

Bob Danielson "Gone too Soon"

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"If he pitches like that all the time, he can win regularly in the American League"

The author of the above statement is Ossie Bleuge, the director of the Washington Senators' farm system and he has just witnessed Charlotte Hornet right-hander Bob Danielson's second-straight shutout victory in the Tri-State League playoffs, a 12-0 win over Spartanburg, on September 9, 1952.

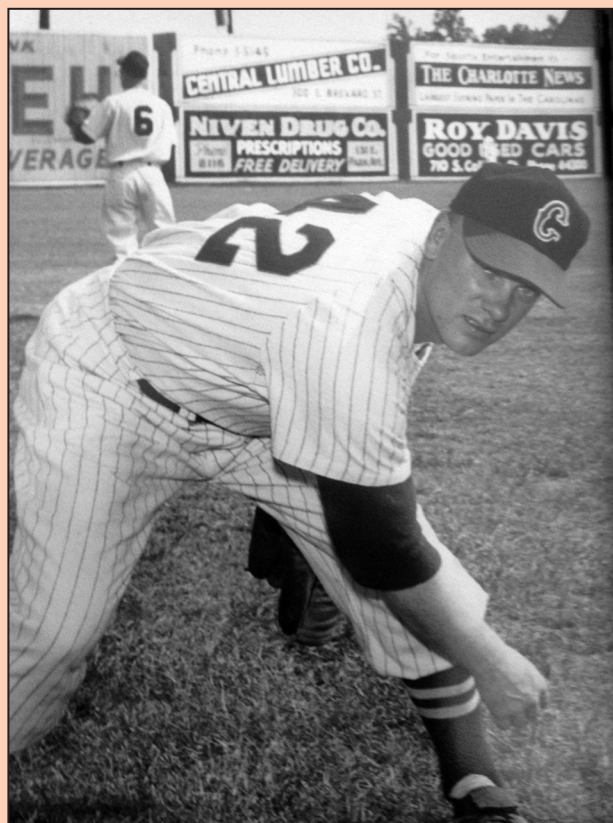
"He has that fastball that jumps," notes Bluege. "He's definitely a major league prospect. I like him, so does Mr. Griffith. The other day Griff was asking, 'How's that big Swede doing at Charlotte?' He doesn't remember names too well, but he knows his ball players"

Danielson doesn't quite equal the no-hitter that he turned in against Anderson five days earlier, but the shutout is the fifteenth win of the summer for the right-hander on a self-described "baseball vacation from the lakes of Minnesota."

Unfortunately for the Senators and the 52-year-old Bluege, when their prized right-hander walks off the mound that night in Charlotte's Griffith Park, it would be the last time he would do so in a professional game.

Five months later, at the urging of his wife and because of the success of his nascent insurance business back in St. Paul, Robert Earl Danielson simply walks away from the game he had played so well.

Success comes early for Danielson. In 1943, as a 17-year-old he leads the Richfield, Minnesota, Junior Legion team (Post 435) to the American Legion National Championship and is voted the Most Valuable Player of the Tournament. Following his team's two-week tournament stay in Miles City, Montana, a triumphant Danielson returns home to Minneapolis where he is later named the top amateur athlete in the city.

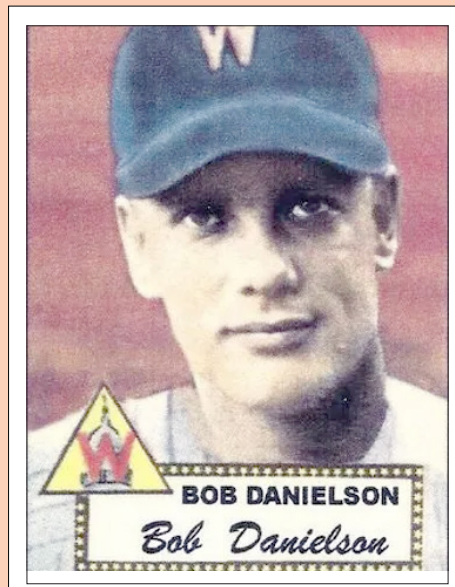


Bob Danielson
1943 Richland Junior Legion

That February, the Chicago White Sox offer the right-hander \$2,500 to sign, but he elects to finish his senior year at Washburn High School. After graduating he puts his baseball career on hold in September when he joins the Navy as a combat air crewman. He is first assigned to a Naval Air Training Center in Norman, Oklahoma, and then transferred to Jacksonville (Fla.) Naval Air Base before ending up in Pearl Harbor in May 1946.

