



William Charles Virdon (born June 9, 1931 in Hazel Park, Michigan) is a former outfielder, manager and coach in Major League Baseball. A premier defensive outfielder during his playing days (1955–65) as a center fielder for the St. Louis Cardinals and Pittsburgh Pirates (winning a Gold Glove in 1962), Virdon also had a long tenure in the major leagues as a manager, with the Pirates (1972–73), New York Yankees (1974–75), Houston Astros (1975–82), and Montreal Expos (1983–84). He was the American League Manager of the Year in 1974, his only full season working for the Yankees of George Steinbrenner. Bill also was named National League Manager of the Year in 1980 while with the Houston Astros.

Virdon initially signed with the Yankees, but he never played for the big league club. As a minor league prospect, he was traded to the Cardinals in a multi-player deal before the 1954 season for veteran outfielder Enos Slaughter, now a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame. After one more year of seasoning in the minors, Virdon joined the Cardinals in 1955 and was named National League Rookie of the Year. He was traded to Pittsburgh in May 1956.

A left-handed batter (who threw right-handed), Virdon's career batting average was .267 with 91 home runs during his 1,583-game NL career. He was the starting center fielder on the 1960 world champion Pirates, batting .241 in seven World Series games. His ground ball in Game 7 took a bad hop and struck Yankees shortstop Tony Kubek in the throat, enabling Virdon to reach base and the Pirates to mount a furious rally in a game (and series) eventually won by Bill Mazeroski's dramatic home run.

As a manager, he led the Pirates to the 1972 NL East title, but the Buccos dropped the NLCS to the Cincinnati Reds when Pittsburgh pitcher Bob Moose unleashed a wild pitch in the final inning of Game 5, allowing the winning run to score. His 1980 Astros won the NL West championship, but fell to the Philadelphia Phillies in a five-game NLCS. His career managerial record, over all or parts of 13 seasons, was 995–921 (.519). He also served three different terms as a Pirates coach. He has the unusual distinction of having been replaced on two separate occasions by the manager he replaced; in Montreal (Jim Fanning) and in Pittsburgh (Danny Murtaugh).

Currently Bill lives in Springfield, Missouri, and serves as a special outfield instructor for the Pirates during spring training.

A part of the U.S. 63 business route in West Plains, Missouri, where Virdon spent his teenage years and played ball for West Plains High School, is named Bill Virdon Boulevard.

He was nicknamed "Quail" for his style of hits in the Major Leagues. Bill lives in Springfield, MO with his wife Shirley.