

Cups of Coffee: Rex Dawson

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On October 3, 1913, the second-to-last day of the regular season, Washington Senators' pitcher Rex Dawson completes a meteoric rise from amateur ball to the major leagues in one season when he pitches a scoreless eighth inning in an 11-3 win over the visiting Boston Red Sox before 3,500 fans in Griffith Stadium.

The 10th of 11 Washington pitchers to make their major debuts in 1913, Dawson succeeds 34-year-old Tom Hughes, making the last start of a 13-year major league career, and is followed by University of North Carolina graduate Harry Hedgpeth, who, like Dawson, is making his lone major league appearance.

"While one inning is hardly sufficient to test a youngster, it could easily be seen that Dawson need considerable polishing and that Hedgpeth has a lot of promise."
- Washington Times

On October 14, Washington manager Clark Griffith cancels Dawson's option with the Missoula Highlanders, saving the Senators \$700. Since the cancelation takes place nine days after the deadline, Missoula plans to take the issue to the National Commission.

Born Rexford Paul Dawson on February 10, 1888, in Mount Vernon, Washington, the burly right-hander first gains attention while toiling for a strong amateur club in Chemainus, British Columbia. Signing his first pro contract in April with the Vancouver Beavers of the Northwestern (B) League, Dawson is 1-1 before being released.

"The Chemainus youth is said to possess the most natural spitball ever seen in the minors."
- Victoria Daily Times



Rex Dawson
1917 Indianapolis Indians

October 3, 1913
Griffith Stadium, Washington Senators
SENATORS AND RED SOX SPLIT:
GRIFFS CLINCH SECOND PLACE

WASHINGTON.					BOSTON.						
AB.	H.	O.	A.	E.	AB.	H.	O.	A.	E.		
Moeller,rf.	5	2	3	0	0	Rehg,rf.	4	0	1	0	0
Gedeon,cf.	1	0	1	0	0	Mundy,lb.	4	0	9	1	0
Milan,cf.	2	2	3	0	0	Engle,cf.	4	1	2	1	0
Foster,3b.	3	0	1	0	0	Lewis,lf,p	4	3	0	1	0
Gandil,lb.	4	1	10	0	0	Gar'ner,3b	4	1	3	1	1
Morgan,2b	3	2	3	5	1	Yerkes,2b.	2	1	0	4	0
Ainsmith,c	4	2	4	0	1	Janvrin,ss	4	0	4	0	0
Acosta,lf.	3	0	1	0	1	Thomas,c.	4	1	5	0	2
Shanks,lf.	1	0	0	0	0	Moseley,p.	1	0	0	4	0
M'Bride,ss	4	2	1	3	0	Hooper,p.	1	1	0	0	0
Boehling,p	3	1	0	2	0						
Hughes,p.	0	0	0	2	0	Totals..	32	8	24	12	3
Dawson,p.	0	0	0	0	0						
H'peth,p.	0	0	0	0	0						
*Cashion..	1	1	0	0	0						

Totals.. 34 14 27 12 3
*Batted for Dawson in eighth.

Washington501 060 02*—11
Boston011 100 000—3
Runs—Moeller, Milan (2), Foster (3), Gandil, Morgan (2), McBride, Cashion, Lewis (2), Thomas; Earned runs—Washington, 1; Boston, 2. First base by errors—Boston, 2. First base on balls—M Moseley, 5; off Hooper, 1; off Boehling, 2. Innings pitched—By Moseley, 5; by Hooper, 2; by Lewis, 1; by Boehling, 5; by Hughes, 2; by Dawson, 1; by Lewis, 1. Hits—Off Moseley, 9; off Hooper, 2; off Lewis, 5; off Boehling, 2; off Hughes, 4; off Dawson, 1. Struck out—By Moseley, 3; by Lewis, 1; by Boehling, 1; by Hughes, 2; by Dawson, 1. Three-base hit—Lewis. Two-base hits—Milan, McBride, Cashion, Boehling, Lewis. Sacrifice flies—Yerkes (2), Mundy. Stolen bases—Yerkes, Moeller (2), Foster (3), Morgan, Milan (3). Passed ball—Thomas. Umpires—Messrs. Connolly and Dineen.

