

= Jason Kipnis =

Jason Michael Kipnis (born April 3 , 1987 ; nicknamed " Kip ") is an American professional baseball second baseman for the Cleveland Indians of Major League Baseball (MLB) . He attended Glenbrook North High School in the suburbs of Chicago , where he earned three letters playing baseball for the Glenbrook North Spartans . He attended the University of Kentucky , but transferred to Arizona State University after two years . In college , Kipnis was an All American and the 2009 Pacific @-@ 10 Conference Player of the Year for the Sun Devils .

The Indians selected Kipnis in the second round of the 2009 Major League Baseball draft . In 2010 , he was named the Indians ' Minor League Player of the Year , and a Baseball America Minor League All Star . Prior to the 2011 season , Baseball Prospectus ranked him as the top Indians prospect and the 28th @-@ highest prospect in baseball . At mid @-@ season , Baseball America rated him as baseball 's 31st @-@ best prospect . He was called up from the minor leagues on July 22 , 2011 . In 2012 , he became the starting second baseman for the Indians .

= = Early life = =

Jason Michael Kipnis was born on April 3 , 1987 in Northbrook , Illinois , a suburb of Chicago . He was the fourth child born to Kay and Mark Kipnis . He has two older brothers , Blair and Todd . His older sister Amanda played softball at the University of Maryland . As a child , his father played an important role in his baseball life . He played Little League and American Legion Baseball . Though Kipnis played baseball , football and soccer while growing up , he said there was never any question that his goal was to become a professional baseball player .

= = High school = =

Kipnis attended Glenbrook North High School in Northbrook , graduating in 2005 . He earned three letters in baseball for the Glenbrook North Spartans and was selected as team captain twice . He played shortstop , center field and pitcher . As an all @-@ conference junior , Kipnis batted .455 with a school @-@ record 11 home runs . As a senior , Kipnis batted .521 with a .690 on @-@ base percentage and 32 stolen bases in 32 attempts ; he was named first @-@ team all @-@ state and the Central Suburban League Most Valuable Player . He was named all @-@ conference in both his junior and senior seasons .

As a freshman at Glenbrook North , Kipnis played soccer , setting the school 's single @-@ season goal scoring record with 41 . He also played football there in 2003 and 2004 . An All @-@ Conference wide receiver , Kipnis set single @-@ season school records for receptions , yards , and touchdowns . He also established school records for career receptions and receiving yards . As a senior in 2004 , Kipnis had 49 pass receptions for 956 yards and 10 touchdowns . His 2004 totals remain Glenbrook North single @-@ season records for receptions , receiving yards , and receiving touchdowns . Kipnis still holds the school 's career record with 1 @-@ 247 receiving yards . In December 2004 , the Pioneer Press sports staff selected Kipnis as a member of its " 2004 North Stars " , the all @-@ star football team for the Central Suburban League 's North Division . In announcing its selection , the Pioneer Press noted : " Quite simply one of the top receivers in the state , a player who piled up impressive numbers despite the fact the Spartans averaged barely 15 passing attempts per game . "

= = College = =

After graduating from high school in 2005 , Kipnis attended the University of Kentucky and then Arizona State University . At the University of Kentucky , Kipnis red @-@ shirted during the 2006 baseball season . In the spring of 2007 , Kipnis began competing with the Kentucky Wildcats during baseball games , where he batted .337 with a .450 on @-@ base percentage as an outfielder while stealing 11 bases in 12 attempts in 34 games . In February of that year , Kipnis was awarded

Southeastern Conference Freshman of the Week honors . In the summer before his sophomore year , Kipnis played for the Covington Lumberjacks of the Valley Baseball League , a National Collegiate Athletic Association @-@ sanctioned collegiate summer baseball league in the Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia . He batted .318 with a .505 on @-@ base percentage and 24 stolen bases .

After two years at the University of Kentucky , Kipnis transferred to Arizona State University . He played baseball for the Sun Devils and double @-@ majored in psychology and sociology . In an interview , Kipnis stated that the University of Kentucky wasn 't the right fit for him and that ASU 's college baseball reputation would make it a better fit .

