

BUFFALO STATE

The State University of New York

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‘Double Plays’

Splitting careers between baseball and hockey

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Bo can't skate

Bo may have known football and baseball, but he couldn't skate. Canada knows hockey and baseball. Here are three:

- **James Riley** played baseball in the majors and minors from 1921-32, as well as 8 seasons in the Pacific Coast Hockey Association and was a member of the Stanley Cup-winning Seattle Metropolitans in 1917.
- **Dennis Ribant** skated with the OHA's Hamilton Red Wings in 1960 and six MLB teams during the 1960s; he threw baseball's only nine-inning perfect game in 1961. (Four other pitchers threw perfect games in the minors, but they went 7 innings, Ribant went 9.)
- **Manny McIntyre** played hockey and baseball in various leagues in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes, along with a brief stint playing hockey in France.

Not on the scorecard

There are others who played college or in the minors in one sport and in the majors in another, or vice versa. For example:

- Kirk McCaskill (drafted by the Winnipeg Jets in 1981 and California Angels in 1982; also played with the Chicago White Sox).
- Tom Quinlan (drafted by the Calgary Flames and Toronto Blue Jays in 1986; also played with the Philadelphia Phillies and Minnesota Twins).
- Justin Morneau (very briefly was a back-up goalie for the Portland Winter Hawks of the World Hockey Association in 1997 and later drafted by the Minnesota Twins in 1999; also played with the Pittsburgh Pirates, Colorado Rockies and White Sox).

Games of summer

If anyone interviewed people on the street to ask, “What is Canada’s National Summer Sport”? Their answers might be baseball. But they’d be wrong. The correct answer is ... lacrosse. Parliament declared lacrosse the nation’s summer sport in 1994.

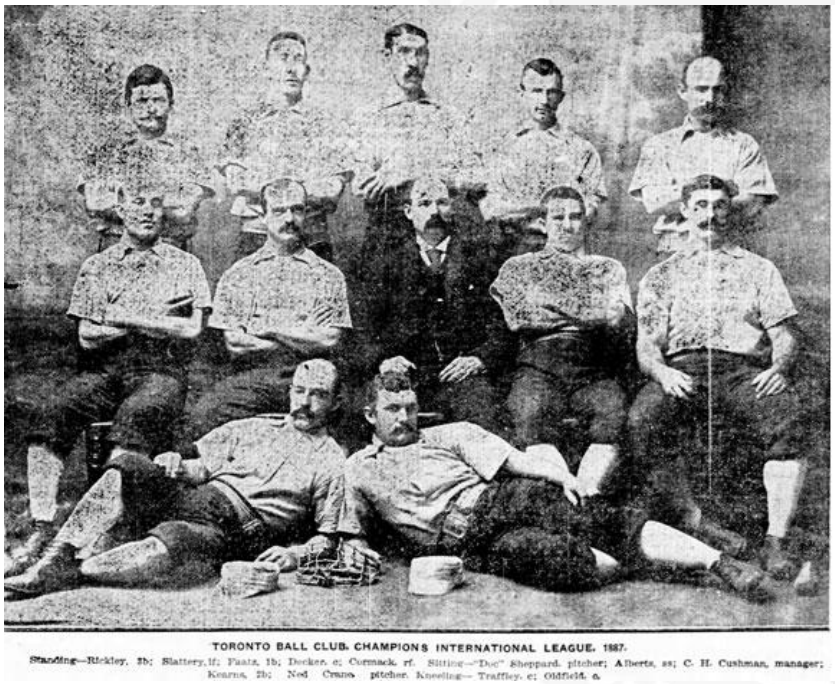


London Tecumsehs



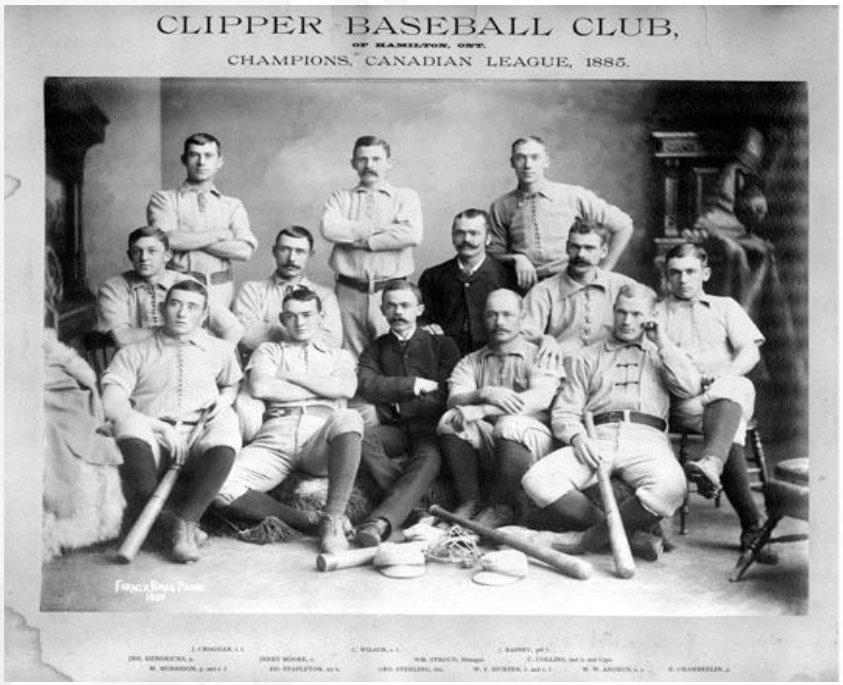
In 2021 the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum inducted the 1877 London Tecumsehs, considered Canada's first baseball champions, winning the International Association pennant.

