

Coming off back-to-back 20-win seasons with the San Diego Padres of the Pacific Coast League, pitcher Tiny Chaplin is killed when the car in which he is a passenger collides with a stalled automobile on the road south of National City, California.

One day after pitching the Padres' regulars to an 11-6 win over the rookies in a five-inning spring training intrasquad game, the 33-year-old Chaplin and a female driver are returning from Tijuana, Mexico, when their vehicle slams into the rear of the stalled car. Chaplin severs his jugular vein when he is thrown through the windshield. The driver, Miss Alma Hamilton, suffers only minor injuries.

Chaplin has an unsigned contract for \$4,000 with him at the time of his death ... the Pittsburgh Pirates, who recently released pitcher Ed Brandt for missing curfew by a mere 10 hours, had been trying to buy Chaplin for two weeks prior to his death, but San Diego president Spider Baum refused to sell Chaplin to the Pirates until after he signed a contract.

"Now Chaplin is dead; San Diego lost a sale and the Pirates are still looking for a pitcher."

-San Francisco Chronicle, March 26, 1939



Tiny Chaplin
1936 Boston Bees

CRASH CAUSES DEATH OF COAST MOUND ACE

Tiny Chaplin, Former Major Leaguer, Fatally Hurt.

By International News Service.

SAN DIEGO — Hurlled through a windshield in an automobile crash Saturday, James (Tiny) Chaplin, 32, star pitcher of the coast league San Diego Padres and a former major circuit player, died at a hospital.

Death came after a machine driven by Alma Hamilton, 34, in which Chaplin was a passenger, crashed into a parked car near National City. Miss Hamilton suffered head lacerations. Police said the car was left parked on the highway 101 after disabled in an earlier accident.

Chaplin, survived by his widow and two children, formerly played with the New York Giants and Boston Bees.

Born James Bailey Chaplin on June 13, 1905, in Los Angeles, Chaplin signs with the National League's New York Giants out of the University of Florida, where he is the captain of the school's baseball team in 1926 and 1927 and an alternate captain for the football team.

In four major league seasons with the Giants (1927, 1929-30) and the Boston Bees (1936), Chaplin is 15-23 with a 4.25 ERA, including a 10-15 mark and a 4.15 ERA for the Bees in 1930.

A three-time 20-game winner, Chaplin is 131-99 with a 3.63 ERA in nine minor league seasons.