

### Fisk knows pains of catching

# Life behind plate not easy

United Press International  
NEW YORK — By doing a little simple arithmetic, you can estimate Carlton Fisk bends up and down something like 12,000 times a season. That's a conservative estimate. Squatting on his haunches, with those metal bars across his face and all that harness on, beating off nasty foul tips on every part of his body all the while, he has to be "in" the ball

game with each pitch. And if you don't think all this intense concentration and physical activity doesn't take a whole lot out of a man, you ought to get a look at the big Boston catcher now. He has lost 15 pounds and he aches all over. His nickname is "Pudge" but there is nothing at all pudgy about him now. He looks pale and drawn, almost as if he has

just donated a couple of pints of blood, but it's a long, long season and the Red Sox need both his bat and his glove desperately. The farthest thing from his mind is going up to Manager Don Zimmer and asking him for a rest. To give you some idea of what Fisk means to the Red Sox, he was 21-for-54 during the 11 of 14 games they dropped before coming into

Yankee Stadium recently for their latest series with the defending world champs. That works out to a .389 batting average and nobody else on the club could touch it. With his .299 season average, his 15 home runs and his 59 RBI, he is the heartbeat, the very core of the Red Sox ballclub. One night in a long, drawn-out 14-inning contest with the Yankees,

a foul tip off Willie Randolph in the second inning caught Fisk's most sensitive part of his groin, pain was excruciating and for moments as he doubled over, looked as if he might not be able to continue, but after walking a for a while, he put on his mask and got behind the plate again. Two innings later, Fisk sharply to drive in Jerry Remy after crossing first base, with called, he walked into foul territory and bent his head toward his

He was white as chalk. His blood had rushed from his head suddenly he felt nauseous, as was going to throw up.

"What's-a-matter?" asked Pesky, the Red Sox first baseman inquired solicitously.

"John, I'm beat, Fisk said. 'My strength is all sapped.'"

"You want me to call the ball?" asked Pesky.

"No, I'll make it," Fisk said, leaning over to take his position at base again.

Fisk caught the entire inning, which was interrupted twice and lasted until 1:16 a.m. on the 13th, weary as he was, Fisk was a wicked sizzler to the first baseman Graig Nettles. He had base hit written all over him somehow Nettles flagged him and made the throw to first.

Sand had been poured on baselines because of the rain, though Fisk was giving it all trying to make first, the most deft footwork slowed him down so that Nettles' throw beat about a step.

At 1:30 a.m., when most other people in baseball were asleep, or should've been, Carlton Fisk, still in uniform, the floor in the Red Sox clubhouse at Yankee Stadium and dously spooned up some sausage balls from a paper plate passed all the players by the clubhouse attendant.

"I was running as fast as I could but I felt like I was spinning wheels," he said, talking about the ball he hit in the 13th.

The Red Sox receiver a couple of sips from a can of beer someone asked him how it felt behind the plate so long, in the end, and all, and then came out of the game with nothing really to show for it.

"These kind of nights make me ache all over your body," he said. "Especially when you have to squatting for so many hours."

"What do you think about the plate?" was one question Fisk smiled.

"You're always thinking about the game," he said, "but once in a while when there's a break in the game for a second or so, you get between pitches. You look people relaxed and enjoying themselves in the stands and you yourself wouldn't it be nice like them for a while, to be able to go to New Hampshire with the family."

## The Bird grounded

United Press International  
DETROIT — Mark "The Fidy" Fidy, plagued by injuries his sensational 1976 rookie year be out for the rest of the season Detroit Tigers announced Tuesday.

General Manager Jim Camp made the announcement after receiving reports from doctors examined the young right-hander Monday.

Campbell said the doctor advised that Fidy, sidelined mid-April with tendinitis in his arm, should rest the remainder of the year.

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