Picked up by the Pendleton Buckaroos of the Western Tri-State League, Dawson gets into only one game before being cut loose for a second time in two weeks. Undaunted, he signs with the Missoula Highlanders of the Union Association and is on a three-game win streak when on August 24, manager Cliff Blankenship announces that the spitball specialist has been sold to the Washington Senators and will report to the club at the end of the Union Association season.

Ten days following his sale to the Senators and before a Union Association game between Helena and Missoula, Blankenship and umpire Charles Eley engage in fisticuffs as a result of Dawson's sale and are suspended by league president E.C. Mulroney. It is determined that Eley had some "responsibility" in arranging the Senators' purchase of Dawson and was promised a bonus by Blankenship. When he receives his payment, Eley feels that he has been short-changed and a fight ensues.

Mulroney later lifts the suspension when Blankenship and Eley settle their differences after Dawson begins a five-day train trip to join the Senators in Washington. Arriving in the nation's capitol on September 9, Dawson proceeds to Griffith Stadium for a workout where he does not exert himself "too much" to avoid injury.

Rex Dawson
En Route to
Big Company



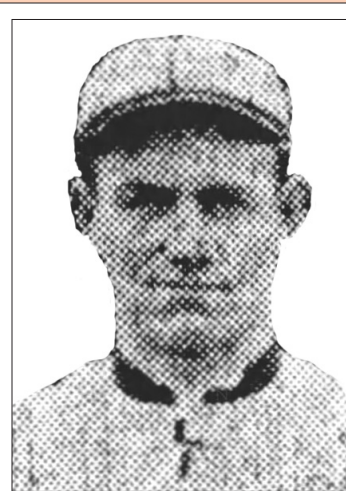
Rex Dawson
1913 Missoula Highlanders

Rex Dawson [2 of 4]:

The 1914 season proves to be difficult for Dawson. Planning on returning to Missoula, Dawson instead ends up with the Murray Infants after the Missoula franchise disbands in mid-January.

On July 20, the "shineball" specialist is again looking for employment as the Infants and the Boise Irrigators are dropped from membership in the Union Association. Murray was dropped and all of its players declared free agents because of its financial situation, while Boise "had to go" for the league to continue as an even-numbered circuit.

Dawson is unemployed for only 48 hours, signing with Salt Lake City on July 22. Making his first start for the Skyscrapers on July 23, Dawson strikes out three and allows 10 hits in a 5-2 win over the visiting Helena Senators. After a six-game playoff series loss to Ogden, Dawson is on the move again, signing with his fourth team of the year, the Lincoln Tigers of the Western (A) League where he is 0-2 in two starts. Dawson is 13-14 for Lincoln in 1915 when the "premiere spitballer of the Western League," is sold once again, this time to the Indianapolis Indians on August 17.



Rex Dawson
1915 Lincoln Tigers



Rex Dawson
1916 Indianapolis Indians

"The sale of Rex Dawson is advancement coming to one of the cleanest baseball players in the game today and is one which is justly deserved and which has been well earned. Dawson is a gentleman of the first water."
-Lincoln Star

