

= Brien Taylor =

Brien McKeiver Taylor (born December 26 , 1971) is a former pitcher in minor league baseball . He spent seven seasons in the minor leagues , primarily with the New York Yankees organization . In his career , he had a win ? loss record of 22 ? 30 , a 5 @. @ 12 earned run average (ERA) , and 425 strikeouts .

Born in Beaufort , North Carolina , Taylor attended East Carteret High School , where his pitching ability caused him to be chosen by the New York Yankees with the first overall selection in the 1991 Major League Baseball Draft . After two full seasons in the minor leagues , he injured his shoulder in a fight , and was ineffective after returning to baseball . He retired in 2000 , having never played a game above Class AA . Taylor is one of two players to be picked first overall in the MLB draft to never reach the major leagues , the other one being Steve Chilcott .

= = Early life and MLB draft = =

Taylor was born in Beaufort , North Carolina to parents Willie Ray , who worked as a mason , and Bettie , who was a crab picker at the local seafood plant . He was the second of four children , and was named for the lead character in the movie Brian 's Song . Taylor attended East Carteret High School in Beaufort and played on the school baseball team . In high school , Taylor had a win ? loss record of 29 @- @ 6 and an earned run average (ERA) of 1 @. @ 25 . He also struck out 213 hitters in 88 innings pitched while walking 28 . His fastball often hit 98 and 99 mph . The New York Yankees selected Taylor with the first overall selection in the 1991 Major League Baseball Draft , and he signed Scott Boras as an advisor , who said of him in 2006 , " Brien Taylor , still to this day , is the best high school pitcher I 've seen in my life . "

The Yankees offered Taylor \$ 300 @, @ 000 to sign a minor league contract , the typical amount given to the first overall draft choice at that time . However , Boras advised the Taylor family that the previous year 's top @- @ rated high school pitcher , Todd Van Poppel , was given more than \$ 1 @. @ 2 million to sign with the Oakland Athletics , and gave up a scholarship to the University of Texas in the process . The Taylors held out for a three @- @ year \$ 1 @. @ 2 million contract , even though they had less leverage because Brien 's poor grades in high school prevented him from getting a major college scholarship offer . They threatened the Yankees that Taylor would not sign and instead attend Louisburg College , a local junior college , to get the Yankees to agree to their terms . The Yankees were without the official services of owner George Steinbrenner , who was serving a suspension at the time , but through the media , Steinbrenner said that if the Yankees let Taylor get away , " they should be shot . " Taylor signed for \$ 1 @. @ 55 million on August 26 , the day before his classes were set to begin . Further delay would have meant the deal could not be signed until after the school year ended , which coincided with the following year 's draft .

= = Professional career = =

The Yankees originally planned to bring Taylor up through the minor leagues rapidly , like the Mets did with Dwight Gooden . However , they found he needed a better move to first base to hold base runners , and chose not to expedite his major league debut . Before even playing a game , he was named the game 's top prospect by Baseball America before the 1992 season . He began his professional career with the Fort Lauderdale Yankees , the Yankees ' Class @- @ A Advanced minor league affiliate . His performances with Fort Lauderdale included throwing nine strikeouts against the Osceola Astros in an 8 ? 5 victory , as well as a 12 @- @ strikeout , two @- @ hit performance in September against the West Palm Beach Expos . For the season , Taylor had a 6 ? 8 win @- @ loss record , a 2 @. @ 57 ERA , and 187 strikeouts in 161 @. @ 1 innings pitched .

The next year , Taylor pitched for the Double @- @ A Albany @- @ Colonie Yankees , where the Yankees planned to have Taylor work on his curveball , as they already felt that his fastball was good enough for the major leagues . Entering the season , he was named baseball 's second @- @ best prospect behind Chipper Jones . That year , Taylor had a 13 ? 7 record , a 3 @. @ 48 ERA ,

and 150 strikeouts in 163 innings , and also led the Eastern League with 102 walks . In 1994 , he was expected to pitch for the Triple @-@ A Columbus Clippers of the International League , and start for the Yankees to begin the 1995 season at the latest , dependent on how he would have performed in spring training . After the season ended , the Yankees wanted Taylor to take part in an instructional league to work on his fundamentals . Taylor declined to attend the camp , and instead chose to return to his home in North Carolina .

On December 18 , 1993 , Taylor was injured while defending his brother Brenden in a fistfight . The New York Times reported that Brenden confronted a man named Ron Wilson , who he had fought with in Harlowe , North Carolina . Brenden suffered head lacerations in his fight with Wilson . Once Brien found out his brother had been hurt , he and a cousin went to Wilson 's trailer home to confront him . There , Taylor got into an altercation with Jamie Morris , Wilson 's friend , and Taylor fell on his shoulder . According to Wilson , Taylor attempted to throw a haymaker at Morris , and missed , which caused the injury . In the hours following the altercation Boras told reporters the injury was a bruise . However , when the Yankees had Taylor visit Dr. Frank Jobe , he called the injury one of the worst he 'd seen . The following week , Jobe repaired a torn capsule and a torn glenoid labrum in Taylor 's shoulder , which caused him to miss the 1994 season .

Taylor returned to baseball in 1995 , and spent the season with the Rookie @-@ level Gulf Coast Yankees . When he returned to the game , after surgery , he had lost 8 mph off his fastball and was unable to throw a curveball for a strike . As a result , in his first season back , he had two wins , five losses , a 6 @.@ 08 ERA , and 54 walks in 40 innings pitched . The Yankees planned to have Taylor spend the 1996 season with the Double @-@ A Norwich Navigators , but he continued to struggle with his control in spring training , saying at one point , " Sometimes I get the ball across the plate , sometimes I feel like I 've never held a ball in my life " . He instead spent the year with the Single @-@ A Greensboro Bats and walked 43 batters in 16 @.@ 1 innings , going 0 ? 5 with an 18 @.@ 73 ERA in nine games ; the Yankees removed him from their 40 @-@ man roster as a result .

Taylor spent the next two seasons in Greensboro . In 1997 , he walked 52 batters in 27 innings , going 1 @-@ 4 with a 14 @.@ 33 ERA in eight games , and in 1998 , he went 0 @-@ 1 with a 9 @.@ 59 ERA in 13 games . He was released by the Yankees at the end of the 1998 season , and signed with the Seattle Mariners the following year . With the Mariners , Taylor took part in extended spring training , and was released in June due to his inconsistency . After the 1999 season , the Cleveland Indians signed him to a contract and placed him with the Class @-@ A Columbus RedStixx . In 2 @.@ 2 innings pitched over five games for Columbus , he gave up 5 hits and 9 walks for a 27 @.@ 00 ERA .

= = After baseball = =

After retiring from baseball , Taylor moved to Raleigh , North Carolina with his five daughters and worked as a UPS package handler , then worked as a beer distributor . By 2006 , he had moved back home and was working as a bricklayer with his father . In January 2005 , police charged Taylor with misdemeanor child abuse for allegedly leaving four of his children (ages from 2 to 11) alone for more than eight hours . He did not show up for his court date , and at one point there were four outstanding warrants for his arrest .

In March 2012 , Taylor was charged with cocaine trafficking after undercover narcotics agents purchased a large quantity of cocaine and crack cocaine from him over a period of several months . He was federally indicted on cocaine trafficking charges in June 2012 . Taylor plead guilty in August 2012 and was sentenced to 38 months in prison , followed by three years ' supervised release . Taylor was Federal Inmate number 56437 @-@ 056 , and was released on September 12 , 2014 .