

RED SCHOENDIENST

This conversation between Red Schoendienst and Walter Langford is being taped in Red's home in St. Louis on December 12, 1987.

WL:: Red, I see you were born in Germantown, IL. Is that something like 40-50 miles from here?

RS; It's a little better than 40 miles. You can drive it in about an hour right now.

WL: Is that where you started playing ball?

RS: Well, everybody played ball in Germantown. It was a big thing. You had nothing else to do, really. There was not that much basketball, though we did play some.

WL: And how did you get into organized ball?

RS: We played, like I said, every Sunday, and worked during the week when we weren't in school. They had ^a great guy over there by the name of Ed Roach. He was a great organizer. He kept the Clinton County and St. Clair County leagues going every Sunday. They had some pretty good ball players. They tried to practice but never had that much time. I did start in that when I was about 16 years old. Then after going to school awhile I went and played professionally.

WL: Where did you start out?

RD. In Union City, TN. They've put a highway through there right now, I think it's Highway 51. We still have some fans come from Union City to St. Louis, and they holler at me. They'll come in about 4-5 times a year and they holler, "Hey, Red, we're back again. We watched you get started." That was D ball. If you went any lower, you went back home. From there, which was the Kitty League, which broke up that year. It was the middle of '42 when I signed up. After that I went to Albany, GA in the Georgia-Florida League and finished the season there. The following year I went to Lynchburg, VA in a B League.

I was there in the spring and started the season. Buddy Blattner was the shortstop at Rochester and Pepper Martin was the manager at the time, and they needed a shortstop. Of course, I'd only played D ball and started in B ball, but they called me up. I can remember I was pretty skinny at that time - weighed about 150-155 pounds. I knocked on the door that Sunday morning when I got there. They were having a meeting before going out on the ball field, and ^{the trainer} ~~Pepper~~ answered the door. I could hear him say, "Here's your new ball player." And Pepper looked around a little bit and then I could hear him say, "Hell, I don't need another batboy, I need another shortstop." I was pretty frail and small at the time. But I did lead the league in hitting that year, ^{after that} in Rochester at Triple A. And then/I went into the service.

One thing I have to say. I remember one big thing while I was at Rochester. We played a doubleheader and I came up to hit for the first time. You know, Syracuse and Newark and all of them were pretty close and they were great baseball fans. There were some people sitting in the stands, and they got all over me. I had never been in the state of New York before in my life and they were on me. They got on everybody. I walked up to hit and I said to myself, "What in hell am I getting into?" But I got by and everything, and there were fans from Syracuse or whoever we were playing and they were hollering at everybody, and I said, "What's this all about?" I never paid any attention. I think that was a big lesson for me, just not to pay any attention.

WL: That's the best lesson to learn. Now, after that season you went into the service?

RS: No, at the beginning of 1944 I went into the service. I was in for a whole year and I came out right before spring training of 1945, and the Cardinals just put me on their list. We went to Carroll, IL.

WL: Were you already in the Cardinals' system?

RS: Oh, yes. Branch Rickey and Mr. Breadon signed me up.

WL: When you were growing up there in Germantown, did you ever have any dreams of that happening?

RS: Well, I guess I did, to a certain extent.

WL: That's where you would have preferred to go, if you were going to the majors?

RS: Right. The thing was, I said to myself, 'I have to do something, and I was going to give myself at least three years in the minor leagues, if I ever got signed up. That was my biggest thought. If I couldn't advance from D ball where I was to A and AA and right on up, if I couldn't make any progress in three years, I would look for something else to do. But I was pretty fortunate, I only spent a year and a half in the minor leagues.

WL: Yeah. You came up fast. Faster than they do even in these days. Your first season was '45 and your manager was Billy Southworth. That year you played the outfield most of the time. Was that because ...

RS: They had no outfielders. A lot of the guys didn't get back from the service, and they needed an outfielder.

WL: No, Marion wasn't back yet. I mean Terry Moore.

RS: Terry Moore wasn't back, and Musial was still in the service. And Enos Slaughter and a whole bunch of them. They really had infielders - Emil Verban and Marion and Kurowski and Ray Sanders. I went out to play in the outfield, fooling around out there, because I wanted to make the club somehow. Mike Gonzalez was one of our coaches and said to Billy, after hitting fungoes to me and watching me/in batting practice, "you don't need another outfielder, you've got one right there." Sometimes it pays to have coaches watch. I wanted to stay on the club, that's the big thing.

WL: But you preferred the infield?

RS: Well, I wanted to play, no matter what.

WL: Because the next year you went to the infield.

RS: And in the meantime, in '45, I did play some at short and at third. If Marion's back was bothering him, I came in and played short.

