

= Ice Box Chamberlain =

Elton P. " Ice Box " Chamberlain (November 5 , 1867 ? September 22 , 1929) was a professional baseball pitcher . He pitched in Major League Baseball for ten seasons between 1886 and 1896 . In several seasons , Chamberlain finished in his league 's top ten in a number of pitching categories , including wins , earned run average , strikeouts , and shutouts . During one of his best seasons , the 1888 St. Louis Browns won the American Association pennant with a 92 ? 43 record . Although a righthanded pitcher , Chamberlain pitched the last two innings of an 1888 game with his left hand .

Chamberlain finished his major league career with 264 complete games out of his 301 games started . After his playing days , he was hired as a baseball umpire and later announced that he was becoming a boxer , but neither venture seems to have worked out . Not much is known about Chamberlain 's later life . He died in Baltimore in 1929 .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life and career = = =

Chamberlain was born on November 5 , 1867 in Warsaw , New York . He was one of six children born to veterinary surgeon Irving Chamberlain and his wife Carrie . Moving to Buffalo as a child , Chamberlain began to play organized baseball as a teenager . His early professional career included stints in Hamilton , Ontario and with a Southern League team in Macon , Georgia . As a 17 @-@ year @-@ old pitcher with Hamilton , he earned 18 wins and led the league in strikeouts .

Chamberlain made his major league debut with the Louisville Colonels of the American Association on September 13 , 1886 . In early October , Chamberlain was pitching in a game against the Baltimore Orioles when Louisville players began to complain that opposing pitcher Matt Kilroy was leaving the pitcher 's box when he threw the ball . When the umpire did not respond to Louisville 's complaints , Chamberlain 's manager told him to run forward out of the box when he let go of his pitches . The move " scared the Baltimore batters out of their wits " and Kilroy did not deliver any more questionable pitches .

In 1887 , Chamberlain won 18 games for Louisville . The right @-@ hander , who stood 5 ft 9 in (1 @.@ 75 m) and weighed 168 lbs . , earned the nickname " Ice Box " . Some sources attribute the nickname to his ability to remain cool when facing tough opposition , but at least one source links the nickname to chronic laziness . On May 9 , 1888 , while pitching against the Kansas City Cowboys , Chamberlain pitched righthanded for the first seven innings and lefthanded for the last two innings . Louisville won the game by a score of 18 ? 6 . He was the third major league pitcher to throw with both his left and right hands during the same game . The feat was not repeated in the major leagues until Greg Harris switched arms for the ninth inning of a 1995 game .

Chamberlain was traded to the St. Louis Browns in August 1888 , having already registered 14 wins for the Colonels that year . He earned 11 more wins in the last six weeks of the season . He struck out 176 batters and registered a 2 @.@ 19 earned run average that season , good for fifth among the league 's pitchers . The Browns finished 1888 with a fourth consecutive league pennant . However , not long after Chamberlain joined the club , pitcher Nat Hudson left the team to get married . In the World Series , the Browns had only Chamberlain and pitcher Silver King to face a trio of New York Giants pitchers that included future Hall of Famer Tim Lincecum .

After Chamberlain pitched a shutout in the second game of the 1888 World Series , he lost the fourth , sixth and eighth games . Chamberlain gave up 11 runs in the eighth game . Though the Giants clinched the series after that game , they played a full ten games , with Chamberlain winning the last game . The series was Chamberlain 's last major league postseason playing appearance .

= = = Middle career = = =

The Cincinnati Reds talked to St. Louis about acquiring Chamberlain in 1889 , but Cincinnati balked

when St. Louis asked \$ 8 @, @ 000 for him . That year , Chamberlain pitched in a career @-@ high 53 games and finished with 32 wins ; his win total was the third highest in the league . Following the 1889 season , a new major league was forming known as the Players ' League . A players association known as the Brotherhood of Professional Ball Players had served as a union and bargaining agent since the mid @-@ 1880s ; now the group 's new league was attempting to compete with established baseball . Browns owner Chris von der Ahe was afraid that Chamberlain would jump to the Chicago team in the new league ; the manager of the Browns from the previous season , Charles Comiskey , had been hired there . Von der Ahe agreed to match the \$ 800 pay increase that Chamberlain would have gotten in Chicago .

