



Aristotle George "Harry" Agganis (Greek: Αριστοτέλης Γεώργιος Αγγάνης) (April 20, 1929 – June 27, 1955), nicknamed "The Golden Greek", was an American first baseman and college football star who played two seasons with the Boston Red Sox of the American League (1954–1955), after passing up a potential professional football career.

Born in Lynn, Massachusetts to Greek immigrants, Georgios Agganis and Georgia Papalimperis, Agganis first gained notice as a college football player at Boston University, becoming the first person in school history to be named All-American. He passed a professional career with the Cleveland Browns in order to play his favorite sport, baseball, close to his hometown. Agganis was signed to a bonus baby contract, and after one season playing minor league baseball, Agganis became the starter at first base for the Red Sox.

In 1955, Agganis became gravely ill early in the season and was hospitalized for two weeks for pneumonia. He rejoined the Red Sox for one week before being rehospitalized with a viral infection. After showing some signs of recovery, Agganis died of a pulmonary embolism on June 27. Agganis' sudden death is considered one of the greatest tragedies to hit Boston's sporting community.

Agganis enrolled at Boston University, where he became a starter, primarily at quarterback. After his sophomore season in 1949, when he set a school record by tossing fifteen touchdown passes, he entered the Marine Corps. Agganis played for the Camp Lejeune (N.C.) football and baseball teams. He received a dependency discharge from the Marines to support his mother and returned to college to play in 1951-52. Around the same time, Agganis was participating in summer baseball leagues in Augusta, Maine.

Agganis became the school's first All-American in football and Boston coach Buff Donelli named Agganis the "greatest football player he ever coached". He also played basketball and baseball in the school.

Agganis set another Boston University mark by passing for 1,402 yards (1,282 m) for the season and won the Bulger Lowe Award as New England's outstanding football player. Coach Paul Brown of the Cleveland Browns thought he could be the successor to Otto Graham and drafted the college junior in the first round of the 1952 NFL Draft, offering him a bonus of \$25,000. Boston Red Sox owner Tom Yawkey outbid Brown, however, and signed Agganis to play Major League Baseball for the Red Sox as a first baseman for \$35,000. At the time of his death, Agganis was spending his off-season at his alma mater as an assistant coach, tutoring Tom Gastall, another quarterback who decided to play professional baseball and who died young.