

Major League Baseball Career of Pacolet Native George Banks

Introduction

I have been asked by Bob Owens and Billy Gossett to post additional information about the career of Pacolet native George Banks, who played in the Major Leagues. They furnished me with newspaper clippings and other memorabilia about George to use in this story. Putting together this story was sometimes a sad and nostalgic experience for me. Around 1950, George and I played together on probably the first Little League team in Pacolet. George played third base and I played shortstop. Our coach was the legendary [Pee-wee Lambert](#). Pee Wee had just started to work for the Mill Company as Youth Director and was a recent graduate of Wofford College. Pee Wee was also a talented catcher for the [Pacolet Mills Trojans baseball team](#). When George and I were having between innings conversations during the hot summers at the [old baseball field](#) neither of us in our wildest imagination could ever have predicted this story. The idea that more than 70 years in the future I would be putting a story on something called the Internet about his future Major League Baseball Career would have been like science fiction. I'm very happy to help keep George's memory alive and thanks to Bob and Billy for giving me this information.

George's Career Timeline

Signed with the New York Yankees in 1957 - Played two years in the minor leagues with their farm teams.

Traded to the Minnesota Twins in 1961. Played on their Major League team and on their farm teams.

Traded to the Cleveland Indians in 1964. Played on their Major League team and their farm teams.

Retired from baseball in 1967.

[See more about Pacolet Mills Baseball.](#)

[See more about Pacolet and Spartanburg players in the Major Leagues.](#)

[See more photos of George Banks.](#)



George Banks (baseball)

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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

George Edward Banks (September 24, 1938 – March 1, 1985) was an American professional baseball player. He was a prolific home run hitter in minor league baseball, smashing 223 homers^[1] over an 11-year career in the minors. A third baseman and outfielder, he played 106 games of Major League Baseball during all or parts of five seasons (1962–1966) for the Minnesota Twins and Cleveland Indians. Banks threw and batted right-handed, stood 5 feet 11 inches (1.80 m) tall and weighed 185 pounds (84 kg).

Banks was born in Pacolet Mills, South Carolina. He signed originally with the New York Yankees in 1957, and made it only to the Eastern League in the Bombers' system. But after back-to-back minor league seasons in which he hit 29 and 30 home runs, Banks was chosen by the Twins in the 1961 Rule 5 draft and spent the entire 1962 campaign on the Twins' MLB roster. He appeared in 63 games during his rookie season, and batted .252 with four home runs and 15 runs batted in. It was his only full campaign in the Major Leagues. In June 1964 he was part of a key trade, when the Twins sent Banks and pitcher Lee Stange to the Indians for right-handed pitcher Mudcat Grant; Grant would win 21 games and lead the Twins to the 1965 American League championship. Banks played in only 17 games for Cleveland over parts of three seasons, and spent most of the rest of his career in the minors at the Triple-A level. He retired after the 1968 campaign.

George Banks died at age 46 of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's Disease). Athletic fields in his native town of Pacolet are named in his memory.^[2]

George Banks	
Third baseman / Outfielder	
Born: September 24, 1938	
Pacolet Mills, South Carolina, U.S.	
Died: March 1, 1985 (aged 46)	
Spartanburg, South Carolina, U.S.	
Batted: Right	Threw: Right
MLB debut	
April 15, 1962, for the Minnesota Twins	
Last MLB appearance	
May 7, 1966, for the Cleveland Indians	
MLB statistics	
Batting average	.219
Home runs	9
Runs batted in	27
Teams	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Minnesota Twins (1962–1964)Cleveland Indians (1964–1966)	

Sideline Slants



by Jimmy Crowe

Banks May Pick A Team This Week

Pacolet High shortstop George Banks was graduated Monday night and from this point on he is fair game for all the major league scouts that have been dotting the ball parks since his sophomore year on the field.

Three scouts have appointments with the Pacolet ace this week and the first is expected to call this afternoon. The Boston Red Sox, Pittsburgh Pirates and New York Yankees have representatives here that are definitely interested in the 300-plus slugger.

When asked for his preference between the three clubs Monday afternoon, Banks all but ruled out the Yankees. "I would like to play with the New York club, but I would be farmed out for a number of years and it would take quite a while to reach the top.

"I think my best chance for an early top spot would be with the Red Sox or Pirates. I should be able to go up faster with either of these clubs than with the Yanks." Banks isn't interested in college at the present time—only in professional baseball.

Banks broke into the starting lineup at Pacolet while in the eighth grade and has lettered all five years. He hit better than .300 in his freshman year and has been under this mark only one season in his career. He dropped to .250 in 1955 but came back with a .515 last season.

The Pacolet shortstop climaxed his brilliant high school career with better than a .500 mark this season and led his team to the runner-up slot for the Upper-State Class B championship.

Scouts Wait While Star Fishes

Whose on first? That might well be the question over in Pacolet these days where several major league scouts are wooing talented shortstop George Banks with offers of cash and a future for his name on a contract.

Banks is the hard-hitting Pacolet star who graduated from high school last Monday night. Scouts have been following his play in prep and sandlot games for the past three years and the zero hour found many of them at his doorstep.

What did George do? The youngster went fishing, leaving most of the talent hunters in a quandary.

Of the clubs seeking his services Boston Red Sox Scout Mace Brown and Pittsburg scout Tuck McConnell paid him visits Tuesday evening. A Milwaukee scout called on the phone while they were there and set up an appointment for yesterday. Several other scouts were reported to have talked to Banks and his father since the graduation exercises.

With all this excitement George and some friends went fishing while his father, Lee, handled the business calls.

The elder Banks told the Herald that it would "be a few days before we know anything. George wants to play pro ball but he has been confused by all of the scouts talking to him. It is an important point in his life and we want him to do the right thing, so we'll take our time on making a decision."



NEWEST YANKEE . . . George Banks, standout Pacolet High shortstop, is shown signing his name to a contract making him the newest member of the New York Yankee organization. Looking over his shoulder is Yankee Scout Ted Petoskey, former University of South Carolina diamond coach. (Photo by B&B Studio.)

Pacolet Shortstop Inks Yankee Pact

By JIM FOSTER
Herald Sports Editor

George Banks, the sensational shortstop with the Pacolet High nine this season, has cast his lot with the New York Yankees after several weeks of indecision and wooing by numerous major league clubs.

Banks, an 18-year-old 170-pounder, signed a contract with Yankee scout Ted Petoskey yesterday. Immediately after signing he accompanied Petoskey to Spartanburg where he purchased shoes and other equipment in preparation for his professional career.

The young power hitter will leave Friday for Kearney, Nebraska where he will play on the Yankees' farm team in the Nebraska Rookie League.

He received a bonus for signing but the amount, as customary, was not announced. It was believed to be near the \$4,000 mark which is the maximum a player can receive and still play in the minor leagues.

The signing took place at his home at Pacolet with his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Banks of 8 Fleming Street, looking on.

Banks, a good field, good hit shortstop, may be converted to third base with the Kearney club. He batted over .500 for Pacolet High and was hitting approximately the same clip with the Pacolet team in the Spartanburg County League through Tuesday's game.

He is a home run hitter with a lot of promise.

"We are very happy to get Banks in our organization," Petoskey said. "He is a fine prospect and we know he will do well."

Petoskey revealed he has been watching Banks for more than a year. "We like everything about him," he said. "First of all he's a fine, clean-cut kid, and secondly he's a good baseball player."

Banks said he was thrilled to be going with the Yankee organization. "All my life I've wanted to play for the Yankees," he said. "Now if I work hard and play good I may get a chance."

July 11, 1957

AREA PRO ROUNDUP

Heavy Hitting Banks Turns Into "Sleeper"

By **SONNY SMITH**
Herald Sports Writer

The New York scouting organization, rated one of the best in the business, has uncovered a "sleeper" in George Banks, late of Pacolet.

Yankee scout Ted Petoskey signed the youth recently and dispatched him to Kearney, Neb., in the all-rookie Nebraska State League.

Banks collected a pinch single on his first plate appearance in pro ball. Shortly afterwards, he increased his total to three safeties in eight swings.

Now reports reach us that he's batting at a .400 clip and filling in at second for the fourth-place Little Yankees. After a tour of duty at the keystone, he will get regular employment at third base.

Two area baseball players found all-star game competition to their liking. Bobby Hazel of Woodruff, playing with host Wichita in the American Association game, went one for three as the All-Stars triumphed 5-4. Sammy Taylor, also of Woodruff, picked up one for two in the Southern Association dream tilt.



GEORGE BANKS

... Wearing Hitting shoes.

Kearney Yankees Batting Averages

George Banks	1.000
Norm Kampschor	.344
Milt Campo	.320
Buddy Burgess	.290
Roger Chaney	.276
Joe DiDomenico	.209
Leo Dunham	.182
Phil Linz	.179
Selvyn Preston	.171
Charlie Parmelee	.143
Jim Shardy	.125
Paul Erickson	.000
Len Biles	.000
Dennis Job	.000
Benny Bain	.000
Leonardo Ferguson	.000
Gary Wiley	.000
Vaughn Shell	.000
Ken Moursund	.000
Al Lindop	.000
Roger Hackett	.000
Dennis Ballard	.000

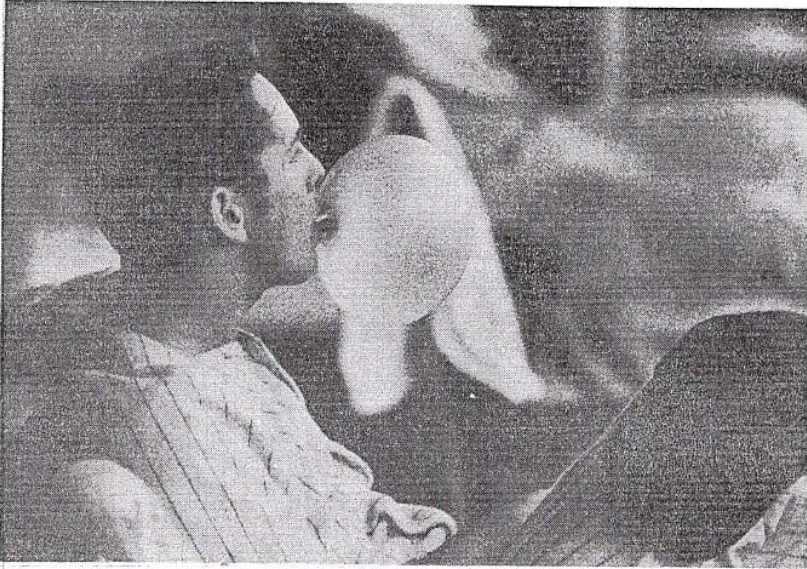
Kearney Yankees Batting Averages

George Banks	.417
Milt Campo	.339
Norm Kampschor	.311
Buddy Burgess	.290
Roger Chaney	.265
Joe DiDomenico	.241
Phil Linz	.206
Leo Dunahm	.195
Selvyn Preston	.158
Charlie Parmelee	.152
Leonardo Ferguson	.100
Jim Shardy	.063
Paul Erickson	.000
Len Biles	.000
Dennis Job	.000
Benny Bain	.000
Gary Wiley	.000
Vaughn Shell	.000
Ken Moursund	.000
Al Lindop	.000
Dennis Ballard	.000
Roger Hackett	.000
Home runs-Milt Campo 6	
Runs batted in-Milt Campo 21	
Most hits-Milt Campo 21	
Most runs-Milt Campo 15	

ing a three for four bat. . . .
continued his fine hitting and
ed his average to .417. . . .
wives of four Kearney players.
wives of four Kearney players.
wives of four Kearney players.

