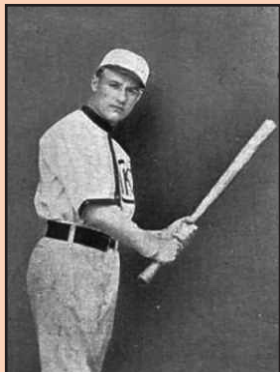


They Played the Game

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Monte Pfyl



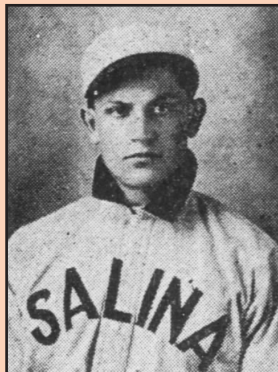
Signed off the sandlots of St. Louis, Meinhard "Monte" Pfyl makes his major league debut on July 30, 1907, for John McGraw's New York Giants. Pinch-hitting for first baseman Frank Bowerman, Pfyl lays down a successful sacrifice bunt in the top of the eighth inning and then stays in at first base for two innings in what turns out to be his only major league appearance. The following day he is sent to Springfield of the Three-I League and then later traded to the Cedar Rapids Bunnies along with Bill Fox in exchange for temperamental pitcher Rusty Owens. Pfyl will play five more seasons of minor leagues ball, with the Altoona Mountaineers (1908), Baltimore Orioles (1908), Stockton Millers (1909), Oakland Oaks (1910-11), and the Jersey City Skeeters (1914). His best season is in 1909 with Stockton when he leads the outlaw California State League with a .358 average and has career-highs in doubles (22), triples (8) home runs (9) and stolen bases (44). For breaking his contract and playing in an outlaw organization, Pfyl's punishment is having to play three years in the Pacific Coast League. After two seasons with the Oakland Oaks, Pfyl retires and takes a job as a salesman for a wholesale house in San Francisco. On October 14, 1913, Pyle is restored to good standing by the National Commission. New York's McGraw refuses to release him from his Giants' contract but allows him to sign with Jersey City of the International (AA) League where he hits .274 in his final season of professional baseball.

Bill Phyle



Probably not the smartest hayseed in the room on any given day, Bill Phyle causes more trouble over the course of his 14-year career than one man should be able to do. On July 31, 1899, Phyle is pitching for the Chicago Orphans, when he takes a "French leave" of the team and boards a train for St. Louis with the expressed intent to view the George Dixon-Eddie Santry fight at the Missouri Metropolis, leaving the team with only two healthy pitchers. The none-to-swift Phyle isn't upset with the \$100 fine levied by manager Tom Burns, but objects to being suspended for the remainder of the season. Within a week his suspension is lifted and he quickly returns to his losing ways with a 10-9 loss to the lowly Cleveland Spiders on August 6. The following spring, with the team training in West Baden Springs, Indiana, Phyle is suspended again, this time by new manager Tom Loftus, for leaving the team for yet another professional boxing event, this time in Chicago. Phyle earns the nickname "Lucky," because of his proverbial hard luck and daily injuries. Traded to Kansas City of the American League on May 18, he refuses to report and ends up playing semipro ball back in the Windy City. In September 1903, Phyle causes yet more problems when he claims that Memphis won that year's Southern Association pennant only after buying games from Montgomery and Atlanta. He refuses to attend two hearings on the matter, claiming he is ill. As a result, he was expelled from organized baseball for a second time in October.

