Fidrych, Mark "Bird" (1954-) Encyclopedia Article

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The American League's Rookie of the Year for 1976, pitcher Mark Fidrych briefly captured the imagination of baseball fans with his bizarre on-the-field antics. Dubbed the "Bird" for his lanky, ostrich-like frame, the 6'3" right-hander with the mop of curly blonde hair won 19 games for the Detroit Tigers that season, compiling 24 complete games and a 2.34 earned run average. But it was the *way* he pitched more than the results that filled ballparks that summer. Fidrych was far more animated than any pitcher before him: he talked to the baseball and shook hands with his infielders after good plays. After one stellar season, however Fidrych blew out his arm and never regained his rookie form. He attempted several abortive comebacks and retired in 1983.

Further Reading:

Amos, Ken. "Still the Bird." *Los Angeles Times.* November 3, 1996.

Pepe, Phil. *Talkin' Baseball: An Oral History of Baseball in the 1970s.* Beverly Hills, Morpheus International, 1991.

Ziegel, Vic. "Former Tigers Goofball Fidrych Remains A Different Sort of Bird." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch.* July 23, 1993.