

John Taff, "Double No-Hitters for Pinehot"

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Only July 15, 1910, Brownsville Brownie rookie pitcher John Taff pitches a no-hitter in the first game of a Southwest Texas (D) League doubleheader against the Beeville Orange Growers.

Following the 90-minute, 5-0 win against Beeville, Taff gains a measure of national attention as it is the second no-hit, no-run game that talented right-hander has turned in within a three week span, having also no-hit the Corpus Christi Pelicans on June 27.

Over his brief six-year professional career, the Austin, Texas, native and son of Bickler public school principal J.J. Taff, is referred to in the press as either "John Taff" or "Bill Taff."

In addition to his multiple first names, Taff acquires several interesting nicknames during his playing days such as "Possum Bill", "Pinehot", "Waco Bill" and "Elongated John."



John Taff
1913 Baltimore Orioles

A 19-year-old Taff begins his organized baseball career in 1909 with the Brownsville Brownies, one of South Texas' top amateur teams. The pitcher/first baseman performs so well for the local nine that when the city joins the six-team Southwest Texas League the following year he is signed to a minor league contract and placed on the team's opening day roster by manager S.H. Bell.

Tabbed by Bell to be the Brownies' opening day starter on April 21, Taff make his professional debut one to remember, pitching a 10-inning complete game 3-2 win over visiting Corpus Christi. Taff finishes his rookie campaign 16-11 with 102 strikeouts and 51 base on balls in 148 innings.

John Taff Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	INN	H	BB	SO	ERA
1909	Brownsville Brownies	-	Amt	-	-	-	-	-	--
1910	Brownsville Brownies	West Texas	D	16-11	148.1	165	51	103	--
1911	Waco Navigators	Texas	B	11-13	212.1	188	60	107	--
1912	Waco Navigators	Texas	B	20-11	285.0	213	75	145	--
1913	Philadelphia Athletics	AMERICAN	ML	0-1	17.2	22	9	5	6.62
	Baltimore Orioles	International	AA	6-10	108.1	132	52	58	--
1914	Beaumont Exporters	Texas	B	15-10	243.0	210	62	134	--
1915	3 Teams	2 Leagues	A/B	7-10	102.0	98	40	54	--
	Beaumont Exporters	Texas	B	4-9	90.0	90	36	47	--
	Waco Navigators	Texas	B	3-0	-	-	-	-	--
	Chattanooga Lookouts	Southern	A	0-1	12.0	8	4	7	--
	Mosers	New Orleans AA	Amt	-	-	-	-	-	--
Major League Totals		1 Season		0-1	17.2	22	9	5	6.62
Minor League Totals		6 Seasons		182-166	1098.2	1006	340	601	--

ML Debut: May 10, 1913 at White Sox Park, Chicago: relieved Broadwalk Brown at the start of the 8th inning in a 4-3 loss to Chicago; allowed 0 runs on 1 hit, 1 walk and 1 strikeout in 2 innings; (no decision).

ML Finale: June 28, 1913 at Griffith Stadium, Washington: started; allowed two runs, five hits, 1 walk and 1 strikeout in 3 innings; losing pitcher (0-1)

July 15, 1910 John Taff No-Hitter Brownsville, Texas

First Game.

Brownsville—	AB.	R.	BN.	PO.	A.	E.
Lamont, cf.....	3	0	0	3	0	0
Price, 2b.....	4	2	0	15	0	1
Hellman, 1b.....	4	1	2	3	4	0
Dalley, 2b.....	4	1	2	3	4	0
White, c.....	4	0	0	0	1	0
Peebles, rf.....	4	1	2	1	0	0
Zacha, lf.....	4	0	1	3	0	0
Tepes, 3b.....	3	0	1	2	4	0
Taff, p.....	2	0	0	0	7	0
Totals	32	5	8	27	22	1
Beeville—	AB.	R.	BN.	PO.	A.	E.
Anderson, ss.....	2	0	0	2	1	0
Wossner, 1b.....	4	0	0	0	0	0
Latham, rf.....	2	0	0	0	0	0
Longley, cf.....	3	0	0	1	0	0
Robinson, c.....	3	0	0	6	1	0
Compton, lf.....	1	0	0	1	0	1
Swoboda, 2b.....	3	0	0	3	2	0
Knaupp, 3b.....	3	0	0	2	2	0
McDonald, p.....	2	0	0	0	4	3
*Gerhardt, c.....	1	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	25	0	0	24	19	4

