

Hope Running High Along Pacific Coast

United Press International
Hopes for sharpened fan interest were high today as action in the Pacific Coast League was renewed for the 37th consecutive year.

League President Leslie O'Connor has predicted a half million increase at the turnstiles for 1959 and up and down the far flung circuit there was talk of a wild scramble for the pennant.

Six contests were on tap for the opening including a pair of day-night double-headers. Spokane was at Phoenix, Vancouver at Salt Lake City, Seattle at Sacramento (two games), and Portland at San Diego (two games). The first games of the two double-headers are daylight affairs while the rest will be played under the lights.

League pundits predict a three-way battle for the pennant among Phoenix, Spokane and San Diego. But almost any of the other clubs—all of whom are expecting additional big league assistance—could make a strong flag bid.

BILKO'S BACK

The spotlight tonight will be in Phoenix for the Giant-Spokane contest. The Indians are a farm club of the Los Angeles Dodgers and are loaded with promising talent along with power-hitting Steve Bilko, the scourge of the PCL in 1956 and 1957.

Last season, Phoenix won the pennant while the Indians finished sixth. The Giants seem to have lost some of their pitching and some of their power while Spokane appears greatly improved.

San Diego, a second place finisher last season and the third member of the predicted powers, has a veteran cast and if the older players hold up the Padres could win it all.

With the three-way battle for the pennant predicted, and managers of the other clubs predicting first division finishes, league officials are hopeful the PCL will get back on the solid footing it knew before Hollywood, Los Angeles and San Francisco passed from the scene following the 1957 season.

SLUMP LAST YEAR

Last year, with the newly structured league, attendance was a disappointing 1,500,000, the lowest in many seasons.

Six of last season's managers have been returned to the fold.

Toronto Still Hangs Tough

TORONTO (AP)—Coach Toe Blake of the Montreal Canadiens, needing only one more victory for an unprecedented fourth straight Stanley Cup, isn't taking anything for granted.

"I must say we're in a good position," he said Thursday night after the Canadiens edged Toronto 3-2 to take a 3-1 lead in the National Hockey League's best-of-seven final series. "But then the New York Rangers thought the same thing about three weeks ago."

Blake was referring to Toronto's come-from-behind ability that sent them into the playoffs on the final night of the regular season while the Rangers were losing six of their last seven games.

Bernie (Boom Boom) Geoffrion led the way as the Canadiens exploded for three third-period goals to take a commanding lead over the Leafs. Toronto had broken a scoreless tie on a goal by Bill Harris at 3:45 of the final period before the Canadiens put on their winning spurt.

Big Race Grows To 57 Entrants

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—The field of the 500-mile race at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway May 30 grew to 57 cars today with announcement of entries from Ray Crawford of Pasadena, Calif., and Joe Massaglia Jr. of Santa Monica, Calif.

The deadline for entries was midnight Wednesday, but the Speedway was accepting all postmarked before that time. A few more may yet be received.

Time trials May 16 will cut the field to the 33 fastest cars for the race.

BREEDING FARM SOLD

SAN JOSE, Calif. (UPI)—Edenvale Farm, one of the West's historic training and breeding ranches, has been sold for real estate development.

Time Out



"Good grief! Looks like BOTH boys have been bribed to take a dive!"

Baltimore Star May Find Nest

BALTIMORE, Md. (AP)—George Bamberger has the foundation at last for a home in the major leagues. It's been a long haul—14 years.

The right-hand pitcher, now approaching 34, convinced Manager Paul Richards Thursday he has a place in the Baltimore Oriole nest. Not as a starter yet.

"I plan to use him a couple of innings at a time in relief," said Richards. "He looked all right to me."

For the first five innings he looked almost perfect to the New York Yankees. Only three of them got on base in Bamberger's first major league start.

The Yanks caught up with him then and went ahead 4-3. However, Bill Gardner's bases-loaded triple in the eighth salvaged a 7-4 victory for the Orioles.

"I didn't feel I was at my best," said Bamberger.

However, with his long log of 12 years of pitching in the highest level minor leagues, he said he was satisfied to get by in any form.

The Orioles bought Bamberger from Vancouver, where he had the leading Pacific Coast League earned run average of 2.4 for 84 innings last year.

He set a baseball record by going 68 2-3 innings without walking a batter and in all issued 26 bases on balls in 31 games, of which he won 15.

The New York Giants gave him two brief spells of major league pitching in 1951 and 1952. He hurled only six innings in seven games. He hurled 17 scoreless innings in 1952 spring exhibition and was shipped to Oakland.

"So I went out and won 106 and here I am back again, 7½ years later—with the Orioles," relates the six-foot, 175-pounder.

Williams Plans To Get In Shape

BOSTON (AP)—Ted Williams may go to Florida to get into shape. The Boston Red Sox slugger has been given doctors' permission to begin light exercises in his recovery from a pinched nerve in his neck. However, he must continue to wear a cervical collar for another 10 days or two weeks, pending another examination.

Jack Fadden, Sox trainer, suggested Thursday that Williams go to Florida where warmer weather "would loosen him up."

Should all go well, Williams could be in the lineup May 12.

Today's Sport Parade

Limerick Target Now Top Twirler

By OSCAR FRALEY

NEW YORK (UPI)—There was a time, five years ago, when Bob Purkey of the Cincinnati Reds was a favorite subject for the baseball limerick writers.

It was about the extent of his usefulness. For as a pitcher he left much to be desired.

There is one limerick about him which sticks in memory which went:

"There was a young pitcher named Purkey,
Whose major league future was murky.
"He was quick to admit,
"I'm not worth two bits."
"But I'm a heckuva lot better than Hetki!"

