

BUC BIOS: Bill Bell "Back-to-Back No-Hitters"

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Bill Bell
1952 Pittsburgh Pirates

On May 26, 1952, 18-year-old Bristol Twins right-hander Bill "Ding Dong" Bell walks to the mound in Bristol's Shaw Stadium and in front of nearly 1,000 fans pitches himself into the record books, becoming only the third pitcher in the history of professional baseball to hurl back-to-back no-hitters.

The Goldsboro, North Carolina native strikes out 20 and walks only four in a seven-inning 4-0 win over the visiting Bluefield Blue Greys, marking the third no-hitter in less than two weeks by a Bristol pitcher and extending the Twins' win streak to 16 games.

Four days earlier, Bell had no-hit the Kingsport Cherokees, out-dueling John Bandula 1-0. Bell walks 11, but strikes out 17 and scores the game's only run on a single by his battery mate Harry Dunlop.

Bell's win over the Cherokees marks the third time in less than two weeks that a Bristol pitcher turns in a no-hitter. On May 13, Ron

Necciai no-hits the Welch Miners 7-0 in a game where the 6-foot-5 right-hander strikes out a modern day 27 batters.

Bell's hope for a third straight no-hitter is stopped on June 8, on a first-inning single by Kingsport's Hal Kollar. Bell allows six hits in picking up his fourth-straight win, 6-2.

Bell's back-to-back no-hitters are the first recorded since Johnny Vander Meer did so in 1938 for the Cincinnati Reds, and the first in the minor leagues since 1901 when Gene Wright turned in successive no-hitters pitching for the Dayton Old Soldiers of the Western Association.

Bill Bell Hurls Second No-Hitter

BRISTOL, Va.-Tenn., May 26. —(AP)—Bill Bell, 18-year-old right-hander, pitched his second successive no-hitter tonight for the Bristol Twins of the Class D Appalachian League.

Bell, a native of Goldsboro, N. C., struck out 20 in hurling the Twins to a 4-0 victory over Bluefield's Blue Grays. Last Thursday, he fanned 17 in setting Kingsport, Tenn., down without a hit 1-0.

Tonight marked the third time since May 13 that a Bristol pitcher has turned in a no-hit performance.

"Rocket Ron" Necciai, 18-year-old speedball phenom, hurled the first, setting a modern baseball record in the process when he struck out 27 as Bristol trimmed Welch, W. Va., 7-0.

Tonight's victory was Bristol's 16th in a row.



Frank Ramsey (L), Bill Bell (R)
1952 Bristol Twins

Later, on August 25, Bell turns in his third no-hitter of the season, striking out nine, walking four and allowing only three balls to be hit to the outfield in a 4-0 win over the visiting Bluefield Blue-Grays.

The following evening, yet another Bristol teenager, 19-year-old left-hander Frank Ramsey turns in the fifth no-hitter of the season for the Twins with a 1-0 win over Bluefield.

Bell finishes 11-3 for the Twins with a league-leading 2.09 ERA, 194 strikeouts in 112 innings (15.5 per 9 innings) and 113 walks (9.08).

1952 BRISTOL TWINS

TWINS NO HITTERS

May 13.....	Ron Necciai.....	Welch.....	7-0
May 22.....	Bill Bell.....	Kingsport.....	1-0
May 26.....	Bill Bell.....	Cherokee.....	4-0
August 25.....	Bill Bell.....	Bluefield.....	4-0
August 26.....	Frank Ramsey.....	Bluefield.....	1-0

TWINS TEENAGE TWIRLERS

Pitcher	W-L	G	INN	HT	SO	BB	ERA
Ron Necciai.....	4-0	6	43	10	109	20	0.42
Bill Bell.....	11-3	15	112	60	194	113	2.09
Frank Ramsey..	14-10	36	194	167	180	112	2.92

APPLACHIAN LEAGUE STANDINGS

Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Johnson City Cardinals.....	69	47	.595	---
Bristol Twins.....	60	57	.513	9.5
Welch Miners.....	59	57	.509	10.0
Pulaski Phillies.....	57	60	.487	12.5
Bluefield Blue-Grays.....	52	64	.448	17.0
Kingsport Cherokees.....	52	64	.448	17.0

Bell makes the jump from Class D ball to the major leagues when Pittsburgh general manager Branch Rickey rewards Bell with a call-up at the end of the Appalachian League playoffs.