*Batted for McDonald in the pinch.
By innings— 1 2 2 4 5 8 7 3 3
Brownsville.....1 0 3 0 0 1 0 0 *— 5
Hits.....2 1 3 0 0 2 0 0 *
Beeville.....0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0— 0
Hits.....0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0— 0

SUMMARY.

Two-base hit: Price.
Three-base hit: Peebles.
Stolen bases: Dalley, Peebles, Tepes, Taff.
Compton.
Sacrifice hit: Taff.
Struck out: By McDonald 5.
Bases on balls: By Taff 2.
Batters hit: By Taff 2, by McDonald 1.
First base on errors: Compton, Hellman, Taff.
Left on bases: Brownsville 5, Beeville 1.
Double plays: Tepes to Dalley to Hellman;
Taff to Price to Hellman.
Passed ball: Robinson.
Time: One hour and thirty minutes.
Umpire: McLaughlin.

In addition, Taff wins two more games in the league's post-season championship series against regular season champion Victoria where the Brownies win the league title winning four of the six games played.

Following his impressive first-year performance, Taff is sold to Waco of the Texas (B) League where in two seasons with Ellis Hardy's Navigators, he is 11-13 and 20-11. The popular Hardy is forced to give up his managerial duties at the end of the 1912 season as it interferes with his duties in the cotton business.

John Taff [2 of 3]:

On September 17, Waco team president W.R. Davidson receives word that the American League's Philadelphia Athletics have drafted his star pitcher in the annual minor league draft. However, several other teams also claim to have drafted Taff and the question of who will acquire his services may have to be settled by drawing lots.

A 23-year-old Taff has an solid spring training with the Athletics and remains with the club for the opening of the 1913 season. He makes his major league debut against the Chicago White Sox on May 11, allowing only one hit in two scoreless innings in a 4-3 setback.

John Taff Major League Debut White Sox Park, Chicago, Illinois, May 10, 1913

ATHLETICS AT CHICAGO, MAY 11.—Ed Walsh returned to the game after a long rest and Chicago defeated the Athletics. The locals won the game by bunching hits after costly errors by Barry and Baker. Walsh weakened in the seventh inning and the visitors bunched three hits behind a base on balls and almost tied the score. Score:

Chicago				Athletics																
AB	R	E	P.A.	AB	R	E	P.A.													
Schaller, lf	4	1	2	1	0	0	0	E. Murphy, rf	4	0	3	0	0	0	0					
Rath, 2b...	3	1	0	2	5	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	Oldring, cf	5	0	1	3	0	0	0
Lord, 3b...	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	E. Collins, 2b	4	0	1	2	3	0	0
Fournier, lb	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	Baker, 3b...	4	0	0	0	1	1	0
J. Collins, rf	3	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	McInnes, lb	2	1	1	1	0	1	0
Mattick, cf	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	J. Walsh, lf	4	0	0	3	0	0	0
Weaver, ss	4	0	1	2	3	1	0	2	3	1	0	0	Barry, ss...	3	1	0	2	3	1	0
Chalk, c...	4	0	0	7	2	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	Thomas, c	2	0	0	3	1	0	0
E. Walsh, p	2	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	*Strunk ...	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Totals..	27	4	6	27	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Schang, c...	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
													Brown, p...	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
													†Daley	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
													Taff, p....	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
													†D. Murphy..	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
													Totals..	34	3	7	24	13	2	0

*Batted for Thomas in seventh inning.

