Tottering Baseball Veterans Find DH Role 'Timely Blessing'

By OL' TIMER

Just when gimpy knees, diminishing speed, and ball-chasing disabilities began to haunt and hamper great black sluggers like Frank Robinson (California Angels), Rico Carty (Texas Rangers), Jim Hart (New York Yankees), Tommy Davis (Baltimore Orioles) and Orlando Cepeda (Boston Red Sox), baseball's new DH (designated hitter) concept promises to add years to their respective careers.

Adopted by suffering American League sages during the months that lead back to October, 1972, the DH proviso allows a tenth player to take regular batting turns and withdraws all pitchers from personal batting responsibilities.

"The new rule makes it possible for me to sit in the dugout when the opposing team is batting," says Cepeda, "then, during our turn on the attack, enter the game as a batsman who is cool, relaxed, and ready."

Cepeda's production during the second week of the season, during which he collected 11 hits in 25 times at bat, for a batting average of 444 (that week), bears witness to the terrible treatment he has weighed against American League pitchers.

His assaults included a double, four home runs and 9 runs batted in. Robinson was just a stride behind Cepeda, with four hits (including a double and a pair of homers) in 11 appearances.

Jim Hart, brought across the continent from the San Francisco Giants to assume DH responsibilities for the New York Yankees, clubbed a homer and two singles in his first game. His bat was decisive.

Tommy Davis, in slow retreat from superstar status from the day he busted an ankle for the Los Angeles Dodgers, eight seasons ago, has come on like an electric storm for the Baltimore franchise. Twice during the week did his wrathful club deliver victories for the Maryland club.

Tony Oliva, still hobbled by leg disabilities, is doing DH chores for the Minnesota Twins. His week represented a .273 pace, by way of three hits in 11 at bats. He drove three runs homeward, one of which produced a victory.

Frank Robinson

Orlando Cepeda

Rico Carty

Tommy Davis

12 CLUBS PROFIT BY DH

All in all, thus far, the American League's twelve clubs have presented 25 designated hitters in their varying lineups. Detroit's Gates Brown, a perennial pinch-hitting specialist, produced two singles, a double and a home run during the measured week. He scored 5 runs (more than any other DH figure, incidentally) and drove four more across the plate.

In our examination of the DH figures of color, in the American Leagues, Brown and Oliva are heroes who never played for a National League franchise. Cepeda, Davis, Hart, Carty, and Robinson all were waived out of the older league.

If, as Cepeda claims, the DH function leaves the batter relaxed and 'ready,' the same can be said for the pitchers. Without hitting chores, American League pitchers spend much time in the stadium club houses during the eight half-inning breaks.

Arm-warming treatment and complete relaxation make pitchers tougher today. As a result, route-going pitching performances are 20 per cent higher thus far in 1973, than ever before.

Many thought the DH proviso would make the going prohibitive for pitchers. They were wrong. The better-rested pitchers can be sharp and sure, says Yankee ace Mel Stottlemyre, these days; because running the bases and trying to score from second on any kind of hit, anywhere, is no longer possible for a non-batting pitcher.

OLD PROS LEAD THE PACK

Most of the other 18 DH figures of the American League have proved to be far less explosive than the old pros here reviewed. Frank Howard, the long ball swatting acquisition of the Detroit Tigers, was a mere .164 sticksmith during the measured week.

A look at the one-week batting statistics of the surging seven black veterans provided the following:

	AB	R	H	HR	RB	PCT
Cepeda	*25*	*4*	*11*	*4*	*9*	*.444*
Robinson	11	2	4	2	3	.363
G. Brown	12	5	4	1	4	.333
Hart	*10*	*2*	*3*	*1*	*3*	*.300*
Carty	*11*	*1*	*3*	*0*	*2*	*.273*
T. Davis	*11*	*0*	*3*	*0*	*1*	*.273*

The foregoing is just a one-week sampling, of course, and does not reveal what the seven stalwarts have achieved on the long pull, dating back to the April 6th 1973 start.

The cast includes in Carty (.317) and Oliva (.313), the respective individual No. 1 and No. 2 career batting averages of present day baseball. Robinson owns an even .300 average for 16 seasons, while Cepeda is .298 for 15.

In other words, the DH personnel of the American League, including as it does the .295 career batting mark of Tommy Davis, is composed of the best batsmen the game knows. At least two of them draw at least $100,000 per year, respectively.

The only lag on their collective part, here, is that all seven would be dubious in a 100-yard dash; but no pitcher laughs when they wave the old ash.

Virgin Islands' Charm

If you are planning a tour of the Virgin Islands, here are a few tips for you.

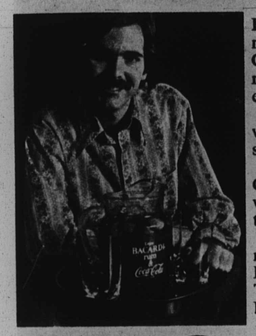
First, if you'll pack a few light mid-summer clothes: women, light cotton dresses, slacks, shorts and for evening, cocktail-length light dresses; gentlemen, slacks, shorts and sports jackets will be just fine.

By the way, you may want to shop on the Islands and go home as the new trendsetter of the neighborhood.

St. Thomas, the first stop, is a city island, the capital of which is Charlotte Amalie, a bit of the French and Italian Riveras lost in the Caribbean.

Bacardi and Coke by the pitcherful!

We owe it to a Cuban messenger, a U.S. civil servant, two U.S. soldiers, a famous song, a sailing crew and a pub in Marinette, Wisconsin.



Back in April of '72, the crew of a famous America's Cup winner was sailing Green Bay and Lake Michigan. Sailors right to the core, the crew occasionally enjoyed a rum ration or two.

But they'd take theirs on land and with Coke. And their favorite watering spot was a pub in Marinette, Wisconsin.

There, tiring of mixing Bacardi and Coke by the glass, the manager came up with one big idea: Bacardi and Coke by the pitcherful! It was a natural.

And often, as each pitcherful was made, customers counted off the shots of Bacardi as they hit the ice: "One! Two! Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten!"

The drink soon became the pub's most popular. By word-of-mouth, you might say. And it wasn't long before the pitcher idea caught on at pubs and lounges throughout the U.S.

Coincidentally, it was word-of-mouth that made rum and Coke popular originally. The words were out of the mouths of three famous sisters as they sang their forties hit, "Drinking Rum and Coca-Cola."

But were they singing about Bacardi rum? It's thought so. After all, the drink was invented with Bacardi rum and Coke.

That happened one August day at a "barcito" in Cuba just after the Spanish-American War.

As recalled by Fausto Rodriguez, a U.S. Army Signal Corps messenger, it was an American civil servant who first ordered Bacardi and Coca-Cola together.

Intrigued, a couple of U.S. soldiers did the same. And that was the beginning of what is probably the world's most popular mixed drink today.

No doubt you've enjoyed it yourself many times. And today you too can serve it by the pitcherful just the way pubs all over the U.S. are doing. In fact, you can even get authentic pitchers and have your own pitcher parties.

Great offer for a great party pitcher.

Order our 85-oz. decorated glass party pitcher and we'll also send you a deluxe party booklet plus the original recording of the Andrews Sisters singing "Drinking Rum and Coca-Cola" backed by "Apple Blossom Time." All for only $3.95 (handling and postage included). It's a great deal for a great idea!

Please send me _____ kit(s) at $3.95 each. I enclose $_____ (check or money order).

Mail to:
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