

N.L. WEST

By Darrell Reider

Normally this division has been a battle between Los Angeles and Cincinnati. Last year, though, the **Houston Astros**, with awesome pitching and timely hitting, captured their first-ever division title. Joe Niekro notched 20 wins and young Dave Smith registered a 1.92 E.R.A. as the Astros tasted the sweetness of being number one in the West. I believe they will be tough again this year, especially if J.R. Richard can recover from his unfortunate stroke, and if newly acquired pitchers Don Sutton and Bob Knepper can achieve double-digit victories. The only real weakness I see for this team is behind the plate; thus, with the crop of fine pitchers that Houston has, a trade for a catcher is possible by mid-season.

THE Los Angeles Dodgers, who have no new faces this season, will pose a threat once again in the West, thanks largely to balanced hitting and solid defense. Steve Garvey (the only National League hitter to reach the 200-hit plateau in 1980), Reggie Smith, Ron Cey, Dusty Baker, and rookie sensation Rudy Law head the list of power and offense for the Dodgers.

The team to watch in the West is the **Atlanta Braves**. Owner Ted Turner isn't afraid to spend money for some players—many of whom might not even be worth it—such as free agents Claudell Washington and Gaylord Perry. As a team, the Braves slammed 144 homers in 1980, with Bob Horner, Dale Murphy, and Chris Chambliss accounting for 86 of them. Atlanta has improved its pitching with the additions of Bob Walk, John "The Count" Montefusco, and Perry to the pitching staff. Beware of the Braves in '81.

The rest of the division, as I see the order of finish: the **Cincinnati Reds**, the **San Diego Padres**, minus Dave Winfield, and the **Sad Francisco Giants**.

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If anyone trusts the Las Vegas odds on the upcoming season, this year's charts show the **Montreal Expos** as 8-5 favorites to win the division, with the **Phillies** right behind them at 9-5. There have been some rumblings in the Expos' camp this spring, with the signing of Gary Carter, one of the finest all-around catchers in all of baseball, and Larry Parrish to multi-year deals for megabucks. Andre Dawson and Ellis Valentine are unhappy and could end up on new clubs by the June 15 trading deadline. The big blow to Montreal this off-season was the loss of outfielder Ron LeFlore to the free agent draft. He provided a spark to the offense that generated team speed, as was evidenced by his league-leading 97 stolen bases. The Expos will miss him.

As for the **Philadelphia Phillies**, I really can't see how they can be stopped, barring injuries to key players. The Phils have solid pitching, with 1980 Cy Young Award winner Steve Carlton, Dick Ruthven, Larry Christenson, and Nino Espinosa. Both Ruthven and Espinosa are recovering quite well from injuries. The hitting is lead by powerful Mike Schmidt and singles hitters Bake McBride and Pete Rose. Charlie Hustle

will surely top Stan Musial's record of most career hits in the National League sometime this season. The acquisition of Gary Matthews could give the **Phillies** a boost. But remember, the long-gone Greg Luzinski really helped the club against the stubborn **Astros** in the playoffs last year. Right now, Philadelphia has about eight outfielders, which leaves speed demon Lonnie Smith on the bench. With utility players of this caliber, the **Phillies** will definitely be hard to beat in 1981.

The next spot in the standings should be a battle to the wire between the **Pirates** and the **St. Louis Cardinals**. St. Louis General Manager Whitey Herzog did some major dealing at the winter meetings in Dallas, where he added Bruce Sutter, Larry Sorenson, Sixto Lezcano, Gene Tenace, and Bob Shirley to the **Redbirds'** roster. But those departed include Ted Simmons, Ken Reitz, Leon Durham, Terry Kennedy, and the one-day Cardinal Rollie Fingers. Herzog, though he helped his pitching staff tremendously, nevertheless could have adversely affected his hitting attack. He is a clever man, though, and knows the game of baseball as well as anyone. Remember, he called a press conference as General Manager to name himself new manager of the team.

The Pittsburgh Pirates were fairly quiet during the winter, with the exception of the trade that sent Bert Blyleven and Manny Sanguillen to Cleveland for pitchers Victor Cruz, Bob Owchinko, and Rafael Vasquez, and catcher Gary Alexander. Many members of the press have counted the **Pirates** out already, even before they open their campaign against **Montreal** next week. Star rightfielder Dave Parker has said that this will be the **Pirates'** year, and ageless Willie Stargell still heads the **Pirate Family**. I am sure the **Bucs** will threaten the leaders in 1981.

The New York Mets, listed as 20-1 longshots to capture the division title, have many new faces to start the 1981 season. Free agents Mike Cubbage, Dave Roberts, and Rusty Staub, and acquisitions Bob Bailor, Randy Jones, and Dave "King Kong" Kingman will all be wearing the orange-and-blue of the **Mets** this year. The **New Yorkers** are certainly no pushovers. For proof, just ask **Pittsburgh**, who dropped 11 games to them in 1980. The **Mets** must concentrate on playing as a team, not as individuals looking for personal glory and prestige.

The Chicago Cubs will sorely miss ace reliever Bruce Sutter, the master of the split-finger fast ball, coming out of the bullpen. Offensively, they are led by the National League's leading hitter of 1980, Bill Buckner, but one man can't carry an entire team. The **Cubbies** really need some help if they expect to bring a division title to the **Windy City** in 1981.

We are sure many readers will disagree with these predictions. If you do have some picks of your own, just drop them off in the **C.C. Reader** office and we'll be sure to include them in our next issue.

