

= Pat Seerey =

James Patrick Seerey (March 17 , 1923 ? April 28 , 1986) was an American professional baseball player . An outfielder , Seerey played in Major League Baseball (MLB) for seven seasons in the American League with the Cleveland Indians and Chicago White Sox . In 561 career games , Seerey recorded a batting average of .224 and accumulated 86 home runs and 261 runs batted in (RBI) .

Born in Oklahoma and raised in Arkansas , Seerey played football and baseball in high school . After graduating , he joined the Cleveland Indians ' farm system in 1941 , and made his major league debut two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half years later . He was primary a starting outfielder the next five seasons for the Indians , but led the league in strikeouts four times . He was traded partway through the 1948 season to the Chicago White Sox , and a month after being traded became one of 16 MLB players to hit four home runs in one game . The following season , he was sent to the minor leagues , and played a few seasons in the farm system for the White Sox before retiring .

= = Early life and minor leagues = =

Pat Seerey was born in Wilburton , Oklahoma in 1923 to James and Marie Seerey . His family moved to Little Rock , Arkansas when he was a child , and he played baseball for the Little Rock Boys ' Club at Lamar Porter Field . He attended Little Rock Catholic High School , where he played baseball and American football , serving as the team 's starting fullback . After graduating from high school in 1941 , he was signed by the Cleveland Indians . Shortly afterwards , he was classified as 4 @-@ F , meaning he would not be lost to the military during World War II .

Seerey started his minor league baseball career in 1941 with the Appleton Papermakers of the Wisconsin State League . In one of his first appearances for the team , he hit for the cycle in a 15 ? 4 victory against the Fond du Lac Panthers . In 104 games for Appleton that year , Seerey had a .330 batting average with 31 home runs and 117 runs batted in ; the 31 home runs were a record for the Wisconsin State League at the time . The following season , Seerey played for the Cedar Rapids Raiders of the Three @-@ I League . In 117 games for the Raiders , he had a .303 batting average and 33 home runs . In 1943 , Seerey was promoted to the Wilkes @-@ Barre Barons of the Eastern League , and played in 31 games over the first two months of the season . In early June , outfielder Hank Edwards broke his collarbone , and the Indians needed an extra outfielder on the roster ; Seerey was promoted as a result .

= = Cleveland Indians = =

Seerey made his debut with the Indians on June 9 , 1943 . Almost immediately after his debut , he earned the nickname of " people 's choice " in media due to both his hitting ability and his " willingness to challenge the brick walls of the stadium " . He played in 26 games for the Indians on the season , and hit .222 in 72 at @-@ bats . Entering the 1944 Cleveland Indians season , manager Lou Boudreau planned to use Seerey as the starting center fielder , as he had reported to spring training 25 pounds lighter and Boudreau felt that Seerey could improve on a weak area on the team 's roster . Seerey moved back to left field to begin the season ; in his first game there on the year , he hit a three @-@ run home run to give the Indians a 7 ? 4 victory over the Detroit Tigers . A month into the season , Seerey was among the league leaders in runs batted in , which was attributed to better plate discipline , though his fielding in the outfield was still considered a liability . Partway through the season , Seerey 's playing time diminished , yet he remained the team leader in home runs for most of the season despite limited at @-@ bats . He finished the season with 15 home runs , 39 runs batted in , and a league @-@ leading 99 strikeouts in 101 games .

Entering the 1945 Cleveland Indians season , Seerey was re @-@ classified as 1 @-@ A , and took a military examination during the offseason . He was not slated to join the military after the exam , and the season started with him on the roster as one of the team 's starting three outfielders ,

thanks in part to getting in shape after a strict diet during the offseason . He started off with hits in the first seven games of the season . A month into the season , Seerey hit his first two home runs of the season in a 7 ? 3 loss to the New York Yankees . He followed that up in a mid @-@ July game against the Yankees with three home runs and eight runs batted in , becoming the fourth Indians player to hit three home runs in a game in a 16 ? 4 Indians win . He spent the second half of the season in and out of the starting lineup due to his inconsistent hitting ; manager Boudreau felt that occasional rest days would increase his consistency . In a career @-@ high 126 games , Seerey hit .236 with 14 home runs and 97 strikeouts , which again led the league .

