

# On Target

April 15, 1976

By Sturgis Hedrick

JOT DOWN THE name "Coastal Grays" as the most vital new factor in Seashore League baseball, which is scheduled to open its regular, 20-game schedule Sunday afternoon, April 25.

The Grays will field a team unique in many ways. But they add up to a fascinating challenge to the holder-over favorites from last year: The champion Carteret Tides; the regular-season winners, the Eastern Blues; and the other playoff contenders, the Newport Red Sox and the Salter Path Braves.

FOUR POWER-HITTING brothers, a father-and-son combination and two All-Stars who have changed uniforms form the nucleus of this awesome new entry.

Catcher Wardell Johnson, left-fielder Cornell Johnson, Willie Ray Johnson in center field and right-fielder Monroe Johnson are the brothers four. Robert Hill at third base is the son of William Hill, another outfielder. Home-run king Alex Fox at first base and speedboy second-baseman Richard Collins topped last year's All-Stars.

A BRILLIANT professional prospect, James Stanley at short-stop, and a pitching staff of left-handers Charley Hardesty and William Stewart and right-handers

Mike Dudley and John Reels round out the likely starters. Seashore League observers concede this team bristles with batting strength. It has great speed and fine fielding skills. But two questions arise. Will the pitching hold up? And is the squad over-loaded with temperamental problems?

That's where the name John Thompson enters the



JOHN THOMPSON

picture. He's the manager, a real task 50-year-old eyes have seen and coach "He's the man," as his teammates say anything."

"ORGANIZATION if our keyno himself. "We have two fine coaches Roy Stiles. We have a statistician in have a secretary-treasurer in James Way back when, the John Thompson Elizabeth City State University (the Mr. Thompson starred as a baseball ball halfback.

John's prowess grew beyond regular caught for the semi-pro Elizabeth City played the best they could find in con North as Washington, D. C.

In fact, this catcher Thompson's all earned him a tryout with the Newark Black Big Leagues. The Eagles' Irv Irvin, shortly thereafter an outfielder League New York Giants.

THEN CAME THE lame throwing. John's career as a pro catching prospect to Morehead City. He latched on to a the then-named W. S. King High School day, Thompson makes his mark physical education program at More High.

His importance and value to the beyond his contributions as a teacher director. His latest role came into being his team of top-flight associates formed in January.

Now they're a tightly knit family social, civic and religious together Thompson asks and expects his fine serves as Big Brother examples to Carteret County.

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