

A DECADE AT THE MET ~ THE TWINS & VIKINGS
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Metropolitan Stadium

By Charles Hanna, Public Information Representative, City of Minneapolis

The small group of men in topcoats stood about on the hillocks waiting for it to begin.

It was a cool June day in 1955. Overcast and threatening to rain. The shiny shovels appeared and a new smile spread from face to face. The day brightened, reflecting the hopes of this small band of men who came to the roughly kept pasture to plant a dream.

With new shovels they broke the earth and that was the start of something big . . . something really big . . . Metropolitan Stadium, now the home of the Minnesota Twins, the Minnesota Vikings.

It is fitting that Metropolitan Stadium was located here on the rolling landscape above the Minnesota River Valley. Only a few miles away, where the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers blend, is where land was broken 150 years before by soldiers founding Minnesota itself.

The same spirit that brought pioneers into this land of 10,000 lakes more than a century before possessed the founders of the great arena, now a landmark for hundreds of thousands of sports enthusiasts from the vast northwest.

That ground breaking ceremony for "the Met" seems like it happened only yesterday instead of 10 years ago. But when one reflects upon all the grand spectacles of sport that have been witnessed here, it seems longer.

When one looks back on the trials and tribulations of that band of determined citizens who desperately wanted major league sports in their own back yard, it doesn't seem possible their hopes and plans could have survived.

But that's the way it was. It was hard work. It took dedication to the dream to make it a reality.

It all started back in 1953. Charlie Johnson, sports editor of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, is fond of the story. He tells it best:

"A young man had an idea. He visioned the day when the Twin Cities - Minneapolis and St. Paul - would have a major league baseball team. That individual was Gerald (Jerry) Moore, then president of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce. He asked me to join him for lunch one day at the Athletic Club.

" 'What we need in this area,' Jerry told me, 'is a major league baseball team. How do we go about getting it? How do we start. Let's get the ball rolling.' "

"No one would have dared to offer this man a discouraging word. It would have been like holding down a freight train with a band-aid," is the way one colleague describes Jerry Moore's determination.

The fervor of Moore was the spark that ignited the enthusiasm of scores of persons who were ready to jump on the major league band wagon.

The campaign began with the organization of a committee, including men like Moore, Lyman Wakefield, E. William Boyer, Kenneth Dayton, Hugh Barber and Charlie Johnson.

Its steps were uphill all the way. And there were upsets and times of bitter disappointment.

At the start the group was told time and again of the necessity of providing an adequate stadium.

"Get yourself a stadium and you'll get a major league ball club" was the phrase that rang and rang again in the minds those involved.

It became the battle cry. After several sites were considered and eliminated or proven unavailable, the Committee decided on a 160-acre tract in Bloomington.

All that remained for "the group" to do was to raise a mere \$4,500,000 from private sources for the construction of a modern stadium. Area bond firms told the stadium promoters that if they could raise \$1,200,000 through public subscription, more than \$3,000,000 in bonds would be sold on the market to investors.

The newly formed Minute Men made up of nearly 200 Twin Cities area sports buffs spearheaded the campaign.

Before it was over the Minute Men had to reach their original goal, plus another \$800,000 to meet financing changes and then come up with more than \$1,250,000 in bond sales that the investment companies declined to handle.

The Minute Men completed the final frustrating innings of financial play while contracts for the stadium were being let and construction underway.

It was a grueling two years - from the summer of 1954 to April of 1956 - but stadium promoters made it. Not even a ravaging fire that swept through a portion of the stands that February could stop the stadium from being born.

It rose from the dust and ashes like a giant multi-winged Phoenix. The Minneapolis Millers abandoned the rickety old Nicollet Park near Lake and Nicollet after 40 years and moved to the Met. -When the Millers and Wichita of the American Association took the field April 22, 1956, the stadium was a beautiful sight.

And the most amazing thing of all was the fact that it was built without costing taxpayers a dime. It was quite an achievement - an impossible one in many cities - but a typical one for people of a region with an abiding love of sports and athletic skill.

The stadium was in place, but only half the battle was won. The "dream" of fielding a major league ball club there was still unfulfilled. The bait was out. And "they" came sniffing, some more seriously than others. The Giants were first and they were wooed away by San Francisco. The Senators were next, but they were uncertain. The Indians looked briefly and decided to stay in Cleveland. It appeared all hope had gone.

The threat of the third major league - the Continental League, with Minneapolis backing - provided the real break the Minnesotans were waiting for. The major leagues decided to expand. It happened October 26, 1960, unexpectedly and so fast that the members of the bargaining teams for Minneapolis had a franchise almost before they knew it.

The Senators of the American League were ours and it wasn't long before Cal Griffith's gang knew that the Twin Cities, all of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest was theirs.

The full circle of victory with the signing of the Minnesota Twins was completed.

The big league, of course, meant stadium expansion. The 23,500 seats were not enough. Plans to increase seating to 40,000 were drawn and a refinancing plan was developed with the help of the Minneapolis City Council.

The expansion boosted the investment in the Met to \$8,500,000. The City lent its superb credit rating to endorse a carefully worked out plan that provided cost of expansion with an existing stadium debt to be covered by revenues. Taxpayers still have not had to contribute a cent to build or support the stadium.

Metropolitan Stadium is yet in the throes of expansion. Plans for its continuing growth are as exciting now as were the first sketches of the proposed facilities 10 years ago.

Built initially as a baseball stadium, the Met also doubles superbly as the home field of the Minnesota Vikings of the rough and tumble National Football League. The baselines become sidelines over night and they can reverse themselves again with ease when schedules overlap in the late fall.

The gridiron strikes across the second to third base portion of the ball diamond. It stretches out between the first base stands and the new \$1,200,000 east side grandstand. Built by the Vikings for the Metropolitan Sports Area Commission, the addition of 12,000 permanent seats swells the stadium total capacity to 47,000. For financing the grandstand, the Vikings received a reduction in their rent.

The Met has had an exciting first decade being the home of the Twins and Vikings and helping them play host to the great baseball clubs of the American League and exciting football teams of the National Football League.

The topper, of course, was the World Series of 1965, with the Twins, the American League Champions, battling it out with the National League pennant holders, the Los Angeles Dodgers. The Dodgers won the world championship but it took seven games and Sandy Koufax to do it.

The Series left no doubt in the minds of those who pioneered the development of Metropolitan Stadium - if any remained - about it being worth the effort. It is a booming success. One that presages an even brighter future.

And for the thousands who pack the stands on warm summer nights, endure the glare of the hot autumn sun and the chilling temperatures on winter Sunday afternoons, Metropolitan Stadium is something else.

It is a kaleidoscope of sound and color and pageantry that graces the drama of major league sports. It is excitement of a dazzling play from shortstop, to second to first. It is a sweeping end run or an arcing touchdown pass.

It's a place for sunglasses, sunburn lotion and kooky sun hats, handwarmers, thermal underwear and ear muffs.

It's a place for hotdogs, sudsy beer, icy pop, peanuts, popcorn and cracker jacks. It's a place for kids with mustard on their faces. It's a place for fat cigars and candy bars.

It's a place for catching foul balls and footballs - if you're not timid. It's a place for seeing all of the stars of diamond and gridiron. It's a place for watching youngsters become men and men become giants.

It's the field of gladiators and matadors, of steely firm nerves and speed and strength and cunning and craft. It's the field of sport, the place where great days and plays are never forgotten. It's a place of voices and names that are gone and the place where tomorrow's heroes will compete.

Metropolitan Stadium is a great mixture of concrete and steel and other mute things of color and strength. But it is also a living thing with a pulse beat of excitement.

To those who put their hearts and their energy into its conception, its birth and its youth, it is a dream come true . . . and a monument.

