

# Worry Wart Rich-- Jittery Twin Jolter

Rollins Frets Over Possible Letdown This Year;  
Hard-Worker Will Push Himself, Rest When Tired

By MAX NICHOLS

ORLANDO, Fla.

Regardless of what Rich Rollins has been saying, the American League's top sophomore of 1962 knows things will be different this season. And it worries him.

"I'm just a little jittery and scared about the coming season," said the red-headed Twin third baseman. "The times when I relaxed last year were the times when I made mistakes and had trouble. I don't want that to happen this season."

Rollins became noted for the way he pushed himself last year, even when he was exhausted. He took batting and infield practice on off days when he was tired. He was batting .360 on June 17, but he fell to .301 by July 20 and held on to finish at .298. He made half of his 28 errors during the last 64 days.

"When I got tired and tried to ease up late in the year, my timing was off on slow-hit balls," said Rollins. "I handled slow-hit balls pretty well the first half. But I looked awful on several of them in August and September."

Rollins has been pestered often with the question about the sophomore jinx bothering him this season. He is asked this because he played in only 13 games for the Twins in 1961. It counted as his rookie year because he was with the club for nearly four months.

"I'm not a sophomore, so how could the sophomore jinx bother me?" said Rollins, polishing that question off quickly. But he says he is concerned about learning to pace himself so that he will be ready to push himself at game time all season.

"I'm going to push myself when I feel good and rest when I'm tired," said Rollins. "I haven't got it made on this club. Someone could take my job away from me. So I have to work hard. But I don't want to do so many foolish things."

## Rich Drilled With Blistered Hands to Impress Pilot

"Last year during spring training I took extra batting practice even when I had blisters on my hands. I was doing everything possible to impress the manager."

Rollins took time out from his honeymoon to begin training with the Twins' pitchers and catchers at Orlando's Tinker Field.

"I'm going to get into condition more gradually this spring," he said. "I am in good shape now. My weight is 182 pounds, and that's where I started and finished last season. I was careful during the banquet circuit and ate nothing between breakfast and dinners on days when I had to speak."

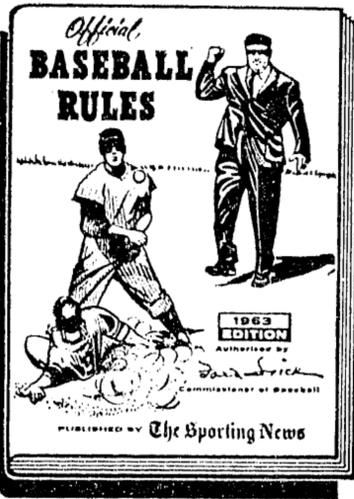
"My wife Lynn is an excellent cook. I don't eat desserts. I eat only meat, potatoes and vegetables. And she does a good job of cooking them. She has come up with some wonderful concoctions."

Rollins said he intends to work on hitting to right field this spring "a little later on." And Manager Sam Mele said he wants to work with Rollins on this point.

Rollins said he does not expect to get off to a .350 start this season because the veteran pitchers will know more about him.

"I've got to improve to be as good as I was last year," said Rollins. And Mele said, after a season of managing Rollins, he is not the slightest concerned about the third baseman improving.

"The kids who falter in their second full season of play are the ones who figure they've got it made," said Mele. "I don't have to worry about this guy not working."



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# TWINS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

fact that Oliva is a lefthanded hitter, although he throws right. Green and Second Baseman Bernie Allen are the only regulars who swing lefthanded.

Oliva went 4-for-9 (plus three walks) in nine September appearances with the Twins last year. His first major league hit was a two-run double off Dick Donovan of Cleveland. The same day he rapped Lefty Sam McDowell for a run-scoring single.

"I liked the way he stood there against McDowell, who might be a little wild," Mele said.

Scout Del Wilbur had Oliva on the Florida Instructional League team he managed for the Twins the last two winters and contributed a rave report on the youngster.

"He has power to all fields, so outfielders can't cheat on him," Wilbur said. "He's one of those ball players who have a certain thing going for them—if he hits the ball in fair territory, four times out of 10 its going to be a hit."

### Respected by Hurlers

"There's no doubt he's a great, natural hitter. You could tell they respected him in the instructional league this winter. The pitchers considered it quite a feat to get him out, so they never laid a good pitch in there for him to hit. He was the talk of the league."

"His improvement has been evident each year. He has good baseball sense and can learn by watching."

As for his first name—Pedro or Tony—Oliva is completely unconcerned. "I've been with these players for two years now," he said, "and they have always called me Tony."

A reporter offered to flip a coin to decide the issue. "Heads it's Pedro," the scribe said, "and tails it's Tony." Oliva agreed. The coin came up tails. So Tony it is.

And Mele, needless to say, is happy the Twins have the Tony.

**Twin Tales:** Manager Sam Mele was impressed by the early showing of Lefthander Gerry Arrigo. "He's getting the ball over the plate better than he did a year ago," Mele said of the 21-year-old pitcher. "It seemed to help when we moved him to the right side of the rubber." . . . Outfielder Jim Lemon, in camp early to work out a left shoulder that fouled an off-season operation, fouled practice pitches off his left shin on two consecutive days. . . . Pitching Coach Gordon Maltzberger was elated over the spirit shown by his mound corps. The pitchers were throwing hard for periods of 20 minutes by the time the full squad reported and the regulars stepped in for batting practice. . . . Dr. Bill Proffitt, Twins' physician, inoculated all the players as protection against the flu epidemic.

