



Collin's Corner

Clyde Barnhardt's Unbreakable Record

by Lee Collin
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Every pitching coach in major league baseball hopes he has an overpowering starter who can give his team a good number of innings and strikeouts. Traditionally, a 200-strikeout season is part of what defines power pitching.

On October 1, 1920, the last major league tripleheader was played at Forbes Field in Pittsburgh between the Pirates and Cincinnati. In that tripleheader, in which the Reds took two of the three games, Pirates third baseman Clyde Barnhardt set a major league record that most fans aren't aware of.

Barnhardt, a rookie in 1920, became the only major leaguer to hit safely in three games in one day, a record that will undoubtedly stand for all-time.

In the opening game, Barnhardt reached Cincinnati starter Ray Fisher for two hits. He doubled and scored on a single by Pittsburgh first baseman Charlie Grimm in the second inning. In the sixth, Barnhardt singled and scored another run, but despite his good hitting, the Pirates were beaten 13 – 4. Fisher gave up four runs on eight hits to claim the victory for Cincinnati. The game was played in just over two hours.

Cincinnati at Pittsburgh											
October 1, 1920											
Game One											
Cincinnati	1	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	4	-	13
Pittsburgh	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-	4
Game Two											
Cincinnati	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	-	7
Pittsburgh	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	-	3
Game Three											
Pittsburgh	3	0	0	0	0	3				-	6
Cincinnati	0	0	0	0	0	0				-	0

In game two, Barnhardt went 1-for-4, with a double and an RBI off Cincinnati hurler Lynn Brenton. The Reds overcame a two-run deficit by scoring seven runs in the 7th inning for a 7 – 3 victory. It was the second and last win for Brenton in the 1920 season. The second game of the tripleheader was played in 1 hour and 56 minutes.

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In the third game, apparently a make-up game originally scheduled for Cincinnati, the Pirates batted first and jumped on top with three runs in the top of the first inning. Barnhardt singled in three at-bats against Reds pitcher Buddy Napier. Pirates starter Johnny Morrison, making his only start of the season, blanked the Reds 6 – 0. With darkness setting in, game three was called after six innings and 1 hour and 1 minute.

Barnhardt went 4-for-11 with two runs scored and two doubles in major league baseball's last tripleheader. He hit .326 for the Pirates in 1920, his rookie year, in very limited duty (15-for-46).

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