STATISTICS

Following is a summary of capacities and quantities of material incorporated in the construction of Metropolitan Stadium:

SITE:

Size of site..... 152 acres
Parking capacity..... 14,500 cars
Paving on parking lots and roads.....600,000 sq. yds.
Earth moved in site preparation.....450,000 cu. ft.
Number of guard posts on site.....6,000

STADIUM:

Total seating capacity.....45,182 seats
West Grandstand:
Lower deck..... 14,412 seats
Middle deck.....6,417 seats
Upper deck..... 3,037 seats
East Grandstand:
Lower deck.....7,202 seats
Upper deck.....4,880 seats
Third Base Bleacher:
Bleachers.....7,122 seats
Right Field Bleacher:
Bleachers.....2,112 seats
Structural Steel..... 3,470 tons
Reinforcing Steel.....900 tons
Concrete..... 15,440 cu. yds.
Brick..... 2,100,000
Pipe Rails.....9 miles
Outside aluminum fence (10' high).....900 ft. long
Number of Ticket Windows.....44
Number of Turnstiles.....71
Number of Concessions.....24
Number of Public Washrooms.....33
Length of Dugout.....51 feet
Height of Center Field Flagpole..... 100 feet
Height of Uppermost Seat above Playing Field (West Grandstand)... .83 feet
Height of Uppermost Seat above Playing Field (East Grandstand).... .87 feet
Overall Height of West Grandstand.....93 feet
Overall Height of East Grandstand.....91 feet
Length of West Grandstand measured along back wall..... 1,000 feet
Length of East Grandstand..... 293 feet
Number of Ramp Towers West Grandstand (16' wide ramps).....3
Number of Ramp Towers, East Grandstand (11' wide ramps).....2
Number of Doors.....460
Elevation playing field below stadium entrance..... 16 feet
Size of Scoreboard..... 135 ft. long
..... 50 ft. high
Size of Scoreboard Clock..... 16 ft. wide
..... 18 ft. high
Height to top of Scoreboard Clock..... 78 feet
Total length of electrical conduit.....50 miles
Total length of wire..... 100 miles
Number of light fixtures.....5,200
Total length of pipe......25 miles
Number of plumbing fixtures.....980
PLAYING FIELD:
Foul line distances Right Field.....330 feet

Left Field.....	344 feet
Center Field distance.....	430 feet
Height of Fence (Right and Left Field).....	12 feet
Height of Centerfield fence.....	8 feet
Width of Playing field warning track.....	20 feet
Playing Field Lights (1500 W).....	1,104
Height of Tubular Steel Light Towers (18).....	138 feet
(32" diameter at base, 10" diameter at top)	
Height of Central Light Towers on Stadium (2).....	154 feet
Playing Field Illumination Infield.....	250 ft. candles
Outfield.....	100 ft. candles

TC - by Max Nichols, Minneapolis Star

It happened right here in Minnesota.

Where a farmer once harvested waving wheat, Bob Allison went sliding across the wet turf for one of the most incredible catches in World Series baseball history.

Where long furrows once stretched into the Minnesota river horizon, the man recognized as the best pitcher in baseball stood on a mound of unfilled soil. And Sandy Koufax pitched a 2-0 seventh game World Series victory that long will be remembered by the whole nation.

Where a Minnesota family once planted their hopes and dreams into rich black dirt, literally millions of persons from hundreds of miles around have come to see the Minnesota Twins bring to life the dreams of baseball thrills.

Jack Kralick's no-hit game in 1962, the All-Star game of 1965 with the greatest stars of our time, dramatic home runs by Harmon Killebrew, 20th pitching victories by Camilo Pascual and Jim Grant - all these have been witnessed in person by Minnesotans at Metropolitan Stadium.

Not on a television screen originating in New York, San Francisco or Chicago.

Right out on Interstate 494, within two miles of the campsite of Albert Pike on his first expedition to the land of lakes, Tony Oliva has won two American League batting crowns. He has started what very well can become one of the great hitting careers of all time in baseball.

Without the dreams of a few men of the early 1950s and their will to realize their dreams, Minnesotans might still be going elsewhere to witness such events in person.

For Calvin Griffith, the dream to move the Griffith family's baseball franchise to Minnesota began to form back in 1955.

"When Charlie Johnson (executive sports editor of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune) first visited my uncle (the late Clark Griffith)," said Griffith, "I first began to think about moving to the Twin Cities. That was in 1955."

But the vision of major league baseball in Minnesota started before then in Minneapolis and St. Paul. And the first man to do anything about it was Gerald (Jerry) Moore, then president of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce.

"For years we used to sit around and talk and wonder about the possibility of having major league baseball here. I don't know where the idea first started. Certainly a lot of men talked about it."

Moore took the first action. He invited Johnson to join him and Norm McGrew of the Chamber staff for lunch. That was early in 1953 at the Minneapolis Athletic Club.

"What we need in this area is a major league baseball team," said Moore. "How do we go about getting it?" . . . or words to that effect.

This was before the Braves moved from Boston to Milwaukee. Johnson gave a discouraging answer, pointing out no changes had been made in the major leagues in 50 years. Moore was not discouraged.

Johnson agreed to visit Baseball Commissioner Ford Frick in New York to find out which channels to go through. He discovered Frank Lane, then of the Chicago White Sox, was chairman of an expansion committee formed in 1948.

Frick warned Johnson of two prime requisites - an adequate stadium and backing of both Minneapolis and St. Paul. Later, Lane visited the Twin Cities. After a tour by airplane and by car he told Moore the same thing.

"We paid \$2,000 for a study that indicated this area could support major league baseball," Moore said.

Moore appointed a major league baseball committee in Minneapolis, including Hugh Barber, attorney; Charlie Johnson, executive sports editor, Minneapolis Star and Tribune; Lyman Wakefield, the First National Bank; Ken Dayton, the Dayton Co., and Bill Boyer of Boyer Ford. The St. Paul Chamber was asked to do the same. On March 23, 1953, this joint committee met.

Just before that season started, the Braves moved to Milwaukee. Bill Veeck, then owner of the St. Louis Browns, was in a financial corner that year. Johnson pleaded numerous times that summer for Veeck to visit the Twin Cities.

Veeck sent Abe Saperstein (owner of the Harlem Globe Trotters) to look over the Twin Cities. It was proposed that the Browns play for a season at an enlarged Parade Stadium while a modern stadium was being built.

The Browns went to Baltimore. But the Twin Citians learned their lesson well.

"Get yourself a stadium and you'll get a major league ball club," became the theme as more followers began to join the movement. While Moore and Boyer formed the Minute Men and went to work selling bonds to build a stadium, other things were happening in Washington.

Griffith was beginning to think more and more seriously about moving the Senators. He became president of the club after Clark Griffith died in 1955. He thought often about Johnson's first visit to the Old Fox earlier.

"I asked Clark Griffith for 30 minutes," said Johnson. "We talked for three hours. Everyone around Griffith Stadium was wanting to know what was going on."

When Calvin took over the club it had a \$100,000 debt. The Griffith organization set out to erase the debt and to build a farm system at the same time. This farm system would go on to produce the nucleus of the club that won the American League pennant in 1965.

The financial aspects of moving became more enticing.

"The first time I ever actually talked to anyone in baseball about the possibility of moving was in 1956," said Griffith. "It was that fall. I went to New York to talk with Horace Stoneham at his apartment in Button Place.

"Stoneham was still talking about moving the Giants to Minneapolis. We talked about Los Angeles, San Francisco and the Twin Cities. Those are the only areas I considered."

The Met had been built and opened in April, 1956, with three decks from first to third bases. Stoneham was interested, but San Francisco Mayor Christopher came up with an offer Minneapolis couldn't match.

The Dodgers moved to Los Angeles and the Giants to San Francisco in the summer of 1957 - starting another chapter in the major league book of the Twin Cities.

As part of the deal, Stoneham had to give up the Giants' American Association franchise in Minneapolis to the Boston Red Sox, who had owned the Pacific Coast League franchise in San Francisco.

"It was at that time that Stoneham told me that Calvin was definitely interested - that he was the man to court. So I started courting," Moore said.

"We set up a model contract with the Millers, one that would serve as a model for the type of contract we figured would be used when a major league club came to the Met.

"Then I started visiting Calvin in Washington. He was being criticized in the Washington papers for his talk about moving, so he often introduced me as Mr. Smith or Mr. Brown from New York. I sat in the box next to him at Griffith Stadium about six times.

"I got to know all of the Griffith family during that time. We had numerous meetings in Washington hotel rooms, going over that contract."

In the summer of 1958 Griffith was invited to bring his Senators to play an exhibition at the Met with the Phillies.

"We were guaranteed \$10,000," said Griffith. "It was a terrific offer. After the game I stayed over saying I wanted to look at some players in the American Association."

If it is possible to nail down the time and place Calvin made up his mind he wanted to move to Minnesota, he says that visit had to be it.

"Chet Roan was stadium manager at that time," Calvin said. "He took me all over this area. He showed me Minneapolis, St. Paul, Excelsior, Hopkins, South St. Paul, North St. Paul - the whole area we would be able to draw from - plus the stadium.

"I promised the Twin Cities group at that time that I would move here as soon as a new club could be placed in Washington through expansion."

There were misunderstandings after that. Calvin was criticized in Washington and the Twin Cities. In both 1958 and 1959 Moore led Twin Cities groups to major league meetings in hopes Griffith would ask permission to move.

Once Moore even had a press conference arranged for the announcement. But Calvin didn't ask permission.

"I knew they were becoming impatient," said Griffith. "I didn't blame them. But the American League owners had made it plain they wouldn't let me move until a new franchise could be put in Washington. They weren't ready to expand yet."

Cleveland showed interest. But that fizzled. With hopes fading in the Twin Cities, Wheelock Whitney headed a group that tied up with four other charter members in the Continental League. This was a proposed third major league.

By August, 1960, the American and National Leagues agreed to expand if the Continental League dropped its plans.

The National League announced its expansion to Houston and New York first. Then the American League owners called a meeting October 26 in New York. The Twin Cities, Los Angeles and Dallas-Fort Worth all were in the picture.