WL: That was a good first season and you hit .278, which is respectable. Then, the next year, but first of all, in '45 you finished just three games

behind the Cubs. It wouldn't have taken much to win it all.

RS: Well, they got Borowy from the Yankees, which helped them. They needed another pitcher. He couldn't beat us, but he beat everybody else.

WL: They've done that twice now, picking up Sutcliffe ~~four~~^{three} years ago.

Did you get a new manager in '46?

RS: Yeah. Eddie Dyer came in. Southworth went on to Boston, the Braves.

They didn't fire him. Billy just made the change himself. I think I'm

correct in that. ^{Wk:} In that year of '46 you guys got into the Series. You beat the Dodgers in the playoffs. Do I remember that it was two straight games you won from them?

RS: That's right. Yeah, we won two straight games, and it wound up we were beating them pretty good in the second one, and then something happened, they were scoring a few runs and then in the 9th inning their big first baseman, I don't remember his name. Schultz, I think, a big righthander (?). He came up and he could hit the ball out of the ball park. And it went down to three and two on him, I think, and a base hit there would have been trouble for us. A home run and he would have tied the game. We did win it.

WL: Who was on the mound for you?

RS: Harry Brecheen.

WL: You're were in about as good hands as you could be at that point. The Dodgers have a history of losing some playoffs - the famous '51 case, and in '62 the San Francisco Giants beat them in a 3-game playoff. Billy Pierce was a part of it, I remember, after coming over from the White Sox. All right, then the Red Sox were kind of a surprise getting into the '46 Series, because I think they finished last the season before (actually 7th), or something like that. Now, it was 11 years or so before you went to Milwaukee.

RS: I went to the Giants first, from the 15th of June to the end of the season and in '57 I went on to Milwaukee.

WL: Were you traded to the Giants?

RS: It was Bill Sarni, Jackie Brandt, Dick Littlefield, and myself (plus

Bobby Stephenson) for Alvin Dark, a pitcher by the name of Don Liddle, Whitey Lockman, and somebody else, I forget. (Ray Katt).

WL: Sounds like a fairly even trade.

RS: Yep. Well, they needed a shortstop^{ST L} here, and they wanted Alvin to play short. Blasingame was here but they had an experienced shortstop when they got Alvin. They thought they had a good chance to win the pennant. Then the following year they came close. I went on to Milwaukee and we won it there.

WL: What do you remember most or best about those ten years here with the Cardinals as a player? Anything stand out in your mind?

RS: Well, I'd have to say the big thing that would stand out in my mind was when I came up in '45, and then in 1946 when we won, I did have a year under my belt, but we had veterans like Terry Moore and Musial and Marion and Kurovski and so many of the other guys, you know, it made it a little easier for me. I think I was the only rookie at the time. At least at my position when I moved to second base.

WL: Remember your first game?

RS: No, I really don't. The one thing I remember about the first game was that you're a little nervous until it starts, but after the first pitch I was relaxed. And then you wonder when you're going to get your first base hit. After that everything is fine.

WL: How about Dyer as a manager? Was he one of the better ones?

RS: He was a good manager, yes. We had a pretty good ball club about that time. He had been head of our minor league system before he came and also managed in the minor leagues. He had discipline with the ball players. It was a little different then from what it is now.

WL: You know it. All of them tell me that. Stanky showed it when he took the manager's job at Texas and after one game said, "I've had it. I can't stand this stuff."

RS: I played under Eddie here, too.

WL: Yeah. You first had a season under Marty Marion. He told me the main

reason he left was that he couldn't get along with Fred Saigh. So he got off of there and went over to the Browns, which was jumping from the frying pan into the fire. Then Stanky followed him.

RS: Eddie was a fiery type. He was fiery here and a lot of ball players didn't like him. Of course, there are a lot of ball players that don't like any manager.

WL: Especially one that's cracking the whip on them. There aren't too many of those left, but Dick Williams is one of them. Players pretty soon get to have a real deep-seated dislike of Dick, because he's cracking the whip.

So, Stanky was relieved in '55 by Harry Walker, during the season. In '56 Fred Hutchinson came in, before you went to the Giants.

RS: Fred was a good manager. Very good.

WL: Everybody says that. Then when you went to the Giants your manager was Bill Rigney. He managed a long time, but as I see it he never had notable success.

RS: Well, our ball club over there in New York wasn't that good a ball club, really.

WL: You had some good names - Bill White, Don Mueller, Willie Mays, Johnny Antonelli, among others.

RS: I don't think we could keep that infield together, with a lot of infielders playing, and I had a bad arm at that particular time, too.

WL: Now, when you went to Milwaukee, was that a trade?

RS: It was a trade. I went to Milwaukee for Danny O'Connell, a second baseman, Ray Crone, and Bobby Thomson.