Toronto Canucks & Hamilton Clippers



TORONTO BALL CLUB. CHAMPIONS INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE. 1887.

Standing—Rickley, 3b; Slattery, lf; Faatz, 1b; Decker, c; Cormack, rf. Sitting—"Doc" Sheppard, pitcher; Alberts, ss; C. H. Cushman, manager; Kearns, 2b; Ned Crane, pitcher. Kneeling—Traffley, c; Oldfield, c.



Expos & Jays





Jim Riley

Riley (born May 25, 1895, in Bayfield, NB) was the pioneer in two-sport seasons. He played in more MLB games than Moonlight Graham, but not by much (four for the American League's St. Louis Browns in 1921 and two for the AL's Washington Senators in 1923) and nine NHL games in 1926-27.



https://www.sportsecyclopedia.com/mlb/teams/defunct/washington-senators-1901/ : "The team was officially named the 'Senators' during 1901-1904, the Nationals during 1905-1955 and the Senators again from 1956-60, but nonetheless was commonly referred to as the Senators throughout its history."

https://www.baseball-reference.com/players/r/rileyji02.shtml

Whitzman, April (no date). https://www.mlb.com/news/mlb=players=who=played-hockey/c-44302058

Riley and hockey

- The hockey games were with the Chicago Black Hawks (3 games) and Detroit Cougars (6 games).
- He played left wing for Chicago on Jan. 19, 22 and 29, 1927, and then left wing with Detroit on Feb. 12, 19 and 22, and March 15, 17 and 22.
- He had no goals but had two even-strength assists as his teams went 2-5-2 during his appearances.

The team changed spelling the name from Black Hawks to Blackhawks in 1986.
https://www.hockey-reference.com/players/r/rileyji01/gamelog/1927/

https://www.statscrew.com/hockey/stats/p-rileyji01

Year	Lg	Team	GP	G
1915-16	PCHA	Victoria Aristocrats	12	4
1916-17	PCHA	Seattle Metropolitans	21	11
1917-18	PCHA	Seattle Metropolitans	18	4
1919-20	PCHA	Seattle Metropolitans	22	11
1920-21	PCHA	Seattle Metropolitans	24	23
1921-22	PCHA	Seattle Metropolitans	24	16
1922-23	PCHA	Seattle Metropolitans	29	22
1923-24	PCHA	Seattle Metropolitans	13	2
1926-27	NHL	Chicago Black Hawks	3	0
1926-27	NHL	Detroit Cougars	6	0
Totals			172	93

Major League Baseball: July 3, 1921

Riley played four games for the Browns. On July 3 in Sportsman's Park in St. Louis, the southpaw second baseman came into the game against the Chicago White Sox's right-handed pitcher Red Faber in the eighth inning but failed to get a hit in his lone at-bat in a 5-1 loss.

The online baseball reference site lists the games as being played at the third Sportsman's Park, but the book "Green Cathedrals: The Ultimate Celebration of Major League and Negro Ballparks" by Philip J. Lowry (New York: Society for American Baseball Research, 2006) says the Browns only played at Sportsman's III from April 23, 1902, to October 6, 1908. The book says the Browns' home field was Sportsman's IV from April 14, 1909, to September 27, 1953. And yet on the same page detailing Sportsman IV there is a picture of the park with the caption that Sportsman's III was the home of the Browns from 1909 to 1952 (page 200).

Baseball: July 4, 1921

- There was a double header against the Detroit Tigers on July 4 and Riley again went hitless, though he did draw a walk in the first game. In that 4-1 loss to the Tigers, Riley was 0-3 at the plate against lefty Dutch Leonard.

- In the second game, a 7-6 loss to the Tigers, he played until the seventh inning and had three plate appearances against lefty Red Oldham. (Lyman Lamb came in as a pinch hitter in the seventh and then played second base for the remaining innings.)

Baseball: Summing up in St. Louis

- Riley batted sixth in those three games against the Tigers and again went hitless the fourth game in four at-bats in a 5-2 loss to right-handed pitcher Howard Ehmke on July 5.

- In his 1921 season the 26-year-old Riley went 0-11 in 26 innings at the plate and struck out three times. He also had an .818 fielding percentage at second base though he committed two errors.

https://www.baseball-reference.com/players/r/rileyji02.shtml

St. Louis stint



The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* was succinct—but maybe a bit brutal—in summing up Riley's time with the Browns (July 15, 1921, p. 6): "Riley, recently secured from Vancouver, failed to live up to hitting and fielding requirements. He goes to the Three-I League club [Terre Haute] on an optional agreement. Although rated a terrific clubber, Riley failed to make a hit in eleven times at bat with the Browns."

- *The Vancouver Beavers finished in fourth and last place (45-72) in the Class B Pacific Coast International League. In 56 games Riley had 66 hits, including nine doubles, five triples and nine home runs, for a .303 batting average. He played 53 games at second base and had a .941 fielding average with 16 errors.* https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/team.cgi?id=fae1e884
- *The Terre Haute Tots went 70-65, good for third place in the eight-team Class B league. Riley collected 63 hits in 58 total games with 15 doubles and four triples for a .296 average. He played 49 games at second and had a .945 fielding average while committing 14 errors.* https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/team.cgi?id=c5d855c8

Optimism

A *Washington Evening Star* article on June 30, 1923, noted (p. 12):

"It seems that Riley has proved one of the sensations of the Texas League this season with his slugging feats and is leading the circuit in hitting, a fact which has attracted the notice of several big league scouts. ...

