

# Lefty Clauss, "A Christmas Story"

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A hard-throwing 22-year-old left-hander, Al "Lefty" Clauss is just in his fourth year of professional baseball when he makes the long jump from the Class D Southern Michigan League to the American League's Detroit Tigers out of spring training in 1913.

Making his major league debut on April 22, 1913, Clauss eventually appears in five games for Hughie Jennings' Bengals. Losing his only start to the Washington Senators on June 10, the erratic portsider finishes his brief stay in the majors with an 0-1 mark and a 4.73 ERA before being sent back to the minors on June 30.

Signed off the sandlots of New Haven, Connecticut, early in the summer of 1910, Clauss begins his professional career with the local New Haven Prairie Hens of the Connecticut State (B) State.

With Saginaw in 1912, Clauss enjoys his best season posting a 12-13 mark and striking out 195 in 229 innings while splitting time between Saginaw and Jackson of the Southern Michigan (D) League.

Clauss fails to post a winning record in any of his five minor league seasons, finishing 33-40 before having to retire after the 1914 season at the young age of 23 due to shoulder problems.

## CLAUSS CHRONOLOGY

July 19, 1910

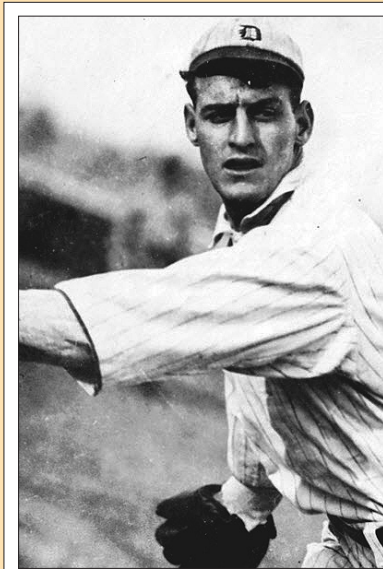
Clauss, a talented New Haven amateur, is signed by the New Haven Prairie Hens of the Connecticut State (B) League.

### Al Clauss Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	INN	H	BB	SO	ERA
1910	New Haven Prairie Hens	Connecticut State	B	0-1	-	-	-	-	---
1911	Saginaw Trailers	Southern Michigan	D	2-2	-	-	-	-	---
	Boyne City Boosters	Michigan State	D	8-11	147.0	-	64	115	---
1912	<b>2 Teams</b>	<b>Southern Michigan</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>12-13</b>	<b>229.0</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>---</b>
	Saginaw Trailers	Southern Michigan	D	-	-	-	-	-	---
	Jackson Convicts	Southern Michigan	D	-	-	-	-	-	---
1913	Detroit Tigers	American	ML	0-1	13.1	11	12	1	4.73
	Lincoln Railsplitters	Western	A	9-10	143.1	133	85	119	4.84
1914	Lincoln Railsplitters	Western	A	2-3	51.2	38	24	-	2.61
<b>Major League Totals</b>		<b>1 Season</b>		<b>0-1</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4.73</b>
<b>Minor League Totals</b>		<b>5 Seasons</b>		<b>33-40</b>	<b>571.0</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>---</b>

**ML Debut:** April 22, 1913, at Comiskey Park, Chicago, Illinois: relieved starter Fred House at the start of the eighth inning in a 3-2 loss to the Chicago White Sox; pitched a scoreless inning with 1 walk.

**ML Finale:** June 17, 1913, at Forbes Field, Boston, Massachusetts: relieved Fred House at the start of the seventh inning of a 7-4 loss to the Boston Red Sox; pitched 2 scoreless innings with 1 walk.



Al "Lefty" Clauss  
1913 Detroit Tigers

Al Clauss' Major League Debut  
April 22, 1913  
Comiskey Park, Chicago, Illinois

Detroit,									
	AB	P	H	PO	A	E			
Bush, ss	4	0	0	1	2	0			
Hugh, cf	4	0	1	5	0	0			
Crawford, rf	4	1	2	3	1	0			
Veach, lf	4	0	1	1	0	0			
Galner, 1b	4	1	0	8	1	0			
Moriarty, 3b	3	0	2	2	3	0			
Vitt, 2b	4	0	0	2	3	0			
McKee, c	4	0	1	2	1	0			
House, p	2	0	0	0	3	0			
xDubuc	1	0	1	0	0	0			
xxGibson	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Clauss, p	0	0	0	0	0	0			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>			