WL: Thomson had slowed. He broke a leg or something and never fully recovered.

RS: That's right. And Ray Crone was a pretty fair pitching prospect

WL: Anyway, you got over there in '57 and found Fred Haney in charge. How was Fred?

RS: Fred was good. I like him. I knew Fred when he managed Pittsburgh.

I used to see him and talk with him quite often. Fred was one guy that wanted me over there, I know that. Duffy Lewis, the old traveling secretary, you

remember him? Duffy said after they got me, "Man, I was looking for you to come over here. Don't let me down, Red. You're one guy I said could help us win the pennant here."

WL: That was exactly right, Red. They needed to get things set there in the infield with a leader type. It paid off. And then you pulled an upset in a way, for in those days any time you could beat the Yankees it was an upset. Burdette was the big hero. Sometimes pitchers will emerge in the Series who haven't had all that great a season. You obviously had quite a lineup there.

RS: I'd have to say that was the best ball club I was ever affiliated with, as far as talent. We had everything. We had pitching, hitting, catching. No matter how you look at it, we had a great ball club. And you can see it by looking at how many of those guys are now in the Hall of Fame.

WL: That's right. And they put it together for several seasons in a row, either winning or coming close. What stands out in your mind about that '57 ~~Series~~ Series, other than Burdette's three wins?

RS: Well, I don't recall anything too special. I know I got hurt. I wasn't feeling good and I pulled a muscle in my leg, and I was out some of the time.

WL: You got into five games.

RS: Right. And I wasn't all up to par at that particular time. That's when I got that TB right after that in the following year.

WL: Any idea how that crept up on you?

RS: Nope. Sure don't. But I was having a hard time.

WL: What were the first symptoms you noticed?

RS: I was ^{tired} ~~tired~~ and just worn out.

WL: Did the doctors catch it right away?

RS: Well, I always had trouble with my arm for a number of years. Once I came here to St. Louis, Dr. Rolando (?) who was a radiologist took X-rays. When he did then he he said, "You had better go see somebody." And ~~when I did that doctor~~ took X-rays "You've got something, and again and said, "Let's just hope it's TB and nothing else." He told me right flat, and he's still around, I see him. Anyway, I went to see Dr. Warner and they

put me in the hospital. And then they finally operated on me. Dr. Warner, I don't think, would have let me play any more unless I got operated on. "Well," I said, "I still want ^{to try} to play." Of course, I was getting up in age. Dr. Lecedo, who did the operation, said he'd be awfully careful how he cut the muscles, so I wasn't on the operating table for a long time. He was an outstanding doctor. Bob Bowman, our old trainer, was the one who recommended Dr. Lecedo to me. I remember he came up to see me, and he said, "Here's a guy who went through St. Louis University selling papers to pay for his studies and everything. He's just a hard worker and he's an outstanding doctor."

WL: Did he remove some of the lung?

RS: Yeah, he took a segment out. Not a whole lung, just a part of it. It has all grown back now. I never felt better in my life after that. Never had any more sore arm or anything after I came back. But the big thing on Dr. Lecedo is this. Mary, my wife, had never met him. They were going to do the operation after I'd been in the hospital for about three months to have everything localized. He came in that morning early. Of course, Mary was there before they took me in, about 6:30 or 7:00 o'clock. Dr. Lecedo came in and Mary always tells the story that he said, "I'm Dr. Lecedo, and I'm going to do the operation on Red and I don't want you to be worried." And Mary looked at him and noticed that he had a cut on his cheek where he had shaved himself that morning. She told him that story later. But Mary was there the whole time and when he came out of the operating room, and it was a long time I was in there, because he was very careful not to cut any of the muscles, and Mary says he looked like he aged about 15-20 years he was in there so long and concentrating so hard. Everything turned out great.

WL: So, you really lost that whole season.

RS: No, I came back. I didn't play that much.

WL: That's what I mean. According to the record, you only got into five games in '59. And then you came back to the Cardinals. In a trade, or what?

RS: No, they released me there. That was when expansion came. I talked with Bing Devine about trying to make the ball club, and he said, "Absolutely, we'll take you to spring training and see what you can do." In the meantime, expansion came and Fred Haney was manager of the California Angels, and ~~he~~ they called me and wanted me to join them. I said, "Well, I made a promise with Bing Devine." Bing heard that and said, "If you care to go, it's okay with me." I told him, "No, Bing, I promised you I'd come. If I can't make it, then I can't make it, and that's it." He gave me a good chance in spring training, and I made the ball club.

WL: Now, when you were with the Giants in New York and Milwaukee, did you move your family to those places or did you keep your home here?

