

1955 Angels Showing More Hustle Than Last Year's Club; Could Be Contenders

(This is the fourth in a series on the outlook for Pacific Coast league teams for the 1955 season.)

By SCOTT BAILLIE

Fullerton, Calif. — (U.P.) — Bill Sweeney, rubicund manager of the Los Angeles Angels, made his customary pennant prediction today, then grinned that he always takes that attitude until somebody shows him he's wrong.

Sweet Wilyum got the word quite early last season with a studgy band of Seraphs who missed the pennant by 27 games and finished in sixth place, but Sweeney thinks that won't happen again.

"We only have eight holdovers from last season and this 1955 club shows a lot more hustle," Sweeney said. "The 1954 team was slow and didn't hit when we needed runs. Look at poor Fred Richards, who hit 24 homers, usually with nobody on, and batted .277 while driving in only 56 runs. Ow!"

Richards is long gone with a host of other former Angels as the Chicago Cubs toy with their pawns. But the 1955 Cherubs hardly can be called a young outfit although the roster is swamped with new names.

Some Old Timers

That grizzled old man taking Richards' job at first base is none other than Herm Reich, who became almost as much a part of Portland as Vaughn street park. Reich, close to 40, came to L.A. this year after dropping from Portland down into the Class C California league and bouncing back to Seattle.

"He's doing a good job at first base," Sweeney said when pressed about the situation there. Burdette Thurlby, who also is an outfielder and batted .285 at Des Moines of the Class A Western league, is eyeing the spot, too.

Over at third is 37-year-old James (Buzz) Clarkson, who smashed 42 home runs with Dallas and Beaumont last year to

win the Texas league homer crown, drive in 133 runs and batter .327.

Manager Bobby Bragan of the arch-rival Hollywood Stars, who watched Clarkson play winter ball this year, predicts that the husky Negro will hit from 25 to 30 roundtrippers in the PCL.

"He sure gives the ball a ride," Sweeney agreed.

Veteran shortstop Bud Hardin and second baseman Gene Mauch are back to give the club strength down the middle while Johnny Pramesa returns to handle the catching. Bob Rivich, up from Stockton of the Class C California league, may give Pramesa some help if not trouble.

Pitching Staff
Charley Bell, Jim Clark and Bob Howard are rookies looking for infield jobs and Sweeney warns that no positions have been cinched.

Old familiar faces on the pitching mound belong to Lefty Joe Hatten, (13-17), Turk Lown, (5-3), and Cal McLish, (13-15).

"We need pitching help bad," Sweeney said. "Those three guys form our nucleus. We'll be glad to get more help there from the Chicago Cubs."

The hottest rookie, at least on paper, is right-hander Dwight Stoddard who won 16 straight for Magic Valley of the Class C Pioneer league. Sweeney says the boy looks "pretty good."

Tom Brown, now in his 12th year of organized ball at the age of 27, may play the outfield again if Clarkson pans out at third, Tommy's old spot. Bob Usher apparently is slated for right field once more. Bob Coats and Bill Bohlender, a pair of .300 hitters from Macon of the Class A Sally league, are among rookies battling for other gardens.

"We would run away with the pennant if I had my pick of the Cubs' roster," Sweeney said. "But we have to take what they send down. I am sure, however, we will be solid contenders in a better balanced league. And we might win the pennant."

SPORTS

Pitching Plus Power May Again Provide Cleveland With American Loop Flag

(This is the ninth in a series on the 1955 prospects of the major league teams.)

By DICK FALES

Tucson, Ariz. — (U.P.) — The 1955 Cleveland Indians should have the best pitching staff in baseball and the greatest array of power hitting, and with those two commodities alone they figure to win the pennant again.

Pitching and power tell the Cleveland story. That was the success pattern a year ago, and it paid off. This year will be the same, only more so.

Manager Al Lopez again will have his right-handed big three of Bob Lemon, Early Winn and Mike Garcia. In addition, he will have rookie southpaw Herb Score, a youngster whom Lopez gives unqualified praise as a "can't miss" star.

The power hitting a year ago was led by third baseman Al Rosen center fielder Larry Doby and first baseman Vic Wertz. A new entry for Tribe home run honors will be Ralph Kiner, purchased during the winter from the Chicago Cubs.

Kiner Could Help
Of defensive and base - running abilities Cleveland will be short.

The No. 1 worry facing Lopez will be his veterans. Wynn, for instance, may tail off from his 23-11 mark of last year because of advancing age — he's 35. Kiner, waived out of the National League, has looked far more impressive in camp games, and he could be the lemon of the year if he doesn't live up to his \$48,000 a year home run salary.

Of Kiner, Lopez had this to say: "Ralph hasn't got his timing down yet, but he will. The left field job is his if he makes

it, but on this ball club nothing's taken for granted. I think Kiner should start hitting home runs like he hit to, but if he doesn't, there are others who can take over left field."

Kiner's performance also might affect another position on the club, first base. Wertz took over the spot last year when Cleveland needed additional power. But a hitting Kiner might prompt Lopez to bench Wertz in favor of converted outfielder Dale Mitchell, an established .300 hitter who has defensive superiority over the slow-moving Wertz.

