

Dud Branom, "Millionaire First Baseman"

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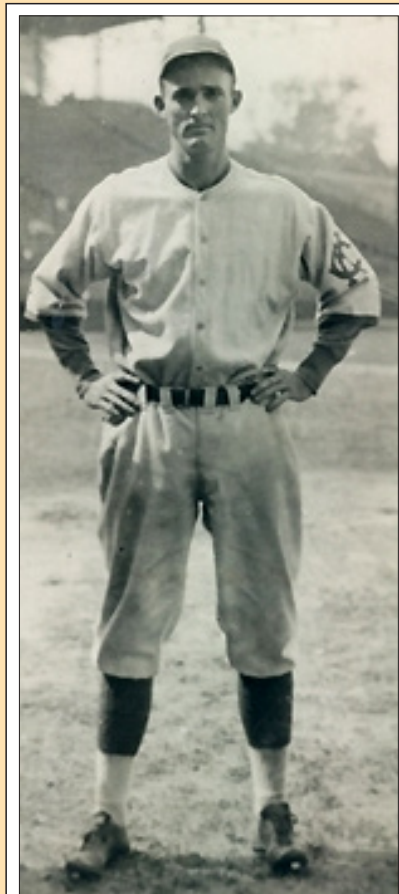
On April 12, 1927, the New York Yankees beat the Philadelphia Athletics 8-3 in the season opener for both teams. In a game that features 11 future Hall of Famers, it's a little known 29-year-old rookie first baseman making his major league debut with the Athletics who is the wealthiest player on the field.

A native of Hartshorne, Oklahoma, Edgar Dudley (Dud) Branom is already independently wealthy as his father-in-law is one of the Sooner State's richest oil barons.

Five years earlier, at the ripe old age of 24, Branom *buys* the Enid Harvesters of the Western (C) Association club prior to the start of the 1922 season. In addition to his financial interest in the Harvesters, Branom is also the team president, business manager as well as the on-the-field captain.

On February 18, 1922, *The Sporting News* reports that, "Dud Branom has finally secured possession of the Enid franchise, the deal being completed when Branom, who was the property of the Kansas City Blues, secured his release on condition that he become financially interested in the Enid club. He will act as field captain and business manager, playing his old position of first base."

Under Branom's ownership, the Harvesters prove to be an artistic, if not a financial, success finishing the season with a 104-27 mark and setting two minor league marks: fewest losses by a 100-win team and the highest winning percentage (.794). Following the season, Branom sells the Enid club to George Muehlebach, owner of the Kansas City Blues.



Dud Branom
1920 Kansas City Blues

Branom will hit only .234 in 30 games during the 1927 season with the Athletics in his only shot at the major league level before being sent to the Portland Beavers of the Pacific Coast League in mid-June where he hits .374 in 102 games with 13 home runs and 81 RBIs.

An outstanding minor league hitter, Branom finishes his 15-year professional baseball career with the Bartleson Reds in 1934, totaling 2,503 hits, including 403 doubles, 152 home runs, 1,459 RBIs and a lifetime batting average of .317. A three-time minor league All-Star, the left-handed hitting first baseman will have over 200 hits in a season five times, including a career-high 222 safeties with the Kansas City Blues of the American (AA) Association in 1926.

In 1920, Kansas City Blues scouts discover Branom working for a railroad company and playing semipro baseball in southeastern Oklahoma. Labeling Branom a "bit green", the Blues farm him to the Enid Harvesters of the Western (D) Association where hits .321 with four home runs and 74 RBIs in 129 games.

Branom will play four years (1923-1926) with the Blues, and after hitting .351 with 10 home runs and 116 RBIs in 1926, is purchased that December for \$50,000 by Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics. After a quick start (.444 with four RBIs in his first six games), Branom goes into an extended slump forcing Mack to bench his millionaire first baseman for playing "ten-cent baseball."

