

Tony Suck, "19th Century Mendoza"

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Before there was a "Mendoza Line", there was a Tony Suck.

Born Charles Anthony Zuck, on June 11, 1858, Suck will play for three major league teams in a brief two-year career (1883 and 1884), fashioning a .151 career batting average with only two extra base hits in 219 plate appearances.

Suck has inauspicious major league debut with the National League's Buffalo Bisons on August 10, 1883 ... starting at catcher and batting sixth in the order against Frank Bancroft's Cleveland Blues, Suck goes 0-for-3, with a walk and a run scored ... but it is the field that Suck gives a glimpse of the future, making three throwing errors and allowing five passed balls.

In 1884, Suck plays for the Baltimore Monumentals and the Chicago Browns in the short-lived 12-team Union Association and improves his batting average to .157 with a pair of doubles among his career-best 31 hits ... in 1885, Suck signs with the Washington Nationals, and accepts their advance money, but elects to spend the season playing for the semi-pro Chicago Blues and the St. Joseph Reds.

Suck continues his nomadic way in 1886 ... on page eight of the April 4th issue of the *The Sporting Life*, Suck is listed as either signing, with or playing for, three different minor league teams - Augusta, Columbus (Ga.), and St. Joseph (Mo.) ... he eventually play for Augusta, ripping the rawhide for eight hits in 88 at bats (.091).

Suck finishes his major league career with a slugging percentage of .161 (three pounds less than his playing weight of 164) ... incredibly, Suck's defense is worse than his hitting, with 53 errors in only 63 games ... his fielding percentage as a catcher is .894, .783 as an outfielder, and just .754 at shortstop (16 errors in only 65 chances).

The Chicago, Illinois, native began playing professional baseball on May 11, 1883 ... starting at catcher for the Fort Wayne Hoosiers in a 7-3 win over the Peoria Reds in a Northwestern League game, Suck makes quite an impression on the *Fort Wayne Daily Gazette* reporter who reports:

"Billy Geiss' pitching and Tony Sucks' catching, with any kind of support, (we) will win the championship pennant and Tony Suck will surprise the baseball world before many days. Very few men could have done the great feat he performed in yesterday's game."

After ending his playing career with the Memphis Browns in 1887, Suck stays in the game as an umpire, beginning with the Western League in August of 1886 and then with the Southern League in 1887 ... in 1888, in addition to his umpiring, Suck works at a cementary in New Orleans.

Tony Suck Major League Debut August 9, 1883

Player	A.P.	R.	In.	P.O.	A.	E.
CLEVELANDS						
Dunlap, 2b	4	1	0	5	1	1
Hotaling, 1b	5	5	3	0	1	1
Glascock, 3b	5	3	1	1	2	1
Yakel, f.	3	3	1	0	1	0
Phillips, lb	3	2	1	6	0	0
Muldoon, 3b	5	2	3	3	1	1
Evans, c.	5	1	1	3	1	2
Bushong, c.	5	0	3	9	0	1
Sawyer, p.	4	0	0	0	2	6
Total	29	14	14	27	8	14
BUFFALO						
Bancroft, l. f. fr. and p.	5	2	1	3	0	1
McFar, r. f.	4	0	0	2	0	0
McFar, 2b	4	0	0	1	1	2
Brouthers, 1b. and p.	4	1	1	4	1	4
White, 3b	3	1	0	2	1	1
Suck, c.	3	1	0	0	0	3
Forbes, s.	4	0	0	1	4	1
Galvin, r. f.	4	1	0	1	0	4
Galvin, p. and l. f.	4	0	0	0	1	4
Total	34	5	4	21	7	13
Innings	1	2	3	4	5	6
Runs scored	0	2	4	5	1	0
Errors	9	0	0	0	1	3

Runs scored—Cleveland 3.
Two base hits—Hotaling 2, Glascock, Muldoon.
Total bases on clean hits—Cleveland 19, Buffalo 7.
Runs on called balls—Cleveland 3, Buffalo 8.
Runs on called balls—Cleveland 5, Buffalo 3.
Runs on base on errors—Cleveland 17, Buffalo 3.
Pitcher's assists—Sawyer 7, Galvin 1, Brouthers 2.
Field throws—Evans, Bushong, Sawyer, Galvin.
Passed grounders—Dunlap, Evans, Eggleston, Galvin.
Fabled grounders—Glascock, Richardson.
Passed flies—Hotaling, Muldoon.
Muffed throws balls—Dunlap, Richardson.
Waste.
Fielded balls—Bancroft 1; Suck 5.

The rookie umpire apparently is not popular in every Southern League city, in May of 1887, *The Memphis Times* opines: "The Times wishes to present its compliments to umpire Tony Suck and tell him that he isn't fit to be on the League staff."

After a bout with pneumonia, Suck dies on January 29, 1895, at the age of 36.

Tony Suck Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Lev	AB	HT	2B	3B	HR	RBI	AVG
1883	Fort Wayne Hoosiers	Northwestern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1883	Buffalo Bisons	NATIONAL	MLB	7	1	0	0	0	-	.125
1883	Brooklyn Greys	Interstate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1884	Chicago/Pittsburgh	UNION	MLB	188	28	2	0	0	-	.149
1884	Baltimore Monumentals	UNION	MLB	10	3	0	0	0	-	.300
1884	Chicago Unions	Semi-Pro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1885	Chicago Blues	Semi-Pro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1885	St. Joseph Reds	Semi-Pro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1886	Augusta Browns	Southern	B	88	8	2	0	0	-	.091
1887	Charleston Quakers	Southern	-	6	2	0	0	0	-	.333
1887	Memphis Browns	Southern	-	6	1	0	0	0	-	.167
Major League Totals				2 years	205	31	2	0	0	-.151
Minor League Totals				3 years	100	12	2	0	0	-.120