

SCHNEIDER AROUND



By RUSSELL SCHNEIDER

Frank Duffy probably will remain on the bench when the Indians return to action in Milwaukee, Friday (2:30 p.m., E.D.T.), said Frank Robinson as the team enjoyed an open date in the sparse spring schedule, Wednesday.

"I haven't written off Duffy yet, but I'm not going to take any chances of him getting hurt worse and possibly losing him for a longer period of time.

"Duffy is too important to us, and besides, Ed Crosby is doing a good job at shortstop. I'm not going to rush Frank."

Jim Perry will get the pitching assignment in the Brewers' home opener, for which a sellout crowd (48,000) already is assured, against Billy Champion, whose 1974 record was 11-4. Jim Perry was 17-12 last year.

Interestingly, the Indians and Brewers talked much of the winter about a trade involving Champion. But then Milwaukee had to back off because of knee operations performed on two other starters, Jim Colborn and Ed Rodriguez. Neither has recovered from surgery completely.

Also interestingly, John Lowenstein, who long has been coveted by the Brewers, probably will see his first game action of the season in Milwaukee this weekend.

"The only lineup change I'm thinking about," said Robinson, "is to make Lowenstein the designated hitter, instead of me, probably in the Saturday and Sunday games.

"Johnny always seems to hit well against the Brewers, and I'm trying to take advantage of those things as much as I possibly can."

Lowenstein hit .281 against the Brewers in 1974. When he plays, he will take over the leadoff position in the batting order and Oscar Gamble will drop to second.

"Otherwise, I'm not planning any other changes, unless it turns out that Duffy can play." If Duffy can return, he'll bat ninth in the place occupied by Crosby.

The manager's plans to start Lowenstein in the second and third games of the Milwaukee series means that Robinson will be matched against Hank Aaron, baseball's all-time homer hitting champion, in Friday afternoon's opener — which should please the Brewers' fans and management.

Robinson and Aaron played against each other twice in spring training, and often, of course, in the National League, but not in a championship game since Aaron broke Babe Ruth's homer record last season and Robinson became manager of the Indians.

Robinson also has made a slight modification in his pitching rotation upon the advice of coach Harvey Haddix, who is in charge of the hurlers.

After Jim Perry pitches against Champion, Friday, the Indians will send Fritz Peterson to the mound against Jim Slaton, Saturday afternoon, holding Gaylord Perry back until Sunday when he'll face Pete Broberg.

"Gaylord originally was scheduled for Saturday, but Harvey thinks the quicker we can get Peterson working, the better it'll be for everybody," Robinson explained the change in plans. "And, by setting Gaylord back a day he gets four days off from his last start (Tuesday) and will get four days off, instead of five, before his next start."

The Indians will work out at 11 a.m. today, and depart for Milwaukee tonight. Slaton was 13-16 for the Brewers last year, and Broberg had an 0-4 record in 1974, which he spent mostly with the Texas Rangers. Obviously, neither Colborn nor Rodriguez is ready yet, so there'll be no deal made for Champion in the foreseeable future.

The Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, N. Y. has requested the bat Frank Robinson used to hit his first inning and 57th career homer Tuesday, plus the official lineup card written by Robinson in his debut as the major leagues' first black manager...Catcher Dave Duncan, who was traded to Baltimore in the deal for Boog Powell and Don Hood, is unable to play for the Orioles because of a bruised knee suffered when he ran into a wall chasing a pop foul.

Among the dozen or so telegrams received by Robinson wishing him luck in the opener was one from former heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis...Overlooked in all the drama of the inaugural victory was the fact that it ended a seven-game losing streak by the Indians to the Yankees at the end of last season...George Hendrick's jammed ankle is improved...Gaylord needed only 122 pitches to beat the Yankees...there are 14 magazines currently on the news stands which include feature stories on Robinson.

Danay Covert, a minor league first baseman who was one of Alvin Dark's favorites when the latter managed the Indians a few years ago, has been released by the farm system. Covert, 24, hit .317 in 45 games at Oklahoma City last season...The Shrine Luncheon Club of Al Koran Temple will hold its annual salute to the Indians, April 17, at the Al Koran Mosque, 3443 Euclid Avenue. Tickets, at \$6 per person, may be ordered by calling 431-3636 or 521-2110.