In 2008 , Kipnis batted .371 with 14 home runs and 73 runs batted in . He finished second in the league with 24 stolen bases in 28 attempts . Kipnis primarily played center field , but played all outfield positions and second base ; he batted leadoff part of the time . In 2008 , Kipnis became the second Arizona State player to win the American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA) Pacific @-@ 10 Conference Newcomer of the Year . (Teammate Ike Davis earned the award two years earlier .) Kipnis was named second @-@ team All America by the ABCA and named third @-@ team All @-@ American outfielder by Baseball America . In May 2008 , he won the Pacific @-@ 10 Player of the Week award . In June , the San Diego Padres drafted Kipnis during the fourth round of the 2008 Major League Baseball draft . However , Kipnis opted to remain in college at Arizona State , becoming the seventh @-@ highest player in the draft who chose not to sign . He decided not to sign with the Padres because he felt he hadn 't fully matured and accomplished everything in college . Regarding Kipnis ' success , Arizona State coach Pat Murphy observed : " I love that kid . He 's tough as nails , and really hard on himself . " Moreover , Paul DePodesta , San Diego Padres front office assistant and former Los Angeles Dodgers general manager , described him as " a pesky player who is a very tough out , hitting the ball to all fields and running the bases aggressively ... [who] plays very hard and is surprisingly strong . " In the summer of 2008 , Kipnis played for the Cotuit Kettleers in the Cape Cod League , a collegiate summer baseball league located on Cape Cod in Massachusetts .

In 2009 , Kipnis was the team 's leadoff hitter and batted .384 with a .500 on @-@ base percentage and a .709 slugging percentage . He finished with 16 home runs , 71 RBIs , 27 steals in 33 attempts , 51 walks and 32 strikeouts . The National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA) , Baseball America , and Collegiate Baseball named Kipnis the Pac @-@ 10 Conference Player of the Year , a Pac @-@ 10 Conference All @-@ Star outfielder , and a First Team College All @-@ American outfielder . Rivals.com rated Kipnis the number one outfielder in the nation .

Over two seasons , Kipnis batted .378 with 30 home runs , 144 RBIs , 142 runs , 37 doubles , 10 triples , and 51 stolen bases in 474 at bats for the Sun Devils .

= = Minor leagues = =

= = = 2009 = = =

The Cleveland Indians drafted Kipnis in the second round (63rd overall) of the 2009 Major League Baseball draft , and he received a signing bonus of \$ 575 @,@ 000 . In 2009 , the first @-@ year minor leaguer batted .306 for the Mahoning Valley Scrappers of the Short @-@ Season A classification New York ? Penn League , playing left and center field . While Kipnis appeared to be a good prospect as an outfielder , the Indians saw his potential as a second baseman . Kipnis felt he would have more success in the majors at second base , particularly because of Cleveland 's difficulties at that position in recent years . Baseball America ranked him the fifth @-@ best player in the league . During this time , Baseball Prospectus rated him the Indians ' eighth @-@ best prospect , describing Kipnis as " fitting great baseball intelligence , a lot of intensity , and surprising tools into a small package . He works the count extremely well and makes consistently hard contact , and he has some surprising pop for his size . "

== 2010 ==

In 2010 , Kipnis batted .300 for the Kinston Indians of the Carolina League . Kipnis was promoted from Kinston to the Akron Aeros of the AA Eastern League on June 10 , 2010 . He hit .311 for the Aeros and won the Aeros Player of the Week Award twice . Baseball America ranked Kipnis the ninth @-@ best prospect in the Eastern League . At the same time , Kipnis made a successful conversion to second base .

He joined the AAA Columbus Clippers for their playoffs . Kipnis batted .455 in five games , and hit for the cycle on September 17 in the Clippers ' victory that clinched the International League title . His big game was voted second in the 2010 Fans Choice " Best Game " Minor League Baseball Yearly Awards . Veteran catcher Luke Carlin said :

They bring up Kipnis from Akron , and we look at this little guy and say , ' Where did he come from , and what is he doing here ? ' We were teasing him , and all he does is go out and hit about a million . I mean , here 's this little infielder and they put him in the fifth spot ... What 's that about ? He goes out and hits for the cycle .

For 2010 , Kipnis led the Indians minor league system in hits (159) and runs (96) . He finished tied for third in triples (8) , fourth in doubles (32) , and tied for fifth in both home runs (16) and RBIs (74) . He batted a combined .313 . He was named the Indians ' 2010 Minor League Player of the Year (the " Lou Boudreau Award ") , and was named a 2010 Baseball America Minor League All @-@ Star .

After the 2010 season , Kipnis played for the Peoria Javelinas in the Arizona Fall League . He batted .296 and tied for fifth in the league in RBIs (19) . He was named to the Arizona Fall League Rising Stars Game , and he wrote a blog for MLB.com during his time in the league . Baseball Prospectus ranked him as Cleveland 's top prospect .

