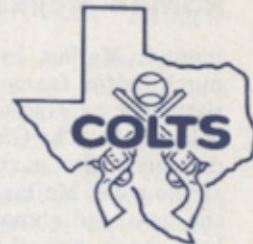


Roman Mejias / *gardener with a full-time job*



By Joe Reichler, AP sportswriter, with Budd Theobald. Designed by Bob Laughlin. Copyright 1962 by Houston Sports Association, Inc. Published by Prentice-Hall, Inc. Printed in U.S.A.



BIG GUN OF .45s' ATTACK

ROMAN MEJIAS SHOULD HAVE BEEN as happy as a bird out of a cage this Sunday morning — May 4, 1958. He had just been informed by Danny Murtaugh, the Pittsburgh manager, that Billy Virdon, the Pirates' regular center fielder, had taken ill, and that he, Mejias, would be in the lineup that afternoon against the Giants.

It was the year the Giants had moved West and the Pirates were to play in cozy Seals Stadium. This was the first trip into San Francisco for the Pirates but Mejias was not a stranger to Seals Stadium. He had played often there in 1956 as a member of the Hollywood Stars, then a farm team of the Pirates.

But Roman, usually a nice, easy-going, friendly fellow, was in a growling mood. He had just finished eating breakfast. The food was fine, all right, but the price was something else again.

"She cost me four dollars to eat breakfast," Roman bristled, "and I am mad. I am madder than anybody."

So Mejias hied himself to the ball park and took his anger out on the Giants. He came to bat in the first inning and promptly whaled southpaw Johnny Antonelli's first pitch into the left field stands for a home run. Roman's next time at bat, in the third, he again took a raffle at Antonelli's first pitch and again the ball landed in the left field stands, for home run No. 2.

Later in the game, with Marv Grissom, a right-hander, on the