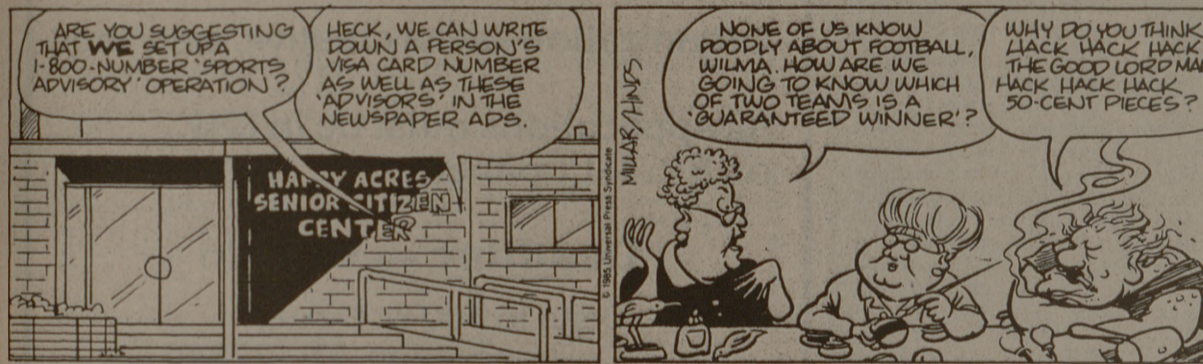




TANK McNAMARA®

by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Royals failed crucial 'Quiz' in Game 2 loss

By HAL BOCK
AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. —It was the start of the ninth inning in Game Two of the World Series and, as usual, Dan Quisenberry was warming up in the Kansas City Royals' bullpen.

This is almost automatic. In a close game, if you have a stopper—a Quisenberry, a Goose Gossage, a Jeff Reardon, a Willie Hernandez, a Tom Niedenfuer—you get him up and throwing. It's almost like a warning to the other guys. Make a move, threaten my lead, and I'll go right to my terminator and finish you off.

So "Quiz" went on display. There was no real reason for concern. Charlie Leibrandt was sailing along on a two-hit shutout. He had retired 13 consecutive St. Louis batters in nursing a 2-0 lead. Three more outs and Kansas City would tie the best-of-seven World Series at 1-1.

Willie McGee opened the ninth with a double. In another time, Quisenberry might have come in right then. He has, after all, had 212 saves in the last six seasons, 37 of them in 1985. With the tying run at the plate in the ninth inning, you go for the terminator.

On the Kansas City bench, though, Manager Dick Howser never moved.

"I thought Charlie was in complete control," Howser said. "His stuff was good. His control was good. We decided it was his game to win or lose."

So Quisenberry kept right on warming up, and Leibrandt kept right on pitching.

The KC starter got the next two hitters, bringing up Jack Clark. Somewhere, Los Angeles Manager Tom Lasorda, burned by Clark's pennant-winning home run in a similar situation last week, must have been shouting advice.

Lasorda didn't walk Clark and paid for that. Howser wouldn't walk him either. He paid, too.

The count went to 3-0 and Clark poked an RBI-single to left, making it 2-1.

Quisenberry kept warming up and Leibrandt kept pitching.

Next was Tito Landrum. The count went to 2-2 and Landrum dumped a double to right, sending Clark, the tying run, to third.

Still, Quisenberry stayed on display and, still, Leibrandt pitched.

Howser, a considerate man, never suggested that his faith in Quisenberry might be wavering. But that possibility does exist.

In Game 2 of the American League playoffs, Quisenberry gave up a game-deciding single to Toronto's Al Oliver. In Game 4, Leibrandt took a shutout to the ninth but, after walking the leadoff batter, turned the game over to "Quiz" and saw the victory evaporate into a disheartening 3-1 loss.

In the Series opener Saturday night, Quisenberry surrendered three hits and an important insurance run in the ninth inning of St. Louis' 3-1 victory.

Was Howser spooked by those recent failures?

"Not at all," the manager said. "I don't think of one outing. Quisenberry is going to give up a run occasionally. It had nothing to do with 'Quiz.' Leibrandt was throwing good."

An intentional walk to Cesar Cedeño loaded the bases and then Terry Pendleton cleared them with a double for a 4-2 Cardinal lead.

Finally, Howser came to the mound and waved for his fireman. The house, however, already had burned to the ground.

Quisenberry said he understood Howser's reluctance to lift Leibrandt. "He's pitched great in jams all year, so why not let him win or lose on his own?" Quisenberry said.

The answer, of course, is because you have a finisher, a terminator, a Quisenberry, who is supposed to take care of that nasty business.

"It's happened before," Quisenberry said about the call that came too late. "It happens a few times a year. It happened in my best year, 1983. It doesn't happen often, but it happens."

"I'm here to pitch. I anticipate pitching every night. That's my job." Why didn't he get a chance to do that job Sunday night?

"I think he has a lot of faith in Charlie," "Quiz" said. "If he's lost faith in me, why would he get me up?"

A lot of people are wondering the same thing today.

Owls' QB learning from errors

Roper to start first game against A&M

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Rice University freshman quarterback Quentis Roper gave himself a grade of C minus for his first collegiate performance but he hopes it will improve by Saturday when he starts for the first time against Texas A&M.

"I made a million mistakes but I'm sure the coaches will point them all out to me," said Roper, who replaced starter Mark Comalander in the first quarter and directed the Owls to a 29-27 victory over Texas Tech over the weekend.

Roper, a true freshman from Dallas Pinkston, had been working at cornerback earlier this season, but Rice Coach Watson Brown had brought him back to the quarter-

back position as a precaution. "I felt we'd better get a third guy ready," Brown said.

When Comalander was lost for the season with a shoulder separation against the Red Raiders, Brown sent Roper into the game.

"I suppose in some of my wildest dreams I saw myself starting as a freshman," Roper said. "But I don't think I even looked at the defense on my first play. I just concentrated on getting the snap."

Roper thinks he'll be ready for Saturday's game in Rice Stadium when the Owls, 3-3, will try to achieve their first three-game winning streak since the 1981 season.

Roper rushed 86 yards on 16 carries and completed six of 18 passes, including two touchdowns to Darrell Goolsby.

Prior to being recalled to the quarterback position, Roper had been the Owls regular kickoff returner and still ranks in a tie for 14th place nationally.

Roper is only 5-foot-10, 165-pounds, but he's not concerned about the size of the Aggie defensive line.

"They can hit me pretty hard if they can catch me," he said. "That's up to me and I have to take advantage of my speed to stay out of their way."

Told that he could be facing a 300-pounder in A&M defensive lineman Marshall Land, Roper asked, "How fast does he run the 40-yard dash?"

Comalander suffered his second injury in as many seasons. As a freshman last season, Comalander set a Southwest Conference freshman passing record 357 yards against Houston.

Brown thinks Roper has similar capabilities.

"His arm is actually stronger than Mark's," Brown said. "The first time I saw him throw the ball, I loved him. Quarterbacks in our offense have to be good athletes and he is."

"I don't feel bad playing him Saturday."

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