

= Red Ruffing =

Charles Herbert " Red " Ruffing (May 3 , 1905 ? February 17 , 1986) was an American professional baseball player . A pitcher , he played in Major League Baseball (MLB) from 1924 through 1947 . He played for the Boston Red Sox , New York Yankees , and Chicago White Sox . Ruffing is most remembered for his time with the highly successful Yankees teams of the 1930s and 1940s .

Ruffing dropped out of school as a child to work in a coal mine in his native Illinois . He played for the mine 's company baseball team as an outfielder and first baseman . After he lost four toes from his left foot in a mining accident , he became unable to run in the field , and switched to pitching . He played in minor league baseball in 1923 and 1924 before making his MLB debut with the Red Sox . After struggling with Boston , pitching to a 36 ? 93 win ? loss record , the Red Sox traded Ruffing to the Yankees , where he became successful , pitching as the Yankees ' ace through 1946 . After one season with the White Sox , Ruffing retired from pitching to work in coaching . He served as a bullpen coach for the White Sox , a pitching coach for the New York Mets , and a scout and minor league instructor for the Cleveland Indians .

Ruffing was a member of six World Series championship teams with the Yankees . He also appeared in six MLB All @-@ Star Games . He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1967 . The Yankees dedicated a plaque to Ruffing in Monument Park in 2004 .

= = Early life = =

Ruffing was born on May 3 , 1905 , in Granville , Illinois . He was one of five children . His parents , John and Louise Ruffing , emigrated to the United States from Germany . Ruffing was raised in Coalton , Illinois and Nokomis , Illinois . He went to school in Nokomis . His father was a coal miner , working in a mine in Coalton , Illinois , until he suffered a broken back . John became the superintendent of the mine , and also served as mayor of Coalton .

Red quit school at the age of 13 to work for his father in the mine , earning \$ 3 per day (\$ 47 in current dollar terms) , working as a coupler . Conditions in the mine were dangerous . Red 's cousin , who also worked in the mine , died in an accident . He also played baseball as an outfielder and first baseman for the mine 's company team , and for a semi @-@ professional team in Nokomis .

When Ruffing was 15 years old , he suffered an accident in the mine , where his left foot was crushed between two cars . Though the doctor was able to save his foot , Red lost four toes . He was supposed to begin his professional baseball career in the Kentucky ? Illinois ? Tennessee League that year , but he found himself unable to run as fast as he previously could . Doc Bennett , the manager of a nearby semi @-@ professional team , suggested that Ruffing should try to continue pursuing a baseball career by becoming a pitcher .

= = Professional career = =

= = Minor leagues (1923 ? 24) = = =

Bennett helped arrange for Ruffing to sign his first professional contract when he reached the age of 18 . Ruffing signed with the Danville Veterans of the Illinois ? Indiana ? Iowa League , a minor league baseball team in the Class B designation level . With Danville , Ruffing had a 12 ? 16 win ? loss record . After pitching for Danville in the 1923 season , the Boston Red Sox purchased Ruffing from Danville for \$ 4 @,@ 000 (\$ 55 @,@ 555 in current dollar terms) .

The Red Sox assigned Ruffing to the Dover Senators of the Class D Eastern Shore League to pitch at the start of the 1924 season . He had a 4 ? 7 record for Dover .

= = Major leagues = = =

===== Boston Red Sox (1924 ? 30) =====

Ruffing made his major league debut with the Red Sox on May 31 , 1924 . He pitched without earning a decision in over 23 innings pitched , and had a 6 @. @ 65 earned run average (ERA) . He saw regular playing time with the Red Sox over the next few years but had limited success . He had a 9 ? 18 win @- @ loss record with a 5 @. @ 01 ERA in the 1925 season , as the Red Sox finished in last place in the eight team American League (AL) . Ruffing had a 6 ? 15 win @- @ loss record and a 4 @. @ 39 ERA in the 1926 season , and a 5 ? 13 win @- @ loss record with a 4 @. @ 66 ERA in the 1927 season , with the Red Sox finishing in last place both years . His best season to date , in terms of earned run performance , came in 1928 , when he posted a 3 @. @ 89 ERA . However , he led the AL in earned runs allowed , with 125 , and had a 10 ? 25 win @- @ loss record , which led the AL in losses . On a positive note , he also led the AL with 25 complete games . As Ruffing had a .314 batting average during the 1928 season , the Red Sox and Ruffing considered having him shift to the outfield . The team decided against a position change due to the limitations of Ruffing 's left foot .