On October 25 the owners began to gather in the Savoy Hilton hotel in New York. But none would say publicly that expansion was coming.

"That night," said Moore, "Griffith called. We were in the hotel. He said he would move the Senators to Minnesota if we met certain conditions. I said I would call him back."

Griffith demanded that the Minneapolis representatives make the following guarantees:

1. An attendance of 2,500,000 fans for the first three years.
2. Metropolitan Stadium be increased to 40,000 capacity for the 1961 season.
3. That \$250,000 be paid to the Griffith organization to help pay indemnities of the Minneapolis and St. Paul clubs of the American Association.
4. Bank credit be arranged.
5. A 7 per cent rental charge for the stadium after taxes, the visiting club's share and league share had been deducted.
6. Accept 10 per cent of the gross on concessions with the Stadium Commission taking all parking receipts.

Calvin gave the group until 8:45 a.m. Oct. 26 to accept. Moore, Boyer, Johnson, Whitney and Gordon Ritz discussed the terms. The \$250,000 guarantee was the stumbling block.

Finally it was decided the \$250,000 would be raised "if we have to go from door to door begging \$1 from each individual." Griffith was informed his terms were acceptable.

"I thought at the time that the \$250,000 would be half our cost," said Griffith. "As it turned out we had to pay the Dodgers \$150,000 for damages to the St. Paul Club, \$100,000 to the Red Sox for the Millers and \$540,000 to the American Association.

"That's \$790,000. I thought we would be able to deduct it. But the federal government wouldn't allow it."

So on the afternoon of Oct. 26 the Minneapolis committee waited outside the meeting chamber. At 4:12 p.m. American League President Joe Cronin read the official announcement:

"The American League has voted to move the Washington franchise to the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. We also have arranged to give new owners a franchise in Washington and another in Los Angeles. Wait. This is important. These changes become effective with the start of the 1961 playing season." So it was done.

The long trips, long meetings in hotel rooms and moments of despair were over. Exactly 177 days later the Minnesota Twins began playing American League baseball at the Met against the "new" Washington Senators.

Griffith's rebuilding efforts already had produced Camilo Pascual, Harmon Killebrew, Bob Allison, Jim Kaat and Earl Battey among others who would later become pennant winners. Don Mincher, Jim Hall and Zoilo Versalles already were in the organization.

Metropolitan Stadium's major league destiny was fulfilled at 1:30 p.m. April 21, 1961. Gov. Elmer

Andersen threw out the first ball. The Twins lost 5-3 to Washington that day.

But in their first five years of home games the Twins have rolled up 220 victories at the Met and only 84 losses.

It was at the Met on June 23, 1961, that Sabath Anthony Mele replaced Cookie Lavagetto as the Twins' field manager.

And since then the Twins have won 408 games and lost 333 under Mele plus a 3-4 mark in the World Series.

A 13-game losing streak under Lavagetto dropped the Twins into the second division. And they never were able to get out, finishing seventh. But it was not an uneventful year for 1,256,722 paying fans.

Zoilo Versalles, a rookie who was homesick for his Cuban home, jumped the club for a month. Killebrew hit the longest home run of his career, a 475-foot clout half way up on the batting background.

Among Twins' pace-setting pitchers are (A) Camilo Pascual, 20-game winner in 1962 and 21-game winner in 1963; (B) Jim Grant, 21-game winner in 1965; (C) Jack Kralick, who pitched a no-run, no-hit game-still the only major league no-hitter at the Met- against Kansas City on Aug. 26, 1962. In 1965, Johnny Sain (D) proved himself almost indispensable as he tutored Twins' pitchers in the art of winning a pennant. Tony Oliva (E), who moved into the lineup in 1964, won the league batting title that year and repeated in 1965. And at the end of the 1965 season, Harmon Killebrew (F) led the all-time homer derby with 297 and was just two shy of the 1,000-mark in lifetime base hits.

Sitting on the bench was an infielder named Rich Rollins, who played in only 13 games while watching more than 100. And unnoticed in the final week was a lanky young rookie named Tony Oliva.

There were plenty of problems facing Mele as he opened his first spring training as manager in 1962.

But suddenly Rollins and a rookie named Bernie Allen grabbed everyone's attention.

Rollins took over third base and Allen second base as a wave of enthusiasm swept the squad. Griffith moved Killebrew to left field from first base.

Don Mincher was "given" the job at first base. But when he had trouble making the adjustment to wearing glasses, Griffith looked around.

Two days before the season started Calvin traded pitcher Pedro Ramos for Cleveland first baseman Vic Power and pitcher Dick Stigman. All of a sudden the Twins had a new look. By June they had established themselves as serious contenders for the pennant.

Rollins batted .351 until June 20, and he finished with a .298 average. He made the All-Star team and was selected by his teammates as their most valuable player.

Jack Kralick pitched his no-hit, no-run 1-0 victory over Kansas City on Aug. 26, 1962, at the Met - still the only major league no-hitter at the Met. And Bob Allison made the first of several significant catches on that field, saving a home run for Kralick.

Power delighted Twin fans with his fancy fielding that year and batted .291. And on the final game of the season Pascual became Minnesota's first 20-game winner with a 1-0 victory over Baltimore. Stigman, a native Nimrod, Minn., pitcher, became a starter and won 12.

The Twins were in the race until the final week and finished second. Harmon Killebrew won the home run championship with 46, his first of three straight crowns. And the Twins drew 1,433,116 fans at the Met.

"We're gonna catch the Yankees," Griffith said after that season. But he would have to wait until 1965.

In May of 1963 he traded Kralick to Cleveland for Jim Perry. But the Twins got too far behind with an early slump.

On May 20 that season a lanky sidearming veteran of 10 minor league seasons started one of the most colorful short careers of the Met era so far.

Bill Dailey did his funny duck-like walk in from the bull-pen and cut down the Boston Red Sox for two and one-third innings. Before that season was over Dailey pitched in 66 games with a 1.98 earned run average. Day after day the reliever walked while organist

Willie Peterson played: "Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home."

Rich Rollins played with a broken jaw that year and Killebrew hit 45 home runs. The Twins matched their 1962 record of winning 91 games, but they finished third, 13 games out of first.

They drew 1,406,652 fans, but they had to sit by while the Yankees celebrated their pennant clinching in the visitors' dressing room at the Met on Sept. 13.

After the 1963 season Battey and Killebrew both had knee operations. These plus the arrival of Oliva were destined to have long range effects on the Minnesota team.

Oliva moved into the 1964 lineup in right field with much fanfare, and he more than lived up to every press clipping. He became the first rookie and first Negro ever to win the American League batting title. He batted .323. He led the league in doubles with 43, in hits with 217, in total bases with 374 and in runs scored with 109.

But all of this wasn't enough. The Twins' defense cracked and they finished in a tie with Cleveland for sixth place.

Because of his knee, Killebrew was kept in left field. He suffered an arm injury throwing with the bad knee, and throwing problems hurt the Twins. Battey's knee was re-injured numerous times. Bob Allison shifted to first base.

In addition to all this Dailey suffered an arm injury in April. He was not replaced until late in June when the Twins acquired Al Worthington and Johnny Klippstein. But the damage was done. A July heat wave was the final straw that broke the Twins' back.

But as the Twin Cities businessmen learned their lesson in the mid-1950s on building a stadium, so the Twins set out to correct their mistakes of 1964. And a June, 1964 trade of Lee Stange for Cleveland's Jim Grant began to pay off.

Right after the 1964 season it was announced that Killebrew would move to first base and Allison to left field.

Within two more months it was announced that Johnny Sain had been hired to coach the pitchers, Billy Martin was hired to coach the infielders and base runners and Bob Lemon was added to coach the hitters.

From that point the fortunes of the Twins began to improve. By the end of 1965 spring training it was evident fans would see a new look in the Twins - speed blended with home run power combined with overall pitching depth.

Sain instilled confidence in all of the pitchers - not just a nucleus of starters. When Pascual was forced to the sidelines with an operation, Jim Perry took up the slack. When Worthington and Klippstein were overworked, Stigman and others came in with important relief jobs.

Jim (Mudcat) Grant learned a new curve from Sain, and with it he became a 21-game winner. Sluggers concentrated on base hits when runners were on bases, and Martin kept them running. Four times Versalles scored all the way from first base on singles and doubles.

Hall hit .300 until July. Then Versalles and Oliva started hitting. When Killebrew suffered an elbow dislocation, Don Mincher stepped into the first base job as though he had never been away.

Team effort became the theme of the Twins. And they won game after game in final inning heroics - 34 by one run or in the final time at bat. Sandy Valdespino, Jerry Kindall, Frank Quilici, Joe Nosssek and Jerry Zimmerman, listed only on the program at the start, reached the headlines.

One of the most dramatic days had to be July 11 when Killebrew turned defeat into victory with a two-out ninth inning two-run homer. It crushed the New York Yankees while giving the Twins a commanding lead over the league.

