

Bridges Was 'Little Man With A Big Heart'

Death Of 'Little Tee' Rekindles Tiger Memories

By W. W. EDOAR

No pitcher in the long and colorful history of the Detroit Tigers furnished more dramatic moments than Tommy Bridges, the slender little right-hander who passed away last week, another victim of cancer.

When news of his death came over the wires from Tennessee, it opened the floodgates of memories and the years went rolling

back to the baseball crazy days of the early 20's in Detroit. Those were the depression years when the banks were closed and most of the workers were being paid in paper they called "scrip." Morale was at its lowest ebb in Detroit and the populace was eager for something that would break the spell and show signs of a bright future that had been prophesied for the city.

IN THOSE DAYS Frank Navin, one of the shrewdest men ever connected with baseball, owned the Tigers and started to make the moves that would turn the folks toward baseball for a morale builder.

"I think I got one of the fellows who will do it," he commented one day, "I can only build his strength."

With that he introduced baseball writers to Bridges, who weighed only slightly more than 120 pounds, and who later became affectionately known as "Little Tee From Tennessee."

"I'm going to try something different with this fellow," Navin explained. "I am going to put him on a diet of milk-shakes and then watch his weight. If I can build him up, he should provide some great moments."

The new plan was duly recorded and Bridges battle with the scales became as much a part of the baseball picture as anything the team did on the field.

"LITTLE TEE from Tennessee" never developed physically to the heights Navin had expected. But he proved Navin to be a great prophet—was the central figure in two of the most unforgettable moments in Tiger history.

The first came on an afternoon in 1932 when he set down the first 26 batters in Navin Field and needed only one more putout to attain fame as the hurler of a perfect no-hitter. The fans sat tense. But it was not to be.

Out of the Washington dugout came Dave Harris, a pinch-hitter, and as he strode to the plate the fans leaped with blazes of boos directed at Walter John-

son, the Washington manager. The boos became louder and were mixed with catcalls when Harris singled and kept Bridges from his no-hitter.

"That's all part of the game," Little Tee commented later in the dressing room, and he held no animosity toward the Washington manager.

FROM THAT DAY on, however, Little Tee was a real hero with the Tigers.

And when Navin, through the generosity of Walter O. Briggs,

a part owner, bought Mickey Cochrane from Connie Mack for \$125,000 to manage the club in 1934, the real drama set in.

With Little Tee as one of the faces of his staff Cochrane led the Tigers to the 1934 pennant, only to lose to the Cardinal "Gas House Gang."

But, again with Bridges teaming up with such colorful hurlers as Schoolboy Rowe, General Crowder, and Elden Aker, the Tigers repeated in 1935 and met the Chicago Cubs in the World Series.

AFTER THE SERIES reached five games and the Tigers leading three games to two, Cochrane walked into the clubhouse of the train returning from Chicago that evening.

He was feeling chipper, but unknown to those present he was about to set the stage for a dramatic moment.

The big right-hander, who had more color than courage, shrugged and answered, "I don't feel too hot right now."

With that "Little Tee" spoke up.

"Mike," he said turning to Cochrane, "I'll do it."

"Okay," Cochrane countered and Bridges was given the assignment.

IT IS HISTORY now that he turned in one of the most startling performances of any Tiger hurler in history.

With the score tied at 3-3 during the ninth, Stan Hack tripled to open the inning. A man on third, none out and the series in the balance. That was the picture.

It was drama at its best. Then, as Cochrane commented later, "Little Tee" started throwing his heart at the batters.

With the crowd cheering him on, Little Tee fanned Bill Jurges, got Larry French to roll out and Augie Galan to fly out.

He saved the Tigers.

THE RECORD BOOKS will tell you that Goose Goslin scored Cochrane with the winning run in the Tiger half.

But it was the pitching of "Little Tee from Tennessee" that saved the day, won the title for the Tigers and gave the fans the kind of tonic they needed to shake off the after effects of the depression.

It was a moment that never will be forgotten by those who saw it.

Realtors Set Discussion Of Money Market

A panel discussion about mortgage money will be presented before members of the United Northwestern Realty Association-Western Wayne-Oakland County Board of Realtors, at a luncheon meeting, Thursday, May 2.

The two panelists, Albert Marshall and Arnold Elmhuy, will give a synopsis of the present mortgage money condition in the metropolitan area and also a brief analysis of the future availability of mortgage money.

Marshall is an assistant cashier and manager of the Redford office of 1st Federal Savings and Loan Association of Detroit, and Elmhuy is a second vice-president and branch manager of the Redford office of Manufacturers National Bank.

The panel discussion will be followed by a question and answer period.

Trojan Errors

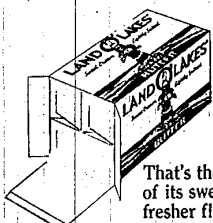
Lead To Loss

Six unearned runs helped Holly High to spring past Clarenceville, 9-3, in a Wayne-Oakland League game Thursday.

Holly scored seven times in the third inning on only two hits and Clarenceville's defense committed a succession of errors.



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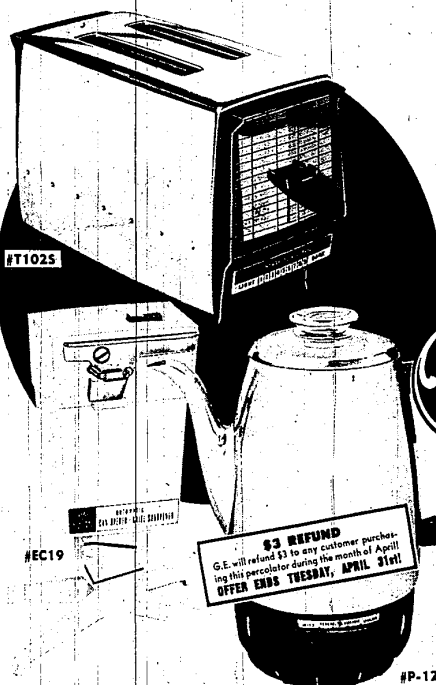
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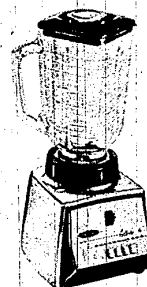
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