

Smokey Blows Up, Ignites Dodger Explosion at Dish

By BOB HUNTER
LOS ANGELES, Calif.

The Dodgers observed the All-Star break with only three decimals between them and the top spot, and while the faces and names were the same when play was resumed, there was evidence something new had been added.

Led by the hot bat of Ron Fairly, the unselected All-Star, the resurgence of Captain Maury Wills and the return to health of Lou Johnson and Willie Davis, the Dodgers suddenly learned how to score a modest supply of runs.

In their last seven games before the brief intermission, the Dodgers scored 42 runs against Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, an average of six an outing. By Dodger standards, this is block-buster baseball.

Walter Alston, just as he did in the pennant year of 1963 when he woke 'em up by stopping the team bus on the way to the Pittsburgh airport and challenging the whole outfit, turned his kittens into tigers again with a clubhouse dressing down in Cincinnati, July 5.

First, Alston ejected a newspaperman traveling with the club, then ripped into his players after they blew a three-run lead and suffered a non-professional, 7-4 loss to the Reds that shoved them out of first place for the first time in two months.

Costly Errors Irk Skipper

There had been several sloppy plays, especially costly throwing errors, and Smokey told 'em off as only he can when he goes into his once-a-year Mt. Vesuvius act.

From then on, they started getting a respectable amount of runs for their pitchers, something that a number of observers insisted they were capable of doing all the time.

"We needed something like that to loosen us up," was the way first base coach Danny Ozark put it.

The next night, the Dodgers went out and throttled the Reds, 11-7, reclaiming first place.

"They went out there and attacked the ball," went on Ozark. "The guys had been swinging half heartedly. Alston's chewing out really woke 'em up. Our team is capable of making runs and maybe now the guys realize it."

The club had been so tense and tight that on the day of Alston's explosion, Ozark told THE SPORTING NEWS he had gone out and invested one dollar in a harmonica, which he said he had intended to tootle on the bus in case of another loss.

He admitted he had taken no lessons, and while a reliable correspondence school had been recommended to him, Ozark frankly admitted he didn't think the situation would warrant such prolonged study.

Fireworks Outside, Too

Another sidelight to the clubhouse upheaval was an accompaniment of post Fourth of July fireworks going on outside as part of a celebration staged by Bill DeWitt.

When Alston had cooled off, he asked this reporter, "Are the fireworks over?"

He grinned and added, "The ones outside, I mean."

Anyway, the club started scoring some runs for its pitchers, with some players jumping on the bandwagon, and others, as in the case of Fairly, speeding up their steady work.

At the brief rest period, Fairly had boosted his average to .311 and owned 53 runs batted in.

"This is the fastest start I've ever had," Fairly said, "and that goes not only since I've been with the Dodgers, but also in the minors, college and high school."

Fairly was so hot, in fact, that Pittsburgh's Frank Carpin walked



Walter Alston

him intentionally in the tenth inning of the second game, July 11.

"That's the first time I've ever been walked on purpose by a left-handed pitcher," reportedly Fairly, whose outfield play has matched his offensive productivity.

"I hope I get the chance to play a big part in carrying the club offensively in the second half. I just want to get a shot with men on base."

It looked like they would be there with some consistency, because Wills was getting aboard again, closing out the July 11 double-header with five hits in his last six at-bats.

Wills Hikes Theft Total

The captain also boosted his stolen-base total to 55 before flying out of Pittsburgh for Minnesota, a figure that put him 20 games ahead of his tempo in 1962, the year he conquered Cobb.

Alston had said, for the previous month, "If we can hang on until the All-Star Game, we'll be okay."

It was obvious the team could use the rest.