Aaron's AL opener heats up Brewer fans

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Gray snow, sustained by sharp winds and mid-30s temperatures, streaked the hillsides surrounding County Stadium Wednesday.

No matter. The calendar said Hank Aaron's homecoming was only two days away, and Milwaukee Brewer ticket director Dick Hackett reported the team's scheduled home opener against Cleveland Friday was a virtual sell-out.

"We've sold in excess of 47,000 tickets now, and only 500 or so are left," he said. "We expect those to be gone tomorrow, and we'll put about 2,000 standing room tickets on sale at 11:30 a.m. Friday."

Largest home crowd in Brewer history was 46,812 last June 9. The old Milwaukee Braves' paid attendance record was 48,642.

The last traces of last week's snowstorm were removed from the field Monday.

"The field is no problem," Hackett said. "It's certainly not in mid-season form and the grass is still dormant, but it's playable."

Tribe basks in opener's success

★ From First Sports Page

large reason for the happiness of the brass.

Commented Seghi, "Once again the crowd reflects what I've always said — that Cleveland is a great, great baseball city."

"The fans further proved it the way they cheered for the last out. It was an incredible show of enthusiasm. I never saw or heard anything like that, either."

"If someone had written a script for the movies or television of Frank Robinson's debut as manager of the Indians, and they put into it all that happened, nobody would buy it. They'd laugh themselves sick. They'd say nothing like all that could possibly happen."

Then Seghi permitted himself the luxury of looking ahead, instead of behind — but still referred to the drama of Tuesday's activities.

Visci hurls no-hitter

Cliff Visci had a hand in his second no-hitter in less than two weeks Wednesday as Cleveland Heights High blanked Shaw, 14-0, in Lake Erie League baseball.

Visci, a senior right hander, went the distance against the Cardinals, striking out 11 and walking five.

On April 1, Visci combined with Larry Nicholson and John McMasters to hold Chanel hitless as the Tigers opened their season with a 3-0 triumph.

Hawken School opened its season with a 3-1 victory over Newbury as pitcher Jim Alemagno fanned 17 of the 21 batters to face him, finishing with a four-hitter.

Buddy Wohar held South in check on a single safety while striking out seven and walking two as Bedford rolled to a 15-0 decision in another independent meeting.

Scholastic baseball

Brewers top Bosox, 7-4

BOSTON (AP) — George Scott and Robin Yount each drove in two runs, helping the Milwaukee Brewers beat the Boston Red Sox 7-4 Wednesday and gain a split of their two-game series.

Scott gave the Brewers a 2-0 lead in the third inning with a two-run single off Bill Lee, Boston's starter and loser.

Table with columns for Milwaukee and Boston players, including stats like AB, R, H, E, and BBI.

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Dodgers-Reds

Table with columns for Los Angeles and Cincinnati players, including stats like AB, R, H, E, and BBI.

Euclid volleyball

DIV. III Semifinal 2, LPEO Financial 1

What happened has to provide some incentive for the club," he said. "How much incentive, nobody can be sure. But certainly it will mean something."

"We should have made a lot of friends — now it's our job to keep them."

Bonda, naturally, was pleased, too.

"It was amazing...everything about it was amazing," he said.

"Now," added Bonda, "we're gearing our operations for two million fans (for the season). I've said all along we can do it and now I'm even more sure we can."

However, unlike Seghi and others within the Wigwam, Bonda had some small disappointments.

"There were some little things that happened, or didn't happen, that I want to rectify," he said, not unpleasantly. "Not that anything went wrong...it's just that I want to see us do things better."

"We had a meeting on it already this morning."

It'll be difficult, however, to improve the performance of the team — or of Robinson.

"What are you planning for an encore?" Frank was asked after taking his wife and children to the airport for their return home flight (to Los Angeles) Wednesday morning.

"An encore?" he asked in return. "All I can promise you is that I'll show up."

But after Tuesday's lift-lifter, that'll be enough for Cleveland fans.