Johnny Hetki was another pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates in those days when the Bucs expected both of them to become some pumpkins. But after another year, the Pirates gave up on Hetki and he since has drifted from the big league scene. Branch Rickey, one of baseball's keener minds, would not give up on Purkey, however, and the Pirates waited, and waited, and then waited some more for him to mature.

HOMEGROWN PRODUCT
But Purkey, a Pittsburgh boy, never could make it big somehow before the home folks. He served his apprenticeship at Greenville, where he won 19, including a no-hitter: at Davenport, where he captured 17, and then did three tricks at New Orleans which were interspersed by two years in the Army.

In 1956 the Pirates counted heavily on him, but the handsome young man wrenched a knee and when he came back to the Pirates for the third time in 1957 he could beat Rickey's old love, the Dodgers, but he was strictly mediocre. When he finished the year with an unimpressive 11-14 mark they finally threw in the sponge and traded him to the Cincinnati Reds.

They say that Rickey is one of the greatest all-time assessors of baseball talent. And the fact that he wasn't dead wrong was proved at Cincinnati last year. The round-faced Purkey finally hit his stride with a 17-11 mark which won him a berth on the All-Star team and caused him to emerge as one of the better pitchers of a rather inadequate Cincinnati staff.

This season he has taken over as the No. 1 pitcher on the Reds' staff. This may not be exactly a ticket to the Hall of Fame but at least has to be some belated satisfaction to the 28-year-old Pennsylvanian.

BEATS PIRATES TWICE
There are some of those wearing Cincinnati flannels who aren't convinced that Purkey is a top-grade major league pitcher. The contention is that he is not extraordinarily endowed, possessing only fair speed to go with a good curve ball and a sound knuckler.

But as of this moment in the infant season, Purkey has compiled a pair of victories over his former teammates and is living up to pre-season calculations as a fine bet to win the National League pennant. They made a fumbling start, however, and two of their early defeats were at the hand of the man they cast off.

The six-foot, two-inch Purkey beat the Pirates with a four-hitter in the opener and came back with a seven-hitter over them for his second straight win. Say, if you will, that Pittsburgh hasn't hit its stride. But you also have to admit that Purkey's pitching may be one of the reasons.

Big Bob may not be overpowering, but at the moment it appears quite possible that at long last he has found himself. What happens from here on out in the long season ahead will tell the story, but it seems at the moment that Pittsburgh just possibly might have given up too quickly. If so, a new limerick would seem to be in order.

Minor League STANDINGS

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

American Assn.
Louisville 5, Omaha 4—10 innings

Fort Worth 6, Minneapolis 2

St. Paul 10, Dallas 0

Other games postponed

International League

Montreal 3-5, Miami 2-6 second game, 11 innings

Only games scheduled

Suggs, Rawls Battle It Out

DALLAS (AP)—Louise Suggs, in a head-to-head battle with Betty Rawls for top money winner of the year in women's golf, entered the second round of the \$10,000 Dallas Civitan Open today leading her rival by three strokes.

Miss Suggs, the 35-year-old veteran from Sea Island, Ga., conquered high winds with a 1-under par 70 Thursday to take the first round lead. Miss Rawls, the 30-year-old star from Spartanburg, S.C., had a 73.

In fact, Miss Rawls wasn't even in second place. That spot went to Jo Ann Prentice of Birmingham, Ala., who had a 72.

In money winnings, Miss Rawls has raked in \$5,692.52 and Miss Suggs, in second place, has won \$371.30 less. If Miss Suggs wins the money here she could take over the lead unless Miss Rawls took second money. First place pays \$1,282.50.

Tied with Miss Rawls for third place was Joyce Ziske of Waterford, Wis.

Klamath Kubs Prep For Another Season

KF emissaries attending the final spring organizational meeting of the Northern California baseball league at Weed last Sunday reported that a full complement of teams have reported for action during the 1959 season.

The league includes, in addition to the Klamath Kubs, the Weed Sons, Mount Shasta, Scott Valley, Yreka and Dunsmuir, and will begin the league schedule May 31.

The Kubs, who are again managed by Irv Whitt, will kickoff the action at Yreka on the 31st, then open at Gern Stadium the following Sunday, June 7.

The Kubs boss, Whitt, noted, "We fully expect to play approximately a 35 game season. Two night games a week are planned in addition to the Sunday afternoon league games."

Questioned about player possibilities for the coming year Whitt said, "It's hard to say how we will be, now. We are going to build the club entirely off the results of the tryouts we are planning. Absolutely no player, repeat no player, has a cinch on any job on the club, at this point. We expect to see a large turnout of some mighty fine talent and we will pick this year's team strictly off performances shown in the tryouts."

Last year the Kubs won the league championship but fell before the Mount Shasta team in the playoffs. This year the playoffs have been changed to a "suicide" type—a one game affair pitting the first and third finishers and the second and fourth. The

winners will then meet on August 16. The regular season will end August 9, and the all-star game will be played in Weed, July 26.

Whitt reported that the league's election of officers resulted in the renaming of Harry Hammond, Yreka, as president, Ivan Bold as vice president and the reappointment of Dan Barberri as secretary-treasurer. Barberri is entering his 30th year in baseball.

Klamath Kubs tryouts will begin shortly but the exact date for the first has as yet not been named. Players wishing to try for berths on the club are advised to watch the sports section of the Herald and News for the exact time and date of the first turnout, according to Whitt.

NHL PLAYOFFS
By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Montreal 3, Toronto 2—Montreal leads best-of-7 series 3-1

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