

Sports

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Crucial play angers Blue Jays

Loss doesn't cut into AL East margin

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Keeping your cool in a pennant race isn't easy, especially when you are ahead by a narrow margin as are the Toronto Blue Jays in the American League East.

"We're in a situation where every play for us is magnified, every pitch, every out is important to us," said left-hander Bud Black, who joined the Blue Jays in a trade from Cleveland eight days ago.

The importance of every play was never more evident than Tuesday night when the Blue Jays lost to the Milwaukee Brewers 8-4 and also lost their manager Cito Gaston, who was ejected in the eighth inning along with pitcher John Candelaria.

Gaston and Candelaria were tossed for a baseball no-no — arguing balls and strikes. But what really had Gaston steaming were two calls in the sixth inning that helped the struggling Brewers score three runs and take the lead.

Milwaukee's first win after seven straight losses kept the Blue Jays' lead over Boston at 1½ games. The Red Sox were beaten 5-2 at Fenway Park by Cleveland.

The Blue Jays, therefore, missed an opportunity to pad their lead before a three-game series in Boston this weekend. But, for one night, the Brewers wouldn't let them, and the calls made things even more frustrating.

"We just felt like they were out, and those two (umpires Terry Cooney and Derryl Cousins) felt they were safe," Gaston said. "That's all there is to it. It would have been nice to pick up a game on them

(Boston). If you're going to lose, you'd better pick a time when they lose."

Robin Yount, whose 17th homer tied the game 2-2 in the fourth inning, hit a run-scoring double in the sixth to tie the game again 3-3.

Dave Parker hit a bouncer back to Black, whose throw to shortstop Tony Fernandez caught Yount diving back to second. Cousins ruled Yount safe, however, drawing an argument from Fernandez and Gaston. TV replays were inconclusive.

"I thought we had him, but my opinion doesn't count," said Black.

Greg Vaughn followed with an RBI double that gave the Brewers a 4-3 lead

and moved Parker to third. B.J. Surhoff hit a fly to medium centre field and Mookie Wilson's throw to catcher Pat Borders was in time to get Parker.

TV replays showed Borders tagged Parker on the hip but Cooney ruled the runner safe. Again Gaston argued, but the Brewers had a 5-3 lead.

"All I can say is that I tagged him," said Borders.

Parker, smiling as he walked to the dugout, all but admitted he was out.

"I gave him a little fake and it was a tough call," he said.

The Brewers later scored three runs off Candelaria on Surhoff's bases-loaded

triple just over the glove of leaping second baseman Manny Lee.

Candelaria, hit hard Monday by the Brewers, struck out Rob Deer and, with a 3-1 count on Dale Sveum, the pitcher and Cooney began to argue over balls and strikes. Gaston raced out of the dugout and was immediately ejected by Cooney.

A heated argument ensued and moments later Candelaria was tossed out by third base umpire Rick Reed.

"The replay speaks for itself," was all Candelaria would say.

"I didn't even know he'd (Candelaria) been thrown out until I turned around," Gaston said.

Black (12-11) took the loss and Bill Krueger (6-8) got the victory.

The Jays visit Milwaukee at 8 this evening on BCTV (channel 12, cable 11) (taped).

A's clinch division title

by Canadian Press

Rickey Henderson and Dave Stewart led Oakland to a 5-0 win Tuesday night over the Kansas City Royals as the Athletics clinched American League West title.

Henderson was 3-for-3 and scored twice while Stewart scattered five hits for his 22nd win as the A's won the AL West for the third straight year.

"This is just a first step," said Stewart. "We can't be too happy. We've been hunted all year. Guys have been looking to bump us off, beat us, trying to take it from us. We've had guys in and out, but we toughed it out and here we are."

