

= Iván Nova =

Iván Manuel Nova Guance (born January 12 , 1987) is a Dominican professional baseball pitcher for the New York Yankees of Major League Baseball (MLB) . Nova made his MLB debut in 2010 . He bats and throws right @-@ handed .

Nova grew up poor in the Dominican Republic , where he started playing baseball at a young age . An unheralded prospect , the Yankees signed Nova as an international free agent in 2004 . After pitching in minor league baseball through the 2008 season , the San Diego Padres selected Nova from the Yankees in the Rule 5 draft . The Padres opted not to carry Nova on their 25 @-@ man roster , however , and returned him to the Yankees .

Nova enjoyed a breakout season in the minors for the Yankees in 2009 . He reached MLB with the Yankees in 2010 . Nova established himself as a key member of the Yankees ' starting rotation during the 2011 season . After struggling in 2012 , Nova reemerged in 2013 , winning the American League Pitcher of the Month Award for August 2013 .

= = Early life = =

Nova was raised in San Cristóbal , Dominican Republic . His father , Manuel , managed a restaurant on the beach . To make ends meet , Nova and his four siblings slept in the same bed and often worked in their father 's restaurant .

Nova rooted for the New York Yankees of Major League Baseball and the Leones del Escogido of the Dominican Professional Baseball League as a child . He played baseball as a shortstop and outfielder , but was not highly regarded as a prospect . He went unnoticed by scouts until he experienced a growth spurt at the age of 15 . Local scouts asked Nova to pitch in a game against older players , and he continued to train as a pitcher .

The Boston Red Sox invited Nova to their Dominican academy , where they attempted to sign him . Nova declined their contract offer , however , as the Red Sox are rivals of the Yankees . When he was 17 years old , a trainer recommended Nova to Victor Mata , a Yankees scout , who invited Nova to attend their Dominican academy .

= = Career = =

= = = Minor league career = = =

After a two @-@ week tryout , the Yankees signed Nova as an international free agent on July 15 , 2004 . Nova received an \$ 80 @,@ 000 signing bonus , about the average bonus given to a Dominican prospect . Though other teams would have offered Nova more money , he insisted on signing with the Yankees .

Nova made his professional debut with the Gulf Coast Yankees in the Rookie @-@ level Gulf Coast League in 2006 , where he accumulated a 3 ? 0 win ? loss record with a 2 @.@ 72 earned run average (ERA) . After starting the 2007 season in extended spring training , the Yankees assigned him to the Charleston RiverDogs of the Class A South Atlantic League .

In 2008 , Nova pitched for the Tampa Yankees of the Class A @-@ Advanced Florida State League . Nova started the season with an 0 ? 5 win ? loss record and a 5 @.@ 06 ERA , at which point he considered quitting baseball . But Nova persevered , and he rebounded to finish the season with an 8 ? 13 win ? loss record and a 4 @.@ 36 ERA in 26 games , 24 of which he started . He recorded 109 strikeouts and 46 walks .

The Yankees opted not to add Nova to their 40 @-@ man roster after the 2008 season , exposing him to the Rule 5 draft that off @-@ season . They calculated that Nova , if selected , would be returned to the organization by the end of spring training , as he was unlikely to last the entire season on a team 's 25 @-@ man roster , as required by the Rule 5 process . In December 2008 , the San Diego Padres selected Nova with the twentieth selection in the Rule 5 draft . Competing for

a spot on the Padres ' roster , Nova had an 8 @. @ 31 ERA in spring training , allowing eight earned runs and 13 hits in 8 2 ? 3 innings pitched , while walking four and striking out three . He was returned to the Yankees after clearing outright waivers at the end of spring training .

Nova began the 2009 season with the Trenton Thunder of the Class AA Eastern League . He started the season with a 2 @. @ 36 ERA in 12 games started . His performance led the Yankees to promote him to the Scranton / Wilkes @- @ Barre Yankees of the Class AAA International League , where he made his first start on June 29 , pitching 5 2 ? 3 innings of no @- @ hit baseball against the Rochester Red Wings . Combined , Nova finished with a 6 ? 8 win ? loss record and a 3 @. @ 68 ERA during the regular season , and had a 1 ? 0 record and a 1 @. @ 93 ERA in two postseason starts with Scranton / Wilkes @- @ Barre . Following the 2009 season , the Yankees added Nova to their 40 @- @ man roster , to ensure he was not selected in the Rule 5 draft again .