RS: Well, I kept my home here. The first year they didn't come along, because I was traded on the 15th of June. Of course, I got back here once in a while. We had the youngsters and everything, so they didn't come into New York. Then, the following year I found a place with Bobby Hoffman and a few of the other players on Hastings-on-the-Hudson. I had a rented home out there. We were due to move in the 15th of June, and that's when the Giants traded me! I had that house on which I was paying pretty good for it. It was a nice place and the people were very nice. I signed the contract with them whereby I couldn't lease it out to anybody in case something happened. It so happened that Ray Crone, who was traded to New York in the deal, had no family but I got in touch with him right away. He said, "Heck, I don't have that kind of money." I said, "Well, I don't either," ~~So I made an agreement with him~~ but I needed a place for the family." I just wanted to get out from under, so I said, "Well, you just pay half and I'll pay the other half and you'll have a place. ~~that~~." I finally talked him into it. That way I was maintaining a home there, really, and one here, and one in Milwaukee.

WL: Did they come to Milwaukee while you were there?

RS: Yeah, they were in New York about a week and then flew into Milwaukee, where I had a place ready for them.

WL: A lot of the old ball players tell me they think the wives are the unsung heroes of major league baseball. So many of them have to spend so much time by themselves, in a sense, taking care of the family, or else moving around all the time and never really being settled.

RS: No question. ~~My wife~~ I didn't have to worry about anything because she was with the kids, you knew everything was going to be good with them and she was going to take care of them. I don't know if you remember, but it was in The Sporting News years ago, that Mary wrote a little poem about the life of a baseball wife, and they published it. In those days you didn't have Pampers, you had diapers, and the formula had to be made just right.

WE: Do you think Mary has a copy of that?

RS: Oh, yes, she's got a copy of that somewhere.

WL: I'll call her up and see if she'll let me have a copy. I'd like to have one.

RS: It was very good. I know when we went barnstorming one year, the American League against the National, starting in Las Vegas and through California and on to Hawaii, and Carl Erskine and Duke Snider and a few other guys on the club had read it and they wanted copies.

WL: How many children do you have, Red?

RS: We have four. Three girls and a boy, the youngest.

WL: Cathy the oldest?

RS: Cathy was the second. Colleen is the oldest. She lives here in St. Louis, with three kids of her own. Cathy's husband is a hospital administrator. They were in Sheboygan, WI for a few years after they got married, and they loved it there, as cold as it was and everything. Now they're in Highland, over here, which is about an hour ride from us. Eileán is in Rockford, IL, and it's real cold there too. Kevin is in Orlando. He was in the Chicago Cubs organization for about a year and a half. Then he got married and of course he couldn't cut it, playing in the minor leagues.

WL: When you got back here in the Sixties, you had a pretty strong outfit here, too. Flood and a lot of holdovers like Bill White and Julian Javier, Sadecki and Gibson.

RS: We had a good shortstop who was underrated, I think - Dal Maxvill.
He was a winner.

WL: The Cardinals have had a history of good shortstops. Even Hornsby, he wasn't too good a shortstop, but he played shortstop for a while when he first came up. Of the long lineup, I suppose that most people would agree that the greatest one of all in the field is Ozzie Smith, but Marion wasn't too far behind him, I think.

RS: Well, it's hard to say, you know, comparing ball players from different periods. You've got your different equipment, you've got your AstroTurf, you've got everything a heck of a lot different.

WL: That equipment, as far as I'm concerned, makes a hell of a difference.

RS: Oh, it sure does.

WL: The one I used just barely covered your hand...

RS: I used one as long as I had a web in it, that's all I cared about.

WL: But you didn't ^{see} much one-handed catching of the ball back then. That was called grandstanding. So, you ended your playing days in '63.

RS: Was it '63? ~~It was '63~~ I don't remember. I'm glad you brought that up. I think I went up to hit about five times that year.

WL: Exactly five times.

RS: I went 0 for 5 pinch hitting, and that knocked me below .290 lifetime.

WL: Yeah, I'll be doggoned. Anyway, there are so many who tell that same sort of thing, like "If it hadn't been for that last season, I'd have hit .300 or .320 or whatever.

RS: If I had stayed on I think I could have raised it again. They had a little problem at the time, you know, with ball players you could keep. They had some young guys, the Cardinals did, and if they'd have kept me on the big roster, they could have lost one or two young ones. Bing called me up and asked me about it. He said "there are a few ball clubs that would like to have you if you want to go. Or if you want to stay here, we'll have you as a coach." I said, "I'll stay here."

WL: That's what I was going to ask. Did you stay as a coach then?

RS: Yes.

WL: So you never really left the Cardinals.

RS: No, I didn't leave. I just stayed right there.

WL: And from there on you've been a coach.

RS: No, I was a coach that year and in '64, and in '65 Johnny Keane left and they made me manager.

WL: What I meant was you've been with the Cards straight through.