"Riley will make a fine prospect for understudy to Joe Judge, provided he can catch a base ball and throw across the diamond. In that period the young man, who is a left-handed batsman, missed getting a hit in only one game and accumulated a total of fifteen singles in forty-three times up for the rather nifty average of .350."



Even more optimism

In three articles in early July and late August the *Washington Times Herald* was optimistic. The July 6, 1923, edition noted (p. 16): “Jim Riley, the Shreveport first sacker booked for a trial with the Griffmen, has at least three years of experience in the minors and may be ready for the big show.”

(Clark Griffith was owner and former manager of the Washington Senators.)

Washington Times Herald, July 7, 1923

"James Norman Riley, better known as plain Jim to the many Seattle fans who each winter follow his activities as left winger of the Seattle Metropolitans, has advanced once more in the diamond pastime.

"Word has been received from Jim that he had been sold to the Washington American League club. He is to report to Clark Griffith's club at the end of the present Texas League season. ...

"The fans are strong for Jim and contend that he is the only ball player on Ira Thomas's club. ...

"One writer is quoted as saying, 'Given two or three Rileys on his team and Shreveport would clean up'. "

Ira Thomas managed the Shreveport Gassers in the 1923 and 1924 seasons.
Washington Times Herald, July 7, 1923, p. 10.

Why such optimism?

The reason for that optimism can be found in an August newspaper clip: “Jim Riley, the Shreveport first sacker, who is coming for a trial with the Griffs, is hitting the ball down in the Texas League for .311 in 103 games so far this season.”

Washington Times Herald, August 25, 1923, p. 14.

But ...

- Riley played two home games—now at first base—in Griffith Stadium near the end of the season for the Washington Senators. In the second game of a doubleheader on October 5, he came in as a pinch hitter for first baseman Joe Judge and went hitless in his one at-bat while committing an error. Washington beat the Boston Red Sox, 8-4.
- In Riley's second game against Boston, a 5-2 Washington win, he had four at-bats. Although again hitless, he walked twice and scored a run.

Judge was hitless in two at-bats https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/WS1/WS1192310052.shtml
https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/WS1/WS1192310070.shtml

Bottom of the ninth



The Senators finished in fourth place in the eight-team American League with a 75-78 record, 23½ games behind the New York Yankees. The Yankees would beat the New York Giants, four games to two, in the 1923 World Series.

In all, Riley played 11 seasons in professional baseball, from the major leagues to Class D. He played in 1,207 games from 1921-32 (he didn't play in 1931). Statistics are sketchy because a baseball reference website has no data for the 1928 and 1929 seasons.

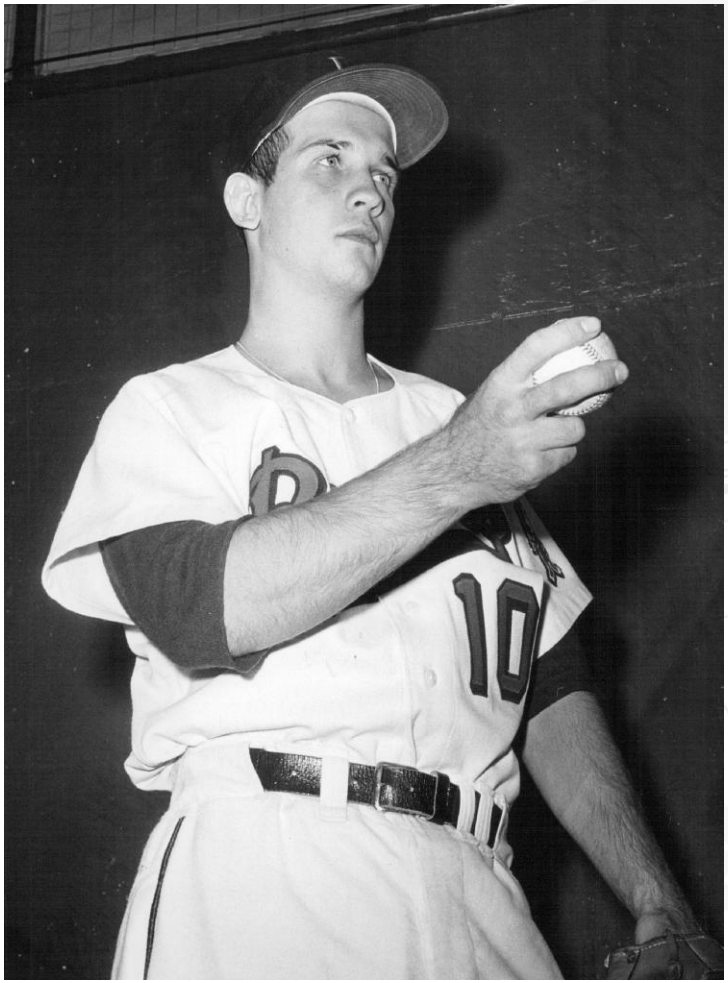
May his memory be a blessing

Riley's dual sports careers went further than most, though not all newspaper coverage recognized that.

He died on his birthday on May 25, 1969, in Seguin, Texas. He was 74. Riley was buried about 15 miles away in New Braunfels, Texas.



Dennis Ribant



Dennis Ribant sought a minor league contract as a right-handed pitcher with his hometown Detroit Tigers organization.

