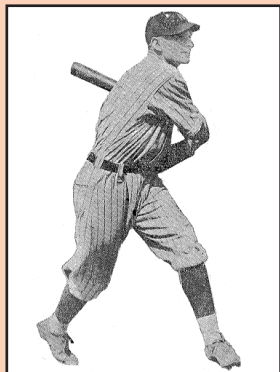


They Played the Game No. 7

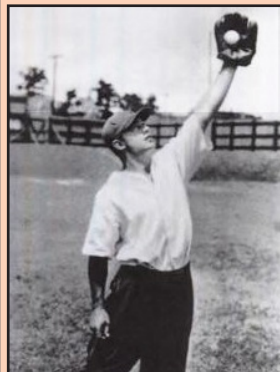
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Debby Foss



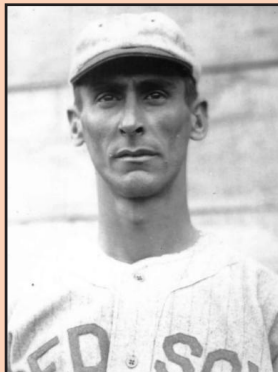
A veteran minor leaguer with 15 years toiling in states ranging from Florida to Minnesota, George "Deeby" Foss finally earns a spot on a major league roster donning the flannels of the sixth-place Washington Senators in 1921. Despite an impressive spring that catches the attention of team owner Clark Griffith, Foss "shines the seat" for six long months behind incumbent Howie Shanks (.302 & 69 RBIs) and manages a mere seven at bats in four games. Following the season, the "Gentleman from Georgia" is traded to the New Orleans Pelicans for pitcher Tom Phillips. On February 8, 1925, playing for Miami in the Southeastern Florida Winter League, Foss turns in an unassisted triple play against the Lake Worth Wonders. Later, on July 3, playing for Waco, Foss garners national attention when he attempts to steal third base with the bases loaded in a 10-6 win over Wichita Falls. After hitting only four home runs in his first nine seasons, the Register, Georgia, native hits a career-high 23 home runs with the Texas League's Waco Cubs in 1925. In 1930, in his last year as a player, Foss is hitting .367 with the Columbus Senators when on June 18, he is named the manager of the Three-I-League's last-place Peoria Tractors (19-32). He directs the Tractors to a 38-45 finish and improves the team to a sixth-place finish. Following his playing days, he serves as a policeman in the Miami area for 28 years.

Norm Small



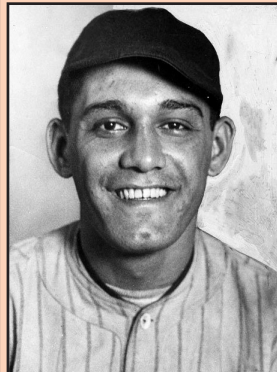
Despite beginning his career as a pitcher, transplanted New Yorker Norman Woodnutt Small proves to be one of the top hitters in the history of the North Carolina State League. Seven times he leads in home runs and four times in RBIs, including a record-setting 152 in 1949, when he hits .344 with career-high 41 home runs. Ten times he will hit over .300, including eight seasons of .325-or-better. The Glen Cove, New York, native finishes his 18-year minor league career with 336 home runs despite missing two years (1944-1945) while attaining the rank of sergeant in the Army. Serving in an infantry unit, he saw heavy action in both France and Germany. In 1934, he is one of eight graduates selected by the St. Louis Cardinals from the Ray Doan baseball school in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and begins his pro career that summer and is 7-2 in 12 games for the Manufacturers of the Bi-State League and receives votes on the league's all-star team both as a pitcher and an outfielder. In June of 1937, Small is hitting .392 for Mooresville when he is sold to the Durham Bulls for \$2,500, thought to be a record for a class B organization to play a class A player. Small, is a six-time all-star (1940, 1941, 1946, 1947, 1950, 1953) but it two years where he failed to make the honors' team. The most glaring All-Star omission comes in 1948 when the 34-year-old outfielder hits .357 with 32 doubles, 33 home runs and a league-leading 130 RBIs.

