

= Tacks Neuer =

John Stein " Tacks " Neuer ( June 8 , 1877 ? January 14 , 1966 ) was a Major League Baseball pitcher who played for the New York Highlanders in 1907 . In seven career games , he had a 4 ? 2 record , with a 2 @. @ 17 earned run average ( ERA ) and 22 strikeouts .

A veteran of the Spanish ? American War , Neuer worked as a brakeman before taking up baseball professionally . He played for various minor league teams in 1905 and 1907 before making his debut for the New York Highlanders . With New York , he threw three shutouts in seven games , and was praised by manager Clark Griffith for his pitching ability during that stretch . However , his control deteriorated after that season , and over the next three years he played for various minor league teams . He retired after 1910 and became an umpire . He then worked at Bendix Aviation until his retirement in 1942 .

= = Early life and career = =

Neuer was born in Fremont , Ohio , and was one of eight children born to Henry Neuer and Jennie Catherman . He and his family moved to Sunbury , Pennsylvania , when he was a child . In 1898 , Neuer enlisted in the Spanish ? American War as a private , and was discharged the following year . After his discharge , he worked as a brakeman for a local railroad for the next few years . In late 1904 , the Detroit Tigers intended to sign Neuer to a contract . However , nothing came of it and he never played a game with the organization .

Six months after the rumored signing , Neuer was signed by the Wilkes @-@ Barre Barons of the New York State League . He made his professional debut on July 27 , 1905 , and threw a one @-@ hit shutout against the Syracuse Stars . He pitched for Wilkes @-@ Barre the rest of the season . In his final game for them , he pitched both games of a doubleheader , winning one and losing the other . In 1906 , Wilkes @-@ Barre planned to re @-@ sign Neuer , praising his hitting ability to the point that they were considering trying him out as an outfielder or first baseman . They were unable to agree on a contract , and as a result he sat out the 1906 season .

In December 1906 , the Philadelphia Phillies signed Neuer to a contract . He played with the Phillies through the spring , but was cut before the season started and sent to the Providence Grays of the Eastern League . He debuted for them in May , and after being on the team for five days was sent back to Philadelphia . The Phillies stated that they released him outright to Providence ; the issue led to a dispute on which club should pay him for that month , which was settled the following year . After the dispute , Neuer was assigned to the Savannah Indians of the South Atlantic League . He played with the team for three months , and threw multiple shutouts for the team . As a result , New York Highlanders manager Clark Griffith purchased Neuer on August 23 " for immediate delivery . "

= = New York Highlanders = =

Neuer made his debut for New York on August 28 , 1907 , against the Boston Americans . He pitched a shutout and earned a 1 ? 0 victory in which he showed " excellent speed and control . " A week later , he again faced the Americans , and while his pitching was not as " unsolvable " as in his debut , the Highlanders again won , 10 ? 5 . His next appearance was against the Washington Senators on September 9 . In that game , he allowed two hits and threw his second shutout of the season . A rematch against Washington five days later resulted in a 10 ? 2 loss that " came as a great shock " due to his victory earlier in the month .

On September 21 , Neuer made an appearance as a relief pitcher in a game against the Detroit Tigers , taking over for Bill Hogg due to the latter 's ineffectiveness . His next appearance as a starter was against the St. Louis Browns . He was unable to control the baseball due to rain ; the 5 ? 2 game was called after six innings as a result , giving Neuer his second loss . His final appearance of the season was on October 3 against the Chicago White Sox . In that game , he allowed three hits in an 8 ? 0 victory for his third and final shutout of the season . Neuer spent the offseason working as a hotel clerk , and after signing a contract for the 1908 season , he joined the team for

spring training .

Griffith continued to have faith in Neuer during the exhibition season , and said he could potentially be " one of the greatest ever in the twirling line . " Instead of working on his control during that time , which was considered the main thing he needed to work on , he practiced throwing the knuckleball and spitball . Griffith encouraged him to do so , believing that developing these trick pitches would allow him to become a great pitcher , and as a result , he practiced these pitches until , according to one sportswriter , " he was so wild he couldn't hit the grand stand . " In one exhibition game against Atlanta , he appeared in relief of Jack Chesbro , and allowed four runs in less than an inning due to his lack of control . His pitching continued to get worse , and by the end of spring training he was sent to the Newark Indians of the Eastern League . He never returned to the major leagues , becoming the only person to throw a shutout in both his major league debut and his final game .

= = Later life = =

In Neuer 's debut for Newark , he allowed nine walks , eight runs , and made two errors ; his pitching was noted as the direct cause of the 8 ? 5 loss . By the beginning of June , Newark returned him to New York ; in his short time in the Eastern League , Neuer set the record for most strikeouts in a game and most walks in a game , with 13 each . Griffith sent him back to Newark almost immediately , and they in turn sent him to the Toronto Maple Leafs , who in turn released him . He then signed with the Little Rock Travelers of the Southern Association , and pitched for them before being released on August 1 .

The Chicago Cubs decided to give Neuer a tryout , hoping to add some pitching depth to help them , as they were in a pennant race . He did not make the roster , and was sent to the Johnstown Johnnies of the Tri @-@ State League , where he finished the 1908 season . In 1909 , he was increasingly referred to with the nickname of " Tacks " , a nickname reserved for " restless , uneasy , erratic athletes " , due to both his lack of control and his general inconsistency on the mound . That season , he played with many teams , both professional and semi @-@ pro , and was frequently released to his inability to control the ball . The following year , he attempted one more comeback with the Binghamton Bingoes of the New York State League . Manager Jack Warner found his control to be so bad that he refused to use him in a regular season game , and Neuer 's release from Binghamton marked the end of his professional career .

After retiring from baseball , Neuer became an umpire for local semi @-@ pro and amateur baseball games , and worked for Bendix Aviation Corporation in Greene , New York until retiring in 1942 . As an umpire , he was known for his entertaining style , adding extra emphasis on his calls to amuse game attendees . Neuer was married twice and had one son , Eugene , from his first marriage . He moved to Northumberland , Pennsylvania in the 1940s , where he lived until his death in 1966 .