But the Tigers said he'd have to give up hockey. John McHale, GM of the Milwaukee Braves, said Ribant could play baseball and hockey.

So Ribant, born Sept. 20, 1941, signed with the Braves and skated for Detroit's Junior Wings team while in high school. But a hockey injury in 1961 led to his 13-year baseball career, six in the majors.

https://ripbaseball.com/2023.05/09/obituaey-dennis-ribant-1941-2023/

Hockey career

(https://www.hockeydb.com/ihdb/stats/pdisplay.php?pid=91376)

Regular Season						Playoffs							
Season	Team	Lge	GP	G	A	Pts	PIM	+/-	GP	G	A	Pts	PIM
1959-60	Hamilton Tiger Cubs	OHA	3	0	1	1	0						
1960-61	Hamilton Red Wings	OHA	48	6	14	20	0						

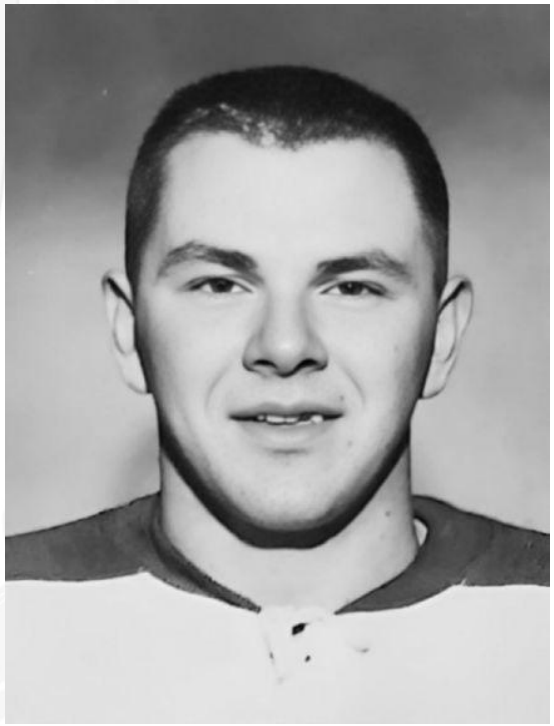
Hamilton Red Wings 1960-61



Goodbye hockey ...

On March 5, 1961, Toronto Marlies player Grant Moore checked Ribant into the boards at 18:13 of the first period. Moore got a major penalty for high sticking and Ribant suffered a dislocated left elbow.

Ribant was right-handed but there was still some concern that the injury would affect his soon-to-be baseball career.



The Hamilton Spectator, March 6, 1961, p. 16; Hamilton would win the game, 4-2.

Hello baseball

As a newspaper put it:

"It may also be an expensive mishap to Ribant, who is slated to leave for Milwaukee Braves' baseball training camp in Georgia next week. Dennis, a pitcher-shortstop, accepted a $20,000 bonus to sign with Milwaukee, despite a higher offer from Detroit, because the Braves didn't mind his playing hockey and Detroit did. He will be sidelined for at least three weeks and maybe six."

The Toronto Star, March 6, 1961, p. 9

More on the injury

After the injury McHale asked the Red Wings to release Ribant and they complied.

“I guess it was a pretty big sacrifice for them. I was the only American-born player in the whole Detroit organization who was considered a prospect for the NHL,” Ribant would later say.

https://ripbaseball.com/2023.05/09/obituaey-dennis-ribant-1941-2023/

Temporary perfection

Almost four months after the injury to his left elbow Ribant pitched the only perfect game in professional baseball in the 1961 season. He struck out 13 for his 13th win in 1961 as his Quad City Braves beat the Clinton C-Sox, 1-0, in a Class D Midwest League game on July 1.

Ribant had a sore elbow and didn't know he'd be pitching until manager Al Monchak told him at the ballpark that day. To seal the win he struck out all three batters he faced in the ninth inning.

Johnson, Lloyd and Miles Wolff (1997). "The Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball," 2nd edition. Durham, N.C.: Baseball America, Inc., p. 473. Left-handed Warren Spahn pitched a 1-0 no-hitter against the San Francisco Giants on April 28, but walked two batters in the game; https://www.baseball-reference.com/friv/no-hitters-and-perfect-games.shtml
Also https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Minor_League_Perfect_Games

Strike one and strike two ...

- A newspaper account at the time noted Ribant's ninth inning grit:
- "As the pressure mounted inning by inning, the calmest guy in the ball park perhaps was Ribant.
- "At least he showed no emotion or tenseness as he toed the mound for the decisive ninth.
- "First, pinch-hitter Jim Evans, one of the league's better hitting pitchers went down on strikes when he batted for Shortstop Britt Madison.
- "Catcher Ron Hafner was next, and he, too, was a strikeout victim. ...

Strike three

"Then Clinton manager, Dick Kinaman, summoned another pinch swinger, Bill Dawson, also a pitcher, to bat for Jim Shuda ...

"Dawson also whiffed, swinging at the third strike.

" 'I was pretty nervous before the game because of the elbow,' Ribant said. " 'I was really glad to strike out Bill Dawson for the final out of the game. He was really razzing me the last time I pitched against them, and now I feel I sort of evened up the score.' "

The Rock Island Argus, July 3, 1961, p. 11.

Ribant (left) and Red Faber (center) get plaques for their perfect games pitched 51 years apart.



