The Atlanta Lournal

INSIDE BASEBALL / JOE STRAUSS

Believe It or Not, Angels Are Pitching Their Way Into Contention

CHICAGO — The California Angels are in contention because of pitching. That's right, pitching. A staff that includes geriatric Bert Blyleven, injury-plagued Kirk McCaskill, walk-prone Mike Witt, rookie Jim Abbott and Chuck Finley has held opponents to two runs or fewer 20 times and walked two or fewer 19 times. This is the same organization that has not produced a 20-game winner in 15 years.

The team ERA of 2.55 leads the league after last year finishing at 4.32, 13th in the

Witt is in the last year of a two-year contract and has had two no-decisions despite pitching 18 consecutive scoreless innings. He was denied a shutout against New York when a foul ball was ruled a home run in a 6-1 win.

Blyleven, 38, had a 5.43 ERA last year but is 4-1 with a 2.08 ERA and has become a rock of consistency this season. McCaskill, a key ingredient of the Angels' 1986 AL West championship, has merely stayed healthy after suffering bone chips and arm numbness in the last two years. His 1.06 ERA leads the league.

Abbott has proven he possesses bigleague material on occasion. He has twice lost to Mark Langston and once by shutout to Mike Moore. Finley already has five wins compared to nine last season. His two complete games equal last year's to-

Among the most insensitive questions of the year posed to the Angels' Abbott, who was born without a right hand: "Do you have any brothers or sisters that are deformed?" and "Were you born a natural lefthander?"

GREAT SCOTT: Houston Astros starter Mike Scott was 29-44 through 1984. Since

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then, he is 71-41. "I used to think it would take me until I was 100 to win my 100th game," Scott said. ... Though he claimed he was devastated by his release from the Astros, catcher Alan Ashby later sounded like a man tired of baseball. Asked whether he would try to catch on elsewhere, he said, "Why would I want to go anywhere else now when I didn't want to before? In my mind, I've had it." Ashby's release leaves the job to Craig Biggio, who threw out only five of the first 37 runners attempting to steal against him. . . . The Astros, after Wednesday night's win over St. Louis, are 11-7 on the road and 8-12 at home. Said pitcher Jim Deshales, "Maybe we should ask the Cardinals to play us at a neutral site. We'll meet them halfway, say at Little Rock." ...

Sunday, the Los Angeles Dodgers ended a string of 119 innings in which they failed to score more than one run. . . . The

Minnesota Twins have not issued an intentional walk this season, which isn't hard to believe, given their penchant for playing from behind. ... Texas Rangers utility player Jeff Kunkel was used at five positions, plus pinch-runner and pinchhitter, in a 10-game span ending this

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS: New York Mets broadcaster Ralph Kiner again summed up a situation succinctly when he said recently of Bruce Sutter, "He's going to be out of action the rest of his career." ... First the Cubs erect lights to satisfy TV, and now NBC tells the Cubs to change a Saturday night game to the afternoon. The Cubs were scheduled to play the Reds at 8:30 p.m. EDT on May 27 but instead will play at 2:20 p.m. for "The Game of the Week." "It seemed important to them," said Cubs president Don Grenesko. .

Phillies third baseman Mike Schmidt received \$500,000 for remaining on the roster through May 15. However, Schmidt hasn't hit a home run since May 2 and has a sore left elbow. . . . When Toronto Blue Jays reliever Duane Ward saved Monday night's game against Cleveland, it was the Blue Jays' first save since April 21. Until last Sunday, Braves closer Joe Boever had not received a save chance since the same date. ... Former Chicago White Sox outfielder Jerry Hairston, now an insurance agent, is writing policies for certain White Sox minor-leaguers as part of a program designed by owner Jerry Reinsdorf.

□ The lineup — Sunday: Sportsbeat. Monday: Inside High Schools. Tuesday: Inside TV/Radio Sports. Wednesday: Inside the NFL. Thursday: Inside Baseball. Friday: Inside TV/Radio Sports. Saturday: Inside the NBA.

