

Infield Springs Leak --Nats Paddle Canoe In a Sea of Miscues

By BOB ADDIE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Anybody know what happened to the glue, or even the Scotch tape? Gil Hodges, manager of the Senators, could use something adhesive to put together his infield.

The Senators have been surprising nobody by flirting with the cellar in June, but things could have been different if the Washington infield had played up to its potential.

The Senators were leading the American League in errors at the last reading and could continue to do so. They were averaging more than one error per game and it was beginning to tell.

There have been other errors of omission as well as of commission. On at least four occasions, a runner caught in a trap managed to get out because of uncertain and apprehensive (not to mention reprehensive) play on the part of the Nats.

Infielders and pitchers have failed to make the double play at a crucial moment. One example was against the White Sox, who scored nine runs in the second inning on May 23 because of the failure to make a key double play. It doesn't show in the earned-run department, but it was a lapse, if not an error. The ball is juggled and you get one man instead of two. Ergo, no error.

Hodges is at a loss to understand the sudden reversal in form.

"In spring training," he confessed, "I was cheered by the infield defense. That was why I was so certain that we were a much-improved team."

Brinkman Sparkled in Spring

"I never saw a better job of short-stopping than Eddie Brinkman turned in this spring. He reminded me of my old teammate, Pee Wee Reese—and everybody knows in what high regard I always held Pee Wee."

"Brinkman was hitting well, too. He batted .400 for the exhibition season. When the regular season opened, Eddie went into a slump. Well, that was all right. He's only 22. It's happened to more experienced men than he. But his fielding fell off until he was making unbelievable errors."

"I could have carried Brinkman with a hot glove and a cold bat," Gil said, "but when both of them didn't function, I had to bench Eddie. He showed some signs of coming out of his batting slump and then he tailed off again."

"John Kennedy has done a sensational job at both third base and shortstop. But he's made some errors at the wrong time—wrong for us, that is. The same is true of Don Blasingame and Don Zimmer. These two fellows have been around and you know they weren't choking up. But it's just been one thing after another. Except for those errors, we could have been pretty respectable this year."

Ex-Senator Hurlers Haunt Capital's Struggling Crew

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The Senators seem to be kind to their "alumni"—especially pitchers. Back in 1962, Early Wynn, then with the White Sox, won his two hundred and ninety-ninth game against his former team. Gus never did get his three hundredth that year—although he had plenty of opportunity to pick it up against the Senators in Washington.

It seems the White Sox decided it had to be done at home, meaning Chicago. Wynn did get No. 300 while wearing a Cleveland uniform in 1963.

Pedro Ramos, who cut his pitching teeth with the old Nats back in 1955 as a 19-year-old boy, picked up No. 99 against Washington this year.

Camilo Pascual, another Washington alumnus, has never been beaten by the expansion Senators and holds a 9-0 record over them.



Ed Brinkman

year," Hodges observed. "It's hard to go over ball games and say where you lost them, but I began to notice that every time we gave the other team a chance with an error or a lapse, they took it and beat us. I said at the beginning of the season that clubs like ours can't afford to give anything away."

"I refuse to believe this is a bad club in Washington. The players really try. Maybe they've been trying too hard. That could be the trouble."

"I never put anybody in the doghouse," Gil revealed. "I'm always trying to get a lineup which will win. I have to figure the percentages and who's pitching. Some batters do better against certain pitchers. That's elementary. But baseball has become highly specialized and you can't overlook a single possibility which will lead to victory."

Fatal Bobble in Ninth

Hodges was dismayed over the cruel turn of events. There was the one when Cleveland's Vic Davilillo missed a Ron Kline knuckler for a third strike with two out in the ninth. It should have ended the game with a 6-5 victory for Washington. But the wicked knuckler got past catcher Mike Brumley for a passed ball. Then came the deluge and the Nats lost the game eventually, 9-6.

Gil was inclined to be charitable about Brumley's "mistake." But it was a tough way to lose.

