Luke Easter Purchased by Tribe Farm: San Diego to Get Slugging...

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San Diego to Get
Slugging Gard’ner
To Join Minoso, Ritchey
in Pacific Coast Loop

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — Bucky Hart, former manager of the New York Yankees, Detroit Tigers and Washington Senators, told here to his third colored player this week when the San Diego club, of the Pacific Coast League, was sent Luke (Luke) Easter, slugging infield-outfielder of the 1948 Birmingham Grays.

Easter, purchased by the Cleveland Indians, joins Orestes Minoso, star of the New York Cubans, and John Ritchey, former Chicago American Giant, on the Tribe’s Far West farm club roster.

Announcement of the deal involving the Puerto Rican League’s top hitter came from two sources. The result was that a mild state of confusion existed.

Word first came to the press on Monday from San Juan where Easter has been slamming the ball for the championship Mayaguez club. Two days later, however, word of the deal was also confirmed by contacts of the players of the eastern Grays, was slated to meet with Bill Veeck in Cleveland to complete the transaction.

This would bring about the dual question in connection with the sale of Grays’ players. In the NAL draft, held recently, the Homestead players were declared property of the league, since Rufus Johnson, of the Columbus, Ohio, had elected to quit.

In this draft, Easter went to the Chicago American Giants as owner J. R. Martin’s first choice. Kansas City got Bob Thurman and Baltimore picked Luis Marquez.

When the New York Yankees bought Marquez, they dealt with Vernon Greene, Elites’ owner, and ignored the claims of the Grays. While Posey was to talk with Veeck on the Easter deal, no word was forthcoming from Martin. Nor was the Afro able to contact the Tribe’s business manager, Rody Schafer, for a statement.

Easter batted .402 in the Puerto Rican League this winter and at one point ran up a record-breaking string of nine hits in succession. A six-foot, 180-pounder, the St. Louis native packs terrific power from the left side of the plate. He also possesses a good arm and surprising speed for one of his height.