The Red Sox chose Ruffing to be their Opening Day starting pitcher for the 1929 season . During the 1929 season , he again led the AL in losses , with 22 , and earned runs , with 135 . He won only nine games . Ruffing often had difficulty pitching more than five innings in a game . Someone in the Red Sox organization suggested to Ruffing that he should try to gain weight by drinking beer , which saw him grow from 185 pounds (84 kg) to 240 pounds (110 kg) .

During the 1930 season , Bob Quinn , the owner of the Red Sox , was in debt and afraid he would lose the team due to foreclosure . To raise capital , he traded Ruffing to the New York Yankees for reserve outfielder Cedric Durst , \$ 50 @, @ 000 (\$ 708 @, @ 267 in current dollar terms) , and a \$ 50 @, @ 000 loan from Jacob Ruppert , the Yankees ' owner . Ruffing ended his five @- @ and @- @ a @- @ half year tenure with the Red Sox with a 39 ? 93 win @- @ loss record ; his winning percentage (.289) was lower than that of the Red Sox during his tenure (.344) .

===== New York Yankees =====

===== 1930 ? 38 =====

Miller Huggins , who served as the Yankees ' manager through 1929 , had attempted to acquire Ruffing from the Red Sox for the last couple years of his Yankees ' tenure . When Ruffing told him that he was considering moving to the outfield , Huggins told him he should continue as a pitcher . Bob Shawkey , a former pitcher who succeeded Huggins as the Yankees new manager in 1930 , had convinced Ed Barrow , the Yankees ' general manager , to acquire Ruffing . Shawkey believed he could change Ruffing 's approach to pitching to obtain better results . Shawkey worked with Ruffing to change his pitching delivery , so that Ruffing used his body more . This helped Ruffing save his arm strength for the later innings of the game . The trade of Ruffing for Durst is now reckoned as one of the most lopsided trades in baseball history ; Durst was a reserve outfielder who always batted at the bottom of the lineup when he was used . The 1930 season proved to be Durst 's last year in the majors . Ruffing had a 0 ? 3 record with the Red Sox before the trade . He won 15 games for the Yankees after the trade , losing only five games .

The Yankees chose Ruffing as their starting pitcher for Opening Day in 1931 . During the 1931 season , Ruffing had a 16 ? 14 win @- @ loss record with a 4 @. @ 41 ERA . The Yankees finished the season in second place . On August 13 , 1932 , Ruffing threw a complete game shutout and hit a home run in the tenth inning off of Washington Senators ' pitcher Tommy Thomas to give the New York Yankees a 1 ? 0 victory . Ruffing became the first pitcher in major league history to win a game 1 ? 0 , hit a home run in the game , and strike out ten or more batters . Two other pitchers have since achieved this feat : Early Wynn in 1957 , and Yovani Gallardo , who did it in 2009 . Ruffing won 18 games during the 1932 season . He had a 3 @. @ 09 ERA , second in the AL only to Lefty

Grove 's 2 @. @ 84 . Ruffing had 190 strikeouts , which led the AL . The Yankees won their first pennant since 1928 . Ruffing won his first World Series game during the 1932 World Series against the Chicago Cubs . He started Game One , and the Yankees swept the Cubs four games to zero .

Ruffing had a 9 ? 14 win @- @ loss record with a 3 @. @ 91 ERA in the 1933 season , as the Yankees finished in second place in the AL . He threw a one @- @ hitter on June 20 , 1934 , against the Cleveland Indians . Two weeks later , Joe Cronin selected Ruffing for the 1934 Major League Baseball All @- @ Star Game . At that point , he had a 9 ? 3 win @- @ loss record on the season . He finished the season with a 19 ? 11 win @- @ loss record , as the Yankees finished second in the AL . Ruffing pitched to a 16 ? 11 record in the 1935 season , as the Yankees again finished second in the AL . His 3 @. @ 12 ERA was third in the league , behind only Grove and Ted Lyons .

Ruffing won 20 games during the 1936 season . His 3 @. @ 85 ERA was the sixth @- @ best in the league , and his 20 wins tied him for third place , with Johnny Allen and Wes Ferrell , behind Tommy Bridges and Vern Kennedy . He started Game One of the 1936 World Series against the New York Giants , but lost . The Yankees defeated the Giants four games to two . In a salary dispute with the Yankees , Ruffing did not report to spring training , and he held out at the start of the 1937 season , missing the first month . He signed in May , receiving a \$ 15 @, @ 000 salary (\$ 246 @, @ 910 in current dollar terms) . Ruffing had a 20 ? 7 win @- @ loss record for the Yankees in 1937 . He finished with the fourth @- @ best ERA in the league , 2 @. @ 98 , trailing Lefty Gomez , Monty Stratton , and Allen , and his 20 wins were second only to Gomez , who had 21 . His performance earned him eighth place in AL Most Valuable Player (MVP) Award voting . He started Game Two in the 1937 World Series , earning the victory , as the Yankees defeated the Giants four games to one .