Afterward

Ribant also was with the Austin Senators in 1961, the Class AA Texas League farm club of the Braves. He was 4-2 with a 1.17 ERA. With Quad Cities he had a 17-2 record and 1.86 ERA and won the Rookie of the Year Award and named to the Midwest League's All-Star Team. Overall, for his rookie season in 1961, Ribant posted a 21-4 record and 1.68 ERA.

In 1963 he also pitched 15 innings in five games (starting one) for the Toronto Maple Leafs in the Triple-A International League season.

Austin would finish the season 69-71, 21 games behind first-place Amarillo Gold Sox (New York Yankees), which had a 90-50 record. Yet Austin would play in the title series, though it would lose, 3 games to 0, to the San Antonio Missions (Chicago Cubs); Johnson and Miles, p. 470.

https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/player.fcgi?id=ribant001den

Thus sayeth Ribant

Having climbed from Class D to Triple-A in two seasons left the loquacious Ribant optimistic, according to one newspaper article:

“He’s got answers you never knew there were questions to.

“ ‘I feel great,’ blurted the 21-yead-old ex-hockey player yesterday. ‘My arm has never been better and I’m looking for a quick start.

“ ‘If I can get off the ground early and keep going, I figure I’ll make the major leagues in two years at the most. Maybe even this season if I can show them I have the stuff.

“ ‘I jumped from D ball to AA ball to Triple A in the little over two years since I got into organized baseball. I started out with Davenport (Midwest League) a year after I was out of high school. I would have started earlier but I had a fling at hockey first.’

The Toronto Star, March 29, 1963, p. 10.

In Toronto

Ribant was 1-1 with a 4.80 ERA during his brief stay in Toronto in 1963. He picked up a save in an early season game against the Arkansas Travelers (Philadelphia Phillies):

"Manager Bill Adair of the Toronto Maple Leafs reached into the bull pen in the first inning last night and found himself a winning pitcher.

"Dennis Ribant, an energetic right-hander, slammed the door on the Arkansas Travelers until the eighth inning and by that time Toronto had amassed more runs than he needed to gain an 11-4 victory. ...

"The 21-year-old Ribant, relying mainly on a fast ball and nerve, limited the damage to two runs and didn't permit another runner past first until Al Kenders and [Cal] Emery led off the last two innings with homers.

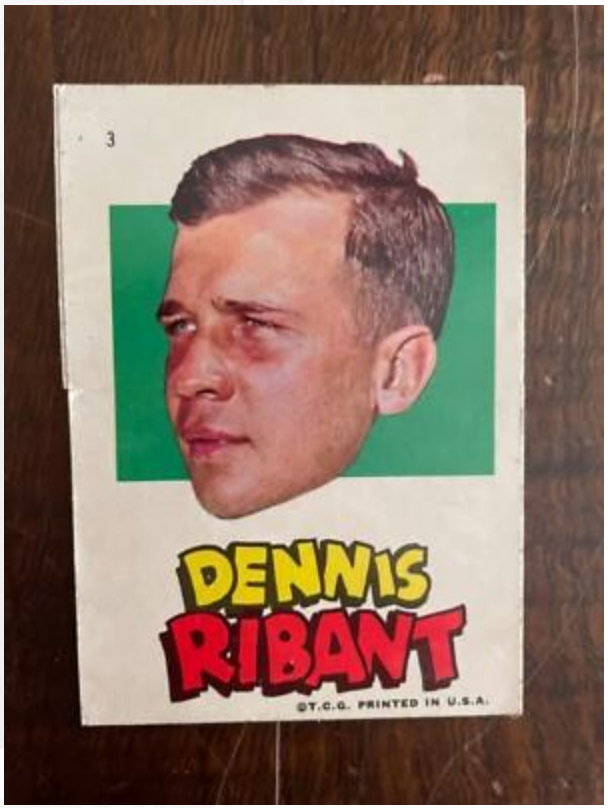
"By then, the 165-pound Detroit-born youngster was tiring, but he scrambled after two ground balls to throw out the last two batters of the game."

The Globe and Mail, April 23, 1963, p. 31.

In the minors

Ribant spent the rest of the 1963 season and part of 1964 with the Denver Bears of the Braves' Triple-A Pacific Coast League. With Denver in 1963 he had a 14-9 record and 5.2 ERA; with the Bears in 1964 he was 8-2 and posted a 3.53 ERA.

https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/player.fcgi?id=ribant001den



The majors

- Ribant made his major league debut Aug. 9, 1964, with the New York Mets, pitching to two batters in the eighth inning in the Mets' 6-0 loss to the Philadelphia Phillies in Connie Mack Stadium.

- His first start was on Aug. 12 at Forbes Field, pitching six innings in the Mets' 5-4 loss to the Pittsburgh Pirates. He gave up nine hits, including two home runs, one to Willie Stargell in the fourth inning and the other to Jerry Lynch in the fifth.

