

= Joey Hamilton =

Johns Joseph " Joey " Hamilton ( born September 9 , 1970 ) is a former Major League Baseball pitcher who played professionally for nine seasons , recording a 74 ? 73 win ? loss record , a 4 @.@ 44 earned run average ( ERA ) and 894 strikeouts . He attended Statesboro High School in Georgia . Following high school , Hamilton attended Georgia Southern University for three years .

He started his professional career in 1991 when he was drafted by the San Diego Padres , and pitched for three major league teams during his career . As a rookie with San Diego in 1994 he finished fifth in the Major League Baseball Rookie of the Year Award voting for the National League . Following the 1998 season , San Diego traded Hamilton to the Toronto Blue Jays . In 2001 , after two seasons with the Blue Jays , he was released . Hamilton signed with the Cincinnati Reds shortly afterward . Hamilton had stints in training camps and the minor leagues with some of the Padres and Reds affiliates . In March 2005 , two days after signing with the New York Mets , the team released him .

= = Early years and college = =

Hamilton was born on September 9 , 1970 , in Statesboro , Georgia to Jack Hamilton and Helen Mathis . He attended Statesboro High School before the Baltimore Orioles drafted him in the 1988 Major League Baseball draft . Hamilton decided against signing with the Orioles , opting instead to play college baseball for Georgia Southern University .

As a sophomore at Georgia Southern in 1990 , Hamilton had an 18 ? 4 record with a 3 @.@ 07 ERA . He was one of nine finalists for the Golden Spikes Award , and he earned Second Team All @-@ American honors from The Sporting News and Baseball America . However , at the beginning of his junior season he went 1 ? 3 with a 7 @.@ 43 ERA after starting five games . It was soon discovered that Hamilton was suffering from an elbow injury , which forced him to have surgery in 1992 .

Hamilton held the Georgia Southern baseball record for appearances , starts , complete games , innings pitched and strikeouts until 1995 . He was elected to the Georgia Southern University Athletics Department Hall of Fame in 1997 .

The San Diego Padres drafted Hamilton eighth overall in the 1991 Major League Baseball draft , making him the highest drafted Atlantic Sun Conference baseball player in the league 's history . He eventually signed a contract with the Padres worth \$ 415 @,@ 000 after a short period in which Hamilton refused to sign a contract . He was surprised upon hearing of his selection , saying " It came as a bit of a shock because I really hadn 't heard much from the Padres . " According to Hamilton 's mother , Hamilton only signed the deal because his father Jack was dying of cancer , and it had been his father 's dream to watch his son pitch in the major leagues . Following the draft , Hamilton joined Team USA in Canada in preparation for the Olympics .

In 1992 , Padres general manager Joe McIlvaine stated the Padres would have never selected Hamilton if they knew his agent was Scott Boras . McIlvaine said of the situation , " Basically , he lied to us . We had no idea . That 's why half the time , you don 't know who he represents . [ Scott Boras is ] very good at that . His clients are very good about keeping their mouths shut . " McIlvaine retracted his comments about Hamilton and Boras after Boras threatened to sue McIlvaine .

= = Professional career = =

= = = San Diego Padres = = =

In 1992 , Baseball America ranked him as the top prospect in the San Diego Padres organization and the 36th in Major League Baseball . The Padres sent Hamilton to their Single @-@ A affiliate , the Charleston Rainbows , who were managed by future Baltimore Orioles manager Dave Trembley . With the Rainbows he went 2 ? 2 , with a 3 @.@ 38 ERA in seven games and 342 ? 3 innings

pitched . He was then called up to the High Desert Mavericks . With High Desert , Hamilton went 4 ? 3 with a 2 @.@ 74 ERA in nine appearances . Hamilton received one more call @-@ up , this time to Double @-@ A. With the Wichita Wranglers he went 3 ? 0 with a 2 @.@ 86 ERA in six starts and pitched 342 ? 3 innings during his time with the team .

In 1993 , Hamilton was ranked as the second best prospect in the Padres organization . He was sent to the Padres ' affiliate , the Rancho Cucamonga Quakes . One of Hamilton 's teammates with the Quakes was 17 @-@ year @-@ old and future All @-@ Star Derrek Lee . During his time with the Quakes , he went 1 ? 0 with a 4 @.@ 09 ERA in 11 innings during two starts . The Padres then called him up to their Double @-@ A affiliate , the Wichita Wranglers . In Wichita , Hamilton had four wins and nine losses with a 3 @.@ 97 ERA in 15 starts . After a combined 39 appearances during two seasons , Hamilton was called up to Triple @-@ A Las Vegas . With Las Vegas he went 3 ? 2 with a 4 @.@ 40 ERA in eight starts .