RS: No, I was with Oakland for two years.

WL: What years were those?

RS: It was after I got fired as manager after being here 12 years. So I went with Uncle Charlie. So what year was that?

WL: I've got it right here. You were manager through ~~70~~ '76.

RS: All right. Then in ~~71~~⁷⁷ and ~~72~~⁷⁸ I was with Oakland as a coach.

WL: Who was the manager there?

RS: Well, they had Bobby Winkles. No, Jack McKeon, then Winkles, then Jack again. Bobby quit, you know, he didn't get fired.

WL: While we were living in San Diego, I got to know Jack McKeon pretty well. After your two years with the A's, you came back here?

RS: Came back here.

WL: By then, was Whitey the manager here?

RS: No, Kenney Boyer was the manager. The next year Herzog came in.

WL: Well, I don't have a vote, but I'm here to prophecy that sooner or later you're going to be put into the Hall of Fame.

RS: I sure hope we make it this year.

WL: Now, think back and tell me a little bit about some of the colorful characters you brushed against in all of these places and games, etc. What's the greatest play you made or you can remember anybody making, or the most dramatic moment. Any players that were colorful or amusing or funny incidents?

RS: Well, first of all, in my first full year in baseball, when I was with Rochester, if I can go back that far, Pepper Martin was my manager.

WL: There's no more colorful guy than that.

RS: I could spend hours on him. Of course, he was a joker. We had a preacher over there who wouldn't pitch on Sunday. Pepper used to play tricks on him. Burned his straw hat one time in the old King Edward Hotel in Toronto. He let it down on a string off that balcony right when he was reading the paper.

That's the way Pepper was, but we had a couple of guys on the club that really couldn't get the signs that well, and Pepper had special signs for them.

When he wanted a guy to bunt he'd pull a blue handkerchief out of his right pocket. If he wanted a hot-and-run he'd pull out a red one from his left pocket. Right out there where he was coaching, either at first base or third.

One day Pepper got thrown out of a ball game in Rochester, in '43 or '44, whenever it was, and he had a garden out in left field, which was a real little fence with a gate in it. Pepper would get violent when an umpire threw him out, and they say that in the lower minors he almost choked an umpire ~~xxxxxx~~ one time. So he got thrown out of a ball game one Sunday afternoon ~~and~~ in Rochester. He finally left and went in the clubhouse to change his clothes and came back out. No, he didn't change his clothes, he still had his uniform on. And he walked to the middle of the diamond, called time, and he walked on out to left field, jumped over the fence and watered his Victory Garden out there.

WL: Terry Moore told me a bunch of stories about Pepper and Dizzy and others.

RS: That was before my time. You know, coming up to the big leagues after spending just a year and a half in the minors, you had read about different great ball players on the Browns and Cardinals and Giants and Yznkees. We were in spring training with the Yankees each year in St. Petersburg, FL, and we played them in seven games each year. That was a big thrill for me, for I had about guys like Joe DiMaggio and Charlie Keller and all those guys. You know, I was sort of amazed to watch Joe play, how he could play center field, how he could do everything. He ran well, knew how to slide, and

I got a great education just watching him. And then I met Ted Williams. He was an outstanding hitter. We always played the Red Sox a couple of times in the spring, as well as in the Series and All-Star Games. I remember one thing about Ted. We went over to Sarasota where they trained and we usually dressed right there in their park or in the hotel there. It was different from the way it is today. And later in Ted's last few years there would be a few pitchers getting traded from the National to the American League, and I can remember old Ted coming up to me the first time we met in the spring. A couple of National League pitchers had been traded over to his league, and he sat down with me and wanted to know what their best pitch was, what they threw with two strikes, did they have a hard breaking ball, what kind of control they had, and ~~what~~ everything. He wanted to know everything about them, and that's one reason why he was such a great hitter.

WL: Yeah, he was about as intense in studying all of that as any batter there ever was. How was Bob Gibson as a person to handle, etc.?

RS: Well, I played against Bob when I was with Milwaukee. He was a determined guy. He was and he still is. One thing I liked about him/^{so much} was that he never did talk to the visiting ball players. Years ago you never saw that. When we went out and Gibson was pitching, it was war. That's the way it was. Now, everybody gathers around the batting cage, and they're out there at 2 or 3 o'clock for a 7 o'clock game talking with one another. One thing about Bob. He had good stuff and knew he had it, and he didn't like to be taken out of a ball game. Nobody does. But he was great to have on your ball club for the reason that if you lost three in a row and he was pitching on the fourth day, you had a pretty good chance of winning it.

WL: He was a stopper, all right. It undoubtedly was an awful disappointment to him and to the Cardinals to lose that last game to Detroit in '68.

