

# Tony Ponce, "Iron Man"

©DiamondsintheDusk.com

September 1, 1951 - Phoenix, Arizona

September 13, 1953 - San Francisco, California

## Phoenix Pitcher Pitches No. 38

Phoenix Senators ace pitcher Tony Ponce sets what is believed at the time to be a new record in organized baseball, completing his 38th straight game of the season with a 4-2 win over the last-place Yuma Panthers.

Ponce pitches 352 innings without having to removed from a game.

However, within days it is discovered that Memphis Egyptians' righthander Glenn Liebrandt hurled 45 complete games in 46 starts in 1906, with 40 being successive.

Liebrandt's one incomplete games took place on May 5, during a 9-4 win over Little Rock when he was thrown out of the game by umpire Pfenninger for disputing one of the arbiter's decisions.



Tony Ponce, 1953 San Francisco Seals

## Ponce of Seals Cops 8th in 17 Days

San Francisco Seals' veteran knuckleball pitcher Tony Ponce, brought up from the Class C California League during the final week in August, proves to be a late-season sensation in the Pacific Coast League when he picks up eight victories over a 17-day span, including a doubleheader sweep, 4-2 and 1-0, of the Los Angeles Angels on the season's final day.

Acquired from the Ventura Oilers where he has 15 wins and a league-leading 20 losses, Ponce makes fewer than 100 pitches in each of his eight victories

Ponce credits his late-season performance by being able to use his knuckleball more saying, "I could not throw my knuckle ball in the low leagues because the catchers couldn't hold it."

## PONCE PITCHES SEALS TO TWIN BILL WIN OVER ANGELS

SAN FRANCISCO (UP) — Tony Ponce, up from last place Ventura of the California League, rolled to his seventh and eighth straight victories in the Pacific Coast League Sunday as he hurled the San Francisco Seals to a doubleheader triumph over Los Angeles by scores of 4-2 and 1-0 before 6,100.

Ponce joined the Seals late in August after being racked up for 20 losses with the cellar bound Oilers which set a California League record for setbacks. He hurled his first win of the season in the Coast League on Aug. 28 against the Oakland Acorns. Starting with that game, the 32-year old knuckleball artist worked 62 innings and gave up nine earned runs for an unofficial earned run mark of 1.30. He did not lose a game.

Ponce had a three-hitter going into the seventh inning of the opener. Then the Angels pelted him for four more in the last three frames.

The 32-year-old right hander, who had a cup of coffee with the

Oakland Oaks in 1947 before being sent to Phoenix of the Arizona-Texas League, closed out his second shot at the PCL with nary a defeat charged against him. Sunday's performance increased his total innings worked in the open circuit to 62. He gave up only nine earned runs for an ERA mark of 1.30.

### FAST WORKER

Ponce said he wasn't worried at all. One of the fastest workers in organized baseball, he was finished with the first game in 1:40. The abbreviated night cap lasted 1:20.

"They were just another couple of ball games," Ponce said, "but I did lose a little weight." The scales showed he had dropped from 218 pounds to 208.

Neither was Manager Tommy Heath worried although the rest of the club was. His decision to go right back with Ponce in the nightcap was a complete surprise to the fans—if not Tony. Twice during the finale Heath walked out to the mound.

"I usually just look at a pitchers eyes to see if they're all right," Heath said. "His were as sparkling as ever."

## Phoenix Pitcher Pitches No. 38

PHOENIX, Ariz., Sept. 2.—(AP) —Tony Ponce, star right-hander of the Phoenix Senators in the Southwest International League, last night set what is believed to be a new pitching record in organized baseball of 38 consecutive games without being relieved.

He marked up his 25th win of the season to 16 losses last night as Phoenix defeated Yuma, 4-2.

The official mark for consecutive games pitched without being relieved is 37 made by William Dineen of the Boston Red Sox in the American League in 1904.

### Ponce's Amazing Streak

Date	Opp	Score	Inn	ER	HT	SO	W
A28	Oakland	5-2	9	2	6	3	2
S1	Hollywood	4-1	9	1	6	5	2
S3	Hollywood	13-2	2	0	0	0	0
S4	Hollywood	7-5	3	0	4	1	1
S6	Hollywood	5-1	7	1	6	3	1
S10	Los Angeles	5-4	9	4	11	0	1
S13	Los Angeles	4-2	9	2	10	1	0

## Tony Ponce [2 of 2]:

Following a three-game rookie debut in 1941 with the Anaheim Aces of the California (C) League, Ponce enters military service. After spending two years in the Army, Ponce plays four years in the Mexican League with Hermosillo and one season with Nogales in the Senora State League.