Dodger Dope: When Sandy Koufax became the first 15-game winner of the season, July 11, he also became the first National leaguer to take that many victories into the All-Star Game. In 1941, Bob Feller had 16. . . . Don Drysdale went in with 13, giving the all-star All-Stars a total of 28 for the first section of the race. . . . Mike Kekich, a first-year player, was married during the interlude. . . . Both Johnny Podres and Howie Reed suffered minor injuries at Pittsburgh. . . . Jim Brewer and Don LeJohn were expected back in action shortly after the All-Star break. . . . Ron Fairly started play with a nine-game batting string when the Cubs came into Dodger Stadium to rejoin the battle. . . . Vice-President Fresno Thompson flew home with the team after a trip to Buffalo, where he was honored as the Bisons' all-time second baseman. . . . Both Buzzie Bavasi and Walter O'Malley represented the club at the All-Star contest. . . . After being given a few days off for the first time, rookie Jim LeFebvre came back swinging, driving in seven runs in a span of four games just before the break. . . . Walt Alston says ex-Senator John Kennedy, now finishing up games for Jim Gilliam when the situation warrants, "has the fastest pair of hands I've ever seen." . . . Drysdale came up with a bad blister on the middle finger of his right hand, but refused to admit it bothered him. . . . Carl Erskine, who "rejoined" the club to throw during batting practice in Cincinnati, said of Drysdale: "He's one of the best workhorses the Dodgers ever had."

N.L. 'Hummers' Give Torre Memento—A Swollen Hand

TWIN CITIES, Minn.—Catcher Joe Torre's hand was so sore after his nine-inning All-Star stint for the National League that he had to soak it in warm water.

"I had some real hummers coming out of the bull pen," the Milwaukee catcher said as he displayed his swollen hand. "The hand really hurts."

The Cardinals' Bob Gibson, a fireballer of note, took a look at Torre's paw and offered some sympathy. "I gotta admit he was catching some sizzlers."

TWIN CITIES TWINKLES

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WILLIE HAILED AS "KING"

WHEN Willie Mays walked onto the field while the Americans were taking batting practice, Earl Battey and Elston Howard doffed their caps and shouted: "Here comes the king!" The Giants' slugger took a look around the park and asked, "Has anyone ever hit one over the second deck of the left field bleachers?" "Take a look at that 365-foot sign," said the Twins' Battey. "I'm lucky to hit one in the lower deck let alone over the second one."

There wasn't any doubt about who was the umpiring veteran in the six-man crew. It was the A. L.'s John Stevens, hands down. Stevens, appearing in his sixth All-Star Game, has been in the junior circuit 18 years, four more than the combined major league total of the five others. They are Bill Valentine and Lou DiMuro of the A. L. and Lee Weyer, John Kibler and Bill Williams of the National.

Ron Santo bumped into N. L. Manager Gene Mauch in the lobby of All-Star headquarters the day before the classic and was told that he'd play in part of the game. "That was good news," said the Cub third baseman. "As a .259 hitter, I felt I was pretty much on the squad on a rain check."

STARGELL ALMOST GETS "ACE"

WILLIE STARGELL, the Pirate slugger, almost made a "hole-in-one" during batting practice. Stargell boomed one behind the center field fence and it almost hit a tuba player who was tooting away in the band there. Stargell enjoyed his batting session and remarked, "Man, I'd like to take this park back to Pittsburgh with me."

Newsman and other guests did not come away empty-handed. There were plenty of gifts for all, most of them donated by Minnesota businesses. There were golf shirts, brief cases, billfold-notebooks and dinner plates. And for the little woman there was a Betty Crocker cook book.

The American League took batting practice first and occupied the dugout on the first base side. The A. L. players wore their home uniforms and the N. L. their traveling grays.

MAUCH SALUTES HILL CORPS

MANAGER Gene Mauch of the Nationals tipped his hat to his pitching corps. "Whenever we reached into the bull pen, we stayed at least as strong as we were," he said. "That's one reason we worked Don Drysdale only a third of an inning. If we hadn't gotten something going, I wouldn't have put in a pinch-hitter for Don. But with a chance to get a run (in the fifth), and our

Casey Stengel: clown or dictator?