RS: It was, and you know it happens that way so many times. Going back to Milwaukee, when I was there, in '58 we had the Yankees down 3 games to one, just like we had Detroit down 3-1 in '68, and they came back and beat us. A

few breaks here, a few breaks there, and you know it can happen.

WL: Well, obviously each of the two teams has to be outstanding or they wouldn't be there in the World Series.

RSE: Any time you get into a Series, sometimes the best club doesn't win, and sometimes the best team won't win in the National League. That's part of the game. You have a close call go against you or a close one go for you, it makes a difference once in a while in the ball game. And especially in a short Series.

WL: What's the attitude of ball players these days on the possibility of using TV instant replay to check up on an umpire's decision?

RS: Oh, I haven't talked to any of the ball players about it, but I myself wouldn't like it. And I don't think the players would either. I think it's a good idea too that the Umpires Association has been able to prevent close plays from being flashed on the big screen on the scoreboard.

WL: Oh, sure, that's a good way to start a riot.

RS: The umpires are only human. They're only going to be 50% right on the close plays. One team will think the ump is right, the other says he's wrong. They have a tough job.

WL: They've got a tough job, and actually the replays show they're right 98% of the time or something like that.

RS: Usually with umpires, over the course of the years I've been around, if they're hustling the managers don't have that much beef with them. And if it's a close play they expect you to come and argue with them.

WL: Why are so many umpires these days overweight?

RS: I don't know. Some of them are bigger than years ago, and some are taller too.

WL: What about expansion? Up to now, do you think it has diluted the quality of play?

RS: As to the quality of play, the big thing, I believe, is that you don't have all the minor leagues you used to have. When I broke in I think they had 25 minor league clubs in the Cardinal organization, and they just don't have that

number any more. And I believe that a lot of good athletes these days are playing football, basketball, golf, etc. And a lot of them could be playing ball ^{and} ~~in~~ doing well.

WL: Yeah, until about after World War II baseball had almost a monopoly on pro sports.

RS: That's why you saw so many minor leagues. I'd have to say there were more great ball players in those days. There are a lot of great players today, but there were just more back then, because there were so many more minor leagues.

WL: This past season the pitching turned pretty mediocre all over. Is that because they are bringing the pitchers up too fast?

RS: Well, I think one reason is you're playing 162 ball games, too, instead of 154. And we had only eight teams in each league. All of that makes a difference.

WL: Of course, with all the relievers, the starters don't work as many innings as they used to. Nor as many complete games. It's like with the equipment. It's a different ball game, with the relievers being as important as the starters.

RS: Yeah, if you get a starter who's a good athlete and is a good fielder, he's going to stay out there a little longer than ordinarily.

WL: Would you agree that expansion didn't dilute the quality much up to this point because of the influx of blacks and Hispanics?

RS: I think that helped tremendously, no question about it.

WL: But now we can't count on that to help when we expand some more, which they're going to do.

RS: Well, I guess they will, one of these years, and maybe when they do expand we can get some of these football and basketball players and golfers to go to baseball. But baseball is hard to play. When you have to hit that little ball and know who's running and they throw the ball at it, and this and that, it's mighty demanding.

WL: It's probably more demanding too in the sense that you've got 162 games in some 175 days, plus spring training.

RS: I think that in the next couple of years they probably will expand,

but I don't think it would hurt, you know.

WL: No, I think the fans would respond properly, even if the level goes down, it's imperceptible to the ordinary fan, up to a point, anyway. The fans like to see the game, and if the pitching isn't quite what it ~~was~~ once was, a lot of the fans don't realize that because they are new fans.

RS: The quality of the players is about equal on each club and this is what we want.

WL: There's more parity than there used to be, I think. Presumably the National League would expand by two teams to even off the leagues at 14 each, but that's not the end of it. They're probably going to 15 or 16 in the foreseeable future. And there are people proposing to have 32 teams and dividing them into four leagues geographically. Putting like the White Sox and Cubs and Cardinals and maybe Detroit and Milwaukee in one league to increase rivalry. And getting the Mets and Yankees in the same league, and so forth. It would save enormously on travel costs, of course, if they were closely bunched like that and the rivalry would bring out the fans. I don't think it's going to happen...

RS: I don't think it'll happen right away.

WL: No, not right away. But it has some merit to think about.

RS: Talking with the president of the National League, Mr. Giamatti, during breakfast while the playoffs were going on, I mentioned to him that St. Petersburg is going ahead with the stadium. And he said, "Yeah, we've never promised them anything and I don't know why they're doing it, because there'll be no expansion, I know, for the next two years." Of course, I guess they figure that if they've got a baseball park built they've got a better chance to get a team.

WL: I suppose they're figuring two ways. Expansion is one and maybe luring a present franchise that's in trouble - Seattle or somebody. The Giants wanted to move, but it looks like they'll stay where they are at least for a while.

