

SportScene

# Baseball Fan: Is He Crazy?

By DAN DONOVAN  
Collegian Sports Editor

Dennison Durrant plopped down on the smooth leather couch in Dr. Amos Slaughter's well-furnished office.

"Doc," he said to the noted psychoanalyst, "I need your help. All my friends think I'm weird and keep laughing at me."

"Well," Slaughter said. "We all have our quirks and peculiarities..."

"But Doc," interrupted Durrant, "I'm really messed up. You see, I like to watch baseball."

"Hmmm," the doctor said as he noted the unusual symptoms on his note pad.

"My friends are beginning to compare me with rocking chairs, but with churns and quill pens," the patient said. "They call me Ben Franklin, because I'm so old-fashioned."

"They can't understand why I get a thrill out of baseball," Durrant continued. "They tell me, 'who likes to watch a guy on a hill throw a little white ball past a guy with a stick?' They are forever telling me about the excitement of football, the real American pastime."

"Hm," hummed the doctor, "You don't like football?"

"No, it's not that," pleaded Dennison, "I dig all those passes and running plays and all that, but when spring comes around I get an impulsive desire to watch baseball."

"Hm," Slaughter muttered again. "Do you think you can explain this desire?"

"Well, you may think this odd," the worried man said, "but I think the game is exciting."

"You haven't taken any hallucinatory drugs lately, have you?" the doctor said.

"No, honestly, Doc. I'm as straight as John Wayne," Durrant said. "Except I like baseball."

"You know this is an aberration from your peer group," the doctor said. "You are deviating from the norm."

"I understand that," Durrant admitted. "It's just that whenever Willie Mays is up at bat I envision him smacking a line drive right past the left fielder."

"Tell me about your childhood," the psychoanalyst said. "Was it normal?"

"Well, I played Little League ball," Durrant said, "and I enjoyed playing third base. I remember charging a ground ball, scooping it up neatly and arching it smoothly into the pitcher's head."

"Were you a good hitter?" the doctor queried.

"Well, I wasn't a home run hitter," the patient said. "I do remember the first time I faced Timothy McGinnity. I thought I had the first pitch nailed, but I swung and missed by a foot. The next pitch came right at me. I ducked, but the umpire called it a strike. I later learned that I was fooled by my first curve."

"Aha!" exclaimed Slaughter. "A simple case of projection. When you see Brooks Robinson stab a line drive, you see yourself doing the same thing. You identify with Roberto Clemente when he slaps a curve ball down the right field line."

"Why, Doc," the grateful man said, "you're a genius. Is there any cure?"

"I'm afraid there is only one I've ever heard of," the doctor said. "That's to watch 25 consecutive games between the Philadelphia Phillies and the San Diego Padres."

"Oh no, not that," Durrant said.

"Fortunately, they don't play that often."



DONOVAN

# Would You Believe Mets, Astros?

By MIKE RATHET  
Associated Press Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Mets made it to the top last year, and the Houston Astros could do it this year, setting up the first National League pennant fight between the expansion franchises born together in 1962.

While many still are not convinced about the Mets, it may not really matter—for the chief pre-

tenders to the throne in the NL East may just have too many of their own problems to deal with to play a successful game of catch-up.

On the other hand, in the NL West, it very likely appears that the race will be wide open, just as it was last year, with the edge given to the Astros here because of their pitching—the same commodity that won it for the Mets last season.

Here's the way it looks at a glance:

# Oakland, Baltimore Seen as AL Winners

By MIKE RATHET  
Associated Press Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Baltimore Orioles, who have the power, and the Oakland Athletics, who hope they have added the power, figure to be the teams to beat in the American League pennant races that begin next week.

Each, however, likely will be faced with different problems.

The Orioles, who do not seem to have stiff competition facing them in AL East, will have to overcome whatever psychological scars were inflicted by losing to the New York Mets in the World Series. The A's will have to overcome the Minnesota Twins in AL West.