Chicago,									
	AB	P	H	PO	A	E			
Rath, 3b	3	0	0	1	0	1			
Lord, 3b	4	0	0	1	1	0			
Collins, rf	4	2	2	1	0	0			
Borton, 1b	3	1	1	10	2	0			
Easterly, c	3	0	1	7	1	0			
Mattick, cf	1	0	0	2	0	0			
Jones, lf	2	0	0	1	0	1			
Weaver, ss	4	0	1	3	3	0			
Scott, p	4	0	1	1	3	0			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>			

xBattled for House in the eighth.  
xxRan for Dubuc in the eighth.  
Score by innings—  
Detroit ..... 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 3--2  
Chicago ..... 1 0 0 1 0 1 0 0 \*--3  
\*Two-base hits—Crawford 2, Collins.  
Dubuc. Home run—Collins. Sacrifice  
fly—Mattick. Hits—Off House, 6 in 7;  
off Clauss, none in 1. Stolen bases—  
Bush, Collins, Moriarty. Double plays  
—Scott to Weaver to Borton; Craw-  
ford to Galner. Left on bases—Chi-  
cago 6, Detroit 4. First base on balls  
—Off House 3, off Scott 1, off Claus 1.  
Struck out—By House 1, by Scott 6.  
Time—1:40. Umpires—O'Loughlin  
and Ferguson.

January 30, 1911

Clauss is sold by the Prairie Hens to the Saginaw Trailers of the Southern Michigan (D) League ... although Clauss did not work a complete game for New Haven, team owner Cameron knows "he has the goods."

June 15, 1911

On the same day that the grocers and grocer clerks of Muskegon, Michigan, organize to form a baseball team to "gain revenge" on the city's butchers, Clauss wins his own complete game with a 13th inning home run giving Saginaw a 7-6 win over visiting Jackson.

## Lefty Clauss [2 of 3]:

### CLAUSS GOES TO BOYNE CITY

#### Pitcher Sent to Strengthen Michigan State Team.

Pitcher Clauss of the Saginaw team who came here early in the year, then went to Berlin, came back here and pitched two games, was sent to Boyne City this afternoon. He will play with that team in the Michigan State league.

June 20, 1911

Clauss is 2-2 with Saginaw, including a .363 average as a hitter (4-for-11), when he is traded to the Boyne City Boosters of the Michigan State (D) League.

June 26, 1911

In his first appearance with Boyne City, Clauss pitches a seven-hit shutout, striking out six, in a 3-0 win over the visiting Traverse City Resorters.

### "Mo" Myers Secures Five Strong Players From Outfit That Has Failed to "Pull" at the Gate

July 8, 1912

In what is regarded as the "biggest deal ever for players" in the history of the Southern Michigan League, Clauss is one of seven players exchanged between the Jackson Convicts and the Saginaw Trailers.

Saginaw, mired in last place with a 19-39 record, sells Clauss, pitchers Chester Spaulding and Bliss Farrell along with outfielders Fred Streeter and John Lee to the Convicts for \$2,000 and pitcher/outfielder J. Daniels. Ferrell and Lee are traded despite being under suspension for "differences" with the Saginaw management.

July 25, 1912

Clauss, now with Jackson, strikes out 11 in a 2-1 complete game win over the Adrian Lions, out-dueling Walter Scott, who strikes out nine in a losing effort.

### CLAUSS IS SOLD TO THE DETROIT TIGERS

August 7, 1912

Clauss, one of the "best pitchers" in the Southern Michigan League, is sold to the American League's Detroit Tigers for \$1,500.

August 8, 1912

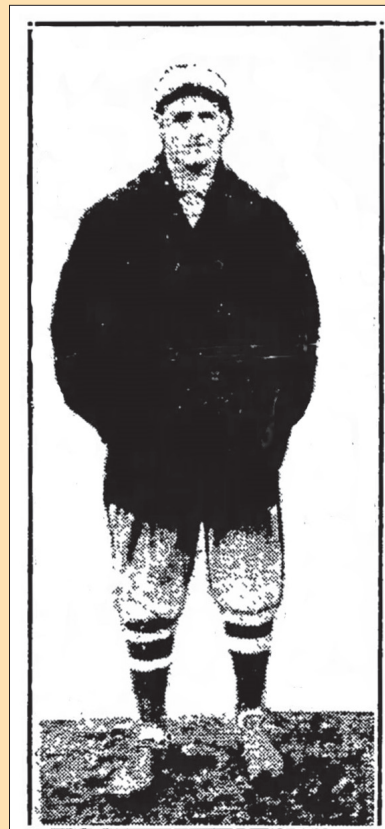
One day after being sold to Detroit, Clauss celebrates by pitching a three-hit, 10-inning, 2-1 complete game victory over the visiting Lansing Senators ... Clauss strikes out 14 and walks five and out-duels Homer (Slab) Warner as the Convicts pull to within 5 1/2 games of first-place Battle Creek, a 4-0 loser to Flint.

