

## NOT A CHEER LEADER

This week I decided to break from form and divert my energy - usually reserved for griping - to insightfulness, and predict the Toronto Blue Jays impending off season moves.

Expect no less than a 20 per cent turn-over this winter in team personnel. Don't let this shock you; last year Blue Jay management dealt, slipped or released away Roy Lee Jackson, Bryan Clark, Alfredo Griffin, Dave Collins, Jim Gott, Rick Leach, and Heathcliff Johnson; totalling 29 percent of their staff.

I'll begin under the title "trimming off the fat." Manny Lee and Lou Thornton will not escape Pat Gillick's (Blue Jay VP Personnel) sharpened butcher knife and with a combined .223 batting average and 8 ribbies, who really cares. Look for Kelly Gruber and Rick Leach to be the utility infielder and outfielder respectively.

Come spring, Jeff Bouroughs will find fishing boots where cletes once were. With a .256 average and a feeble 6 dingers, Jeff was a gamble that simply didn't pan out.

Heathcliff was snatched from Texas to produce extra base hits and souvenirs for the fans. He's provided neither, amounting a tally that can be measured on one hand, leaving the thumb for his total home runs.

The past few weeks, Gil'ck has been driving the Toronto sports writers to fits, with his promise of a big name designated hitter. Whoever this diety may be (though rumours point to Dusty Baker or Dave Kingman of Oakland) it spells back seat for the post season hero Al Oliver. Al asked to be traded from the Dodgers when he was demoted to pinch hitting duties. His pride and inflated ego will prevent him from doing anything differently in Toronto.

I nearly choked on my Corn Flakes last year, when Pat traded Jim Gott (their only quality relief, with promise as a starter) at age 26, for a 36 year old lefty from the Giants named Gary Lavelle. Jimmy had a 73/49 strike out to walks ration, while Gary (Where's-the-Geritol) Lavelle struggled at a mere 50/36. Dig up the calculators boys and girls, you'll find Jimmy ahead by a length. The man is trade bait. The man to fill this great void in the pen will depend on whether Pat gets a starter in the off season. If he doesn't, Stan Clarke (a lefty from their farm system) should get the nod. However if Gillick does come through with a quality starter, watch Steve Davis (the blonde kid you saw toeing the rubber near season's end) bump Stanley onto the bus back to Syracuse (Blue Jay farm system).

Ernie (achin'-knees) Whitt will finally get a partner of worth in the off season. Carleton Fisk has been babbling for the past half month how he'd love to play half the season in Toronto's pint sized park. Please sign him Pat! Please!

Ignore rumours of Bill Caudill seeing daylight in other pastures. His ERA ended at sub three, with 14 saves. His history shows that he rotates between good and bad years and in the 84 season he had an awesome record with 36 saves. Besides Pat will not trade Bill away with his contract as well, and who is going to assume a \$25 million tab. Only Steinbrenner is retarded enough to trade players and continue to pay their salaries. By the Way George, Doyle says thanks.

A man we might not see donning the blue and white next year is Jimmy Acker. Boston, Chicago (after Bob James departs) Minnesota and others will be looking for a stopper and many think our Ack can fill the bill.

Anyway, verbal diarrhea must come to an end. But before I go, I have a concluding bit advice for Mr Gillick: There are only 158 shopping days left before April Pat, cash in all your coupons and get a GOOD DH and catcher. You listening, Pat?



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## Express ...

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captain of the team and this is why he has not been giving 100%

Wayne Groulx came down to the team as an unknown quantity. His first couple of games with the club were impressive, and he was highly touted as an exciting forward with speed whose only problem was a lack of size. It turned out that his real problem was a bad attitude. The talent is there; he managed well over 100 points in each of his last three seasons at junior level; but in this league he's going to have to go all out if he wants any ice time from Savard.

The plus side of the ledger has been the stellar performance of netminder Wendell Young. Wendell started the season with a 1-0 loss to the Moncton Golden Flames and then lost 5-4 to the Nova Scotia Oilers. In both cases the games were not this close. His next start was also against the Oilers, and this time he emerged with a 5-1 victory. The night after that, he came up with a strong performance as the Express defeated the Sherbrooke Canadiens 3-2.

A defenceman who has impressed everyone is big Michel Petit. In only three games thus far, he has shown himself to be more than capable of handling AHL action. Too capable, in fact, as it is likely that he will soon be recalled by the Van-

couver Canucks. Yet, even if he is called up, talent such as Tom Thornbury, Tom Karalis, and Claude Julien will be able to do the job.

At forward, the star thus far has been Marc Crawford. His four-goal performance against the Springfield Indians on Oct. 17th set a team record. He immediately followed that up with two goals against Nova Scotia in the very next game. Less flashy but more consistent is left-winger Mike Hough. Mike has managed three goals and seven points in his seven games. A rarity in the Express lineup this season has been that Mike Hough has been team captain on the road while Marc Crawford has had the honor here at home.

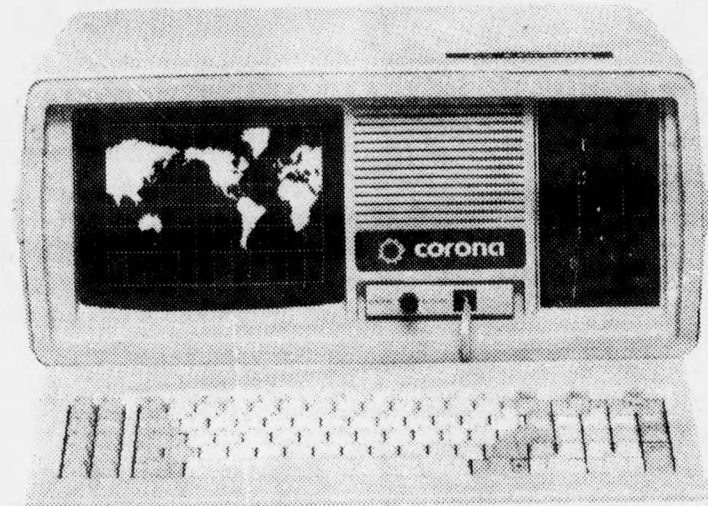
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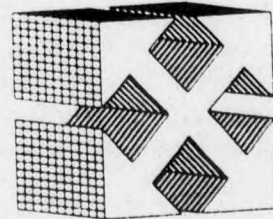
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