Chamberlain had returned to Buffalo by May 1890 , where he was reported to be hanging out in pool rooms . Rumors held that Chamberlain wanted to join the Brotherhood and that he was " playing for his release . " He was sold to the Columbus Solons (also of the American Association) the next month . Chamberlain had appeared in five games for St. Louis and pitched in 25 more for Columbus by the end of the season . He finished the year with a league @-@ leading six shutouts . In February 1891 , Chamberlain pleaded guilty to a charge of aiding and abetting a prize fight . He received a \$ 50 fine and the Columbus team declared that they would not retain him for the 1891 season .

The Philadelphia Athletics indicated immediate interest in Chamberlain , hoping that he would pitch most of the team 's games . Chamberlain earned a 22 ? 23 win @-@ loss record in 1891 . He was the losing pitcher in the last of 485 shutouts recorded in the few seasons of American Association play . In August , he gave up the longest home run that had been hit at Boston 's Congress Street Grounds . Chamberlain pitched for the NL 's Cincinnati Reds in 1892 , compiling a 19 ? 23 record . In May of that season , Chamberlain pitched in an unusual game that was suspended due to sunlight ; the scoreless game was in extra innings when umpire Jack Sheridan ruled that the sun was too bright for players to see the ball . The 1892 Reds finished with an overall record of 82 ? 68 . League officials split the season into two halves and the Reds finished fourth and eighth in the respective halves .

Before the 1893 season , Chamberlain indicated his displeasure with the climate in Cincinnati and said that he hoped to pitch for New York or Philadelphia in the coming year . He also said that he would be happy to pitch in Buffalo if the city received a major league expansion team . Chamberlain stayed in Cincinnati for that season and the next one , earning 16 ? 12 and 10 ? 9 records . On May 30 , 1894 , Chamberlain was the pitcher when Bobby Lowe became the first major league player to hit four home runs in one game . Two of Lowe 's home runs came in the same inning . Lowe hit only 70 career home runs in an 18 @-@ year career .

= = = Later career and life = = =

Chamberlain had agreed to play for the Cleveland Spiders in 1895 , but instead he joined a Class D baseball team out of Warren , Ohio in the Iron and Oil League . Future Baseball Hall of Fame member Honus Wagner played on the team . Years later , Wagner recalled Chamberlain as an experienced pitcher who shared his baseball knowledge with his young teammates . He reported to the Spiders in 1896 . The team featured Cy Young and young pitchers such as Cy Swaim and Zeke Wilson . Chamberlain was released after appearing in two games .

Chamberlain finished his major league career with a 157 ? 120 win @-@ loss record and a 3 @.@ 57 earned run average . Though he only finished among the top ten in complete games in two of his seasons , Chamberlain completed 264 of his 301 games started . His complete game total was ranked 64th on the all @-@ time major league list after the 2013 season . Chamberlain also hit nine home runs , including a grand slam , during his major league career .

In early 1898 , The Montreal Gazette reported that NL president Nicholas Young signed Chamberlain as an umpire for the coming season . Chamberlain did not ultimately work for the NL because he was unhappy with the salary that he was offered . He played local semi @-@ amateur baseball in Buffalo and then announced that he was leaving baseball to become a boxer . He challenged Jack Baty , a black fighter , to a boxing match and posted a \$ 500 bet on the fight .

There is no record of Chamberlain boxing against Baty or anyone else , and little is known about his life after the major leagues .

Chamberlain briefly played minor league baseball for the 1899 Buffalo Bisons in the Western League . He did not win any games for Buffalo . In 1904 , Sporting Life reported that the pitcher had a brother , F. Earl Chamberlain , who was named a Pacific Coast League umpire . Elton died of colon cancer at the age of 61 . He was interred in the Holy Cross Cemetery in Baltimore , Maryland .