him, 'I'm sure I've lost my eye.'"

Wilber Remembers

"Then he said, 'You certainly did.'"

Del Wilber, the super-scout who annually manages the Twins' Florida team, also recalls the incident vividly:

"It was a Sunday. That evening, the doctor told me there wasn't much chance of saving the eye. Frank was in the hospital for four weeks.

"Four weeks and one day after the accident, he was let out. He called the ballpark and asked if somebody could come to get him.

"Instead of going to the club's motel, he went right to the ballpark and put on his uniform.

"I'll be darned if he didn't go

out there and take batting practice. His attitude and spirit were so great, we didn't want to stop him.

"Six weeks after that accident, I let him pitch two innings against the Detroit team. He gave up a couple of runs, but he also struck out a couple of guys.

"Then—and I think he was joking—he got disturbed at me for not letting him pitch the third inning so he could hit.

"Everybody was rooting for him because he was so determined."

Discouraged at First

Sands accentuated the determination when he said:

"I never thought about quitting baseball. Naturally, at first I was discouraged when the doc said I was losing the eye, but then I decided I could play because I still could hit and still could see well.

"The view is narrow and my first time in the batting cage after the accident I couldn't even hit the ball. It was hard to adjust. My depth perception isn't 100 percent, but I still can follow the ball and pick it up all right.

"I feel good about trying to become a pitcher. I think I can do it. I can throw a fast ball, curve, slider and change-up and my experience as a catcher should help my thinking as a pitcher.

"I feel it would be more difficult to become an outfielder. As a pitcher, I have that good left eye to keep on the target when I'm in my windup."

More Time Needed

Manager Billy Martin, who recognizes a scrapper when he sees one, considered giving Sands an opportunity to pitch in an early exhibition game. However, team physician Dr. L. J. Michienzi cautioned him against it because it will require possibly a year to 18 months for Sands to adjust his depth perception.

Sands' financial worries have been eliminated by Twins' President Cal Griffith, who has guaranteed the gutty youngster a lifetime job in his organization.

Meanwhile, Sands insists he partakes of other pleasures that are "no different at all, except I'm missing the wider view."

These off-diamond interests, which suddenly figure as great luxuries for Sands, include reading, watching television and driving a car.



John Roseboro, Right, and George Mitterwald.

Talk to Roseboro... And Get the Facts

By ARNO GOETHEL

ORLANDO, Fla.—It's no wonder John Roseboro is interested in just the facts, ma'am.

During the winter, the Twins' veteran catcher appeared in a television movie, a full length version of "Dragnet," as a sergeant in the Los Angeles police department.

So he isn't looking for an alibi about last year, his first under Minnesota colors.

Twelve months ago, Roseboro was getting acquainted with his new teammates. He had been acquired, along with pitchers Ron Perranoski and Bob Miller, in exchange for Zoilo Versalles and Mudcat Grant.

Roseboro's credentials at that time were considerable.

He had a lifetime batting average of .251 for 1,289 games in the major leagues, during which he had set the National League record for lifetime putouts by a catcher, 7,895.

Now, after 135 games for the Twins, the seventh-place Twins, the only Twins he has known, Roseboro has a lifetime American League batting average of .216.

And he's earning \$10,000 less on the diamond than he was a year ago.

But he's working hard, determined to prove to his old fans in Los Angeles, his new fans in Minnesota and, yes, to himself, that 35 isn't too late to make a comeback.

Still, he isn't reaching for a crutch.

No Hint of Alibi

It would be easy for Roseboro to blame last year's performance on the fact that even veterans can become discouraged with a club that is split internally, a ship without a rudder, or that a thinking man's catcher has to suffer mentally when his team is playing brainless baseball.

John sticks to the facts: "The biggest thing that gave me trouble last year was seeing all the pitchers I never had seen before.

"Hitting is a good percentage of having confidence. Look at the All-Star Game. You don't see too many hits, as a rule. That's because it's tough to get out there and hit those pitchers you've never seen."

Actually, it required Roseboro about a half season to become acclimated to the American League.

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FRANK SANDS works out under the close check of Early Wynn, Twins' pitching coach.