

Pinch Hits, "Dynamite Dave & Nubby Wafer"

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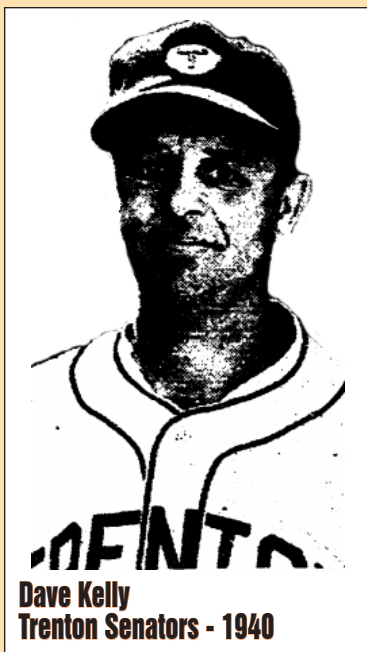
JUNE 5, 1940

Not a great day for "Dynamite" Dave Kelly of the Trenton Senators. Kelly is hitting .204 with 18 hits in 88 at bats when the 30-year-old first baseman is released by Senators' manager Goose Goslin.

Acquired from the Sunbury Senators on January 29, for \$200 following a breakout rookie campaign in 1939, where the 5-11, 185-pounder wins the Interstate League's "Triple Crown" with 14 home runs, 86 runs batted in and a .404 average. Trenton had tried to acquire Kelly earlier in a trade for second baseman Charlie Budd, but calls off the deal when Budd expresses a strong desire to remain in Trenton.

Following his release, Kelly is quickly picked up by the Allentown Wings and is later traded back to Sunbury to close out the season. Kelly responds by hitting .276 (100-for-362) and finishes the 1940 campaign with a .262 average with 19 doubles, three triples, two home runs and ranks 11th among Interstate RBI leaders with 72. Released by the Wings in February 1942, Kelly signs with the Miffenburgh club in the Pennsylvania's semipro West Branch League.

Kelly begins his career as a sore-armed pitcher, dressing for a couple of games with the Greensburg Green Sox in 1937. The Miffenburgh, Pa., native spends the early part of 1938 in various tryouts with Scranton and Reading. Quitting pro ball all together, Kelly elects to play for a semipro in Sunbury where his hitting convinces the Senators to sign him.



Dave Kelly
Trenton Senators - 1940



Howard Wafer
Baylor Bears - 1942

JUNE 5, 1940

McKinney (Texas) High School pitching sensation Howard Wafer draws national attention for his accomplishments in a story carried by the Associated Press.

In three seasons of Texas high school baseball, Wafer is 18-4 with 271 strikeouts in 170 1/3 innings. Twice in 1940, he strikes out 21 batters and only twice does he fail to strike out as many as ten. Called "Nubby" because he is missing the little finger of his right hand, Wafer also

has three no-hitters to his credit.

Wafer elects to attend Baylor University as a freshman in the fall of 1941. Veteran Waco sportswriter Jinx Tucker tells fans to start spelling his name with capital letters "because it is going to be in the sports headlines for years to come."

Following a solid sophomore season in 1942, Wafer is one of eight Baylor athletes drafted into the military. He enlists in the Army in January of 1943, and Baylor eventually suspends its baseball program for the duration of World War II (1943-1945).

Discharged early from the military because of a heart ailment, Wafer is employed as a material checker at the Houston Shipbuilding Corporation when he signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers on January 27, 1944.

Waco scribe Tucker now changes his tune, saying of Wafer, "his greatest asset at Baylor University was his ability displayed in being the student manager of the football team."

Dodger Branch Rickey says the rejuvenated hurler is good enough to step into a major league job without "seasoning in a minor loop." Wafer is brought into the Dodger spring training camp where he suffers a broken jaw after being hit by a thrown ball during practice.

Making his pro debut with the New Orleans Pelicans against the Little Rock Travelers on May 14, 1944, Wafer walks the first three batters and yields a bases-clearing double to Howard Cantrell before being relieved by Al Briede. Wafer will play parts of four minor league seasons, ending with the Tyler Trojans of the Lone Star (C) League in 1948.

New Trenton Senator Bus Set for Allentown Trip