Nat Notes: Don Lock's zeal in chasing a fly ball landed him on the sidelines for a week. He banged his right knee against the wire fence at D. C. Stadium chasing Leon Wagner's long drive which went for a triple. Lock has had his troubles this year. He blacked out once from a sinus attack while in the outfield. His bat was cold all spring and just when he started to hit he was hurt. His replacement, Fred Valentine, did a good job. Valentine is a switch-hitter. . . . Marshall Bridges was down with "pneumonitis," which means a severe chest cold, but finally recovered. . . . Now that his personal problem has been settled with a divorce, Moose Skowron seems to be playing better.

Stigman, Thinking Positively, Erases Twin Wild-Man Stigma

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

Positive thinking and positively good control of his curve ball finally overcame six weeks of pitching problems for Dick Stigman, the last of the **Twins** starting pitchers to reach peak form.

For what seemed like six years to Stigman, the best he could do was go eight innings and "hold" the White Sox to five runs. The 15-game winner of 1963 had started seven times and relieved once going into the final week of May. All he had to show for it was three losses.

"I couldn't get my curve over the plate," said Stigman. "And the batters were just waiting for my fast ball."

Minnesota Manager Sam Mele, plagued by problems in his bull pen and with all starters, except Camilo Pascual and Jim Kaat, could wait no longer after Stigman was driven from the mound in the third inning at Baltimore.

Stigman was sent to the bull pen. "It's the same problem he had last year," said Mele at that time. "He's behind every batter. We'll put him in the bull pen and see if he can work out his problems."

About that time, lefthanders Jim Roland and Gerry Arrigo started to register their first strong performances. And Stigman received a letter recommending him to read a book on positive thinking.

Helped by Bull-Pen Stint

"I never read the book," said Stigman, "but I've been working on positive thinking. As far as I am concerned, it's my own invention. Going to the bull pen helped me. There is a lot of competition among lefthanders for the starting jobs on this club. I had to come around to get my job back."

When Stigman got his next chance to pitch, it was in relief against the Angels at Los Angeles. He entered a 3-3 game with the bases loaded and one out. That game went 13 innings before he and the **Twins** won it on Don Mincher's home run, for the Angels did not score again.

"He kept firing strikes when he was in a jam," said Mele. "That was the best game he has ever pitched." But Stigman had pitched five or six strong innings before. It still remained for him to go nine. He got his chance against the Yankees five days later.

Stigman stopped the Yankees, 2-1, with a five-hitter, proving to himself that he can win one-run games with positive thinking. Last year, he had lost five of six games decided in late innings, three to the Yankees.

"When Mickey Mantle came to bat in the ninth inning with a man on base, I didn't think maybe Mantle is going to hit one out and beat me," said Stigman. "I started thinking immediately how I would pitch to him, how I would throw the curve and where."

Reversal of '63 Thinking

Was this actually a contrast to his way of thinking in one-run losses such as the ones he went through last year?

"I think so," said Stigman. "I can remember as far back as when I was pitching in Class D ball. I would pitch well for six or seven innings. Then I would start to get tired. Well, anyone is going to get a little tired, but you have to kick yourself, force yourself to throw the ball hard and throw it where you want it."

"But if you start thinking you are tired, you start expecting things to happen. You are not really forcing yourself."

Stigman said Mantle has "hit a ton" against him in the past. But he kept those one-run losses of last year out of his mind in that big ninth inning.

"Remember, I'm thinking positively now," said Stigman. "When you've won 15 games the year before, you know you can do it. It's a matter of doing it."

Stigman found himself just in time for the **Twins**. Jim Kaat, lefthander

Arrigo Walks Bases Full— Then Slams Door on Yanks

TWIN CITIES, Minn. — Gerry Arrigo, lefthanded rookie pitcher of the **Twins**, pulled the old trick of walking the bases loaded and then retiring three batters in a row. He did it off against the Yankees.