After getting married in early 1946 to Jeanne Dillinger , Seerey started the 1946 Cleveland Indians season working with Boudreau to fix his hitting , as his lunge when he swung the bat was causing him to strike out too often and not hit enough home runs . The change worked , as by the start of July Seerey had a team @-@ leading 11 home runs . His second half performance included a doubleheader against the Chicago White Sox where he hit a home run in each game ; the second home run landed in the upper deck of Cleveland Municipal Stadium , a feat that at the time had only been matched by fellow Indians outfielder Jeff Heath . He finished the season with a .225 batting average , 26 home runs , 62 RBIs , and 101 strikeouts . The 26 home runs were fourth in the league , and for the third straight year Seerey led the league in strikeouts .

Indians catcher Jim Hegan and Seerey spent the offseason improving their hitting , attending batting school led by Hall of Famer Rogers Hornsby ; Hornsby concentrated primarily on improving Seerey 's timing to help him to hit the ball more frequently . In spring training games , Seerey had nine home runs , and expectations were high for him ; Boudreau gave him the starting job in left field for the opener against the White Sox . Through the first month of the season , Seerey had six home runs , but his performance worsened as the season went on . At the end of June , Seerey was removed from the starting lineup and replaced by both Dale Mitchell and Hank Edwards ; he spent the rest of the season playing part @-@ time . He finished the season with a .171 batting average and 11 home runs in 82 games .

After the 1947 season ended , Indians owner Bill Veeck put Seerey on a strict diet and exercise regimen for the offseason , stating that he had to lose 35 pounds if he wanted to remain on the team . By the start of spring training , he had reached his goal of 195 pounds , and felt like he had an easier time swinging the baseball bat as a result . After a good month of spring training , Boudreau named him the starter in right field for the 1948 season , saying that " he 'll be in there until he stops hitting . " Shortly afterwards , Seerey was removed from the starting lineup , and he ended up playing 10 games for the Indians before being traded . On June 2 , Seerey was traded with Al Gettel to the White Sox for Bob Kennedy due to his inconsistency as well as an overstocked group of outfielders on the roster .

= = Chicago White Sox and later life = =

Seerey was named the starting left fielder upon joining the White Sox , a position he held the rest of the season . Through his first 12 games , Seerey had 16 RBIs . On July 18 , Seerey made history , becoming the fifth player to hit four home runs in one game , doing so in an 11 @-@ inning , 12 ? 11 win over the Philadelphia Athletics . Seerey homered in three successive innings (fourth through sixth) , hitting his first two off starting pitcher Carl Scheib and the third off reliever Bob Savage . His fourth home run , in the 11th off Lou Brissie , gave the White Sox the win . On that day , Seerey went 4 @-@ for @-@ 6 with seven runs batted in . In 105 games , 95 with the White Sox , Seerey had a .231 batting average , 19 home runs , 70 RBIs , and 102 strikeouts ; he led the league in strikeouts for the fourth time .

The White Sox brought on new manager Jack Onslow to begin the 1949 Chicago White Sox season . He had a problem with Seerey , who arrived overweight to spring training , and did not consider him worthy of practicing with the other players until he got the weight back down . After playing in four games for the Sox , his last coming on May 7 , Seerey was sent to the Los Angeles Angels of the Pacific Coast League , ending his major league career . He played for four minor league teams in 1949 : Los Angeles , the Newark Bears , the Kansas City Blues , and the San

Antonio Missions .

Seerey spent 1950 with the Colorado Springs Sky Sox of the Western League . Partway through the season , he broke the league 's home run record of 30 , and went on to hit 44 for the Sky Sox over the course of the season . He then finished the season with the Memphis Chickasaws , playing 136 total games with both teams . Seerey split most of the 1951 season between Memphis and Colorado Springs . In one game with the Sky Sox in June , Seerey had two grand slams and nine RBIs in a game , both league records at the time . He ended the season with the Tampa Smokers , and had 28 home runs in 113 between the three teams .

In 1952 , Seerey joined a semi @-@ professional baseball team in Guelph , Ontario . With them , he had 11 home runs and a .253 batting average , and retired at season 's end . The 11 home runs were the highest in the league that season . After retiring , Seerey became a janitor in the St. Louis public school system . He died in Jennings , Missouri on April 28 , 1986 at the age of 63 .