

# May 25, 1954

## Cucchiarini killed ...

Minor league outfielder Ray Cucchiarini dies following a car accident on U.S. Highway 75 near Huntsville, Texas ... the 23-year-old Californian is en route to joining the Houston Buffaloes (AA Texas League), when his car skids on wet pavement, leaves the road and overturns twice before hitting a pine tree.



Cucchiarini dies two hours later in the local hospital of a crushed chest, compound rib fractures, a broken jaw and a possible punctured lung.

A lifetime .286 hitter over six minor league seasons in the Brooklyn Dodger organization, Cucchiarini is batting .326 for the Fort Worth Cats when his contract is purchased by the St. Louis Cardinals ... his playing time with the Cats had recently diminished because of the acquisition of more experienced outfielders.

He hits a career-high .312 with 20 doubles and 21 home runs for the Muskogee Reds (C Western Association) as a 20-year-old in 1950.

Born in San Francisco on June 6, 1930, Cucchiarini has a successful professional baseball debut (.286, 15 doubles) in 1948 with the Medford Nuggets of the Far West (D) League.

After missing most of two seasons (1951-52) due to military obligations, Cucchiarini returns in 1953 and is hitting .224 with two home runs in 48 games for Fort Worth (AA Texas League) before being demoted to the Pueblo of the Western (A) League ... at Pueblo he hits an even .300 with 14 doubles and 19 home runs in only 98 games.

Opening the 1954 season with Mobile (Southern), the 5-foot-10, 180-pounder is hitting .326 in 13 games when he is sent to Fort Worth ... he is batting .326 with the Cats with three home runs and seven RBIs when his contract is bought by Houston, his third different team of the season.

<http://www.baseball-reference.com/minors/player.cgi?id=cucchi001ray>

### BUFF FIELDER

## Cucchiarini Killed in Car Wreck

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AP).—Ray Cucchiarini, promising young Texas League outfielder, was killed in a traffic accident Tuesday while hurrying to Houston where he was to have joined the Houston Buffs Tuesday night.

The 23-year-old San Francisco ballplayer's car skidded on wet pavement on Highway 75 six miles south of Huntsville and slammed into a pine tree. He died shortly afterward in a Huntsville hospital of compound rib fractures, a broken jaw and a possibly punctured lung.

Highway Patrolman Marcus White said he saw Cucchiarini traveling at about sixty-five miles an hour and was following him when the car skidded into the tree.

Cucchiarini broke into organized baseball in 1948 with Santa Barbara of the California League. After his discharge from the armed forces last spring he hit .224 in forty-eight games for the Fort Worth Club of the Texas League, then was sent to Pueblo of the Class A Western League, where he hit .300 for the rest of the year. He opened with Mobile this year, hitting .326 until he was sent to Fort Worth in April. He had boosted his mark to .341 through Sunday's game when the Houston Buffs of the Class AA circuit claimed him.

Cucchiarini was born in San Francisco and was graduated from Mission High School there. Survivors include his mother, Mrs. Joseph Cucchiarini of 117 Ladyard Street, San Francisco.