IF BUBBLES BANKS AND MANTLE GET TOGETHER

Things Will Really Pop In Stadium



● George (Bubbles) Banks, St. Petersburg Saints third baseman, may have a method to his mad gum chewing pace. Chewing tobacco has been part and parcel of the rise to stardom of many baseball stars. Second baseman Nellie Fox of the Chicago White Sox is a notable example.

But Banks, a Yankee farmhand, who likes to hit the long ball (15 homers), has his sights set higher — on becoming a Mickey Mantle perhaps. As he contemplates the future over a massive bubble while sitting in the dugout, he might be thinking of this scene (right) in which Mantle is caught with a large bubble just before taking off to catch a fly hit by Chicago White Sox pitcher Sandy Consuegra. Maybe someday he will become a Yankee and then, between Banks and Mantle, won't things really pop.



In 1961, George was traded to the Minnesota Twins.

Twins Grab Pacolet's Banks From Yankees

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — The talent-hungry major leagues drafted 35 minor league baseball players Monday for a record outlay of \$630,000 in the annual raid on their rivals' farm systems.

The Los Angeles Angels, Minnesota Twins and Cleveland Indians each took four men and Kansas City, Baltimore, Washington and the Chicago White Sox each drafted three.

Hardest hit were the sprawling farm systems of the New York Yankees and Milwaukee Braves, each of whom lost six players. The San Francisco Giants' farms were clipped for four players.

The selections ranged from such familiar names as veteran outfielder Gino Cimoli, taken by Kansas City, to an unknown infielder-outfielder, Steven Selsky, whose only pro experience has been in an instructional league. The White Sox picked Selsky from the Los Angeles Dodgers' Spokane list.

Washington had the No. 1 pick and took shortstop Ken Hamlin as expected. The 26-year-old Hamlin cost only \$25,000 this year, a sharp mark down from the \$75,000 the Angels had to pay for him last year in the expansion draft.

Of the 35 players selected, 20 were veterans at \$25,000 each, and 15 were first-year men who started playing pro ball in 1961. The

freshmen cost only \$12,000 each. Last year the majors drafted 23 for \$497,000, and only six of them were first-year men.

The idea of the first-year draft is to keep the rich clubs from hoarding talent but most of them protect their top prospects by advancing them to a big league roster, immune from the draft.

After Washington took Hamlin to fill the shortstop vacancy created by the Army call of Bob Johnson and the sale of Coot Veal, the Philadelphia Phillies grabbed Billy Consolo, former Boston Red Sox \$60,000 bonus baby.

Consolo, now 27, hit .283 last year at Vancouver, a Milwaukee farm. The 32-year-old Cimoli, a major leaguer since 1956, played with Pittsburgh and Milwaukee last season, but was sent to Vancouver in October.

Minnesota took third baseman George Banks from the Yankee chain after he hit .296 with 30 home runs at their Binghamton, N.Y., farm. The Twins also drafted John Swango, former Baltimore bonus pitcher from the Yankees' Richmond farm. Pitcher Georges Maranda, who had a 10-4 record at Tacoma and infielder Johnny Goryl, ex-Cub who hit .230 at Omaha, also went to the Twins.

The Angeles, digging for talent, snapped up third baseman Marlan Coughtry, a .296 hitter at Seattle; infielder-outfielder Felix Torres, who drove in 97 runs for Buffalo, and Bob Belinsky, a left-handed pitcher with a 9-10 record at Little Rock.

Moe Drabowsky, a rookie whiz with the Cubs in 1957 was Cincinnati's only draft. Baltimore grabbed Billy Short, from the Yanks at Richmond, where he had a 1-1 record after undergoing an arm operation. Short once was rated a sure-fire big leaguer and was voted the outstanding lefty in

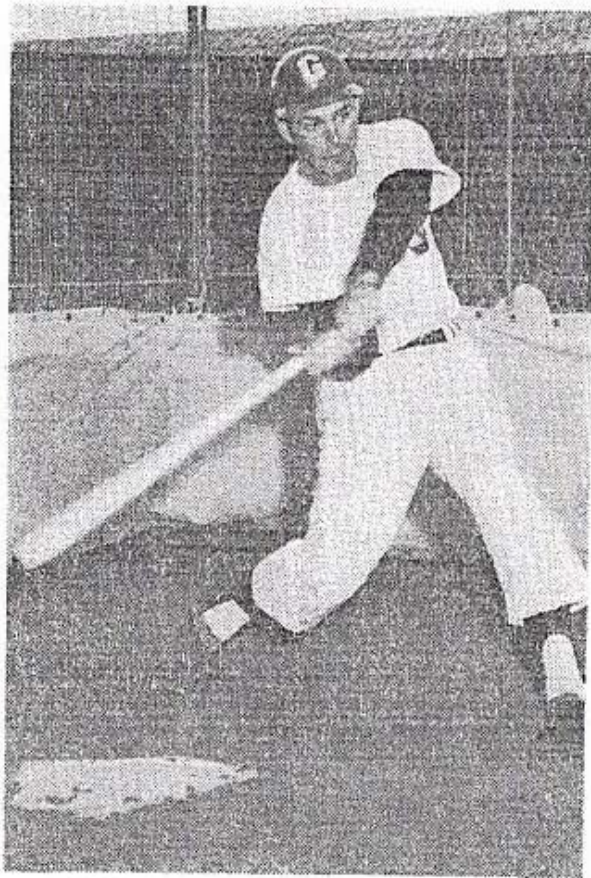
the minors in 1959.

Among Cleveland's four draftees was ex-White Sox pitcher Don Rudolph, an 13-9 winner at Indianapolis. St. Louis took only right-handed pitcher John Anderson, 14-9 at Rochester.

Of the two new clubs in the National League, the Houston Colts and New York Mets, each was allowed to take two veterans at \$25,

000 each after the other clubs had finished.

The Colts drafted left-handed pitcher Dean Store, formerly with Washington, and outfielder Johnny Weekly from the Giants' organization. The Mets selected two right-handed pitchers, Charles (Bob) Moorhead from Indianapolis and Aubrey Gatewood from Dallas.



GEORGE BANKS SHOWN IN ACTION
Picture Made In Greensboro Uniform

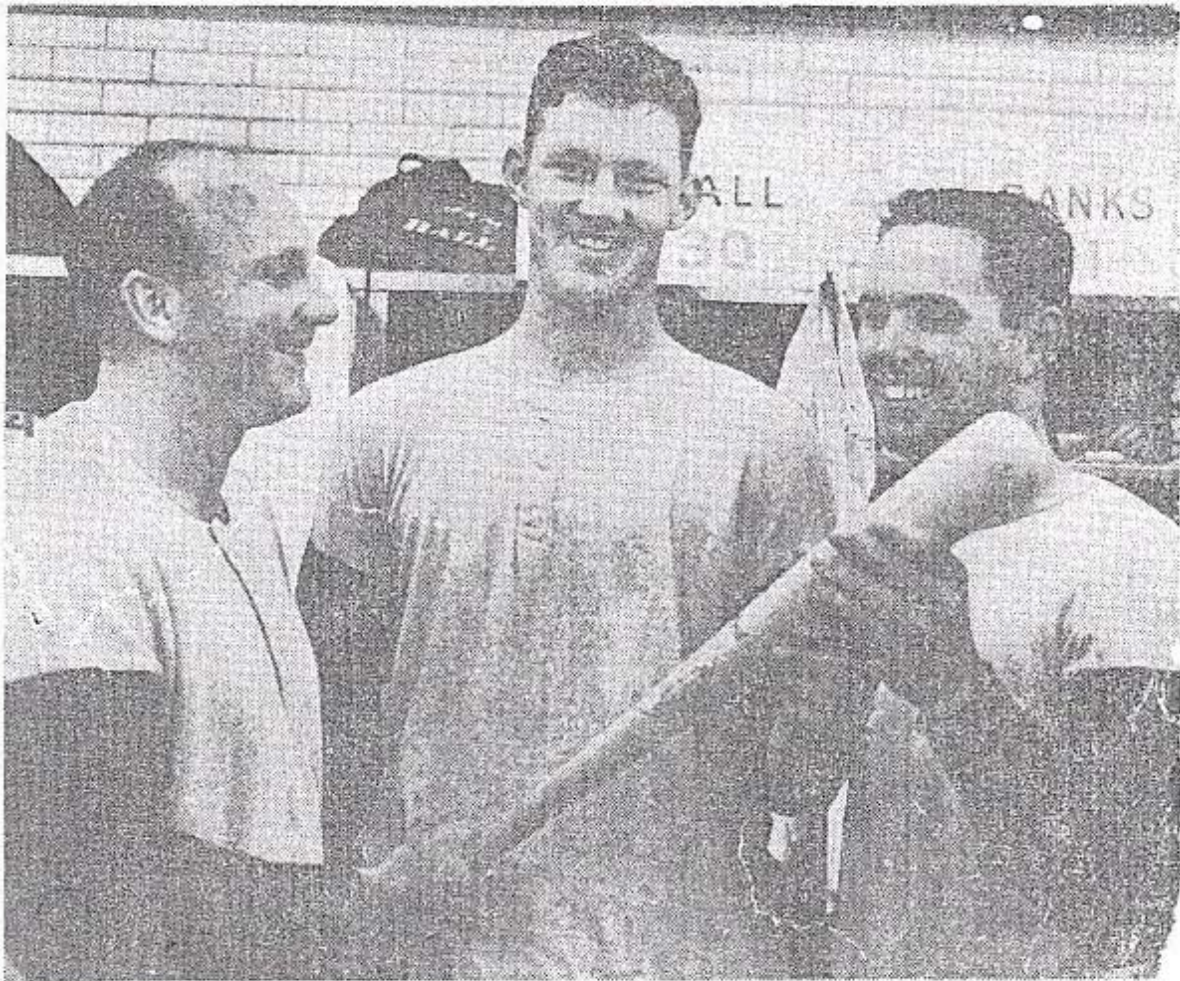
Minneapolis Morning Tribune

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THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1963

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The First One Is Sweet



Minneapolis Tribune Photo by John C.

