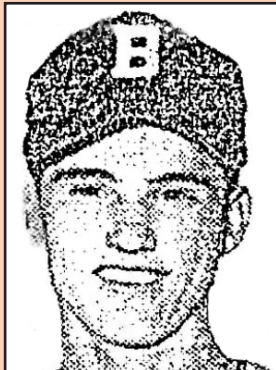


They Played the Game No. 6

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Buel Morrison



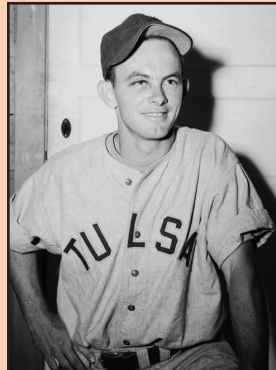
A 6-foot-4, 185-pound two-sport standout athlete from Ada, Oklahoma, Buel Lavon Morrison is 5-1 as a pitcher and hits .536 with nine home runs and teams with future Chicago Cub pitcher Don Kaiser in leading Byng High School its second-straight class B state championship in 1954. Married with an infant girl and a second-team All-State second baseman, he signs with the Cleveland Indians for a \$1,500 bonus in mid-May. Assigned to Jacksonville Beach Sea Birds of the Florida State (D) League, Morrison starts the season as the team's starting left fielder, but with a batting average in the .230's, but manager Spud Chandler converts him to pitching in mid-July and he is 5-5 with a 4.04 ERA and eight complete games in nine starts. After going 2-2 as a reliever for Barranquilla of the Columbia winter league, he is promoted to class C Sherbrooke for 1955. His batting average drops to .204 and he is 6-6 with a 4.23 ERA. Still a prospect in Cleveland's opinion, he climbs up the Indians' organizational ladder to the Port Arthur Seahawks of the Big State (B) League. Moved to the bullpen, Morrison is 2-0 with 11 strikeouts and 12 walks in 14 1/3 innings when he draws his unconditional release on May 22. In three minor league seasons, Morrison hits .214 with 18 double and nine home runs. In addition, he is 13-11 with a 4.07 ERA. Morrison passes away on October 9, 2015 in Jacksonville, Florida. He was 80 years old.

Jack Niemes



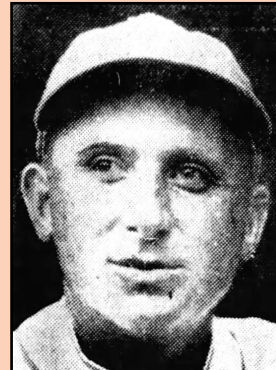
A Navy veteran wounded while serving in the South Pacific during World War II, Jack Niemes is a Cincinnati native who appears in three games for his hometown Reds in 1943. After leading Hughes High School to the state title in 1938, Niemes signs with the Columbia Reds of the South Atlantic (B) League where he is 0-4 in nine appearances. Over the next two seasons he wins 14 games, including an 8-8 mark with the Piedmont (B) League's Durham Bulls in 1940. His movement up the Cincinnati Reds' organizational ladder stalls in 1941 when he elects to leave baseball in mid-May and return home to Cincinnati to take over the family's plumbing business after his father retires to California for health reasons. He attends the University of Cincinnati for one year while continuing to pitch for various semipro teams in the Cincinnati area, first for the Hamilton County Cardinals and then the Middletown Armcos. In 1943, the war-strapped Cincinnati Reds are looking to add a left-handed pitcher when on May 11 they sign the 23-year-old one-time organizational farmhand, noted as a "local plumber." His three appearances for Bill McKechnie's Reds are spread out over four months. Niemes is 0-0 with a 6.00 ERA in three innings of work. Despite his relative inaction, Niemes is one of 26 Cincinnati players to later receive a full share of second-place money (\$1,355.57) from the 1943 World Series receipts.

Windy Donaldson



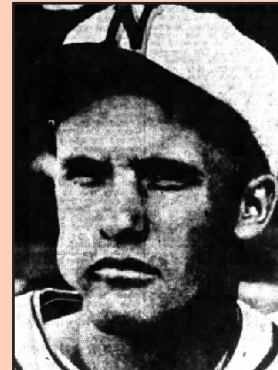
Gordon "Windy" Donaldson plays six years of minor league baseball and like so many men of his era, his career is interrupted by World War II. Donaldson graduates from Polytechnic High School in Fort Worth in 1939 and later attends Texas Wesleyan College and Texas Christian University. Following his rookie season in 1942 with the Idaho Falls Russets where he leads the Pioneer League second baseman in fielding, Donaldson enlists in the Army Air Force in October and serves three years. In 1944 while playing for the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center, he lists Enos "Country" Slaughter and Howie Pollet as teammates. Resuming his baseball career in 1946 with the Tulsa Oilers, the 150-pound middle infielder is hitting .257 when he is sent down to the Macon Peaches of the South Atlantic (A) League. In 1947, Donaldson is playing for the Gainesville (Texas) Owls when he achieves career-highs in hits (171) home runs (22), RBIs (97) and earns second-team Big State League All-Star honors. He will play three more years of B-level ball with the Owls before leaving the pro ranks after the 1950 season. During his time in the minor leagues, he was a member of the New York Yankees and Chicago Cubs organizations. After leaving Gainesville, he plays seven years with the Plymouth Oilers, a semipro baseball team. The Oilers were national champions in 1951 and state champions six times.

Pea Ridge Day



On March 21, 1934, former major league pitcher Pea Ridge Day, reportedly distraught over not being in the big leagues any longer, commits suicide by slashing his throat with a hunting knife. In Kansas City to visit former teammate Max Thomas, the 34-year-old right-hander had just been treated at a local hospital after complaining of frequent lapses in memory. Thomas says he attempted to stop Day but was pushed aside. The suicide occurs in Thomas' apartment. Pea Ridge Day was a screwball pitcher - literally and figuratively. He was known for making loud hog-calls on the mound following a strikeout. In parts of four seasons with the Cardinals (1924-25), Reds (1926) and the Dodgers (1931), Day is 5-7 with a 4.55 ERA and three complete games, the first being a six-hit complete game victory over the Boston Braves in his major league debut on September 19, 1924, and the second a 14-hitter on April 18, 1925 in a 20-5 rout of the Chicago Cubs. In 1925, he sets a St. Louis Cardinals' record that stands for 88 years by opening the season with 29 2/3 innings without issuing a walk. Named after a little Arkansas town of Pea Ridge where he grew up, Day boasts that he was the champion hog-caller of Arkansas. When he reached the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1931, Wilbert Robinson was quoted as saying: "I made him stop that braying, because no man has any right to be any sillier than God intended him to be."

Junie Barnes



One of 491 native North Carolinians to have played in the major leagues, Junie Barnes, 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.