With the exception of those three teams—the Orioles, the A's and the Twins—it looks from here as if the others will have difficulty keeping within hailing range. The entire order of finish should look something like this: East—(1.) Baltimore; (2.) Boston; (3.) Washington; (4.) New York; (5.) Detroit; (6.) Cleveland. West—(1.) Oakland; (2.) Min-

nesota; (3.) Kansas City; (4.) California; (5.) Chicago; (6.) Milwaukee.

The big battle most likely will develop in AL West with the defending champion Twins meeting the challenge of the A's.

The Twins, who won it under Billy Martin last year, will be trying to duplicate that effort this year under Bill Rigney and the adjustment required in adapting to that change-over may have been reflected in Minnesota's 0-9 record at the beginning of spring training.

There is heavy artillery available, with Harmon Killebrew and Tony Oliva, and the pitching should have improved with the addition of Luis Tiant to a staff that includes Jim Kaat, Jim Perry and Dave Boswell.

The A's, however, seem to have improved themselves to the point where they have the ability to overtake the Twins. The addition of Don Mincher and Felipe Alou should add even more dynamite to a line-up that already includes a legitimate super-slugger in Reggie Jackson.

There doesn't seem to be any way the others can be a factor. The Royals' youthful forces may be the only edge

needed to finish third in what figures to be a three-team race with California and Chicago. Milwaukee will bring up the rear.

In the Eastern sector, only a complete turnabout can keep the Orioles from another World Series engagement.

With Frank Robinson, Boog Powell and Brooks Robinson swinging a nd Mike Cuellar, Dave McNally and Jim Palmer pitching the Orioles just could be as convincing winners as they were last year when they finished 19 games ahead of second-place Detroit.

The Tigers figure to fade this year, without the suspended Denny McLain for a half season, and the most likely challenger is Boston, hoping to recapture the spirit of 1967 under new manager Eddie Kasko with a solid team led by Carl Yastrzemski.

Another year under Ted Williams should lift the Senators into third place despite improvements made by the Yankees with the acquisition of first baseman Danny Cater and outfielder Curt Blefary.

The Tigers are tagged to sink to fifth, winding up ahead of only Cleveland.

East—1. New York, 2. St. Louis, 3. Pittsburgh, 4. Chicago, 5. Montreal, 6. Philadelphia.

West—1. Houston, 2. Cincinnati, 3. San Francisco, 4. Atlanta, 5. Los Angeles, 6. San Diego.

The Mets, with Tom Seaver and Jerry Koosman as the aces of a strong pitching staff, are difficult to pick against, despite the fact many still consider some sort of miracle brought them through last year.

However, it was more than a miracle—it was talent, and the prime weak spot seems to have been bolstered by the acquisition of Joe Foy to play third base.

The Cubs, who folded last year after building a 9 1/2-game lead in mid-August, will have to carry that traumatic experience with them as well as a pitching shortage behind Ferguson Jenkins, Ken Holtzman and Bill Hands. They figure to fade as a factor. And neither Montreal nor Philadelphia figures at all.

That leaves the field to the St. Louis Cardinals and Pittsburgh Pirates.

Expectations were that the Cardinals would be a significant threat with slugger Richie Allen adding his bat in support of pitchers of the caliber of Bob Gibson, Steve Carlton and Nelson Briles. But the illness of Mike Shannon, the hard-hitting third baseman, may slow them down.

The Pirates have been getting some support because of the threat of heavy-shelling by Willie Stargell and Roberto Clemente and the pitching of Bob Veale, Bob Moose, Dock Ellis and Steve Blass, but there are big question-marks circled around shortstop Gene Alley and second baseman Bill Mazerowski. Whether they can stand up for a full season likely could be the decisive factor.

Braves Champs

Last year's champions, the Braves, were severely jolted by the loss of Ron Reed, an 18-game winner. With Hank Aaron they are always a threat, but with Reed gone the pitching load may be too heavy to handle, despite the addition of Jim Nash from Oakland. That paves the way for Houston, who made a rush at the title last year but faded in the last halfmonth. Joe Pepitone figures to add power to a team that relies heavily on the strong pitching of Larry Dierker, Don Wilson and Denny Lemaster, and two guys who began to show the same stuff as the Big Three last season—Tom Griffin and Jim Ray.