== 2011 ==

Baseball Prospectus 2011 reported that Kipnis was " a compact athlete who works the count , and consistently barrels up balls with enough power for 15 ? 20 home runs annually in the big leagues . " Indians Manager Manny Acta described him as : " a blue collar , dirt bag , run @-@ through @-@ a @-@ wall , relentless type of guy . " Writer John Sickels said Kipnis is " quite strong and has plenty of bat speed . His feel for the strike zone is impressive , and he has no problem generating power . He seems to handle both fastballs and breaking stuff well , makes adjustments , and can handle left @-@ handed pitching just fine . "

Baseball Prospectus ranked him as the 28th @-@ highest prospect in baseball (" .300 hitter , with 12 ? 18 home runs ") and the best in the organization . Jim Bowden ranked him the 39th @-@ best prospect in baseball , saying , " He made great progress defensively this past year , and there is no doubt he should be a .300 , 15 HR , 70 RBI type offensive 2B in the future " . Baseball America initially ranked him as the 54th @-@ best prospect in baseball , the second @-@ best second base prospect and the second @-@ best prospect in the Indians organization . By midseason , the publication ranked him 31st @-@ best in the minors .

In 2011 , Kipnis was named the Indians Minor League Player of the Week for June 26 ? July 2 , after batting .500 with two home runs and a .581 on @-@ base percentage . At that point in the season , Kipnis was 11 @-@ for @-@ 11 in stolen base attempts and was leading the International League in runs scored (60) and triples (9) . At that time he was also second in OPS (.914) , fourth in slugging percentage (.525) , fifth in on @-@ base percentage (.389) , tied for sixth in RBIs (50) , tied for seventh in hits (90) , twelfth in average (.305) , tied for fifteenth in stolen bases (11) , and tied for nineteenth in HRs (11) . On July 4 , Kipnis was named the International League Player of the Week .

Kipnis represented the Cleveland Indians in the 2011 All @-@ Star Futures Game on July 10 , hitting a 95 @-@ mph fastball for a home run when he led off the bottom of the first inning for the United States . Kipnis also was named to the International League All @-@ Star team , and he doubled and walked in the game on July 13 .

On July 22 , 2011 , Kipnis was called up from the Clippers to the Cleveland Indians . At the time , he was leading the International league in triples (9) , was second in runs scored (64) , seventh in total bases (164) , tied for tenth in walks (44) , twelfth in RBIs (55) , and seventeenth in stolen bases (12 in 13 attempts) .

= = Major leagues = =

= = = Cleveland Indians (2011 ? present) = = =

Kipnis made his major league debut on July 22 , 2011 , starting at second base against the Chicago White Sox . His first career hit came in his next game two days later ? a game @-@ winning walk @-@ off single with the bases loaded and two outs in the ninth inning against the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim . On August 3 , 2011 , Kipnis became the first Indians second baseman to hit a home run in four consecutive games , and the only Indian other than former Indians MVP Al Rosen to do so in his rookie year . It was the first time in major league history that a player had homered in four consecutive games within two weeks of his major league debut . On August 10 , Kipnis had a five @-@ hit , four @-@ run game , the first time a rookie had done so since Jim Fidelity in 1952 . In 2011 , he played 36 games in the major leagues and batted .272 with seven home runs and 19 RBIs .

Jason Kipnis got the Opening Day starting job at second base for 2012 . On May 3 , 2012 , in a game against the Chicago White Sox , Kipnis had a triple , home run , and a career @-@ high four RBIs in a 7 ? 5 Indians victory . On June 1 , Kipnis hit his first major league grand slam off Minnesota Twins ' starting pitcher Carl Pavano . Kipnis played 152 games in 2012 , batting .257 with 14 home runs and 76 RBIs , and finished tied for 6th in the American League in steals (with 31) .

In the 2013 season Kipnis continued to improve over his 2012 performance , winning the Player of the Week honor twice in the month of June . Kipnis batted .419 in June , with an OPS of 1 @. @ 216 , in addition to stealing 9 bases in 10 attempts . He was also named the American League Player of the Month for June . Kipnis was later named a member of the 2013 American League All Star team . In 2013 , he finished among AL leaders in sacrifice flies (tied for 2nd , with 10) , walks (tied for 7th , with 76) , and steals (tied for 9th , with 30) .

Kipnis signed a 6 @-@ year , \$ 52 @. @ 5 million contract with the Indians on April 4 , 2014 .

In May 2015 Kipnis broke the Indians team record for the most hits in a single month with 51 total hits . He also ended the month with 30 runs which made him one of three people ever in the MLB to have 50 + hits and 30 + runs in the month of May . He was only behind Ty Cobb and Al Simmons .

On June 1 , Kipnis was voted the AL Player of the Month for May .

= = Personal life = =

Kipnis is a practicing Roman Catholic , though he self @-@ identifies as Jewish due to his father 's Jewish ancestry . Kipnis has been nicknamed " Dirtbag " , since he is prone to get his uniform dirty during the course of a game . Former Indians manager Manny Acta affectionately used the term when speaking about Kipnis in public .