Twin heroes (l-r) Harmon Killebrew, Jim Kaat, George Bank



Associated Press

BUT NOT JIM—Four of the stars of the Minnesota Twins get in some hot campaigning for mayor of Wyoming—Michigan, that is. Actually, Lawrence Kaat, of Wyoming, is the candidate and sent the card to nephew Jim Kaat,

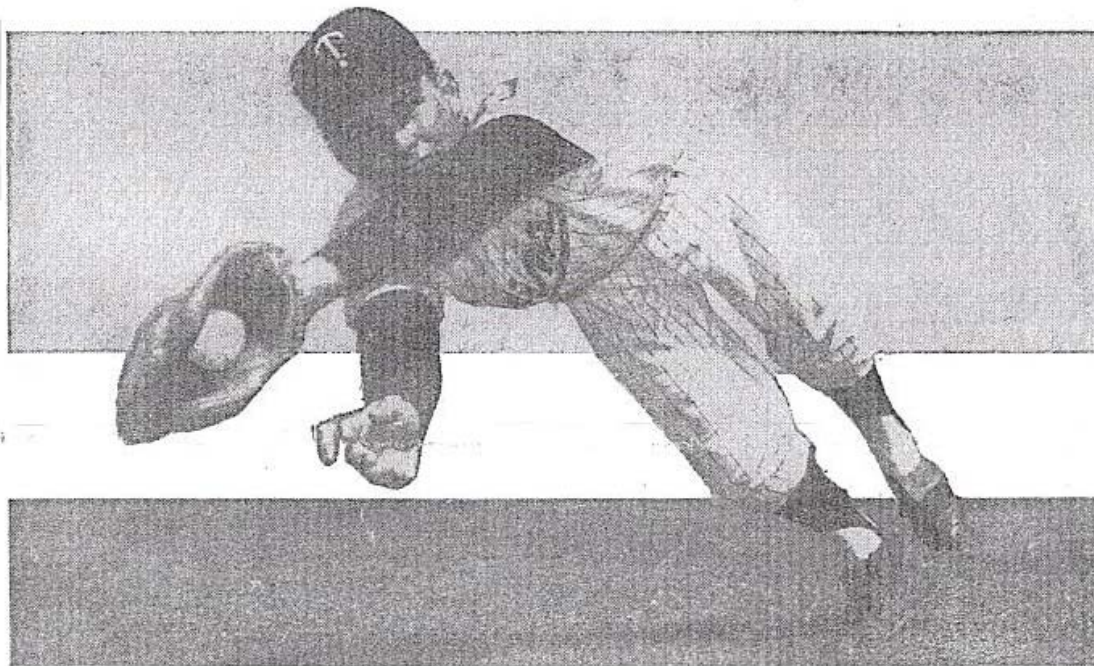
left, lefthanded pitching ace of the Twins. Campaign workers and fellow Twins are George Banks, John Goryl and Bob Allison, reading from left in back row. Kaat started for the Twins yesterday, allowed two runs, Nats won, 3-2



—Photo by B&B Studio

PACOLET HERO BUSY

George Banks, Pacolets No. 1 baseball ambassador, busily signs autographs for his young fans at the Kiwanis Baseball Banquet at Memorial Auditorium here Thursday night. The young utility player with the Minnesota Twins was one of six active major league baseball players who attended. Billy O'Dell of the Giants was the speaker. **More pictures and complete details can be found on Page 23.**



Rookie George Banks dives to make grab of line drive.

1962 MINNESOTA TWINS 1962



Top Row: Harmon Killebrew, of; Georges Maranda, p; Jim Kaat, p; Camilo Pascual, p; Earl Battey, c; Dick Stigman, p; Hal Naragon, c; Jerry Zimmerman, c.

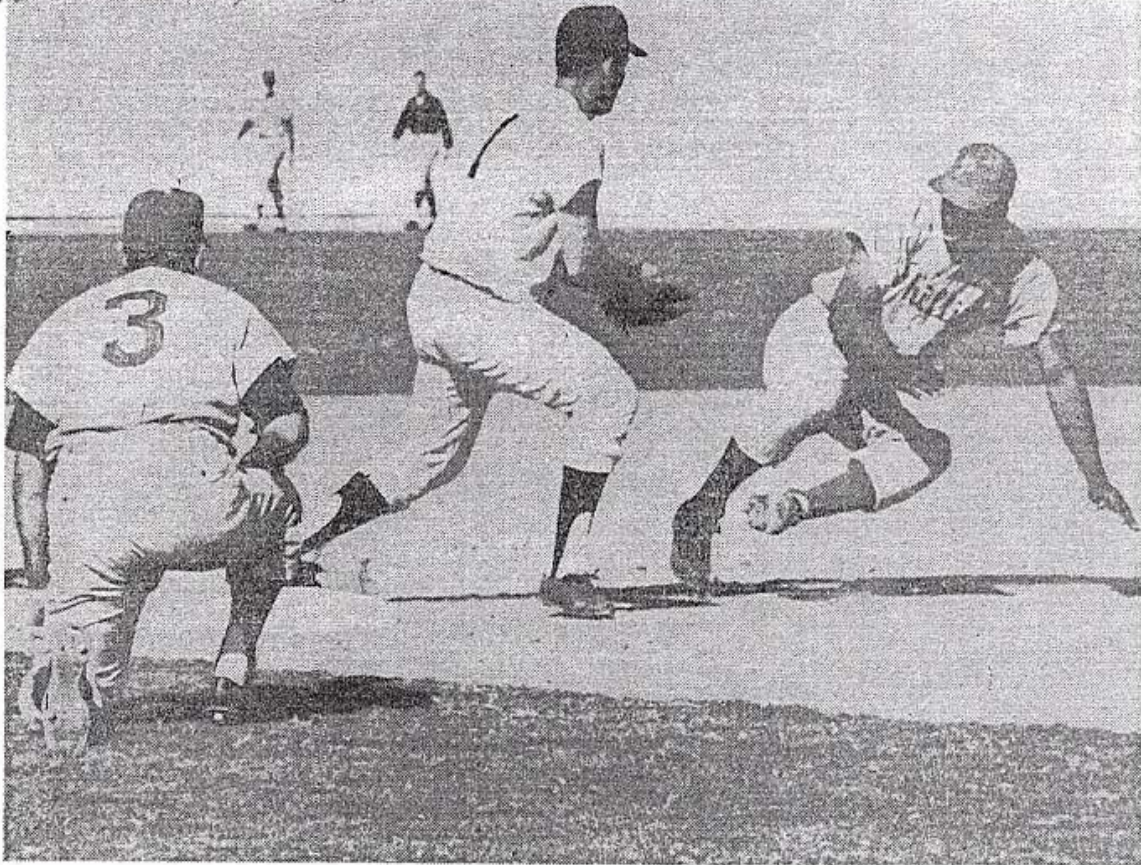
Third Row: George Banks, if; Vic Power, if; Lee Stange, p; Bill Tuttle, of; Ted Sadowski, p; Bernie Allen, if; Orlando Martinez, if; Bob Allison, of; Jack Kralick, p; Rich Rollins, if; Don Lee, p; Ray Moore, p.

Second Row: Howard Fox, traveling secretary; Ed FitzGerald, coach; Floyd Baker, coach; Gordon Maltzberger, coach; Sam Mele, manager; George Strickland, coach; Zoilo Versalles, if; George Lentz, trainer; Lenny Green, of.

Front Row: Ray Crump, equipment manager; Johnny Goryl, if; Peter King, ballboy; Mike Meuleners, batboy; Richard King, ballboy; Joe Bonikowski, p.

First Year in Major Leagues

Orlando - March 19 63



(Sentinel Photo by Jim Muncaster)

PHILLIES' ALEX JOHNSON ARRIVES AT 3D TOO LATE
...Twins' Banks sets for tag as Coach Lowrey watches

Spring Training
Minnesota Twins
Orlando, Florida
March 1963

Twins Thank Lucky Stars for Banks' Big Bat, Versatile Glove

Prexy Griffith Nixes Talk of Trading Off '61 Draftee; George Proved He Can Hit, Handle Third or Picket Job

By ARNO GOETHEL

TWIN CITIES, Minn.

From the way President Calvin Griffith of the Minnesota Twins launched his discourse on George Banks, you'd have thought he was putting the young third baseman-outfielder and pinch-hitter on the trading block.

"Banks," Griffith began, "would be capable of making some other clubs, either as a third baseman or outfielder. If he had the opportunity to play every day, he could become a real good player."

Before the question of trading Banks could be raised, however, Griffith supplied the answer:

"He's of great value to us because he's so versatile and he can really swing that bat. I would not consider letting him go to any other club."

Banks, 24, was drafted from the Richmond (International) roster in the New York Yankee farm system a year ago for \$25,000. Yankee reports indicated Banks had "bad hands," a reputation almost as damaging for a ball player as it would be for a concert pianist. However, the reports also touted Banks for his ability to hit.

"We drafted him," said Griffith, "because we figured he would improve as a fielder."

Banks appeared in 63 games while the Twins were improving five notches to second place in 1962. He started 23 games, including ten in right field, seven in left and six at the hot corner.

His other appearances were as a pinch-hitter.

George Rapped Four Homers

In 103 at-bats, Banks collected 20 hits for 42 total bases, had four homers and two triples and drove in 15 runs while hitting .252.

With the glove, he accepted 26 total chances and made two errors, a wild throw from third and a muff of a fly ball in right.

George posted a fielding average of .949, which won't win any Gold Glove awards.

Still, his performances impressed Griffith:

"He hasn't much finesse at third."

Griff said, "but he does the job. He gets the ball and throws his man out. He doesn't let the ball get past him."

Banks performed similarly in right field, effectively and ungracefully. In a May 25 game at Chicago, he galloped great distances in both directions to haul down drives by Nellie Fox and Al Smith.

Both times his feet zipped from

Sparkling Spare



George Banks

under him and Banks wound up on his backside.

Manager Sam Mele gave the rookie from South Carolina a pat below the Mason-Dixon line after each catch. Later, in the clubhouse, Mele suggested:

"Maybe I should get you a pair of skis out there."

