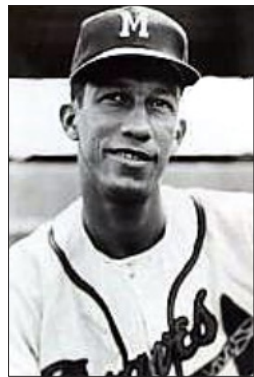


Cups of Coffee: Fred Van Dusen

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On September 11, 1955, in the second game of a doubleheader with the Milwaukee Braves, 18-year-old Philadelphia Phillies' pinch-hitter Fred Van Dusen (the youngest player in the National League that season) becomes only the fifth player in major league history to be hit by a pitch in what would be his only plate appearance in the majors

Batting for relief pitcher Lynn Lovenguth with one out in the top of the ninth inning, Van Dusen is grazed on the leg by Braves' journeyman pitcher Humberto Robinson on a 1-2 curveball.



Humberto Robinson
1955 Milwaukee Braves

A left-handed hitting outfielder, Van Dusen fouls off the first pitch before taking a fastball strike. The 25-year-old Robinson then "wastes" a pitch to make the count 1-2 before throwing a breaking pitch inside that hits Van Dusen on the left knee and earns the rookie a trip to first base.

Van Dusen takes his base but is left stranded when Robinson recovers to retire Stan Lopata (strikeout) and Richie Ashburn (F7) to finish off the first of only two complete games in his career.



Fred Van Dusen
1955 Philadelphia Phillies

Van Dusen, a highly-regarded prospect, will not play in another major league game before leaving baseball six years later.

Of the six major league players who were hit by a pitch in their only plate appearance in the majors, only Van Dusen never plays in the field:

Ham Wade, New York Giants, 1907
Charlie Faust, New York Giants, 1912
Harvey Grubb, Cleveland Naps, 1912
Cy Malis, Philadelphia Phillies, 1934
Fred Van Dusen, Philadelphia Phillies, 1955
John Rheinecker, Texas Rangers, 2006

Frederick William Van Dusen Jr., will continue to play in the Philadelphia Phillies minor league chain through 1961. In six minor league seasons with seven different teams, Van Dusen hits .260 with 86 home runs and 401 runs batted in.

Fred Van Dusen Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Lev	AB	HT	2B	3B	HR	RBI	AVG
1954	Bryant High School	PSAL	HS	-	-	-	-	-	-	.447
1955	Bryant High School	PSAL	HS	-	-	-	-	10	57	.521
1955	Philadelphia Phillies	NATIONAL	ML	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000
1956	Wilson Tobs	Carolina	B	508	128	19	4	11	43	.252
1957	H Point-Thomasville Hi-Toms	Carolina	B	400	124	15	5	25	93	.310
1958	2 Teams	2 Leagues	A-AAA	287	60	13	1	5	5	.209
1958	Miami Marlins	International	AAA	48	8	0	0	1	5	.167
1958	Williamsport Grays	Eastern	A	239	52	13	1	4	22	.218
1959	Williamsport Grays	Eastern	A	309	84	18	3	14	65	.272
1960	2 Teams	2 Leagues	A-AAA	387	96	14	5	24	67	.248
1960	Indianapolis Indians	AA	AAA	76	18	1	1	4	11	.237
1960	Asheville Tourists	South Atlantic	A	311	78	13	4	20	56	.251
1961	Chattanooga Lookouts	Southern	AA	234	61	9	1	7	39	.261
Major League Totals				1 year	0	0	0	0	0	---
Minor League Totals				6 years	2125	553	88	19	86	.260

1957 - Carolina League MVP

In 1957, Van Dusen eclipses the .300 mark for the only time in his career when he hits .310 for the High Point-Thomasville (N.C.) Hi-Toms with 15 doubles, five triples, 25 home runs and 93 RBIs and is chosen as the Carolina (B) League's Most Valuable Player.

Fred Van Dusen [2 of 3]:

A high school standout in Jackson Heights, New York, Van Dusen fields contract offers from 15 major league teams, including two that offer a signing bonus. Van Dusen opts to sign with the Phillies because his father is impressed with Philadelphia owner/president Bob Carpenter and his mother wants him to remain on the East Coast.

Van Dusen refuses to accept any bonus money from the Phillies because he feels that he would be better off playing regularly in the minors than sitting the bench for two years as required by players accepting bonus payments.