†Batted for Brown in seventh inning.

‡Batted for Taff in ninth inning.

Chicago	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	x-4	
Athletics	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0-3

Two-base hits—E. Walsh, Schaller, Fournier. Three-base hit—Strunk. Home run—McInnes. Hits—Off Brown 5 in 6 innings, Taff 1 in 2 innings. Sacrifice hit—Mattick. Sacrifice fly—J. Collins. Stolen base—Rath. Double plays—Schalk, Weaver; E. Collins, McInnes, Barry. Left on bases—Athletics 8, Chicago 7. First on balls—Off Brown 4, Walsh 4, Taff 1. Hit by pitcher—By Brown 1. Struck out—By Walsh 6, Brown 2, Taff 1. Wild pitches—Walsh 2. Time—2:09. Umpires—Hildebrand and Evans.



John Taff
1913 Philadelphia Athletics

In 1915, his final season in professional baseball, Taff toils for four different teams in three different states. Starting the season in the Beaumont rotation, he is 4-9 on May 4, when the Exporters sell his contract to Fort Worth.

Despite picking up three wins in his first five appearances for the Panthers, he is released on June 15, with a 3-0 mark because he "failed completely to show the class expected of him and did not finish a game that he started while a member of the club."

Eight days later Taff is signed by the Chattanooga Lookouts of the Southern

June 27, 1910 John Taff No-Hitter Brownsville, Texas

Corpus Christi

	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
Allison, cf	4	0	0	1	1	0
Tolson, 2b	3	0	0	2	1	0
Page, c	3	0	0	5	4	0
Henderson, lb	3	0	0	13	2	0
Addington, 3b	3	0	0	1	2	1
Hieron, lf	3	0	0	0	0	0
Ashe, rf	3	0	0	2	1	1
Kelley, cf	3	0	0	0	1	0
Trotter, p	3	0	0	2	3	0
Totals	28	0	0	27	18	2

Brownsville

	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
Lambert, c	4	0	0	2	6	2
Prior, ss	3	0	0	3	4	0
Kollman, lb	4	0	0	17	2	0
Dalley, cf	3	0	0	2	4	0
Feeley, rf	3	1	2	1	0	0
Zacka, lf	4	0	2	2	0	1
Tepe, 3b	2	0	0	0	5	1
Corpus Christi, rf	3	0	1	0	0	0
Taff, p	3	0	0	0	4	0
Totals	29	1	5	27	19	3

Score by innings:

Corpus Christi	000	000	000	0
Brownsville	000	000	000	1

Turned run—Brownsville, 1

Two base hit—Zacka.

Struck out—By Trotter, 2; Taff,

2.

First on balls—Off Trotter, 2;

Taff, 1.

Sacrifice hit—Page.

First on errors—Corpus Christi,

2; Brownsville, 2.

Left on bases—Corpus Christi, 3;

Brownsville, 5.

Hit by pitcher—Dalley.

Time of game—One hour and fifteen

minutes.

Umpire—Daskin.

On May 26, "Bill" Taff makes the only start of his major league career in the second game of a doubleheader with the Washington Senators.

His mound opponent that afternoon in Shibe Park? Walter Johnson - enough said.

"Waco Bill" gets through the opening stanza unscathed, but in the second inning four consecutive hits drive in three runs and "tending largely to promote the hunch that Bill ought to be elsewhere instead of out there starting total annihilation in the face."

In one and 1/3 innings, Taff allows three runs on four hits and a walk while striking out one while Johnson picks up one of 417 career victories.

Taff pitches his final game in the majors on June 28, in an 8-3 loss to the Washington Senators. He is 0-1 with a 6.62 ERA in seven games when on July 2, "Waco Bill" is assigned to the Baltimore Orioles of the International (AA) League.

