

IN THIS CORNER

George Beahon

Bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, the Boston Red Sox executed a public mugging of the New York Yankees on opening day in Fenway. This was the first public appearance in serious combat of the American League's new designatus clavator operation. There were something like 28 base hits in this Pier Sixer, and the designatus clavators for the two competing clubs produced none of the 28 hits.

Year of the Designated Hitter (designatus clavator to you Latin students) thus came out of the pits with a loud fizzle as the A.L. sought to perk up its offense and fill some spaces known as empty seats.

Well, if the DH flunked out on that first day in the Fens, it wasn't long before it broke loose with noises like backfiring semis on the Thruway.

Even before the teams changed hotels that first weekend, the DH had struck telling blows in the A.L.

Before the Red Sox and Yankees would quit partying in Fenway, Orlando Cepeda, the Red Sox special hit man, would pump one out, a clutch homer to beat the Yankees and sweep the set.

The Oakland Athletics, world champions of the sport, would lose one to Minnesota, because the Twins' contract marksman, Danny Walton, would trigger a decisive home run. The DH had struck and stuck hard, in its very first weekend. Already victims of the new hitting hype were the ambitious, lordly Yankees, and the defending world champions.

Make no argument about it. The DH is in the American League to stay: Not just for this year, or for the approved three-year option. It is a cinch to be picked up next season by the National League, and the customers, along with a few old gunners whose legs are shy, will be the big beneficiaries.

Only sad spot in the future is when World Series time comes along and the American League champions have to sent their pitchers up to bat, many of them, probably most of them, for the first time in combat since 1972. The N.L. will take this advantage without apology, but the Office of the Commissioner, as suggested recently by Baltimore manager Earl Weaver, should do something to correct the injustice right NOW. Like, at least permit the A.L. to use its DH in home games.

No one really knows who conceived the DH idea, although it was the International League which first used it, at the urging of president George Sisler Jr., in 1969. The American Association tried a handcuffed variation, which limited its managerial options. But it was the International which first showcased the DH, and sold it to the A.L.

If any hardhead remains insisting this is spoiling the good old image of the good old game, let him tell you how much he would pay to watch a team of pitchers stride to and from the batter's box for nine innings?

The St. Louis Cardinals' pitching staff led all the majors in hitting last season, with a grandiose average of .181.

While that was the best staff average in both leagues, compare it to the .113 by Cincinnati, and tell me how much the pitchers' hitting had to do with success when St. Louis dragged its feet and Cincinnati went to the World Series?

There must, of course, be one notable exception. This would be Jim (Catfish) Hunter, of the

Oakland club. He happens to be the only active A.L. pitcher — with a minimum of a modest 100 lifetime at bats — to boast a lifetime average of more than .200. Hunter is .266, which would embarrass many a shortstop, second baseman, catcher and center fielder. But Hunter is THE exception.

If the guy on the next stool insists on arguing that the pitcher's non-hitting proclivities add excitement to the action, offer him these figures:

Major league pitchers, in both leagues, over the last three years, compiled composite averages of .148, .149 and .146. What that is, is modeling in consistency. Which also could be spelled failure. Welcome to the DH. Long live the DH.



SCHOLASTIC

NOTEBOOK

John Doser

While there were doubts in the past two years whether Aquinas Stadium would be retained or torn down, apparently one problem has been resolved.

There will be no auto racing at the stadium, now owned by the City of Rochester, much to the disappointment of Greece promoter James D. Vollertsen.

Vollertsen admitted he has, for the time being, given up trying to put racing cars on the stadium oval, describing the conflict between himself and the city fathers as a "political issue," an understatement!

For one thing, ex-Mayor Frank Lamb is on record as being opposed to auto racing not only at Aquinas Stadium but anywhere else in the city.

Vollertsen proposed to conduct modified stock car races on a quarter-mile flat track inside the stadium. His plan called for 18 days of racing a year for the next five years.

He said auto racing would put about \$146,000 into the city's treasury, but neighbors from the LaGrange-Ridgway-Mt. Read area bitterly complained in advance about the noise, safety, and the type of crowds racing would draw.

A public hearing held at School 40, LaGrange Ave., produced a vote where 54 said no to the racing and seven said OK.