He made his Major League debut on May 24 , 1994 . In the game , Hamilton allowed three runs and five hits in six innings but ended up winning the game 6 ? 3 after Phil Clark hit a three ? run home run . Overall , Hamilton went 9 ? 6 with a 2 @.@ 69 ERA in 1082 ? 3 innings pitched . He was fifth in the Major League Baseball Rookie of the Year Award voting for the National League . In 1995 , Hamilton went 6 ? 9 with a 3 @.@ 08 ERA in 30 starts and 2041 ? 3 innings pitched . Hamilton gave up 189 hits and 70 earned runs ( 89 unearned ) . Hamilton walked 56 batters and struck out 123 . At age 25 in 1996 , Hamilton put up a career high in wins ( 15 ) and his second most innings pitched ( 2112 ? 3 ) . Hamilton accrued a 4 @.@ 17 ERA in 33 starts , along with 206 hits allowed and 98 earned runs . In his fourth year with San Diego in 1997 , Hamilton started on Opening Day for the Padres . In the game , he pitched six innings and gave up four runs on eight hits . The Padres won the game over the New York Mets 12 ? 6 . Hamilton compiled a 12 ? 7 record with a 4 @.@ 25 ERA for the season and gave up 69 walks and struck out 124 . Hamilton suffered a shoulder injury that was described as an inflammation of the rotator cuff and bursa sac . This injury forced Hamilton onto the disabled list during the 1997 season . Hamilton called the injury " real scary " , saying that he feared he may lose the ability to throw 100 miles per hour ( 160 km / h ) . During the 1998 off @-@ season , San Diego acquired Kevin Brown through a trade with the Florida Marlins , giving San Diego three pitchers who could throw at 90 miles per hour ( 140 km / h ) and above , including Hamilton . With the Padres in 1998 , Hamilton 's last season in San Diego , he had a 13 ? 13 record , 4 @.@ 27 ERA in 34 starts and 2171 ? 3 innings pitched . He walked a career @-@ high 106 batters and struck out 147 . There was a rumored trade around the 1998 MLB trade deadline that would have sent Hamilton to the Detroit Tigers , but it never materialized . During the 1998 World Series , the Padres scheduled Hamilton to pitch game four but was passed over for game one starter Kevin Brown and instead entered game three to relieve starter Sterling Hitchcock . With San Diego , Hamilton went 55 and 44 with a 3 @.@ 75 ERA in 9342 ? 3 innings pitched .

= = = After San Diego = = =

After five years with San Diego , Hamilton was traded to the Toronto Blue Jays on December 12 , 1998 , for Peter Tucci , Carlos Almanzar , and Woody Williams . Analysts believe that Toronto acquired Hamilton if Roger Clemens 's trade request was successful . Hamilton began the 1999 season with the Syracuse SkyChiefs , the Triple @-@ A affiliate of the Blue Jays . He started three games , recording one loss , no wins , and a 5 @.@ 11 ERA in 121 ? 3 innings pitched . The Blue Jays called him up , and Hamilton made 18 starts in 22 games pitched . Pitching in 98 innings , he went 7 ? 8 with a 6 @.@ 52 ERA .

For the second time in his career , Hamilton began the season in Syracuse and went 3 ? 2 with a 3 @.@ 66 ERA in six games and 391 ? 3 innings pitched . Hamilton had a shortened 2000 season for Toronto in which he went 2 ? 1 with a 3 @.@ 55 ERA in six games .

For the first time during his tenure with Toronto , Hamilton started the season with the Blue Jays . He went 5 ? 8 with a 5 @.@ 89 ERA in 22 games and 1221 ? 3 innings , before being released on August 3 , 2001 .

Hamilton signed with the Cincinnati Reds on August 17 , 2001 , and was optioned to their Triple

@-@ A team , the Louisville Bats . He made one start in Louisville , posting a 1 ? 0 record with a 5 @.@ 40 ERA . The Reds called him up , and he made four starts and went 1 ? 2 with a 6 @.@ 23 ERA .

Despite only recording one win for the team the year before , Hamilton was named the Reds ' 2002 Opening Day starter . In the game , Hamilton allowed two runs on seven hits in five innings of work . The Reds won the game over the Chicago Cubs , 5 ? 4 . For the rest of the year , he spent time in Louisville and Cincinnati and posted a combined 5 ? 10 record , 3 @.@ 92 ERA , and started 20 games and pitched in relief in 22 games . According to ESPN 's Peter Gammons , Hamilton , " looked like the ' 97 Hamilton " when he was making his comeback to the majors after spending time in the minors . At the conclusion of the 2002 season , he was offered arbitration by the Reds along with José Rijo , which they both rejected in mid @-@ December , meaning the Reds could not sign them until May 1 , 2003 .

= = = Final years = = =

Hamilton was signed by the St. Louis Cardinals on January 6 , 2003 , but was released on March 26 , 2003 after struggling in spring training . Hamilton then re @-@ signed with the Cincinnati Reds on April 11 , 2003 . After posting a 12 @.@ 66 ERA in three starts with the Reds , he was sent down to Louisville . He made 33 appearances for the Bats with an 8 ? 3 record and a 3 @.@ 23 ERA in 86 1 ? 3 innings . On October 15 , 2003 , he became a free agent .

The Padres re @-@ signed Hamilton on December 10 , 2003 , and optioned him to their Triple @-@ A affiliate , the Portland Beavers . Hamilton appeared in 11 games with the Beavers , posting an 0 ? 2 record and 5 @.@ 36 ERA . Hamilton was released on June 7 , 2004 . He was signed by the New York Mets on March 10 , 2005 , to a minor league contract . He was released two days later after being arrested for suspicion of driving under the influence .