Rex Dawson

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	GP	INN	H	BB	SO	ERA
1911	Cheminus	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1912	Cheminus	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1913	3 Teams	3 Leagues	D-B	7-9	25	178.1	179	50	79	--
	Vancouver Beavers	Northwestern	B	1-1	4	24.0	24	4	5	--
	Pendleton Buckaroos	Western Tri-State	D	0-1	1	9.0	13	2	2	--
	Missoula Highlanders	Union Association	D	6-7	20	145.1	142	44	72	--
1913	Washington Senators	AMERICAN	ML	0-0	1	1.0	1	0	1	0
1914	3 Teams	Union Association	D	9-11	30	172.2	-	61	-	--
	Murray Infants	Union Association	D	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
	Salt Lake City Skyscrapers	Union Association	D	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
	Lincoln Tigers	Western League	A	0-2	2	18.0	13	-	-	--
1915	2 Teams	2 Leagues	A-AA	17-17	41	286.1	246	87	-	2.11
	Lincoln Tigers	Western	A	13-14	30	220.0	191	62	-	2
	Indianapolis Indians	American Association	AA	4-3	11	66.1	55	25	-	2.44
1916	Indianapolis Indians	American Association	AA	20-14	43	291.0	256	113	113	2.75
1917	Indianapolis Indians	American Association	AA	15-14	36	256.0	243	69	93	2.71
1918	Anderson Eagles	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1919	2 Teams	2 Leagues	AA	16-12	40	235.0	223	64	-	-
	Indianapolis Indians	American Association	AA	0-1	1	4.0	5	3	1	--
	Vernon Tigers	Pacific Coast	AA	16-11	39	231.0	218	61	-	2.96
1920	Lafayette (Ind.) Red Sox	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1921	Marion (Ind.) Boosters	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1921	Denver (Colo.) Broncos	Midwest	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1922	Columbus (Ind.) Commercials	Southern Indiana	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1922	Montpelier (Ind.)	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1922	Noblesville (Ind.)	Tri-County	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1922	Huntington (Ind.) Indians	Tri-County	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1923	Shelbyville (Ind.) Nationals	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1924	Zanesville (Ohio) Greys	Eastern Ohio	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1924	Bellevue (Ky.) Bells	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1926	Ludlow (Ohio)	Central	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
Major League Totals		1 Season		0-0	1	1.0	1	0	1	0.00
Minor League Totals		5 Seasons		75-66	185	1242.2	1142	380	-	--

ML Debut: October 3, 1913 at Griffith Stadium, Washington: relieves Tom Hughes in the eighth inning for Washington in an 11-3 win over the Boston Red Sox; pitches one scoreless inning with one hit and one strikeout.

CUBS BUY TWO PITCHERS.

Chicago, Aug. 28.—Victor Aldridge and Rex Dawson, pitchers, with the Indianapolis American Association Club, were purchased by the Chicago Nationals today. Aldridge pitched a one-hit game yesterday. They are to report at the close of the association season.

Dawson is 16-11 with a 2.96 ERA with a team-high 98 strikeouts when on August 28, he and fellow Indianapolis pitcher Vic Aldridge are sold to the National League's Chicago Cubs.

Dawson Fans Sixteen Players and Wins Game

Rex Dawson, who was a star pitcher with the Indianapolis American Association team last season and who makes this city his home, is pitching great ball for the naval aviation team at San Diego, Cal. Rex recently left here to enlist in the naval aviation branch of the service and since his arrival at the camp he has pitched three games and won all three of them.

Aldridge will go on to win 97 games in nine major league seasons with the Cubs, Pittsburgh and the New York Giants. Dawson spends most of the 1917 spring training with the Cubs before being optioned back to Indianapolis on April 2.

Rex Dawson [3 of 4]:

1918 begins ominously for Dawson and other American Association pitchers when the league outlaws the spitball and all of its "varied ilk."

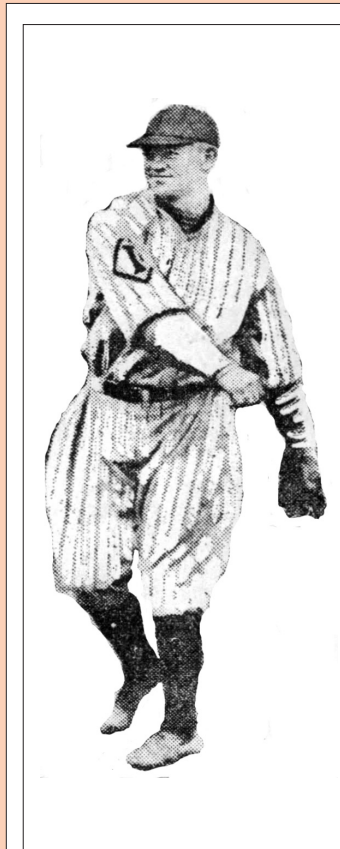
After refusing to accept terms with Indianapolis, Dawson sits out the entire 1918 season and is working as a mechanic in a shop that is doing government work while pitching for the semipro Anderson Eagles.