Hagan Top Catcher

Elsewhere on the club the situation will be unchanged. Batting champion Bobby Avila, who held out for an extra \$14,000 to go along with last year's .341 batting average, will be at second. Rosen, victim of an ill-fated move to first a year ago, will remain at third. Weak - hitting George Strickland will be at shortstop, but former Athletics' Manager Eddie Joost could grab the position if Strickland's hitting gets worse.

With Kiner in left field, Al Smith will move over to right. Smith and centerfielder Doby gave Cleveland a sound defensive outfield last year.

Durable Jim Hagan, who played 139 games last year, will again be the No. 1 catcher.

Cleveland's reserve strength perhaps accounted for last year's pennant more than anything else, and Lopez planned on an equally-strong bench this year. For pitchers, he will have Bob Feller and Art Houtteman for occasional starting assignments, with Ray Narleski and left-handers Hal Newhouser and Don Mossi heading the relief corps.

Infield protection is provided by veterans Sam Dente and Hank Majeski. Dave Philley and Wally Westlake, another pair of experienced players, will give outfielding depth. And rookie Hank Foiles, a .332 hitter with Indianapolis a year ago, will team with Hal Naragon to provide catching reserve.

Yreka Nine Tips Tornado

Medford high's baseballers doubled the Loggers in hitting but had trouble on the basepaths yesterday as they lost their season opener 6 to 2 at Yreka, Calif.

The Black Tornado got a good number of men on bases but had them stranded there as base running was not what it should have been.

Larry Gober's double topped eight Medford hits. Yreka got only four safeties but drew eight walks to Medford's four.

The second and fifth were Yreka's big innings with two and three, tallies respectively.

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Medford 001 100 0 2 8 2
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Sides, Bellack (4), Tyler (4) and McLaughlin; Dilley, Keavs (3) and Kliever.

World's Record For 880 Broken

Berkeley, Calif. — (U.P.) — Long Spurrier, former University of California track star, broke the world's record Saturday for the 880-yard run when he ran a blistering 1:47.5 to best the official standard by more than a full second.

The 22-year-old speedster from Delano, Calif., now competing as a member of the San Francisco Olympic Club track team, finished 35-yards in front of the pack in a triangular meet between UC, Olympic club and the Santa Clara Youth Center.

The official record of 1:48.6 is held jointly by Mal Whitfield, formerly of Ohio State, and Gunnar Nielsen.

Spurrier, who was runner in the 800-meter run in the Pan American games at Mexico City last week, had a previous best half-mile mark of 1:49.8.

Antonelli Said Ready For Season Opener

Mesa, Ariz. — (U.P.) — Left-hander Johnny Antonelli, who closed the World Series out for the New York Giants last autumn, looks like he's ready to open the National league season for the champions.

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Pirates Nip Jacksonville In Practice

Jacksonville — Phoenix was victor 3 to 2 Friday in a practice tussle which opened the 1955 baseball season for Coach Fred Richardson's Jacksonville high school Redskins.

Freshmen and sophomores figured strongly in the line-up for the Redskins.

Only four lettermen are back from last year's club, and one of them, catcher-outfielder Harold Jordan, has been out of school for the past week because of illness in his family.

Two of the lettermen have only one year of experience. Both sophomores, they are First Baseman Gary Hueners and pitcher-infielder Clyde Smith. Outfielder Dick Sanford, the fourth letterman, and Jordan both are seniors.

Leading infield candidates at present are Hueners, first base; Bob Guches, a junior, at second; Jack Daly, sophomore, shortstop; and Sam Bishop, sophomore, third base.

Richardson's three top outfielders at this stage of the season appear to be Sanford, Freshman Walter Couch, and Senior Dick Teal. Couch and Teal will also double as left handed pitchers.

Two other pitchers are looming big in Richardson's plans. They are Senior Dale Baysinger, a left hander, and Junior J. L. Beams, a right handed hurler.

Seven other squad members will be contending for starting berths this year. They are Sophomore Gary West, catcher; John Winingham, a freshman infielder; Marion Dowell, a freshman infielder-outfielder; Ken Shockie, sophomore infielder; Eddie Paxton, right handed freshman pitcher; Tom Bishop, freshman outfielder; and Bob Gemahlich, senior catcher.

Richardson tentatively has lined up a practice game for Tuesday against the combined Medford varsity and junior varsity, to be played at Medford.

Meanwhile, Track Coach Millard Webb is drilling his hopefuls in preparation for what looks like an improved season over last year's record.

Lettermen who will be back are Fred DeVos, a senior, who is defending district 440 champion; Floyd Driscoll, a sophomore sprinter, and Bruce Boyd, a senior who figures in Webb's half mile and mile plans for this season.

Other top track prospects include Dick Sanford, senior, in the half mile and high jump; Harvey Hueners, senior, in the javelin; Ronnie McIntyre, senior, in the 440 and 880; Harold Jordan, senior, in the sprints and relay; Eldon Smith, freshman, middle distances and high jump; Marion Dowell, freshman, who looks good in several events; Bob Gemahlich, senior, in the shot put; Bob Guches, junior, in the pole vault; Dale Baysinger, senior transfer from Grants Pass, hurdles; Gene Smith, freshman, mile; Jerry Stewart, senior, pole vault and hurdles; Sam Bishop, sophomore, middle distances and Clyde Smith, sophomore, javelin.

