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Pirates Heroes: Remembering the Pittsburgh Pirates Who Helped Make the 1960s Baseball's Real Golden Age

Carroll Conklin

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These were the heroes who owned the summers of the 1960s. Roberto Clemente and Vern Law. Manny Sanguillen and Roy Face. Vern Law and Dick Groat. Smoky Burgess and Matty Alou. During the summers of the 1960s, the heroes of Pittsburgh wore Pirates uniforms. On their best days (which were, admittedly, too few), they were entertaining and inspiring. They smote hated rivals and sent their best to the All-Star game, in the decade when that mid-summer classic moved under the lights … and into prime time. On their worst days, these Pirates heroes broke our hearts, squandering late-inning leads and pre-season hopes … but they never lost our devotion. They were the heroes of our youth. Now their stories are collected in Pirates Heroes: Remembering the Pittsburgh Pirates Who Helped Make the 1960s Baseball’s Real Golden Age. The book profiles the best (and a few of the worst) of the Pittsburgh Pirates of the 1960s. In all, there are 66 profiles of the infielders, outfielders, catchers and pitchers who played for the Pittsburgh Pirates in the 1960s. Do you remember … The left-handed fireballer who struck out 250 batters in 1964, and was the only National League pitcher from 1963 through 1966 who out-k’ed Koufax? (page 111) The slugging outfielder who was a 9-time All-Star in the 1960s and won more batting titles than any other player in that decade? (page 38) The Hall of Fame second baseman who won a World Series with his bat rather than his “golden” glove? (page 21) The six-time All-Star catcher who was also a six-time .300 hitter? (page 54) The Cy Young award winner who was Pittsburgh’s only 20-game winner in the 1960s? (page 92) The slugging first baseman who was the first player to hit 30+ home runs in both leagues … and still holds the record for most errors at first? (page 26) The Pirates’ ace who won 78 games in 5 seasons, and then couldn’t throw a strike? (page 72) The shortstop who once led the NCAA in scoring … in basketball? (page 14) The All-Star catcher who never saw a pitch he couldn’t hit … and batted .296 for his career? (page 62) The Hall of Fame outfielder who held the record for the longest home runs in at least half the National League’s ballparks? (page 48) Their stories are here. Enjoy the memories.

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