

Allen's 2 inside-park homers subdue Twins

By Tom Briere
Staff Writer

Richie Allen of the Chicago White Sox swings heavy lumber, meaning in baseball talk that he's a good hitter. But, in Allen's case, it's literally true.

While most baseball players today swing 33- or 34-ounce bats, Allen wields a 40-ounce Adirondack bat, and Monday he hit two inside-the-park home runs to power Chicago to an 8-1 victory over the Twins at Metropolitan Stadium.

Allen, 30, a right-handed power hitter who has moved from Philadelphia to St. Louis to Los Angeles to Chicago in his career, hit his 26th and 27th home runs to drive in five runs. He leads the American League in home runs and also in runs batted in, with 77. "If he's trouble," said White Sox manager Chuck Tanner, "that's the kind of trouble I want."

Allen said, "I started out swinging 35 ounces, but that was 10 years ago. I like the feel of the heavier bat in-

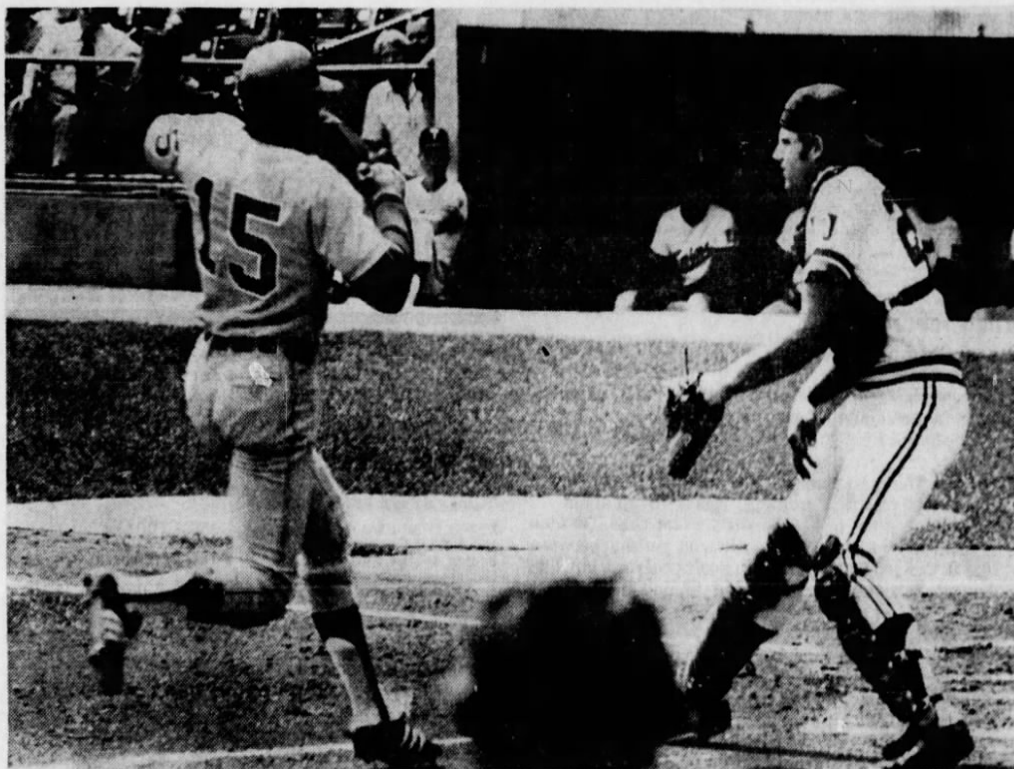
stead of the whip that most guys like in the light bat. I get good wood with 40 ounces."

The Twins can testify to Allen's "wood" and center-fielder Bobby Darwin of the Twins also testified that Allen hits knuckleballs to center field. "The ball was diving and sinking," said Darwin, "and the outfield grass was slippery from the rain early yesterday morning."

In the first inning, Twins' right-hander Bert Blyleven, now 9-14, walked Pat Kelly and gave up an infield hit to Luis Alvarado. Then Allen hit a line drive to center field. Darwin slipped attempting to stop to field the ball and it rolled to the fence as Allen circled the bases for a 3-0 lead. That was all Chicago right-hander Stan Bahnsen needed to win his 13th.

In the fifth inning, Allen came to the plate with a runner on base. He hit another shot to left-center field. Darwin tried for a shoe-string catch, the ball went by him to the center-field fence and Allen had another four-bagger.

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Richie Allen raced home after hitting his second inside-the-park homer as Twins' Gienn Borgemann watched.