



The Pride of the Red Sox

an education major named Don Schwall is
the American League's 1961 Rookie-of-the-Year

By PAUL GALLOWAY

IT ALL started with a phone call—Boston to Seattle. The baseball season was nearly a month and a half gone, and the Red Sox pitching staff needed help from their minor league club in Seattle. "Send Don Schwall." The former O.U. athlete caught a plane to Boston immediately, and on a sunny Sunday afternoon, May 21, Schwall stood on the pitching mound at Fenway Park, facing the Chicago White Sox in his first major league game. It was the beginning of a remarkable season for the tall right-hander.

That afternoon Schwall pitched the Boston team to a 4-1 win over Chicago. Eight days later he shut out the Baltimore Orioles, 5-0. Schwall won five straight games before dropping his first one. In July he was selected to play for the American League in the second All-Star game in Boston—a rare honor for a first-year man.

Schwall became Boston's most dependable pitcher. By the middle of August he had won 13 of 15 decisions when a kidney ailment sidelined him for two weeks. He returned to action weakened from his illness and never regained his earlier form. Still, he finished the season with a superior 15-7 record for the mediocre second division Boston club. He gave up an average of only 3.27 runs per game, placing him near the top of the league's pitchers. And in October he was named Rookie-of-the-Year in the American League.

When the season ended the last of September, Schwall returned to the University of Oklahoma for the semester's work needed to complete his degree in business education. Since 1957, when he signed a contract with the Red Sox for a reported \$50,000 bonus, Schwall has been combining professional baseball with college, attending O.U. during the fall semester of each year and playing ball in the spring and summer.

Schwall was in his bachelor apartment
Boston Red Sox hurler Don Schwall shows the form which won him Rookie-of-the-Year title.

near the campus when the word came of his Rookie-of-the-Year selection. After the excitement had subsided, the 23-year-old athlete had time to stretch his 6-foot 6-inch frame into a leather easy chair and talk about school, the past baseball season and his plans for the future.

"All I need to complete my degree is my practice teaching which I'm doing at Capitol Hill High School in Oklahoma City. I teach bookkeeping and typing. Getting a diploma has always been one of my goals. Most people said I'd never finish when I signed with the Red Sox.

"I don't know whether I'll ever teach once I'm through playing baseball. I'd like to coach, preferably basketball. I've always loved to play basketball, and I think I'd like to coach it."

Schwall first came to O.U. in 1955 from his native Ypsilanti, Michigan, on a basketball and baseball scholarship. His brother, Air Force Capt. John Schwall, who was stationed at Tinker Field, had told Sooner baseball coach Jack Baer about his younger brother, a three-sport high school star.

AT O.U. Schwall is best remembered for his ability in basketball. He broke the Sooner scoring record for sophomores during the 1956-57 season, averaging 15.9 points per game. He also led Coach Doyle Parrack's squad in rebounding. One of the highlights of that year was Schwall's three-game scoring duel with Kansas' 7-foot 1-inch center Wilt Chamberlain. In the first two games Chamberlain outscored Schwall 36 to 24 and 22 to 20, but Schwall prevailed in the third contest, 30 to 11.

At the beginning of the next basketball season in December, 1957, Schwall decided to sign the contract with Boston.

"The summer after my sophomore year I played semi-pro ball for Mitchell, South Dakota. I pitched real well. My control got pretty sharp and before I knew it 15 major

league clubs were interested in signing me."

After agreeing to terms, Schwall played three seasons of minor league ball. He had a good year with Minneapolis in 1960, winning 16 and losing 9, but at the beginning of this season, he still hadn't made the Red Sox roster.

Schwall was surprised by his quick success after Boston beckoned for him. "I never had any idea I would pitch so well at first. Sal Maglie, the Red Sox pitching coach, was a big help in telling me how to pitch to the hitters. Joe Ginsberg and Joe Pagliaroni (Sox catchers) helped a lot, too."

SCHWALL has a variety of pitches, but he relies on a sinker "about 80 per cent of the time." The sinker is a pitch which drops quickly as it comes to the plate. "I have several speeds for the sinker. The idea is for them to hit it on the ground. It's a hard pitch to get up in the air."

Opposing hitters will verify this statement. Only eight home runs were hit off Schwall this season.

