

Phils take Series 4-2 over Royals

United Press International
PHILADELPHIA — Larry Bowa had complained "the label" from past failures "still hangs on our backs."

Garry Maddox still carried the scar of a dropped fly ball that lost the 1978 playoff series.

Bob Boone went through the kind of a frustrating season you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy.

And a lot of players didn't like Manager Dallas Green too much. But all this was forgotten Tuesday night.

All three veterans of prior heartbreaks with the Philadelphia Phillies stood by their lockers spraying and swilling champagne and toasting this club's first ever World Series championship, which ended 97 years of frustration.

"I never wanted any more in life but this," said an ecstatic Bowa, who led all Phillies in the series with nine hits and scored a vital insurance run in the sixth in the 4-1 victory over the Kansas City Royals Tuesday night that gave the Phils the Series 4 games to 2.

"Everyone wrote we were a bunch of low-key, spoiled, overpaid, don't-want-to-win athletes. It was so great to prove everybody wrong."

The Phillies did things the hard way. Tuesday night's win marked the first time in the series they never trailed.

"I hope we will get the credit we deserve," Series MVP Mike Schmidt said. "I know the media would like to see New York and Los Angeles or a team with some of the older stars. But you can't see any better baseball."

"Going into today's game, any one of six players could have been the MVP. I squeaked through because I drove in the first two runs. That's

why we're world champions — we don't depend on any one guy."

For Maddox, the moment was especially sweet. Despite his status as one of baseball's finest center fielders, he still was remembered for the line drive he dropped in Los Angeles which led to the Dodgers' victory in the 1978 league championship series.

"Los Angeles was so long ago," he said. "I've been able to put that out of my mind."

No member of the Phillies' starting eight, including Schmidt, had a higher average than Boone. The All-Star catcher, who hit a career-low .229 during the regular season, batted .412 in the Series and contributed one of his four RBIs Tuesday night.

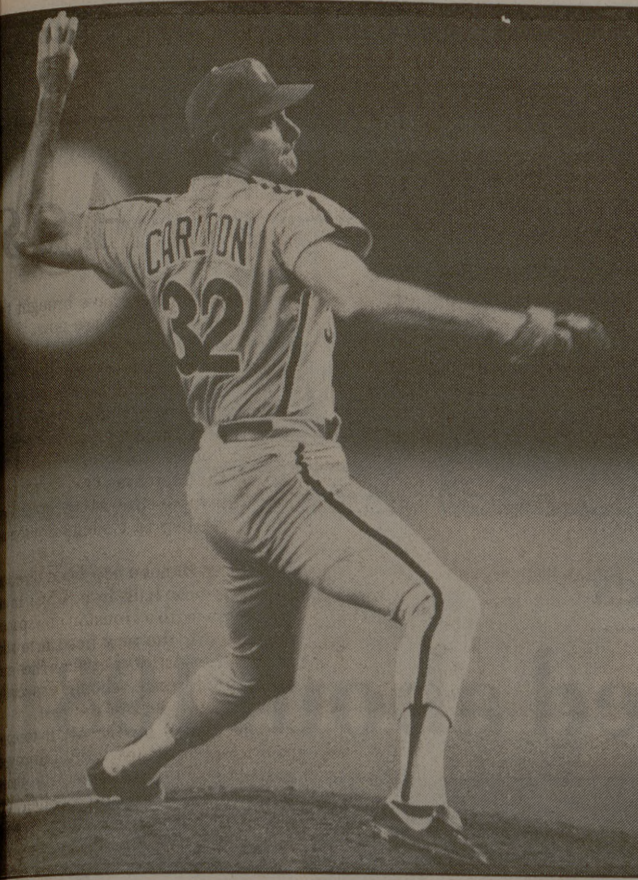
"I started swinging well the last couple of weeks of the season," he said. "It was the best I was striking the ball all year."

Boone was directly involved in what will be one of the most talked-about plays of this World Series. With the bases loaded and one out in the ninth, Frank White hit a pop foul near the Phillies' dugout with Boone and first baseman Pete Rose in pursuit.

Boone got his glove on the ball, but it spun out. Rose, however, managed to catch the ball before it hit the ground for the out, and reliever Tug McGraw struck out Willie Wilson to end the game and touch off the wild celebration.

"Pete grabbed it so quick I didn't have much time to think," Boone said.

"I was watching the ball all the way," Rose said, then joked, "We worked on that play the other day."



Steve Carlton

Reflections

by Richard Oliver



It's up to the players now

When the skies began to darken considerably and lightning began to flash in the distance, the reporters in the press box at Kyle Field began to get a bit queasy.

One reporter laughed nervously about reports of hail falling in Huntsville. Another remembered a day many moons ago when a football game at Kyle Field was postponed because a tornado touched down near the stadium during a game in full view of the spectators. The coles and tales flowed, and the rains came.

On the field, the Baylor Bears and Texas A&M Aggies went through the pregame motions while tentatively glancing at the broiling skies.

The storms on the horizon may have produced a few skipped heartbeats in the stands and boxes, but it was the downright deluge that came after the kickoff that provided the most excitement. That is, if you're a Baylor fan.

For the entire season, we as Aggies have endured a drug investigation, injuries and four losses. Old Aggies shake their heads and remember the old days when four losses constituted about three losses too many for an A&M season.

In 1980, we began with a 23-20 win in Mississippi. We moved on to Georgia, only to be slammed by the Bulldogs, 42-0. Penn State whipped us, 25-9, in a grudge match, and David Beal led us to a fantastic and satisfying win over Texas Tech, 42-21. Houston nipped us 17-13, and finally, the Bears left us shaken, 46-7.

Some of us have cried foul, perhaps unfairly. Some point now to Head Coach Tom Wilson, asking for answers, and fast. Others cry louder for the dejected, silent 12th man. Still others look closely at the Aggie players, and ask for dedication and pride.

"I don't know what to think anymore," said a civil engineer sitting in the lobby of the MSC Monday. "I'm really tired of hearing how bad we are."

His girlfriend leaned over and added, "Being an Aggie doesn't just mean having a good football team, though. Shoot, we're still the best. Just cause the team can't get their act together doesn't mean we shouldn't be proud of them. I'm not going to make excuses for them."

Indeed, most of us have tried one way or another to explain the Aggie losses this year. Storms, referees, midnight games, coaches, lazy players, and injuries just aren't going to cut it anymore.

Simple faith will just have to do. We as outsiders can never know the reasons. Only the players and coaches can determine the fate of the Aggies now.

As A&M quarterback Gary Kubiak said after the game, "We're going to have to reach deep down inside and pull something out now. We've got to pull it together. Something good's got to happen."

He's right. There are no more excuses to be made. We all have opinions, we all have ideas, but the players themselves have the answers. The time has come for those athletes to search a little, work a little, and decide a few things deep inside.

The 12th Man can only stand by and have faith that they will.

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