

THE PROS

by John Cairns

Another baseball season is ending. From two leagues only four teams remain alive. Kansas City Royals, New York Yankees, Los Angeles Dodgers and Philadelphia Phillies are all talented and deserving. Just one however, can become world champions. Which will it be? We can only guess.

Tommy Lasorda's first year managing the Dodgers couldn't have been more successful. His team quickly outdistanced Cincinnati, and coasted to the pennant. Managers Danny Ozark of Philadelphia and Whitey Herzog of Kansas City also guided their teams to easy titles. They reached first after mid-season, but once there were never threatened. Billy Martin of the Yankees is much more controversial. His team fought for the pennant while he fought for his job. At his best, however, he is an unequalled baseball man. All four teams will have excellent leadership in their championship bids.

Pitching is crucial in the World Series, just as in the pennant races. Yankee starters Mike Torrez, Don Gullet and Ron Guidry are tops. If he's off the injured list Catfish Hunter may also be effective. Reliever Sparky Lyle's value is unquestioned. Philadelphia hurlers though, aren't far behind. Steve Carleton has over twenty wins, but firemen Gene Garber and Ron Reed have better earned run averages. Larry Christenson and Tug McGraw also get people out. In Los Angeles there is excellent firepower in Doug Rau, Tommy John and Don Sutton. Mike Garman provides good relief. Kansas City's Andy Hassler, Dennis Leonard and Jim Colborn are only slightly less effective, and Doug Bird is truly a Royal reliever.

Former Yankee squads were famous for the batting of

Ruth, Maris and Mantle. This year's team has equal power. Fleet footed Mickey Rivers has a batting average in the clouds. Reggie Jackson is now socking instead of sulking. There is also catching Thurman Munson, Lou Pinella, Paul Blair, Graig Nettles and Chris Chambliss. Each of them qualify as stars, but don't underestimate the opposition. Royals' George Brett, Al Cowens and Hal McRae are all around 300, while John Mayberry and Amos Otis are still capable. Philadelphia hitting was the National League's best. Greg Luzinski has power to spare. Bake McBride, Dave Johnson and Bob Boone can also handle themselves. Schmidt, Sizemore, Maddox and Hebner come in handy too. The Dodgers have almost twice as many homers as last year. Reggie Smith has the best statistics, but Steve Garvey and Davey Lopes aren't far behind. Ron Cey can also provide leadership.

Now that we've met the teams, what about predictions? Luzinski, Carleton and the great defensive infield will carry Philadelphia to the Series. The Yankees will also make it. The winner? I'll root for the Phillies, but the Yankees will have too much talent. Look for New York in six games.

This year's baseball has been called a "Rabbit ball" and a "pitcher's nightmare." League officials however, insisted that it meets all requirements. Maybe so, but it's still fun to hit. A new single season homer record has been set, and we can expect a few more in the World Series.

Hamilton's Jimmy Edwards and Doyle Orange are the C.F.L.'s best running combination. They'll take the team to the play-offs, and who knows how far they'll go?

YANKEES TO WIN IN SIX

Ken Norton and Jimmy Young are training for their November 5 bout. Both won recently during the same card, and immediately they began a game of psychology. Norton was particularly outspoken. "He can't punch. I know he can't hurt me." Jimmy however isn't frightened. The winner, probably Young, could well be the next champion.

Shouldn't professional sports be open to anyone talented enough? Greg Neeld, who has sight in only one eye, was drafted last year by the Buffalo Sabres. The N.H.L. however, denied him a try-out. The youngster's suit against the league was recently dismissed in court. Thus, fans are denied watching a youth, who unlike some, has real desire. The decision is an unforgivable inconsistency. People aren't supposed to discriminate because of physical handicaps. Besides, Bobby Clarke is a diabetic and he's allowed to play.

Canadian hockey is threatened in more places than Europe. Boston coach Don Cherry says American players display more desire than

ours. "The American boy is a lot hungrier, a lot tougher. He hasn't polished his skills as finely as the Canadian player, but he makes up for it in desire." Cherry thinks that within four years the United States will supply a quarter of the N.H.L.'s players. If another quarter is from Europe, what about us? Our economy will be in real trouble when even the hockey players are unemployed.

The chief reason for escalating sports salaries has been players' agents. Do they serve any function aside from increasing ticket prices? Do they even help the players? Richard Sorkin is a case in point. He has been convicted of larceny for losing \$360,000 belonging to seven athletes. Sorkin admitted only to misinvesting the money, but he lost part of it gambling. I realize that some agents are vital to their clients. They don't however, deserve huge salaries any more than the players. Sports could do without both powerful agents and millionaire athletes.

WORLD SERIES

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