There were others - a dash to home plate for the winning run by Oliva on a double play, a pinch hit homer by Kindall to tie a game when it seemed Killebrew's injury might stop the Twins, a home run by Jim Hall that crushed Chicago.

On Sept. 19 at Washington the Twins celebrated the pennant victory. It was as fresh tasting to the players as it was to the Minnesota fans, because so few of them ever had played on a pennant winner. For his effort Versalles became the Most Valuable Player in the American League.

Even after all this, the Series could be no anti-climax to Minnesota. The Twins were underdogs, and it was even predicted that Los Angeles Dodger pitching might stop them in four straight games.

But Grant, Mincher and Versalles stopped that talk. Grant beat Dodger pitcher Don Drysdale while Mincher and Versalles homered in the first game. Then Jim Kaat out-pitched Koufax in the second game while Allison made his backhanded diving catch in the mud of left field.

After losing three straight they evened the Series at 3-3 on another Grant victory and a Grant home run - the first by a pitcher in the Series since 1920.

That set up the final game. And before 50,595 - a Met record - the pitching of Koufax was chosen by the Sporting News as the No. 1 sports thrill in the nation.

It happened at the Met.

THE MINNESOTA VIKINGS

The tolerant football buff will pardon the Minnesota Vikings for not having won a championship in their first five years of hostilities in the National Football League.

By any reasonable yardstick they have accomplished everything else - including the creation of a gnomish legend named Jim Marshall, the founding of a potato-patch school of pro offenses in which it doesn't matter where anybody runs as long as he runs, and a growing fondness for unpredictability.

You might argue, for example, that any coach can resign in mid-season, even if he happens to be one of the most popular coaching types in the territory.

But it takes a man of truly towering ingenuity to recant the next day and a month later to land a new long-term contract.

The Vikings seemingly delight in friend and foe alike. They, or rather their sponsors, began early by wangling a franchise from the NFL at a time when the Twin Cities technically were still members of the newly forming American Football League.

A year later they lifted more eyebrows by hiring as their coach Norm Van Brocklin, who despite modest denials was something of a controversial citizen in pro football and who had not blown a coaching whistle until then.

All of which might have been a sedate prelude to the Vikings competitive debut on a sun-soaked mid-September day in 1961 when a team of nondescripts and kids bombed the Chicago Bears 37-13 and imparted a tone of impudence and spontaneity to Viking football has never been lost.

They have been a financial success beyond the wildest notions of their founders, who understandably could never have anticipated the television windfall that has come to pro football.

Aside from this, however, they have found a strong, stable acceptance by the ticket buyers, to the point where they sold 32,000 season tickets a year ago and kept the stadium humming at capacity or close to it throughout 1965.

Their rapid competitive rise achieved the ultimate badge of big league accreditation in 1965 - when the customers began grumbling in mid-season at a time when the Vikings were struggling to a .500 season.

When you acquire so much prestige as to unhinge some of your followers by not winning a title in the fifth season you know you have covered a lot of ground in a hurry.

The Vikings in 1965 had reached the level where they could endure a chain of last-minute disasters, slumps by three or four of their most widely-advertised players, a terrible November - and still win half of their games in the world's toughest football league.

It was not an especially successful season, but in view of all the calamities, it was a very tolerable one.

Which means the Vikings can approach 1966 in a more or less normal state of mind, free of the sugary buildup which made their 1965 dip seem more of a fizzle than it was.

The over-riding fact of the Vikings' five years of existence is that pro football is solidly dug in at Metropolitan Stadium, its popularity mounting among fans who like festivity with their field goals, tail-gate parties with their touchdowns.

They have witnessed the development of a Fran Tarkenton into one of the box office prodigies of pro football's Sunday theater, the elevation of players like Rip Hawkins, Mick Tingelhoff, Tommy Mason, Bill Brown and Grady Alderman to the status of league celebrities.

They suffered with Van Brocklin through his public soul-searching of last November and stayed with him.

And they applauded the unique gesture by the Viking ownership in committing more than a million dollars of their current and future profits to construct a 12,000-seat eastside pavilion that benefited football and baseball viewers alike.

This last was a clear-headed and thoughtful response by a big league ownership to the needs of the people who pay the freight, a classic in rare example of a cooperative civic venture in major sports.

The Vikings were founded generally along those lines, which is not to say the profit motive was entirely absent.

As football terrain, of course, Minnesota has been tilled and harvested successfully for years by the University of Minnesota, the colleges and high schools.

It had an occasional liaison with pro football when the sport was just emerging from the cornfield stage, but it did not become desirable ground for the game as a big-money enterprise until Metropolitan Stadium blossomed on the plains at Bloomington.

Minneapolis enterprisers went gunning for an NFL franchise in the late 1950s, going to the extreme one year of guaranteeing the Chicago (now St. Louis) Cardinals \$240,000 to transplant two league games to the Met.

The object of that particular courtship was the Cardinals themselves, who were contemplating a franchise shift.

It never got beyond the flirtation level, but pro football manipulators were suitably impressed by the crowds - in view of the fact that they were attracted by the game as pure spectacle, without a hometown favorite to yell for.

Enter the American Football League a couple of years later, to hold its 1959 organizational meeting in Minneapolis on the day the Cardinals were playing the Giants at the Met.

Events of that day and the ensuing weeks later became the focus of an AFL lawsuit against the NFL, charging the NFL had violated antitrust statutes by trying to undermine the new league with a franchise offer to the Twin Cities, one of the AFL charter members.

Two years later a Baltimore court cleared the NFL.

In any case, the NFL - partly under the goad of the Chicago Bears' George Halas - awarded a franchise to Minnesota in the winter of 1960, under the ownership of St. Paul publisher B. H. Ridder Jr., representing St. Paul interests, Max Winter, H. P. Skoglund and E. W. Boyer of Minneapolis and Ole Haugrud, representing Duluth - which had flown the NFL flag 40 years before under the name of the Duluth Eskimos.

Two months later they picked a talent scout, a well traveled pro footballer named Joe Thomas, and four months after that a general manager, Bert Rose Jr.

Rose enlisted Twin Cities Minute Men in a high velocity ticket campaign that produced 25,000 season ticket sales for the first season, enough to put the new franchise on a solvent basis.

Van Brocklin, elbowed out of the Philadelphia Eagles' coaching job after leading the team to an NFL championship, was hired at the end of a sleepy, wee-hours conference with the Viking owners.

And now all they needed was a football and some players.

Their first draft, primarily the creature of Rose and Thomas, produced Tarkenton, Tommy Mason, Rip Hawkins and Ed Sharockman, who remain after five years the bedrock of the Viking manpower mine.

From the league's player pool, for which the Viking management paid \$600,000, the club obtained 36 players, described once by Van Brocklin with no great charity but considerable accuracy, as "36 stiffs."

Only Alderman remains from that elite group.

They were the roistering dispossessed of the NFL, among them were malcontents and oddballs, youngsters who had failed and oldsters who had declined.

But there was at least one, Hugh McElhenny, whose vintage artistry set the crowds stirring and who, above everyone in that formative year, represented the class of pro football to a new audience eager to participate and admire.

Ultimately it was Van Brocklin himself who pulled pro football out of the curiosity stage here and gave Viking football an identity, who insisted that although his team was under talented, it could beat anybody it set its mind to beat.

And so, while the Vikings lost for three seasons, they usually hurt people when they did - and they won a lot more often than they had a right to, three times in 1961, twice in 1962 and five times in 1963 before they startled the league by winning eight games and finishing in a second place tie with the Packers in 1964.

Van Brocklin's thrust and rigid authority were responsible for much of this, congealing the loosely tied veterans of 1961 and the unsettled kids of 1962 into a disciplined team that by 1963 could fight the best on close to even terms.

Not that pro football generally or the Vikings specifically are all that grim. It is probably true that in the emotional commitment it requires and the strategic maneuvering it involves, pro football more closely approximates an actual war than any other game on the American scene.

But it has to be leavened by the cutups and wagsters. And Van Brocklin himself, removed from Sunday afternoons and the dark aftermaths if they resulted in defeats, can be a humorist of hilarious dimensions.

"I've always considered Francis an artist," he once said of Tarkenton. "My only objection is that 3rd and 15 to go is a lousy tune to start improvising."

He also referred to wrong-way runner Jim Marshall as "the only man in the NFL who needs a seeing-eye dog to find the payroll line."

But the Dutchman, of course, always regarded Marshall with the affection of an elder toward a good-hearted if occasionally wayward youngster. And despite their colliding viewpoints on how a quarterback should behave in the pocket, Van Brocklin has never seriously intervened in Tarkenton's conduct of the football game.

By all counts Tarkenton is the most remarkable man in uniform on the club, a purposeful young Georgian whose impromptu style of quarterbacking pioneered new ground in pro football, made the scrambling passer acceptable and even more envied where once he was scorned and pitied.

He did it out of pure necessity in the Vikings' embryonic years but now has adopted it as standard procedure.