"Taff was of no use to Mack. The Waco youngster did not have the stuff necessary to enable him to fool the American League batters. His work against Washington last Saturday was particularly weird."
-Philadelphia Inquirer, July 3, 1913

The Texan is back in the minors for good. Following a 6-10 mark for the Orioles in 1913, he returns to the Lone Star State, signing with the Beaumont Exporters of the Texas (B) League where goes 15-10 in 1914.

Memphis Chickasaws 1, Chattanooga Lookouts 0 Andrews Field, Chattanooga, Tennessee, June 29, 1915

Taff and Cunningham held Memphis to one hit, but Chattanooga was beaten in the ninth on Cruthers' double and his daring work in scoring from second on an infield out. Roth pitched good ball also. Score:

Memphis				Chattanooga										
AB	R	E	P.A.	AB	R	E	P.A.							
Allison, cf	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	Graff, 3b...	4	0	0	0	3	0
McDer't, 3b	4	0	0	4	2	0	0	Elberfeld, ss	3	0	0	0	2	0
Stewart, rf	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	Johnston, lf	3	0	0	3	0	1
Lord, lf...	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	McCor'k, rf	4	0	0	0	0	0
Schlef, c...	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	Daley, cf...	4	0	2	3	0	0
Cruthers, 2b	3	1	1	3	3	0	0	Harris, lb...	4	0	0	13	0	0
Elbel, lb...	2	0	0	14	0	1	0	Hudnall, 2b	4	0	1	0	2	0
Mitchell, ss	2	0	0	0	3	2	0	Kitchens, c...	4	0	0	8	0	0
Roth, p...	4	0	0	0	8	1	0	Taff, p....	1	0	0	0	1	0
Totals..	27	1	1	27	16	1	0	*Peters	1	0	0	0	0	0
								Cunn'm, p	0	0	0	0	3	0
								Totals..	32	0	3	27	11	1

*Batted for Taff in seventh inning.

Memphis

Chattanooga

Sacrifice hits—Johnston, McDermott, Schlef.

Stolen base—Lord. Double play—Gitchell, Cruthers,

Elbel. Struck out—By Taff 5, Cunningham 2, Roth 2.

First on balls—Off Taff 4, Cunningham 4, Roth 2.

Hits—Off Taff 1 in 7 innings, with no runs. Time—

2:10. Umpires—Rudderham and Bernhard.

John Taff [3 of 3]:

(A) Association where he is quickly inserted into the team's starting rotation despite being released by two teams in the first three months of the season.

On June 29, Taff responds with one of his best games in years, shutting out the visiting Memphis Chickasaws on only one hit in seven innings. Unfortunately for Taff and first game starter Rube Marshall, the Lookouts fail to score nary a run in 18 innings in a twin bill defeat that drops their record to 33-38.

On July 5, 1915, Taff's final appearance in professional baseball comes to an abrupt end when he is struck in the temple by a pitch thrown by Nashville's Tom Rogers and forced to leave the game after allowing five runs on seven hits in four innings.

Two days later, saddled with a headache and a ERA of 6.00, Taff's once promising career comes to an end when the Lookouts hand him his walking papers.

Not be denied in his quest to remain in baseball, Taff makes his way south to New Orleans where he hopes to sign with New Orleans, another Southern Association team. However Pelicans' manager John Dobbs decides to pass on the still-young (25-year-old) hurler, so Taff signs to play with the New Orleans Mosers of the New Orleans Amateur Association in hopes of catching on with some one the following spring.

On May 15, 1961, Taff passes away in Houston, Texas at the age of 70.

July 5, 1915
John Taff Final Game
Nashville, Tennessee

Moose Beat Vols

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 5.--Heavy second baseman, defeated Chattanooga was spiked in the knee by Baker and when Taff was struck by a pitched ball on the temple and badly hurt. Doctors are in attendance on Taff.

