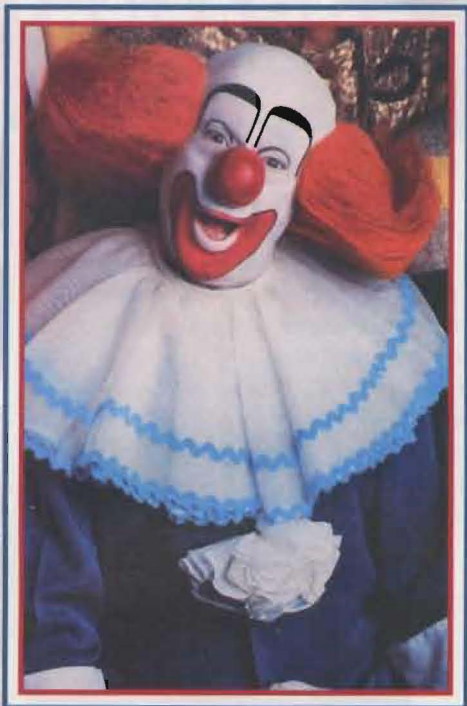


HE'S NOT CLOWNING AROUND

Angels' Minor League Hurler Trevor Bell is stepping onto HIS OWN STAGE

By Bill Mitchell



Bozo the Clown © and © Larry Hamon Pictures Corp.



Bill Mitchell

LIKE MILLIONS OF OTHER CHILDREN in the past 50 years, Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim prospect Trevor Bell grew up being entertained by Bozo the Clown. However, the 19-year-old right-handed pitcher had a closer connection to the famous television clown than most other children in the United States.

Bozo was his grandfather.

Bob Bell was an actor and starred for 24 years on Chicago's WGN-TV as America's most famous clown. The elder Bell was a beloved figure in the Windy City, entertaining generations of Chicago area children. The

show was so popular that typically there was a waiting period that spanned years for tickets to be in the studio audience.

Mr. Bell was inducted into the International Clown Hall of Fame in 1996, just one year before his death. He is still remembered by many of his show's former viewers, as evidenced by the numerous references made about the "Bozo" connection when the younger Bell began his professional baseball career.

While hoping to make his mark in the entertainment world as a baseball player, Bell inherited at least one trait from his grandfather.

"His main thing was he loved kids," said Bell. "That's where a lot of the passion I have for kids comes from, because he'd do anything for kids. He would go and visit them in the hospital, sign autographs, and all sorts of things that I love to do. ... I think that's very cool."

Bell has had his own time on the silver screen. His mother is a talent manager in the television and movie business. She got Bell a few TV gigs while growing up, mostly commercial work. He's appeared in ads for Hot Wheels, Kellogg's and Old Navy.

But Bell is completely dedicated to baseball at this point in his life.

"It's totally a separate thing," said Bell about his acting career. "Baseball is just my life, and that (acting) was a fun little game I like to play."

His baseball career is off to a good start. After having been one of the top-ranked youth and high school players in California, Bell was drafted by the Angels organization out of the Los Angeles area's Crescenta Valley High School in the supplemental first round with the 37th overall pick.

The Angels were attracted by Bell's aggressiveness on the mound, as well as his poise and makeup. Most of all, they liked his power arm. He signed late in the summer and made only four appearances in the rookie level Arizona League, posting a 4.50 ERA with seven strikeouts in eight innings.

Bell has been everything the Angels had hoped for when they signed him.

"We've seen a lot of maturity from the kid," said Tony Reagins, the Angels' director of player development. "His last outing was pretty special, so I think it's coming. He's got some ability, now he's just got to put it together."

Former major league catcher Brian Harper, who managed Bell in his initial pro season, agrees with Reagins' opinion on Bell's makeup.

"I saw a kid that was real competitive," said Harper, currently the manager of the Angels' Triple-A affiliate in Salt Lake. "He really likes to compete and play, and obviously likes to pitch."

Bell made the most of his first spring training, trying to soak in as much knowledge as possible.

"It's definitely been an amazing experience so far," said Bell, "Getting up early and staying late. It is tough on my body, but it's fun to be here with the organization."

One of the Angels' organizational philosophies matches Bell's friendly, outgoing nature.

"The Angels are a very team-oriented ballclub and the clubhouse is very close," he said. "A lot of the guys are friends and we hang out off the field. It's a good chemistry that we have."

In addition to his regular lessons on the field, Bell is also trying to learn from the big league players whenever possible.

"After spring training here at the minor league complex, I usually go up to the big league complex and watch those guys," said Bell. "I watch the big league pitchers... where they place the ball and what pitches they throw."

Having been confined to the Angels training complex in Arizona to date, Bell is eager to get on with the next phase of his career, even if it means taking those notoriously long bus trips for which the lower minor leagues are known.

"I don't know if I've ever been on a 15-hour bus ride," said Bell, "but I'm asking a lot of the guys and they're telling me what it takes and the amount of sleep you've got to get the night before to keep your body healthy."

Staying healthy—that's Bell's biggest goal for the 2006 season.

"As far as what I want to accomplish," he said, "is to just have a good healthy season; stay healthy and get used to the 100 or whatever games I'll be playing."

He's also looking forward to getting back to playing in front of crowds. That's when the actor in him comes out. He wants people to watch him on the field, as he is a natural entertainer.

"I love helping people," said Bell, "even to watch me play baseball and help them learn the game."

After all, it's all part of show business. ▮

THE STATS ON



Trevor D. Bell

Age: 19 **D.O.B.:** 10/12/1986

Height: 6'1" **Weight:** 190 lbs.

Throws: Right **Bats:** Left

Position: Pitcher

Acquired: Selected by the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim organization in the first round (supplemental pick, 37th overall) of the 2005 amateur draft

Current Team: Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim



YEAR	ORG	TEAM	LEAGUE	CLASS	W	L	ERA	G	GS	IP	H	BB	SO
'05	LAA	Angels	AZL	R	0	0	4.50	4	4	8.0	10	3	7