You don't realize how long Casey Stengel's been in baseball until somebody reminds you that when he played his first game for Brooklyn in 1912, the opposing shortstop was Honus Wagner.

The current Saturday Evening Post takes a close, hard look at this 75-year old phenomenon. Read about the increasing criticism he's getting as he manages the losingest team in history. Stengel seems warm, lovable and shrewd. But why do those who know him best resent him the most? Is it true that he's more loyal to his writers than his players? Learn why he bowed to DiMaggio, yet turned his back on Mantle. Stengel's been accused of everything from breaking the spirit of some players to falling asleep during games. What's the truth?

Don't miss this honest and penetrating article on "The last angry old man" in the July 31 issue.

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POST

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strong bull pen, I decided on the pinch-batter."

MAYS SETS HIT RECORD

WILLIE MAYS, appearing in his sixteenth consecutive classic, set an All-Star hit record with his home run in the first inning. It was his twenty-first safety and third homer. He also extended one of his marks by scoring his seventeenth and eighteenth runs.

Ed Kranepool of the Mets, one of the five National leaguers who didn't see action, took a philosophical view. "Oh, well, it's great to be with a winner," he commented.

Gene Mauch, the N. L. pilot, explained his eyebrow-raising strategy in employing Willie Mays as the leadoff hitter instead of using a swiftie like Maury Wills. "I decided on Mays and also Hank Aaron as the No. 2 batter because it could give them another time at bat," Mauch said. "Also, in the event the game had been tied in the ninth, I'd rather have Mays and Aaron up there than any other guys."

SANTO HIT REAL HOPPER

SECOND baseman Bobby Richardson, commenting on Ron Santo's trick hopper which accounted for the winning run, said: "If it hadn't hopped up, it was an easy double play. It hopped just enough, so that if I leaped for it and got it, I couldn't have got back to the base in time for the force. I let the ball go through to (Zoillo) Versalles, figuring he had a better chance to make a play at first." Versalles said the hop was too big. "I have to jump, throw and, by that time, there is no chance."

Heavy rains the night before the game caused Commissioner Ford Frick and his staff some concern. Frick and the six-man umpire crew, headed by John Stevens of the A. L., arrived at the park at 10 a. m. to check playing conditions. Also inspecting the field were Manager Gene Mauch of the N. L. and Sam Mele, an A. L. coach.

Seven teen-age boys, one of whom was from Chicago, were outside the park at 11 p. m. the night before the game when a rainstorm was at its

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through the ninth, and the game was then lost, 2-1, in the tenth.

"The only time I have felt tired all year was when I pitched in three or four straight games back in May," Klippstein said. "My arm was tired then. But now I feel great—as good as I ever felt."

Twins' Tracks: Earl Battey raised his batting average from .298 to .316 with seven hits in 14 times at bat despite a finger still sore from a dislocation. . . . The Twins rode their longest streak of the season when they won nine straight, including a three-game sweep at Kansas City and a four-game sweep against Boston. . . . Bob Allison hoped to return to action after the All-Star break after suffering a fracture and bone chip from a pitch that hit his right wrist. . . . Jimmie Hall tied for the club leadership in home runs with 16 and led in RBIs with 50. . . . Sandy Valdespino replaced Allison in left field. . . . Joe Nosssek boosted his stock at third base against lefthanded pitching after handling eight chances perfectly at Kansas City. . . . Jim Kaat, who missed a turn as a starter because of stiffness in his forearm, returned to action in three straight starts and hoped to "work it out." He says the problem was tendonitis.

height. They weathered that and then waited for the standing-room tickets to go on sale at noon. They occupied their time, when it wasn't raining, by playing touch football on a parking lot, sleeping or playing cards.

INCOME FOR PENSION FUND

NET RECEIPTS from the game, which was witnessed by 46,706, were \$242,755.27. Television and radio revenue produced another \$250,000. Ninety-five per cent of the gate and radio-TV money went to the players' pension fund. The remainder was turned over to the major leagues' Central Fund.