

NAPOLEON IS HERO

Pinch-Hitter Triples With 3 On and 2 Out in Mets' Ninth

By **LEONARD KOPPETT**

Special to The New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, April 24 —Piling the incredible upon the implausible, the New York Mets repeated in broad daylight today the ninth-inning trauma they inflicted on the San Francisco Giants in the middle of the night 18 hours before.

Danny Napoleon, a 23-year-old rookie, up at the plate for only the third time in his life in a major league game, tripled off Bob Shaw with the bases loaded, two out, the count two strikes and no balls, and the Mets trailing by two runs.

This blow, a long, wind-aided drive to right center that bounced off the glove of Jesus Alou and off the wire fence 380 feet from home, gave the Mets a 7-6 victory and almost complete euphoria.

Shortly before midnight Friday, they had scored four runs to tie in the ninth, and had gone on to win in the 11th inning, 9-8. This time, they had a 4-4 tie going into the last of the eighth and appeared to be beaten because a wind-blown popup by Willie Mays had set the stage for two Giant runs.

Score Is Tied

But the inning that followed surpassed anything that had gone before in the way of unorthodox detail. It also overshadowed such orthodox details as two home runs by Ed Kranepool earlier in the game.

The Giant pitcher was Shaw, who had relieved Jack Sanford with two out, two on and the score tied in the eighth, and had retired Jesse Gonder on a weak grounder.

Now Charlie Smith, the leading home run hitter of the Mets last year, greeted Shaw with a surprise bunt to the right of the mound. He got a hit without even a throw to first.

Cleon Jones batted for Bobby Klaus and flied out. Chris Cannizzaro, batting .160, was so fooled by one of Shaw's change-ups, that he checked his swing and this fooled Shaw even worse. The ball came back to the mound on one bounce, but not nearly as hard as Shaw expected. It glanced off the pitcher's glove for an error, and the tying run was on base.

Pinch Hits for Kroll

The next scheduled hitter was Gary Kroll, the tall young pitcher who had been knocked out in the first inning Friday and who was about to become the winning pitcher in this game after working four innings in relief.

Only one left-handed pinch-hitter was left to the Mets: Warren Spahn, who was 44 years old yesterday. He bounced out to Willie McCovey, but did succeed in moving both runners into scoring position and a moment later this had an important consequence.

Johnny Lewis, who had stretched his hitting streak to 10 games with a first-inning single, was a batter the Giants feared. Shaw tried to make him swing at a bad pitch and when the count reached 3-1 gave him ball four deliberately.

It is against conservative

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The New York Times

Published: April 25, 1965

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METS' 3 IN NINTH BEAT GIANTS, 7-6

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baseball thinking to put the winning run on base this way and the next play showed why. Of course, if Spahn had not moved the runner from first to second, the Giants would never have considered walking Lewis, since a single in that case wouldn't have been enough to tie the game.

And that left it up to Napoleon. Shaw, one of the most experienced and effective relief pitchers around, threw the rookie a big curve for called strike one. He threw an off-speed pitch that Napoleon swung at, much too soon, and missed.

But then Shaw threw the 0-and-2 pitch within reach and Napoleon slammed it up into the wind, and the Mets were ahead. They were far from safe, however, because they still had to get the Giants out and their regular shortstop and second baseman, McMillan and Klaus, were out of the game.

So, after Bob Hendley had fanned Kranepool, Casey Stengel sent his Mets into the field with the following alignment:

Smith, who had been playing third, moved to short.

Billy Cowan, who had replaced Jim Hickman in center after Gonder had batted in the eighth, moved in to second base.

Napoleon, who is an outfielder, went to third.

Bob Taylor went in to catch, since Cannizzaro had been removed for a pinch runner (Al Jackson) when he got on with the tying run.

And Dennis Ribant, last night's winning pitcher, went to the mound to face the middle of the fearsome Giant batting order.

The excitement continued. Matty Alou hit a one-hop liner—which Cowan grabbed moving to his left. One out.

Willie McCovey bounced a single up the middle.

Mays rolled to Smith at short, who tossed to Cowan for the force at second—and Cowan didn't try anything fancy like a double-play pivot, settling for the second out.

With Jesus Alou up, batting exactly .400, Mays surprised no one by stealing second—but when Taylor's high throw sailed into center field, Willie wound up on third.

But there he stayed as Alou grounded to Smith, who made a careful pick-up and deliberate throw to Kranepool, ending the game.

As the Mets ran and jumped off the field in World Series-style jubilation, the earlier events of the game seemed far in the past.

Tom Parsons had started against Sanford. McCovey's wild throw on a bunt, along with hits by Lewis and Smith,

gave the Mets a 2-0 lead in the first. Eight singles off Parsons, none of them exceptionally hard hit, cost him a run in the second and three in the third. Kroll took over in the fifth.

Meanwhile, Kranepool's homers, in the third and sixth innings, pulled the Mets even. In the eighth, the pop fly Mays hit drifted toward the right-field foul line as Klaus, Lewis and Kranepool converged, and Bobby's final lunge was unsuccessful. A bunt put Mays on third and made the Met infield play in, and Jim Hart grounded a single past Smith for the tie-breaking run. A walk and Shaw's first hit in two years as a Giant added what looked like an insurance run—but against the Mets these days no insurance is enough.

NEW YORK (N.)		SAN FRAN. (N.)				
	ab.r.h.bi		ab.r.h.bi			
Lewis, lf	4 2 1 0	Pagan, ss	5 1 1 0			
McMillan, ss	3 1 0 0	M. Alou, lf	5 1 2 0			
Napoleon, ph	1 0 1 3	McCovey, 1b	4 0 1 0			
Kranepool, 1b	4 2 2 2	Schroeder, pr	0 0 0 0			
Christopher, lf	3 0 1 0	Mays, cf	5 2 3 1			
Hickman, cf	3 0 0 1	J. Alou, rf	4 1 2 1			
Gonder, ph	1 0 0 0	Hart, 3b	4 1 1 2			
Cowan, cf, 2b	0 0 0 0	Davenport, 3b	0 0 0 0			
Smith, 3b, ss	4 1 2 1	Haller, c	3 0 1 1			
Klaus, 2b	3 0 0 0	Lanier, 2b	4 0 0 0			
Jones, ph, cf	1 0 0 0	Sanford, p	3 0 0 0			
Cannizzaro, c	4 0 0 0	Shaw, p	1 0 1 1			
Jackson, pr	0 1 0 0					
Taylor, c	0 0 0 0	Totals	38 6 12 6			
Parsons, p	1 0 0 0					
Swoboda, ph	1 0 0 0					
Kroll, p	1 0 0 0					
Spahn, ph	1 0 0 0					
Totals	35 7 7 7					
New York	2 0 1 0 0 1 0 0 3-7					
San Francisco	0 1 3 0 0 0 0 2 0-6					
E—McCovey, Klaus, Shaw, Taylor. LOB—New York 5, San Francisco 8.						
2B—Mays. 3B—Napoleon. HR—Kranepool 2 (3). S—McMillan, J. Alou. SB—Mays.						
	IP.	H.	R.	ER.	BB.	SO.
Parsons	4	7	4	4	0	0
Kroll (W, 2-0)	4	4	2	2	1	3
Ribant	1	1	0	0	0	0
Sanford	7½	5	4	2	2	8
Shaw (L, 0-1)	1	2	3	0	1	0
Hendley	⅓	0	0	0	0	1
HBP—By Kroll (McCovey). PB—Cannizzaro.						
T—2:48. A—14,702.						