Agents Walters, Bloom Trying to Get New Trial

Attorneys for convicted sports agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom are seeking a new trial for their clients, contending a federal judge made errors. In motions filed in Chicago with the U.S. District judge, George M. Marovich, the attorneys said he made erroneous rulings concerning evidence and testimony. They specifically complained Tuesday that Marovich barred them from cross-examining a key prosecution witness about his involvement in several murders. Walters, 58, and Bloom, 29, were convicted last month on charges of racketeering, fraud and conspiracy. They were found guilty of defrauding universities by luring college athletes to sign post-dated professional representation contracts before their eligibility had expired. Bloom and Walters also were convicted of threatening to injure athletes who attempted to break their contracts with the two agents. Marovich is expected to rule on the motions before their sentencing hearing scheduled for June 19. Walters and Bloom face up to 55 years in prison and \$1.5 million in

Kentucky Plans to Talk to Knicks' Pitino

The University of Kentucky will approach New York Knicks coach Rick Pitino about the school's head basketball coaching job once the Knicks finish their run in the NBA playoffs, Kentucky athletics director C.M. Newton said. "Whenever Rick Pitino is free to talk, certainly we'll go through the proper channels to try to talk to him," Newton said of the search for a successor to Eddie Sutton, who resigned March 19. "We've decided to wait till we get the sanctions before we bring anyone else to campus." A judgment on the Kentucky program from the NCAA committee on infractions is expcted this week or early next week, Newton said. . . . Davidson's Bruce Elder, the freshman from Marietta, Ga., who led the Wildcats in scoring and rebounding last season, has decided to transfer to Vanderbilt. Elder, a 6-foot-4 wing who averaged 17.2 and 5.6 rebounds on Davidson's 7-24 team, will sit out next season and have three years of eligibility remaining. . . . The Seattle SuperSonics have re-signed restricted free agent forward Xavier McDaniel to a five-year contract. Terms were not disclosed. . . . The Golden State Warriors will try to trade up to get one of the lottery choices in the NBA draft, general manager Don Nelson said.

Gators Reportedly Misused Phone Credit Card

University of Florida football players misused a telephone credit

card belonging to a former Gators recruiting coordinator,

using the account to make "several thousand dollars" worth of calls, a newspaper reported Wednesday. Jeremy Foley, the school's associate athletics director, told the St. Petersburg Times that the calls were placed in recent months by 10 or 11 athletes he declined to name. Foley did not reveal the exact amount of the bill but confirmed the calls were made on an account assigned to former recruiting coordinator Tim Cassidy, who resigned last week to accept a similar job at Texas A&M. He and Foley both denied the move was related to the credit card incident. "At some point, that number [on Cassidy's credit card] got out," said Foley, who added that Florida officials have not notified the NCAA because he determined the players used the account without the recruiting coordinator's knowledge. Foley said the athletes involved have been asked to make restitution and will not be allowed to enroll until the money is paid. . . . Texas Gov. Bill Clements signed a bill Wednesday making it a crime to recruit student-athletes with money or gifts. Clements two years ago publicly apologized for his role in the payfor-play scandal that led to the suspension of Southern Methodist's football program. The legislation makes giving improper payments to a student-athlete a third-degree felony, punishable by two to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000. ... The Philadelphia Eagles have released nine-year cornerback Roynell Young. . . . Defensive end Burt Grossman, the San Diego Chargers' top draft pick, admits he experimented with steroids but says he discontinued their use after about a month and never tried the banned muscle-building drugs again.

De Leon Wins Fourth Cruiserweight Title

Carlos de Leon (44-4-1) of Puerto Rico won the World Boxing Council cruiserweight title for the fourth time, stopping Britain's Sammy Reeson (24-2) at 2:04 of the ninth round in London. De Leon first won the title in November 1980, then lost and regained it twice before being knocked out by Atlanta's BOXING Evander Holyfield 13 months ago. ... Convicted embezzler Harold Smith's involvement with hard-luck Olympic boxer Roy Jones Jr. was questioned by Nevada boxing officials. Members of the Nevada State Athletic Commission voted to table the license application of a California promoter until his ties with Smith and Jones are further explained. Thad Spencer, a former fighter, had sought the license to promote a boxing card in Las Vegas that would feature Jones and former heavyweight champion George Foreman in separate fights in August.