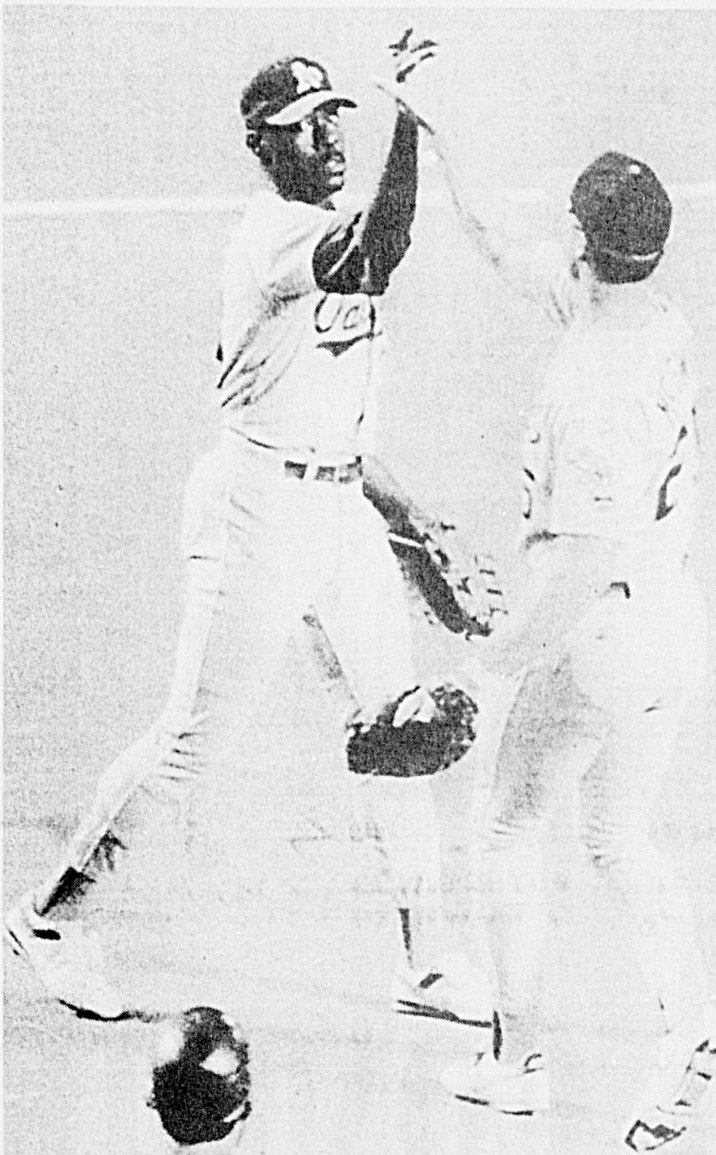
The Athletics, the defending World Series champions, finished the game knowing their nearest pursuer — the Chicago White Sox — had lost 4-3 to Minnesota.

With only eight games remaining, the win over the Royals put Chicago nine games back. The A's became the first team since the 1976-78 Royals, Philadelphia Phillies and New York Yankees to win three straight division titles.

"Every time it gets better," said Oakland manager Tony LaRussa. "You think of all the combinations, all the ways it can go. The Twins always play hard."

In other games, it was: New York 15, Baltimore 3; Detroit 4, Seattle 1; and California 8, Texas 2.

More baseball, page 15.



Dave Stewart and Mark McGwire celebrate the A's victory.

PRESIDENT'S MAN MOVING

Rota gets NHL post

VANCOUVER (CP) — Former player Darcy Rota resigned Tuesday as director of media relations for the Vancouver Canucks to become special assistant to NHL president John Ziegler.

Rota will be based in New York and be directly responsible to Ziegler, he told a news conference.

"This is a mixed day for me," said Rota. "It brings back memories of six years ago when I was contemplating retirement."

He met with Ziegler last week in Toronto to discuss the newly created position.

Rota, 37, played five seasons for the Canucks before retiring in December 1984 because of a neck injury. He became media relations director in 1987.

"The opportunities with this new job are almost unlimited," he said. "There's expansion, the NHL alumni and community relations, to start with."

"It's a great chance to broaden my horizons. I'll miss the Canucks because this is a team on the rise."

Rota broke into the NHL in

1973 with the Chicago Blackhawks after being selected in the first round of the draft from the junior Edmonton Oil Kings.

In 11 NHL seasons with Chicago, the Atlanta Flames and Vancouver, the hard-shooting left winger scored 256 goals and had 495 points.

The Canucks did not name a replacement for Rota. Vancouver general manager Pat Quinn was attending league meetings in Toronto, along with Ziegler.

Kings continue to trim roster

The Prince George Spruce Kings have released six more players as they continue to trim their roster to the required 20.

Among those released are veterans Trevor Niebergal and Gary Vallentgoed. Vallentgoed was released mid-way through last season and rejoined the squad again this season.

"He's actually playing very well," said assistant coach Mike Mesic. "I think all of the players we're releasing are good enough to play in the league."

"Niebergal is 20 years old and we thought we would go with someone younger we could bring along in our training. We had to make some difficult choices in deciding who to cut."