= = = New York Yankees = = =

= = = 2010 ? 2011 = = =

After recording a 2 @. @ 43 ERA and 1 @. @ 27 walks plus hits per inning pitched (WHIP) ratio over his first six starts for Scranton / Wilkes Barre , Nova was promoted to the major leagues on May 10 , 2010 , to serve as a long reliever in the Yankees ' bullpen . He pitched three shutout innings in relief before he was optioned back to Scranton / Wilkes @- @ Barre . Nova was recalled to the majors on August 21 , and he made his first career major league start on August 23 . He impressed the Yankees in his first start , going 5 1 ? 3 innings and allowing two runs on six hits against the Toronto Blue Jays . He was given his second start , replacing Javier Vázquez in the Yankees ' starting rotation . Nova struck out seven Chicago White Sox in his first MLB victory on August 29 .

At the time of his MLB debut , the league investigated Nova and fellow Yankees pitching prospect Wilkins de la Rosa for injecting each other with Vitamin B12 . Overall , Nova made seven starts for the Yankees in 2010 , pitching to a 1 ? 2 record and a 4 @. @ 50 ERA . Nova reached the sixth inning only once , however , as he allowed a higher opponents ' batting average and ERA in the fifth inning than in the first four . The Yankees did not include Nova on their postseason roster .

Nova entered spring training in 2011 expected to secure a spot in the starting rotation . Nova was named to the Yankees ' starting rotation . On June 20 , Nova had the longest start in his career , allowing one run in eight innings against the Cincinnati Reds , while striking out seven . Through June , Nova had an 8 ? 4 win ? loss record and 4 @. @ 15 ERA , including a 4 ? 1 record and 3 @. @ 35 ERA in his six most recent starts .

Despite Nova 's success , he was demoted to Scranton / Wilkes @- @ Barre due to the return of Bartolo Colón and Phil Hughes from the disabled list , as Nova had minor league options remaining . Nova used the time with Scranton / Wilkes @- @ Barre to work on his slider .

Nova was called up to the majors due to a double @- @ header against the Baltimore Orioles on July 30 . Nova solidified himself in the Yankee rotation after a 7 2 ? 3 inning , six hit , one run , ten strikeout , zero walk performance against the Chicago White Sox . He remained in the rotation , as manager Joe Girardi went with a six @- @ man rotation , in place of the usual five @- @ man rotation , in order to keep starting Nova . After his July 30 promotion , Nova had an 8 ? 0 record with a 3 @. @ 18 ERA . The Yankees selected Nova for their three @- @ man postseason starting rotation at the end of the season . Girardi named Nova the starter in Game 2 of the 2011 American League Division Series (ALDS) . When Game 1 was postponed by rain in the third inning , he pitched 6 2 ? 3 innings of the resumed game , while allowing only two runs and earning the win . He pitched again for the Yankees in Game 5 but the team lost the series .

Nova compiled a 16 ? 4 record in 2011 , the most wins for a Yankees rookie since Stan Bahnsen won 17 games in 1968 . He also had a 3 @. @ 70 ERA . He was named to the Baseball America All @- @ Rookie Team following the season . Nova finished fourth in balloting for the American League (AL) Rookie of the Year Award , finishing behind Jeremy Hellickson , Mark Trumbo , and Eric

Hosmer .

== 2012 ? present ==

Nova secured for a spot in the starting rotation for the 2012 season in spring training . He won 15 consecutive games from June 2011 through May 2012 , one short of the franchise record set by Roger Clemens . He surpassed the Yankees ' rookie record of twelve consecutive wins , set by Atley Donald in 1939 , during the 2011 season .