It has sown confusion into enemy defenses and, at times, befuddled his own blockers and receivers. But by and large it works, although Tarkenton must answer the final challenge to it - can he win a title as a scrambling quarterback?

The answer may be that he can as soon as the Vikings are able to achieve a full-squad depth on the scale of the Green Bay Packers and Baltimore Colts.

Aside from their inaugural draft, they have not been sensationally successful either at the draft table or in signing a heavy percentage of quality high-round choices.

The best of their premium choices since 1961 have been Paul Flatley, Carl Eller and Hal Bedsole. Flatley is truly arrived as a high-magnitude NFL player. After two years, Eller and Bedsole must still be spoken of in terms of potential rather than consistent performance.

Their 1964 draft may yet be mildly productive but produced practically no immediate help for the 1965 season - one of the reasons the Vikings fell short of their 8-5-1 high water mark of the previous year.

There is no way of judging at the moment the wisdom or success of their most recent drafts.

But it is an unchangeable truth in the NFL that the teams which do not replenish themselves adequately in the draft, the ones which do not land two of three blue ribbon players each year, are inviting serious trouble.

Until now the Vikings may either have been unusually perceptive, or lucky, or both, in discovering quality players such as Mick Tingelhoff, Milt Sunde and a few others from the ranks of free agents and low draft choices.

But the high draft choices are the ones who normally deliver titles, and the Vikings since 1961 have lagged there.

They have also lagged in the development of their defense, which probably suffered from the loss of coaching assistant Harry Gilmer after the 1964 season, but they have suffered more from the absence of first-flight talent at many of the defensive positions.

The club has had to overhaul its secondary in each of its five seasons, and in 1965 it began overhauling the linebacking and the line itself.

It is hiring a new secondary coach for 1966, and Van Brocklin almost certainly will attach his most critical priorities this summer to toughening the defense.

With Tarkenton, Mason, Brown, Flatley operating with an offensive line of growing strength the Vikings are always going to score. But they won't win titles if they have to put 35 points a game on the board to do it.

Encouragingly, the Viking defense did brace in the final weeks of the season. Its performance against the Packers, Lions and Bears down the stretch was uniformly strong and cohesive.

But it will have to play that way for 14 games in 1966.

None of which is intended to detract from the scope of the Vikings' accomplishments in five short sessions - nor to remove the suspense, incidentally, from the most intriguing question of the year:

Which way will Jim Marshall jump in 1966?

Marshall, of course, has been confounding people, particularly insurance people, for years.

He opened modestly enough by accidentally shooting himself in 1963. Subsequently he took up parachute jumping, skiing, scuba diving, wig-selling and karate chopping.

In 1964 he galloped to a measure of immortality by traveling 66 yards with a fumble, moving to the leeward when he should have been going windward.

To demonstrate his versatility the following summer, Jim got a green grape caught in his voice box and was hospitalized for five days.

He emerged on a Sunday afternoon at the training table, where he chug-a-lugged two big bunches of grapes.

"Just had to prove," he explained, "that I wasn't gun-shy."

Marshall now threatens to climb mountains, where it can be embarrassing to go the wrong way.

In the matter of climbing heights, the Viking management itself seems already to have scaled the most difficult.

It has the franchise moving at a high-profit level, it pushed the Viking home attendance in 1965 to a record 321,119 for seven games, and its front office affairs are running serenely.

Some of the old guarders, such as Rose and Thomas are gone, replaced by Jim Finks as general manager and Jerry Reichow as the chief talent scout.

Like the front office, the Viking coaching staff has undergone changes. But it retains Van Brocklin at the throttle, apparently exorcised of his personal devils by his impulsive resignation and subsequent act of contrition.

And Van Brocklin has been, over the years, the largest and best thing the Vikings have had going for them.

They may win no titles in 1966, but if you want uninhibited football in the most rollicking pro style, the Met is the place for you in 1966.

Fun and Profit

This year more than one and three quarter million fans are expected to pass through the turnstiles of Metropolitan Stadium to watch the Minnesota Twins and Vikings.

They will come from more than 2,000 communities in every state in the nation and from the provinces of Canada. They will spend more than \$5.3 million for tickets and another \$1.5 million for "goodies", including beer, pop, coffee, ice cream, peanuts, popcorn, cracker jacks and hot dogs.

Thirsty fans drink enough beer during an average baseball season to fill an Olympic size swimming pool, 25 feet by 50 feet, six feet deep. It would take a pool nearly as large to hold the umpteen thousands of gallons of soda pop consumed during the Twins home stands.

The 50 tons of hot dogs consumed at the stadium during average baseball and football seasons would run around the ball diamond more than 50 times if laid end to end.

Fans put away more than 3,000 cases of peanuts, more than 15,000 cups of ice cream, 2.5 tons of coffee, over 350 gallons of milk and more than 50,000 hot dog rolls.

Aside from being the "main store" of operations for the Twins and Vikings, the Stadium is a business itself.

And 1965 was its best year to date with more than two million persons attending regular Twins games, the All Star Game, the World Series and the games of the Vikings.

They came in droves; down the freeways, across the arterials and onto the broad parking lots encircling the stadium. There were 585,087 cars and 5,716 buses paying parking fees to the Met totalling over \$467,000.

It was a very good year-1965. After all the receipts were in and all the bills paid, the stadium had a net profit of slightly over \$21,000 that went into a reserve fund.

The surplus may not seem like a lot of money for a big operation like the Met, but one must remember that it was the balance AFTER all obligations had been met, including payments of more than \$554,500 for operating expenses, \$408,000 for bond indebtedness (to the City of Minneapolis) and \$125,000 for capital improvements.

The financial picture of Metropolitan Stadium reflects the business acumen of the Metropolitan Sports Area Commission- Gerald Moore, chairman; Lyle Dorrian, vice chairman; James Kempf, secretary-treasurer; Jack Irons, John Curtis and Clayton LeFevre - and of Stadium Manager Bill Williams.

A breakdown of stadium revenue for the past year includes \$215,706 in stadium rent from the Twins and a flat \$10,000 for both the All Star game and the World Series. The Vikings paid \$42,630 [including a \$55,000 a-year cut for financing construction of the east grandstand). The stadium collected \$5,625 in rent for other events and \$1,300 from scoreboard and signboard advertising.

The stadium's share of concessions for baseball, football, All Star, World Series and other events amounted to \$156,774. The "old" left field bleacher seats were sold for \$15,098. Another \$1,516 was earned from other sources.

Of course, there were expenses. A facility the size of the Met does not run itself. It takes nearly 900 employees to handle a crowd of 30,000 at the stadium, not including players and employees of the Twins and Vikings.

The stadium employees include ticket sellers, cleanup crews, vendors, police, ushers, parking attendants and ground workers. The stadium's electric bill runs \$35,500 a year. It pays out more than \$13,000 in sewer charges, nearly \$8,000 for water, almost \$20,000 for gas and heating, and nearly \$13,000 for insurance premiums.

The economic importance of Metropolitan Stadium extends far beyond the ball diamond, the gridiron and the physical plant itself. The stadium is a major contributor to the economic health of the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Expenditures in the area directly attributed to the games of Minnesota's major league teams amounts to more than \$14.5 million each year.

The economic impact is determined by totalling the local expenditures of the clubs, visiting teams, game officials, press, radio and television personnel and out-of-stadium spending by fans.

The initial expenditure of \$14.5 million is received by firms, government and individuals who in turn spend it for wages, services and supplies.

A continuation of the economic process set in motion by professional baseball and football creates a chain of spending which may amount to at least \$29 million in terms of incomes and \$72.5 million in sales volume.

And, according to a recent study of the economic impact of major league sports on the Twin Cities metropolitan area, there are other favorable economic values accrued from the attraction of firms and individuals to the area. They include construction, publicity and psychological boosts to the cities themselves.

The study, compiled by Mid-Continent Surveys, Inc., for the Metropolitan Sports Area Commission, revealed many interesting patterns and habits of area sports fans.

The majority of fans, for example, attend Twins games at Metropolitan Stadium with friends or family members. A significant minority attend with large organized groups.

Seven out of ten fans travel to the stadium by car. Only one out of eight come by bus.

Two thirds of the fans live in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area, distributed about evenly in proportion to population, 42 per cent Hennepin County, 18 per cent Ramsey County, 3 per cent Dakota County. Out of town fans are equally divided between out-state Minnesota and other states and Canada.

Twin Cities fans travel an average of 11 miles to the stadium. One out of eight stop for food and beverages before arriving at the stadium, spending an average of \$2.90 per person. Two out of eight fans stop on the way home and spend \$2.42 per person.

Eighty per cent of the out-of-town fans come to the Twin Cities primarily to see a ball game. About 40 per cent, however, engage in some other activity such as business meetings, visiting friends or relatives, shopping and vacationing.

The average out-of-town fan spends \$15.90 for hotel or motel accommodations while in the Twin Cities area. He spends about \$6.98 for food and beverages, \$8.36 for entertainment, \$13.35 while shopping, \$7.37 for gas and oil and \$3.72 for public transportation.

