

BLUE

From Page 8

drugs. "If I suspected a teammate was on cocaine, I'd probably go to him and ask him if I could be of any service to him."

As a ballplayer, Blue is a senior statesman of 36. As befits a statesman, his hairline has receded. In his speech, there is only a trace of an accent, but he has retained the outward casualness of a Mansfield, La., upbringing. As he delivered his low-key message, he wore an open-collared white shirt, gray sweater, blue jeans and cowboy boots.

In his words, his baseball career is rounding third and heading home. Maybe there are a couple of years left. There is one for certain. He signed a one-year contract with the Giants Dec. 17.

He said he signed with the Giants out of loyalty. They had given him a chance when no other team was willing. He had been out of baseball since released by the Royals in August 1983.

When he came to spring training at Scottsdale, Ariz., last year, his career was in the past tense. He had had three 20-victory seasons. He had been the pitcher of the year in both leagues. He had been the American League's most valuable player in 1971. He pitched in three consecutive World Series championship seasons for the A's from 1972 to 1974.

But at spring training in 1986, he was another pitcher wearing No. 60 on his back. But the longshot, wearing a high number reserved for players who normally don't make teams, was back in a familiar No. 14 jersey by the time the Giants were back at Candlestick Park. He pitched 131 innings in 33 games, including 20 starts. A spot starter most of last year, Blue said he has been told that he will begin the season in the starting rotation. He made his own promise to the Giants.

In a letter dated Dec. 9, Blue said he will undergo testing for drugs as long as he continues to play major league baseball. Last year, he had an 8-8 record with a 4.47 earned run average with the Giants and underwent testing twice a week as a requirement of his federal probation, which ends March 21.

"My decision is strictly personal. I took that step to

clear the air for my own self."

Blue, who lives in Oakland, attends a drug rehabilitation outpatient program in Berkeley twice a week.

In his letter, he said he wanted the public to know that his successes and failures on the field could be attributed only to his abilities and not to the effects of drugs.

But he has mixed feelings on proposals to make drug testing mandatory for all players in the big leagues.

"For one thing, the testing will remove all doubt that a guy is on drugs when he drops a fly ball. If a guy drops a fly ball . . . he's on drugs, at least that's the attitude some fans have.

"If it (mandatory testing) would help baseball, yes, I would be in favor of it. I'm not sure it will."

Blue will meet with Baseball Commissioner Peter Ueberroth on Monday in New York. Blue is unsure what to expect, although the commissioner has met with other players who have been involved in drug investigations. Blue said he will go to the meeting with legal counsel.

"I don't expect anything drastic to happen. I hope I can answer the questions he asks. If I can't, so be it."

Since returning to baseball, Blue says he doesn't make any more personal appearances than he did before or during the three years he used cocaine, but he tries to provide more quality time now.

"I have more to share now. Before, I'd walk in and say, 'Uh, I'm Vida Blue, the left-handed pitcher . . . what's your name?' Then I'd write, best wishes, Vida

Blue. "I'd like to think I know a little about everything now."

What he does at hospitals and schools, Blue doesn't call speaking. He terms it "rapping."

He says he doesn't have to make the appearances as a requirement of his federal probation. He raps because that's what he wants to do.

Blue came to Reno because he is planning to spend time in Reno in the coming weeks. Beginning Feb. 9, he will start a weekly 30-minute Sunday afternoon TV show, "Sports Extra," on KOLO, channel 8 with Bruce Breslow and Ed Anderson, both of Reno.

The show will have national guests and will continue through the baseball season.

But TV is a sideline for Blue right now. He still pitches for a living. There is still unfinished business for him.

After a year away from baseball and winning half of his decisions on a team that lost 100 games, Blue, in some ways, feels he was a success in 1985.

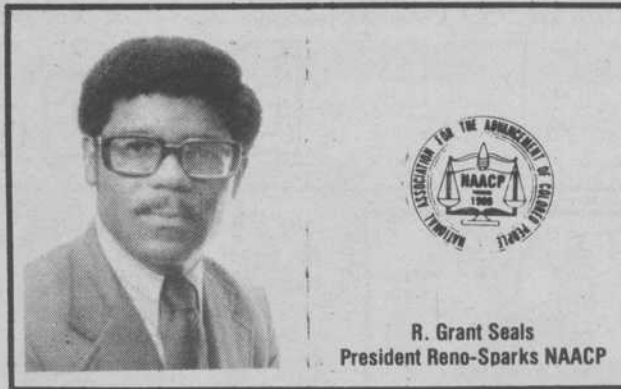
But this man won 20 games too many times to feel satisfied.

"There's no way in hell I enjoyed being eight-and-eight. I played for a team that lost 100 games. I'm as good as my team."

For Blue to be better in 1986, the Giants have to be better. But that's one of the Giants' lesser mysteries. The most important is where they will play.

The club still isn't selling tickets, waiting to be certain where it will be at home in 1986 — Candlestick Park, Vancouver, British Columbia, or some other port-of-call.

Blue has no idea where the team will be at home.



R. Grant Seals
President Reno-Sparks NAACP

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Activities

Sunday, Jan. 19 — Community Church Services, Greater New Hope Baptist Church, 1810 Helena, 3 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 20 — Parade, 12 noon, begin Commercial Row and Virginia and end at University of Nevada. Address by Gov. Richard Bryan at approximately 1:30 p.m. Reception at approximately 2:30 p.m. Address and Reception at Jot Travis Union. For further information, contact Mrs. Bertha Mullins 786-6023, 853-3043.

Voter Registrars

There will be new classes for deputy voter registrars at the following times and places:

Monday, Jan. 27, 5:30 p.m., Washoe County Main Library.

Tuesday, Jan. 28, 3 p.m., Washoe County Main Library.

Wednesday, Jan. 29, 5:30 p.m., Washoe County Main Library.

Persons who have had previous classes only need attend part of the hour's session and fill out appropriate forms. New persons need to attend the entire hour.

Additional classes will be offered at a later time. For further information, contact Harry Day, Coordinator of the Deputy Registrar Program, 785-4194.

VEGAS

From Page 6

"I'm informed with what I read in the paper. I haven't read the Chronicle today."

One day at a time. That's the way Blue takes life now. He told the students as much.

"Each day is a new day for me when I wake up . . . that I didn't use cocaine the night before."

By Steve Sneddon
Gazette-Journal

of the twentieth century as a true miracle of God.

We have come from being counted as a person, to not being recognized as a citizen-not allowed to vote -- and from being denied the opportunity to receive an education. What a mighty God we serve!

Today the critics would have the Black man compete in today's society with those

who were not denied their rights.

FREE RIDERS OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT ARE TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION

Today the benefits of the Civil Rights movement are shared by many, but with the exception of a few whites, Blacks generally bore the brunt of the Civil Rights battle.

Blacks suffered the humiliation of not being served at lunch counters of of being arrested there. All too often they were beaten with police clubs, water-hosed and bitten by vicious police dogs.

As previously stated, some of these patriots lost their lives in the battle for freedom. When the smoke was settled, the mood of the country was to grant previously-denied rights to all minorities, including women. Now Blacks are just a number in a minority.

Just as the preparation of an elementary and high school education is needed in the quest for college training, so was the Civil Rights movement a paved way for Blacks and other minorities to enter into the sophisticated aspects of the social, political and economic segments of American life. Now our problem is no longer at the check-in counter of the hotel, but is having enough money to pay at the check-out counter on leaving the hotel.

LET US MARCH FORWARD TOGETHER, NAACP — TOWARD ONE SOCIETY.

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