Mike Herrera



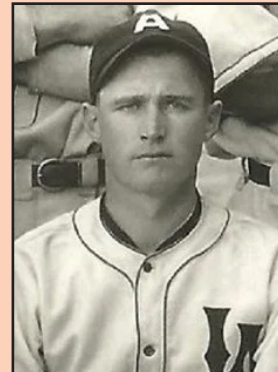
A former major leaguer with the Boston Red Sox in 1925 and 1926 and a father of nine children, Mike Herrera is hitting a solid .298 in 1929, with 16 doubles and two triples in 49 games for the Western League's Pueblo Steelworkers when he draws his release in early June. Now a free agent, the 31-year-old Cuban infielder signs with the Arizona State (D) League's Phoenix Senators, he reports to the team on June 15. Herrera is hitting .312 in 15 games for the Senators when he is one of three players released by the team on July 8. Following his release, he reportedly returns home to his native Cuba. A week following his release, veteran Tucson Cowboys' manager Pug Cavet is on the lookout for Herrera to replace the injured Ken O'Kane, one of the league's top hitters with a .351 average. Cavet says, "I spent all morning trying to get a player. Mike Herrera has gone back to Cuba, and he was about the only player available around here." A utility infielder, the 5-foot-6 Herrera plays in the Negro Leagues in 1920, 1921 and again in 1928 with the Cuban Stars East where he hits .327 in 30 games. His first and his last game in the major leagues turn out to be on the same date, September 22 (1925 and 1926). In 84 career games with the Red Sox, he hits .275 with one home run and 85 RBIs. Baseball Reference lists Herrera passing away in Havana on February 3, 1978, at the age of 80.

Prince Oana



If there had been an MVP award in the Arizona State (D) League in 1929 and 1930, there is a good chance that Globe's Henry "Prince" Oana would have won the honor both years. In his two seasons with the Bears (1929-1930) the Oahu native hits .392 with 48 doubles, 25 triples and 39 home runs. Rumored to have come from Hawaii royalty (he wasn't), Oana makes his major league debut on April 22, 1934, with the Philadelphia Phillies. In six National League games he hits .238 with a double and three RBIs. He returns to the majors nine years later this time as a 33-year-old pitcher with the Detroit Tigers. Oana plays 23 years of organized ball, first as an outfielder from 1929 to 1942, before Fort Worth manager Rogers Hornsby switches the 6-foot-2 right-hander to the mound in 1942 where he is 16-5 and a 1.72 ERA. In 13 games over two seasons with the Tigers in the midst of World War II, he is 3-2 with a 3.77 ERA. In 23 minor league seasons, he hits .304 with 261 home runs and 1,368 RBIs in 2,214 games. He was also 79-54 as a pitcher with a 3.24 ERA. He was a five-sport star at St. Louis High School in Honolulu and was recruited to play college football by several colleges on the mainland. In his only major league start, on September 12, 1945, against the Philadelphia Athletics, Oana takes a one-hitter into the ninth inning before settling for a no decision in 10 2/3 innings.

Gale Staley



Shortstop George Gaylor "Gale" Staley is 18-years-old and a junior in high school in 1923 when he forgoes his senior year signing with the Cincinnati Reds. Two years later (1925) he opens the season with the South Atlantic (B) League's Charlotte Hornets but after hitting only .172 in 18 games he is sent down to Salisbury of the Piedmont (D) League. On July 18, Staley is considering quitting baseball when he is sold to the Chicago Cubs for a reported \$6,500. Brought up to the Cubs at the end of the season, he makes his major league debut against the Cincinnati Reds on September 16. In seven games he fashions a .423 average while hitting safely in each of those seven games. Unfortunately for the Seattle resident those will be the only seven major league games he appears in. On December 23, 1925, the Cubs send Staley and outfielder Art Weis to the PCL's Los Angeles Angels in exchange for second baseman Clyde Beck. In 1928 he hits .301 for Los Angeles but after the season he is sold to the Portland Beavers because his throws to first base on double plays "lacked snap." He will play four more minor league seasons in the Pacific Coast League before retiring just prior to the 1931 season when the "veteran of the far western slopes," coming off an injury-filled season (career-low 84 games) with Portland is sold to the Memphis Chicks.