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"Cincy tougher Sonny P: nationTE than ever," AP slam-dunk cham

Give the Cincinnati Reds an arm and they'll take a leg. Give them a couple of new legs, and they'll prob-

ably take a pennant. The Reds won the World Series last year despite championship-level bench strength. But they didn't sit on their bench over the winter, sw-inging some deals which appear to have made them stronger in that de-

The Reds added a lethal right-handed pinch hitter in Bob Bailey and a swinging left-hander in Mike Lum and now Sparky Anderson's gang is loaded, if you'll pardon the

expression. The Reds are a team that has ev-erything — speed, power, defense, pitching and bench strength and the guess is that they'll also have the National League pennant by the time the 1976 baseball season is over. Along with their new bench strength, the Reds can count on some old strengths in catcher Johnny Bench, second-baseman Joe Morgan and third baseman Pete Rose, all Most Valuable Players at one time or other. Those Big Three are joined by reliable Tony Perez, giving Cincin-nati's thoroughbreds the inside track

in the West Division race. The Reds will probably be challenged most seriously in their division by Los Angeles, which remains a palpable threat despite the loss of pitcher Andy Messersmith, who won free agent status and jumped the Dodgers in search of fortune elsewhere

Pitching is the Dodgers' forte. They led the league last year for the fourth straight season with a 2.92 earned run average and figure to have a strong staff with Don Sutton, Burt Hooton and Doug Rau as the nucleus. If left-hander Tommy John comes back with some of his oldtime authority, the Dodgers could make it authority, the Dodgers could make it red-hot for the Reds.

fielder acquired in an offseason deal with the Atlanta Braves.

The San Francisco Giants finished 27^{1/2} games off the Reds' runaway pace last season, and don't figure to get too much closer this time. The only thing positive about the team is that it'll be playing in Candlestick Park. On the verge of a move to To-ronto, the financially troubled Giants were saved at the last moment by a local group, but won't be saved the embarrassment of finish-ing third in the West despite the presence of outfielder star Bobby Murcer and the addition of third baseman Ken Reitz.

The talent gap which separates San Francisco from the top two teams becomes even more discernible in the rest of the West.

General Manager Tal Smith and Manager Bill Virdon put the trading emphasis on pitching for Houston over the winter, unloading longtime star Doug Rader and catcher Milt May. The Astros have plenty of prospects on the mound and that's precisely what they are with few of proven quality. The San Diego Padres came out of

the cellar for the last season, but still won't see much light this year. They've acquired the aforemen-tioned Rader to bolster their infield, but pitching is still their main prob-lem. Randy Jones pressed New York's Tom Seaver for the Cy Young Award last year, but Dave Freisel-ben and Dan Spillner are the other leading starters and they only won 10 genges between them in 1975 10 games between them in 1975.

The Atlanta Braves had a disastr-ous fifth-place finish last season de-spite high hopes and General Man-ager Eddie Robinson took things in his own hands over the winter. He tore up the Braves beyond recognition, unloading hometown favorites like Ralph Garr and Baker in a major reconstruction job. In the East, the Pittsburgh Pirates

National League champions two have strengthened their pitching years ago, the Dodgers have big run-producers in Steve Garvey, Ron Cey and Dusty Baker, the center young John Candelaria.

Indiana's Scott May shared honors at Monday night's Pizza Hut All-Star Classic held in Las Vegas. By P Bat

two points May was credit came as a result of Texa Ter Bullock being called forgot s Relay Parker scored eight poin Univers game while playing about time, as all players were equal time. The East gained the lead TEP, Parker left the game in the tast y nutes and May was not be The final score was 91-87, ding a over the West for the third four-m Parker, the first Aggie ever to play in the post-season basketball classic, was named the National Collegiate Slam-Dunk Champion during the contest held at halftime of the game. May was named Most Valuable

Player of the game after he guided his team (the East) into the lead and ultimately to victory in the final mi-Parker drew plaudits for his out-

standing defensive job on the highly year.

