

Bucs send Easler to Red Sox for Tudor

By JOHN NELSON
AP Sports Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Boston Red Sox and Pittsburgh Pirates completed the first major deal of annual Winter Meetings yesterday as the baseball world awaited the arrival of George Steinbrenner to really heat things up.

The Red Sox sent left-handed pitcher John Tudor to the Pirates for left-handed hitting outfielder Mike Easler. The deal provided much-needed pitching for the Pirates while supplying the Red Sox's desire for a left-handed hitter to augment all their right-handed power.

"We've lost Jim Bibby to free agency. Don Robinson had another shoulder operation, and we don't know if we can sign (free agent) Kent Tekulve," Pirates General Manager Pete Peterson said. "We wanted to improve our pitching staff, so we've given up a good, young player."

Red Sox Manager Ralph Houk said he hadn't had time to make any specific plans for the 33-year-old Easler, but "I want that bat in our lineup. He should hit well in our park. He hits the ball all over, and he's got good power to left-center."

While early attention centered on trades and rumors of trades, Steinbrenner, the New York Yankees' owner, planned to arrive here late yesterday after attending the funeral of a friend in Pittsburgh in the afternoon.

Sources and published reports persisted in pre-

dicting that Steinbrenner would announce he has fired Manager Billy Martin, whom he would replace with coach and former Yankee catcher Yogi Berra.

Contacted at his home in Montclair, N.J., yesterday morning, Berra said he hadn't talked with Steinbrenner since last Thursday night. At that time, Steinbrenner met informally with Berra after a Boy Scouts dinner at which Steinbrenner was the featured speaker.

Berra confirmed to several sources at that time that he had been offered the Yankee job, which he held in 1964.

"I haven't heard from George since then," Berra told The Associated Press. "There's nothing going on that I know of."

Originally, Steinbrenner was expected to make an announcement on his managerial situation on yesterday. Speculation was, however, that the funeral may have pushed back Steinbrenner's timetable by at least a day.

Yankee officials, meanwhile, maintained that there was no announcement imminent and Berra said that as far as he was concerned, "Billy's still the manager."

"If there is any announcement, George will make it," Yankees General Manager Murray Cook said.

Several rumors floated through the trade-mill yesterday morning, and the Cincinnati Reds, promising to be active at these meetings, were scheduled to meet again yesterday with free agent Dave

Parker's agent, Tom Reich.

The Reds made Reich an offer for Parker's services on Monday, and the two sides appeared to be closing in on a deal that would end Parker's 10-year stay with the Pittsburgh Pirates, during which he won a National League Most Valuable Player award in 1976.

Easler began his major league career with the Houston Astros, for whom he played briefly in 1973, '74 and '75. He came to Pittsburgh in 1977, spent '78 in the Red Sox's minor leagues and rejoined the Pirates in 1979.

He hit .338 in 393 at-bats in 1980, and last season, he hit .307 in 381 at-bats with 10 homers and 54 RBI while platooning in left field with Lee Lacy.

Tudor has pitched for the Red Sox since 1980. After compiling a 13-12 record this past season, he has a lifetime mark of 39-32. Tudor had a 4.09 ERA in '83, striking out 136 batters in 242 innings pitched.

The trading of Easler left Pittsburgh a little short on outfielders, but Tanner said the Pirates had several options. The only position locked up was center field, and that belonged to Marvell Wynne.

Doug Frobel, a rookie who played in 32 games yesterday, sending defenceman Randy Boyd to the Chicago Black Hawks for defenceman Greg Fox.

Boyd had no goals and one assist in five games this season after being recalled from Baltimore of the American Hockey League.

Sims gets death threat

PONTIAC, Mich. (AP) — An anonymous threat to Billy Sims' life was telephoned to the Pontiac Silverdome Monday night, shortly before the Detroit tailback rushed for 137 yards in the Lions' 15-2 victory over the Minnesota Vikings.

Sims, notified before the kickoff that his life had been threatened, laughed it off afterward.

"It's hard to hit a moving target," he told newsmen in the Lions' locker room after his fourth consecutive 100-yard game gave him 904 yards for the NFL season.

According to Detroit Coach Monte Clark, Silverdome security received the phone call at 7:32 p.m. EST, about 90 minutes before kickoff, around the time the Lions were taking the field for their pregame practice.

Clark said he felt he had to tell Sims at that time and did so. He said Sims didn't take it seriously.

"I've never experienced anything like that before," said Clark. "It's a real experience, I'll tell you that. I felt the right thing was to tell Billy about it and I did."

Pens acquire Chicago's Fox

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The Pittsburgh Penguins completed their second trade in less than 24 hours yesterday, sending defenceman Randy Boyd to the Chicago Black Hawks for defenceman Greg Fox.

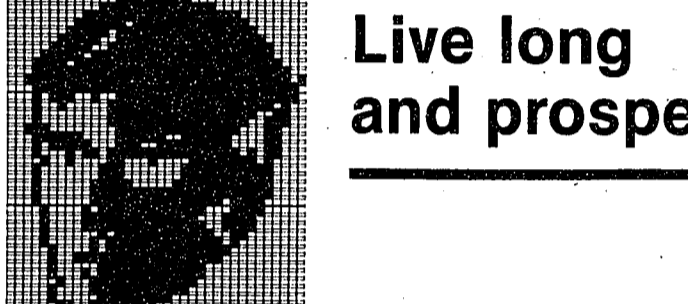
Boyd had no goals and one assist in five games this season after being recalled from Baltimore of the American Hockey League.

The Penguins also announced that left wing Ted Bulley and center Dave Hannan would be sent to Baltimore after their NHL game last night against the Boston Bruins.

Bulley had three goals and two assists in 23 games, while Hannan had two goals and three assists in 23 games.

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