The Stadium Club, with membership limited to stadium bondholders and season ticket buyers, had about 52,300 patrons in 1965, averaging 568 persons per event. On an average they spent 87 cents for food, \$1.17 for beverages.

Out-of-town fans interviewed during the survey indicated they would attend an average of 3.7 games per season. Twin Cities fans said they would attend 10.5 games.

About 28 per cent of the attendance during the 1964 baseball season was accounted for by mail order ticket sales. About 37 per cent of the mail order applications came from the Twin Cities area. The Twin Cities area fans bought 66 per cent of the mail order tickets for 51 per cent of the games played at the Met.

Business firms accounted for 19 per cent of the ticket applications, 27 per cent of the games ordered and 65 per cent of the tickets ordered. About 59 per cent of the tickets ordered by business firms were located in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. About 32 per cent of the tickets ordered by individuals came from the Twin Cities area.

The New York Yankees remain the favorite of visiting teams for Twins fans, drawing better than four times as many ticket orders as their nearest rivals in popularity, Chicago and Baltimore.

Eight per cent of all games ordered by mail were not filled. Of these, 70 per cent were for games with the Yankees which were sold out; 16 per cent were not filled because the specific location was not available. The remaining 14 per cent were not filled because of inadequate information.

Minute Men

The rise of Metropolitan Stadium would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the Minneapolis Minute Men.

This carefully recruited group of less than 100 has acted as the front line promotional force for the Metropolitan Sports Area Commission.

The Minute Men have been out front ever since they sold the first bond of many to help finance the construction of the original stadium back in 1954-56.

No one group experienced greater excitement - with the exception of the Twins themselves, perhaps - than the Minute Men when the American League pennant was lofted above Metropolitan Stadium in 1965.

Leo P. Sullivan, a charter member of the Minute Men organization and unofficial historian, put it this way:

"We opened the gate, and held it open, and for a helluva long time, it seemed, it looked like nobody was coming! But they did come. First the Twins, then the Vikings, then the teeming thousands and ultimately the World Series itself."

When early efforts for bringing major league baseball to Metropolitan Stadium suffered setback after setback, it was the Minute Men who helped keep the fires of hope burning. They sponsored all sorts of projects designed as a holding action in the stadium's battle of deficits from bond interest and other expenses that were too formidable to handle with less than big league revenue.

Major league exhibition games, concerts, rodeos, auto races and even a sale of history books were staged as lures to spectators. The Minute Men more than twice dipped into their treasury to help out. Once they donated \$11,000 to the financially strapped Metropolitan Sports Area Commission for installment of winter plumbing and a heating system.

Although revenue from the special promotions was in short measure, it helped keep the Met afloat.

Even most major league baseball exhibition games were not too profitable because of the substantial demands of the participating clubs. However, Horace Stoneham twice brought his famous San Francisco Giants to the Met for little more than expenses.

When local promoters learned the Chicago Cardinals of the National Football League were "shopping around" for a change of scenery, the Minute Men were in pursuit to induce the Cardinals to come to Minneapolis. Contracts and notes guaranteeing the Cardinals \$250,000 for games with the New York Giants and the Philadelphia Eagles were nervously signed by the Minute Men officers. The Eagles, the first, lost money. But the Minute Men dug in and with substantial support of business leaders turned the Giants game into a real money maker at a time when the Met's purse had nearly run dry.

Success of the Cardinal-Giants game was the Minute Men's - and the Met's - "finest hour." The entire group was divided into ten teams, each bearing an NFL club name.

Ed Arnold headed the Chicago Bears team. Joe Brink led the Green Bay Packers squad. Joe Duffy had the Baltimore Colts group. Tony Felicetta ran the Los Angeles Rams squad. Bob Knowlton's team was the San Francisco 49'ers. Harry Phillips steered the Chicago Cardinals. Bill Rafferty guided the Philadelphia Eagles. Gunnar Rovick directed the New York Giants. Howie Runyon had charge of the Detroit Lions and Tony Tesarek was leader of the Cleveland Browns team.

It is virtually impossible to single out individuals or groups within the Minute Men organization who contributed more than others. With every demand for their talents and in every "crisis" they came forward to the last man.

It has been the Minute Men's closely knit and united efforts that have produced success for them and the Met. One member aptly describes them as "the group that put the point on the plow and did the plowing."

The members are men with business interests or important jobs that make their contributions to any outside endeavor an overtime job - an extra load. Together they have given an old saying new dimensions: "If you want a big job done, ask busy men to do it."

Over the years the Minute Men have taken on the big job of promoting and supporting the stadium and its sports attractions with unselfish devotion. In addition to the regular monthly meetings held for many years, members have turned out time and again to emergency sessions called to dispose of some specific problem of the moment. All of these efforts took time and energy and dedication to a great variety of tasks, essentially secondary to each individual's first obligation - the conduct of his personal affairs.

Although the Minute Men membership is made up of younger "go-getters" today, it still includes "old timers" like Ray Ewald, Ted Paulson, Eddie Schwartz, George Thompson, Tony Felicetta and Bill Johnson. Some of the Minute Men like Norm McGrew, Ed Arnold, Joe Opsal, Ernie Andresen, Joe Brink and O. D. Gay are former heads of the Chamber of Commerce Sports and Attractions Committee and two members, Leo Sullivan and Emmett Salisbury, actually founded that committee some 20 years ago.

Whenever there was a selling job to be done - Twins or Vikings tickets, program advertising, whatever - always in the forefront were such men as Len Freeman, Tony Felicetta, Sherm Pinkham, Bill Rafferty, Jarv Tew, Otto Wagner, Joe Duffy, Howard Runyon, Norm McDonald and Don McDonald, Harry Phillips, Ed Peterson, Vern Danielson, Stan Eddy, John Lenke, Dick Pollard, Ching Johnson, Dr. Ben Bofenkamp, Joe Bilcik, Gunnar Rovick, Les Fitting, Jim Henry, Bob Knowlton, W. O. Johnson, Tony Tesarek, Dutch Schoenecker and many more who deserve as much credit.

Dick Pollard is president of the Minute Men today. Don McDonald is vice president and Bill Young is secretary-treasurer.

Gunnar Rovick held the top spot of president first with Joe Duffy as vice president and Elmer Hillner as secretary-treasurer. Duffy served as president for three years after that with Leo Sullivan as vice president and Hillner staying on as secretary-treasurer. Howard Runyon took the helm as president for two years. Art Erpelding served as vice president and Trumble as secretary-treasurer. Nearly a third of the members have been on the board.

Chet Roan and Joe Duffy managed the stadium during the early years and Ray Duffy managed the Stadium Club. Erpelding, Trumble, Runyon, Lenke and Rafferty contributed substantially to refining Stadium Club operations.

The Minute Men themselves are always quick to recognize others who have contributed so much to the Stadium and the acquisition of the Twins and Vikings. The role of Wheelock Whitney and Gordon Ritz in

efforts to organize the Continental League as a third major league has earned them the Minute Men's highest esteem.

The Minute Men's initial task has been accomplished. But the work of the group has not ended. It committed itself early to support those enterprises which have made the area big league. "Screaming successes" have faded in other towns because boosters became complacent and figured that they had no further obligation to back and promote the sports attractions they had won.

As one wag said, "And who would be stupid enough to let such a dynamic collection of talent disassemble?"

The Minute Men are as much in the sports picture of Metropolitan Stadium as the Twins and the Vikings. Without the Minute Men it is very doubtful that Met Stadium, the Twins or the Vikings would even be here today.

So many great things have happened at Metropolitan Stadium during the past ten years, it is difficult for most persons to think of the Stadium in terms of its future. But it does have a future and a very bright one indeed.

Metropolitan Stadium is more than just a carefully arranged system of decks, seats, runways, ramps and lights. It has a personality all its own. I like to visit the stadium on the morning before a ball game and see it come alive. It is quite a show and one I never get tired of watching.

You see the groundkeepers at work smoothing off the infield and carefully pruning here and there out beyond the base lines. The PA system sounds off with a cadence-like call of 1-2-3-4. And the scoreboard operator posts the names of players in the starting line up. Under the stands concession operators prepare for the demands of hungry and thirsty fans. There is the clatter of change going into cash drawers. Stacks of tickets are lined up behind closed windows. Vendors pull their souvenir items from cardboard boxes and prepare for the day's sales. It is an exciting and lively place that fires the imagination of all of us on the Metropolitan Sports Area Commission and others who have a role in its operation and its success.

Many of us can reflect on its brief history and recall vividly its every step from the beginning to now. We like to dream of its future. That is how Metropolitan Stadium started - with a dream. That is how it will continue to grow until it incorporates features that will make it capable of serving nearly every desire and interest of the thousands of sports fans who flock through its turnstiles.

An early goal is the completion of permanent third base side stands. This project will duplicate the regular two decks of stadium seating now in place along the first base side. Construction of this new section would eliminate the 6300-seat bleacher-type stands and replace them with about 10,000 individual seats. The new arrangement will also improve viewing for fans.

