

On This Date

December 31, 1963

One of 476 native North Carolinians to have played in the major leagues, Junie Barnes, despite being a collegiate star at Wake Forest College and a record-setting strikeout pitcher during his 10-year minor league career, has a brief, very brief, major league career with the last-place Cincinnati Reds in 1934, when he faces just two batters, in two different games.

Brought up by the last-place Reds after winning 18 games and setting a Piedmont (B) League record with 232 strikeouts, Barnes makes a forgettable major debut on September 12 against the Brooklyn Dodgers in Ebbets Field.

"An extremely young and entirely left-handed pitcher," Barnes replaces Si Johnson in the bottom of the tenth inning and walks pinch-hitter Sam Leslie, forcing in Buzz Boyle with the winning run in an 8-7 Dodger victory.

Nine days later, the 22-year-old portsider makes his second, and last major league appearance in the first game of a Friday doubleheader against the Pittsburgh Pirates in Forbes Field. Replacing Ray Kolp with two out in the bottom of the eighth inning, Barnes get Red Lucas to ground into a force out ending the inning in an eventual 9-3 loss to the Corsairs.

Attending Wake Forest law school in the off-season, the Linwood, North Carolina native will not make a return trip to the major leagues playing instead another eight years in the minor leagues before becoming a business agent for the Textile Workers Union of America. Barnes passes away on **December 31, 1963**, in Jacksonville, North Carolina, after battling colon cancer the last year of his life.