Schwall had plenty of thrills in his first year in the major leagues. "Being Rookie-of-the-Year was my biggest honor, but I think striking out Stan Musial in the All-Star game was my biggest thrill. Also I got a kick out of striking out Jerry Adair of Baltimore four times the first game I pitched against the Orioles. I had played basketball and baseball against Adair when he was playing for Oklahoma State and I was at Oklahoma."

Fielding the inevitable question of Maris and Mantle, Schwall judged Mantle "the toughest hitter I ever faced. I had good luck with Maris, though. He didn't hit a ball out of the infield against me. There will be a lot of pressure on Maris and Mantle next year after the season they just had. The Yankees have a great club, of course, but I think they can be beaten. I managed to break even against them. (Schwall was

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2-2 against New York.) It's a funny thing, but the teams that gave me the most trouble were Washington and Los Angeles."

Schwall thinks the Tigers will be contenders again next year and also predicts an improvement in the Boston team. "We're a young club and the added year of experience is sure to help. I can't say how I'll do. I don't think there's anything to the 'sophomore jinx' that people talk about. It'll be harder for me since the hitters will

have had a year to look me over, but I will have had a year, too."

Schwall is high in his praise of the Boston fans and Red Sox manager Mike Higgins. "The fans there are great. They're extremely loyal, and they took me under their wing. They couldn't have been nicer. Higgins is a patient, intelligent baseball man—a good man to play for."

Higgins has also had some nice things to say about his prize rookie. "Any time you bring up a kid who pitches the way Schwall does, you have to think things are turning for the better. The kid is great. I thought he was pretty good this spring, but

he's better than I thought. He makes the game look easy."

Schwall has a heavy calendar of banquets and appearances scheduled before he leaves Oklahoma for spring training in February. "I hope I can get some rest sometime. I've been working out a little and I intend to keep it up until I report. At any rate, it's good to be back in Oklahoma. I like the East, but Oklahoma is my favorite spot. The people here are friendlier than any place I have lived. I hope to live here when I'm through with baseball."

But the way Don Schwall plays baseball, that time should be far in the future.

Look of a Leader

continued

sent are Gary Wayne Abrams, Purcell; Bobby Joe Altom, Healdton; Juanita Anderson, Mattoon, Illinois; Victor V. Ashford, El Reno; Eldon C. Battey, Elk City; Logan Beard III, Madill; Ann Belanger, Guymon; George Bershinsky, Hartshorne; Carol Bird, Oklahoma City Classen; Candace Blalock, Pauls Valley; Louis H. Brigham, Hobart; Letitia Chambers, Enid; Linda Kay Chandler, Spencer; Jack Cochran, Wagoner; Bill Dawson, Seminole; Robert Thomas Doty, Tulsa Webster; Roger Bruce Elton, Grove; Linda Evans, Poteau; Richard H. Evans, Temple; Jerry Flick, Clinton; Linda Graves, Blackwell; Lynda Jo Hackler, Ponca City; Robert Kent Hatley, Duncan; Michael Hewitt, Bartlesville; David Landholt, Holdenville; Mary Ann Lively, McAlester, and Edward McConnel, Crescent.

Also William Mercer, Oklahoma City U. S. Grant; Allen Miller, Hinton; David A. Milligan, Canton; Stan Moran, Ardmore; Larry Mullins, Sand Springs; George Narvaes, Winfield, Kansas; Dan Nelson, Woodward; David Nemecek, Oklahoma City Capitol Hill; Richard Northcutt, Noble; David Pauling, Lawton; Susan Reno, Cleveland; Don Ringrose, Guthrie; Ron Roblyer, Commerce; Dianne Schwab, Alva; Jack D. Shannon, Anadarko; Ralph Simmons, Hugo; Carole Kay Slepka, Okemah; Billi Kaye Smith, Stroud; Steve Smith, Oklahoma City Northeast; Randall H. Smith, Broken Bow; James A. Stiles, Frederick; Jim Taylor, Durant; Stephanie Thomas, Vinita; Larry Thompson, Midwest City; Karen Tims, Altus; Donald Walker, Shawnee; Charles Waters, Marlow; Charles D. Watson, Drumright; Thomas P. White, Tulsa Edison, and William Winans, Jr., Maysville.

These are names to remember; you may be seeing them again.

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