The Commission hopes to add a covered third deck to the permanent structure along the first base side, some time soon. There is a possibility of including deluxe boxes on top of the third deck cover. A sufficient number of fans have already expressed interest in the idea of rooftop boxes. The boxes, of course, would pay for themselves. It also will be necessary to extend at least two decks all the way around right field to the scoreboard. That may be some time off, but it seems inevitable.

There has been some discussion of building a second stadium club (to seat about 600 persons) on top of the proposed two-deck stand along the third base line. The demand for this type facility warrants consideration.

Eventually, of course, the use of the stadium and the growing demand for seating may require construction of three full decks providing nearly 70,000 seats. That sounds like a fantastic amount of seating, but when you consider the population projections for the metropolitan area alone, it certainly isn't out of the picture of things.

There has been a lot of discussion across the country of enclosed stadiums. There is a possibility that some day Metropolitan Stadium might have a dome or some type of retractable roof. Further research and engineering may produce something that would be feasible and practical.

The Commission has heard a proposal for electrically heating the playing field. Technically it is feasible. It is very costly. If the price barrier could be overcome it would be worth considering.

There is also the idea of installing radiant heating in the stands, that would please the Vikings fans especially. The Commission would like to do it, but that costs a lot of money, too. It remains a future possibility. With the pace of engineering developments, nothing can be ruled out.

Some thought has been given to the idea of moving sidewalks and stadium ramps. They may or may not be practical, but it is something to think about and study thoroughly.

A proposed sod farm, to be used to replenish turf, might be developed so it could double as a Vikings practice field.

The Commission is considering ways to accommodate the offices of the Minnesota Vikings - in addition to the Twins - at the Stadium or nearby. The Vikings' organization, headquartered several miles away at its own choice, is now interested in moving to the Stadium. The Vikings' contract calls for the Commission to provide space.

It is very possible in the future that Metropolitan Stadium may serve the public in an increasing number of ways. Already a place for occasional concerts, it may be used more in the future for rodeos and perhaps for special shows.

One of the first cantilever designed stadiums of any real size in the nation, the Met is regarded as one of the best facilities in the major leagues. None can claim all of its many advantages. Served now by excellent highways and other major routes, access and egress will be improved even further soon with additional roadway construction.

Parking is one of the stadium's biggest assets. When the land for the stadium site was purchased a little over 10 years ago, some people said it was crazy to acquire 160 acres "way out there in the country." No one thinks so today. We've got the best parking available at any major league ball park. More than 15,000 cars can be accommodated on the broad lots surrounding the Met.

Financially, the stadium is on solid footings. More than two million Twins and Vikings fans, a record annual attendance, contributed to the soundness of operations in 1965.

The Stadium met all of its obligations the past year and even managed to add a little over \$21,000 to a reserve fund. It was indeed "an exceptional year." Today, the Stadium has a replacement value of \$20 million, about double the amount invested in it.

The Commission intends to keep Metropolitan Stadium in good fiscal health. It has consistently stayed within its budget while making the necessary improvements for the benefits of tenants and sports fans alike. Some concessions, resulting in higher costs initially, have been made to obtain certain maintenance advantages and long-term savings. For example, older wooden seats are being replaced with seats made of foam plastic that will have a longer life span with practically no maintenance required.

The commission has been fortunate to have the cooperation and support of so many interested individuals and groups. It is particularly indebted to the Minute Men organization and all of the public officials who have been so patient and understanding of stadium problems and needs.

It is because of such cooperation and support that the Metropolitan Sports Area Commission has been able to guide the development of the Stadium to its present success.

And it has permitted the members of this Commission to plan the future of Metropolitan Stadium with imagination and perhaps with a dream or two here and there.

For two years Metropolitan Stadium has been voted as the field with the best playing conditions in the American League. It also has received an award "for consideration to the handicapped" because of construction features.

The future of the Twins

By Calvin Griffith, President, Minnesota Twins

The future of the Twins is indeed excellent for several reasons, according to President Calvin Griffith (A). First, the area is growing and its economy expanding. Second, residents are enthusiastic fans of all types of sports. And third, the Twins are a pennant-winning club, supported by one of baseball's largest organizations of farm club and scouting personnel (B) to help assure continued winning baseball.

To build a winning team in the major leagues, a baseball club must start with a strong farm organization.

To keep a winner, a ball club must continue finding and signing young players with natural ability to feed into the minor league clubs of the organization.

That is the reason we have spent more than \$1,500,000 per year on player development since we moved to Minnesota. That's why we have built the largest organization in baseball with eight farm clubs. And that is why we now have 30 full time scouts all over the United States.

Our insurance for future winning baseball at Metropolitan Stadium is our investment in developing young talent.

Our 1965 American League champion Twins were built around a nucleus of star players between 24 and 31 years old. Bob Allison and Camilo Pascual are the oldest of our highly paid stars at 32. Harmon Killebrew, Earl Battey and Jim Grant all are around the 30 mark.

This means our immediate future should be excellent on the field. These are outstanding players and should have good years ahead of them. We have an opportunity to have three or four years with these players plus younger stars - Tony Oliva, Zoilo Versalles, Jim Kaat, Jim Hall and Don Mincher - playing together in their prime.

This also means we still have time to develop young players to replace them. Because of their caliber it's a large order. We always anticipate coming up with Killebrews, Olivas and Pascuals. But in baseball it's a gamble because of injuries and many other things.

We feel when players reach 33 or 34, they have very few more years to carry on with their best ability.

So we are looking at players in our organization now, hoping we can find the ones who can replace our stars one-by-one in future years. One of our first problems will be relief pitching. Al Worthington is 37, and John Klippstein is 38. They could have one more good year or several. There is no way to tell.

We feel Andy Kosco and Ted Uhlaender certainly have the potential to develop into major league regular outfielders. Kosco is a long ball hitter of the Killebrew-Allison type. Uhlaender hits more for high average. He led the Pacific Coast League for Denver with .340 last year.

Jim Merritt and Dave Boswell were rookies on our pitching staff last year. Both could become big winners in the future and replace the 15 and 20-game winners of today.

If we can improve the players on our bench, we try to do that. Often these boys move up after a year into regular jobs. Don Mincher was on our bench for more than two years before he became a regular. He could develop into one of the big home run hitters in the game.

In our farm system now we have young infielders such as Rod Carew and Rick Renick, who played at Orlando in the Florida State League. Carew is a Panamanian and a left-handed hitter. He batted .303 and could become another Oliva. We also have infielder Jim Jenkins, third baseman Ron Clark and a hitter named Dan DiPace. Clark is a wiry boy, a bronco buster in rodeos. DiPace hit .333 for Wisconsin Rapids last year.

Injuries are just part of what can happen to such talented young men. Often good prospects are called into the armed services. It takes time - sometimes a year or two - for a young man to get back into the rhythm and coordination he

needs in baseball. Jim Hall was called into service twice, which slowed him down.

In our system we are trying to give more and more players the opportunity to make the major leagues. If we find out they are not major league caliber, we give them releases and try to get others who can help in the future.

Of course, any club gets stuck once in a while by releasing a player.

There was the case of Kosco. He signed with Detroit for a large bonus. After several years of showing very little in the minors, he was released. But our man at Bismarck, N.D., Vern Morgan, thought Kosco had a chance. We signed him. Kosco turned around and led the Northern League in home runs, hitting and runs batted in during 1964. Now he is battling for a major league job.

This points out the necessity for having extremely good men in position to see outstanding talent wherever it is.

Every manager in our farm organization also is a scout. He sends reports on every player he sees in his league. So we have five or six reports on every player in organized baseball. Believe it or not, sometimes we get five or six different opinions on one man's ability.

From their reports we can draft players from other organizations if they should become available.

We also have scouts watching -the major leagues. Del Wilbur and Jack McKeon scout the American League. Otto Bluege, brother of Ossie Bluege, our controller and former field manager, scouts the National league with Dick Wiencek of Los Angeles. Billy Martin was a major league scout before he became a coach for us.

From their reports we get ideas and opinions for trades and waivers - two other ways to acquire players. Sometimes a player is just getting ready for the major leagues when his options have been exhausted. He must be put on waivers. We watch carefully for them.

Under the new free agent draft rule we draft players just out of high school and college. Last year we drafted 52 and signed 30. The Twins and the Houston Astros signed more than anyone.

Because we are a winning club, we get 19th choice this year. This makes it harder to get any of the top prospects. But often those boys receive such big bonuses they are not always hungry enough to learn all they need to learn.

We feel with our scouting staff we are in excellent position to compete under the new draft rule. Though the lower clubs get first choice on the top few, it takes more than one player to build a club. Right now I would say Wiencek in Los Angeles and Floyd Baker in Ohio are our top scouts.