Following his military service, Danielson attends Macalester College in St. Paul, where he graduates in 1950 with a degree in Speech and Radio while playing both basketball and baseball for the The Scots. To earn some extra money, he also plays semipro ball in the Southern Minnesota League during the summers. In his senior season he is the winning pitcher for Macalester in the Minnesota State College Championship game.

A 23-year-old Danielson begins his pro career in June 1950, with the Minot (N.D.) Mallards of the independent Manitoba-Dakota (ManDak) League. Signed by former Senators' pitcher and player/manager Bill LeFebvre as a first baseman and pitcher, the blonde, blue-eyed Danielson is with the team the entire season.



Bob Danielson [2 of 3]:

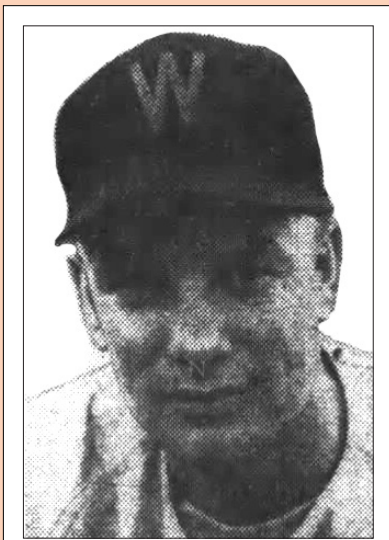
The Mallards' roster lists several former Negro League players, including 43-year-old Satchell Paige, Steve Wylie, Ted Strong, Freddie Shepard, Jack Bruton, Willie Cathey, Leonard Williams and Les Witherspoon. Unfortunately for Minot fans, Wiley jumps the club on July 1 to join with the Swift Current team in Saskatchewan, followed a week later by Strong and Williams.

1950 Minot Mallards



The Mallards finish 24-24 and third place in the 1950 ManDak League. Danielson is pictured here as the far right player in the middle row.

in North Dakota where he dabbles in radio in his spare time and the off-season, Danielson elects to give up pursuing a budding career as a sportscaster to play minor league baseball on a full-time basis.



Bob Danielson
1952 Washington Senators

Using his Washington connections, LeFebvre recommends Danielson to the Chattanooga Lookouts, the top farm team of the Washington Senators. Team owner Joe Engel trusts LeFebvre's judgement and signs the 24-year-old to a minor league contract in February.

At the Washington Senators' spring training in Winter Garden, Florida, Danielson is impressive enough to have Senators' team owner Clark Griffith take him aside after a game to tell him to stop throwing the knuckleball as it is "slowing him down."

Danielson makes a huge jump from independent baseball to the highly-regarded Southern (AA) Association when he makes Chattanooga's opening day roster for 1951. Used only in relief with the eventual last-place Lookouts, Danielson is 0-0 with a 7.88 ERA in nine appearances when he is "farmed out" to the Tri-State (D) League's Charlotte Hornets.