"We didn't win the B.C. championships last year. We lost to New West (New Westminster Royals) and we're trying to develop a team that can go all the way."

Mesic feels even though the Spruce Kings' roster

has been pared to close to 20 players, they'll continue to make trades and acquisitions looking for the best combination of players to put on the ice. He feels the Kings are still a couple of players away from a B.C. championship calibre squad.

"I feel we have the potential to be a good team," Mesic said. "Actually, I think we are a good team now. I think we're going to be a really good team this year."

Mesic is pleased with the way the defense is playing and is impressed with rookie Darren Watson who came to the Kings from Edmonton.

"He's been a pleasant surprise," said Mesic.

Other players released were forward Trent Potskin, defenseman Steve McKinnon, forward Dan Post and forward Tom Mix.

The Kings next pre-season game is against the Quesnel Millionaires Friday at 7:30 p.m. at the Coliseum.

Tewksbury not taking break while here

by DON SCHAFER
Sports Editor

With just four months left before the world swimming championships in Perth, Australia, it might seem odd that Mark Tewksbury's taking time to travel around the country.

The 22-year-old Olympic medalist and world record holder is in Prince George for three busy days that have seen him swim with the Prince George Barracudas, attend a couple of businessmen's lunches, do a little dry-land training and spend some time with the young swimmers.

"I can only do so many of these a year," said Tewksbury Tuesday morning over a healthy breakfast of Cream of Wheat, brown toast and iced tea. "It just takes too much time and energy away from training to do too many."

"I really enjoy this, and I like being with kids, but pretty soon I'm just going to have to start saying no."

That's a tough task for the personable young man who's being touted by the national media as the latest king of Canadian swimming. His time is in demand, not just by groups eager to have him speak, but by the coaching staff at the University of Calgary Dinosaurs swim club.

"I mostly just stick to Western Canada," he said. "Going too far back east means a two-day trip like this one becomes four days, including travelling time, and my coach just says no way."

Barracuda coach Dave Parker organized the visit after he took part of the team to a Tewksbury-led clinic in Hinton, Alta., last

year. Parker was impressed enough to arrange the trip and schedule a trip here.

Tewksbury, a renowned motivator, is away from Olympic co-coach Derek Snelling, who's also his club coach, but he isn't taking a break. He trained with the 'Cudas Tuesday morning and today. With the world championships so close, he can't afford to slacken his pace much.

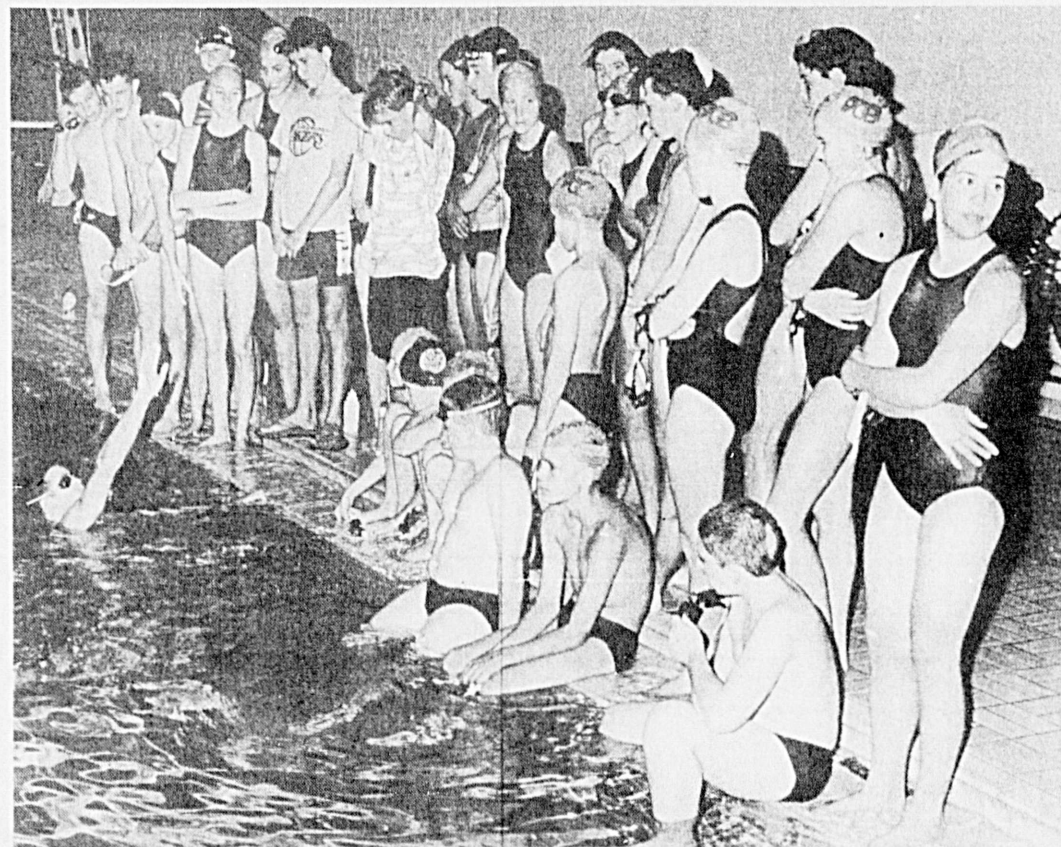
That's a pace that has seen him emerge solidly at the forefront of swimming in the world. He's been ranked in the top five for a while, but his short-course record of 53.69 seconds, set in the 25-metre pool in Saskatoon in March, and a second-place finish in Rome early in the long-course season propelled him to second, just behind Jeff Rouse of the United States.

