

#1B Wade Brothers - Jake, Ben and Winfield (The Mailboat Spring of 1991)



Whistlin' Jake.

Jake Wade...

The day I went to visit Jake I knew when I got there it would be a day to remember. Yet I had no idea what a privilege it would be. When I drove in the yard I felt like I had been there before. Jake met me at the door with "Miss Rosalie" not far behind welcoming me into their beautiful home. I had gone to meet a ballplayer; what I found was a true gentleman.

We talked about baseball and baseball players, about his brothers and their commitment to each other, and about a lifetime of moving around the country to play ball. Names like Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and Hank Greenberg, teams like the Yankees and Red Sox, places like Chicago, Toledo, and St. Louis - all part of the story of a young Morehead boy who went to State College with "a twenty dollar bill in my pocket!"

When I left I felt like I had heard a story that was about more than just playing baseball. I had seen and heard what "the American dream" is all about... talent, hard work, and dedication to the dream. Yet, with all of the accomplishments of his career, he ended the conversation with the passing thought, "I just played ball."

Jake Wade is not a celebrity; he doesn't want any part of that. Everyday his mailbox holds a letter or a card from someone wanting his autograph or to ask him a question. He told me of a man from California that came to Wildwood on a rainy Saturday night to get his autograph and the kids that send pictures to sign, but he's not impressed. The twenty years he spent on major league fields were good ones, but the years since he came home in 1950 have been too. He is equally proud of his family and his grandson in Kuwait, his garden, the beautiful trees and flowers surrounding the home place — all of it together make Jake Wade.

#1B Wade Brothers - Continued

Baseball Brothers...

The Wade Brothers began their baseball careers in the sandy soil of Carteret County. As high school players they quickly made their way to the top of their teams.

The oldest of the brothers, Winfield (better known as "Croaker") was followed by Jake to State College. There Wink (as the family called him) was the first to move to a professional organization. Jake would follow a few years later to a Raleigh based team associated with the Detroit organization. By 1931 Jake was transferred to Evansville, Indiana (a team owned by Detroit). Wink was in Seattle.

1932 found Jake in Molene, Illinois; 1933 to Beaumont, Texas. 1935 proved to be a memorable year because that spring Jake went to spring training with Detroit. Babe Ruth was there too!

That year was spent with Portland, Oregon, the next in Montreal, Canada. The years from 1936 to 1938 were spent with Detroit until the winter when he was traded to the Boston Red Sox. However, while at Boston, Jake brought Ben to Boston to watch and learn.

At the end of 1939 Jake was traded to the St. Louis Browns but a sore arm would be a problem all season. 1940 was spent in Toledo, Ohio and 1941 Indianapolis, Indiana, where been signed to play with them. By now Wink had moved to an engineering career. Jake was released because of his arm and came back home to recuperate. However he played with New Bern in the Coastal Plains during that season, and became a free agent at the end of 1941.

The years between the spring of 1942 and 1944 belonged to the Chicago White Sox. In 1944, the War would wait no longer, so Jake joined the Navy on

Jake Wade Gets Publicity —

Now figuring in big time baseball circles, Morehead City's Jake Wade, one of the highly touted brother threesome to whom the Morehead City baseball park was dedicated several weeks ago, rated headlines recently in Newark, NJ newspaper.

Under the headline 'Wade Sparking Jersey Giants,' the following story appeared on sports pages: 'Jake Wade, 35 year old left-hander, is one of the reasons the Jersey City Giants are in the thick of the International League pennant scramble.

'The giants, who weren't figured as a pennant threat at the start of the campaign, are only three and one-half games behind the front running Montreal Royals at this writing.

Wade, who broke into the game in 1931, saw service with six American League clubs, has contributed 11 victories to the Giant cause while sustaining only four setbacks and the veteran appears better every time out."

Ben and Winfield are the other members of the popular Morehead City baseball trio."

The Beaufort News, August 22, 1947