Although he wouldn't part with Banks now, Griffith came close to it last spring. Under the draft rules, the Twins had to keep Banks on their major league roster; they couldn't send him on option to one of their farm clubs until Richmond (International) had an opportunity to buy him back for half the draft price.

When the Twins had to pare their squad from 28 to 25 players before May 15, Griffith asked General Manager Roy Hapley of the Yankees if the Twins could option Banks to a farm club without the Yanks putting in a claim.

Hapley said: "He's too good not to take back for \$12,500."

So the Twins kept him. And Banks earned his keep as a competent replacement.

St. Paul, Minn. - March, 1963

Twins George Banks at Best When Competition Is Toughest



GEORGE BANKS
At Best When Going's Tough

By ARNO GOETHEL
Staff Writer

ORLANDO, FLA.—Tough competition brings out the best in George Banks.

The baby-faced, pleasantly drawing Minnesota Twins' outfielder-third baseman slugged four homeruns in 1962. One was struck off Galen Cjoso, a 4-7 performer with Boston.

The other three homers, however, were hit against Dick Donovan, Ralph Terry and Ray Herbert.

These three gentlemen comprised 75 per cent of the American league's 20-game winners. The other was Camilo Pascual, who is — of course — Banks' teammate on the Twins. So wasn't put to the test of George's authoritative swing.

It was the same way with his batting average.

Banks tagged ninth-place Kansas City pitching for an unimpressive .182 club.

Against the league-leading, world champion Yankees, however, Banks flailed away at a torrid .412 pace.

A 24-year-old righthanded hitter and thrower from Pa-colet Mills, S. C., Banks says: "I believe I can be a better hitter in the major leagues than I was in the minors. If you came to the plate in the minors after the man before you hit a homerun, you knew the next pitch was coming right at you. They can't do that up here."

"In the majors, all the pitches are around the plate because the pitchers have bet-

ter control. So you get more pitches to swing at."

Banks has risen to meet tough challenges all his baseball life.

He broke into the game as a Little League all-star shortstop in his cotton-milling home town. When still a youngster of 13, he was invited to play with the Mill team, composed of men averaging 30 years old.

"I was better with the older fellas than I was with kids my own age," he recalled. "In a case like that, you have to be better."

After high school, Banks signed with the New York Yankee organization for a \$1,750 bonus. For five frustrating years, he was buried in the Yankee system.

Then, in December of 1961, he was drafted by the Twins for \$25,000.

When he reported to spring training with the Twins in 1962, the third base situation was a maze. Banks had no one individual to challenge.

Now, however, he knows he has to beat a tough competitor, All-Star third baseman Rich Rollins.

"It will be tough," Banks admitted. "Rich had a good year in 1962 and he's a good ball player. But I feel better this year than I did a year ago. I might have been pressing too hard last year. I just hope I can get started."

Banks could be called the Sam Snead of baseball. His picture swing comes naturally.

"I've had only two tips on how to hit," he said. "One fella told me to hit the ball six inches to a foot in front of the plate. Another fella told me to get up there and feel comfortable and wait until I get my pitch."

"When I was home during winter, high school coaches asked me to explain my hitting style. I couldn't do it. I told them to watch me. That's the only way I could explain."

Likes Tough Competition

Banks likes hitting major league pitching. He firmly believes, given the chance, he can hit better in the majors than in the minors. That would take some doing because he hit better than .300 at Binghamton, N. Y. in 1961 including 30 home runs and 108 runs batted in. On that performance the Twins paid the \$25,000 to draft him away from the Yankees.

Banks' philosophy is sound. "If you came to the plate in the minors after the man ahead of you had hit a home run, you knew the next pitch was coming right at you," he said. "They can't do that up here and get away with it too much."

"In the majors, all the pitches are around the plate because the pitchers have better control. So you get more pitches to swing at."

Records of his first year in the majors bear out that he does better against better competition.

Three of his four homers were hit against Cleveland's Dick Donovan, New York's Ralph Terry and Chicago's Ray Herbert. These three hurlers had 75 percent of the American League's 20-game winners last season. Camilo Paschal, the other 20-game winner, was Banks' teammate and did not have to test his arm against the youngster.

Banks hit only .192 against the ninth-place Kansas City Athletics. But he rapped the pitching of the World Champion New York Yankees at a hot .412 pace.

For Minnesota Twins

Pacolet's George Banks May Have Starting Slot

ST. PAUL-MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A disheartening comedown from American League All-Star third baseman to bench warmer and pinch hitter could be the dismal prospect facing Minnesota's Rich Rollins.

The main reason, strangely enough, is not the broken jawbone Rich suffered when struck by a pitch from Detroit's Paul Foytack in last Sunday's exhibition finale.

It is the presence on the Twins roster of George Banks, the former New York Yankee farmhand Minnesota drafted for \$25,000 after the 1961 season. Banks hails from Pacolet, S. C.

Banks didn't wait long to make his presence felt in a big way. He clouted a two-run homer Wednesday that helped the Twins to a 5-3 victory over Cleveland.

That was his first hit after

taking over for Rollins when Rich was sidelined from Tuesday's season opener by the broken jaw.

Banks can hit. No less an authority than Ted Williams will attest to that. Williams once told Twins Manager Sam Mele: "The Red Sox wanted Banks urgently. I peg him as a real good hitter."

A weak arm has been his biggest handicap, but reserve outfield duty spelling Harmon Killebrew and Bob Allison last year

appears to have strengthened it. He covers well at third.

Banks hit 30 home runs for the Yankees farm team at Binghamton, N. Y., in 1961, 26 at Greensboro in 1960 and 17 at Fargo-Moorhead in 1959, so the power is there. Last year he had four homers in 103 times at bat while hitting .252 as a Twins reserve.

Banks didn't get to play much in spring training, because Mele was fearful of further damaging Rollins' sagging confidence if he were benched. So Banks' batting eye was not overly sharp most of the spring. It is getting that way now.

"I was just missing," he said after cracking his 390-foot homer Wednesday. "My timing is good now. It takes something like that to get you started."

Banks Homers In Twins' 5-3 Victory



THE END OF A LINER. George Banks, Minnesota Twins third baseman, makes a high-reaching leap to snare a line drive off the bat of Kansas City's Chuck Essagian in the sixth inning of Friday night's game at Kansas City. Watching closely is umpire Nestor Chylak. The Athletics blanked the Twins 6-0 on the two-hit pitching of Ed Rakow. —AP Wirephoto.

been a good spring ball player," he said. "I don't know what it is, I just can't seem to get going good early. I'm just now beginning to get in shape and start coming around."

One of the reasons has been the adjustment to major league pitching. "The pitching here is entirely different than what you see in the minor league camps. Up here, the pitching is better and it makes a better hitter out of you."

THIS TAKES SOME explaining. You normally would figure that the better the pitching, the tougher it is to hit. This holds up in a ball game.

get everything but your hitting. You can concentrate on what you're trying to do. In the minor league camps," he laughed, "you've got to be pretty loose in there. The balls are liable to come at you inside, outside, up, down, any place. Here you can concentrate on hitting instead of dodging."

No Big Changes

Banks hit 16 home runs at St. Petersburg and had a .315 batting average. He has hit more homers in every other full season in which he's

The infield candidate, speaking in a soft Southern drawl, slowly answered, "No, I don't think I'm doing anything different. I'm just trying to meet the ball. I haven't changed since I played down here—I just hit the way I feel natural and comfortable . . . try to pick a stance that feels good to me and hit out of that."

Mgr. Mele said Banks "looks like a good prospect. I like the way he swings the bat and he covers his ground well. The other day he was fooling around at shortstop and he didn't look bad over there."

Banks Belts One; Twins Take a Pair

CHICAGO (AP)—The Minnesota Twins climbed to within ½ game of the American League lead Sunday by sweeping a doubleheader from the Chicago White Sox 5-4 and 8-6 via the home run route.

George Banks' first homer in the majors provided the margin for Jim Kaat's 11-hit victory and 3-4 record in the opener. The 23-year-old top draft choice parked it into the lower left field deck in the sixth inning and scored behind Harmon Killebrew, who had singled.

Banks is from Pacolet, S.C. Killebrew's 11th homer, with two runners aboard, keyed a four-run seventh in the nightcap after the Sox had taken a 6-3 lead by jamming all their runs into the fourth.

Kaat singled home two runs and Vic Power doubled in another in the opening triumph. Jim Landis accounted for three Sox runs with pairs of doubles and singles in five trips.

The Twins knocked out Juan Pizarro in the first two innings of the afterpiece, scoring three runs.

Power's double and Rich Rollins' single accounted for two in the first, and Killebrew drove in another in the third.

MINNESOTA		CHICAGO	
ab	r h bi	ab	r h bi
Green cf	4 1 2 0	Cunningham 1b	5 1 1 0
Power 1b	4 0 1 1	Aparicio ss	4 1 2 1
Rollins 3b	4 0 0 0	Landis cf	5 0 4 3
Killebrew lf	3 1 1 0	A. Smith lf	4 0 0 0
Battley c	3 0 1 0	Hershberger rf	4 0 0 0
Zimmon c	0 0 0 0	C. Smith 3b	4 0 1 0
Banks cf	3 2 2 2	Fox 2b	4 0 1 0
Tuttle rf	0 0 0 0	Lollar c	4 0 2 0
Allen 2b	4 1 1 0	Herbert p	1 1 0 0
Versalles ss	4 0 0 0	Carrson	0 1 0 0
Kaat p	4 0 1 2	Zanni p	0 0 0 0
		Roselli	1 0 0 0
		Lown p	0 0 0 0
Totals	32 5 9 5	Totals	26 4 11 4

a—Walked for Herbert in 7th; b—Hit into force play for Zanni in 8th.
 Minnesota 002 012 000—3
 Chicago 002 000 100—4
 E—C. Smith, PO/A—Minnesota 27-16, Chicago 27-8. DP—Versalles; Allen and Power; C. Smith, Fox and Cunningham; Fox and Cunningham. LOB—Minnesota 4, Chicago 3.
 2B—Allen, Cunningham, Landis 2. Power. HR—Banks, S—Battley. SF—Aparicio.
 IP H R ER BS SO



GEORGE BANKS
The Pacolet Twin



HOW'S THE FINGER. Rookie George Banks, right, checks on the injured finger of slugger Bob Allison who had five stitches in his finger removed Monday night. Allison was given no hint of when he could return to the lineup. Meanwhile Banks, drafted from the New York Yankee organization, fills in for the powerful Allison. Banks is an infielder, but is making good as a fly chaser to give manager Sam Mele more versatility.