Given a parting pep talk by Chattanooga manager Jack Onslow to "toughen up," Danielson arrives in Charlotte on June 14, just recently wed, before flying to Knoxville to join the team the

Bob Danielson Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	Finish	W-L	GP	GS	CG	SHO	SV	INN	H	ER	BB	SO	ERA
1949	Faribault Lakers	Southern Minnesota	Ind			0-0	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1950	Minot Mallards	Manitoba-Dakota	Ind	24-24	3 of 8	6-4	11	10	6	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	--
1951	2 Teams	2 Leagues	B-AA			11-3	26	14	9	2	0	129.0	104	44	66	112	3.07
	Chattanooga Lookouts	Southern	AA	62-91	8 of 8	0-0	9	1	0	0	0	16.0	22	14	14	13	7.88
	Charlotte Hornets	Tri-State	B	100-40	1 of 8	11-3	17	13	9	2	0	113.0	82	30	52	99	2.39
1952	2 Teams	2 Leagues	B-AA														
	Chattanooga Lookouts	Southern	AA	86-66	1 of 8	0-0	3	2	0	0	0	7.1	11	8	6	3	9.81
	Charlotte Hornets	Tri-State	B	87-51	2 of 8	13-5	28	17	10	0	0	165.0	123	48	83	142	2.62
	Minor League Totals	2 Seasons				24-8	57	33	19	2	0	301.1	238	100	155	257	2.99

No-Hitter

September 4, 1952

Anderson Rebels at Charlotte Hornets
Griffith Park, Charlotte, North Carolina

Bob Danielson Gets No-Hitter For Charlotte

Anderson			Charlotte		
	Ab.	h.o.a.		Ab.	h.o.a.
H'smann, 2b	4	0 3 3	Meachini, ss	3	0 1 0
Jones, c	3	0 7 1	Guyton, cf	4	1 2 0
McCain, 1b	2	0 2 0	Barnes, rf	4	1 3 0
Powis, cf	3	0 2 0	Marino, 3b	3	0 1 2
Perez, 3b	3	0 1 1	McAnulty, lf	3	0 0 0
Mulligan, lf	3	0 0 0	Bollick, 2b	3	0 2 1
Honacki, ss	3	0 0 4	Azpiazu, 1b	3	1 5 0
Samela, rf	3	0 2 0	Ech'y'ria, c	3	1 1 0
Rynard, p	2	0 0 2	Danielson, p	2	0 0 0
a Lemons	1	0 0 0			

Totals 27 0 24 11 Totals 28 4 27 3

a—Struck out for Rynard in 9th.

Anderson 000 000 000—0

Charlotte 001 000 00x—1

R—Danielson. E—None. RBI—Barnes Left—Anderson 1, Charlotte 5. BB—Rynard 2, Danielson 1. SO—Danielson 12, Rynard 7. R and ER—Danielson 0-0; Rynard 1-1. PB—Jones, Winner—Danielson. Loser—Rynard. U—Thomas and Simpson. T—1 35. A—346.

Exactly two years to the day after Dizzy Sutherland's no-hitter against Rock Hill, Danielson turns in one of the all-time great pitching performances in league history when he faces only 28 batters in a 1-0 no-hit effort against Anderson. In the first game of the Tri-State post-season playoffs and in front of only 346 fans at Griffith Park (the smallest crowd of the year), Danielson strikes out 12, including the side in the ninth inning but misses out on a perfect game by walking the Rebels' first baseman Sam McCain on a 3-2 count.

Bob Danielson [3 of 3]:

following day. Danielson tells the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, "I went to school all these weeks at Chattanooga. I learned a lot of things I never knew about pitching. Onslow has been tough, but he's been a great teacher."



Bob Danielson
1951 Chattanooga Lookouts

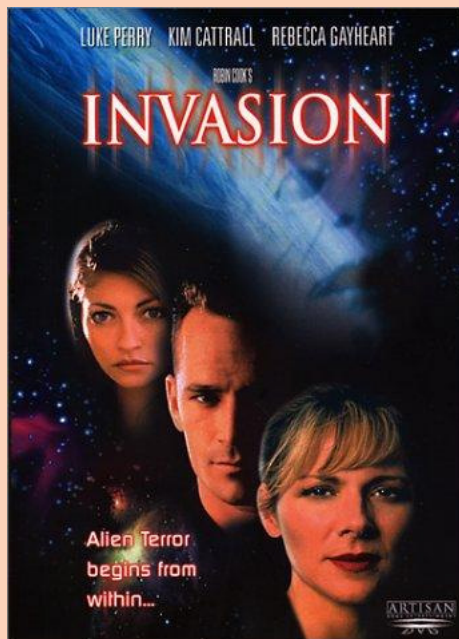
Danielson makes his Hornets' debut on June 20 and picks up his first win of the season in a two-inning relief appearance against Asheville. He will go on to win his first five decisions for Cal Ermer's pennant-bound Hornets. Danielson finishes his first full season in the minor leagues with an 11-3 mark, a 2.39 ERA and nine complete games, including two shutouts, in 13 starts. He allows only 82 hits in 113 1/3 innings (6.5 per 9 innings) and strikes out 99 while walking only 52.

