

# Blyleven 'Masterful'

By JON ROE

Minneapolis Tribune Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Bert Blyleven's teammates told it best.

"What is there to say," said Twins catcher George Mitterwald. "You saw it. It was great. He had everything. He had a great fast ball. A great curve. He had command of his pitches."

"Superb," observed Marv Grissom, Twins pitching coach. "He had great poise. He has a great future in baseball."

"How about that?" asked a smiling veteran Bob Allison. "He's something, isn't he?"

But it was Twins manager Bill Rigney, who had gambled in starting a 19-year-old rookie pitcher Friday night against the Washington Senators, who put the frosting on the cake.

"I haven't seen anybody debut like that," said Rigney. "Juan Marichal threw a nine-inning shutout when he started, but it was no better."

Bert Blyleven, a rookie right-hander who was born in The Netherlands, started his first game in the major leagues last night. He went seven innings, allowed five hits, struck out seven and the Twins defeated Washington 2-1.

"He gave this team a terrific boost," said Rigney after the Twins snapped a two-game losing streak. "He went out there and challenged the hitters. He works quickly because he has confidence in himself. He says, 'Here, see if you can hit this.' He was great."

Rigney took Blyleven out of the game at the start of the eighth inning and brought in reliever Ron Perranoski, who notched his 13th save of the year.

"After the job the kid had done," said Rigney, "I didn't want him to come out a loser. He was getting tired and his arm was starting to drop in his motion. If anybody had reached base in the eighth I would have taken him out anyway, so I went to Perranoski."

Blyleven's debut got off to a rocky start. He went to a 3-2 count on lead-off man Lee Maye and his next pitch went over the right field fence.

"I wanted to crawl into a hole out there," Blyleven said after the game. "I thought, 'Oh, no. Here we go.' Then I started looking around for Big Frank."

Big Frank is Frank Howard, the Senators' six-foot, seven-inch 250-pound left fielder who leads the American League in homers, with 16. After Blyleven struck out Ed Stroud Big Frank was the batter.

Blyleven got him on a ground-out.

"I was going to go out to the mound after that homer," said Rigney. "But I figured, why the hell should I. Am I going to go out to the mound every time this kid faces a batter? He's too good to do that."

Although Blyleven gave up hits in the third, fourth



Blyleven

Twins

Continued on Page 16

# Twins

Continued From Page 15

and fifth innings, nobody got past second base. He faced Howard again in the third, with Maye on second base. Howard flied out to center.

"I just said a prayer before I threw to him," said Blyleven. "I didn't think he hit the ball very good, but it just seemed to keep going and going. I hoped the park was big enough."

It was.

Blyleven, who was pitching for Garden Grove, Calif., high school one year ago, faced Howard a third time in the sixth inning as the lead-off batter.

"When I got two strikes on him right away," said Blyleven, who has played in just 20 minor league games. "I thought about striking him out. I wanted to throw the best curve I've ever thrown."

He did.

"Did you see that ball," asked Mitterwald in admiration. "It must have broken this far," he said, holding his hands at least two feet apart. Howard struck out on it.

Blyleven admitted he did start to tire in the seventh, after walking Ed Brinkman with one out. He got out of the inning with no further damage, and Perranoski entered to finish the game.

Howard made the final out of the eighth on a fly ball against the left field fence. Aurelio Rodriguez made the final out of the game on a fly ball to the left field fence.

"Howard's ball I knew wasn't going out," said Jim Holt, Twins left fielder. "But that last ball I caught with my arm over the fence."

Rigney was still pacing the locker room in nervous excitement 30 minutes after the game. He was asked of Blyleven would start again.

"Not until Wednesday," he said with a grin.

Wednesday the Twins

will play in Yankee Stadium.

Bert Blyleven was last seen Friday night walking through the hotel lobby—smiling.

At his side were Jim Perry and Jim Kaat. They were smiling too.

## Twins Scorecard

### FIRST INNING

**TWINS:** Cesar Tovar walked and stole second. Jim Holt flied out. Tony Oliva singled to left, scoring Tovar. Harmon Killebrew flied out. Oliva was out trying to steal second.

**SENATORS:** Lee Maye homered to right, his fourth of the year. Ed Stroud struck out. Frank Howard grounded out. Mike Epstein singled to center. Bernie Allen grounded out.

Twins 1, Senators 1

### FIFTH INNING

**TWINS:** Frank Quilici got an infield hit. Bert Blyleven's sacrifice bunt moved Quilici to second. Tovar singled to right, scoring Quilici, but Tovar was out trying to reach second. Holt flied out.

Twins 2, Senators 1

TWINS (2)	AB	R	H	BI	PO	A	E
Tovar, cf	3	1	1	1	3	0	0
Holt, lf	4	0	0	0	3	0	0
Oliva, rf	4	0	2	1	3	0	0
Killebrew, 3b	4	0	1	0	0	1	0
Reese, 1b	4	0	1	0	9	1	0
Cardenas, ss	4	0	2	0	0	3	0
Mitterwald, c	2	0	0	0	8	0	0
Quilici, 2b	3	1	2	0	1	2	0
Blyleven, p	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
Perranoski, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Totals	AB	R	H	BI	PO	A	E
Totals	30	2	9	2	27	8	0
WASH. (1)	AB	R	H	BI	PO	A	E
Maye, rf	3	1	2	1	4	1	0
b-Comer, 1b	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stroud, cf	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
Howard, lf	4	0	0	0	3	0	0
Epstein, 1b	4	0	1	0	9	1	0
Allen, 2b	3	0	1	0	6	3	0
c-Reichardt	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rodriguez, 3b	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brinkman, ss	2	0	0	0	1	6	0
French, c	3	0	1	0	3	1	0
Cox, p	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
a-Roseboro	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Knowles, p	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

Totals	AB	R	H	BI	PO	A	E
Totals	31	1	5	1	27	13	0
TWINS	100	010	000	000	2		
Washington	100	000	000	000	1		

a—Flied out for Cox in 7th.  
 b—Entered after rounding out for Maye in 8th.  
 c—Flied out for Allen in 9th.  
 DP—Brinkman - Allen - Epstein (2).  
 LOB—Twins 4 Washington 5 2B—  
 Cardenas. HR—Maye. SB—Tovar. S  
 Blyleven. Cox.  
**Pitching Summary** IP H R ER BB SO  
 Blyleven (W, 1-0) 7 5 1 1 1 7  
 Perranoski 2 0 0 0 0 0  
 Cox (L, 3-4) 2 2 2 2 2 3  
 Knowles 2 1 0 0 0 0  
 T-2-01. A-12,818.