LAKE ERIE LEAGUE

Table with columns for various teams and players, including stats like AB, R, H, E, and BBI.

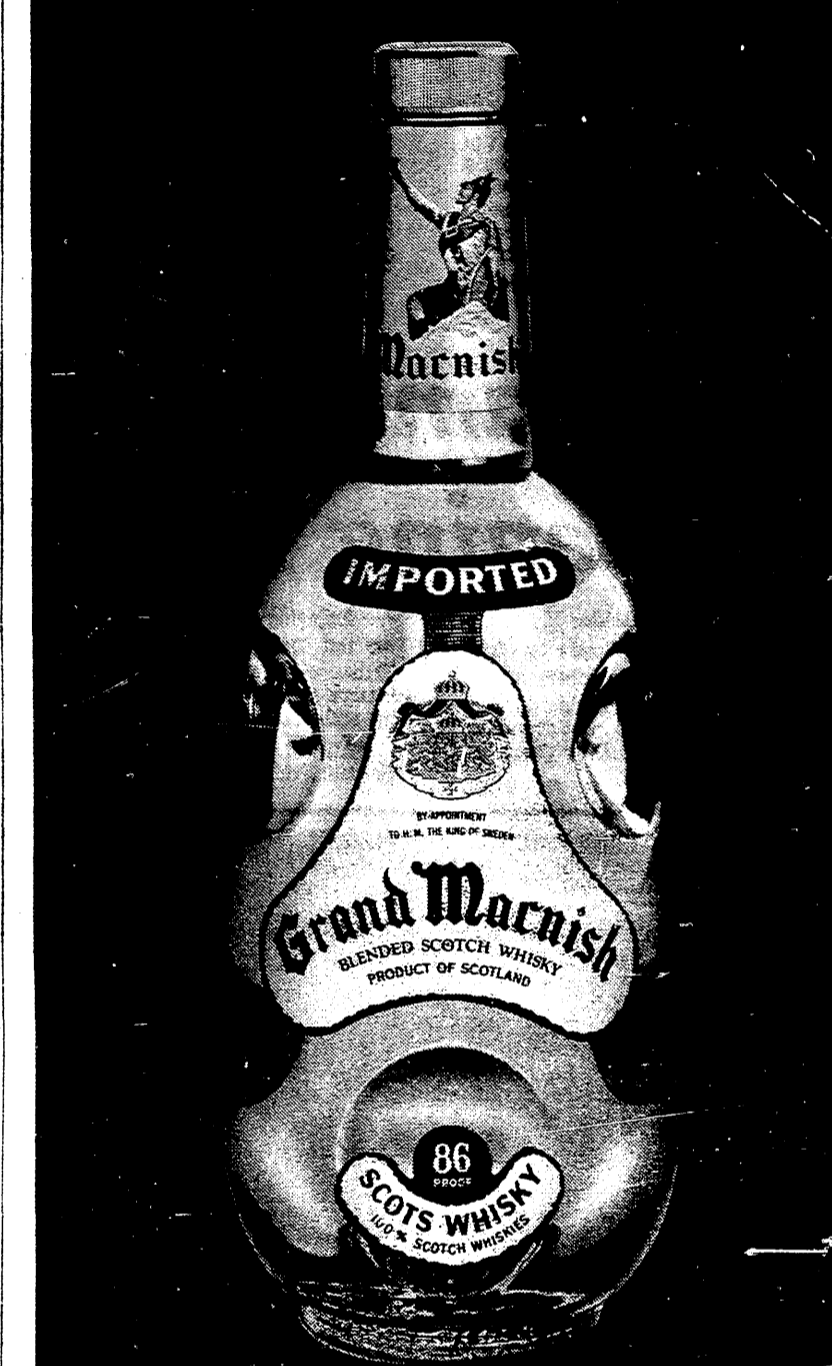
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Spirits spank Nets

UNIONDALE, N.Y. (AP) — With rookie Marvin Barnes scoring 35 points and rookie Maurice Lucas putting a defensive blanket over New York's Julius Erving, the Spirits of St. Louis routed the Nets 115-97 Wednesday night, evening their American Basketball Association best-of-seven playoff series at 1-1. Erving was held to six points.

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