Bill Bell [2 of 4]:

The 6-foot-3 Bell makes his major league debut on September 5, against the St. Louis Cardinals. Starting against Vinegar Bend Mizell, he allows four runs (all earned) on six hits and eight walks in six innings. Bell strikes out only one and in a 4-0 loss to the Red Birds.

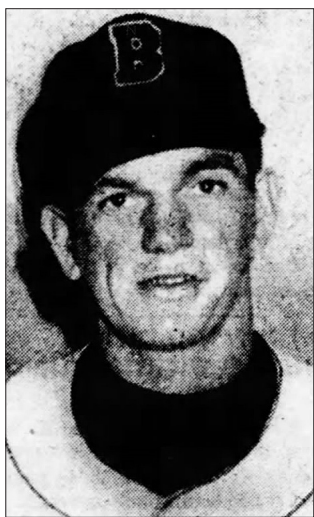
Bell will make four September appearances for the last-place Corsairs (42-112), walking 13 in 15 2/3 innings and finishing 0-1 with a 4.61 ERA.

The following March, Bell is inducted into the Army and begins serving a two-year term at Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina.

Returning to Pittsburgh for one more game on April 16, 1955, Bell develops a chronic sore arm that hinders his mound career.

In five major league games, Bell is 0-1 with a 4.32 ERA and only four strikeouts in 16 2/3 innings pitched.

An outstanding quarterback at Goldsboro (N.C.) High School, Bell is recruited by both Duke and North Carolina after earning honorable mention All-State honors in 1950 by the *Greensboro News & Record*.



Bill Bell
1952 Bristol Twins

On June 18, 1951, Bell signs as an amateur free agent by the Pittsburgh Pirates for a bonus reported to be between \$15,000 and \$25,000. The Pirates immediately send the 17-year-old to the Mayfield (Kentucky) Clothiers of the Kitty League where he goes 6-8 with a 3.46 ERA.

Bell is 46-50 in seven minor league seasons, appearing in 161 games, pitching 822 innings, allowing 617 hits and 715 base on balls.

On January 24, 1962, Bell is injured in an automobile accident in Fort Myers, Florida. Never regaining consciousness, the 28-year-old North Carolinian, who only 10 years earlier had written his name into the record books with his back-to-back no hitters, passes away on October 11, 1962, at the Durham, North Carolina, Veterans Hospital.

Bill Bell Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	INN	H	BB	SO	ERA
1951	Mayfield Clothiers	Kitty	D	6-8	104	71	106	-	3.46
1952	2 Teams	2 Leagues	D-B	11-4	120	71	131	194	3.15
	Bristol Twins	Appalachian	D	11-3	112	60	113	194	2.09
	Burlington-Graham Pirates	Carolina	B	0-1	8	11	18	-	18
1952	Pittsburgh Pirates	National	MLB	0-1	15.2	16	13	4	4.61
1955	Lincoln Pirates	Western	A	8-12	168	162	133	-	5.52
1955	Pittsburgh Pirates	National	MLB	0-0	1	0	1	0	0
1956	Kinston Eagles	Carolina	B	6-13	154	123	130	-	4.56
1957	Lincoln Chiefs	Western	A	11-4	159	125	101	-	4.08
1958	3 Teams	3 Leagues	AA-A-AAA	2-9	56	27	64	22	---
	Portland Beavers	Pacific Coast	AAA	0-1	11.1	15	12	6	7.94
	San Antonio Missions	Texas	AA	1-5	33	27	35	22	5.18
	Lincoln Chiefs	Western	A	1-3	23	-	29	-	8.22
1959	3 Teams	2 Leagues	A-AAA	2-0	50	38	50	30	---
	Denver Bears	American Assoc.	AAA	0-0	-	-	-	-	---
	Columbus/Gastonia Pirates	South Atlantic	A	-	-	-	-	-	---
	Asheville	South Atlantic	A	-	-	-	-	-	---
Major League Totals		2 Seasons		0-1	16.2	16	14	4	4.32
Minor League Totals		7 Seasons		46-50	822.0	617	715	246	---

ML Debut: September 5, 1952, at Sportsman Park, St. Louis, Missouri: started (and lost) vs. Vinegar Bend Mizell; allowed four runs (all earned) in six innings on six hits (home runs to Dick Sisler and Tommy Glaviano) and eight walks, struck out one in a 4-0 loss to the St. Louis Cardinals.

ML Finale: April 16, 1955, at Forbes Field, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: relieved Roy Face at the start of the ninth inning of a 6-0 loss to the Los Angeles Dodgers; pitched a scoreless inning with 1 walk.