—Staff Photo by Paul Lic



—Associated Press Wirephoto

RANGER ALL-STARS—These four Rangers head for Spokane Monday and the Pacific Coast League's All-

Star game. From left are George Banks, Jack McKeon, Cesar Tovar and Marv Mecklenburg.

RANGER PITCHER, MANAGER ADDED TO ALL-STAR SQUAD

Marv Mecklenburg, Dallas-Fort Worth's top southpaw, was added to the Pacific Coast League All-Star pitching squad Friday, the third Ranger player to be named to the elite team.

Mecklenburg (6-3 and 3.03 ERA) will join Cesar Tovar and George Banks at Spokane Monday when the All-Stars battle the hometown Indians.

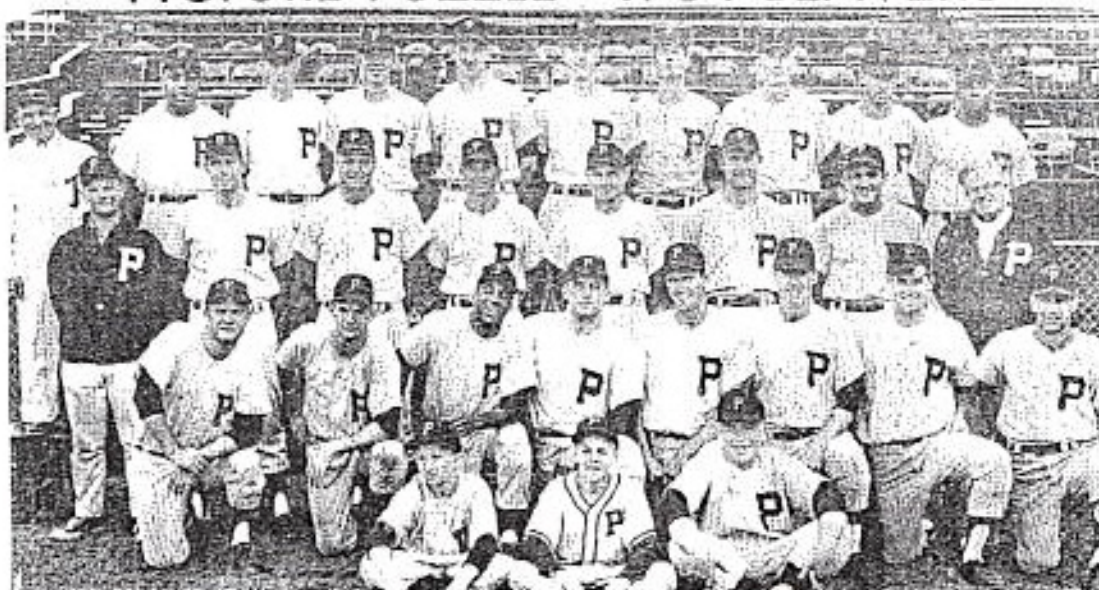
Tovar was voted into the starting lineup in left field while Banks was named as a reserve infielder on the 21-man squad. Manager Jack McKeon was also picked as a coach for all-star manager Grady Hatton.


The Rangers made two players shifts as they prepared to send Joe Bonikowski (3-4) against Seattle's Pete Smith (7-8) in a single game at Burnett Field at 7:30 p. m. Saturday.

Chuck Weatherspoon, who can play the outfield, first base and also catch, was called up from Charlotte. In exchange, the Rangers sent Catcher Ron Henry to the South Atlantic League club.

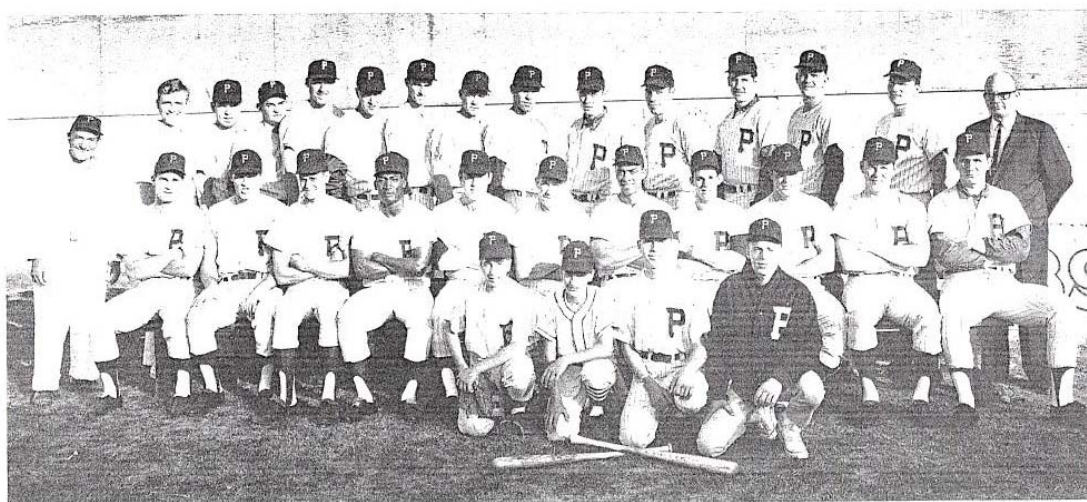
In 1964, George was traded to the Cleveland Indians.

PICTURE PUZZLE---1964 BEAVERS



Top Row—(Left to right) Rocky Benevento, Willie Tasby, George Culver, Bob Allen, Floyd Weaver, Steve Hargan, Tommy John, Wynn Hawkins, Steve Bailey, Tony Curry; Middle Row—Stubby Jaynes, Dave Tyrriver, Jim Lawrence, Augle Garride, Manager John Lippon, Duke Sims, Tony Martinez, Doc Carroll; Front Row—Jack Curtis, Buddy Booker, Tommy Agee, Al Luplow, Gordy Lund, Jim Weaver, George Banks, Tony Attansio, Bruce Jaynes, Jimmy Kotsovos, Craig Gavin 

PORTLAND BEAVERS - 1966



FRONT ROW

RON CASCISA, Bat Boy
GARY GATTO, Bat Boy
TONY GATTO, Ball Boy
JIM KOTSOVAS, Clubhouse

SECOND ROW

ROCKY BENEVENTO, Groundskeeper
JOHN BUTLER
GORDON LUND
VERN FULLER
JOSE VIDAL
JIM WEAVER

JOHN LIPON, Team Manager
BILLY WILLIAMS, Coach
OSCAR ZAMORA
LOU PINELIA
BILL DAVIS
KEN SOKOLOWSKI

THIRD ROW

BILL NORRIS, Trainer
GEORGE BANKS
BUDDY BOOKER
PAUL DICKEN
JACK SPRING

TOM GRAMLY
DOC EDWARDS
PAT DOBSON
GEORGE CULVER
BOB TIEFENAUER

FLOYD WEAVER
BOB HEFFNER
JUNE RAINES
WIL HUDSON, General Manager

COMPLIMENTS
OF

Beaverooters



Staff Photo—Noel Davis

CRACKERS' GEORGE BANKS GETS A BEAR HUG ON WATER COOLER
 'No One's Getting a Drink but Me,' He Seems to Say on Hot Night at Ponce de Leon

CRACKER AVERAGES

PLAYER	ATLANTA AVERAGES					
	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	Avg.
Valdespino	161	16	56	2	25	.348
Snyder	133	19	36	0	13	.271
Washington	127	16	33	0	7	.260
Marlinez	110	8	27	0	5	.245
Hundley	83	8	14	2	2	.222
Weatherpoon	90	14	19	3	10	.211
Nasek	102	9	23	4	10	.225
Banks	103	13	27	5	17	.214
Olivares	98	9	21	2	11	.215
Jablonski	93	4	16	1	9	.188
Bellino	53	4	7	1	2	.133

PITCHER	PITCHER					
	IP	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L
Williams	41	17	11	18	20	5-1
Merritt	42	25	20	22	32	4-5
Nelson	70.1	27	24	20	39	1-6
Rantz	31	12	11	21	16	1-1
Nelson	19	8	8	7	8	2-3
Seyfried	20.2	12	12	9	15	2-2
Cimino	27.1	18	16	10	12	0-0
Fosnow	21	11	11	4	12	2-1
Siebler	29	22	20	8	20	0-5

Three Of A Kind: All Winners



LUIS TIANT
Victorious In Relief

SAM McDOWELL
Stops Tigers On 4 Hits

GEORGE BANKS
Assaults Padre Pitching

Banks' Bat Riddles SD For 3 HRs

Pacific Coast League				
WESTERN DIVISION				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
San Diego	44	46	.492	—
Portland	45	48	.475	1/2
Tacoma	57	50	.533	5 1/2
Spokane	56	55	.505	8 1/2
Seattle	55	55	.500	9
Hawaii	43	69	.384	22

EASTERN DIVISION				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Arkansas	44	44	.500	—
Oklahoma City	43	49	.463	3
Indianapolis	56	52	.519	8
Denver	57	56	.504	9 1/2
Salt Lake City	45	68	.398	21 1/2
Dallas	39	72	.351	26 1/2

SUNDAY RESULTS
 At PORTLAND 15-4, San Diego 2-4
 At Tacoma 10, Hawaii 4, second game
 p.d., rain
 At Seattle 5-6, Spokane 7-4 (first game
 10 innings)
 At Arkansas 1-1, Salt Lake City 3-0
 (first game 10 innings, second game
 eight innings)
 At Indianapolis 5, Denver 4 (11 innings)
 At Oklahoma City 2, Dallas 0

By LEO DAVIS
 Sports Writer, The Oregonian

Rob Banks' third homer of the day resolved a second-game stalemate in favor of Portland Sunday as the Beavers climaxed a riotous afternoon by sweeping a Pacific Coast League doubleheader from San Diego's Western Division pacosetters.

Banks' wallop bailed out the Bevos, 6-4, after Steve Hargan had humbled the Padres, 15-2, with a sweet three-hitter. Floyd Weaver, fourth Portland

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 1)

Banks Leads Angel Bat Rampage

By HY ZIMMERMAN
Times Sports Writer

VANCOUVER, B. C. — What a parlay those Seattles made here.

About the time Noel Picard was scoring the winning goal for the Totems over in the Forum last night, George Banks powered a grand-slam homer for the Angels which featured a 10-2 victory over the Mounties and spoiled their home opener in Capilano Stadium.

The weather already had done some spoilage. Damp,

cold weather held the crowd to 2,169 fans.

The Angels mounted their biggest attack of the young season—12 hits, three of them by Banks, who also had two singles and batted in a total of five runs.