Briefly . . .

Georgia State soccer coach Hugh Beasley has announced the signing of Joe Bramlett, a goalkeeper from Snellville's Brookwood High School, and Matt Brown, a midfielder from Kennesaw's North Cobb High School. ... Toni Matt, a pioneer in American competitive skiing and two-time U.S. national downhill champion, died Wednesday of an apparent heart attack at Quaker Hill Country Club in Pawling, N.Y., his son, Richard, said. Matt was 69. ... Wilkie Smith, head baseball coach at Georgia Southwestern College, has resigned. Smith had coached the Hurricanes for four years, and amassed a 78-96 record.



The Associated Press

Warming to the Task

MONTPELIER, Vt. - Former Boston Red Sox pitcher Bill Lee warms up for a time at-bat for the Mavericks, a Capitol Men's Softball League team. Lee, a left fielder, went 2-for-4 in the Mavericks' season opener.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Prep School Trying To Lure New Students By Advertising Tennis

Baylor Prep, a private, coeducational boarding school in Chattanooga, is seeking tennis players, so much so it decided to advertise its "world-class tennis in an outstanding collegepreparatory program" in the May issue of World Tennis magazine.

Although the ad is acceptable under Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association rules, executive director Ronnie Carter said it may lead to athletics being placed ahead of education.

The ad states that "100 percent of Baylor's recent graduates have been accepted by leading colleges" and points out that Baylor has won 22 Southern championships.

The tennis players responding to the ad have been ordinary players rather than stars, Baylor tennis coach Park Lockrow said.

Mechanic Sues Indy For Taking Passes He Loaned to a Friend

A Columbus businessman has sued the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for \$2.87 million, claiming he's losing sales because the speedway took away his pit and garage passes.

The lawsuit, filed Tuesday, accuses speedway officials of wrongly taking passes belonging to A.J. Mobley after he loaned them to a companion last Friday.

Mobley contends the pass agreement with the speedway allowed him to loan the passes.

Mobley said he needs the passes to enter the garages and pits to sell a wheel rut and socket assembly to race teams. The safety device, designed by Mobley, a mechanical engineer, holds race car wheels in place and is certified by auto racing technical committees, the lawsuit said.

Speedway officials declined comment on the lawsuit.

Glavine Likely to Miss Sunday Start vs. Cards

CHICAGO — Pitcher Tom Glavine likely will miss his next scheduled start Sunday against the St. Louis Cardinals. The left ankle he sprained in Tuesday's loss at Chicago is not considered serious, but "we aren't going to take any chances," manager Russ Nixon said. Glavine will be examined further today by

BRAVES Braves team physician Joe Chandler. With an off day next Monday, Derek Lilliquist likely will take his regular turn in the rotation Sunday, bumping Glavine to Tuesday's game against Pittsburgh. Lilliquist was initially going to the bullpen because of two off days within a week. "It doesn't feel all that bad," Glavine said. "Right now, I don't plan on missing my next start."

-Joe Strauss

No Tech Players Make All-Tournament Team



Each tournament is three rounds.

For the first time since the ACC began naming all-tournament teams in 1987, no Georgia Tech players were represented this year. The Yellow Jackets had three players on the team in 1987 and five in 1988, both years they won the tournament championship. The only remaining all-tournament player

GA. TECH on Tech's roster is pitcher Scott Erwin, who made the team last year and threw a four-hitter against Virginia on Saturday. Erwin was beaten for the all-tournament starting pitcher's position by Clemson's Brian Barnes, who struck out a tournament record 22 batters in two starts. ... The golf team will play in an NCAA regional tournament May 25-27 at the Long Bay Golf Club in Myrtle Beach, S.C. The Jackets, ranked third in NCAA District 3 North, will be joined by six other teams from the district, the top eight teams from NCAA District 3 South and the top five each from districts 1 and 2. The top 11 teams from the tournament will advance to the NCAA championship tour-

nament June 7-10 at the Oak Tree Country Club in Edmond, Okla.