"Chesty" Bob Danielson's effort to make the Washington roster for 1952 gets off to a solid start in the team's spring training opener when he singles with one out in the tenth inning scoring Leroy Dietzel giving the Senators an 8-7 victory over the Philadelphia Athletics. In addition, he picks up the win pitching two scoreless innings prior to his hit. However, for a second-straight year, the Senators assign a sore-armed Danielson back to Chattanooga, where in three games he is 0-0 with a less-than-flattering

9.81 ERA. On May 8, he is optioned once again to Charlotte.



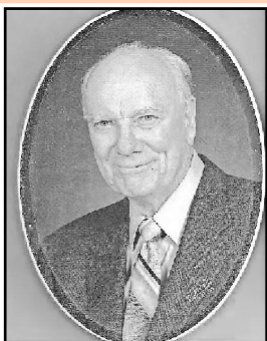
Bob Danielson
1951 Charlotte Hornets



On September 4, in the first round of the post-season playoffs, Danielson turns in one of the all-time great pitching performances in Tri-State League history when he faces only 28 batters in a 1-0 no-hit effort against the Anderson Rebels. In front of only 346 fans at Charlotte's Griffith Park (the smallest crowd of the year), Danielson strikes out 12, including the side in the ninth inning but misses out on a perfect game by walking the Rebels' first baseman Sam McCain with two outs in the fourth inning. After going 13-5 with a league-leading 2.62 during the regular season, Danielson leads the Hornets to the league's post-season championship, going 3-0 with a pair of shutouts.

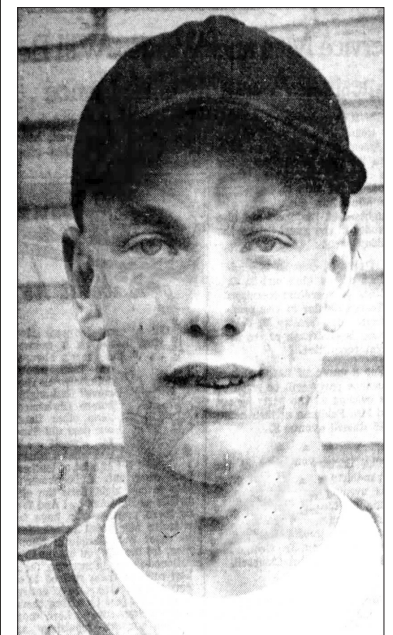
Despite having earned the right for a longer look by the Senators in the 1953 spring training along with the possibility of a roster spot, Danielson advises Washington's Clark Griffith in early February that he is retiring from baseball because his insurance business in St. Paul is "just too prosperous." Griffith

tells *The Washington Star*, "I think we can persuade him to come to camp. I'm getting a letter off to him right now."



However, on February 16, Senator hopes for Danielson's return are dashed when he signs with the Mankato Merchants of the independent Southern Minnesota League for 1953. Danielson's much-heralded arrival in Mankato comes to an end on June 9 when the 5-6 and fourth-place Merchants release the 26-year hurler. A talented pianist, he later manages the Schmitt Music stores in St. Paul. **His "other" career includes appearances in over 80 television commercials and a secondary role in Robin Cook's 1997 sci-fi movie, "Invasion".**

Eventually he and his wife Barbara Ann, move to Phoenix, Arizona where he passes away on November 30, 2018. He was 92 years old.



Bob Danielson
1943 Richland Junior Legion