It was in the fourth inning. Arrigo walked Hector Lopez, Roger Maris and Joe Pepitone to lead it off. Then he got Cleve Boyer on a short fly to center, pinch-hitter Phil Linz on a short fly to right and fanned Tony Kubek.

To top it off, Arrigo also loaded the bases in the third inning and had runners on second and third with no outs in the fifth. The Yankees did not score off him until the eighth in Arrigo's 6-2 victory.

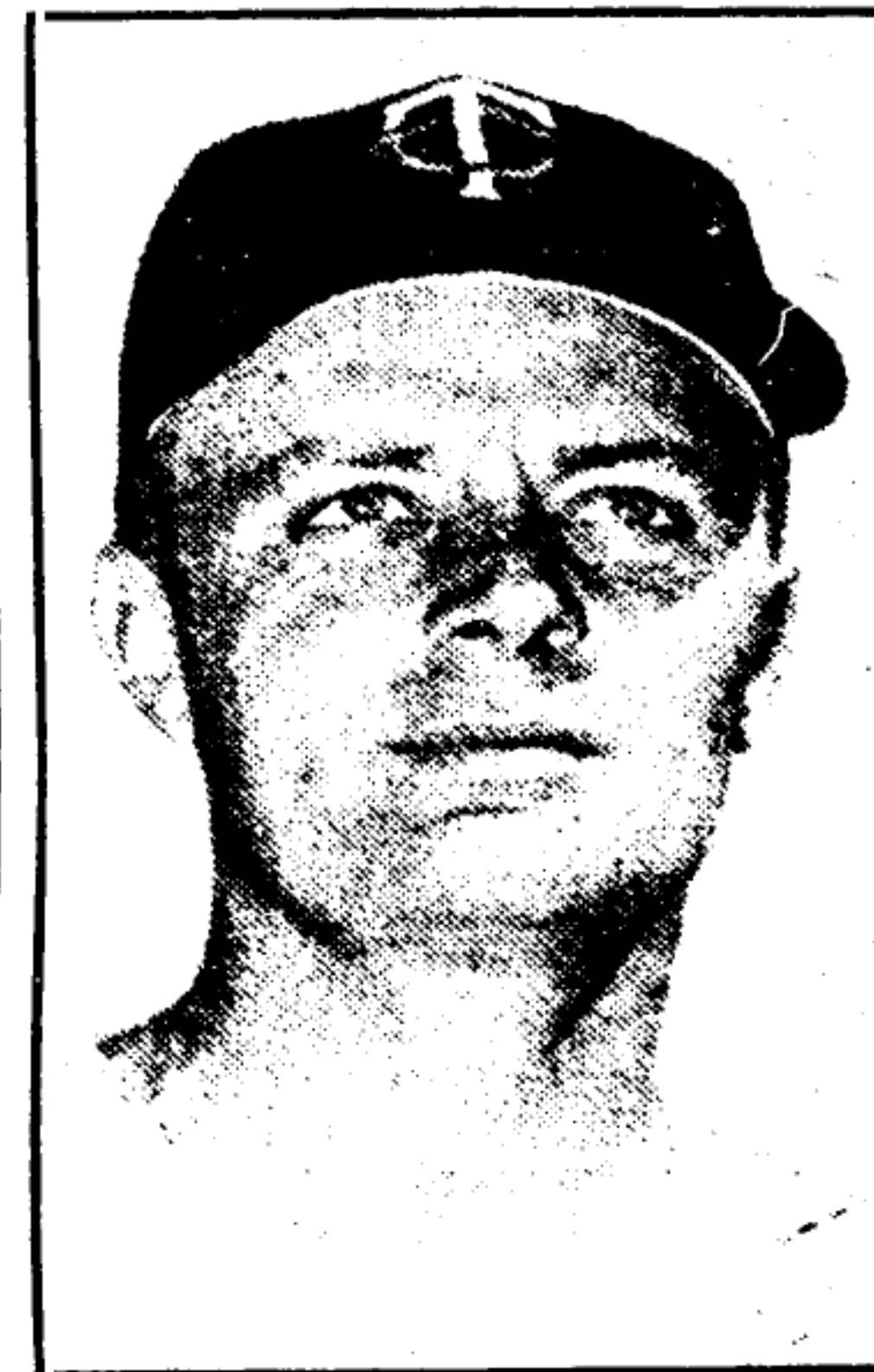
with a 5-2 start, suffered a torn muscle in his pitching shoulder and was out of action at least two weeks. Then Camilo Pascual cut a finger on his pitching hand reaching for a razor blade, and he missed a turn.