Vollertsen said the hearing was "ridiculous" because only 60 of some 500 who received notices of the meeting turned up, and only 16 of 60, Vollertsen said, actually spoke against the racing program.

Vice Mayor John Parfinello said the city acted on the advice of the Advisory Committee for the War Memorial and Aquinas Stadium, and Joe Lusardi, director of the stadium and the War Memorial, and on the opposition of the neighborhood residents.

Vollertsen, a hard man to put down, said he didn't think that the program was given "proper evaluation." He said he has decided to make a "pit stop," indicating that he expects to come back and try again at a later date.

SCHOOL OF THE Holy Childhood gym was the scene of a whale of a basketball game recently when two SHC school teams, the Reds and the Blues, battled as the culmination of several weeks of in-depth basketball instruction by a

Local Knights

Slate Roll-Offs

The Rochester Knights of St. John and the Ladies Auxiliary will host the organization's National Bowling Tournament for the first time in eight years, April 27-29.

Opening ceremonies and the tournament itself will be held at Olympic Lanes.

Organizers of the tournament expect more than 700 participants for the three days of bowling.

Among the national dignitaries of the group who will attend include Alfred F. Hartings of Maria Stein, Ohio; Mrs. Catherine Mooney of Albany; Salvatore LaBianca of Parma, Ohio; and Mrs. Germaine Wenner of Madiaion Heights, Mich.

Co-chairmen of the event are Martin Stephan and Mrs. Betty Shea. Presidents of the Rochester District Commandery and Auxiliary are Joseph Cimino and Mrs. Ruth Martindale.

Voter Drive Needs Help

The Monroe County Coalition for Voter Registration has started its 1973 registration campaign by bringing volunteer registrars to the high schools through the county.

The coalition intends to have registrars at every high school in the county. However, many more volunteers will be needed to enable all eligible students to register, said Father Charles Mulligan, coalition chairman. Registered Republicans or Democrats with no previous experience can be certified as volunteer registrars.

The nonpartisan group registered more than 31,000 people last year in schools, shopping centers, and supermarkets but 30 per cent of the eligible voters in the county remain unregistered. The group hopes eventually to achieve registration of 90 per cent of those eligible.

The drive will figure in June and those wishing to help in volunteer registration in the high schools or over the summer should call Jan Waltonen at 288-8851.

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number of McQuaid Jesuit High players. The Blues won by two points.

The SHC players, despite various handicaps, progressed in some cases from barely dribbling the ball to competing in the title contest, complete with uniforms, cheerleaders and fans.

The young instructors from McQuaid included Chris Magiulli, Mark Baszto, Roger Key, Joe Urzetta, Dave Faraone, Kevin Spath, Joe King, Joe Kane, Tom Wahl, Kevin Klein, Rick Keating, Danny Affulter, Jim Bonaventura, Joe Schaller and Pete Bishe.

Sister Seraphine, SSJ, principal of the School of the Holy Childhood, said she and her staff try to make the school a happy place to be and thanked the McQuaid boys for making it an especially happy place that particular morning.

The players presented the McQuaid students after the game with a plaque which stated their lives were richer and their bodies were stronger because the McQuaid students took the time to help with the graciousness of Christ. The plaque was signed, 1st basketball team of Holy Childhood, 1973.

FOOTNOTES — Former McQuaid freestyler Pete Brunson finished an outstanding season at Allegheny College where he won the 1650, 200 and 500-yard freestyle events at the President's Athletic Conference championships, plus anchoring the record smashing freestyle relay team.

Bernie Wegman, former Cardinal Mooney wrestling hero, won the Region III, 142-lb. championship at Alfred University by dethroning the defending champ.

The win sent Wegman into the national competition at Warrington, Minn. He won 22 of 25 matches at Delhi Tech this year. At Mooney Wegman was unbeaten in his senior year and won the diocesan and state championships in his sophomore year.

As a junior he won the Catholic Invitational Tournament, the Upstate Catholic Tournament and the Greece Town Christmas Tournament.

In 1972 Wegman received the most valuable player award, the athlete of the year award and won the City-Catholic and Monroe County Parks mat championships.