

Roman Mejias

at Columbus. He hit 21 home runs there in 1961, a fact that didn't escape the Colts when they picked him in the National League player pool for 75 grand.

A big opportunity

Mejias found things different in Houston where, unlike Pittsburgh, a regular job awaited him if he could earn it. The husky six-footer wasted little time staking a claim to right field with his steady play, and his known ability to hit big league pitching. He began hitting practically from the first exhibition game and at the end of spring training was leading the club in batting, home runs, runs batted in and total bases.

Mejias has continued to build a solid foundation in his new "home" in Houston. He etched his name on the cornerstone of Houston National League baseball, along with that of winning pitcher Bobby Shantz, by blasting two home runs and driving in six runs in Houston's 11-2 victory over the Chicago Cubs in Texas' debut in the National League, April 10, 1962.

Mejias by all odds has been the hitting star of the Colt .45s, leading the team in batting, runs scored, hits, home runs, runs batted in and total bases through the month of May. Nearly all of his first ten home runs came in clutch situations.

One of Mejias' biggest batting days took place on May 6 when he contributed three home runs and drove in seven runs in a double-header split with the Braves in Milwaukee. Two of those homers came in the second game and helped Dick

Farrell gain his second Colt victory.

That nightcap marked the first time a Colt game had been televised back home. The occasion prompted Coach Lum Harris to chide Mejias.

"You're just a showboat. You knew you were on television."

Big Gun of .45s' Attack

Mejias is far from a showboat, even though he gives fly balls the Willie Mays treatment in the outfield. That is, he catches the ball at his belt buckle. But the husky six-footer with the dark, wistful eyes, square brown face and friendly

smile is no "hot dog" — a player who turns it on for the crowd. He's a sincere, determined athlete who finally has found a home and intends to dig permanent roots in it. His teammates like him and so do the fans of Houston. ■



Mejias slides safely into third at Milwaukee, May 5.

Next day he eliminated need for such exertion by hitting three home runs against Braves, enabling him to trot around bases unmolested.