

# Giants roll past Astros in opener, 5-1

## Bradley wins as Maddox HR tops attack

By Bucky Walter

Under a grey, drizzling sky, the San Francisco Giants today celebrated Opening Day with an impressive 5-1 victory over the Houston Astros at Candlestick Park.

Pre-game rain delayed the contest for 19 minutes and certainly diminished attendance which was an all-time inaugural day low of 17,527.

Respectable Tom Bradley, the Giants' righthander, pitched a shutout through eight innings.

After the Astros scored a run off Bradley in the ninth, Manager Charlie Fox brought in Randy Moffitt from the bullpen to retire the last two batsmen.

The first legitimate scoring threat of the opener didn't come until the top of the fourth inning, when the Giants' Bobby Bonds made a spectacular grab of Bob Watson's slicing drive to the rightfield fence.

Roger Metzger of the Astros was on first base

through an error by third baseman Dave Kingman. The fleet Metzger would have scored had not Bonds made a frantic dash to snatch the ball in front of the screen.

The fans, many huddled under umbrellas, sent up a roar when the Giants broke through Dave Roberts for two runs in the bottom of the fourth.

Tito Fuentes singled in-field and was forced out on Garry Maddox's grounder. Maddox moved to second on a single by Gary Matthews and scored on another single by Steve Ontiveros for the game's first run.

Then Kingman singled over short to plate Matthews for 2-0.

Maddox's three-run homer over the right-field fence in the fifth jumped the Giants to a 5-0 lead.

The prelude to Maddox's clout was tame, Dave Roberts retiring the first two batsmen. But then Bonds and Fuentes singled sharply

and Maddox skied the ball over the barrier.

There was the traditional electric feeling of a season opener, the 17th for the Giants in San Francisco.

The stands were bedecked with red, white and blue banners and temporary field seats, reserved for celebrities, were filled with the usual gaggle of civic dignitaries.

Mayor Joseph Alioto was to make the ceremonial first pitch.

Pre-game music was provided by the Los Altos High School Marching Band, 172 pieces.

The National Anthem was sung by soprano Nancy Hager, a senior at Los Altos High and daughter of Kan-



TOM BRADLEY

sas City Royals' scout Dick Hager.

The flag was raised at the centerfield pole by a United States Marines' color guard.

Southpaw Mike Caldwell, fetched from San Diego in the Willie McCovey deal, will start for the Giants tomorrow on Bat Day against Houston's Tom Griffin.

On Sunday, Fox will turn

the ball over to lathy Jim Willoughby (vs. Claude Osteen) on the basis of Willoughby's spring performance of yielding no earned runs in 11 innings.

With ace Ron Bryant sidelined until at least April 16, the bullpen obviously will be important to the Giants in early season.

Elias Sosa and Randy Moffitt have few peers in short term relief. Young Don Rose will be around to help, too.

Sosa didn't have much of a spring, but in Tuesday's game against the Dodgers was his old, devastating self, and Fox pronounced, "He's ready now. He smelled the fire of competition and responded."

The nine pitchers the Giants are carrying are healthy and primed for action.

If they can hold the fort until Bryant's gashed right side mends, all hope will not be lost, Fox maintains.



Mrs. Eunice Bull's hat expresses her enthusiasm

—Examiner Photo



Tom Bradley's first pitch opens National League season today at Candlestick Park

—Examiner photo by Bill Nichols

## Reggie's performance made even Finley happy

Special to The Examiner

ARLINGTON (Tex.)—Reggie Jackson and Oakland A's owner Charles O. Finley may not always see eye to eye, but after the season-opening performance by Jackson, Finley ecstatically exclaimed, "He can play barefooted for all I care."

Jackson, the American League and World Series Most Valuable Player in 1973, got off to a terrific start last night. The world champions powered to a 7-2 debut under Alvin Dark at the expense of the Texas Rangers and 1973 nemesis Jim Bibby.

The A's right fielder merely had a four-for-five night against Bibby and his successors — a home run, two doubles and a single, as well as stealing a base.

Oddly, the solo homer gave Jackson his only RBI, but his first double ignited a four-run outburst in the second inning that really was all Jim (Catfish) Hunter needed to get credit for the victory. Hunter tired and

gave way to Rollie Fingers in the eighth after successive singles by Jim Fregosi and Rich Billings and a double by Dave Nelson that finally gave the crowd of 21,907 something to cheer about.