"Those bonus offers from the Western teams would have cost me money in the long run if Freddie had accepted. I've been watching him since he was in the Knot-Hole League and I don't plan to quit now. It would have cost me a fortune to commute between Long Island and, say, Chicago. I can hop over to Philadelphia with practically no trouble at all."

-Frederick J. Van Dusen (father)

Contracting hepatitis midway through the 1961 season, Van Dusen finishes his pro baseball career prematurely at the age of 23 with the Chattanooga Lookouts. Van Dusen later enters the investment and insurance business in New York, and eventually moves to Franklin, Tennessee.

In May, 2018, Van Dusen contracts an infection while swimming in Florida. He passes away two days later on June 1, 2018, at the age of 80.

VAN DUSEN CHRONOLOGY

July 27, 1955

Chosen as the top high school player in the state of New York, Van Dusen is "awarded" a two-week trip with the National League's New York Giants ... Van Dusen will be allowed to workout with the team before each game and will room with pitcher Paul Giel.

Phillies Sign N. Y. Phenom

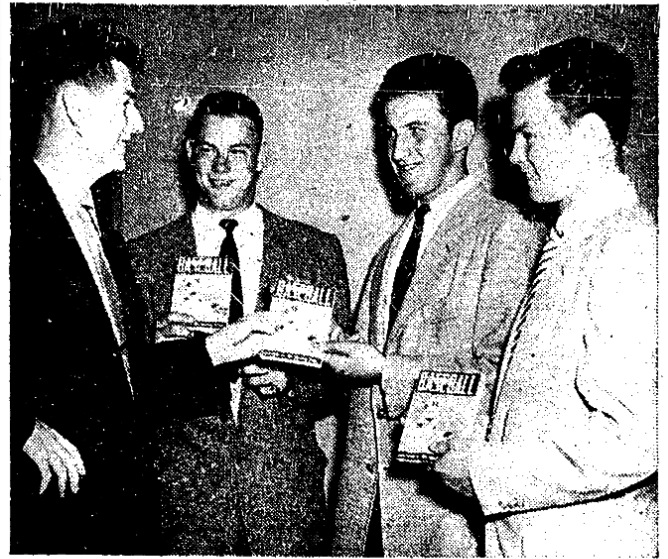
PHILADELPHIA (INS)—The Phillies signed 18-year-old Fred Van Dusen of Jackson Heights, N. Y., a star performer at Bryant High School.

Van Dusen, a standout in New York City's metropolitan championship game, hit .441 in collegiate play this season and was credited with 10 home runs in 22 games.

August 20, 1955
Eighteen-year-old Fred Van Dusen rejects offers from 14 other teams and signs with the Philadelphia Phillies ... the Washington Senators are the only team to not tender an offer.

"The best young prospect I've ever seen."
-Hall of Famer Al Simmons

Gifts for N.Y. Schoolboy Stars



THE 20 FINALISTS in the New York World-Telegram & Sun's most valuable schoolboy player contest were guests at a luncheon and the Yankee-Athletic game at Yankee Stadium, June 22. All were presented with copies of the Official Baseball Guide, with the compliments of Publisher J. G. Taylor Spink of THE SPORTING NEWS. In order, left to right, next to Zander Hollander of the World-Telegram & Sun, who is handing out the books, are Bob Blair, Roosevelt High of Yonkers; Bob Magnani, New Dorp, Staten Island, and Tom Forbes, Hempstead, Long Island. The most valuable player is Fred Van Dusen, Jr., center fielder of Bryant High School, who batted .521, hit ten homers and drove in 57 runs in 22 games this season. As a reward, he will make a western trip with the Giants.



Frederick W. Van Dusen (right), an 18-year-old high school sensation from Jackson Heights, N. Y., and his father, Frederick J. (center), are being greeted by Phils' executive George Fletcher after the youngster signed with the Phils.

Fred Van Dusen [3 of 3]:



FRED VAN DUSEN ... Athlete Of Week

March 25, 1956

Van Dusen is one of four players cut by the Phillies ... Van Dusen and first baseman George Moskos are sent to Bennettville while pitcher Jack Spring and first baseman Ed Bouchee are assigned to the Miami Marlins of the International League.

January 23, 1956

The Philadelphia Phillies announce the signing of two outfielders - Harry Baumholtz, 36, and Fred Van Dusen, 18, to contracts for the 1956 season.

