

the sports

# 'Bull' Boston bound, 'Boomer' to KC

United Press International  
**PHILADELPHIA** — Houston Astros slugger Bob Watson, who has spent a good part of the season on the bench, said Wednesday night he's going to the Boston Red Sox with "a tremendously positive attitude" and said: "I hope I can help lead them to the American League pennant."

Watson, 33, who has spent his entire 15-year professional baseball career with Houston, said he was disappointed in a way to be traded but said he didn't have any hard feelings toward the Astros management.

"I have mixed emotions," Watson said. "I have been in that organization 15 years and there are a lot of memories, good and bad. But I am delighted the Boston Red Sox want my services. They are a class organization with a lot of all-star players."

Watson, who was in street clothes for the Astros-Phillies game Wednesday night, is due to join Boston in Chicago Friday for the start of a weekend series against the White Sox.

He said he is willing to play any position, including designated hitter.

"I am sure they (the Red Sox) will bring up some of my talents. I am going there with a tremendously positive attitude," he said.

Nevertheless, Watson said: "I am disappointed in a way. I feel I didn't get a chance to get myself back on the track. But I don't have any hard feelings. I am not going to rip the ballclub or call anybody any dirty names."

Watson, a .299 lifetime hitter who slumped to .239 in 49 games this season, said he has no plans to change his hitting style to take ad-

vantage of Boston's short left field wall — Fenway Park's so-called "Green Monster."

"I have pretty good credentials as a line-drive hitter to left center and right center. I am going to do what I have always done — see the ball and hit it and not alter my swing. It would be very foolish for me to change my swing at this stage of my career," he said.

Astros manager Bill Virdon called Watson as a "fine player," but said the club was forced to trade him.

"I think everybody more or less anticipated this trade. He wasn't playing and we had to make a deal under the circumstances. He is still a capable player, but through a lack of production, and production on the part some of the other players he lost his job," Virdon said.

In exchange for Watson, Houston

obtained the rights to Peter Ladd, a 22-year-old relief pitcher who posted a 3-1 record and a 0.63 earned run average in 18 appearances this season with the Bristol Red Sox of the Eastern League. Ladd, a resident of Portland, Maine, was 4-1 and 8-2 in two previous seasons with Winter Haven in the Florida State League.

After the Red Sox obtained Watson from Houston, they turned around and sent disgruntled first baseman George "The Boomer" Scott to the Kansas City Royals an hour later.

Scott, 35, was traded for outfielder Tom Poquette and was in a Royals' uniform for Wednesday night's game although he was not in the Kansas City starting lineup.

Kansas City manager Whitey Herzog said Scott was acquired to

help strengthen the Royals' right-handed power hitting and said Scott will start at first base in Friday night's game in Milwaukee.

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## Niekro knuckles 10th, Astros, Rangers win

United Press International  
**PHILADELPHIA** — Joe Niekro set a team record with his ninth consecutive victory and Cesar Cedeno drilled three run-scoring singles Wednesday night to pace the Houston Astros to a 4-3 victory over the Philadelphia Phillies.

Niekro, who recorded his league-high 10th win against two losses, scattered nine hits and struck out seven to break the record he previously shared with the late John Wilson, who won eight in a row for Houston in 1969.

Cedeno stroked singles in the first and third innings to score Terry Puhl, who singled and stole second on both occasions. The Phillies cut the lead to 2-1 in the third when Pete Rose reached on a fielder's choice, went to third on Larry Bowa's double and scored on a throwing error by Houston right-fielder Jeff Leonard.

Art Howe lined his third homer of the season off starter and loser Dick Ruthven, 6-4, to spark a two-run fourth inning for Houston. Alan Ashby then doubled, went to third on Niekro's groundout and scored on Cedeno's third single.

The Phillies scored again in the fourth when Niekro wild pitched Mike Schmidt home with the bases loaded. Schmidt tripled to lead off the eighth and scored on Bake McBride's sacrifice fly.

Meanwhile in Arlington, Buddy Bell's bases-loaded single off the left field wall with one out in the bottom of the ninth inning capped a three-run rally and gave the Texas Rangers a 7-6 victory over Milwaukee, sending the Brewers down to their fourth straight loss.

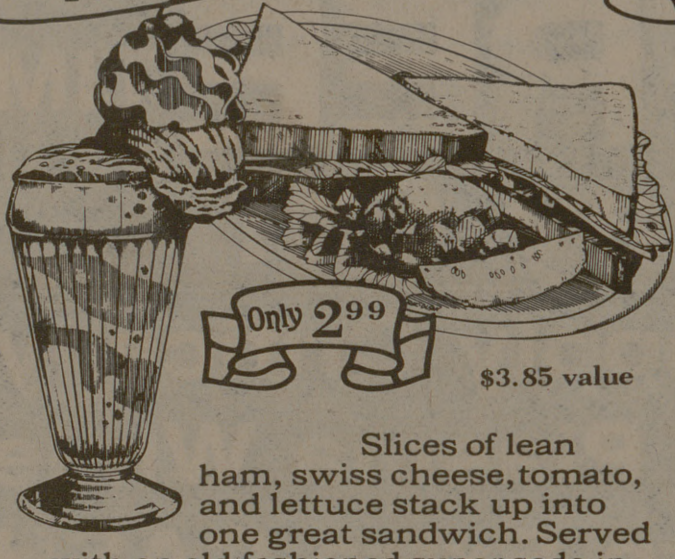
Lary Sorensen, 8-6, took a 6-4 lead into the ninth but walked Larvell Blanks and hit pinch-hitter John Ellis. John Grubb then laid down a bunt and Sorensen threw the ball away at first, allowing Blanks to score and pinch-runner Nelson Norman to go to third. Bill Castro came on and gave up a bloop single

to Billy Sample, scoring Norman and moving pinch-runner Dave Roberts to third. Reliever Jerry Augustine then intentionally walked Al Oliver before pinch-hitter Richie Zisk popped out, setting the stage for Bell, who stroked his fourth hit of the game.

Gorman Thomas' third double of the game scored Ben Oglivie and Sixto Lezcano and gave the Brewers a 6-4 lead off winning reliever Jim Kern, 8-1, in the eighth.

An error by Bell opened the way for four Milwaukee runs in the second. With two out, Lezcano reached first on Bell's error and Texas starter Steve Comer then gave up a single to Robin Yount, doubles to Thomas — who drove in four runs — and Buck Martinez and a triple to Paul Molitor. Sample hit his first major league homer in the first and Bell had a solo homer in the second.

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