In 1949, Ponce goes 22-6 with a league-best .786 winning percentage for the Phoenix Senators. He hits .298 with 17 RBIs and his 4.48 ERA is eighth among league leaders, but he is left off the Arizona-Texas League all-star team in favor of Juarez Indios' lefthander Memo Luna (12-6, 4.85 ERA).

In 12 minor league campaigns, Ponce has eight-straight seasons with 200 or more innings pitched, including two years (1951 & 1953) with 300 innings plus.

The Rivera, California, native ends his career in 1958 following a combined 4-15 mark with four different teams.

## Tony Ponce Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	INN	H	BB	SO	ERA	
1940	Whittier High School.....	SoCal	HS	-	-	-	-	-	---	
	Housel Truck.....	LA Winter League	Spro	-	-	-	-	-	---	
1941	Anaheim Aces.....	California	C	1-1	15	-	-	-	---	
	Housel Truck.....	LA Winter League	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	---	
1948	<b>3 Teams.....</b>	<b>2 Lgs</b>	<b>C-AAA</b>	<b>15-11</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>4.1</b>	
	Nogales Internationals.....	Sonora State	MexL	9-0	-	-	-	-	---	
	Oakland Oaks.....	Pacific Coast	AAA	0-1	6	7	0	4	9	
	Phoenix Senators.....	Arizona-Texas	C	15-10	194	220	-	43	3.94	
1949	Phoenix Senators.....	Arizona-Texas	C	22-6	239	285	-	73	4.48	
1950	Phoenix Senators.....	Arizona-Texas	C	18-11	254	343	-	72	5.31	
1951	Phoenix Senators.....	Southwest Int.	C	25-16	352	369	-	75	3.45	
1952	Phoenix Senators.....	Arizona-Texas	C	19-12	234	334	-	73	5.27	
1953	<b>2 Teams.....</b>	<b>2 Lgs</b>	<b>C-Opn</b>	<b>23-20</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>3.85</b>	
	Ventura Oilers.....	California	C	15-20	279	320	-	70	4.42	
	San Francisco Seals.....	Pacific Coast	Opn	8-0	62	58	19	15	1.31	
1954	San Francisco Seals.....	Pacific Coast	Opn	14-16	237	256	69	61	3.41	
1955	San Francisco Seals.....	Pacific Coast	Opn	10-12	184	229	61	48	4.26	
1956	<b>2 Teams.....</b>	<b>2 Lgs</b>	<b>AAA</b>	<b>10-8</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>4.03</b>	
	Louisville Colonels.....	American Assoc.	AAA	9-7	105	139	21	22	4.46	
	Miami Marlins.....	International	AAA	1-1	40	45	10	5	2.92	
1957	Indianapolis Indians.....	American Assoc.	AAA	12-13	176	203	53	52	4.55	
1958	<b>4 Teams.....</b>	<b>3 Lgs</b>	<b>C-AAA</b>	<b>4-15</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>5.96</b>	
	Indianapolis Indians.....	American Assoc.	AAA	0-1	-	-	-	-	---	
	Chattanooga Lookouts.....	Southern	AA	0-0	-	-	-	-	---	
	New Orleans Pelicans.....	Southern	AA	1-4	40	57	-	11	6.08	
	Mexicali Aguilas.....	Arizona-Mexico	C	3-10	105	152	-	21	5.91	
1960	Long Beach Rockets.....	City League	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	---	
<b>Minor League Totals .....</b>				<b>12 Seasons</b>	<b>173-141</b>	<b>2522</b>	<b>3017</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>4.30</b>

### Hurling Record

Pitcher Tony Ponce of Phoenix, Southwest International league, was running up an impressive record as August drew to a close. Ponce had pitched 33 consecutive games without being relieved. The record for pitching the most complete games without relief was set by Glenn Liebhardt of Memphis of the Southern Assn. in 1906. Liebhardt started 46 times and finished 45 games. An umpire tossed Liebhardt out in his 46th game for disputing a decision.

## Ponce Hurls 38 Complete Games, Believed Record

Tony Ponce of Phoenix (Southwest International) is believed to have established a modern Organized Ball record by pitching 38 consecutive games without relief in a season. He marked up his twenty-fifth win of the season, compared to 16 losses, September 1,



Tony Ponce

when he turned back Yuma, 4 to 2. The official major league mark for consecutive games pitched without being relieved is 37, set by William Dinneen with the Red Sox in the American League in 1904. The modern National League record is held by John Taylor of St. Louis, established at 23 in 1904.