

Alvin Faust



Whenever there's a discussion about who were the best pitchers to come out of the city of Norwalk, the name Alvin Faust has to be somewhere near the top of that list.

The hard-throwing right-hander had a blazing fastball that brought him success at every level he pitched, from Little League to high school and eventually to a career in professional baseball with the Boston Red Sox organization.

Alvin Faust, Jr. earned a reputation as an overpowering pitcher almost from the time he stepped on a mound for Davey's Pharmacy in the Norwalk National Little League. As he got older and moved up, he got better and faster, first as a 13- and 14-year-old with Hatch & Baily in the Norwalk Pony League, and then as a 15- and 16-year-old all-star with Monahan Supply in the Norwalk Colt League.

By the time he arrived at Brien McMahon High School, the rest of Fairfield County found out what Norwalk already knew: This 6-foot-1, 190-pound righty had a fastball to match his intimidating presence on the mound.

Faust played only two seasons of high school baseball. In fact, it was actually only a season and a half after a freak injury cut his final year short. But it was a dominating season and a half while he was able to pitch.

As a junior in 1973, Faust burst on the FCIAC scene in a big way. He pitched in 12 of McMahon's 18 games that season and was the winning pitcher in seven of the Senators' 10 victories. He finished 7-5 with a 1.92 ERA and 86 strikeouts in 72-2/3 innings, including 13 against Trumbul and 11 versus city rival Norwalk. He led the city in all five major pitching categories and was named to *The Hour's* 1973 All-City Baseball Team.

That summer, a new league in town, the Norwalk Senior Babe Ruth League for ages 16-18, began play and Faust was on the mound opening day. All he did in the very first game in league history was pitch a no-hitter and strike out 19 batters, a record that stood throughout the 30-plus years the league was in existence.

The following spring, Faust appeared to be well on his way to having another big season as a high school senior in 1974, posting a 6-1 record through McMahon's first 10 games while recording 46 strikeouts in 39-2/3 innings. But in game No. 11, he suffered a season-ending knee injury while covering first base when the batter ran into him.

While his high school career was over, he eventually recovered and was back on the mound for the Norwalk American Legion baseball team, where he continued to impress the pro scouts who followed his career. The Red Sox scouts in particular were impressed and in 1975 — the same year their team won the American League pennant — they signed the Norwalk native to a contract and assigned him to Class A Elmira in the New York Penn League.

That would be the first of six minor league seasons with the Red Sox for Faust. His best year in pro ball was 1976 with Class A Winston Salem in the Carolina League, where he went 11-5 with a 2.50 ERA. Used as a starter and reliever, he threw six complete games, including one shutout, and finished with 87 strikeouts in 155 innings.

Faust was promoted to Double A Bristol at the start of the 1977 season and after nine games was called up to Triple A Pawtucket of the International League. Pitching strictly out of the bullpen, he went 1-0 with both clubs.

Norwalk's Alvin Faust also had the distinction of becoming the first pitcher in Pawtucket Red Sox history to earn a win against the parent Boston team in the annual Jimmy Fund exhibition game against its Triple A affiliate.

In six seasons, from 1975-80, Faust had a career minor league record of 34-33 with a 3.53 ERA and 303 strikeouts.

He continued to pitch after his pro baseball days, most notably in the Connecticut Senior Men's Baseball League for players 30 and older. Faust pitched for the CSMBL team in Bristol, where he still resided at the time, and helped them win the league championship in 1989 and '90. The 1990 team went 29-0 and Faust was named the National League *Pitcher of the Year* after going 11-0 with a .026 ERA.

Faust, who now resides in Stamford, would later hurl for the Norwalk Pirates and briefly for a team in New Canaan, pitching well into his 40s before hanging his glove up.

But not before establishing himself as one of the best pitchers to ever come out of Norwalk.