SO, IT WAS a laugher, and in more ways than one. The Angels got the tying run in the fifth inning when Rene Lachemann, Mountie catcher, forgot how many outs there were and, after a whiff by Banks for the second out of the inning, threw the ball

in a third-out gesture. He was an out short.

Manager Chuck Tanner, a good traffic cop at third base, sent Bobby Trevino home.

Beneficiary of all this was Clyde Wright, knocked about by the Mounties in Seattle's home opener. Clyde tethered the Mounties on three hits, none of them after the third inning. He struck out six and got away with five walks, only one of which turned into a run.

Tonight, it will be Marty Pattin (0-0) against the Red-

coats' Bill Edgerton (0-1).

Wright yielded two of his hits in the first inning to fall behind, 1-0. Joe Gaines opened with a single to center, gained second on a passed ball, third on an infield out and home on Gerry Reimer's sacrifice fly.

In the third, Gaines again scored. He opened with a walk, hurried to third on John Donaldson's hit-and-run single and scored on Reimer's second sacrifice fly.

Meanwhile, Bob Meyer was keeping the Angels grounded, until the fifth. Then, Bill Murphy hit his second double, to center. Trevino drew one of his three walks, and both advanced on a wild pitch.

An out later, Murphy scored on Felix Torres' grounder to short, which Jim Driscoll booted.

THERE WAS ONLY one out, then, before Banks struck out and Lachemann miscalculated for the tying run. (The catcher probably caught it in the dressing room.)

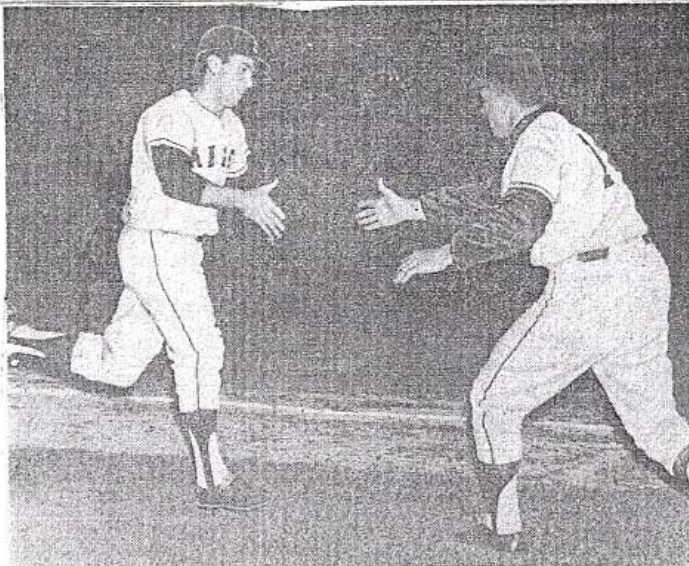
Chuck Cottier, playing his first game at second, then singled to left for the lead run.

Vern Handrahan started the sixth — and wished he hadn't. With one out, Wright singled and was forced by Murphy. Trevino walked, and Ed Kirkpatrick was hit by a pitch to load the bases.

Chuck Vinson walked to force in one run. Then Banks cashed in with his jackpot poke, over left center.

Vinson's double and Banks' single in the eighth inning got the ninth run. Singles by Chris Krug and Hector Torres and Murphy's sacrifice fly got No. 10 in the ninth.

Defensively, Cottier, as expected, sparkled at second. It is a sharp infield with Chuck in there.



—Times photo by Pete Liddell.

GEORGE BANKS, left, ROUNDED THIRD BASE ON 4TH-INNING HOME RUN
Chuck Tanner, Angel manager, greeted his right fielder with hand shake

SEATTLE				VANCOUVER			
ab	r	b	bi	ab	r	b	bi
Murphy,lf	5	2	1	Gaines,rf	2	2	1
Trevino,cf	3	2	0	Donaldson,2b	4	0	1
Kirkpatrick,4	1	0	0	Reimer,cf	1	0	0
F. Torres,lb	3	1	0	Schultz,lb	4	0	1
Vinson,lb	2	1	1	Bondo,3b	2	0	0
Gonzalez,2b	5	1	5	Norton,cf	4	0	0
Cottier,2b	3	0	1	Lachemann,c	2	0	0
Krug,c	5	1	0	Driscoll,ss	3	0	0
H. Torres	5	0	2	Meyer,p	1	0	0
Wright,p	4	0	2	Creero,ph	1	0	0
				Handrahan,p	0	0	0
				Wilson,p	0	0	0
				Dixon,p	0	0	0

SEATTLE				VANCOUVER			
ab	r	b	bi	ab	r	b	bi
Totals	39	10	12	9	Totals	26	2

Seattle	000	035	011—11
Vancouver	101	000	000—

E—Driscoll, Lachemann. DP—Seattle.
Left—Seattle 10. Vancouver 4. 2B—Murphy. 2. Vinson. 3B—Wright. HR—Bank (1). 5B—Murphy. 5—Wright. SF—Reimer. 2. Murphy. WP—Wright. Meyer 2. PB—Krug. T—2.50. A—2,169.

PITCHING

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SC
Wright (W, 1-1)	5	3	2	2	5	
Meyer (L, 0-1)	1	3	3	1	4	
Handrahan	3	5	6	6	2	
Dixon	1	2	1	1	0	



(Times Photo by Bob Mereland)

SAINTS STAR IS HURT

Trainer Bernie Smith applies ice pack to arm of George Banks, Saints third baseman who was hit by pitched ball in second inning of game last night. Banks remained in game but had to have ice pack applied between innings.

BANKS CLUBS 3-RUN HOMER

Horsford Captures 15th As Saints Win

By HARRIS WILLIAMS
(Times Sports Writer)

Righthander Jim Horsford, with the help of a three-run home run by George Banks, gained his 15th victory of the year last night as the St. Petersburg Saints shut out Gainesville 6-0.

The Puerto Rican native gave up only four hits in gaining the win. He has lost only once this year.

Banks, a Pacolet Mills, S.C., product, clubbed his homer in the third inning after teammates Art Pennington and Manager Tom Hamilton had walked. It was his 11th circuit blow of the year and ran his RBI total to 74, high for the Florida State League.

Tonight the Saints, if Doc Benefield's tape holds up, play host to the Cocoa Indians in the first of a three-game series. The second will be played Thursday night and the rubber game Friday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. Ted Murry, 6-6, will go on the hill for the first half champs tonight.

LONG INJURY LIST

Hamilton, taped himself from head-to-toe, has a long list of injuries to consider when making out the lineup. Outfielder-catcher Walter James has an infected foot and will be out for two or three days; pitcher Art Henriksen (10-1) has a slipped disc in his back and won't be ready for duty until Friday; pitcher Al Lindop is suffering from a sore arm; Banks and Tom Tresh have weak ankles that hamper their playing and last night leftfielder Charlie Parmelee had to be lifted from the game in the eighth inning because of an ankle injury. The extent of the injury was not known immediately.

The victory over the G-men ran the Saints' home record to 39-3 for the year. It was the first

a victory over every club in the league.

In the first inning Pedro Gonzales singled to become the first player in the FSL to reach the 100-hit mark for the year. The hit brought his batting average to an even .300.

Horsford had two of the winners' 10 hits, and Hamilton had a double and single.

The Saints scored what proved to be the winning run in the second inning on a single by Hamilton, a walk, and a single by Horsford. Banks added three more in the third and singles by Hugo Muskus and Pennington, plus an error by Buddy Leftridge, added a fifth in the fourth.

The scoring ended in the sixth when Tresh singled, Pennington reached first on a fielder's

(See HORSFORD, Page 2-C)



(Times Photo by Paul White)

A TARPON HITS THE DUST

... in first inning of game against Saints at Lang Field last night. Sliding safely into third is Tampa's Bill Cline. He failed to score, however. Watching Cline is Saints third baseman George Banks.



By **GEORGE PASERO**

Journal Sports Editor

It's great to have George Banks back. There's always hope (for the long one) when he squares off at the plate, his body balanced on strong legs and his wide shoulders level.

His is the kind of bat stance you can recommend to the Little Leaguers, who have dreams of some day playing in the major leagues.

And for that matter, playing with the Bevos isn't bad.

★ ★ ★

Banks has the good attitude, too.

When Cleveland sent him down this time, the Tribe bosses didn't have to tell him that he no longer had a place with the Indians.

He was out of options. So a return to Portland meant that the Indians were saying goodbye to him if anyone else cared to draft him next winter.

It's heart-breaking, we're sure, to have your dreams of playing with "the big club" dashed like that.

Some players are so resentful they just "put in time" with the minor club. We saw a couple give a lot less than their best when they checked into old Vaughn Street in similar circumstances.

But George came back to Portland to give his best. Sure, he was assured by Gabe Paul that if some other club wanted him, the Indians would do nothing to block his acquisition by that team.

Somehow, though, we think Reb Banks would give his best for Portland anytime. He always has. And he likes our people and our town.

We're glad that Reb hasn't given up on himself. He should still make it... if he gets a chance to play regularly.



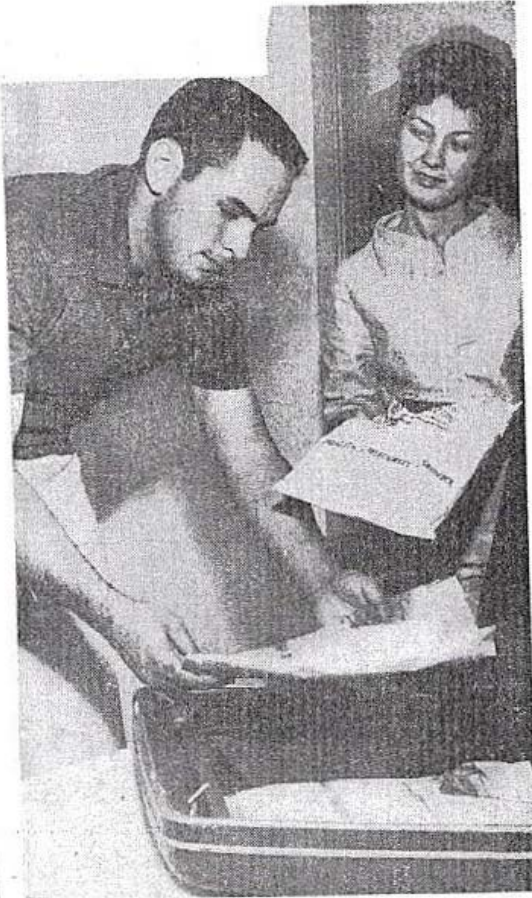
REB BANKS
... cheers for him



FAMILY WELCOME. George Banks, Indians' rookie infielder, is greeted at Hopkins Airport by his wife Delores and daughters, Mona, 3, and Rhonda, 2. Mrs. Banks and the children drove to Cleveland to await the arrival of the team.