AP chooses A to regain title

the Oakland A's" in the American League West. Well, somebody's finally done it — the owner. But it appears that Charles O. Fin-

ley's zany machinations won't keep the Mustache Gang from winning another division championship. Catfish Hunter escaped the Oak-

land madhouse last year when Finley committed a contractual error. Reggie Jackson and Ken Holtzman, two other players who helped the A's to three straight world championships, were unloaded in a trade that left the baseball world stunned, but it seems there was a method to Fin-

ley's apparent madness. The A's, winners of five straight West titles, have been aching for a blue-chip righthander since the departure of Hunter. And Finley Jackson-Holtzman deal with the Bal-timore Orioles — battle-tested Mike Torrez and fast-rising Paul Mitchell. In addition to the two pitchers, Finley acquired outfielder Don

Baylor, a player who hit shorter and fewer home runs than Jackson but batted 29 points higher.

Associated Press For years they hollered "Break up ne Oakland A's" in the American eague West. Well, somebody's fi-ally done it — the owner. But it appears that Charles O. Fin-ey's zany machinations won't keep ne Mustache Gang from winning other division championship.

Jackson and Holtzman, the have enough talent to beath rest of the West — a pitch headed by Vida Blue, a bulk tressed by Rollie Fingen, power-packed lineup with LEVEI ters as Baylor, Joe Rud, Warfi Tenace, Claudell Washing rs of si Billy Williams. r ago, The toughest inter-diwns. competition for Oakland prarfield will come from the Kansasche Nav als and Texas Rangers. with th

als and Texas Rangers.

The Rangers were a team with th future two years ago unde Martin and could be a team present if their pitching math hurry. Texas traded veters hander Ferguson Jenkins du off-season to the Bostoñ Rei outfielder Juan Beniquez H a group of fine young playes h by Mike Hargrove, Toby H Len Randle, Jim Sundbergaexas Ad

Burroughs.

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Current Aggie Baseball Stats the lea 1976 TEXAS A&M BASEBALL - SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE - 12 Games (%) TOP

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Player	G		R	H	Avg	BI	2B	3B	HR	SB	Sac	HP	BB	SO	PO	A	
Bonner	12		13	. 20	.385	5	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	15	21	son
Grobe	12		11	16	.364	4	0	0	0	2	3	0	7	6	21	18	he
Raymer	12		8	13	.351	13	2	0	1	0	2	0	17	4	24	0	tt C
Blanchard	10		4	9	.321	10	3	1	2	0	0	0	7	4	2	0	L. T
Thurmond	9	34	8	10	.294	3	3	2	0	0	1	0	3	6	14	.0	mI
Whiddon	12		7	13	.289	10	1	0	3	2	0	1	4	6	11	20	Ag
Biersner	11	36	9	10	.278	6	2	0	2	2	1	1	3	7	80	7	H se
Campbell	12	47	8	11	.234	9	5	0	0	1	1	.0	3	4	74	11	
Verde	12	39	5	7	.180	5	2	0	1	2	2	1 .	5	9	21	- 1	MOL
Turner 3.	7	16	2	9	.563	9		0	1,	0	.0	9.	. 0	2	13	0	r v
McMath	3	5	2	3	.600	0	0	0	0	0	0.	0	0,	0	0	0	kc
Dulak	3	5	2	2	.400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	100
Crabtree	4	6	2	1	.167	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	0	son
Lockett	4	7	1	1	.143	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	7	1 5
Paschal	4	3	2	1	.333	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	nnl
Woodruff	2	3	2	1	.333	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1 NT
Larsen	3	3	1	0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	I IN
Gibson	6														4 .	10	ger
Thomas	4														2	6	Neo
Ross	1														0	1	1
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Player	G	AB	R	н	Avg	BI	2B	3B	HR	SB	Sac	HP	BB	so	PO	A	prai
Raymer	31	93	18	39	.419	29	4	1	2	0	4	0	33	10	43	2	-
Blanchard	24	65	9	25	.385	23	4	3	3	0	0	2	16	8	4	0	he
Bonner	29	103	27	38	.369	16	6		0	3	5	0	7	6.	35	54	19-3
Thurmond	- 28	84	17	28	.333	11	6	3	1	2	1	0	11	12	38	2	T
Campbell	31	110	21	36	.327	28	9	3	1	1	2	2	7	8	202	19	1.1
Grobe	29	94	23	30	.319	9	6	0	0	2	4	1	18	11	47	38	11-1
Biersner	23	64	15	17	.266	10	4	0	2	2	1	1	9	10	132	11	The
Whiddon	31	108	17	25	.232	17	5	0	4	3	3	1	10	12	29	60	M
Verde	30	89	17	20	225	14	7	0	1	4	3	2	16	16	44		TANK .

