

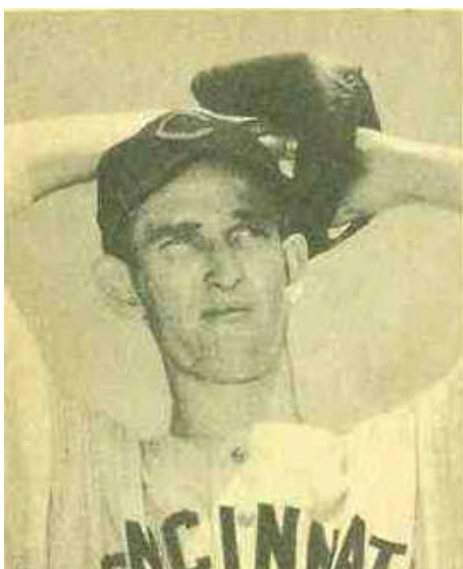
# BASEBALL HISTORY

by  
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## Blackwell Nearly Duplicated Vander Meer's Feat



In 1938, Cincinnati Reds pitcher Johnny Vander Meer gained baseball immortality by hurling consecutive no-hitters. Though more than 200 no-hit games have been pitched in the major leagues, no one else has duplicated the feat. However, in June of 1947, one of Vander Meer's young teammates nearly pulled it off.

Although in only his second full season, right-hander Ewell Blackwell was the scourge of the National League. At 6'6" and 195 pounds with a blazing fastball and a devastating curve, "The Whip" was all elbows and knees, culminating in a wicked sidearm delivery. Despite pitching for a fifth place team, Blackwell would lead the league in wins in 1947 with 22 (30% of his team's victories), complete games (23) and strikeouts (193), while posting a nifty 2.47 ERA. In a season full of highlights, he would also reel off 16 straight wins between May 10<sup>th</sup> and July 25<sup>th</sup>.

His eighth consecutive victory occurred on June 18<sup>th</sup>. On that occasion Blackwell wowed the home crowd at Crosley Field with a 6 – 0 no-hit jewel in which he polished off the Boston Braves in 1 hour and 51 minutes. Among his Braves victims that day was New Orleanian Connie Ryan, who claimed that Blackwell was the toughest pitcher he ever faced.

In his next start on June 22<sup>nd</sup> Blackwell faced the powerful Brooklyn Dodgers. Through 8-1/3 innings at Crosley, The Whip waltzed through their awesome lineup. The second batter of the 9<sup>th</sup> inning, Eddie Stankey, had previously struck out looking twice and grounded into a routine out. In his final at-bat of the day, Stankey shot a low grass-cutter through the box just out of Blackwell's long reach, ending the fastballer's double no-hit dream. One out later, Jackie Robinson reached on the Dodger's final hit of the day, a bloop single to right.

It had been a magnificent run. Coupled with the last 1-2/3 innings of his June 14<sup>th</sup> start, Blackwell completed 19 straight hitless innings. In that stretch, Blackie faced a total of 62 batters, allowing only seven base runners via walks.

An arm injury in 1948 and medical problems in 1949 reduced Blackwell's effectiveness. Despite the setbacks, the six-time National League All-Star remained one of the most feared pitchers in baseball through the early 1950's. And Connie Ryan must have jumped for joy when he was traded to Cincinnati in 1950, making him Blackwell's teammate through the 1951 season.

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Brooklyn							Cincinnati						
	AB	R	H	PO	A	E		AB	R	H	PO	A	E
Stanky, 2b	4	0	1	0	3	0	Baumholtz, rf	2	0	0	3	0	0
Gionfriddo, lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	Zientara, 2b	4	0	0	1	5	0
Robinson, 1b	4	0	1	8	1	0	Hatton, 3b	4	2	1	0	1	0
Furillo, cf	3	0	0	4	0	0	Haas, cf	3	1	1	2	0	0
Walker, rf	1	0	0	3	0	0	Young, 1b	2	0	0	9	1	0
Jorgensen, 3b	3	0	0	2	0	0	Galan, lf	2	1	0	4	0	0
Reese, ss	2	0	0	3	3	0	Miller, ss	4	0	2	2	1	0
a – Vaughan	1	0	0	0	0	0	Lamanno, c	2	0	0	6	0	0
Rojek, ss	0	0	0	0	0	0	Blackwell, p	4	0	0	0	0	0
Hodges, c	2	0	0	3	1	0							
b – Snider	1	0	0	0	0	0							
Bragan, c	0	0	0	1	0	0							
Hatten, p	2	0	0	0	0	0							
Behrman, p	0	0	0	0	0	0							
c – Hermanski	1	0	0	0	0	0							
<hr/>							<hr/>						
Totals	28	0	2	24	8	0	Totals	27	4	4	27	8	0

a – Forced runner for Reese in 8th

b – Fanned for Hodges in 8th

c – Flied to Galan for Behrman in 9th

Score by innings:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	R	H	E	
Brooklyn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	=	0	2	0
Cincinnati	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	x	=	4	4	0

Summary: Rund Batted In – by Galan, Miller 3. Two-Base Hits – Miller 2. Double Play – Miller, Zientara and Young. Stuck Out – By Hatten 2, Benrman 1, Blackwell 6. Bases on Balls – By Hatten 6, Behrman 3, Blackwell 3. Off Hatten, 1 run, 1 hit in 5-2/3 innings; Behrman, 3 runs, 3 hits in 2-1/3 innings. Losing Pitcher – Hatten. Left on Bases – Brooklyn 4, Cincinnati 8. Time – Two hours and 13 minutes. Umpires – Goetz, Conlan, and Reardon.

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