— Darryl Maxie

Delivering Practice Gear No Sweat for Kasten

When Moses Malone came to an interview at a local health club this logo of a former team, the Washington Bullets. Asked for an week he was attired in blue sweats bearing the name and explanation, Malone said, "This is a strange place. [The Hawks] take all your practice gear when the season's over." Hawks president Stan Kasten heard about that and said,

"I'm embarrassed, but yes, that's how we've always done it." Kasten did not let the matter rest there. Wednesday he personally delivered Malone's sweats to him at his home in north Sandy Springs. "I always want Moses to be happy," Kasten said, "but you might also mention that he only lives three doors from me."

-Jeffrey Denberg

Junior College Power Forward Signs With Dogs



ATHENS — Jasper Hooks, a 6-foot-9, 225-pound power forward from Connors State Junior College in Warner, Okla., has signed a basketball scholarship with Georgia. Hooks, from Warwick, Ga., originally attended Middle Georgia. He averaged 16.5 points and 10.1 rebounds. Georgia also expects to have 6-5 GEORGIA Reginald Tinch of Connors State in school next fall. Tinch

signed with Georgia last year but failed to meet the admission requirements. ... Work has begun on installing a new artificial turf football practice field adjacent. According to assistant athletic director Greg McGarity, the carpet is costing \$275,000. The old turf has worn out. Georgia used the artificial field only on rain days or when preparing to play an opponent on turf.

-Thomas O'Toole

THE FINAL WORD

Golfer Bruce Lietzke on the extreme weather conditions that have plagued the PGA Tour in recent weeks:

'Anybody who's played the last couple of weeks, hitting out of the mess and slop, doesn't have a clue where his game is right now.'

ON THIS DAY

. 1920 - Man o' War, ridden by Clarence Kummer, wins the Preakness Stakes by 11/2 lengths over Upset.

1957 - Bold Ruler, ridden by Eddie Arcaro, wins the Preakness Stakes by two lengths over Iron Liege.

1979 — Atlanta's Dale Murphy hit three home runs against the San Francisco Giants to lead the Braves to a 6-4 victory. Murphy hit his first two homers off Vida Blue and his third off Tom Griffin.

SOUNDOFF

A Citizenship Worth \$2 Million

Before I read Ed Hinton's recent column, I didn't know why the Braves paid Dale Murphy \$2 million a year. Now I know.

Therefore, I suggest to Stan Kasten that he put the following notice in the want-ads when Murphy retires:

"Wanted: cleanup hitter who doesn't dip snuff, who doesn't chew tobacco or take drugs, who won't burn an American flag or beat his wife or sell secrets to the Communists. We will pay you \$2 million a year, even for what you did in the past. ...

"We don't care if we lose 106 games with you, or have five straight losing seasons. . . . J. Harrison Crawford, Marietta

Dispelling Myths About Hawks

There are two myths concerning the

Hawks that I want to address. First, there is the idea that the Hawks are so talented. Let's get real. Of the three best athletes on the Hawks: Dominique (Wilkins). Spud (Webb) and (John) Battle, two have limited roles. ... Moses was at one time a real

The second myth is that ... they will get to the next level while relying only on the running, slam-jam game. The Hawks need to make tremendous improvement in fundamentals.

force in the NBA, not now.

Mike Fratello has to prove that he can coach the halfcourt game.

Jim Grattan, Lilburn

Deion a Golden Draft Choice

I think the Falcons did the right thing by drafting Deion Sanders. I think Rankin Smith should give him \$10 million right away because he's the player who can turn the Falcons around. We need a "Prime Time" player with plenty of gold in Atlanta. Tell people to get themselves a good job and don't ask how Deion Sanders got all of the gold around his

Gary Coney, Dublin, Ga.

Send letters to Sports Soundoff, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, P.O. Box 4689, Atlanta, Ga. 30302. Comments may also be expressed by calling 526-5340. All comments must include return telephone number and address.