Plain Dealer Photos (Norbert J. Yassanyo)

Banks says: "I was taught to be mean at the plate by my high school coach. I aim Wynn's bid is young Mr. Banks, who is happy to be wearing Twins' flannels.



Delores Banks helps her hubby, George, pack his bags for trip to Los Angeles.

Banks recalls that his high school coach James Lambert gave him the advice to be "mean up there all the time."

"I learned a lot from Mr. Lambert," said Banks today. "He changed my grip on the bat and my stance. Ever since I've been able to hit the long ball."

Banks, signed by the Yankees for less than \$4,000, admits he has changed his batting stance several times when he was in slumps. "But I always went back to my old style," George declares. At Binghampton last year, George stroked 30 homers, 24 doubles and 10 triples to draw the attention of Twins' scouts. He was the No. 1 draft choice of Sherry Robertson, the Twins' farm boss.

"Every report on Banks was good. We wanted him," Sherry explains.

A tailback in football, Banks has a special reason for not guessing on pitches and accepting signs from the bench or the coaching lines.

In his first season in pro ball Banks saw a member of the Palaka, Fla., team hit in the head. He was guessing for a curve ball and couldn't duck out of the way of a fast pitch," Banks said. The player (he can't remember his name) died from the blow on the head.

"That taught me the big lesson. I take my look at the ball," said the young 23-year-old slugger who needs three more homeruns to reach the century mark.

Banks, because he does come to play, doesn't care where. "I'll play any position," said the rookie who in 3 of his 5 years in the minor leagues drove in more than 100 runs with his mean bat.

Banks, a third baseman, was moved into the outfield by Mele when Jim Lemon was injured. Mele realized Banks' potential as a hitter and wanted his explosive bat in the lineup. Dav-hv-dav

Banks: Have Bat, Will Travel

The long distance telephone line crackled and popped, then the voice on the other end became clearer.

"The people here had a big "Welcome Home" cake at the ball park for me, but it still didn't make me feel any better," said George Banks, the Pacolet baseball veteran whom Cleveland recently sent to Portland, Ore., of the Pacific Coast League.

Speaking from his room at the Commodore Hotel in Portland, Banks expressed his disappointment over being trimmed from the Cleveland team. "Yes, I am disgusted," he said. "You try to do good, and they just keep pushing you around. It makes you start wondering if it's worth it."

Cleveland used its last option on the young infielder, and cannot recall him. Banks can be traded,

or else put on the waiver list. If no other club claims him from the waiver list during the winter, then the Indians can reclaim him.



GEORGE BANKS

Though Banks may be disgusted at having to play at Portland for the third consecutive year, his bat does not let the disappointment show. In Friday night's game against Denver, Banks socked a home run, a single, drove in three runs and stole three bases carrying the league-leading Beavers to the win.

And in a game in Hawaii recently, he got three hits to spark another win.

"Though I am hitting good at times, I'm not really in the groove yet," he explained. "By not getting to play regularly at Cleveland for a month, and because of rain-outs and cold weather here, I haven't got my eyes trained on the ball yet. Manager John Lipon said they made some films of our game last night, and wanted me to come down to the park early today (Saturday) and try to find out what I was doing wrong."

Banks, a third baseman, hammered 35 homers and batted .279 last year when Portland won the PCL pennant. Naturally, the Portland fans greeted him as a returning hero when Banks arrived there almost two weeks ago.

But for Banks, he still wants to find a way to be a major league third baseman. Not just another minor league hero.

The Following information is from a page by Artist Nicholas who did George's portrait on page 1 for the Twins.

About George Banks Outfielder - Third Baseman

Height: 5 feet, 11 inches

Weight: 185 pounds

Born: Pacolet Mills, SC (9/24/1938)

Bats and Throws Right Handed

Married

A highly valued member of the Twins last year was the baby-faced pleasantly drawing textile - mill worker. He was a productive long - ball threat as a pinch hitter and filled in nicely as a utility third baseman and outfielder. Purchased from the Yankees organization for the \$25,000 draft price in December, 1961, George seemed to delight in tormenting New York pitchers, hitting .412 in 12 games against them. In 1961, he led the Eastern League in homers and runs batted in and topped all of the third baseman in fielding percentage and double play making. This earned him All - Star recognition. In 1958, he paced the Florida State League in triples and runs batted in.

Year	Club	G	AB	R	H	2b	3b	Hr	Rbi	BA	PO	A	E	FA
1957	Kearney	42	157	37	40	8	0	6	23	.255	57	72	11	.921
1958	St. Petersburg	141	454	111	143	24	15	16	113	.315	109	244	40	.900
1959	Greensboro	5	15	0	1	0	0	0	2	.067	—	—	—	—
1959	Fargo-Moor.	115	389	69	94	12	9	17	68	.242	100	267	26	.934
1960	Greensboro	137	468	96	127	20	4	26	117	.271	108	239	36	.906
1961	Birmingham	139	473	110	140	24	10	30	108	.296	108	240	27	.928
1962	Minnesota	63	103	22	26	0	2	4	15	.252	26	11	2	.949
Major League Totals		63	103	22	26	0	2	4	15	.252	26	11	2	.949

In 1967 George retired from Major League Baseball.

Jan. 11, 1968 Spartanburg Herald-Journal • 2-3

Banks May Hang Up Spikes

By TOM HUNTER
Herald Sports Writer

George Banks of Paeolet has been in professional baseball for 11 years and is at the point now where he thinks that may be just about long enough.

The 29-year-old Banks played triple A ball with Seattle, Wash., last season at every position except pitcher, catcher and centerfield. Banks broke into professional baseball with the New York Yankees right after graduation from Paeolet High in 1957.

He is undecided about next season but is thinking seriously of quitting baseball and going into business. Banks works at the Kohler Plant here during the off-season.

"I've just about lost all desire to play," Banks said from his home earlier this week. "Last year everything seemed to go wrong and I just wanted to see the season end."

"If I had a chance to make

it in the major leagues I might try it. I don't want to play triple A ball again though."

Seattle is a member of the California Angels organization and with a new club Banks thought he might have a chance to move up. "I always seem to be at the wrong place at the wrong time though," Banks said.

"I believe I could play major league ball. I've played against guys who were in the majors and I did all right against them."

Banks believes baseball has changed a great deal since he broke in. The biggest difference appears to be in the ages of the major league players he said.

"It used to be that half of the players in the big leagues were over 30. Now they're coming up at the age of 18, 19 or 20. They use to start you off in class C ball and let you work your way up. Now they're starting the youngsters off near the top and giving them a shot at the majors after a couple of years."

Banks was the victim of batting slumps this past season which hurt his average. When a

player gets into a slump he just has to wait it out he mentioned.

"I've stayed in the batting cage at practice till I had blisters on my hand," Banks said. "It doesn't do any good though. You just have to wait until you get back in the groove."

As for the city of Seattle, Banks said the cool weather was good to play in but that the rain could slow up the season.

"Sometimes we'll have a good summer and other times it will rain just about all summer. The cool climate is enjoyable to play in though."

"If they're going to play big league baseball out there they'll need a domed stadium. Rain could really hurt them if they don't have one."

Looking toward the upcoming season, Banks said, "I'm not really looking forward to it. I might retire but I don't know for sure yet. I'll just have to wait and see what comes up."



GEORGE BANKS

A Former Major Leaguer

8-11-68

To George Banks, Baseball Is Happiness

By MIKE HEMBREE
Herald-Journal Sports Writer

To George Banks, happiness is baseball.

It doesn't particularly matter how fast or how slow — just as long as it's baseball.

And right now baseball means the Clifton team in the Spartanburg County League for Banks.

Banks, Paeolet's pride and now a resident of Whitestone, traveled the roads between major and minor league baseball 11 years before joining the voluntary retirement list in the fall of 1967. Now, he says he's happy at Clifton, and he's certainly welcome there, where he has played a major role in leading the team to the league's first place spot.

"I enjoy playing here," said Banks. "Playing just once a week (each Saturday) is good, and I think most of the guys enjoy it more than playing several times during the week."

Banks is hitting around .480 for the team, including several home runs. On defense, he plays an almost errorless shortstop.

Banks said there's still a chance he could go back to pro

baseball — but he'd like a real good shot at the majors.

"I'd like to go back to professional ball," said Banks. "But I wouldn't go back just to play in the minors. I would want to be guaranteed I would play major league ball."

Banks made quite a tour of the minors when he first broke into the pro ranks. After graduating from Paeolet High, he signed with the New York Yankees. He toiled in the Nebraska State, Florida State, Carolina, Northern and Eastern leagues before getting his first major league opportunity with the Minnesota Twins.

He hit at a .252 clip for the Twins in 1962, and started the '63 season with the big club, but was later optioned to Dallas-Forth Worth in the Pacific Coast

League. The next year saw Banks with Atlanta, Minnesota, Cleveland and Portland.

Still at Portland in '65 Banks hit 35 home runs and was called up by Cleveland. He was with both Portland and Cleveland in '66 and moved to Seattle in '67, where he hit .239 before deciding on retirement.

Banks joined the Clifton team in '68, but was signed by the Spartanburg Phillies with two months remaining in the season.

One thing that brought Banks to his retirement decision was the endless grind he faced in pro ball.

"I liked playing pro ball," he said, "but not every day. You have games almost every day, and pretty soon the doubleheaders start piling up. After awhile, you get tired of

playing almost continuously.

"I could have gone back when the leagues expanded," said Banks, "but I didn't think they were ready to expand. There are not that many quality baseball players."

Banks is still the property of the Angel organization, and, if he had returned during expansion, it would probably have been to California's AAA Hawaii club or the AA El Paso team. "I've been in Hawaii before and didn't particularly like it there," said Banks. "And the pay in El Paso is not too good. So I decided just to sit it out."

"They may need some extra players soon, though," he added. "Maybe next year."

Against Greenwood Tonight

Phillies Return To Action With A New Face In Lineup

BY GENE GRANGER

Assistant Sports Editor
George Banks, who was honored by the Spartanburg Phillies less than two months ago, is coming out of retirement to play for the Western Carolinas League club.

"We have worked out a deal with the Angels to use George the rest of the season," said Spartanburg President-General Manager Pat Williams, who made the announcement Wednesday.

Banks retired last fall after 11 years of professional baseball. The California Angels, who own Banks' contract, put him on the voluntary retirement list rather than give him his release.

Banks a third baseman will

make his debut in a Spartanburg uniform tonight against the Greenwood Braves at Duncan Park. He will replace Ernie Aguirre, who probably will miss the rest of the season because of military obligations.