May 19, 1956

Eventually assigned to the Wilson Tobs of the Carolina (B) League, Van Dusen collects his first home run in professional baseball with an 11th inning walk-off round tripper in the nightcap of a doubleheader against the High Point-Thomasville Hi-Toms.

June 4, 1957

Acquired in the off-season by the High Point-Thomasville Hi-Toms, Van Dusen has a double, a triple and two home runs and drives in five runs in an 11-4 win over the Winston-Salem Red Birds ... coming off a season with 11 home runs and a .243 batting average, Van Dusen changes his batting stance, assuming a more open stance.

Van Dusen on the Bus

Apparently our young Van Dusen is given to brooding if he has a bad night at the plate.

One night during the 1957 season, while playing on the road in the Carolina League with the Thomasville Hi-Toms, Van Dusen takes the "collar."

As the team bus was ready to leave, a count of players is performed and it is discovered that Van Dusen is missing. Following an extensive, but fruitless, search, the team leaves without him, or so it is thought.

The bus is pulled over by a state trooper who tells the driver there is a man riding on the roof.

The passenger taking in the fresh air is Van Dusen, who is so mad at himself that he wants to be alone, and the roof of the bus is the only place that afforded him that luxury.

July 6, 1957

With 73 votes, Van Dusen is the top vote getter among outfielders in balloting for the Carolina (B) League All-Star team.

July 15, 1957

In his lone all-star game appearance, Van Dusen has two hits in three at bats, including a solo home run in the eighth inning, as the All-Stars beat first-half winner Durham, 7-6.

October 12, 1957

After hitting .310 with 25 home runs and 93 RBIs, Van Dusen is voted as the Carolina League Most Valuable Player ... in the off season, the Phillies promote Van Dusen to the Miami Marlins of the International (AAA) League.

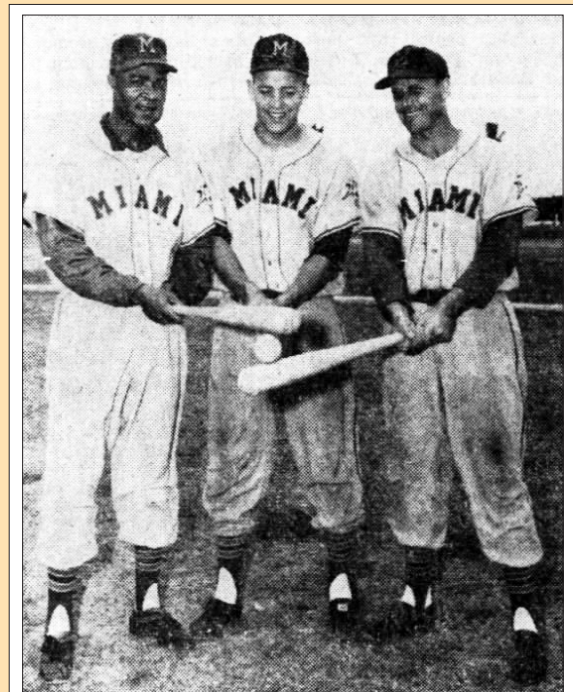
August 11, 1958

Hitting only .139 for the Williamsport Grays of the Eastern (A) League, Van Dusen hits a pinch-hit grand slam home run in the eighth inning off of Springfield's Roy Wright keying the Grays to a 6-4 come from behind win ... Wright, like Van Dusen, will make one appearance in the major leagues with the

New York Giants on September 30, 1956, Wright, when he allows the Philadelphia Phillies five runs and eight hits and is charged with the loss in what would turn out to be his only appearance at the major league level.

July 6, 1961

Playing for the Chattanooga Lookouts, Van Dusen is hitting .261 with seven home runs and 39 RBIs when he contracts hepatitis and is lost for the remainder of the season ... despite losing Van Dusen and pitcher Dennis Bennett to season-ending injuries, the Lookouts win 13 of their last 15 games and win their first Southern Association pennant since 1952.



Miami Marlins teammates Claude Harmon (L), Fred Van Dusen (C) and Bob Usher (R) ... the 34-year-old Harmon, just one year removed from hitting .258 in 66 games with the Cardinals and Phillies, will hit only .206 in 36 games for the Marlins before being released ... Harmon, a four-year major league veteran, will play three more seasons and finish an 11-year minor league career with a .320 batting average ... the 33-year-old Usher, a former major leaguer with the Reds, Cubs, Indians and Senators, will hit .275 with six home runs and 43 RBIs for the Marlins in his final season in professional baseball.