Dud Branom Debut April 12, 1927

PHILADELPHIA:	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
E. Collins, 2b	4	0	0	3	0	1
Lamar, lf	5	0	0	0	0	0
obb, rf	4	1	1	1	0	0
Simmons, cf	4	1	2	1	0	0
Hale, 3b	3	1	2	1	4	0
Branom, 1b	3	0	1	10	2	1
Cochrane, c	3	0	1	7	1	0
Boley, ss	3	0	0	1	4	2
xFrench	1	0	0	0	0	0
Grove, p	3	0	0	0	4	1
xBishop	1	0	0	0	0	0
Quinn, p	0	0	0	0	0	0
xxxWheat	1	0	1	0	0	0
Totals	34	3	8	34	15	5
NEW YORK—						
Combs, cf	4	2	1	3	1	0
Koenig, ss	3	1	2	2	5	0
Ruth, rf	3	0	0	1	0	0
Paschal, lf	2	0	1	1	0	0
Gehrig, 1b	4	0	1	12	0	1
Meusel, lf	4	0	0	2	0	0
Lazzeri, 2b	3	1	1	1	2	0
Dugan, 3b	4	1	3	1	0	0
Grabowski, c	3	2	1	4	2	0
Hoyt, p	2	1	0	0	2	0
Totals	32	8	10	27	12	1
xBatted for Boley in 9th.						
xxBatted for Grove in 7th.						
xxxBatted for Quinn in 9th.						
Score by innings:						
Philadelphia	000	002	010	—3		
New York	000	044	00x	—8		
Summary: Two-base hits: Combs, Gehrig, Lazzeri, Simmons. Three-base hit, Koenig. Sacrifices: Koenig, Hoyt (2), Hale. Double play: Branom-Boley-Branom. Left on base: New York 8, Philadelphia 8. Base on balls, Hoyt 3, Grove 3, Quinn 2. Struck out by Hoyt 3, Grove 6. Hits, off Grove 9 in 6 innings, Quinn 1 in 3. Passed Ball, Cochrane. Losing Pitcher, Grove. Umpires: Evans, Hildebrand, McGowan. Time, 3:07.						

Dud Branom [2 of 4]:

Following his playing days, Branom becomes a law enforcement officer in Garfield County, Oklahoma, serving as sheriff from 1939 to 1947.

Branom passes away on February 25, 1980, in Sun City, Arizona.

BRANOM CHRONOLOGY

February 12, 1922

After several weeks of protracted negotiations, the Enid (Okla.) Harvesters of the Western Association, and its ballpark, are sold to 24-year-old Dudley Branom, a popular first baseman for the team two years earlier ... terms of the purchase are not made public.



Dud Branom
1937 Portland Beavers

BASEBALL CLUB IS ASSURED WHEN THE ENID CLUB IS SOLD

Dudley Branom Is the New Owner of Enid Harvester Aggregation.

Enid will be represented in the Western Association this season, according to an announcement made Saturday. By the contract, Dudley Branom, popular former infielder of the Harvesters, becomes owner of the Enid club. The price paid for the baseball team, park and franchise was not stated.

The deal has been hanging fire for several weeks and several times the transfer was thought practically made when a delay was caused by some technicality which was not agreeable to all parties. Papers agreeable to all were finally drawn up by attorneys and the deal went over, it was said.

Prospects for the 1922 team are unusually bright, at least on paper. Ten men are under contract and it is understood several contracts have been mailed to players in anticipation that Enid would have a ball team on the field this season.

July 12, 1922

Enid team owner, general manager and first baseman Dud Branom sells starting shortstop Wayne Windle to the Oklahoma City Indians of the Western (A) League for an undisclosed amount of cash ... Windle is batting .276 with 22 doubles and six home runs in 65 games for the Harvesters.

September 4, 1922

Enid completes a record-setting season sweeping a double header from the fifth-place Okmulgee Drillers 8-7 and 10-4 ... with the two wins, the Harvesters end the season with a 104-27 record, including a 57-11 mark in the second half.

Despite their season-long success, Enid will lose a best-of-seven championship series to the Joplin Miners, winners of the first half, four games to two.

November 20, 1922

Kansas City Blues owner George Muehlenbach buys the Enid franchise in the Western Association and makes it a farm team for the Blues ... despite finishing the season with a 104-27 record,

Harvester owner Dud Branom notes the team was "not a financial success".

December 11, 1926

Following four productive seasons with the Kansas City Blues, Branom reportedly warns team owner George Muehlenbach that he will retire unless he is sold to a big league club ... Branom is eventually acquired by the Philadelphia Athletics in exchange for infielder Bill Wambsganns (he of unassisted triple play fame in the 1920 World Series) "without any strings attached", first baseman Joe Hauser, on a year's option, and an undisclosed amount of cash (\$50,000).

April 21, 1927

Branom has his second three-hit game against the New York Yankees in as many days, raising his batting average to a team-leading .444 (8-for-18) with four RBIs.

June 13, 1927

Despite the fact that Branom is hitting only .234 and has proven to be unreliable in the field, Philadelphia manager Connie Mack

What Was He Thinking?

Following the conclusion of the 1922 season, the Joplin (Mo.) Globe sports editor selects a first and second team Western Association All-Star team ... Branom, despite hitting .391 with 36 doubles, 14 home runs and 110 RBIs, is relegated to the second team behind Joplin's Guy Sturdy who hit .335 with 18 doubles, six home runs and 73 RBIs ... giving the Joplin editor his due, Sturdy did lead the Western Association in steals with 67.

