

= Aaron Loup =

Aaron Christopher Loup (born December 19 , 1987) is an American professional baseball relief pitcher for the Toronto Blue Jays of Major League Baseball . He stands 6 feet 0 inches (183 cm) and weighs 210 pounds (95 kg) . Born in Raceland , Louisiana , Loup played baseball at Hahnville High School and Tulane University , where he led his teams to several state playoff appearances and recorded a five @-@ hit shutout . He was drafted by the Blue Jays out of Tulane in the ninth round of the 2009 draft .

After playing for three years with minor @-@ league affiliates for the Toronto Blue Jays and even being chosen for the 2012 Eastern League All @-@ Star Game , Loup was called up to the Blue Jays as a replacement for Luis Pérez and retired all six batters he faced . He was later voted the 2012 Toronto Blue Jays Rookie of the Year by the Toronto chapter of the Baseball Writers Association of America (BBWAA) . Loup pitched 11 2/3 innings on Opening Day in 2013 , and would go on to win his first major league game on April 10 against the Detroit Tigers . He recorded his first two major league saves on April 12 and June 2 , and led the Blue Jays to a win in an 18 @-@ inning game on June 8 after a pair of groundouts .

Loup is a southpaw whose pitching drastically improved after coaches told him to become a sidearm pitcher . His fastball has been noted as particularly effective against both left- and right @-@ handed batters , but he continues to struggle with a changeup . Manager John Gibbons does not view Loup as a long reliever , but rather as a " situational , one @-@ inning guy . " He is known for his " relaxed " personality , which has improved after spending time with his teammates .

= = Early life = =

Loup was born December 19 , 1987 , in Raceland , Louisiana . His father and grandfather influenced his baseball interest the most when he was young , and he says that it was " just all baseball all the time " , with " a little football " . Loup said that when he was thirteen , " My dad had me in the backyard almost every day ? or at least it seemed that way . I was always doing something , whether it was pitching off the mound or hitting in the cage . I wanted to play baseball and knew that I needed to work hard to get there . As a kid , I needed to be reminded of that sometimes . " His baseball role models growing up were Greg Maddux , John Smoltz , and Tom Glavine .

Loup played baseball at Hahnville High School , where he led the Hahnville Fighting Tigers to four state playoff appearances . As a sophomore , he threw a complete @-@ game no @-@ hitter against Terrebonne High School . He then attended Tulane University , where he majored in digital design and played for the Tulane Green Wave from freshman year until his junior year , when he was drafted by the Toronto Blue Jays . As a freshman for the Green Wave , he held a 4 @. @ 37 earned run average (ERA) and 36 strikeouts in 35 innings . As a sophomore , he held a 5 @. @ 66 ERA in 472 2/3 innings , as well as pitching a perfect game of relief on April 26 , 2008 . Before being drafted in his junior year , he had thrown 571 2/3 innings .

= = Professional career = =

= = = Draft = = =

The Blue Jays drafted Loup in the ninth round of the 2009 Major League Baseball Draft . Loup had shown a strong performance when he was playing for the Tulane Green Wave and was the second Green Wave player to be drafted . Loup said of the event , " I had 20 people text message me before I even heard anything and then my phone rang and I got the call . It 's exciting . They told me they would call me as soon as the draft was over and we would discuss details , so hopefully everything will shake out . "

== Minor league career ==

After the draft , Loup played for the Gulf Coast League Blue Jays in 2009 . In the 2009 season , he held a 3 @. @ 86 ERA and 19 strikeouts in 161 ? 3 innings . In 2010 , he was moved up to the Lansing Lugnuts , one of the Class A affiliates of the Blue Jays , where he held a 4 @. @ 54 ERA and 73 strikeouts in 731 ? 3 innings . On June 22 , 2010 , Loup was chosen a Mid @- @ Season All @- @ Star . He missed the last two months of the season with an unknown injury and began 2011 on the disabled list . In 2011 , he was moved to the Dunedin Blue Jays , the Class A @- @ Advanced Blue Jays affiliate , where he held a 4 @. @ 66 ERA and 56 strikeouts in 652 ? 3 innings .

In 2012 , Loup joined the New Hampshire Fisher Cats , the double @- @ A affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays . There , he boasted 36 Eastern League appearances , a 2 @. @ 84 ERA , and 43 strikeouts in 441 ? 3 innings . After his teammate Sam Dyson was promoted to the Blue Jays , Loup was Dyson 's replacement for the Minor League Baseball 2012 Eastern League All @- @ Star Game .

== Toronto Blue Jays ==

==== 2012 ====

Loup began 2012 with the Fisher Cats . In the 2012 season , the Toronto Blue Jays used 32 different pitchers due to frequent injuries , and Loup was among these . He was called up to replace Luis Pérez on July 14 after Pérez tore his ulnar collateral ligament . In his debut , Loup retired all six batters he faced .

On August 3 , Loup became the first pitcher in Blue Jays history to bat in an American League game , grounding out to begin the top of the 15th against the Oakland Athletics . Loup closed out the season posting a 0 @- @ 2 record with a 2 @. @ 64 ERA and 21 strikeouts in 302 ? 3 innings . The Toronto chapter of the Baseball Writers Association of America (BBWAA) named him the Toronto Blue Jays 2012 Rookie of the Year that November .