The Yankees started Ruffing on Opening Day for the 1938 season . He was again named an All @- @ Star during the 1938 season . Yankees ' manager Joe McCarthy , who managed the AL team in the All @- @ Star Game , chose teammate Lefty Gomez as the starting pitcher . As McCarthy did not believe in pitching two players from the same team in an All @- @ Star Game , Ruffing did not appear in the game . He led the AL with 21 wins in the 1938 season . He also tied for the AL lead in shutouts during with three , while his 3 @. @ 31 ERA was third @- @ best in the league , behind only Grove . Ruffing pitched the opening game of the 1938 World Series against the Cubs . He won two games in the series as the Yankees defeated the Cubs . Ruffing finished fourth in AL MVP voting for the 1938 season .

== == == 1939 ? 46 == == ==

McCarthy named Ruffing to be the starting pitcher for the Yankees on Opening Day in 1939 . McCarthy , managing the AL All @- @ Star team that year , also selected Ruffing as his starter for the 1939 MLB All @- @ Star Game . He missed several weeks late in the 1939 season due to an arm injury , but managed to start Game One of the 1939 World Series . He defeated the Cincinnati Redlegs in that game , and the Yankees won the series in a four games to zero sweep . Ruffing won 21 games during the 1939 season . His four shutouts in the 1939 season again tied him for the AL lead , while he finished second in wins behind Bob Feller , and fourth in ERA (2 @. @ 93) behind Grove , Lyons , and Feller . He finished fifth in the balloting for the AL MVP .

Ruffing was the Yankees ' Opening Day starting pitcher in 1940 . He was named to the 1940 All @- @ Star team , and Cronin , acting as manager , selected Ruffing as his starting pitcher . Ruffing finished the season with a 15 ? 12 win @- @ loss record . Ruffing was a member of the 1941 All @- @ Star team as well , but he did not pitch in the game . He had a 15 ? 6 win @- @ loss record during the 1941 season , and was named the starting pitcher for Game One of the 1941 World Series against the Brooklyn Dodgers . Ruffing defeated the Dodgers , as the Yankees won the series four games to one .

Ruffing pitched for the Yankees during Opening Day of the 1942 season . On the year , he compiled a 14 ? 7 win @- @ loss record . He was again named an All @- @ Star , and again did not pitch in the All @- @ Star Game , which was started by teammate Spud Chandler . Though teammate Tiny Bonham had a better season , pitching to a 21 ? 5 win @- @ loss record , McCarthy

again chose Ruffing as his Game One starter for the 1942 World Series , setting a record with six World Series Game One starts that stood until Whitey Ford started his seventh Game One in the 1963 World Series . Ruffing defeated the St. Louis Cardinals in Game One , his seventh World Series victory . This set a record that was surpassed by Ford in 1960 . Ruffing pitched again in the Game Five , with the Yankees down three games to one . Ruffing lost the game , as the Cardinals defeated the Yankees to win the series .

After the 1942 season , Ruffing took a job with Vultee Aircraft , a defense contractor . Despite his age (37) and missing toes , a United States Army doctor certified Ruffing as Class 1 @-@ B in the Selective Service System , overruled Ruffing 's personal physician , who had ruled Ruffing unfit for service . The Army decided that Ruffing could serve in a non @-@ combat role . Ruffing missed the 1943 and 1944 seasons due to his service during World War II . He served in the Sixth Ferrying Group of the Air Transport Command of the United States Army Air Forces at the rank of private . However , he did pitch for the Air Transport Command 's baseball team , throwing a perfect game against Joe DiMaggio 's team , and leading his team to the championship against Ted Lyons ' team . In 1944 , he played with an All @-@ Star team for troops stationed in Hawaii .

Ruffing turned forty years of age during the war , resulting in his discharge in June 1945 . He rejoined the Yankees that month , signing for the same \$ 20 @,@ 000 salary (\$ 262 @,@ 884 in current dollar terms) he earned in 1942 . He made his first appearance with the Yankees since the 1942 season in July 1945 . Pitching for the Yankees as a spot starter in 1946 , he had a 5 ? 1 win @-@ loss record and a 1 @.@ 77 ERA when he suffered a broken kneecap from a line drive hit by Hank Majeski , and missed the remainder of the season .

In total , Ruffing won 231 games with the Yankees . This mark was the most in franchise history , until Ford surpassed it in 1965 . He remains the winningest right @-@ handed pitcher in Yankees ' history .