Two All Star Teams in the W. A. Picked by the Globe Sports Editor

First Team.			Second Team.		
Street, Joplin, manager.	BA.	FA.	Downey, Enid, manager.	BA.	FA.
Dash, Joplin, cf. ....	.291	.963	Erwin, Okmulgee, cf. .	.271	.969
Sturdy, Joplin, 1b. ....	.335	.968	Corrigan, Joplin, 2b. .	.259	.958
Relger, Enid, lf. ....	.392	.953	Regan, Enid, 3b. ....	.301	.941
McNally, Joplin, ss. ...	.371	.932	Branom, Enid, 1b. ...	.391	.994
Makin, Fort Smith, 3b .	.322	.904	Cotter, Springfld, rf. .	.396	.931
Greene, Joplin, rf. ...	.317	.972	Davis, Joplin, lf. ....	.342	.955
Foster, Springfld, 2b. .	.331	.978	Viveros, Henryetta, ss.	.282	.941
Diamond, Enid, c. ....	.301	.963	Rayes, Henryetta, c. .	.315	.972
White, Springfeld, c. .	.319	.983	Rainey, Fort Smith, c.	.358	.969
Hodges, Joplin, p. ...	.179	.930	Cowan, Enid, p. ....	.295	.925
Songer, Enid, p. ....	.270	.990	Adecock, Joplin, p. ...	.236	.958
Abrams, Enid, p. ....	.128	.984	Bogart, McAlester, p. .	.113	.918
Jelsma, Henryetta, p. .	.193	.975	Grey, Henryetta, p. ...	.311	.974
Barnes, Fort Smith, p. .	.357	.873	Malone, Springfld, p. .	.149	.936
Jones, Ft. Smith, util. .	.287	.930	Poolaw, Joplin, util. .	.163	.960

Dud Branom [3 of 4]:

predicts that once his expensive first baseman gets over his nervousness he will "blossom" into of the top "initial sackers" in the major within the next two years.

"Branom is a great prospect, and I have all the confidence in the world in him," says Mack, "I thought he would shake that nervousness before this, but I've had experiences where it took a player of Branom's type years before he could be depended upon."

June 14, 1927

With the arrival of two new collegiate pitchers, Neil Baker from the University of Texas and John Mildexter from Denver University, Philadelphia gets down to the roster limit of 25 by optioning Branom to the Portland Beavers of the Pacific Coast League ... Branom responds to his new surroundings by hitting .374 with 13 home runs and 81 RBIs and earning a spot on the league's all-star team.

June 23, 1927

Branom develops a reputation that he is not a "brilliant or rapid thinker" ... team veterans estimate that mental mistakes in the field by their rookie first baseman has cost the team six games in the win column.

September 1, 1927

The Pittsburgh Pirates reportedly offer the Philadelphia Athletics \$50,000 for Branom.

September 15, 1927

The Philadelphia Athletics recall Branom to their major league roster but tell the Oklahoman not to report until next year's spring training camp.

November 5, 1927

The Philadelphia Athletics announce the outright sale of Branom to the Kansas City Blues.

April 4, 1928

A holdout because of a salary dispute, Branom and catcher Ginger Shinault are sold by the Kansas City Blues to the Louisville Colonels

February 28, 1931

Branom is one nine unsigned players that are told that they will not be allowed to board a train leaving for the Louisville Colonels' Mobile, Alabama, spring training camp

Dud Branom Year by Year:

