

Cups of Coffee: Aubrey Epps

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A right-handed hitting catcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Aubrey "Yo-Yo" Epps plays in only one major league game, but he makes it worthwhile.

On September 29, in the final game of the 1935 season, in the second game of a doubleheader against the Cincinnati Reds, Epps, batting eighth in the Corsair lineup, collects two singles and a triple in four at bats, and fives in three runs in a 9-6 loss.

Signed by the Birmingham Barons one week after graduating from Memphis (Tenn.) Tech, in the spring of 1933, a 19-year-old Epps begins his professional baseball career in the highly-competitive Southern (A) League ... hitting only .225 in 30 games with the Barons, Epps is shipped out to the Longview (Texas) Cannibals of the Dixie (C) League, where his hits .318 in six games.

Young Catcher Is Fighting for Life at Memphis

Aubrey Epps, Prospect Owned by Pittsburgh, Gravely Ill Following Tonsillectomy.

Memphis, Tenn., Oct. 31 (AP)—Aubrey Epps, 21-year-old catcher of the Pittsburgh Pirates, battled for his life in a hospital here tonight, weak from the ravages of pneumonia.

His illness developed from a cold following a tonsillectomy nine days ago.

Epps began his baseball career with Birmingham of the Southern association and was purchased by Pittsburgh at the end of his first season. He was sent back to Birmingham last year for further seasoning, and later was transferred to Fort Worth of the Texas league. He was recalled by the Pirates late in the summer.

Hopeful of landing a first string catching berth with Pittsburgh next season, Epps decided to start getting in condition early by having his tonsils removed about nine days ago.

Hemorrhages caused him to return to the hospital two days later. A severe cold, which impaired his breathing, developed into pneumonia.

Back with the Barons the following season, Epps is moved to center field by manager Clyde Milan and he responds by hitting .301 in 152 games with 24 doubles, 11 triples and three home runs.

On September 1, 1934, after a recommendation from scout Carleton Molesworth, the Pirates outbid the Cleveland Indians and acquire Epps for an "unannounced amount of cash" ... Pittsburgh instructs the Barons that Epps must be used solely as a catcher for the remainder of the 1934 season.

Despite expectations that he will open the 1935 season as the third-string catcher with the Pirates, Epps is sent back to Birmingham on 24-hour recall ... on June 25, Birmingham send Epps is sent to the Fort Worth Cats of the Texas (A) League ... interestingly enough, Epps is hitting only .203 in 26 games with Fort Worth when he promoted to the Pirates.

Epps undergoes a tonsillectomy in October of 1935, but severe hemorrhaging puts him in a Memphis hospital in critical condition with pneumonia ... failing to make the Pirates' opening day roster, Epps spends the entire 1936 season with the Scranton Miners of the New York-Penn (A) League, hitting a career-high .332.

Aubrey Audibles: Named to the Southeastern (A) League All-Star team in 1938 after hitting .287 with 11 home runs and 87 RBIs for the Jackson Senators ... contracts pneumonia in October of 1935 after having his tonsils removed and is placed in an oxygen tent ... drafted into the military in 1942, Epps serves with the Fourth Marine Division and is a veteran of four Pacific campaigns ... earns his nickname "Yo-Yo" for his proficiency with the toy.



Aubrey Lee (Yo-Yo) Epps

Aubrey Epps Major League Debut September 29, 1935

Pittsburgh	Ab.	R.	H.	Po.	A.
L. Waner, cf	5	1	3	3	0
P. Waner, rf	4	0	1	2	0
Hafey, lf	4	0	2	1	0
Young, 2b	5	0	0	2	2
Lavagetto, 3b	5	0	1	1	2
Brown, 1b	4	2	2	7	0
Subr, 1b	1	0	0	1	0
Thevenow, ss	5	2	2	2	2
Epps, c	4	1	2	5	1
Passo, p	1	0	0	0	2
Padden, x	1	0	1	0	0
Birkhofer, p	2	0	0	0	1

Totals	41	6	13	24	10
x-Batted for Passo in 4th					
Cincinnati	Ab.	R.	H.	Po.	A.
Chapman, ss	4	0	2	1	5
Byrd, cf	5	0	0	0	0
Cuyler, rf	3	1	0	0	0
Scarsella, 1b	4	3	2	11	1
Lombardi, c	5	2	2	8	3
Gamble, lf	3	2	2	1	1
Riggs, 3b	4	1	1	1	2
Kampouris, 7b	3	0	1	4	3
Grissom, p	2	0	0	1	1
Derringer, p	2	0	0	0	1

Totals	33	9	10	27	17
Score by innings:					R.
Pittsburgh	010	202	010	—6	
Cincinnati	022	041	00x	—9	
Errors:	Lavagetto, Epps 2, Chapman, Byrd. Two base hits: L. Waner, Scarsella, Lombardi, Gamble, Riggs. Three base hits: Hafey, Epps. Stolen bases: Cuyler 2, Gamble. Double plays: Passo, Thevenow to Brown; Chapman, Kampouris to Scarsella; Derringer, Chaman to Scarsella. Left on bases: Pittsburgh 10, Cincinnati 8.				