

Twins trade Blyleven, Thompson for 4 Rangers



Blyleven



Thompson



Singer

By Sid Hartman
Staff Writer

The Minnesota Twins gave Bert Blyleven his wish Tuesday and traded the 25-year-old right-handed pitcher along with shortstop Danny Thompson to the Texas Rangers for infielders Roy Smalley III and Mike Cabbage and pitchers Bill Singer and Jim Gideon.

Singer, who pitched last night for Texas against the Chicago White

Sox, will join the Twins today, as will Smalley, who will move in as the starting shortstop, and Cabbage, who will either play third base or be used as a designated hitter.

Gideon, a first draft choice last June from the University of Texas, has been pitching for Sacramento of the Pacific Coast League and will move to the Twins farm club at Tacoma. To stay at the 25-player roster limit, the Twins have

sent left-handed pitcher Mike Pazik to Tacoma.

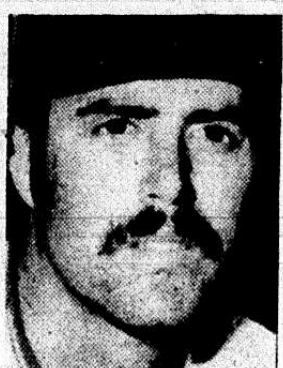
Texas also will pay the Twins about \$50,000—the difference between the total annual salaries of the four new Twins and lesser total for Blyleven and Thompson.

Blyleven, who won 99 games during his Minnesota career, had been at odds with Twins owner Calvin

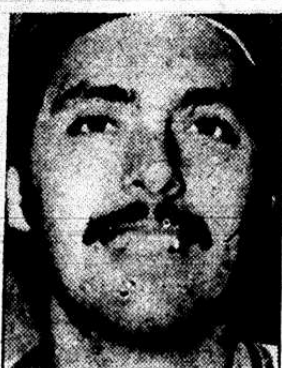
Trade continued on page 6A



Cabbage



Gideon



Smalley

Trade

Continued from page 1A

Griffith since the two failed to agree to contract terms last spring.

Last Sunday Griffith gave Blyleven permission to negotiate with Brad Corbett, owner of the Rangers. When Corbett met Blyleven's price of a \$100,000 bonus and three-year contract at \$150,000 a year, the stage was set for the trade. Griffith turned down two Ranger offers, before he and Texas General Manager Danny O'Brien agreed early yesterday morning on a deal that included Thompson.

Smalley, the nation's No. 1 pick in the January 1974 free agent draft, is a nephew of Twin Manager Gene Mauch. He was batting .230 going into last night's game with Chicago. Singer is a 10-year veteran who has twice won 20 games in a season.

Since 1966, however, the 32-year-old pitcher has suffered a series of injuries, including a circulation problem that the required the removal of a rib; a broken finger; a broken knuckle, and several muscle pulls.

Most recently, Singer has undergone surgery for a ruptured disk in 1974 and to remove bone chips and cartilage from his elbow last year.

Singer was a member of the Los Angeles Dodgers from 1967 to 1972 before being traded to the California Angels where he pitched three seasons before going to Texas last winter.

Cabbage is a University of Virginia graduate who spent most of the time in the minors until last season when he played 58 games for Texas and hit .224. He is batting .214 in 14 games this year. Gideon is 3-3 in nine games for Sacramento with an earned-run average of 4.88.

Blyleven was elated by the trade. "I've been fighting my control a little bit because of the pressure of the contract negotiations," he said. "Actually, I've pitched pretty well, except for the Cleveland game when I gave up nine runs to hurt my earned-run average. Even so my ERA is 3.1. My won-loss record isn't that good (4-5), but at times I didn't get many runs, I'm sure I'll come out of it and be consistent at Texas.

"The last two years have been the two most trying periods of my life, especially the last two months. All the pressure kept building up. I knew it would eventually come to a climax with my being traded or signed. I'm glad it happened before my next start. My arm feels good now. My first start out with Texas, I won't have to be concerned about what has happened in the past. I hope to win 20 for Texas. I've tried to give my best during the six years I was with the Twins. Some of the fans may not have thought so, but I did inside," Blyleven said.

Griffith said last night that he thought the trade improved the Twins' defense.

"Smalley will do the job we'd like done defensively at shortstop," Griffith said. "He is the type of player who can advance a runner with a sacrifice fly. I don't know how much he'll hit but he'll make plays our shortstops haven't been making. Infielders as good as Cabbage are hard to find. We had to have a starting pitcher in the deal and we picked Singer because he has been a winner in both leagues."

Twins players responded cautiously to the trade. "Time is probably the best judge of who got the best of the deal," said outfielder Larry Hisle.

"I'm surprised," said pitcher Joe Decker, "that they would trade him to the same division and to a contender. He's got to make Texas stronger because of the caliber pitcher he is."

"He knows everything about us as a team," said center fielder Lyman Bostock. "He can hurt us. I don't understand why they didn't trade him outside our division. It's going to be tough knowing you have to go to Texas and have to face him."

Blyleven apologizes for gesture he made

Bert Blyleven, in a prepared statement he wrote and signed, issued an apology to baseball fans in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest for a gesture he made when he left the mound after the ninth inning of Monday night's game with the California Angels at Metropolitan Stadium.

Some fans sang "Good-by Bert, we're glad to see you go," when Blyleven finished pitching in the game the Twins lost 3-2. Blyleven made a gesture with his arms in response.

Part of his statement read, "In recent weeks, certain circumstances have arisen which have caused a measure of misunderstanding to develop between me and the fans of the Twins. I must accept a proportionate degree of the blame for this misunderstanding. . .

"My reaction, however, was entirely uncalled for in as much as we professional athletes must accept the reality that the paying customers have every right to express themselves where our performances are concerned, whether favorably or unfavorably.

"I do, therefore apologize to the fans of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest, even though I'm now leaving to join the Texas Rangers, I'll always consider the people of this great area to be among the finest and most knowledgeable baseball fans anywhere."

That was not the same sentiment Blyleven expressed in an interview before last night's game. "The fans pay to get in," he said, "so I suppose they can do or say whatever they want. But I think these fans just come to the game to have fun and they don't really care who wins."