How about the artificial surface? You never played on it, did you?

RS: No, never did play on it. Well, I think like here in St. Louis with the football team you need it. They play soccer on that field, they play football,

you play baseball. With the rain that you have in the beginning of the year, that field would be torn up. I don't think you could play as many baseball games as we have without postponements.

WL: And you get the true bounce.

RS: The ~~true~~ bounce, I'd have to say that. I would have to say it's a little harder on your legs than the regular turf.

WL: A lot of people, like Andre Dawson, for example, should last longer in Chicago than he would have in Montreal.

RS: Probably so. Still and all, you still have a ~~few~~ few natural fields you play on, but like here and in Montreal and you're going to play on it 81 games a year. When we moved over from Sportsman's Park to the new ball park, we didn't have AstroTurf, but that following year we had the AstroTurf or one of the other surfaces. You could tell the difference in the way the pitchers complained about their legs when they ran before the game. Of course, we were the only other ball club except Houston that had AstroTurf at that time.

WL: How about free agency?

RS: Well, I have nothing to do with it and I hate like heck to say anything, but I can remember Dick Meyer, when he was the big man for Mr. Busch, he said, "That's one rule you should never have let into baseball." No, not free agency, he was talking about arbitration.

WL: I think there's more support for free agency than for arbitration. And from the players' point of view it's a great thing, but from management's point of view it has been difficult.

RS: That's right. Today, you see, when you had a Musial and a Ted Williams and a DiMaggio and Mantle and guys like that, you knew they were going to be back on that ball club. And you had your hero and wanted to come out and see him. Now after so many years they go here and go there.

WL: Much more movement, and without being traded. Well, in your day the knockdown pitch was still pretty common.

RS: Oh, yeah.

WL: And nobody went rushing out to the mound to challenge the pitcher after he was knocked down.

RS: Not that much.

WL: That's right. It happened but rarely.

RS: You knew that the pitcher was going to throw at you, to make it come close. As Mr. Rickey would say, "That's a purpose pitch." They'd throw it close, and they'd hit you lots of times. They didn't mean to a lot of times, but they were going to get it in the ~~the~~^{the} close.

WL: When they did mean it they would be hitting you on the rump or back or somewhere else than the head.

RS: Yeah, that's right.

WL: And of course you didn't have batting helmets then. A lot of the old-timers talk about how they were knocked down, especially as rookies.

RS: Oh, yeah, that was a big thing. And when you know you're going to be pitched inside, it's a pretty big mental thing. You really didn't dig in a lot of times, and you'd know when to dig in and when not to, depending on who was pitching and the circumstances of the moment. I think it made you a better hitter, really.

When they brushed you back, if you had any moxie at all about you, you'd come back fighting, not running out on the mound but doing it with the bat.

And I do believe right now the strike zone is different. And I think there would be better hitters today if they would call strikes like they used to call them.

I think you had more aggressive hitters and better hitters. I know one thing - you'd have faster games.

WL: Right. Something which a lot of people want. But on the other hand the fans will say they want faster games but they also want a lot of home runs and running and hits, etc., and those two wishes are contradictory. You can't have both of them, I don't think. But George Uhle and some of the other old-time pi x pitchers tell me they would pitch a game in an hour or so and not be suprised that it ended so fast. Ball players are business people these days, as well as ball players, which wasn't so much the case in the old days where

RS: Well, I think that's due to the agent more than anything.

WL: The agent and the escalation of salaries. Ball players don't talk baseball as much as they used to among themselves.

RS: Well, I think it was a different era all the way back. You know, we travelled on the train. And you were together and we played day games.

WL: Everything in that sense is changed, or many things, and you have to adjust to the times. What about the long-term, guaranteed, no-cut contracts?

RS: Well, that's a sign of the times, I'm sure. But you'd never get more than a one-year contract back when I was playing. They want to have you tied up so that they couldn't trade you. Now, of course, you can have it put in your contract that if you plan to trade me, I don't want to be traded here or there. This free agency caused a lot of this. I don't know whether it makes for a better ball player or worse or what, but it's more ^a ~~of~~ business now than it used to be, by far.

WL: That's true at the management level too. A lot of the owners in the old days were owners because they were wealthy and were baseball fans and they did it for the fun of it. Now the owners for the most part are doing it for the money.

RS: Oh, yes. And it costs a lot of money to run a ball club.

WL: TV has made all of that possible.

RS: TV has changed baseball so much. It has in all sports.

WL: Not all for the best.

RS: No, and just like your TV has changed all sports. You can sure see it in golf, where these golfers on TV will walk around and size everything up while they are on camera.

WL: What about the designated hitter?