Sammy Krepps



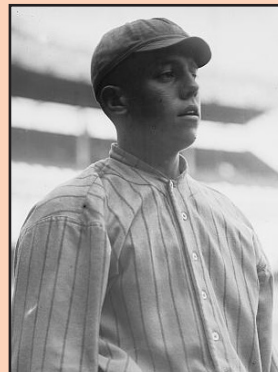
Samuel Archie Krepps might be what one would term a "hot head," having a career filled with altercations and suspensions. A native of Sabetha, Kansas, Krepps first appears in 1907 playing semipro ball with the Salina Bankers, the McPherson Sluggers and the Abilene Champs before making a one inning, one at bat and one error professional debut on September 15 with the Webb City Goldbugs of the Western Association. Following the game with Hutchinson, he is released. Krepps later signs with Muskogee, but starts the 1908 season with the Salina Trade Winners of the Central Kansas (D) League. Despite promising he would "hit .400" Krepps hits .188 and .194, respectively, in his first two seasons. After playing semipro ball again in 1910, Krepps returns to the Central Kansas League with the Concordia Travelers and is hitting .281 when he is sold to Topeka of the Western (A) League on June 23. In 87 games with the Jayhawks, Krepps hits .248 and at the end of the season is sued by a Salina Clothier for an outstanding \$30 bill. Krepps receives a pay raise from Topeka but is waived on March 25 and ends up back in Salina where he hits a career-high .305 while playing in all 90 games for the last-place Insurgents. Traded in January of 1913 to the Petersburg Goobers of the Virginia (C) League, Krepps hits .250 with career-highs in doubles (36) and triples (10). In 1914, he hits .229 with the Newport News Shipbuilders in his final minor league season ended early by a broken leg. Krepps will play several more seasons of semipro ball in Kansas.

Walter Ogiego



In 1939, 24-year-old left-hander Walter Ogiego makes his professional debut with the Tallahassee Capitals of the Georgia-Florida (D) League. Playing third base and outfield in addition to his mound duty, the Munster, Indiana, native posts a 17-8 record with a 3.18 ERA and is one of three Capitals to earn a berth on the league's post-season all-star team. At the end of the season, Ogiego is drafted by the International League's Buffalo Bisons where he is the "rookie rave," and the "classiest curver" in team's 1940 spring training. Following two less-than-impressive appearances with the last-place Bisons, Ogiego is optioned down to Winston-Salem of the Piedmont (B) League. Making his debut with the last-place Twins on May 7, he pitches a seven-hit complete game win over visiting Charlotte. The portsider's stay in the Tar Heel State is unsuccessful as he is 4-7 with a 6.12 ERA for the Twins before being recalled by Buffalo on July 29. Ogiego wins the 22nd and last game of his career on August 11, 1940, against Montreal. That December he and second baseman John Kroner are traded to the Dallas Rebels for shortstop Jim Levey. Ogiego refuses to report to Dallas and that April is sold to Topeka of the Western Association where he also doesn't report. His brief pro career over after three seasons, Ogiego will pitch several seasons for the Gary (Indiana) Sportsmen, one of the fastest independent teams in Northern Indiana.

Art Bues



Art Bues plays 14 seasons of professional baseball, including two years at the major league level with the Boston Braves (1913) and Chicago Cubs (1914). The Milwaukee native begins his pro career as a 19-year-old in 1907 with Lethbridge of the Western Canada (D) League. Following four non-descript seasons, Bues has a breakout season in 1911 with the Seattle Giants, leading the Northwestern (B) League in hits (219), home runs (27) and batting average (.352). Sought by four major league teams, Bues eventually makes the Boston Braves' opening day roster in 1913, but after one plate appearance in two games, he is traded to Buffalo of the International (AA) League for 20-year-old outfielder Les Mann. After two weeks with the Bisons, Bues jumps the team, expressing displeasure with his salary. He later returns and hits .257, splitting time between Buffalo and Jersey City. He makes his final major league appearance late in the 1914 season with the Chicago Cubs, hitting .222 with four RBIs. Bues will play another nine seasons, including two semipro seasons in his native Wisconsin. In 1923, Milwaukee, in need of an infielder, acquires Bues, now in private business, to play for the hometown Brewers. The team and Bues are surprised to find out that he has been barred from organized baseball after playing with an outlaw club in Illinois. Milwaukee owner Otto Borchert then buys Bues from Louisville so that he can retire from the game with "a clean slate."