

Juco

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It makes sense, then, to hand out scholarships to proven juco players, instead of paying for a player's school for two years while he sits on the bench, then watching him run to the pros the minute they come calling.

Still, Chandler says he and assistant coach Mark Johnson turned to the "juco connection" as a matter of last resort.

"We would much rather sign a high school player," Chandler said, "so he can go through our program. With a high school player, you get him for at least three years, if he signs a pro contract. But we needed players who could play right away."

Not to mention pitchers who can pitch right away. Using Johnson's west coast contacts, the Aggies signed juco players Beje Mahue, Tom Arrington and Wayne Jackson in an attempt to bolster the pitching staff. Chandler says those three, along with returning pitchers Phillip Taylor and Sherman Corbett and another juco transfer, Chris Hutchingson from Wharton Junior College, will be in charge of putting things back in order on the mound in Olsen field.

"We can only go up," says Chandler, referring to the Aggies' 4-17 SWC record last season. "But there's no question we'll be greatly improved. By adding these pitchers, we think we'll be a contender."

If it works, and the Aggies crawl back into respectability, you have to give credit to Chandler's juco connection — that, and having pitchers who can pitch.

NL old-timers use power hitters to slip past AL, 6-5

United Press International
CHICAGO — By now, the National League has such a monopoly over the All-Star game that even the American League's legendary old-timers have fallen victim to the curse.

A total of 88 ex-major league players and officials — 44 of them Hall of Famers — took the field at Comiskey Park Tuesday in an Old Timers' preliminary to tonight's Golden Anniversary All-Star game.

Predictably, the National League won, as it has in the last 11 "other" All-Star games.

Unpredictably, it was power hitting from a couple of former Chicago Cubs that made the difference in the 6-5 NL victory.

Former Cub outfielder Billy Williams, now 45, smashed a towering two-run homer in the second inning of the three-inning contest. Another one-time Cub, 41-year-old Don Kessinger, got credit for the winning RBI, breaking a 5-5 third inning tie with a double to left that scored 59-year-old ex-Giant Bobby Thomson.

"It felt real good to hit the ball that far and get a chance to walk around the bases," said Williams, who was elected Old-timers' MVP for smashing one out against renowned knuckleballer Hoyt Wilhelm.

"I just find it kind of ironic that I had to wait until I was 45 years old to get an MVP award," he joked.

The play was far from artistic, but the memories were heavenly for fans treated to the sight of an Al Kaline double driving in Minnie Minoso and Mickey Vernon; Warren Spahn, Robin Roberts; Don Drysdale and Juan Marichal taking the mound; and Lefty Gomez — who started the

first All-Star game 50 years ago tonight — humming it to a couple of batters again.

"It was amazing," said Atlanta manager Joe Torre, who hit an RBI single for the National League. "It was incredible. It gave me goosebumps, sitting in the same dugout with the likes of Kiner, Durocher, Spahn and Mathews."

"The best thing about these games is the reminiscing," said Bob Feller, 64, an ex-Cleveland pitcher.

Ernie Banks had so much to talk about he didn't want to quit. Mr. Cub — whose trademark in his playing days was the line "Let's play two" — could have gone on and on.

Even to the National League

All-Star game still not life-or-death

by Milton Richman
UPI Sports Editor

CHICAGO — They had it right the first time. I'm talking about baseball's All-Star game, which originated as a figment of one man's imagination and now is equated by some in the same general terms as the latest running crisis in the Midwest.

Originally, the game was conceived by the late Arch Ward, sports editor for the Chicago Tribune, as a baseball fan's dream, a fantasy in the form of purely an exhibition game that would count for absolutely nothing. That's what it still counts for — nothing.

Not even with the National League, which proudly advertises the fact it has beaten the American League in the last 11 consecutive All-Star Games and 19 of the last 20.

Never once have I heard a single National League player broach the subject of his circuit's supremacy in All-Star competition, and you are free to speculate as to the reason for that. I believe NL players rarely, if ever, think about their All-Star dominance, and whenever anyone else brings it up, the players in the NL don't seem to think it's particularly significant.

The only person I know of who gets worked up at all about the outcome of these All-Star Games is Chub Feeney, the president of the National League, and more often than not, I get the distinct feeling he's merely following tradition.

His predecessor, the late Warren Giles, was a National League pitcher through and through, first serving in several front-office capacities with the Cincinnati Reds and later as league president. He honestly thought the National League was better than the American, even in

those years his league was being beaten regularly in All-Star competition.

Giles would go into the National League clubhouse before they played the All-Star Game and really stir up the players. He'd wave his arms like some college cheerleader and tell the players things like "You're better than them," or "You can't let 'em beat you," or "We got 'em on the run now and we don't wanna let 'em up."

From talking to Warren Giles before he died, I know he realized the All-Star Game wasn't that important, certainly not anywhere near as important as the World Series, but he still preferred his league to win it.

Feeney isn't as fervent but that's what he heard Giles say and what he saw him do, so he more or less goes along.

This whole All-Star business

gets to be a big laugh. So much so, that after Tuesday's 6-5 win by a collection of old-time National League All-Stars over a similar geriatric group of American Leaguers, Feeney, already "fretting" about Wednesday night's regular All-Star Game, said, "All I know is that we don't want a split."

To keep this all in its proper context, bear in mind the one victory here he was talking about had to do with a game that went only three innings and included some players in their 50's and 60's.

Lee MacPhail, the AL President, wants his league to win too, but with him it isn't nearly that much a case of life or death. He's serving his last year as league president and can joke about what he said when he first took office in 1974.

"I said, 'I can promise you all

one thing — we're gonna do better in the All-Star,'" MacPhail recalls with a smile. "Since then we've lost nine and haven't won one."

MacPhail would like to win as much as Feeney. But actually, what does it all matter — except maybe to someone like Pete Rose, who nearly totaled catcher Ray Fosse when he slid into him with the winning run for the National Leaguers in the 12th inning of the 1970 All-Star Game in Cincinnati.

Here's something about all this All-Star fever that may make you smile:

Billy Williams, the Cubs' 45-year-old former outfielder who should be in the Hall of Fame but isn't yet, was voted Most Valuable Player in Tuesday's mini old-timers All-Star fool-around for the tremendous two-run homer he hit into the upper

right-field deck at Comiskey Park, and for a fine blooping catch he made in the field.

He spent all but the last 18 years of his life with the Cubs, so naturally he played for the National League Tuesday.

But where do you go to make his living now? In the American League, the Oakland A's batting line-up. And that just goes to show — the All-Star Game isn't as fun, for those who aren't playing.

George Brett, participating in his eighth one, has a good on this All-Star business. "I play 162 games a year, and blood and money," he says, "this one, though, I come have fun."

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