Jackson and Finley were standing together in the dressing room after the game when someone brought up the subject of controversy.

"Anybody who gets two doubles, a home run and a single in the first game can play barefooted for all I care," Finley said.

Jackson described as "a bunch of bull" the stories of friction between him and Finley.

"You guys just like to sell newspapers," he said. "Mr. Finley and I have a mutual respect. I'm not going to make a fool of him and he's not going to make a fool of me."

The pitching of Bibby, who threw a no-hitter last July and held them to only three runs in 26 1-3 innings, didn't fool Jackson either. Both doubles and the single came off the Rangers' right-hander, who retired in the fifth after giving up eight hits and six runs.

"Both doubles were hit off hard sliders, but I was just fortunate in getting both of them," he said of the two-basers which went into the right field corner. "The homer (off Steve Hargan) came off a fast ball."

The A's combined Jackson's double, a walk to Gene Tenace, a double by Joe Rudi and singles by Ray Fosse and Dick Green for the four runs in the second inning. Jackson's second double was wasted in the third, but in the fifth he singled off Nelson's glove, went to second on a throwing er-

ror that also allowed Sal Bando to score from second, then stole third and came home on Rudi's single.

Toby Harrah got to Hunter for three singles and Rich Billings for a pair of one-baggers. Aside from those

blows and Nelson's double, Hunter looked just like he did in compiling a 21-5 record last year.

The clubs were idle today with the second game of their series set for tomorrow

• Box score, Page 67

## Orioles tip Tigers on lucky hit, 3-2

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Don Baylor, after failing on a squeeze-bunt attempt, hit a checked-swing single in the eighth inning, driving in the winning run today and boosting the Baltimore Orioles to a 3-2 victory over the Detroit Tigers in the season

opener for both teams.

Baylor's winning hit scored Al Bumbry, who had reached first on an error by second baseman Gary Sutherland and reached second on a sacrifice. Then Bobby Grich was walked intentionally and Bumbry moved to third on designated hitter

Tommy Davis' fly.

Baylor tried to squeeze Bumbry home on the first pitch but missed, before delivering his single to center.

The Orioles, held hitless through the first three innings by Mickey Lolich, tied the score 2-2 in the fourth

against Detroit's ace left-hander.

Grich singled for Baltimore's first hit and moved to third on a single by Davis. Grich scored on a passed ball by Detroit catcher Bill Freehan and Baylor singled in Davis.

The Tigers scored in the first against winner Jim Palmer, the 1973 American League Cy Young Award winner, on a walk to Ed Brinkman, a single by Aurelio Rodriguez and a run-producing ground out by Jim Northrup.

Willie Horton's 360-foot home run in the fourth inning gave the Tigers a 2-0 lead.

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Carl Yastrzemski's two-run homer in the seventh inning and Doug Griffin's three-run double in the third powered the Boston Red Sox to a 9-8 triumph over the Milwaukee Brewers today in the season opener.

### Cal Angels rip Cihsox, 8-2

CHICAGO—Strikeout king Nolan Ryan walked 10 batters but allowed only five hits today to lead the California Angels to an 8-2 decision over the Chicago White Sox in an opening game featuring more streaks, stripers and fights than there were runs.

Ryan, a 21-game winner in 1973, beat Sox starter Wilbur Wood, who led the majors in wins last year with 24.

Lee Stanton batted in of the Angels' runs with a home run and a double.

### Yaz belts HR for Bosox win

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Carl Yastrzemski's two-run homer in the seventh inning and Doug Griffin's three-run double in the third powered the Boston Red Sox to a 9-8 triumph over the Milwaukee Brewers today in the season opener.

Yastrzemski's homer, followed a bad-hop single by Cecil Cooper, overcame an 8-7 lead which the Brewers had gained with four runs in the sixth.

### INSIDE

#### Paragon of efficiency

After that winter-long buildup, after all the talk and speculation about his tying Babe Ruth's homer record, Hank Aaron didn't drag out the suspense, as the Babe was wont to do, Wells Twombly observes. The Atlanta Braves' superb slugger acted just like a machine when he came to bat for the first time in the 1974 season and calmly rapped No. 714 out of the lot. Comment, Page 62.

#### Billingham Knew

Cincinnati Reds' pitcher Jack Billingham said he knew that Hank Aaron had tied Babe Ruth's record as soon as he saw the ball leave the bat. Baseball, Page 62.

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