Goldsboro's Bell Signs With Pirates

GOLDSBORO, June 18.—Goldsboro High School's Bill Bell, a 17-year-old pitching star, was signed today by the Pittsburgh Pirates for a reported bonus of between \$15,000 and \$25,000. He is in Pittsburgh today and will remain there for a few days before being farmed out.

Bell, also a football and basketball star for Goldsboro High, was signed to a New Orleans contract, but it is expected that he will go to a lower classification team—probably for Class B action.

BELL CHRONOLOGY

September 8, 1950

Bell gains 133 yards on 21 attempts leading Goldsboro High School past Henderson 27-0.

August 9, 1951

Bell and 20-year-old left-hander Scott Keeney combine to set a Kitty League single game record with 23 strikeouts in a 14-3 win over the Madisonville Miners, breaking the previous mark of 22 set by Orlin Collier of the Jackson Blue Jays in 1924 ... Bell has 15 strikeouts in the first six innings ... 13-3 in his only season in professional baseball, Keeney enters the military that December and does not appear in professional baseball again.

Bill Bell [3 of 4]:



Clarence "Gene" Wright
1901 Dayton Old Soldiers
Western (A) Association

Back-to-Back No-Hitters
9-22-01 Columbus Senators4-0
9-25-01 Grand Rapids Furniture Makers ..2-0



Johnny Vander Meer
1938 Cincinnati Reds
National League

Back-to-Back No-Hitters
6-11-38 Boston Bees3-0
6-15-38 Brooklyn Dodgers6-0



Bill Bell
1952 Bristol Twins
Appalachian (D) League

Back-to-Back No-Hitters
5-22-52 Kingsport Cherokees4-0
5-26-52 Bluefield Blue-Grays4-0

**Second Bristol Ace
Pitches No-Hitter,
Fans 37 in 2 Games**

By the Associated Press

BRISTOL, Va.-Tenn., May 23.—This mountain town that straddles the Virginia-Tennessee border is going nuts over the Nation's most fabulous Class D ball club.

Never have the folk hereabouts seen such a collection of prize rookies as the parent Pittsburgh Pirates have planted at Bristol for seasoning in the six-team Appalachian League.

First there was "Rocket Ron" Neccial, 19-year-old super whiz from Monongahela, Pa., who set a modern baseball record with 27 strikeouts in a nine-inning no-hitter last week and fanned 24 Wednesday in hurling a two-hit, 7-1 triumph over Kingsport, Tenn.

But the Rocket didn't bask in the spotlight all by himself.

The Twins have another pitcher named Bill Bell, 18-year-old right-hander from Goldsboro, N. C. Bell, in his first start, whiffed 20 as Bristol walloped Bluefield, W. Va., 13-1.

Last night in his second start, he set down Kingsport without a hit and struck out 17 for a 1-0 win.

Bell, unlike Neccial, is pretty wild right now, having issued 11 walks in both games. But observers say he's nearly as fast as Neccial.

September 4, 1951

Mayfield, behind Bell's six-hitter, beats the Owensboro Oilers 6-3 to take a 2-1 lead in the first round of the Kitty League playoffs.

May 22, 1952

Just nine days after teammate Ron Neccial strikes out 27 batters in a 7-0 no-hitter of the Welch Miners, Bell no-hits the Kingsport Cherokees, striking out 17 and walking 11 and driving home the game's only run in a 1-0 victory ... in his first two starts for the Twins, Bell is 2-0 with a 0.50 ERA and 37 strikeouts in 18 innings.

May 26, 1952

Bell pitches his second no-hitter in four days, striking out 20 and walking only four in a 4-0 win over the visiting Bluefield Blue Greys ... the victory extends the Twins' winning streak to 16 games.

June 25, 1952

Bell strikes out 14 and walks 15 and allows only six hits in a 15-3 win over Welch.

August 19, 1952

Bell is recalled by the New Orleans Pelicans and his contract turned over to the Pittsburgh Pirates and will join the parent club by no later than September 1.

**Bill Bell Hurls
Second No-Hitter**

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Bill Bell [4 of 4]:

August 25, 1952

Bell hurls his third no-hitter of the season, shutting out visiting Bluefield 4-0 in the first game of a Appalachian League doubleheader ... Bell strikes out nine, walks four and allows only three balls to be hit to the outfield.

Bristol Fans See Usual No-Hitter

BRISTOL, Va.-Tenn., Aug. 28 (AP)—Frank Ramsey, a 19-year-old left-hander, turned in the second no-hitter in two nights and fifth of the season here tonight as he blanked Bluefield, 1-0.

