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## **Jamestownner Flashes Big League Form With Signal Corps in Korea**

An eager baseball world pulsates today with every pitch of the 51<sup>st</sup> World Series, while in Seoul, Korea, members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Signal Squadron are perhaps wondering if they hold within their ranks a future diamond great.

Behind this musing is Kenny Martin, retiring, 21-year-old shortstop who insists he always had "a lucky day" or "they threw me some good ones," yet led his team to a pennant winning season in the Seoul City League with a .386 average.

Martin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Martin of 89 Eagle Street, starred in basketball and baseball before his graduation from Jamestown High School in 1952. Performing for the Raiders, Ken drew the ardent praise of teammates and opponents alike as a fine athlete in every sense.

### **Batted .333 in Muny**

He batted .333 for the now defunct Curtis Machine team of the Muny AA League in the summer of '52. Winter came and his name was still on the sports pages, playing sparkling basketball for the Rec League national Worsted quintet.

Early in May of '53, Martin pocketed his come-hither slip from the U.S. Army and headed for basic training at Fort Dix, N.J. After aptitude tests, he was assigned to the 304<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion and instructed on the rudiments of a radio signalman.

The 304<sup>th</sup> pulled out of Fort Dix on November 4. Destination: South Korea, where the July 27 armistice had ended the Korean War and created a need for occupation forces. Martin's squadron has remained in Seoul since then.

### **Played Before 15,000**

When a notice for baseball tryouts appeared in the barracks this spring, Ken was reluctant, writing home that he didn't think he could "make a show," but a buddy lit the fuse and ken exploded all over the diamond.

Playing before 15,000 fans for the Korean Athletic Association championship in July, he hammered two doubles and a single to account for three of his team's four runs. Ken collaborated with Keystoner Dick Pace for two shining double plays, then capped off a brilliant show by stealing home to tie the game.

### **Hits Two Homers**

He drove in four runs with a pair of homers in the final game of the season, sparking the Double Deuces (22<sup>nd</sup> Squadron) to an 11-4 victory. Ken's mid-season totals showed 24 hits in 62 at bats, including 7 doubles, four triples and four homers.

Following the regular campaign, Ken's team won the all-Korean playoffs and was flown to Tokyo, Japan to compete for the Far Eastern crown. The Deuces lost in three games and Ken went back to being a regular soldier.

But Martin's outstanding play had not gone unnoticed. He was the youngest player on a team roster boasting several former professional ballplayers. And his average led the league.

### **Big League Prospect**

Martin, a strapping 6'4", 193 pounds, has all the earmarks of a bright major league prospect. He has the long arms, the big hands, and a sharp throwing arm. His effortless graceful movements encouraged the nickname "Goose." (Baseball slang would have a player "loose as a goose.")

So Ken, when he leaves the Army in late March, will have a couple of scouts waiting to see him. One tryout beckons from a Pacific Coast League club, another from the New York Giants team in New Jersey. Detroit took a look through one-time Jamestown Falcons owner John Jachym in '52 and could be back again.

But regardless of his baseball future, Kenny's sincere, warm personality is a one-way ticket to a happy life. It will start when he comes home and opens the Christmas and birthday presents his mom has away and we hope it never ends.