Scouting has developed so highly in baseball that we even get reports on boys in Little Leagues, Pony Leagues or Babe Ruth Leagues. If a boy with unusual natural ability is spotted, we might follow him eight or nine years. We have scouts from coast-to-coast and from the Gulf to Canada. Our scouts have "bird dogs", or sub-scouts. If we sign a player first spotted by a sub-scout, we pay him a bonus.

With quality scouts, minor league managers and coaches plus highly-salaried players, the Twins have become one of the highest paying organizations in baseball. Our team payroll is second only to the New York Yankees in the American League.

This means our break-even point is high. But we feel our future is excellent in the Twin Cities. I have heard people say that after we win a pennant, we will have to keep winning them. I have heard people say this could become another Milwaukee. I don't think either will be true.

First of all, most of our fans are local people, not transients. They take pride in Minnesota. And they are sports-minded. They love football, hockey, fishing and hunting.

We were told when we came here it would be a bad area because of the fishing, boating and hunting. We have found out that instead this is an asset.

I don't think it's possible we could have another Milwaukee situation here. When we came here, we gave our fans 50 games on television. By doing this we expanded our drawing possibilities over a five-state area. People who never had a chance to see a major league game before came to see the Twins after seeing them on television. Milwaukee never televised a home game or a road game before we moved here. Only when they received compensation from a game-of-the-week televised game was a home game on TV.

And the Milwaukee owners never lived in the city where the team played. I live in the Twin Cities all year long. My sister, Thelma, and my three brothers all live here and work here. We have a winter tour bigger than any in baseball, sending our players to between 80 and 100 communities every year. All over the five-state area our fans have had a chance to meet our players. Every year about 300,000 persons come in delegations from towns on our tour, and we intend to keep this up.

Besides all this, the Twin Cities are growing. The working man is well paid here with labor well organized. Most of the industry is for consumer products. This economy does not rely on government contracts.

Surveys show that by the year 2,000 there will be about three million living in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Because of this expected growth, because of our sports minded fans, because we have a first rate farm organization as well as a pennant-winning team, I feel we have the best franchise in baseball today.

The future of the Vikings

By Max Winter, President, Minnesota Vikings

The future of the National Football League, from New York to Atlanta to Los Angeles, is bright and challenging. Nowhere does it hold more promise of exciting days to come than in Minnesota.

It was a perfect marriage, the Upper Midwest and the Vikings. Here is a territory so natural for professional football that success was envisioned from the day the franchise was born here. Through sacrifice and hard work, the beginnings of that success have been realized. But we have just scratched the surface.

In their five years of operation, the Vikings have become one of the soundest organizations in the National Football League. We have accomplished more than we ever dared hope when the team began to play here in 1961. Yet there is so much more looming on the horizon.

After a five-year orientation program, the Viking organization has polished the rough edges, strengthened itself at critical points and taken on maturity until it now seems capable of becoming a consistent NFL title contender.

I believe we have progressed farther than any team in the league. It's true that we felt our record last fall was going to-be better than 7-7. But there are many things to consider. The Vikings are playing in the toughest division in professional football. Had we been assigned to the Eastern division, we would have won at least one title by now. The Vikings proved, last fall, that they can beat any team in the league on a given Sunday. To win the title, a team needs depth, and some good fortune. Sometimes the difference is one man, or possibly one play in a key game. And of course, you've got to have the coaching.

We're fortunate, on the Vikings, to have such a high caliber of coaching. Norm Van Brocklin has done an outstanding job in five years. He'll be even better in the years to come. He has his feet wet in the ways of coaching now. He knows what works best against certain teams, and what those teams will throw at him. Remember, he joined the Vikings in 1961 with no background as a head coach. That was a monumental jump, from an active NFL player to an NFL head coach,' and Van Brocklin negotiated it well. In the process, he has taken on a first class staff of assistants, who know their business and get the best out of players.

The front office is important, too. Here the Vikings stand on an equally firm position. The board of directors, responsible for the overall operation of the franchise, secured a tremendously capable general manager in Jim Finks. He has the complete respect of both the people he works with in the Viking organization and those around the league. In a relative short time with us he has made an amazing insight into the mechanics of the league. We are all very happy with his work.

No matter how great the strength of your coaching or front office, however, you need playing talent to win. Fresh, incoming talent every year. The only way to obtain that is with a thorough scouting system, and here again the Vikings are well fortified. Jerry Reichow, only one season removed from an active playing career, made an outstanding contribution last fall in his first venture into scouting. He did so well, in fact, that he became director of playing personnel, supervising our entire scouting network. We have Jess Thompson as a full time scout in the Southwest, and we are considering adding a similar position in the Southeast.

Some NFL teams favor universal scouting, where teams pool their evaluation and ratings of top college personnel. That saves a great deal of expense, but the Vikings have never gone in for it. We prefer to compete in the acquisition of talent, just as our team competes on the field.

Which brings us to look at our playing personnel today, and a projected look into the future. The Vikings are basically still a young team. The squad's nucleus was obtained in the 1960 collegiate draft. Those players, like Tommy Mason, Fran Tarkenton, Rip Hawkins and Ed Sharockman, are now in the prime of their careers. We have strengthened several positions by trades. In addition, I felt we had our best draft ever last fall, even better than 1960. We got the help where we needed it most. Moreover, the Vikings signed their first six choices - boys like Jerry Shay of Purdue, Jim Lindsey of Arkansas, Don Hansen and Ron Acks of Illinois, Doug Davis of Kentucky and Bob Hall of Brown. Out of those six should come at least two outstanding players, the type who can help lead a team to a championship.

Many people have asked what we intend to do about the huge bonus payments. Is there any end in sight? Well, I don't know if the bonus system can be curbed. As long as the American Football League remains in business, there will be competition for the top college talent. We might as well face the fact that the AFL will be with us, and it is up to the NFL to hold its status as the major league of professional football. To me, there is only one big league - the NFL. If it takes a continuing outlay of cash to keep it that way, so be it.

Nobody can dispute the fact that such payments make a difference in the financial figures of a team's operation. But I have every confidence that the Upper Midwest territory will continue to support the Vikings in big league fashion. This is solid football country, the finest in the nation. Our fans are steeped in football tradition. They are loyal. With the public support we have, the Vikings now can get into a bidding war if need be and go after that one player who can make a difference in winning.

Metropolitan Stadium, the only playing field home the Vikings have ever had, will be enlarged soon to accommodate some 55,000 people for football. This is truly good news for us and for the people who want to see the Vikings. Last year we sold 33,000 season tickets. I'm hopeful that within two years our season ticket sale will reach 40,000. Also on the long range scope is the possibility that some day the Vikings may have their offices, locker rooms and practice field facilities at Metropolitan Stadium. This would give us the finest setup in the NFL.

Television . . . hasn't that almost become synonymous in recent years with the NFL? Millions and millions of fans have watched the league's games over the past decade and more. Television has been a vital factor in the growth of professional football. Financially, it provides a big part in meeting our yearly budget.

Under the terms Of the recently

signed "contract with CBS, each NFL team will receive approximately \$1.2 million each year for the next three years. Also significant is the new plan of- inadified-blackout uV NFL cities.. In the future, each Sunday that the Vikings are playing at home, there will be another NFL game piped into: our area. It will give the thousands of fans who: cannot,

oobtain tickets to Viking games an opportunity to see and appreciate the other NFL teams. I think it will create an even greater interest in the NFL. In addition, the league plans to televise eight "double-headers" this season^--carrying a game from one section of the country via the- early afternoon and one from another section in the late afternoon. Before the regular NFL season opens in September, four pre-season games will be telecast. Last year the Vikings were included in one pre-season national telecast, defeating the New York Giants at Omaha. Some have said,"VVhat about over-exposure? Won't the public become/saturated with professional football? It's a long season, from August until the Pro Bowl game in January." "The league has considered, that possibility, of course. But we are firmly convinced,that fans will never tire of the caliber of NFL football on TV. They can't get too much of it. As long as it remains a class product, it will be in heavy demand.

There is one additional item on future NFL business which carries significance for Vikings fans. That is the sound program of expansion adapted by the league. This season, with the addition of Atlanta to the NFL the Vikings will play 14 league games in a 15-week span. Next, season the league will contain 16 teams, and-we will play 16 conference games. Present plans are to split the league into four divisions of four teams each. The four divisional champions will meet in a semifinal play off, and the two winners will play for the NFL title. This will hold the interest of fans right down to the last game, while retaining the old rivalries/Can you picture, for instance, the competitive nature of a division including the Vikings, Green Bay Chicago and Detroit? This is just speculation, since nothing has been finalized concerning the makeup of the new divisions. But I do know that the battles for divisional championships will be increased by this new format; and I expect the Vikings to be in there contending for the title each year. In conclusion, the future of NFL football in Minnesota is the most exciting project I have ever been involved in. The NFL is big league, and big business. Our franchise is an integral part of this.

Sunday afternoons at the Met have become a way of life. I'm grateful that the future holds every promise of more thrilling Sundays to come for the Vikings and for our fans.