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Martin Signs With Giants

Jamestown Youth Assigned To Northern League Club

Fate, the New York Giants, and Ken Martin of Jamestown have collaborated to splice a boyhood friendship at the intersection of two promising professional careers.

Martin, the 21-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Martin, has signed with St. Cloud of the Class C Northern League after a three-day Polo Grounds tryout with the World Champion Giants.

When he makes the near 1,500-mile trip to Minnesota in a week or ten days, Martin will be joining Jack Wigley, Lakewood second baseman, optioned two weeks ago from Class A Sioux City of the Western League.

Service Sensation

The pair were buddies throughout their scholastic days - Martin a baseball-basketball star at Jamestown and Wigley, an all-sport letterman with Southwestern. Military service (Martin as been discharged after two years with United Nations occupation forces in Seoul, Korea) interrupted their friendship but not their ambition.

Martin led the 22nd Signal Squadron, a team sprinkled with minor league talent, to the Seoul city championship with a .386 average. Wigley in 1953 went to Maryvale-Alcoa a Giant affiliate in the Class D Mountain States League and went on to hit .292 for the pennant-winning Twins. Last summer he was at St. Cloud finishing at .285 and meriting a promotion to Sioux City. His own impending duty with Uncle Sam prompted the shift back to the Rox, currently a fourth-place club.

Switched To Third

Oddly enough, a teammate of Martin's, Jack Parente, is now the regular Sioux City third baseman. The Martin-Wigley ties were inevitably drawn tighter.

A shortstop when he left Jamestown last Wednesday, Martin was converted overnight into a third baseman when Giant coaches got a peek at his slingshot arm. "Guess I was too strong," Ken said. "I overthrew first base a couple of times." Two home-run shots, one into the upper deck 350-feet away, ade short memories of any mistakes and laid the groundwork for a \$500 signing bonus.

Frank Shellenback, a 10-15 pitcher for the Chicago White Sox in 1918-19, was Martin's main tutor around the hot corner. The position was not entirely unfamiliar; he

played there occasionally for the 22nd Squadron. He may yet be turned to the outfield to unleash the speed and grace that led his Korean pals to dub him “Goose.”

Took Liking To Dark

Ken, with one exception, took infield and batting practice with the non-regulars. On this occasion Giant officials sent in Whitey Lockman, National League All-Star first baseman last season. Doubtlessly, his opinion of the youngster’s arm carried a big stick with scout Jack Schwarz when contract time rolled around.

Martin met all of what he respectfully calls ‘the big boys.’ He particularly like shortstop and captain Alvin Dark and characterized the entire team as “a great bunch of guys.”