- He got his first win Aug. 17, a 5-0 against the Pirates at Shea Stadium. Ribant gave up four hits and struck out 10 as the Mets improved to 37-82

https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/PHI/PHI196408090.shtml
https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/PIT/PIT196408120.shtml
https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/NYN/NYN196408170.shtml

Highlighting good advice

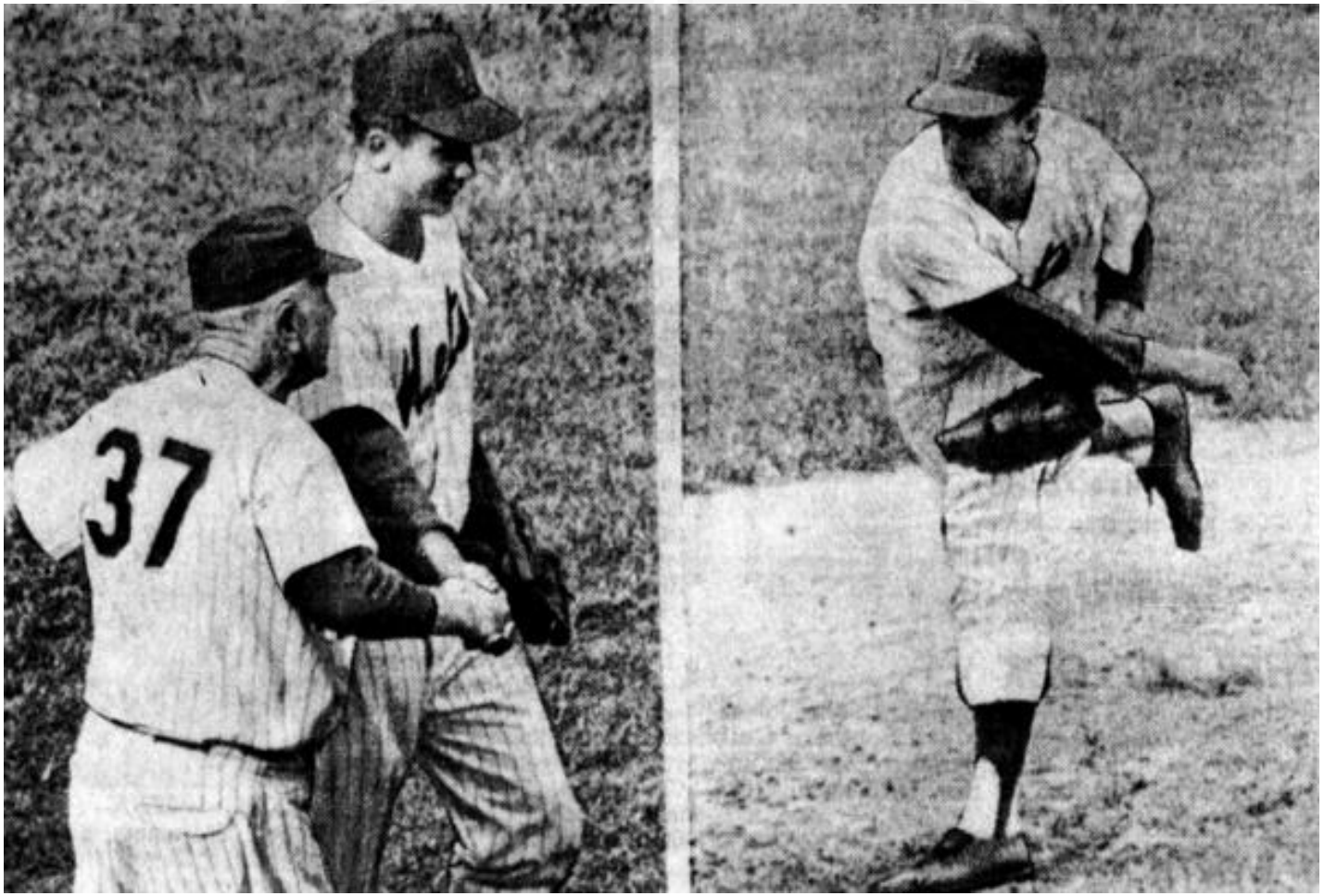


Ribant's best season was in 1966 with the Mets when he posted an 11-9 record and a 3.20 ERA. He credited his coaches for the improvement:

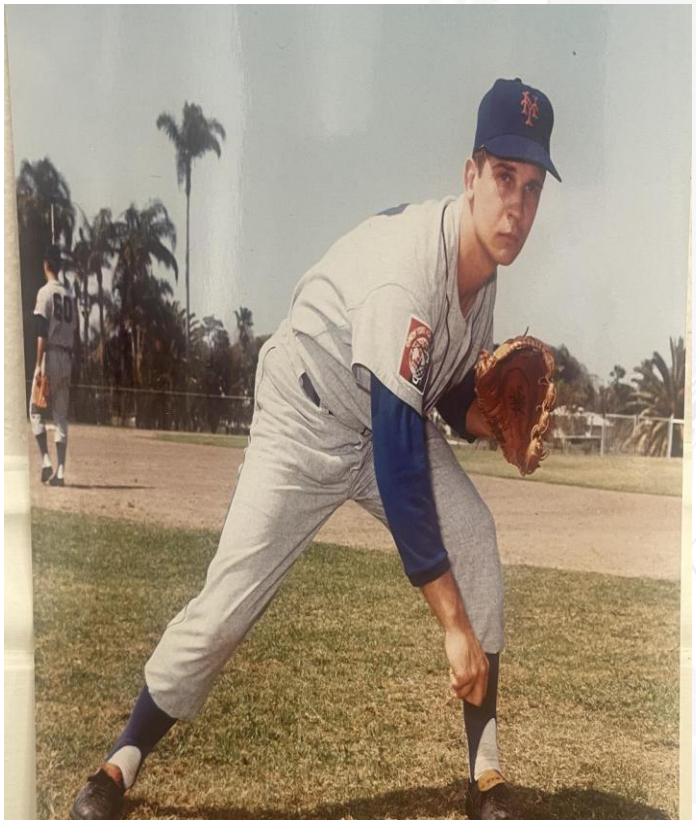
" 'I finally began to use my brain,' ... by doing what coaches had been telling him to do—keep the ball low, pick the corners, change speeds. 'I was amazed. It worked. Those guys were right.' "

https://ripbaseball.com/2023.05/09/obituaey-dennis-ribant-1941-2023/

The ‘old perfessor’ has his say



Major stats



In parts of six seasons in the majors Ribant was 24-29 with a 3.87 ERA. Along the way he struck out 241 batters; he had a 95-65 record in 10 seasons in the minors.