March 1, 1913

Clauss is the only left-hander among 13 pitchers in the Detroit Tigers spring training camp.

"Clauss is an ambitious and willing worker, which is a food recommendation. In fact he is altogether too ambitious, and it keeps one of the coaching faculty busy slowing him down and trying to convince him that there is no occasion for showing all that he has in the first few days of the season."

-Highie Jennings, Detroit Tigers' manager



LEFTY CLAUSS.

#### SAGINAW SOUTHERN MICHIGAN LEAGUE TEAM, 1911



—Special Photo for The News by Dupraw

TOP ROW—BURNETT, 2b; CAMPBELL, c; CLAUSS, p; MUELLER, p; RENFER, p; BURKART, President; KUTINA, 1b; POKORNEY, s; HIGGINS, p; HOPKINS, l. f; GIBSON, p.  
BOTTOM ROW—KITTRIDGE, Manager; SCHAUR, r. f; RAUSER, c; B. TAYLOR, p; DUNN, c; BROWNING, p; LAVENS, 3b; DALY, r. f.

### **Lefty Clauss [3 of 3]:**

April 6, 1913

Detroit manager Hughie Jennings tells the media that Clauss is so wild that he can not use the lefty to even pitch batting practice ... however, once Clauss is put into a game "he shoots the ball through the middle regularly."

April 7, 1913

Clauss reports that he is working on two areas of his pitching - a new motion with a runner on first and a "slow ball" modeled after Jean Debut's ... Clauss picked up his new move from 38-year-old ex-major leaguer Billy Campbell of the Mobile Seagulls.

April 22, 1913

Clauss makes his major league debut at Chicago's Comiskey Park, relieving starter Fred House at the start of the eighth inning in a 3-2 loss to the White Sox ... Clauss pitches a scoreless inning with one walk.

June 10, 1913

Clauss makes his only major league start against the Washington Senators and is relieved after walking the first two batters in third inning ... Clauss does not allow a hit in his two innings, but allows walks six and absorbs the loss ... the Senators get only one hit (by future Chicago White Sox/Black Sox Chick Gandill) en route to a 3-0 win.

June 30, 1913

The Detroit Tigers announce that University of Minnesota graduate Heine Elder will be kept on the roster for the remainder of the season primarily to pitch batting practice and that Clauss will be sent to the minors ... Elder make his only major league appearance seven days later, allowing three runs on four hits and five base on balls in a three 1/3 inning relief stint against the St. Louis Browns.

March 18, 1914

Although "not entirely satisfied" with the contract offered him by the Lincoln Railsplitters, Clauss resigns with the Western (A) League club.

April 8, 1914

On a cold afternoon during a spring training game, Clauss strikes out five straight Chicago White Sox batters ... however, having failed to warm up properly, he suffers a severe shoulder injury that will eventually end his playing career at the age of 23.

April 24, 1914

Optioned to Lincoln of the Western (A) League, Clauss does not make a road trip with the Railsplitters because of a sore shoulder and consults a surgeon in an effort get his shoulder back in shape ... it is first determined that the lefty has a torn muscle in his shoulder, but a later visit to the famous Bonesetter Reese in Youngstown, Ohio, reveals that a tendon "had slipped out of its proper position."

June 21, 1914

Clauss will make his first appearance of the season for Lincoln, allowing four runs on five hits in three and 2/3 innings but picks up a save in a 8-7 win over Wichita in the second game of a Western League doubleheader.

August 8, 1914

Suspended 10 days without pay by the Lincoln team management, Clauss leaves for his home in New Haven, Connecticut.

August 12, 1914

Clauss is forced to retire because of swollen ligaments in his left arm.

June, 1918

Clauss is scheduled to pitch for the Army's Fort Slocum team.

September 13, 1952

Albert Stanley Clauss dies at the age of 61 in New Haven, Connecticut.