Nova struggled at the beginning of the 2012 season , recording a 5 @. @ 60 ERA through May , but decreased it to 3 @. @ 92 by the All @- @ Star break . During an interleague game against the Atlanta Braves on June 11 , 2012 , Nova got his first career base hit off of Randall Delgado in a 3 ? 0 win . Nova was not very effective after the All @- @ Star break , pitching to a 2 ? 5 record with a 6 @. @ 40 ERA in 10 starts , and was placed on the 15 @- @ day disabled list due to rotator cuff inflammation . Due to his struggles late in the season , the Yankees decided to demote Nova to the bullpen for the postseason roster until the team lost in the 2012 ALCS to the Detroit Tigers . Despite his 5 @. @ 02 ERA , he still finished the 2012 season with a record of 12 ? 8 in 28 starts .

Nova struggled in his first four starts of the 2013 season , in which he failed to pitch past the fifth inning , pitching to a 1 ? 1 record and a 6 @. @ 28 ERA . On April 27 , 2013 , Nova was placed on the 15 @- @ day disabled list after an MRI revealed he had inflammation of his right triceps . Nova was activated on May 24 , 2013 , and demoted to the bullpen . He pitched an immaculate inning on May 29 , 2013 against the New York Mets . However , he was demoted to Scranton / Wilkes @- @ Barre the next day , as the Yankees decided they wanted Nova to continue to start .

The Yankees recalled Nova on June 23 . On July 5 , he pitched his first career complete game in a 3 ? 2 win against the Orioles . Again facing the Orioles , Nova pitched his first career shutout on August 31 . Nova was named the AL Pitcher of the Month for August 2013 , in which he recorded a 4 ? 0 record and a 2 @. @ 08 ERA . From July 5 through August 31 , Nova made seven consecutive starts in which he pitched at least seven innings and allowed three or fewer runs . Nova compiled a 7 ? 5 record and a 2 @. @ 70 ERA in 17 games , 16 of them starts , after being recalled from the minor leagues . His final 2013 record was 9 ? 6 with a 3 @. @ 10 ERA in 23 games pitched , 20 of them starts .

Eligible for salary arbitration , Nova and the Yankees agreed on a \$ 3 @. @ 3 million salary for the 2014 season . He was removed from his April 19 start with an elbow injury , which was diagnosed as a partially torn ulnar collateral ligament and required Tommy John surgery , ending Nova 's season . He had a 2 ? 2 record and a 8 @. @ 47 ERA in four starts before the surgery .

Nova began a throwing program to rehabilitate his arm in September , and spent the winter at the Yankees ' spring training facility in Tampa , Florida , rather than returning to the Dominican Republic . The Yankees signed Nova to a \$ 3 @. @ 3 million contract for the 2015 season , avoiding arbitration . On April 11 , 2015 , the Yankees placed Nova on the 60 @- @ day disabled list to begin the season recovering from his Tommy John surgery . He made his first rehabilitation start on June 8 , and returned to the Yankees on June 24 . Nova pitched to a 5 @. @ 11 ERA in 14 starts before the Yankees took Nova out of the starting rotation on September 16 ; however , Nova remained in the rotation due to an injury to Masahiro Tanaka . He finished the 2015 season with a 6 ? 11 record and a 5 @. @ 07 ERA .

In his final year of arbitration , Nova signed a contract worth \$ 4 @. @ 1 million for the 2016 season . Nova began the 2016 season as a relief pitcher before making his first start on May 9 .

== Scouting report ==

Nova throws four pitches : a four @- @ seam fastball between 91 to 95 miles per hour (146 ? 153 km / h) (tops out at 97 mph) , a circle changeup between 85 to 88 miles per hour (137 ? 142 km / h) , a slider / cut fastball between 85 to 89 miles per hour (137 ? 143 km / h) , and a 12 ? 6 curveball between 79 to 82 miles per hour (127 ? 132 km / h) . He relies heavily on his four @- @ seamer against hitters from both sides of the plate . A high percentage (20 ? 25 %) of his pitches

are curveballs , especially when facing left @-@ handers . Nova worked in 2011 to develop his slider , changing his grip at the suggestion of Yankees executive Billy Connors . The work paid off , as his slider garnered a whiff rate of 43 % in 2011 . Nova 's changeup is not his main weapon and is not used against right @-@ handed hitters .

= = Personal life = =

Nova 's family resides in the Dominican Republic . His father traveled to the United States to watch his second MLB start in person . Nova dedicated his 2011 season to his grandfather , who died in 2010 .

Nova is married to Ada de la Cruz , a Dominican beauty pageant champion .