The Reds have the hitting but appear to lack the pitching despite the acquisitions of Jim McGlothlin from California and the emergence of rookie Wayne Simpson. The Giants, with Willie McCovey, figure to be in there and so do the Dodgers with Willie Davis on the threshold of becoming a super-star.

It figures to be tight—but the Astros are picked here because of their youthful pitchers.

## Immediate Plans Undecided

# McLain Pitching to Brother

LAKELAND, Fla. (AP)—Denny McLain doesn't know yet exactly what he'll do between now and July 1, the day his suspension from baseball is lifted.

"I expect to get some club bookings, but don't have anything set yet," said the sometime organist.

"And I don't know who I'll be able to work out with. I have no immediate plans on what to do to play baseball."

"It's my understanding that I can't be associated with semipro ball so I'll just have to wait and see."

Baseball commissioner Bowie Kuhn announced in New York Wednesday that the 26-year-old Detroit Tiger pitcher would be suspended until July 1.

The reason Kuhn gave was Denny's association with

gamblers involved in an alleged bookmaking operation in 1967 in Flint, Mich.

In the meantime, Denny will probably continue pitching to his brother, Tim, to keep his arm in shape. Tim, 22, was formerly a pitcher in the White Sox farm system until an auto accident resulted in torn neck ligaments, and he quit baseball and finished college.

Yesterday McLain, with the pressure of Kuhn's decision passed, relaxed with a game of golf. He has been playing considerable golf lately, shooting in the mid-70s, and he said his legs are therefore in good shape.

McLain will not be allowed to work out with the Tigers in any way, the same condition which has existed during the spring training season when Denny was under indefinite suspension by Kuhn.

# NBA Semifinals Tonight; Hawks, Bucks Favored

By The Associated Press

The Atlanta Hawks and Milwaukee Bucks, with three small steps already behind them, can take that final giant step into the division finals of the National Basketball Association playoffs by beating Chicago and Philadelphia tonight.

The Hawks, with a 3-0 lead over Chicago in their Western Division semifinal, can close out the best-of-seven series in Chicago. The Bucks, with a 3-1 lead over Philadelphia, can clinch their East set at the University of Wisconsin field house in Madison.

In the other semis, stiffer battles are raging for the New York Knicks, the East regular season champion, and for the Los Angeles Lakers, who finished second in the West.

The Knicks met third place

Baltimore in New York last night, tied 2-2.

The Lakers and Suns met in Phoenix, tied at 1-1.

The Hawks, with Lou Hudson and Joe Caldwell scoring and Walt Bellamy and Bill Bridges controlling the boards, have had little trouble against the third place Bulls in three easy victories. Second place Milwaukee has scored two straight victories over the fourth place 76ers, including Wednesday night's 118-111 triumph despite Billy Cunningham's 50 points for the 76ers.

## CWENS

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### Feel your upper lip

The hard thing about shaving your upper lip with a razor blade is shaving close enough.

Again, the unique Norelco design lets you maneuver around your nose and mouth, to shave your beard in every direction.

### Feel your sideburns

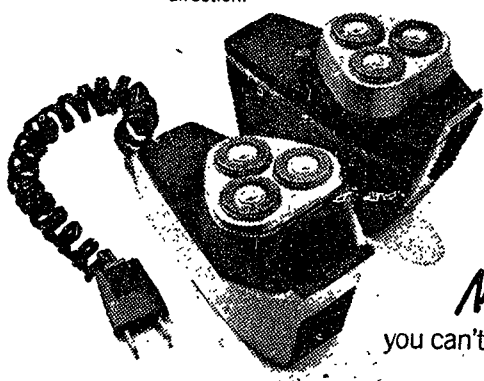
The biggest problem with shaving sideburns is to get them straight, and even on both sides.

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