=== Chicago White Sox (1947) ===

Suffering from recurrent knee injuries , the Yankees released Ruffing after the 1946 season . He signed with the Chicago White Sox for the 1947 season , but continued to be limited by his knee . In May , the White Sox removed Ruffing from their active roster after he was hit in his bad knee with another line drive . He rejoined the White Sox ' active roster in July . He pitched to a 3 ? 5 win ? loss record and a 6 @.@ 11 ERA in nine games pitched on the season . Ruffing retired after the 1947 season .

=== Career summary ===

Ruffing finished his career with 273 wins , 225 losses , 1 @,@ 987 strikeouts and a 3 @.@ 80 ERA . He also had 16 saves . Ruffing compiled 335 complete games in his 536 games started . Ruffing could also handle the bat very well compared to most other pitchers , hitting 36 home runs and batting .269 in 1 @,@ 937 career at @-@ bats . He hit over .300 in eight different seasons , and was frequently used as a pinch hitter in games he did not pitch . He also played in the outfield in emergency situations . Ruffing 's home run total as a pitcher trails only Ferrell , Warren Spahn , and Bob Lemon . Ruffing holds the AL record for most runs and earned runs allowed .

Ruffing threw a fastball , a " sharp " curveball , and a slider . According to AL umpire Bill Summers , " [O] n account of Red Ruffing , the slider got to be the thing . " Joe Paparella , also an AL umpire , said " The first game I ever worked behind the plate in the major leagues was against the guy who invented the slider and had the best slider ever seen ? Red Ruffing " .

== Coaching career ==

After he retired from pitching , Ruffing stayed with the White Sox organization to instruct their players . The White Sox named Ruffing the manager of their Class A minor league affiliate , the Muskegon Clippers of the Central League , for the 1949 season . That season , the Clippers finished

in fifth place out of six teams . In 1950 , Ruffing managed the Daytona Beach Islanders of the Florida State League , a Cleveland Indians ' affiliate .

When Al Simmons retired from his coaching position with the Indians just before the 1951 season due to his failing health , bullpen coach Jake Flowers was moved to the third base coaching position , and Ruffing took over Flowers 's duties . From 1952 through 1961 , Ruffing was a player personnel executive for the Indians . Ruffing returned to the baseball field serving as pitching coach for the expansion New York Mets in 1962 , which were run by George Weiss , the general manager , and Casey Stengel , the manager . Weiss and Stengel had held the same positions with the Yankees during Ruffing 's tenure . As a team , the Mets had a 5 @.@ 04 ERA across the 1962 season , which was the worst in the major leagues . The job also involved scouting duties , which Ruffing did not like , and he retired shortly after the season ended . He returned to baseball again for the 1969 season , at the request of former teammate Don Heffner , who was managing the Denver Bears of the American Association . Ruffing served as Heffner 's pitching coach .

= = Personal = =

Ruffing married Pauline Mulholland , a native of Chicago , at the end of the 1934 season . The couple settled in Long Beach , California . When he worked for the Indians in the 1950s , the Ruffing family relocated to Cleveland . The couple had a son , named Charles , Jr .

Ruffing suffered a stroke in 1974 , at the age of 68 , which left him paralyzed on his left side . As a result , he used a wheelchair for the remainder of his life . This was Ruffing 's second stroke , and he also suffered from kidney and heart problems . He contracted skin cancer , necessitating the partial amputation of one of his ears . He died on February 17 , 1986 , at Hillcrest Hospital in Mayfield Heights , Ohio , of heart failure .

= = Honors = =

In balloting for the National Baseball Hall of Fame following his retirement , Ruffing often received votes from approximately 50 % of the voters in the Baseball Writers ' Association of America , short of the 75 % required for induction . Bob Feller wrote an article in The Saturday Evening Post in 1962 , calling Ruffing , Satchel Paige , and Luke Appling the three most deserving players who had yet to be elected . The balloting of 1967 was Ruffing 's final year of eligibility , as he had retired twenty years prior . Ruffing finished with 212 votes , tied with Joe Medwick for the highest vote count , but was seven votes short of the 219 required for induction . However , a runoff election held the next month saw Ruffing into the Hall of Fame the next month .

During an Old @-@ Timers ' Day ceremony held on July 10 , 2004 at Yankee Stadium , the Yankees dedicated a plaque in Ruffing 's memory . The plaque is displayed in Monument Park . ESPN.com ranked Ruffing as the ninth greatest Yankee of all time .

A museum in Nokomis , Illinois , the Bottomley @-@ Ruffing @-@ Schalk Museum , is dedicated to Ruffing and fellow Hall of Famers Ray Schalk and Jim Bottomley .