# ◆ ◆ DIAMOND ◆ ◆ FACTS and FACETS

Colled by RAY GILLESPIE

## John P. Carmichael in the Chicago Daily News

Six young men, wearing slacks and sport shirts, walked into a room at the Cardinals' swank clubhouse and seated themselves in a semi-circle of chairs. . . . Facing them, from behind a desk, was Branch Rickey, now back with his own after almost 20 years. . . . They came out three hours



PAT FRIDAY  
... Win or Else



DARYL SPENCER  
... Deal on Fire?



BILLY MARTIN  
... Gentle Soul



BRANCH RICKEY  
... Lecturer

later after an unbroken session which had to be the mental equivalent of the 50-mile hike. . . . The young men began pulling on uniforms of their trade. . . . "Did you understand all he said?" one of them nudged another. . . . The guy looked around, saw he was in the "clear" and answered: "No, but he sure seemed to mean it!"

**Ernest Mehl in the Kansas City Star:** A popular player is traded, commented General Manager Pat Friday of the A's, and his followers resent his leaving. . . . But they will forget, so long as the team wins. . . . If it doesn't? . . . "Then," he grinned, "I go back to the insurance business!"

**Bill Hengen in the Minneapolis Star:** Sam Mele, Twins' manager, says he plans to ask his newly-named coach, Hal Naragon, if he will room, on the road, with the club's 20-game winner last year, Camilo Pascual. . . . "They were roommates last season," Sam explained. . . . "Normally, as coach, Naragon rates a single room. . . . But the two hit it off so well last year, and they both talk and study baseball all the time. . . . I feel that Pascual gets the most benefit of having Naragon around."

## Morris Siegel in the Washington Star

While Mickey Mantle was dining the other day, something prompted him to think of Billy Martin, his former roomie on the Yankees and part of the inseparable Ford-Mantle-Martin combine when they all did Broadway—at night. . . . "I like Billy," Mickey said. . . . "Next to Whitey—the best pal I ever had—Martin comes next. . . . People thought Martin was a tough, rough guy. . . . They couldn't be more wrong. . . . He's a very sensitive fellow. . . . He popped off and tried to act tough, but he isn't. . . . He couldn't stand to see unfortunate people—you know, like blind folks or crippled people on the street. . . . When we used to walk around town and he saw someone who was blind or crippled, he'd start crying. . . . He'd always go over and sneak 'em maybe five bucks, but he'd cry, too."

**Chester L. Smith in the Pittsburgh Press:** Will American League umpires have to carry thermometers in the future? . . . There is a new rule, designed to speed up the games, that a pitcher will be limited to five warmup throws per inning. . . . But in the American League, there is an amendment that allows the pitcher eight warmup pitches on cold days. . . . However, no mention is made of when a day (or night) is cold or when it isn't. . . . On whose shoulders will fall this weighty decision?

**Steve O'Neill in the Baltimore News-Post:** When Hoyt Wilhelm was traded from the Orioles to the White Sox, Baltimore didn't have to throw in the over-sized glove used by its catchers for Wilhelm's tricky knuckleball. . . . White Sox catchers already have one which they use to catch their own knuckleballer, young Eddie Fisher.

## Bob Hunter in the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner

Just remember where you read this first, because I'm not going to remind you: Red Patterson and George Selkirk have been on the phone discussing a Dodger third baseman named Daryl Spencer, and the deal is in the works. . . . Spencer is a good bet to be wearing a Washington Senator uniform before the end of spring training. . . . Buzzie Bavasi declared him expendable immediately after last season ended so sourly. . . . Bobby Bragan and John McHale of the Braves want Wally Moon, in another late-hour bid, offering Pitcher Carl Willey. . . . Forget it, was the Dodgers' reply.

**Don Riley in the St. Paul Pioneer Press:** An athlete like Los Angeles' Bo Belinsky makes more copy than a revolution, but you can't tell me a highballing playboy doesn't cause more morale problems than a guy who shows his paycheck.

**Dick Peebles in the Houston Chronicle:** Mets' Coach Solly Hemus, although he batted .304 for the Cardinals in 124 games in 1954, doesn't believe he'd have ever made it to the majors if the strike zone had been enlarged when he joined the Cardinals to stay in 1951. . . . "I was a base on balls hitter; I was looking for a walk or getting hit with a pitch every time I went to the plate," said Hemus. . . . "On every high pitch, I'd genuflect, trying to make it appear even higher than it was. . . . With this new strike zone, hitters like me never could have made it in the majors."

## Jimmy Burns in the Miami Herald

Modern baseball players compare favorably with old-timers, according to Paul Waner, a Hall of Fame member, who keeps in touch by serving as freelance batting instructor. . . . "I look back and see that the players today get out and play hard like we did years ago," said Paul. . . . "In every camp, a few try to loaf, but they're not going anywhere. . . . Most of 'em take baseball seriously and take better care of themselves physically than the old-timers did. . . . I'd say the modern players are larger and younger and as good as players used to be. . . . But there is one thing you can't beat, and that is experience. . . . There is an occasional exception, but most players need to play in the minors before hitting the majors."