Starters Complete Their Tasks

Starting with May 19, **Twins** starters went the route 10 times in 20 games. Stigman, Roland, Pascual, Arrigo and Kaat made up a combination of starters that allowed the **Twins** to win 12 and losing five during those three weeks.

Only three times during all of those games did a **Twins** starter go less than seven innings. After his victory over New York, Stigman came back to pitch eight strong innings against Baltimore, before losing, 2-1, to Steve Barber.

Twin Tracks: Rich Rollins and Jimmie Hall missed a week of action after suffering injuries during the same game at Los Angeles. . . . Rollins pulled a hamstring muscle and Hall was hit in the left cheek by a pitch by Bo Belinsky. Hall suffered no fracture, but when he returned to action, he requested a special helmet similar to the one worn by Earl Battey for batting. The helmet has a special plate attached to protect the temple and side of the head nearest the pitcher. . . . Rookie Tony Oliva also has a helmet like this, but he has yet to wear it in a game. Oliva, incidentally, continued his .380-plus hitting right through the **Twins** first series in June. At that point, he had failed to hit in only eight games all season. . . . Earl Battey, who has been playing all season despite a painful right knee, was given a rest after his batting average dipped to .220. The knee hurts Battey when he's throwing, running and hitting. He was unable to shift his weight quickly for wide pitches when catching, so he devised a method of diving for the ball. . . . From May 15 until he was rested, June 5, Battey managed nine hits in 53 times at bat, but one was a ninth-inning home run that beat Boston and another was a triple that helped beat New York. . . . Garland Shifflett, rookie relief pitcher recently called up from Charlotte, N. C., made his 1964 debut against the Yankees. He retired the side in the ninth inning of one game without allowing a run and pitched two innings before giving up a run the next day against the same club.



Dick Stigman

Tough Tony Oliva Really Rough With Men on Sacks

By MAX NICHOLS

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

In addition to leading the American League in four departments, rookie Tony Oliva of the **Twins** has proven his strong character as a ball player in two other ways:

1—He has batted .472 with runners in scoring position to lead the **Twins** in that department.

2—He plays in spite of injuries without complaint. Manager Sam Mele had to order him to take a day of rest after the right fielder played for three weeks with an injured shoulder and for one week with a swollen finger.

After the first 50 games, Oliva had weathered a dozen knockdown pitches and one beanball to lead the American League in batting with .385, in hits with 78, in doubles with 12 and in triples with five.

But it's in the matter of driving in runners that batters prove their value, and Oliva is even better than normal in the tough situations.



Tony Oliva

Tony Scores Runner Seven Times in Nine Chances

The 22-year-old Cuban hit safely 17 times in his first 36 official at-bats with runners on second or third or both. He scored 17 of the first 47 runners he had a chance to drive in. In his first nine chances with a runner on third and less than two outs, he scored the man seven times.

Earl Battey was the closest to Oliva among the **Twins** in RBI percentage. Battey, hitting behind such power hitters as Bob Allison, Jimmie Hall and Harmon Killebrew, came to bat only 16 times with chances to score runners from second and third. He hit safely for a .437 average.

Rich Rollins was next with a .423 percentage—11 hits in 26 official times at bat. Walks, hit batsmen and sacrifices were not included in the times at bat.

Killebrew, the **Twins** RBI leader with 36 at this point, had 46 official chances and hit safely 12 times for a .261 average.