In mid-May he leaves for the West Coast where enters the military with the Naval Aviation Corps. Mustered out in February, he is one the first players to return a signed contract with Indianapolis.

May 2, 1919, Dawson is 0-1 with Indianapolis when he is sold to the Vernon Tigers of the Pacific Coast League where the spitball is still allowed and valued.

Despite an excellent campaign with Vernon, where he is 16-11 with a 2.96 ERA, Dawson decides to retire from professional baseball to concentrate on his business in Indianapolis.

However the urge to play returns, and Dawson signs with the semipro Lafayette Red Sox to pitch on the weekends. Over the next six years, Dawson toils for various semipro teams in Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and Colorado.



Rex Dawson
1917 Indianapolis Indians



Rex Dawson
1915 Lincoln Tigers



Rex Dawson
1915 Lincoln Tigers

September 9, 1923 Shelbyville, Indiana



HELBYVILLE, Ind., Sept. 9. — Rex Dawson, ex-American Association hurler, pitched a no-hit, no-run game against Liberty here this afternoon, the Shelbyville Nationals winning, 2 to 0. Only twenty-nine men faced the big Indianapolis hurler. According to the scorekeeper, Dawson pitched only eighty-seven balls during the nine innings, an average of less than ten an inning. Four men reached first base, three on errors and one on a base on balls, but they never advanced beyond that station and two were cut down on double plays.

Franz hurled winning ball for Liberty, but a little ragged play in the field in the third inning permitted two local runs to score. Score:

Liberty 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0—0 0 1
Nationals 0 0 2 0 0 0 0 0—2 0 3

Batteries—Franz and Plander; Dawson and Peters.

Following his playing days, Dawson is a manager with the Remedial Finance Corporation and later a partner in the Foxworthy Ford Company, and then president of Dealers Engine Service, retiring in 1953.

A graduate of the University of Washington where he was a member of the football and baseball teams, Dawson dies on October 20, 1958, at the age of 70, of a heart attack at his home in Indianapolis.

1919 Vernon Tigers

In 1919, Dawson enjoys one of his best seasons with the Pacific Coast League's Vernon Tigers, finishing 16-11 with a 2.96 ERA in 39 appearances. However, Dawson's Tigers are involved in a controversy at the season's end, when the league's new president, William H. McCarthy, acting on evidence that the PCL season had been tainted with bribes and thrown games, begins an investigation that produces criminal charges against several Vernon players, including Hal Chase, who is eventually banished from both the major and minor leagues. After an initial inquiry, Dawson is cleared of any wrong doing.

1916 Indianapolis Indians



1919 Vernon Tigers



NO GAMBLING, SAYS DAWSON

FORMER VERNON PITCHER
KNEW NOTHING OF AL-
LEGED "THROWING"
OF GAMES.

Rex Dawson Lafayette pitcher, who was a member of the Vernon baseball club of the Pacific Coast League last season, declared Monday evening that it was untrue that every member of the Vernon team had been approached and asked to contribute to a pool in order to buy "assistance" to win the 1919 pennant. Dawson said that as far as he knows only one member of the team was ever offered money to "throw" a game.

"We won the Pacific coast pennant fair and square and there was no gambling of any player on the Vernon club as far as I know," said Rex. "One afternoon a member of our pitching staff was approached by a professional gambler and offered \$500 to "throw" the game. The pitcher came into the clubhouse and told all the players about it. As for the pool," says Dawson, "the business men of Vernon had offered the Vernon players a small bonus of appreciation if they won the pennant. Also, each player received a cut on the series which was played with St. Paul, the American Association winners. If there was any money held out, I know nothing of it."