

any sort of sensible judgment."

His baseball strategy does not differ too greatly from his speech. Although it is imaginative and even sometimes seems reckless, it is always carefully reasoned. His reputation for unorthodoxy comes from such widely publicized minor-league gambits as walking the pitcher to get to Sam Jethroe whenever a two-out, nobody-on situation presented itself; in the majors, he got a ton of publicity by keeping a righthanded pitcher in the game by placing him at third-base, while he brought in a lefthander to pitch to one lefthanded batter.

More generally, his reputation came from his success in keeping the White Sox in contention long after their time by running them as no team has run since the advent of the lively ball and the big inning. As we have indicated, however, Richards does not run his men just for the sake of seeing them run. There is no stratagem, no tactic that, in his own book, is not solid. And, as far as Paul Richards is concerned, his own percentages are the only ones that count. "I don't think there is any such thing as The Book," he says. "Every manager has to write his own book." (Obviously, that is true. If it weren't, if there were only one right way to meet a situation, then an owner could save a fat salary by installing an IBM machine next to the water cooler.)

The Jethroe strategy came to him one day in Buffalo when the Montreal pitcher was batting in the eighth inning of a tie game. *I hope this guy gets on*, Richards thought to himself, *so Jethroe won't get to lead off the ninth*. Having thought that, he then thought: *Well, if I want him on base, why not just put him there?*

He explains the percentage this way: "From past experience it seemed that when Jethroe got on as leadoff man, he'd score about 99 times out of 100. But with the pitcher on first, and two outs, he almost had to hit a home run, in the small Buffalo park, to get a run in. Even if he hit what might normally be a triple for him, it would be doubtful if the pitcher could get around. I tried it four times, I think, and one of those times Jethroe did hit a home run. There were few tributes to my genius that day."

The one-batter pitcher shuffle was also a tactic he had tried in the minors. Most of the time it worked, although once, at Buffalo, he moved Bob Hooper to first base to bring in a lefthander, and when Hooper returned to the mound he was racked for three straight doubles. This type of maneuvering had been in the minors before and it is, of course, done on the sandlots every day. The

point is, that until Richards, it wasn't being done in the majors.

At Fenway Park, early in 1951, the White Sox were leading the Red Sox, 7-6, with Ted Williams scheduled to lead off in the ninth. Richards wanted to bring in his good lefthander, Billy Pierce, to keep Williams off the bases, but—with Fenway's left-field fence breathing down on the pitcher—he also wanted to keep Harry Dorish, a righthander with a sinking fast ball, in there to face Boston's string of righthanded power-hitters. The risk of putting Dorish on third was slight, since Williams hadn't tried to hit there even when Lou Boudreau's Indians had vacated the entire area. After Pierce pitched to Williams, Richards sent in the slick-fielding Floyd Baker, who frequently replaced Minoso at third in the late innings anyway. After Pierce got Williams on a pop-up, the Red Sox tied the game off Dorish. Chicago finally won it in the 11th.

Richards denies that this was anything more than percentage baseball; he insists that he wants no part of bizarre tactics. What is the percentage in having players spend hours practicing once-in-a-lifetime plays, he asks, when the same time could be put to use working on the fundamentals that win games day in and day out?

It has generally been assumed that when he was managing Chicago, Richards used a running game as an evening-up tactic against the stronger teams like the Yankees and Indians. Richards says that isn't precisely true, either. "You don't run against a team, you run against a pitcher. Unfortunately, the easiest pitchers to run against are usually found on second-division teams. Besides, you usually don't run until you get a lead, and it is obviously easier to get a lead against a poor team than against a good one."

That doesn't mean Richards will never run when he's behind, however. Against the Yanks early this season, he got a run by pulling a double steal in the fourth inning when he was four runs behind and had weak-hitting Willie Miranda at bat. That early in the game, he felt, it was worth risking the out to be three runs behind instead of four. "In fact, if we were only one run behind, the play probably would have been much harder to pull off, because Berra might not have thrown to second. As it was, if he had whipped the ball back to the pitcher, the man coming in would have been dead and everybody would have said, 'That Richards is crazy risking the out for one run when he needs four!'" He paused for a long moment to think it over, then said: "When you try things like that

—things that are usually called crazy—you have to be prepared to have them backfire." There was another pause, then a thin-lipped smile. "Sometimes I think the only possible preparation is a three-year contract."

When he is asked whether he really thinks the average sportswriter is qualified to second-guess a major-league manager, he gives it careful thought, then shows a nicety of language and thought by answering: "I would say that they are *qualified* but not always *justified*. They would be justified only after they came to the manager to find out what he had in mind in doing whatever it was that didn't work . . . I have observed that I have never been second-guessed on anything that *did* work."

In addition to his running teams, Richards is most renowned for his ability to squeeze a few extra drops out of his pitching staff. Saul Rogovin, the ERA leader in 1951, has been able to win for nobody but Richards, either in the minors or the majors. Virgil Trucks came off a 5-19 season to win 20 and then 19 games for him. Sandy Consuegra, picked up on waivers the second time around (at one point, every club in both leagues had waived on him), led the American League in percentage last season with a 16-3 record.

Like Joe McCarthy, Richards does not believe in the four-starter rotation system. Pitchers, no less than batters, tend to have hot and cold streaks, so over the season most pitchers' records tend to even up. For obvious reasons, Paul would much rather have three 14-5 pitchers than a pair of 20-15 pitchers. "A pitcher makes his own rotation," Richards says. "You work him the way he works the best. That's just common sense." To Richards, common sense tells him to spot them. There are pitchers who beat some clubs and can't beat others; there are some who work best in certain parks; there are even some who work better in the cool weather of spring and fall than in the hot summer months. He had such a pitcher with the White Sox—Joe Dobson—and when an unseasonably cool day popped up in July, Richards would change his pitching plans and use him. There are pitchers who—for obvious reasons—are most effective pitching at night, and others who—for less obvious reasons—are most effective pitching a day game following a night game. "The day after a night game, a player feels heavy and lousy. As a rule, very few runs are scored. Since there does not figure to be much hitting, the situation obviously calls for a control pitcher, a pitcher who isn't going to put many men on base."