He was with:

- New York Mets from 1964-66
- Pittsburgh Pirates in 1967
- Detroit Tigers and Chicago White Sox in 1968
- St. Louis Cardinals and Cincinnati Reds in 1969.

https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/player.fcgi?id=ribant001den

At the Topps

Topps 463

DENNIS RIBANT

HT: 5'11" WT: 175 THROWS: R
BATS: R BORN: 9/20/41
HOME: AMITYVILLE, N.Y.

DENNIS STARTED TO BECOME A PRO HOCKEY PLAYER.



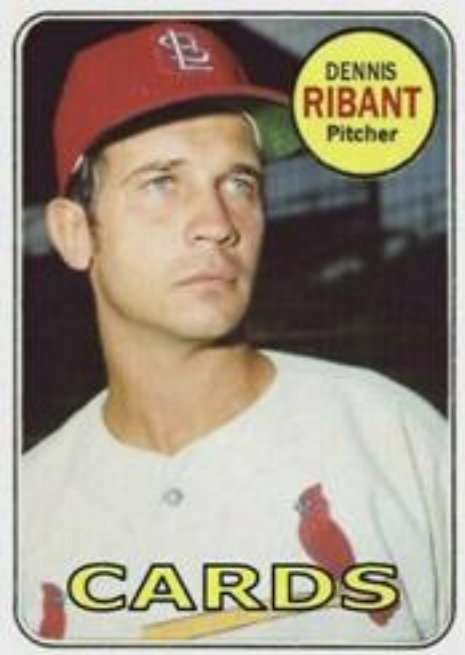
The Royals picked up Dennis from Detroit's Toledo farm club last winter.

MAJOR AND MINOR LEAGUE PITCHING RECORD

YEAR	TEAM	LEA.	G	IP	W	L	PCT	SO	BB	ERA
1961	Davenport	Midwest	20	155	17	2	.895	155	39	1.86
1961	Austin	Tex.	7	54	4	2	.667	46	18	1.17
1962	Louisville	A.A.	6	20	0	3	.000	15	10	13.05
1962	Austin	Tex.	24	148	11	9	.550	103	36	3.95
1963	Toronto	Int.	5	15	1	1	.500	11	1	4.80
1963	Denver	P.C.L.	32	166	14	9	.609	110	35	5.10
1964	Denver	P.C.L.	30	120	8	2	.800	114	23	3.53
1964	New York	N.L.	14	58	1	5	.167	35	9	5.12
1965	New York	N.L.	19	35	1	3	.250	13	6	3.86
1965	Buffalo	Int.	21	109	3	12	.200	62	30	3.88
1966	New York	N.L.	39	188	11	9	.550	84	40	3.21
1967	Pittsburgh	N.L.	38	172	9	8	.529	75	40	4.08
1968	Det.-Chi.	A.L.	31	56	2	4	.333	27	27	4.34
Major	League Totals	5 Yrs.	141	509	24	29	.453	234	122	3.89

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In 1969



- He played 1 game for the St. Louis Cardinals. In 1 1/3 inning he had a 13.5 ERA.
- Ribant also played 8 games with Tulsa, the Cards' AAA team.
- He pitched in 7 games for the Cincinnati Reds, striking out 7 with a 1.08 ERA.
- And he pitched in 18 games for Indianapolis, the Reds' AAA team.

Regrets?



"I often wonder just how I would have made out had I stuck with hockey. I miss playing the game but I make my home in Hamilton and see a few games."

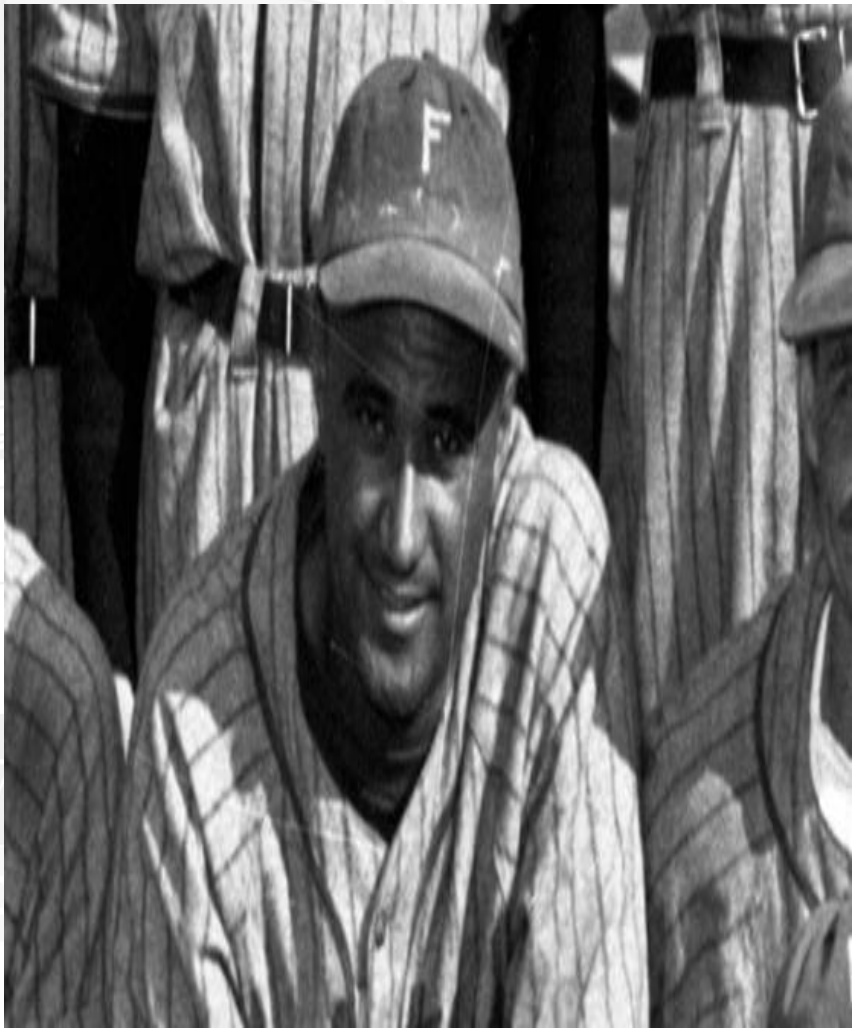
Ribant died April 24, 2023, in Newport Beach, California. He was 81.

