

(Another fine feature article reprinted from the 'Bible of Baseball', The Sporting News)

Maury Making Like Superman, But Dodgers Miss the Message

By BOB HUNTER
LOS ANGELES, Calif.

These are changing times for the Dodgers, there is no doubt about that, although at first glance much of their successful 1963 format seems to be the same.

Some of it is, in fact, but the results have been totally and dismally different.

Last year, and the year before, when Maury Wills was on base, the Dodgers were running away from the opposition for enough runs to make victory.

Lately, Wills has been off on a new hit binge, but nothing is happening in the way of a substantial Dodger rise in the National League race, which still would seem to be up for grabs.

Against the Phils on July 31, Mousey had four straight hits and managed to score a run, but it was the only one as the Dodgers lost a 6-1 decision.

"When Wills used to get hits off us," observed Gene Mauch, "we never did beat the Dodgers. The only way we used to beat them was to make Maury turn right at first base."

The Dodger leadoff man even had his thirty-third stolen base in that game, but he died on second.

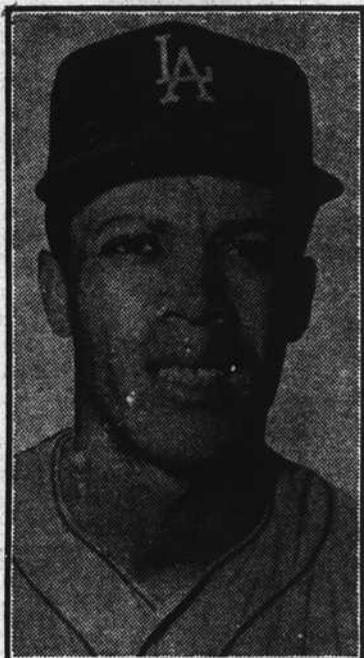
The team is not picking him up at the plate, although the powder-puff hitters have raised their team batting average to .253—which makes the story even more of an enigma.

Six Hits in Succession

In the next game on August 1 against the Phils, Wills singled his first time at bat and tripled his second, scoring both times for a string of 6-for-6, staking Don Drysdale to a 4-0 lead against Jim Bunning.

Four runs have been known to be sufficient to give Drysdale four victories, but the hard-nosed Phillies came up with five in the second and four in the fourth to pound away to a 10-6 victory.

"That's part of our story this year," said Walter Alston. "We just haven't



Maury Wills

been able to put the hitting and pitching together. At the start of the season our pitching was just great. I had no complaints, even with Johnny Podres out, the way Phil Ortega and Joe Moeller were taking up the slack.

"Then we did have one brief hitting streak about six weeks ago, but after that, both departments, except for Drysdale and Koufax, tailed off."

Wills actually has been remarkable, often being forced to soak his ankles in ice and undergo other therapy by trainers Wayne Anderson and Bill Buhler before starting a game.

In the August 2 game against the Phils he again led off with two hits and two stolen bases in his first two at-bats, and the Dodgers made this stand up for a 6-1 victory.

.477 Pace for 12 Games

His big games, although losers for the fading champions against the Phils, gave him a 12-game hitting string, during which he batted .477.

That boosted his season mark to .306 and put him on the fringe of the National League's top ten.

In the last 11 of those games Mousey batted .510, and in his last 21 he showed a remarkable .423 log, moving his season mark from .275 well into the magic circle.

But still the team wasn't winning. In the past two years the accepted story around the league was that to let Maury get on base was to let yourself get beat.

Adding more to the puzzle that no one, including Alston and Buzzie Bavasi has been able to fathom is that Tommy Davis, the '62 and '63 National League batting king, also has beefed up his batting after a miserable start.

He logged a 14-game batting string, hitting .352 over this span. He also had hit in 23 of 24 games, knocking in 21 runs over the stretch, giving him 51 for the season, the same as Ron Fairly, and two fewer than the club leader, Frank Howard.

Tommy, however, still was batting only .278, nothing compared to his championship figures of the previous two seasons.

Fairly had batted in 39 runs in 39 games, and even rookie Nate Oliver, a pleasant surprise, chipped in with a nine-game hitting chain that put his average at .288.

The inexplicable Dodgers saw reason for a new source of hope on August 1 when John Roseboro, who had been enjoying his finest season before he was hurt, returned to catching duty.

Finger Injured Again

The next day he went out again, although supposedly only for a brief time, when he reinjured a finger.

Alston gave 20-year-old Derrell Griffith his first start in right field.

Smokey indicated he intended to platoon Howard and Griffith, who had played 38 games at third base until management decided to give him and his .293 batting average a shot in the outfield.



By MARK QUEEN

REFEREE ZACH CLAYTON and judge Johnny Dran certainly gave the proposed Cassius Clay-Sonny Liston heavyweight title rematch a big shot in the arm last Friday night when they awarded unranked Billy Daniels the decision over top contender Doug Jones in their 10-rounder at Madison Square Garden.

In overruling judge Al Berli's vote for Jones, Clayton and Dran deftly removed one of the largest obstacles confronting the Clay and Liston camps in their efforts to win approval for a return bout between "Muhammad Ali" and the Big Bear.

Many of the high muckety-mucks in the World Boxing Association had been relying on Jones as their "ace-in-the-hole" to bust the rematch contract between Clay and Liston. It wasn't too long ago that the venerable George Barton, a member of the WBA executive and championship committees, demanded that Clay make his first defense against Jones. It is no secret that Barton's view was shared by many other highly-placed boxing officials, including Gen. Melvin Krulwich, chairman of the influential but non-WBA-affiliated New York commission.

Now that Jones has "lost" to the lightly-regarded Daniels, who hadn't won a fight in five starts immediately prior to last Saturday, Clay's managers, together with Liston's Intercontinental promoting outfit that holds the contract for Cassius's first defense, are in a perfect position to claim that Sonny is the "logical challenger," even though he hasn't been reinstated in the WBA ratings.

Certainly, no one in his right mind could regard Daniels as a "logical challenger" off his awkward performance against Jones and Billy's recent dismal record. So who does that leave? Ernie Terrell? (Ugh!) Floyd Patterson? (!!!) Cleveland Williams???

Actually, we feel that either Patterson or Williams (but assuredly not Terrell) would prove a worthy opponent for Clay. But what are you going to do about Liston's record against both Floyd and Cleveland? Didn't Sonny belt out

(See SPORTS, page 20)

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