RS: I really don't like it. I think it takes a little finesse away from the manager and also the pitcher himself. Years ago, when I was playing, you had some pretty good athletes who were pitching ^{and who were} ~~to some~~ pretty good hitters who could handle the bat. Not only could they hit a home run but they could also hit-and-run and everything else. You just don't see pitchers hit any more.

I guess it's logical. They don't do it in the minor leagues, they don't do it in college any more. Like Kingman. He was a pitcher/outfielder. Now, if you're a pitcher, you don't hit. I think it's not good. I'd like to see the minor leagues especially have the pitchers hit, just like they do in the National League.

WL: Well, at the very least they ought to have the two major leagues the same, either with it or without it, both of them.

RS: I think the DH takes away. A lot of times we've got a close ball game, in the American League if he's still pitching a good ball game in the 7th inning with a man on second they've got the DH in there, where we need to go to a pinch hitter.

WL: It makes a lot of difference in that sense and in the maneuvering the manager can do. So, what do the Cards need most to be sure or to have the best chance of winning again next year?

RS: Well, we have to have everything go the way it ~~far~~ went for us this year. With fewer injuries. And we'd like to have Jack Clark back, and healthy. Of course, our third baseman played all year hurt and nobody even knew it. He's a tough little player, Terry is. He wanted to play in that World Series so bad, but he couldn't swing and he couldn't even throw. His side was bothering him. You get him healthy and along with Clark and ...

WL: You still have hopes that Lindeman will come along as a hitter.

RS: Well, we hope so. And see what we have in the minor leagues. I'm anxious to see this spring. What kind of pitching. I know they've got three or four of them coming up. They may not be ready, but talking with Lee Thomas, the head of our minor league, he said there's a couple of pitchers you're going to look at. They're going to catch your eye. They may not be ready, but they might be ready before the year is over. So that's encouraging. We need somebody who's ... of course, we've got Oquendo. He plays all over, and he's a good shortstop and play that outfield. He's played everything except catch. When you've got a guy like that on your club, he's not a power

hitter, but you gotta have him. And you've gotta have Willie McGee in good shape, you know.

WL: But the prospect is bright, nevertheless.

RS: Well, Lee doesn't like to talk about it too much, but I was in the office about a month ago and I looked at the list of the 40-man roster, and he was telling me there are a few others who can play. They may not be ready, they're in Double A ball or Triple A. From what he sees and looking at what everybody else has in the minor leagues, he says we've got some pretty good looking prospects.

WL: And the Mets didn't get Bob Welch.

RS: No, they didn't. He's a good pitcher.

WL: Sure is.

RS: I'm really surprised, though, after looking at this morning's paper, for the Dodgers had a chance of getting Mookie Wilson and Rafael Santana.

WL: Yeah, some of those trades make you wonder.

RS: And Mookie Wilson is a pretty good player.

WL: You're doggoned right.

RS: I'm telling you, he can play center field. He's not the greatest but he's real good. He can hit, he can run, he can do a lot of things for you. He's a type you like to have on your club. But they got Howell from Oakland, and I guess he's pretty good but I don't know him.

WL: Yeah, he has done pretty well off and on.

RS: Griffin, I don't know him.

WL: Well, he was great, but I think he's past his best years. I was surprised when they put such a high value on him. He was injured this past year, I think.

RS: That Santana, he's not a flashy player, but he gets the job done. And he gets a big hit now and then for you. I've always kind of liked him. I'll say one thing for Johnson. He put him out and left him out there and stayed right in there with him. They couldn't find anybody else to take his place.

WL: He did well enough. Orosco may be on the downgrade.

RS: Well, he could, with all the pitching he's done. It often helps relievers

to change to another ball club. It sounds like he was dissatisfied there.

WL: He really was. He ^{no}/longer was top dog in that bullpen. Well, it'll be another interesting season.

RS: I think it will be. Hopefully we can get everybody signed up, and I hope Clark's all right. We'll battle 'em. There's one thing about our club I have to say. As long as I've been with the Cardinals, they've always had an exciting ball club. You're going to get 100%, no matter who's the manager or anything.

WL: They had no reason to expect to win this past year with all of the injuries, etc. It looked like they were down and out when they went in to play the Mets in September, and then Pendleton homers and turns everything around.

RS: That was a big turn.

WL: One of the biggest hits of the season.

RS: And then when they bring somebody up from one of the minor leagues and he walks up there and gets a big base hit. If you can do that, you can win.

WL: Well, good luck, and I appreciate very much your taking the time to chat with me.

RS: Well, thank you, and I hope I gave you enough.

WE: You gave me lots of good stuff, Red, and I'll put something together. I'm working on another book now, and I've talked with half a dozen people already, and this time I'm going to include a general manager, an umpire, etc.