Score:

CHATTANOOGA—	AB.	R.	H.	PO.	A.	E.
Graff, 3b,	5	0	1	1	4	0
Elberfeld, ss,	4	0	3	4	1	0
Johnston, lf,	5	0	1	0	0	0
McCormick, rf, ..	5	0	0	1	0	0
Daily, cf,	4	0	1	0	0	0
Harris, 1b,	2	1	0	15	0	0
Hudnall, 2b,	4	0	2	0	5	1
Peters, c,	1	0	0	2	0	0
Kitchens, c,	3	0	1	1	1	0
Taff, p,	1	0	0	0	2	0
Cunningham, p,	2	0	1	0	3	0
x Smithson,	2	0	1	0	3	0
x Smithson,	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals,	36	1	10	24	16	1

x ran for Taff in fifth.

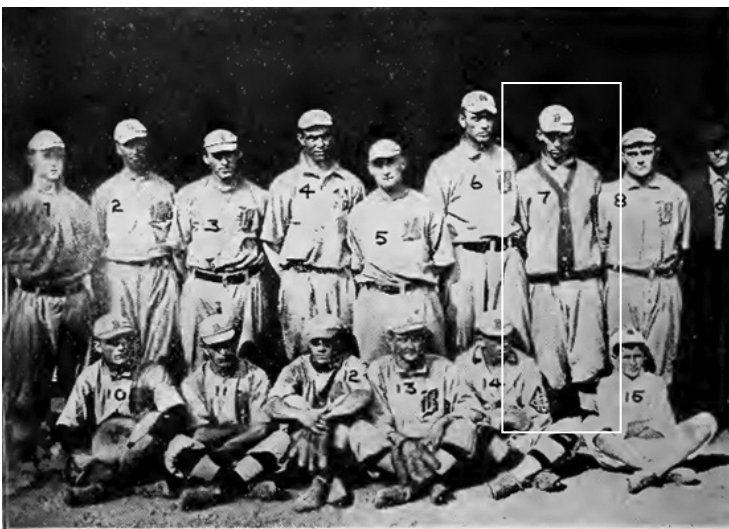
NASHVILLE—	AB.	R.	H.	F.	D.	A.	E.
Kircher, cf,	3	0	0	1	0	0	0
Stark, ss,	3	1	3	5	1		
Baker, rf,	4	1	3	0	0	0	
Paulette, 1b,	4	1	0	9	0	0	
Farmer, lf,	4	1	0	8	0	0	
Sheehan, 2b,	3	1	2	2	3	0	
Dodge, 3b,	3	0	2	0	0	0	
Street, c,	3	0	0	4	4	0	
Rogers, p,	3	0	0	0	0	0	
Totals,	30	5	8	27	12	1	

By innings:

Nashville,	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	—5
Chattanooga,	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—1

Summary: Innings pitched by Taff, 4, with 7 hits, and 5 runs. Struck out by Taff, 2; by Rogers, 4. Bases on balls, off Taff, 2; off Rogers, 2. Hit by pitches, by Rogers (Taff.) Two-base hits, Daly, Hudnall, Baker. Sheehan (2.) Left on bases. Nashville, 3:

1910 Brownsville Brownies



1. White; 2. Peebles; 3. Hellman; 4. Kerr; 5. O. K. Price, Capt.; 6. Brown; 7. Taff; 8. Zacha; 9. S. Bell, Mgr.; 10. McClintock; 11. Lamonica; 12. Tene; 13. Morton; 14. Daily; 15. Mascot.

"In all the towns that the Brownies play, the papers all state that they are among the cleanest and most gentlemanly ball players that have been in that section this season. That is the only kind of players Brownsville will have.

When the Brownies are licked, they can take their medicine and not raise a howl, but when they are deliberately robbed of a game because the other team "must have the game at all costs," they have a right to kick. Give us a fair deal and then beat us, and we are willing to admit that your team is the superior, but not otherwise."

- Brownsville Daily Herald, July 30, 1909