His masterpiece came only 24 hours after Bill Bell, 18-year-old righthander, had pitched his third no-hitter last night in blanking the same Bluefield team. Ron Necciai, young strike-out artist now with the Pittsburgh Pirates, started the string May 13 when he struck out 27 men in hurling the first of the five local no-hitters.

Ramsey, a native of Rocky Hill, Conn., playing his second season of pro ball, struck out nine, walked five and hit one batter in notching his 14th win against 10 losses in the Class D Appalachian League.

August 26, 1952

Nineteen-year-old southpaw Frank Ramsey pitches Bristol's fifth no-hitter of the season in a 1-0 win over Bluefield ... the Rocky Hill, Connecticut native strikes out nine and walks five in picking up his 14th win against 10 defeats ... all five no-hitters have been played in Bristol's Shaw Stadium.

January 24, 1953

Bell and 21-year-old infielder Sonny Senerchia return their signed contracts to the Pittsburgh Pirates for the upcoming season ... Senerchia had three home runs and 11 RBIs in 100 at-bats for Bucs in 1952 ... a 1952 graduate of Montclair State and an accomplished jazz musician who appeared at Carnegie Hall at the age of 10, Senerchia plays six more years in the minors (1953-1958) before retiring.

March 29, 1953

Bell receives his summons to report to his Goldsboro, North Carolina, draft board for a physical examination ... Bell is later inducted and joins future

Brooklyn Dodger pitcher Roger Craig at Ft. Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina.

April 19, 1955

Pittsburgh options pitcher Jake Thies to Columbus of the American Association, Bell and pitcher Dick Hall to Lincoln of the Western Association.



Sacramento native Harry Dunlop caught only 18 games for the Bristol Twins in 1952 but three of those were no-hitters - one by Ron Necciai and two by Bill Bell ... caught for 14 years in the minors (1952-1968), losing two years to military service.

April 29, 1955

Bell wins his first game in three years, pitching a five-hit complete game and driving home the winning run with a two-out ninth inning single in a 5-4 win over the Wichita Indians ... Bell opens the season 4-0 for the Chiefs, but will finish the season winning only four more times in 16 decisions.

August 10, 1958

Back with the Lincoln Chiefs for the third time in four years, Bell hurls a one-hitter against Colorado Springs in his debut.

January 24, 1962

Bell is injured in an automobile accident in Fort Myers, Florida.

October 1962

Never regaining consciousness, Bell passes away at the Durham (N.C.) Veterans Hospital.

Bucs Will Get No-Hitter Ace

Rickey to Buy Contract of Bill Bell

Pittsburgh, Pa. (AP)—General Manager Branch Rickey said Friday the Pittsburgh Pirates are going to purchase Bill Bell, 18, the author of three no-hit games this year in the Class D Appalachian League.

Rickey said the Pirates will pick up the youthful right-hander's contract after he has completed the season with Bristol, Va., which is now in the Appalachian play-off.

Bell is a native of Goldsboro, N. C.

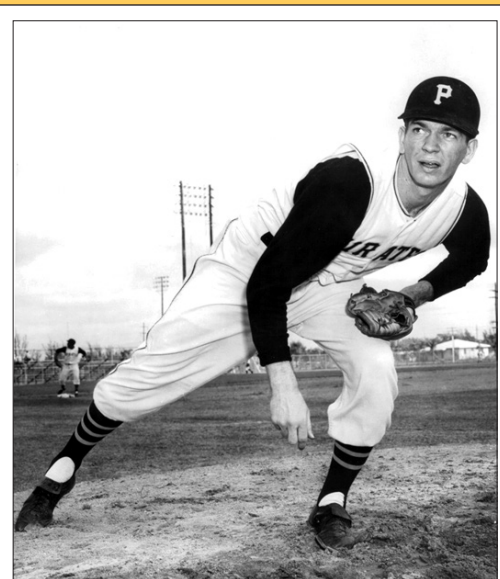
The youth, who has fanned 194 batters in 112 innings, hurled his first no-hitter May 14 when Bristol beat Kingsport, Tenn., 1-0.

Four days later, Bell chalked up his second no-hitter against Bluefield, W. Va.

Bluefield was also the victim of Bell's third no-hitter August 25. Bell's season record was 11 wins and three losses.

He broke into organized baseball with Mayfield in the Kitty League last season and had a 6-8 record.

Bell is now the property of New Orleans of the Southern Association. Rickey said he will close the deal with New Orleans after Bell is recalled from Bristol.



Bill Bell
1955 Pittsburgh Pirates