

Comment On Sports

By PETE FRITCHE

Washington, D. C.—The big question for the National League this coming season is whether the new clubs, New York and Houston, can get into the competition for the pennant. Our guess is that they cannot.

It is true, of course, that Washington and Los Angeles played surprisingly fierce baseball in their first few months, but by the end of the season they were playing like new clubs would be expected to play.

In the National League, except for the Phillies, there are more top-contending clubs than in the American. There is Cincinnati, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, San Francisco and the St. Louis Cardinals, all of whom might up and grab the flag. Only Chicago and Philadelphia seem out of it and Chicago should be coming before too long.

Now where does that leave Casey Stengel, for instance, in his new job as manager of the Mets? It seems to leave him about where he was at the start of his managerial career—leading the Boston Braves.

No matter how good he can juggle his lineup and no matter how shrewd his strategy, Casey will find, and already knows, that when a manager doesn't have the talent, he doesn't have the talent, and there is no substitute for it.

The trade for Frank Robinson, who came from Milwaukee, was a feather in someone's cap, and he should help the Mets. With a few more like him and some luck, the New York team might surprise a lot of people and make a strong run for the fans' money.

But it is highly doubtful if either Houston or New York can

Oddities In The News

BIG TUNNEL FOR WHISKEY

Philadelphia—Burglars tunneled into a State liquor store and stole "a large quantity" of whiskey in cases.

The burglars spent some time tunneling from the basement of an unoccupied building under an alley and burrowed about 15 feet to the foundation wall of the liquor store, then punched a hole in it.

Detective William Butler said the tunnel was about 2 feet high and 2 feet wide.

OUT OF GAS—NO TANK

Rochester, N. Y.—When an out-of-town motorist ran out of gas in suburban Rochester, an obliging policeman brought him a can of

The gas was put in the car and it ran out on the street.

Closer inspection showed that not only was the car out of gas but the gas tank had dropped off a few miles back.

Darlington, S. C.—Operating the Darlington Speedway had enough worries by busy Bob Colvin. He had neither the time nor the patience to share a telephone with his teenage youngsters.

The problem has been solved. He is listed in the Darlington telephone directory as "Bob Colvin" and under that, "Colvin Teenagers," with a separate number for the youngsters.

SOLDIER TWINS

Fort Dix, N. J.—Folks around this army post understand why there has been a lot of trouble identifying John and Joseph Marchessault in their home town of

Moosup, Connecticut.

The 23-year-old brothers are identical twins and wear the same kind of army uniforms. Both work in the personnel office. Soldiers pass John's desk then

are stunned when seeing an identical face behind Joseph's desk.

Soviet hits failure in ending China rift.

RESERVES AND DEFERMENT

The Defense Department says those reservists who "have been holding out their hands all these years and now don't want to serve" must face active-duty or resign.

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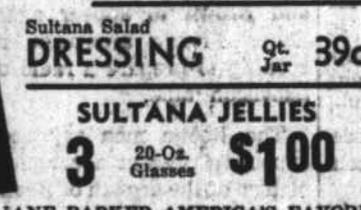
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