PILOTS TOP GONZAGA

Portland — (U.P.) — Portland University decided Gonzaga 7½ to 4½ in a golfing match at Columbia - Edgewater Friday.

Roger Siliecky of Portland and J. J. Hagen of Gonzaga shared medal honors with 77's.

Sports Bulletin

Chicago — (U.P.) — Wes Santee turned in a blazing finish Saturday night to win the Bankers' mile of the Chicago Daily News relays with the third fastest time of the season, 4:04.2, before 15,262 fans. It was the second straight standout performance by the former Kansas University star. Last night he won the mile in Cleveland in a clocking of 4:04.6. His time tonight set a new relay record, eclipsing the old mark of 4:06.4 set by Gil Dodds of the Boston A.A. in 1944.

Baker Decisions Mederos Easily; Eyes Valdes Bout

New York — (U.P.) — Heavyweight contender Bob Baker of Pittsburgh, who licked one Cuban Friday night, issued a warning today to another Cuban, Nino Valdes to "fight me or be bypassed in the race for a September shot at the title."

Big Bob, third-ranking contender won a top-sided decision over unranked Julio Mederos of Havana in their nationally televised and broadcast 10-rounder at Madison Square Garden Friday night.

Valdes is the No. 1 contender. But he already has been bypassed by second-ranking Don Cockell of England for a May title fight with champion Rocky Marciano.

Baker, who scaled 209 pounds to Mederos' 190 Friday night, came out of the fight unmarked although Cuban Julio landed several good long rights to the head during the bout. However, Mederos was too eager and too nervous for good marksmanship in his first Garden fight. He missed with most of his punches.

Baker shuffled forward persistently and gave Mederos a methodical beating with short punches to head and body. He staggered the Cuban several times but couldn't drop him. Big Bob boxed so well that he made Julio look like a one-handed fighter.

Olympic Chief Considers Taking Australia Trip

Chicago — (U.P.) — Avery Brundage, international Olympic president, said yesterday he "may go to Australia in three or four days" to check reports that the 1956 games, scheduled for Melbourne, are endangered by strike disputes and lack of accommodation.

The Australian press has circulated reports saying that Brundage was "alarmed by the situation and would fly to Melbourne next week to inspect the situation."

"I haven't definitely decided to go yet," Brundage said. "But if I do, it probably will be to make first-hand report to the International Olympic Committee which meets in Paris in June."

Brundage added that "Australian officials have assured me the unfortunate publicity is unwarranted."

He said he hasn't heard a thing about alleged reports that fresh demands are being made in Europe to take the games away from Melbourne even at this late date.

J. J. Hagen of Gonzaga shared medal honors with 77's.

Two Americans Aid Cambridge Crew Win

London — (U.P.) — A pair of brawny Americans helped power Cambridge's eight-oared shell to its most one-sided victory over Oxford since 1900 Saturday on the choppy waters of the Thames river.

With Philip Dubois of Ridgefield, Conn., at the No. 2 oar and Bob Monks of Washington, D. C., at No. 6, the "light blues" of Cambridge won by 16 lengths in the 101st renewal of this famed rowing rivalry dating back to 1829. It was the first time in the history of the race that two Americans rowed for the same crew.

Americans Win Doubles At Canoe Tournament

Nice, France — (U.P.) — Budge Patty of Los Angeles and Tony Vincent of Miami, Fla. won the men's doubles championship in the Galla Tennis tournament in Cannes by defeating Bernard Destreameau of France and Vladimir Skonecki, self-exiled Pole, 6-2, 6-3, 6-2.

Earlier, Patty and Vincent defeated Robert Bedard and Donald Fontana of Canada in the semi-finals, 6-4, 7-9, 6-2.

Shirley Bloom and Patricia Ward of England won the women's doubles finals by defeating Angela Buxton and Joan Curry of England, 5-7, 7-5, 6-1.

NASHUA WINS

Hallandale, Fla. — (U.P.) — Nashua, the equine "playboy" from New York, passed an important test in his young racing career Saturday when he won the \$148,750 Florida derby over a muddy track at Gulfstream park.

West Virginia Breaks 100-Point Scoring Barrier

New York — (U.P.) — West Virginia Tech became the first team ever to break the 100-points-a-game barrier and Bob Hopkins of Grambling swept to a new career scoring record, according to small-college season-end statistics released yesterday by the NCAA Service Bureau.

Tech wound up the season with a 107.5 points per-game average over a span of 20 games to rack up a new first in team scoring averages. Other team records set were Santa Barbara's 48.6 per cent free throw accuracy mark.

Hopkins, who scored 1036 points in 32 games, lost out to Bill Warden of North Central for the individual scoring leadership, but boosted his three-year total to 2894 points, surpassing all previous career scorers. And he still has a year of eligibility remaining.



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