

December 25, 1922

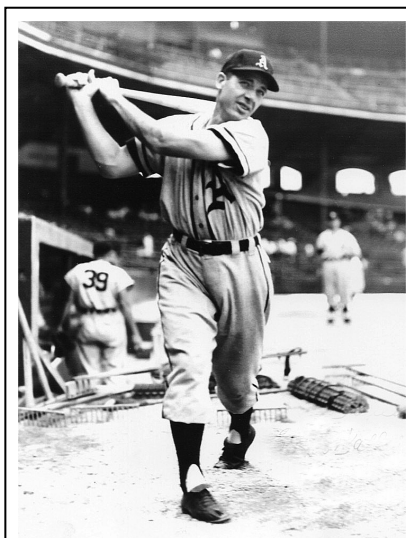
Christmas Day

Born on Christmas Day 1922, Julius Neal Watlington is a career minor leaguer, save for a brief 21-game stay with the American League's Philadelphia Athletics in 1953.

Catcher Called Up

PHILADELPHIA (INS)—The Philadelphia Athletics have recalled Neal Watlington from Ottawa to fill in for injured First-String Catcher Joe Astroth.

Recalled by the Athletics on July 6, 1953, the Yanceyville, North Carolina, native makes his major league debut on July 10, against the Boston Red Sox in Fenway Park ... batting eighth, Watlington goes 1-for-4 and collects his first major league hit, a single to right field, against Hal "Skinny" Brown in a 9-5 loss in the first game of a doubleheader.



Neal Watlington
Philadelphia Athletics, 1953



FUTILE TRY: In Boston yesterday — Hector (Skinny) Brown, foreground, Red Sox pitcher, was thrown out at home by Neal Watlington of Philadelphia on an attempted steal in the first game of a double-header. Umpire Hank Soar called the play. Brown hurled a 9-5 victory, his fourth in a row.

In his 21 games for Jimmy Dykes' seventh-place Athletics, the left-handed hitting catcher bats .182 (7-for-44) with one double and three RBIs ... acquires his only extra base (double) against Detroit's Ned Garver on August 9 ... in his seven starts behind the plate, Watlington throws out three base runners - Bob Kennedy, Dick Kokos and Vic Wertz - in five attempted steals.

An 18-year-old Watlington begins his professional baseball career in 1941 with the Mayodan (N.C.) Millers of the Bi-State (D) League ... inducted into the military in 1942, he serves the next three years in France and Belgium, earning the Purple Heart.

Signing with the New York Giants in February, 1947, Watlington returns to the diamond that summer, hitting .328 with seven home runs for the Danville Leafs of the Carolina (C) League.

Following a .238 campaign with the Ottawa Giants of the International League in 1951, Watlington, along with Ed Wright and Frank Fanovich, is sold to Philadelphia ... finishing his career in 1958 with the Rochester Red Wings, Watlington hits a solid .266 with 49 home runs in 13 minor league seasons.

<http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/w/watline01.shtml>