The Toronto Star, April 24, 1963, p. 10

https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/player.fcgi?id=ribant001den

Manny McIntyre





“Black Aces”

In the 1941-42 season the famous “Black Aces” line first played together. Brothers Herb and Ossie Carnegie, along with Manny McIntyre, played for a semi-pro team in Timmins.

As Herb described their line in his memoir, “I was both a scorer and playmaker, Ossie combined excellent positional play with a wicked shot and Manny took no guff from anyone.”

The trio also played together with the Shawinigan Cataracts in 1944 and the Sherbrooke Randies/Saints in 1945-46, 1946-47 and 1948-49.



https://www.hhof.com/induction/induction2022/herbcarnegie.html

Baseball days

Born Oct. 4, 1918, in Devon, NB, McIntyre was the first Black Canadian to play organized baseball in the modern era.

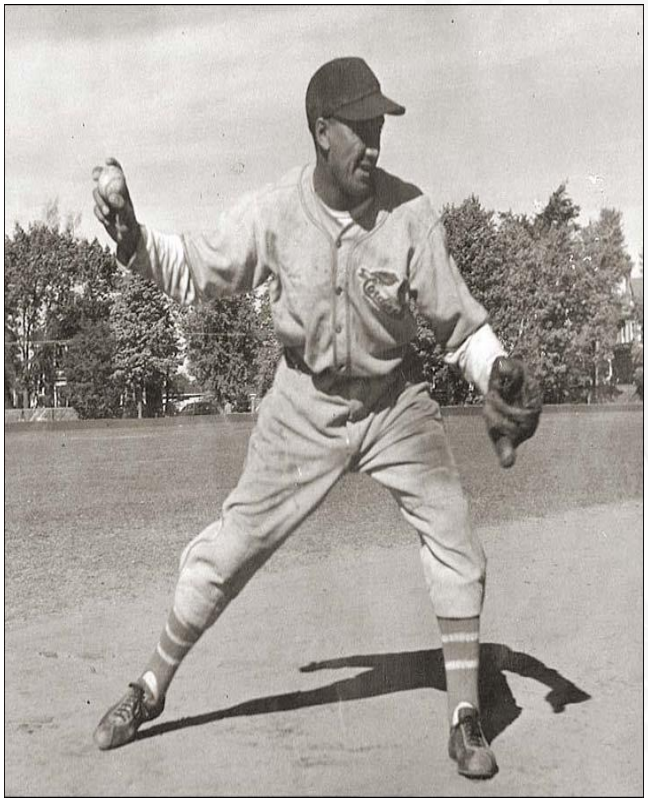
He led Devon to the New Brunswick Junior Baseball championship in 1938. After a year of senior baseball with the Truro Bearcats of Nova Scotia's Pictou County League, he played wartime baseball in Halifax. In 1945, he moved to Trois-Rivières of the Quebec Provincial League and attracted attention from the New York Cubans, who were undertaking a barnstorming tour.

He signed a contract to play shortstop with the Sherbrooke Canadians, a Class C farm team of the St. Louis Cardinals, in 1946, making him one of only six Blacks in organized baseball.

McIntyre passed away on June 13, 2011, in Candiac, Que.

https://baseballhalloffame.ca/hall-of-famer/manny-mcintyre/

Going home



He hit .310 with Sherbrooke with one home run and two doubles, accumulating 40 hits in 129 at-bats.

On the road in the U.S., racism often meant McIntyre was alone. He returned to the Maritimes to finish the season with the Middleton Cardinals of the Halifax & District League.

According to the New Brunswick Black History Society, McIntyre had played an exhibition game with the Negro National League's New York Cubans at Yankee Stadium.

https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/manny-mcintyre-new-brunswick-s-baseball-and-hockey-ace-remembered-1.5890071

Halls of Fame

In hockey, he scored 187 goals and had 278 assists for 465 points in 468 games in his career.

He was inducted into the Canadian Baseball of Fame and Museum in 2021.

McIntyre is also in the New Brunswick Baseball and Sports Hall of Fame, the Timmins Sports Heritage Hall of Fame, and the Black Ice Society Hall of Fame.