Next issue: Capitol baseball, NHL and NBA reports, and intramural updates.

Special thanks go to Kevin Iannucci for his help with this report.

A SUCCESSFUL ROAD TRIP

By Kevin Spiegel

While all of us were at home enjoying ourselves on "break," the Capitol Campus baseball team was traveling down to Maryland, to play four games in three days. Folks, this is 1981, not 1980, and guess whose team won three out of four? Yes—ours did!

Coach Melchiorre and company surprised everyone by starting their 1981 season on the right foot. In game one versus Coppin State, Capitol received a command pitching performance from Tim Christine. The hard-throwing right-hander fanned 12, walked four, and yielded three runs. En route to the team's impressive first win, John Buzzy and Gerald Stahl led the hitting attack, both collecting two hits and scoring two runs.

Games two and three were played as a doubleheader, which PSU split. In the first game, RSU lost 8-4 to St. Mary's College, but the big story in that game was the superb relief performance by Kevin Keffer. He came on in relief of Mike Smith, and shut down St. Mary's attack, hurling five innings of no-hit ball. (An impressive performance by the tall righthander!)

Game number two of the doubleheader proved to be yet another out-

standing pitching performance. Tom Stoudt, a lefthander, surrendered three runs and three hits (two in the last inning), as the **Lions** were en route to their second win in as many days. Stoudt helped his own cause by pounding out two hits himself. The **Lions** needed a four-run outburst in the second inning to help capture the victory for Stoudt.

You might be saying, "Wow—two lucky wins!" But wait, we are not finished yet.

Game four was not only pitching, but also a barrage of hits; 12 of them in fact. Tom Stoudt collected four hits, and John Clark added a 2-for-2 game. Kevin Keffer started, but ran into trouble late in the game. Coach Melchiorre put in Frank Notturmo, who pitched well enough to earn PSU its third win. Tim Christine saved the day and game for Notturmo by shutting down a strong Coppin State hitting attack.

In the four games played in Maryland, the **Lions'** hitting was led by Tom Stoudt (8-15, .533), Gerald Stahl (4-9, .444), and Tim Christine (4-13, .307). Coach Melchiorre said that all the non-starters, especially, helped the team's efforts. This year's team has won more games in three days than last year's team won in the entire campaign.

So look out opponents, the **Lions** have been released from their cages.

TENNIS, ANYONE?

Are you interested in participating in an intercollegiate tennis program, co-ed, during the Spring Term? If so, there will be a meeting on Friday, April 3, at 3:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Building Gymnasium. If you are interested in this program, but are unable to attend the meeting, please call 948-6266 for further information.

RECREATION FACILITIES
SPRING TERM HOURS

Monday through Friday--8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday--2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONAL



Rox--I don't know what this campus will be without you. What's the deal with HLB? I would still like your leg, remember!--HLB-II

Mr. & Mrs. Carlton A. Klinger--Congratulations and happiness always!
--Joan & Joe

Baby Boots--You be very careful if you get the Mini Couper--you are irreplaceable to me. Love, Lady Boots

Bob, Ruth, Ray, Kim--Thanks for being around on Friday the 13th. It's nice to have friends like you!--Joe

A-1 State College--I'm the other Kevin. Missed you at the Ranger-Flyer game. Sorry to hear about your N.Y. friend. We miss him, too! It's the Mets?? in '81--W328

SMS--Here's lookin' at you--StarRider

Joanie--Hope you remember April 11 forever; I will. Too bad no REO, but DC was fun (sorta)--Me

W205--Welcome to the booming metropolis of Capitol Campus. Nice to be reunited again. It's home for now.--W328

Ruth--Thanks for helping me through a bad time again. Friday the 13th sure isn't my lucky day, but I'm lucky to have found you for a friend--J.W.

Rosanne--Only the strong survive. Think about it.--The Vampire

J&M--Boy am I looking forward to partying! Sorry about last time--really. Who knows, maybe you'll learn something better about me this time?--Puppy

M.M.S.--Hello Again. How's life been? Well Spring Term is gonna be easy--only two classes. I enjoyed the break with you--doing all those things and wishing it was warmer weather! There's only 9 more weeks of school left til summer fun in '81... when it gets here I hope we can share it together! It'll work if you want it to. C-U-Soon.--Cruisin

Ro--The beautiful picnic weather showed that two Prez's are better than one. Couldn't have done it without you.
--Joe Baby

Snugglebunny--You're the best thing that has ever happened to me. 5-21-83 seems like an eternity away, hope the time goes by quickly. Can't wait to have those little B's buzzing around!
--Your Princess

Caroline--Do you love as good as you look?

MOUNTAIN WOMAN--Sorry about Aliquippa. It'll be good to be looking from the other side of the bars in June. Have a good term--HLB

Son--Sure miss you bumming Tylenol. REO was great! Hope to see you soon.
Your Mom

Almond Joy--I missed you over break. It's nice to be back with you.--Mounds

J.R.--You are a Honey!--Peggy Sue

Becky--Your performance was excellent, countess. I'm proud to be your friend. Looking forward to your 1st year at Cal?
--The One & Only Vampire

WSDC--WE DID IT! Thanks for working in the phonathon--Your Prez

Princess--Is incest best, or am I? You know what I mean. Still want to be Queen B?--Your 'SB'

Middletown Lanes

944-9991

WEDNESDAY- Campus League Nite

Ball drilling services, Bags,

Shoes and Accessories