==== 2013 ====

Though he was considered one of the front @- @ runners , there was still much competition for one of the limited 2013 bullpen spots as a relief pitcher . His main competition was seen as Brett Cecil and J. A. Happ . John Gibbons said , " How it best fits the team , how it all stacks up down there is really what it 's going to come down to . But we 're going to go with the best guy , not because guys are out of options . " Reportedly , Loup learned that he had acquired one of the bullpen spots when Gibbons walked by his locker and said , " Oh , hey Loup ? you made the team . "

Loup pitched 1 1 ? 3 innings of relief for the Blue Jays against the Cleveland Indians on Opening Day . On April 10 , in a game against the Detroit Tigers , Loup recorded his first career win . On April 12 , Loup recorded his first major league save in a game against the Kansas City Royals . He would later record a second major league save in a game against the San Diego Padres on June 2 . On April 20 , Loup committed a two @- @ run throwing error in the eleventh inning against the New York Yankees . During the first two months of the Blue Jays ' lackluster 2013 season , Loup and other relief pitchers helped to keep the Blue Jays from more defeats . Loup was the ninth and final pitcher in an eighteen @- @ inning game against the Texas Rangers on June 8 . The game , which was the longest in Blue Jays history , resulted in a win after Loup gained a pair of groundouts . In another game against the Rangers on June 14 , Loup pitched in the eighth inning and participated in a shutout . Loup ended the 2013 season with a 4 ? 6 record , 2 @. @ 47 ERA and 53 strikeouts in 691 ? 3 innings .

==== 2014 ====

Loup was one of eight pitchers in the bullpen for the Blue Jays ' 2014 opening day . On April 20 , Loup walked three consecutive batters for the first time in his career , and took the loss as the Blue Jays fell to the Cleveland Indians 6 ? 4 . On May 3 , the Blue Jays announced that Loup would replace Sergio Santos as the team 's closer until Casey Janssen returned from injury . After walking as many batters in three months as he had the entire last season , Loup regained confidence after pitching the last few innings of a game on June 4 that went from a 3 ? 2 lead to an 8 ? 2 win against the Detroit Tigers .

===== 2015 =====

Loup took the loss in the Blue Jays ' second game of the 2015 season . Entering with a 3 ? 1 lead against the New York Yankees in the eighth inning , he loaded the bases without recording an out . All three runners would come in to score and Toronto would lose , 4 ? 3 . On April 12 , Loup pitched 12 ? 3 perfect innings against the Orioles , taking the win by a score of 10 ? 7 . Loup experienced ineffectiveness throughout the season , posting an ERA over 5 @. @ 00 into August . Following a 3 ? 1 win over the Yankees on August 16 , Loup was optioned to the Triple @-@ A Buffalo Bisons . He was recalled on September 1 .

===== 2016 =====

On January 15 , 2016 , Loup and the Blue Jays avoided salary arbitration by agreeing to a one @-@ year , \$ 1 @. @ 05 million contract . Loup began the 2016 season on the disabled list with a left forearm flexor strain . He began a rehab assignment with the Dunedin Blue Jays on May 14 . On May 21 , he was moved up to the Buffalo Bisons to continue rehabbing the injury .

===== Scouting report =====

===== Defense =====

Due to his non @-@ ideal size as a pitcher , some have seen issues in Loup 's stamina and durability . His pitches can also come across as " a bit too hittable . " He is , however , especially effective when pitching against left @-@ handed batters . In 2013 , Loup was viewed by the Blue Jays ' manager John Gibbons as " not necessarily a long guy ; he 's more a situational , one @-@ inning guy . " Despite his shortcomings , Loup has the lowest walk rate among all major league pitchers who have pitched at least seventy innings since 2012 , having walked only 2 @. @ 6 % of the batters he has faced . His consistency and endurance have made Loup the Blue Jays ' most @-@ used reliever , and he says " I 'm one of those guys that if my body would let me , I would pitch every day . "

The Baseball Cube 's player ratings , which are based solely on statistics on a scale from 0 @-@ 100 , gave Loup a 69 for control , a 62 for " K @-@ rating " , or strikeouts compared to batters faced , a 62 for efficiency , and a 52 for " vsPower " , or home runs compared to batters faced .

===== Pitching style =====

Loup is a left @-@ handed pitcher , or southpaw . He struggled at first with pitching until minor league pitching instructor Dane Johnson and Dunedin pitching coach Darold Knowles told him to lower his arm and become more of a sidearm pitcher . Now , as he pitches , he tracks a plane from his ear to his shoulder , which also helped his effectiveness against left @-@ handed batters . His slider and fastball improved drastically , but his changeup continued to struggle , and Loup says that he is still a little inconsistent with it . He can throw a low @-@ 90s " breaking " fastball that is just as effective against right @-@ handed batters as left @-@ handed batters . John Farrell , a previous

Toronto Blue Jays manager , said that it was " [Loup 's] poise and his presence that allows him to maintain not only composure , but the ability to execute . " Blue Jays ' bullpen coach Pat Hentgen says that Loup " keeps things simple , he doesn 't over @-@ think . He stays aggressive . He 's got a lot of guts , goes right after hitters and you combine all those things and you 're going to have the success that he 's had . " One reporter compared Loup to Bran Flakes , stating that " [y] ou know exactly what you 're going to get from him every time he takes the mound and he 's not going to add any excitement to any situation . "

= = Personal life = =

Loup married his high school sweetheart Leigh Ann . The couple have one child , a daughter named Sophie Harper Loup , born the weekend of August 24 , 2013 . Loup went on the paternity list for the Blue Jays on August 23 , 2013 , but was called back on August 26 due to the three @-@ day paternity list limit . Loup and his wife spend the off @-@ season at Loup 's Louisiana home . An avid bowhunter , Loup prefers hunting deer with a compound bow . He has also been known to fish and hunt with a gun in the off @-@ season . He is known for having a more quiet and reserved personality , but he says that he has become " a little more comfortable " with his teammates by spending time and " connecting " with them , which he says contributes to his success .