

Need For Baseball Diamond Told

Ronald Spinks, 17-year-old right handed pitcher, formerly a member of the West Park Manor Babe Ruth League, Chicago, drafted by the Houston Astros, National League, who has been shipped to the team's farm club in Bismarck, N.D. A graduate of Harlan High school, Spinks was attending Wilson Junior college when he was signed up by the Astros. (NPI Photo)



of people, I know how important it is for anyone to grow up with a sense of pride in himself and a feeling of respect for his neighbor. "That's why we are trying to teach our kids through this baseball program, Overstreet explained.

Referring again to young Spinks, he pointed out that the program embraces youngsters from 13 to 17 years of age and that Spinks at 14 pitched a no-hit...no-run game and has a record of six straight wins. Spinks is a graduate of Harlan High school and was attending Wilson Junior college when he received his draft notice from the Houston Astros. He left for Bismarck last week.

"Another important phase of our program," commented Overstreet, "is teaching of thrift and the professional side of sports. "Many of our successful athletes have made great sums of money, only to be duped by fast-talking confidence men, into ventures that ended in huge losses. We try to impress our youngsters that their talent is valuable and will not last forever, so they must operate by sound business procedures, while playing for the love of a sport."

The league has brought its need of a recreation facility to the attention of Mayor Daley's Youth Foundation and is eyeing a field on the Southside of the city. The group is seeking funds to realize their dream--a fenced-in playing field with modern facilities.

CHICAGO - (NPI)--A youths baseball league on the Southside of the city is literally "busting its athletic vest" and needs more room for its expanding program. The activity started by Anthony Overstreet of 6730 S. Princeton Ave., has blossomed into a talented baseball aggregation with six teams--the Jets, Hornets, Angels, Sox, Tigers and Atomic Sox. The league was started in 1958 and chartered in 1960 as the West Park Manor Babe Ruth League. There are only two Negro Babe Ruth Leagues in the nation. The other one is in Los Angeles.

MEMBERS OF the West Park Manor outfit are all smiles these days, and for a good reason. One of their aggregation has been drafted by a major league team. He is 17-year-old Ronald Spinks (6136 Champlain Ave.) a right-handed pitcher with a splendid record of achievement. Spinks was drafted by the Houston Astros and has been sent to the Astros' farm team at Bismarck, N.D.

Overstreet, who served as president of the West Park outfit for six years, and now is its director, said the league has developed several youngsters with big league potential, who are being watched by major team scouts. "While the league has grown and more boys have shown interest to play, our facilities haven't. Our games are still played in public parks," the director stated.

OVERSTREET SAID that his aggregation has dreams of hosting the Babe Ruth state tournament some day, but that the league needs its own park and facilities to handle the event.

The director, who has worked as a Pullman porter on the Rock Island railroad's "Golden State" limited for 28 years, was prompted to participate in the baseball activity by his concern over the numerous problems faced by youth in the big city.

"After working for 28 years with all kinds

How To Succeed Despite-

By BENNIE THOMAS

BATON ROUGE La. - (NPI)--Theron Lewis, the Southern University Olympian who didn't run in the 1964 Tokyo games, in the two years since has more than made up for the slight.

Recently, in the Los Angeles International Track and Field games, the New Orleans quarter-mile marvel anchored the American 1,600 meter relay team which set a new world record of 2:39.6 for the event.

Sharing the winners' podium with the Southern University senior were Bob Frey, UCLA; Lee Evans, San Jose City college and Tommie Smith, San Jose State college. But the record-setting victory had to be sweeter to Lewis than to any other member of the quartet.

BACK IN the 1964 Olympics, Lewis was to have run a leg on the USA 1,600 meter relay team, but the Jaguar swiftie became a last minute victim of a coach's whim and Henry Carr was handed the assignment which had originally been Lewis. The American team of Ollan Cassill, Mike Larabee, Ullis Williams and Carr sped to a 3:00.7 Olympic victory, which was also good for a new world's record. This is the mark which Lewis and his mates shattered on July 24.

Whatever effect on Lewis the Olympic switch has had fails to show up in the two-year performance chart of the Southern senior. He has roamed the U.S. from coast to coast winning with rare consistency, indoor and out, in the 440, and, his travels have carried him to corners outside the continental limits of the country without his tape-breaking antics suffering to a great degree.

HIS RECENT performance served to lodge the name of Theron Lewis into the world record book in two different events--a distinction which a quick check revealed belongs only to a handful of performers. Bob Hayes, for instance, did it in the 100 yard dash and the 100 meters and Frank Budd in the 200 meters and the 220 yard dash.

When Lewis' name came up for another entry in Los Angeles, it marked the second listing for the Jaguar runner of the world list. The Southern university one-mile relay team shares the world's record of 3:04.5 with Arizona State University. Lewis, along with Robert Johnson, Anthony Gates, and Everette Mason set the world mark in the California relays at Modesto last year.

So, Theron Lewis, the young man who was robbed of his chance of competing in the Olympic games--and he was never given a reason for the scratch--has set about the business of making his own way. Getting the world record book suggests that he's doing a pretty fair job in the endeavor.

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EARL BATTEY

NEW YORK - (NPI) --Catcher Earl Battey of the Minnesota Twins has acknowledged that he may have to undergo surgery again at season's end for a cartilage problem in his right knee. He also acknowledged that the operation could end his baseball career, declaring: "If the operation's successful, maybe I'll be able to play five or six years. If not, I'll have to step down and not play anymore." He underwent surgery for the same trouble in 1963.

MARICHAL

NEW YORK - (NPI) --Juan Marichal, star of the San Francisco Giants mound staff sidelined recently with an injury to his pitching hand, returned to the lineup last week in a game against the New York Mets. He was injured when his friend and ex-Giants teammate, Manny Mota of the Pittsburgh Pirates, accidentally closed the door of his auto on his hand. Marichal and Mota are fellow Dominicans.