



## Ted Breitenstein

### A No-Hitter In His First Start

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On the final day of the 1891 season, player-manager Charles Comiskey of the St. Louis Browns found his team in second place, 8½ games behind the Boston Reds in the American Association. On the schedule was a doubleheader with the Louisville Colonels. Comiskey gave the starting nod for the first game to young Theodore “Ted” Breitenstein, a hometown product with a promising left arm.

Breitenstein had seen limited action in relief during the season, having hurled 19-2/3 innings in five previous appearances. But Comiskey wanted to give Breitenstein his first start, so on October 4, 1891, Ted Breitenstein took the mound in old Sportsman’s Park to face Louisville left fielder Monk Cline.

Over the course of the next two hours, a crowd of 5,000 watched as Breitenstein mowed down hitter after hitter. The Browns’ defense was flawless and their offense produced 8 runs to give the home team a shutout victory over the Colonels. It was the only no-hitter of the 1891 season in the American Association and the last in the league’s history.

However, Breitenstein’s no-hitter was nearly the third perfect game in the history of baseball behind Lee Richmond and John Ward’s feats in 1880. Breitenstein issued a single base-on-balls, but he also faced the minimum 27 batters. How the lone Louisville base runner was retired is not recorded – either in a double play or a pick-off – in the box scores of the day.

The 22-year old southpaw wasn’t even aware of his remarkable feat until after the game as his teammates feared they would jinx his performance.

Breitenstein would throw a total of 4 no-hitters in his 11-year major league career, placing him in the company of Nolan Ryan (7) and Sandy Koufax (4). He was also involved in a number of close calls. His bid for a no-hitter on May 6, 1892 against the Brooklyn Bridegrooms was broken up by 2 singles in the 9<sup>th</sup> inning.

His no-hitter against the Pittsburgh Pirates on April 22, 1898 occurred on the same day as Baltimore’s Jim Hughes’ no-hitter against Boston, marking the first time in the history of major league baseball that two nine inning no-hitters were thrown on the same day.

Breitenstein is 2<sup>nd</sup> all-time in National League history for pitching 447 innings – *that’s nearly 50 complete games* – during the 1894 season. His 30 losses during the 1895 campaign, however, ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> all-time in major league history.

But Ted Breitenstein can claim what few men can: a no-hitter in his first major league start.