

# Cubs Counting on Slumbering Burton to Come Alive in '65

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By JEROME HOLTZMAN  
CHICAGO, Ill.

"That fellow has a world of talent—if he'd only put it to work and use it." So said Bob Kennedy, the Cubs' head coach, one afternoon as he sat in the Wrigley Field dugout watching outfielder Ellis Burton swing away during pre-game batting practice. A switch-batter, Burton swung from both sides of the plate and ripped line drives into the corners—ringing shots that would be ticketed for extra bases.

But, despite all of his talent—speed, line-drive power and good range in the field—Burton has had more than average difficulty remaining with a major league club. Though he's only 27, Burton is unusually well-traveled and has already been the property of five major league organizations.

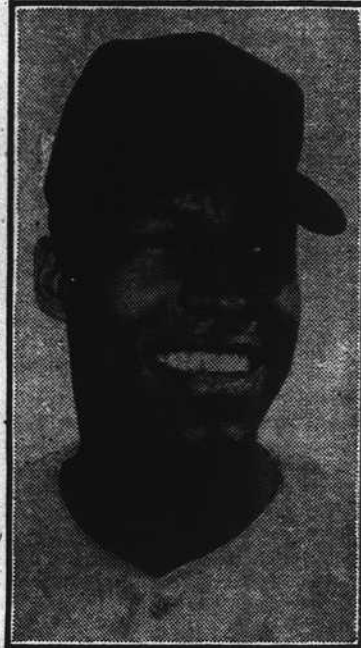
### Disappointment to Bucs

The Pirates signed him for a modest bonus in 1955, but he never advanced beyond Class B in the Pirate system. The Cardinals drafted him in the winter of 1957 and gave him several trials. Later, the Colts also plucked him out of the draft, but he didn't last out spring training with Houston and was traded to the Indians. After about a month and a half with the Tribe, he was sent to the Cubs.

"I've been around," Burton admitted. "Maybe now I can stay in one place for a while."

The Cubs, indeed, are hoping just that and as the Wrigleys were in the process of concluding another disappointing season, Head Coach Kennedy was giving Burton every opportunity to show his stuff.

And from what Burton has shown since he was recalled from Fort



Ellis Burton

Worth (Texas) on August 27, it appears that he could be the Chicagoans' No. 1 center or right fielder in 1965.

The impression, however, is that Burton has been his own worst enemy.

For example, when the Indians had him, he was twice fined for missing planes. Moreover, he was fined by Kennedy when he reported a day late on August 29.

"It was my fault," said Burton in regard to this latest assessment. "I should have tried harder to be here on August 28."

Burton, however, has been trying quite hard ever since. He drove

in the winning run in his August 29 debut, had three more hits the next afternoon and ripped off a six-game hitting streak.

Then, on September 7, he joined a small select group of switch-hitters when he slugged two homers in one game, the first one from the left side of the plate and the second from the right side, against the Braves.

### Select Trio of Swatters

Burton thus became the third player in all of major league history to twice hit homers left and righthanded in one game. The others are Mickey Vernon of the Yankees, who has done it nine times, and Jim Russell of the Pirates and Braves, who did it twice.

Burton accomplished this feat for the first time in 1963, also against the Braves.

Moreover, he even bettered this in 1961 when he was with Toronto of the International League. There, he hit two home runs in one inning, one left and the other right.

But what about Burton? Will he stay this time?

"No one ever knows," Burton replied. "But I'm giving it everything I've got. I'm even trying to learn how to hit to the opposite field."

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with its contracted guarantee of \$55,000.

This claim was based on an allegation that Nationwide's contract with Giardello was invalid because another group of eastern promoters held prior exclusive rights to co-promote all of Giardello's championship fights and had taken steps to attach Joey's purse if he went through with the Carter fight in Las Vegas.

IT SO HAPPENS that this writer inquired as to the validity of the alleged prior contract after Silver State announced the fight for Las Vegas and was personally assured by a representative of the local firm that "it doesn't mean a thing." We were further assured that Nationwide's contract with Giardello was unquestionably valid.

Moreover, when one of the "other" eastern promoters informed the Nevada commission that his group held a prior commitment for Giardello's services, he was asked to submit a copy of the alleged contract for commission study. This request was flatly refused with a statement to the effect, "We'll wait until the day of the fight and then hit Giardello with a court order."

The alleged existence of this prior contract was well-publicized before Silver State signed to co-promote the fight with Nationwide. There is no possibility that the local promoters had not heard about it. If there was any question in their minds as to the validity of such a document, and the likelihood that it could gum up the Las Vegas fight, how come they signed with Nationwide? How come they waited until after the fight was called off to cast doubts on the validity of Nationwide's contract with Giardello? And how come those "other" eastern promoters refused to let the Nevada commission have a look at their alleged contract with Giardello so the commission could obtain a legal opinion as to its validity?

As far as we can discover, these "other" eastern promoters are not connected with next week's Giardello-Carter fight in Philadelphia. Nationwide apparently is co-promoting the fight with a Philadelphia promoter. If and when the fight comes off as scheduled (it was still "on" when this was written), it will be interesting to see if the "other" eastern promoters go through with their threat to tie up Giardello's purse and what comes of it if they do.

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