Bobby Malkmus, the Phillies skipper, played against Banks in the Pacific Coast League. In three seasons at Portland, Banks hit 20, 35 and 22 home runs. The 29-year-old righthanded hitter has walloped 225 homers in 11 seasons.

"I'm real happy to get him," said Malkmus. "I know he can swing the bat and I have never seen him boot a ball. It looks as though he will be my regular third baseman.

"He should add some power

to our lineup. He will hit the ball as soon as he gets a few games under his belt."

Banks, who resides at White Stone, was born at Pacolet Mills. He was graduated from Pacolet High before signing with the New York Yankees. He played in the Nebraska State, Florida State, Carolina, Northern and Eastern leagues before getting a major league shot with the Minnesota Twins.

He batted .252 for the Twins in 1962. He started the 1963 season with the Twins, but was optioned to Dallas-Forth Worth of the PCL. In 1964 he was with Atlanta, Minnesota, Cleveland and Portland.

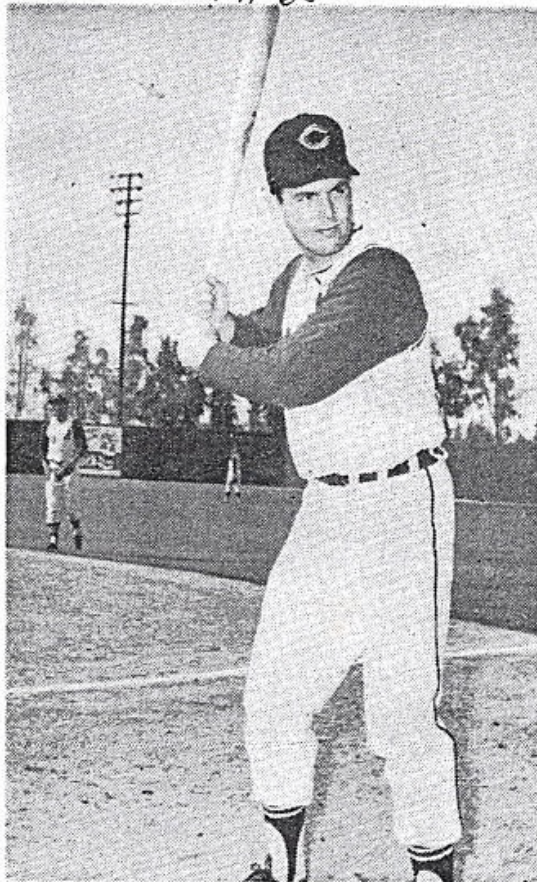
Banks was called up by Cleveland after hitting 35 homers for Portland in 1965. He was with both clubs in 1966. He hit .239 last season for Seattle of the PCL.

Banks was signed in time to play Wednesday night at Greenwood. But rain washed out the game between two of the top three clubs tied for the WCL lead.

The Phillies have played only one league game since July 2. They were idled by rain July 3-5, beat Greenville 4-1 last Saturday, lost by a forfeit Sunday, played host to the All-Stars Monday, had an off day Tuesday and lost to the rain again Wednesday.

The Wednesday rainout at Greenwood will be made up as part of a doubleheader August 5. The Phillies held a workout Wednesday afternoon at Wofford College.

Gordy Knutson (5-2) will pitch for the Phillies tonight. He will be opposed by Greenwood's Rick Keester (0-0), a hard throwing righthander just out of UCLA.



GEORGE BANKS
Back In Action

SPORTS

The Spartanburg Herald

Page 22—Spartanburg Herald, Thursday, July 11, 1968



Leslie Timms

Herald-Journal Sports Editor

Banks Can Play At Home

George Banks will finally be getting a chance to perform before the home folks. The veteran baseball player from Pacolet signed a contract with the Spartanburg Phillies Wednesday and will be playing here for the remainder of the season.

Banks, who has played in the major leagues with the Twins and Indians, retired from baseball this spring after spending most of the previous four seasons in Class AAA ball in the Pacific Coast League.

With expansion coming in the major leagues next year most observers had figured that Banks and Mike Page, another Spartanburg County veteran who retired during the winter months, would have a good chance of playing with an expansion club.

Page returned to the Atlanta Braves organization and now is with the Braves big league team. "I haven't talked to Mike since last winter," George said Wednesday. "But his situation didn't have anything to do with the changing my mind."

The fact that he would have a chance to play before the home folks, and the fact that he can keep his job with the Kohler Co., were the two big reasons.

Not Thinking Of Expansion

"I'm not thinking about playing next year," he continued. "The expansion didn't have anything to do with me deciding to go back and play."

The fact that Banks likes baseball would have to

be obvious because a man doesn't spend 10 years doing something he doesn't like to do.

"I'm just going back and play the few weeks they have left in the season at Spartanburg and see how things go. If I can't hit the ball I'm definitely through after this year," he continued.

George was with the Twins in 1962 and 63 and with the Twins and Indians for a few games in the 1964 season. He played in a total of eight games in 1965 and 66 with the Indians before going back to the minor leagues.

"The last couple of years I seemed like I was going downhill," he continued. "I wasn't hitting the ball well. I was playing several different positions and I don't know whether that was the reason I wasn't hitting or not," he said, talking of the years spent at Portland and Seattle, where he hit .254 and .239.

No More 3,000 Mile Trips

George has no idea of getting his hopes up about another trip to the big leagues with an expansion club. "I gave this a lot of thought before deciding to play with the Phillies," continued George.

"My boss is a big baseball fan and he is letting me work things out so that I can still work full time. If it weren't for that I wouldn't be going back to play.

"Seems like every year it's meant going 3,000 miles away from here to play ball, having to pack up everything and go. I just didn't want to have to do that this year," continued George.

Banks, who was a standout athlete at Pacolet High School, graduating in 1957, has been keeping in shape by playing with the Clifton team in the Twin County League here this year.

"I'm in pretty good shape right now," he continued. "I've been throwing a lot of batting practice and in a few days I should be able to get my timing down and my arm in good shape."

George is looking forward to his new opportunity to get paid for playing ball. He is a big favorite among the local fans and this will be the first time they have had a chance to see him perform in a good many years. You get the feeling that means a lot to George.

Phillies Manager Bobby Malkmus, who played against Banks in the Pacific Coast League, was overjoyed at getting the deal worked out. "I think we can find a place for him to play," Malkmus laughed, noting the understatement.

Maybe fate will smile on Banks as it has on Page with another trip to the big leagues after next year. "I'm not getting my hopes up, though," he added with the tone of a man who is just happy to be able to spend a baseball season at home and still enjoy playing.

In November, 1958 George's parents received this letter from Topps.

TOPPS CHEWING GUM

INCORPORATED

254-36TH STREET, BROOKLYN 32



NEW YORK TELEPHONE SOUTH 8-8900

November 10, 1958

Mr. Lee Banks
Pacolet Mills
South Carolina

RE: TOPPS CHEWING GUM AGREEMENT
WITH YOUR SON George E. Banks

Dear Sir:

We're pleased to tell you that your son has signed the attached Agreement for the use of his picture and biography in our annual TOPPS BASEBALL PICTURE CARD SERIES.

In the event that you are not familiar with our Series, which is cherished by American youngsters throughout the nation, I am enclosing a few of the cards which were part of our 1958 edition.

Since he is under 21 years of age, in order to complete the Agreement it is necessary that you give your consent. It would be appreciated if you would be good enough to read the Agreement over carefully and indicate your consent by affixing your signature to the left of your son's.

Please note that this is the very same Agreement which we have in effect with all of the Major League Stars, without exception.

For your convenience, I am enclosing a postage-paid envelope in which you can return the signed release.

Your prompt cooperation will be sincerely appreciated.


Sincerely,

TOPPS CHEWING GUM
Incorporated

Sy Berger
Sy Berger

SB:FC
Enc.

Tragically, George contracted Lou Gehrig's disease, also known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) while still young. He passed away in 1985. Ironically, this disease is named after the famous New York Yankees first baseman who also died from this disease in 1941.





George Edward Banks [Find a Grave®](#)


BIRTH	24 Sep 1938 Pacolet Mills, Spartanburg County, South Carolina, USA
DEATH	1 Mar 1985 (aged 46) Spartanburg, Spartanburg County, South Carolina, USA
BURIAL	Pacolet Memorial Gardens Pacolet, Spartanburg County, South Carolina, USA Add to Map
MEMORIAL ID	13663049 · View Source

Major League Baseball Player. The third baseman-outfielder played for the Minnesota Twins (1962 to 1964) and Cleveland Indians (1964 to 1966). The right-handed batter hit .252 in 63 games during his rookie season. The Twins traded him with pitcher Lee Stange on June 15, 1964 to the Indians for pitcher Mudcat Grant. The right-handed hitter's five-year totals were .219 with nine homers and 27 runs batted in. He was 7 for 43 (.163) as a pinch hitter.

Family Members

Parents

-  [Lee H Banks](#)
1907-1999
-  [Viola P Banks](#)
1913-1979



ALS George Banks 25th Memorial Walk

Pacolet Fire Department
160 Hillbrook Circle
Pacolet, SC 29372

Saturday, April 10, 2010

Cost: Donations Only

Walk starts at 10:00 AM

Come join us for our 1st annual ALS George Banks 25th Memorial Walk. Sponsored by Friends, Family and Community Officials.

- Memorial Walk from Pacolet Fire House to the George Banks Ball Fields
- All welcome to participate
- Registration is free
- T-shirts, "Strike Out ALS" wristbands, food and drinks for sale at the end of the Walk at the fields.

"Our Father passed away at an early age to this terrible disease. He was our Father, Coach, Mentor and Role Model and did not deserve to let this disease beat him. Please join us in raising money to help other families living with ALS to find a cure."

"We walk for those who can no longer walk..."

*Because, that is what "Daddy" would want us to do.
The Banks Girls*



Registration for this event is free. Donations only. Donations can be made at the Walk on Saturday. Please make checks payable to:

"The ALS Association"
c/o Billy Gossett
115 Providence Road
Spartanburg, SC 29302

T-shirts available for sale at the start and finish.
Softball game at the park after the walk ...
Lots of fun for the entire family!!
Food, drinks and "Strike Out ALS" wristbands to be sold at the park following the walk. "The Palisades" will be playing at the ball field from 11:30am-1:30pm.

Please dress appropriately in comfortable clothing and good walking shoes. Don't forget sunscreen and water.

Thanks to our sponsors
The Beacon Lighthouse Fish Camp Bi-Lo Food Lion
W & W Woodworking Spartan Custom

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