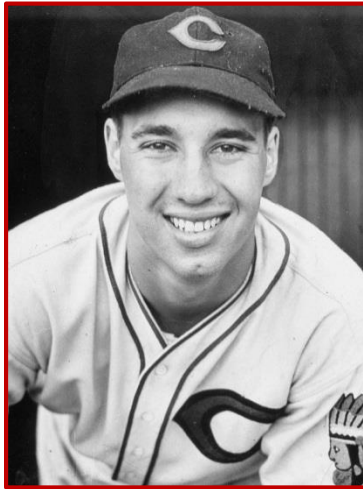


Bob Feller: Underrated?



Robert William Feller (1918 – 2010) was a star in Major League Baseball for 18 seasons with the Cleveland Indians, playing from 1936 to 1941 and from 1945 to 1956, with a four-year stint in the Navy in between.

His win-loss record was 266-162, with an earned-run average of 3.25 and 2,581 strikeouts. He pitched three career no-hitters and led the Indians to a World Series championship in 1948. He was the first pitcher to win 24 games in a season before the age of 21.

In his book, *Underrated: Bob Feller*, author John B. Holway points out that Feller had already thrown a no-hitter and won 107 games in the major leagues when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Feller volunteered to fight for his country at the age of 23. He was chief petty officer aboard the *USS Alabama*.

After the war, Feller returned to pitching. But his years of military service cost him much of the fame he deserved, Holway said.

When baseball fans elected the All-Century Team in 1999, Feller and his 266 victories were ignored in favor of two other pitchers. Some suggest Feller may be the most underrated baseball player of all time, Holway wrote.

Feller was once asked if he regretted his wartime service. “No,” he responded. “I’ve made many mistakes in my life. That wasn’t one of them.”

Feller’s attitude reveals at least three character lessons:

1. Keeping life’s priorities in order is preferred. Service to Feller’s country was more important to him than fame on the baseball diamond.
2. Money should not be the ultimate influence on our decisions. A seaman’s pay was substantially lower than that of an all-star baseball player.
3. Public acclaim is less important than an individual’s own sense of fulfillment and purpose.

While we in health care are not performing on some grand stage in the public’s eye, what we do has significance. Helping others is a prime responsibility of anyone who walks upon this earth. Meeting the needs of those entrusted to us keeps our priorities straight and brings its own personal rewards.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12: 31 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter