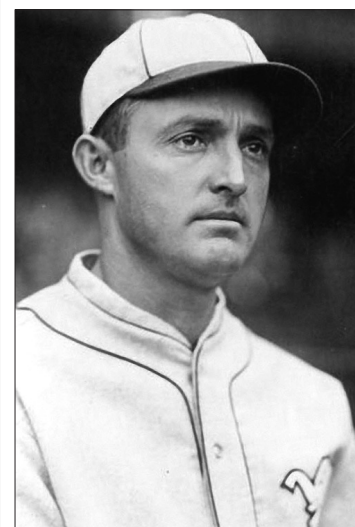
Year	Team	League	Lev	AB	R	HT	2B	3B	HR	RBI	AVG
1920	2 Teams	2 Leagues	D-AA	559	60	178	37	9	4	78	.318
1920	Enid Harvesters	Western Assoc.	D	499	56	160	33	7	4	74	.321
1920	Kansas City Blues	American Assoc.	AA	60	4	18	4	2	0	4	.300
1921	2 Teams	2 Leagues	A-AA	375	53	101	23	6	2	57	.269
1921	Kansas City Blues	American Assoc.	AA	58	9	16	2	3	1	7	.276
1921	Tulsa Oilers	Western	A	317	44	85	21	3	1	50	.268
1922	2 Teams	2 Leagues	C-AA	531	103	208	37	6	14	113	.392
1922	Enid Harvesters	Western Assoc.	C	511	99	200	36	6	14	110	.391
1922	Kansas City Blues	American Assoc.	AA	20	4	8	1	0	0	3	.400
1923	Kansas City Blues	American Assoc.	AA	379	71	132	18	14	9	76	.348
1924	Kansas City Blues	American Assoc.	AA	629	98	200	37	22	11	105	.318
1925	Kansas City Blues	American Assoc.	AA	514	66	151	20	9	7	99	.294
1926	Kansas City Blues	American Assoc.	AA	632	98	222	34	7	10	116	.351
1927	Philadelphia Athletics	AMERICAN	ML	94	8	22	1	0	0	13	.234
1927	Portland Beavers	Pacific Coast	AA	377	59	141	22	3	13	81	.374
1928	Louisville Colonels	American Assoc.	AA	659	69	204	33	11	17	128	.310
1929	Louisville Colonels	American Assoc.	AA	597	92	198	35	8	17	129	.332
1930	Louisville Colonels	American Assoc.	AA	617	90	194	20	4	14	123	.314
1931	Louisville Colonels	American Assoc.	AA	670	98	201	30	6	15	134	.300
1932	Louisville Colonels	American Assoc.	AA	652	71	177	27	6	17	110	.271
1933	3 Teams	3 Leagues	A-AA	358	30	103	19	3	1	55	.288
1933	Baltimore Orioles	International	AA	109	11	23	3	0	1	14	.211
1933	Minneapolis Millers	American Assoc.	AA	4	0	2	1	0	0	2	.500
1933	Wilkes-Barre Barons	NY-Penn	A	245	19	78	15	3	0	39	.318
1934	3 Teams	3 Leagues	C-A-AA	345	36	93	11	2	1	55	.270
1934	Milwaukee Brewers	American Assoc.	AA	75	7	20	2	0	1	8	.267
1934	Little Rock Travelers	Southern	A	99	10	22	2	2	0	12	.222
1934	Bartlesville Reds	Western Assoc.	C	171	19	51	7	0	0	35	.298
Major League Totals.....				1 Year	94	8	22	1	0	13	.234
Minor League Totals				13 Years	7894	1094	2503	403	116	1459	.311

Bold denotes led league

All-Star Team: 1922-Western Association (2nd); 1927-Pacific Coast League; 1929-American Association.

ML Debut: April 12, 1927 at Yankee Stadium, New York: started at 1B and went 1-for-3 with a RBI in an 8-3 loss to the New York Yankees.

ML Finale: May 31, 1927 at Shibe Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: pinch hit for pitcher Joe Pate in the ninth inning and went 0-1, grounding out to shortstop in a 18-5 loss to the New York Yankees.



Dud Branom
1927 Philadelphia Athletics

Dud Branom [4 of 4]:

... among the unsigned are Branom, Ben Tincup, Roy Wilkerson, Joe DeBerry, Ray Thompson and Billy Herman.

April 30, 1934

Playing for the Milwaukee Brewers, Branom hits the 152nd, and final, home run of his career in a 6-5 win over the Kansas City Blues.

May 7, 1934

Branom is released by the Brewers.

"I've been around too long. I've bunkered in pullmans for years, have seen alot of country in my time and I guess the only place left for me is at Enid, Oklahoma.

June 12, 1934

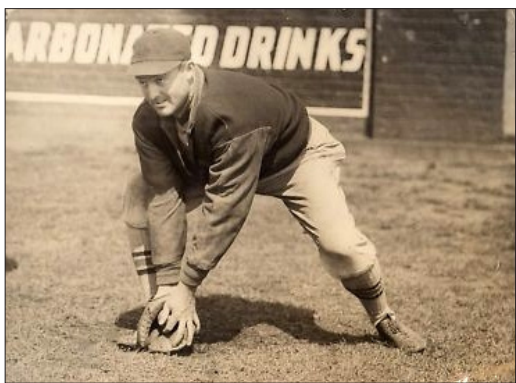
Playing for the Little Rock Travellers of the Southern Association, Branom is hitting .222 in 99 at bats when he is released by manager Johnny Moore.

July 22, 1934

Out of baseball and back on his farm in Oklahoma after being released by Little Rock, a 36-year-old Branom signs with the Bartlesville Reds of the Western (C) Association ... there is concern among league members that the Reds are paying the ex-major leaguer more than the \$200 per month as allowed by league rules.



Dud Branom
1927 Philadelphia Athletics



Dud Branom
1930 Louisville Colonels

February 25, 1980

Branom passes away in Sun City, Arizona, at the age of 82.