

Is a Pirate comeback possible? Series against Phillies will tell

BY BOB BUDAY
Summer Sports Editor

Like the biblical walls of Jericho, the Philadelphia Phillies will crumble to the earth, or artificial turf to be more accurate.

Now, looking you square in the eye and repeating that with a stone-cold poker face is a totally different story. The ancient trumpeters themselves wouldn't faze Danny Ozark's 1976 Whiz Kids.

But like all loyal Pirate fans, I can dream. And I'll probably have to dream up a miracle — something on par with those tumbling walls at that.

In the next four days the Pirates will try to close a Phillie lead resembling a tidal wave threatening to wash the rest of the National League onto the shores of oblivion. A Bucco sweep will make it a race. A Phillie sweep will make it a mockery.

Anything less than four Pirate wins in this five game series will send the Bucs reeling — taking the eight count.

The Phils blow the series to the Pirates? Preposterous, you might say. Perhaps, but the only redress a Pirate backer has is to recall baseball history. You guessed it — 1964 — or the "Why Do You Pirate Fans Keep Bringing Up That God Awful Memory?" year.

Anyway, the standings looked like this exactly 12 years ago:

(July 21, 1964)

Standings	W.	L.	Pct.	G.B.
PHILLIES	53	37	.589	—
San Francisco	51	40	.574	1
Cincinnati	51	42	.548	3 1/2
Pittsburgh	46	42	.523	6
Milwaukee	47	44	.516	6 1/2
St. Louis	47	45	.511	7
Chicago	46	45	.505	7 1/2
Los Angeles	45	47	.489	9
Houston	43	52	.453	12 1/2
New York	28	66	.298	27

St. Louis, the eventual winners of the National League and the World Series were stacked deep in the deck some seven games behind the front-running Phils. The lead was widened to ten games over the Cards only three days later when the Phils pummeled Cardinal fireballer Bob Gibson 9-1 at Connie Mack.

Plunging one game under .500 at 47-48, the Cardinals' hopes looked like the remnants of a bird squashed by a Mack truck on the Schuylkill Expressway.

The season progressed and the Phillies were 6 1/2 games in front on Sept. 21. Then Richie Allen (as he was known), Jim Bunning, Chris Short

and company took that well-publicized nosedive by losing ten straight, blowing the lead and raising the ire of Philadelphia rooters everywhere.

And to top it off, the once-lowly St. Louis Cardinals, miles away in July, put things together at last and kindly grabbed first place.

The number one question for the leaders is: "Will the Phillies shatter all baseball records by winning 70 per cent of their ballgames?" Baseball teams are made up of human beings, aren't they? Hey Greg, Dave, Mike, and Bob, do you guys really plug yourselves into the locker room wall sockets after each crushing victory? And you, Garry, are you really programmed to snag every everything that floats around center field like some mechanical spider?

I guess we'll all find out in the next four days. Night games are played on Thursday and Friday, followed by a Saturday two-night doubleheader, and single contest Sunday afternoon, all from the Phillies' backyard — Veteran's Stadium. All are televised on the channel 6 (WJAC).

And that's where I'll be, glued to the tube hoping for the walls to come tumbling down. I don't think the trumpeters will show up this time, though.

'Thumb' kind of trouble Kingman out for 6 weeks

NEW YORK (AP) — Dave Kingman barely got the words out of his mouth — "this is my first year of day-in, day-out playing" — when it all came to an abrupt end ... the home runs and the strikeouts.

Instead of pursuing the home run records of Babe Ruth, Roger Maris and Hack Wilson, for the next six weeks the gangling slugger of the New York Mets will have his left thumb in a cast.

The 6 foot-6 Kingman suffered torn ligaments in the thumb in the third inning of a game Monday night against Atlanta when he dove for a fly ball in left field at Shea Stadium and jammed his thumb into the turf. Surgery was performed immediately after the game, the thumb was put in a cast and Kingman placed on the 21-day disabled list.

He took with him 32 towering home runs, 72 runs-batted-in and 92 strikeouts, all of which have prompted such nicknames as King Kong, Sky and Daven the Wave.

The sudden curtailment of his finest season had to be a disappointment, enough so that he begged off immediate conversation about the in-

jury. Only Sunday he was saying: "This is my first year of day-in, day-out playing, and that has been very rewarding to me."

Previously, the awkward fielding outfielder-first baseman was being platooned quite a bit by first San Francisco and then the Mets. But this season he was in the process of showing everyone that he could make it every day against all kinds of pitching.

He hit homer No. 32 in the Mets' 92nd game of the season on Sunday. Ruth, who hit 60 home runs in the 1927 season, did not hit No. 32 until his 95th game. Wilson, who holds the National League record of 56 homers in one season, also waited until his 95th game to connect on No. 32. Maris, who launched 61 homers in 1961, hit his 32nd in game No. 78.

During a game, Kingman does not want to think about home run records, and off the field he does not want to be reminded of them. "I never idolized anyone when I was a kid," he said recently. "I vaguely remember hearing about Mickey Mantle and Maris. And now you're getting into a subject I don't want to talk about."