"The long-course 100-metre record is a possibility," he said, "but it's 54.5 seconds and my best time is 55.5, so I'm a full second off."

"I sort of timed the summer poorly — we had a close club race at nationals and I ended up swimming about 18 races. There were only five days between nationals and the Rome meet, so I didn't have enough time to recover."

That he's not above swimming far more races than he'd like in order to help the club's chances at a title reflects not only the philosophy of Snelling — "Derek trains us to not be above anything," he laughed — but also his own personality. He doesn't consider himself the star of his team, even though his best time puts him a step ahead of such notable club-mates as butterfly specialist Tom Ponting, winner of the World Cup points title last season.

He started swimming at age five and joined his first swim club at eight after moving back to his na-



Mark Tewksbury (in pool) got lots of attention Tuesday morning at the Four Seasons Pool.

tive Calgary from Dallas, where his parents lived for a time.

"I started breaking records at 10," he said, "so I had some early success. But I also had some frustration as well — there was a time when my times just didn't improve at all — so I had both experiences early and learned how to deal with them."

He won a silver medal in Seoul in the 400-metre medley relay with Ponting, Sandy Goss and the late Victor Davis.

"The Olympics were my greatest experience ever," he said.

"I tell kids it was like Christmas morning for 16 days in a row."

"There was the same peacefulness, how everyone is happy and loving and everyone is there together for the same reason. There was some tension, but once that passed there was relief. We had nine days to go to the other venues and go downtown."

His world best time (only records set in 50-metre pools are recognized by the international swimming body as world records) was another incredible feeling.

"I swam very fast in the

heats," he said. "I had a feeling when I came back for the final."

"The swim seemed fast — it wasn't effortless, but it seemed fast. But I was surprised when the clock said 53."

Tewksbury, a political science major, said he still has some goals to meet. He wants an individual Olympic or world championship medal to go with the world best time.

"I started out with dreams, like every other swimmer," he said.

Mark Tewksbury's almost realized both of his.

Swimmer hit with kids

It isn't just Mark Tewksbury's trademark smile that endears him to young swimmers.

Tewksbury, who's in Prince George for a three-day visit, spent some pool time with the Prince George Barracudas Tuesday, and both young and old were enthused.

"He's a good teacher," said one of the younger 'Cudas who took part Tuesday session. "He taught us to keep our legs straight."

"He's lots of fun."

In the pool with children, Tewksbury seems a big, friendly pal — he might be as good an instructor as a swimmer.

The older swimmers in the club, who worked out with Tewksbury in the morning sessions, were equally impressed.

"It was great," said both Graeme and Christine Martindale, two of the better swimmers in the club. "It's great to have him here."

"He showed us his stroke techniques and his preparation for high-level meets," said Graeme. "His workouts are a lot different than we do."

Christine concurred. "His pre-workout stretching is a lot different than ours," she said. "His psychological preparation is different, too."

Tewksbury wants to bring that sense of enthusiasm to the clubs he visits.

"I'm a role model, and I want to show them that I'm just a regular guy," he said. "I like to just talk to them."

"I'd like them to think that if I can do it, they can, too."

Citizen photo by Brock Gable