

White Sox' catcher says catching tough

Fisk wants position change

United Press International
Next time you go out to see some kids play on the sandlot, watch how they all want to pitch.

Or play first base. Nobody wants to catch. Carlton Fisk, who has been catching for more than 15 years now, as man and boy, understands the problem completely.

That's why he might follow Johnny Bench's lead some day and ask the Chicago White Sox to let him up from behind the

plate so he can play some other position like first base, third base or the outfield.

"I've considered the possibility of taking a break from behind the plate," he says. "Physically, it would be very helpful. I'm not going in and making any demands, though. It would be nice playing some other position awhile, but I know the reason the White Sox signed me was to catch for them."

Day in and day out, catchers have the most demanding job on the field and are easily the most vulnerable to injury.

"I once tried to figure out how many times I back up first base a year," Fisk laughs. "I really tried. Honestly, I got tired of counting that high. I quit when I got to 1,300."

Catchers seldom talk about how tough their jobs are, mostly because nobody cares and because people are much more interested in the pitchers.

"It would be hard to explain to someone who has never caught before, all that is involved in catching," Fisk says. "Day after day, the physical and mental demands of catching are pure and simple punishment for your body and your mind. The only thing I really can compare it with is that legendary little Dutch boy who kept his finger in the dike to try to prevent the water from coming through. You do it and do it as long as you

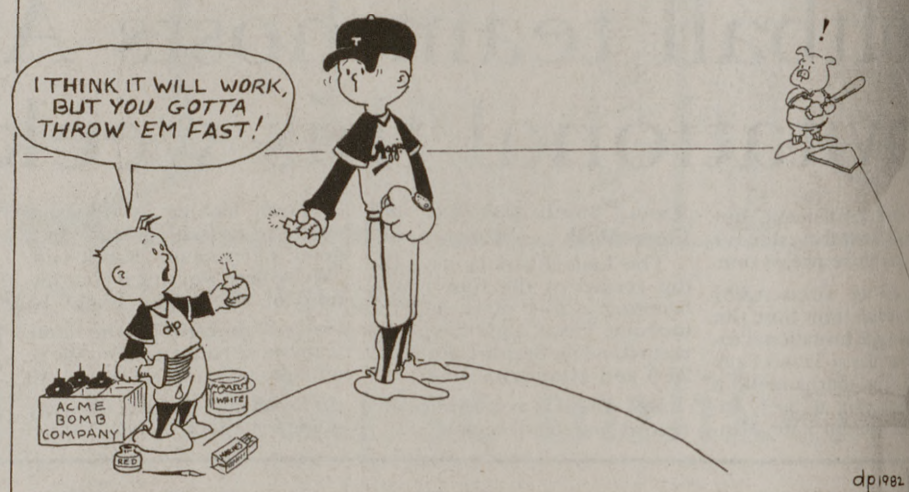
possibly can and then one day you can't do it anymore and you go pfooooof."

Fisk has played other positions with both the Red Sox and the White Sox.

With the Red Sox in 1980, before becoming a free agent and signing a \$3 million, five-year contract with the White Sox a year ago, Fisk caught 115 games but played three other positions also. He played three games at first, three others at third and five in left field.

"They're paying me to catch," says Fisk, whom his teammates call "Pudge." "Of course, my main value is behind the plate. I've never put a ceiling on how many games I'm gonna catch, but realistically speaking, I don't think they are looking for me to catch as many as 130 games this year. If I'm healthy, it's conceivable I could catch 140 or 145, but catching that many in one season takes its toll from year to year."

The catcher the White Sox are counting on for the future is Joel Skinner, 21-year-old son of Pirates' coach Bob Skinner. Young Skinner showed well with Chicago this spring before being farmed out for more experience.



dp 1982

Rangers use power play goals to defeat Flyers

United Press International
With the New York Rangers' erratic power play, Coach Herb Brooks does no more than hope for the best.

After a night in which he got the worst, he watched the Rangers turn it around completely Thursday night for a 7-3 victory over the Philadelphia Flyers and a split of the first two games of their first-round Stanley Cup series at New York.

The Rangers scored on 4-of-5 power-play chances as opposed to their 0-for-5 performance in Game 1, which they lost 4-1.

"I feel a little better tonight," Brooks said. "We made no adjustments on our power play. It was just a matter of execution."

One of the stars of the power play was Mikko Leinonen, who constantly skated from one side of the rink to another and set an NHL playoff record with six assists. Ron Duguay, Don Maloney and Robbie Ftorek scored consecutive goals with a man advantage.

The series shifts to the Philadelphia Spectrum for the next two games Saturday and Sunday.

In other games, Boston topped Buffalo, 7-3, the New York Islanders routed Pittsburgh, 7-2, Quebec edged Montreal, 3-2, Chicago downed Minnesota, 5-3, Winnipeg defeated St. Louis, 5-2, Edmonton nipped Los Angeles, 3-2, in overtime, and

Vancouver beat Calgary, 2-0, in overtime.

At Boston, Barty Pede the Bruins' brilliant and scored three goals in the period to give Boston a 2-0 lead over the Sabres.

At Uniondale, N.Y., Steve Persson helped set up a key four-goal first period that allowed the Islanders easily go two games up onsburgh.

At Montreal, rookie Paul Aubry scored the game-winning goal at 2:30 of the final period as the Canadiens beat the Quebecers 4-1. At Bloomington, Minn., Savard's goal through the third period of the Chicago open a surprising lead in the series.

At Winnipeg, Martin Auber scored twice during a five consecutive Winnipeg and his rookie linemate Haverchuk collected assists to lead the Jets, 7-2, in the series at 1-1.

At Edmonton, Al Wayne Gretzky came to the ers' rescue by setting up a goal with 4:54 left in regulation time and blasting in a foot slapshot at 6:20 of overtime to even the series at 1-1.

At Vancouver, British Columbia, Dave "Tiger" Wilton scored from close range at 1:07 of sudden-death overtime to give the Canucks a 2-0 advantage.

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