While he has never threatened any records before, Kingman has always been considered a home run hitter since he came up with

the Giants in 1971. He hit 29 in 135 games in 1972 and 24 in 112 games in 1973. But he never hit for the average — .225, .203 and .223.

With the Mets, he quickly became a favorite last season, smashing 36 homers in 134 games with a career high 88 runs-batted-in, and a .231 average. He is only hitting .234 this year, but his 72 RBI's are second only to George Foster's 74 in the major leagues, and his homers top both leagues.

Intramural Standings

SUMMER SOFTBALL SLOW PITCH LEAGUE A	W	L	Nads	LEAGUE F
Bearded Clams	5	0	Free U	4
Sunshine	3	2	Past Gas	3
Aardvarks	2	3	Weaver A.C.	3
Scarlet Begonia	2	3	Heller Skelter	3
Agronomy	1	3	Section 43	3
Highwaymen	1	3	C.E.	1
Lumberjacks	0	4	Mech. Eng.	1
LEAGUE B			Fears Rears	1
Diamond Men	4	2	Eagles	0
Melminers	3	3	CO-REC LEAGUE LEAGUE A	
P.S. Vets	3	3	Wizdog A	4
Lumber Co.	1	5	Flashers	4
Goat Roapers	2	3	Perspirators	3
Geology	2	3	Monroe	3
LEAGUE C			McKee Hall	2
Primos	5	0	York	3
Leftovers	5	0	Zoo Chester	1
Obitos	3	2	Bad Company	1
A.X.E.	1	3	Cross	1
A.R.L.	1	4	LEAGUE B	
Frothers	1	4	Lam Chi Ai	3
Tavern A.C.	1	5	Mercer	2
LEAGUE D			Allentown Phils	2
Local Lesions	5	0	Grand Circle	2
Park Forest	4	1	Wash-Windsor	3
Oracles	4	1	Wizdog Z	1
Burgers Vector	3	2	Northampton	0
Longballers	3	2	P.S. Philosophy	0
Fatiguers	2	3	Coun. Ed.	3
Saloon	2	3	Park Forest	2
MER	1	4	Remvrandts	2
Philly	1	4	Mad Dogs	2
Old Foresters	0	5	Trident	2
LEAGUE E			Alma Latina	1
Phi Gam Del	5	0	Huntingdon	0
Rolling Rocks	4	1	Adams	0
Meteo Marauder	4	1		
Masterballers	3	2		
Alma Latina	3	2		
NLE	2	3		
Chainsaw Gang	2	3		

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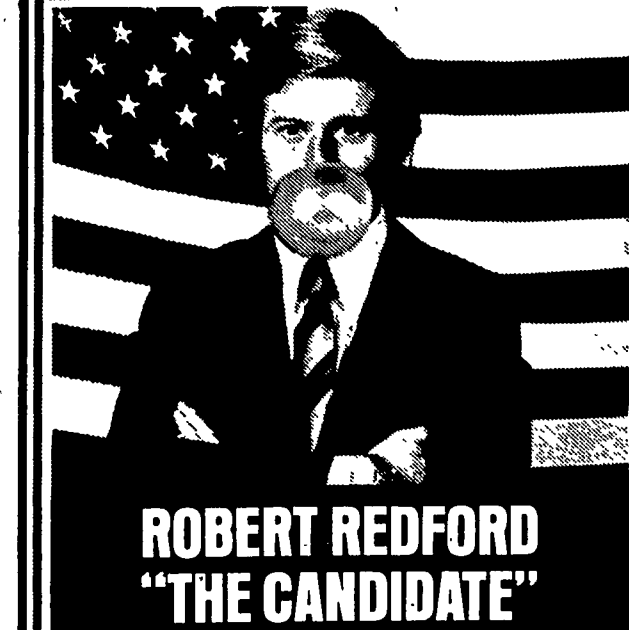
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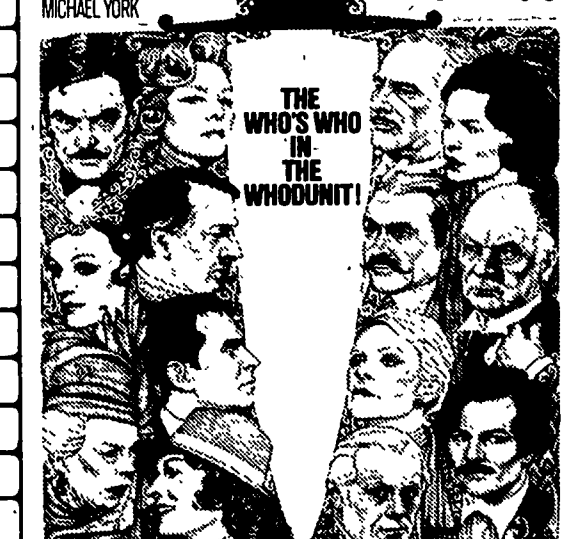
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