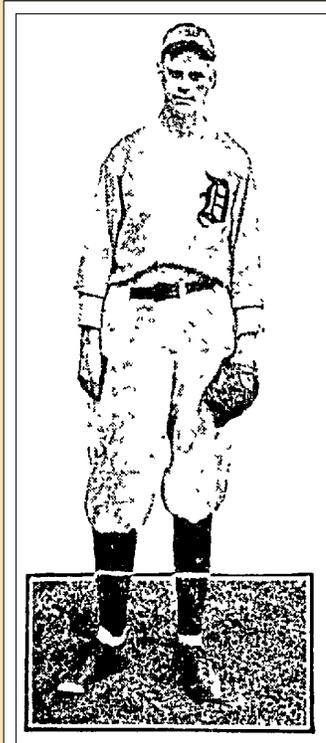


# Cups of Coffee: Willis Koenigsmark

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On September 10, 1919, St. Louis Cardinals rookie Willis Koenigsmark makes his major league debut against the Brooklyn Dodgers, and unfortunately for the Waterloo, Illinois native, pitches his way into the record books by becoming the fifth of only 13 pitchers (through 2009) to appear in only one major league game and allow at least one run while not recording an out thus finishing his career with an infinity ERA.



Will Koenigsmark  
1917 Dallas Giants

Two days after pitching for the Perryville Red Sox in a southern Illinois semipro game, Koenigsmark is brought in by Cardinals' manager Branch Rickey in relief of starter Marv Goodwin at the start of the eighth inning. The 6-foot-4 right-hander faces only three batters, walking shortstop Ivey Olson and yielding singles to second baseman Jimmy Johnston and Tommy Griffith before being relieved by Frank Woodward. Both Olson and Johnston will come around to score on a force out and a single, by Hi Myers, in an eventual 11-8 Redbird win.

In addition to Koenigsmark, Brooklyn's **Lafayette Henion** also makes his only major league appearance in the game, allowing two runs in three relief innings.

A World War I army veteran, Koenigsmark signs his first professional baseball contract on February 17, 1917, with the Dallas Giants of the Texas (B) League. With the announcement of his signing, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* opines about his last name:

*"As Koenigsmark is a youngster there is of course some doubt of his making good, and for the sake of scorers and umpires it may be a blessing if Willie is send back to his dear old Waterloo."*

The *Star-Telegram* nearly gets its wish as the lanky right-hander with the lengthy last name is sold to the Sherman Browns (575 miles from Waterloo) of the Western (D) Association on March 21.

No statistical records for Koenigsmark (other than his one game with St. Louis) exist between 1917 and 1919. Prior to his signing with the Cardinals, he toils for a semipro team in Perryville, Illinois, where he has games of 22 and 20 strikeouts and is known as the "Fireball King of Southern Illinois."

One of 18 pitchers invited to the Cardinals' 1920 spring training camp in Checotah, Oklahoma. Koenigsmark is eventually sent to the Houston Buffaloes of the Texas (B) League where his progress is set back three weeks while nursing a spiked foot injury.

In his Buffaloes' debut on April 22, Koenigsmark, pitching in relief of starter A.L. Sparks, allows the visiting Beaumont Exporters only six singles in 10 2/3 innings, but absorbs the loss when the Exporters push across the winning run in the bottom of the 11th inning in a 6-5 win.

September 10, 1919  
Robison Field, St. Louis, Missouri

## ST. LOUIS DEFEATS DODGERS BY 11-8

Brooklyn Makes Big Rally in Ninth  
But Fails to Cop

ST. LOUIS, Mo., Sept. 10.—St. Louis pounded Mamaux for six runs in the third inning today and won a loosely played game from Brooklyn, 11 to 8. Score:

Brooklyn						
	AB.	R.	H.	O.	A.	E.
Olson, ss	4	2	1	3	4	0
Johnston, 2b	5	2	2	3	3	0
Griffith, rf	5	1	3	2	0	0
Z. Wheat, lf	3	0	1	1	0	0
Hickman, lf	2	0	0	0	0	0
Myers, cf	5	1	3	1	0	0
Konetchy, 1b	3	0	0	6	1	0
Schmandt, 1b	2	0	0	4	1	0
Kilduff, 3b	2	0	2	1	3	0
Baird, 3b	2	0	0	0	0	0
Miller, c	4	1	0	2	3	1
Mamaux, p	1	0	0	0	0	1
Henion, p	1	0	0	1	0	0
xM. Wheat	0	1	0	0	0	0

Totals ..... 39 8 12 24 15 2  
x Batted for Henion in ninth.

St. Louis						
	AB.	R.	H.	O.	A.	E.
Schultz, rf	3	2	2	0	0	0
J. Smith, rf	1	1	0	0	0	0
Heathcote, cf	4	2	2	1	0	0
Stock, 3b	4	1	2	2	2	0
Hornsby, 3b	2	1	2	2	6	0
McHenry, lf	3	1	1	2	0	0
Shotten, lf	1	0	0	1	0	0
Dilhoefer, c	4	0	1	6	0	0
Mollwitz, 1b	3	0	0	12	0	0
Lavan, ss	3	1	2	0	1	0
Janvrin, ss	1	0	0	1	2	1
Goodwin, p	3	2	0	0	1	0
Koenigsmark, p	0	0	0	0	0	0
Woodward, p	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parker, p	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tuero, p	0	0	0	0	0	0

Totals ..... 32 11 12 27 12 1  
Brooklyn ... 1 0 0 1 0 0 0 2 4—8  
St. Louis ... 0 0 6 3 0 2 0 0 x—11

Two base hits—Lavan, McHenry, Hornsby. Three base hits—Myers, 2. Stolen base—Heathcote. Sacrifice fly—Hornsby. Double plays—Olson, Johnston and Schmandt; Konetchy, Miller, Kilduff and Olson; Stock, Hornsby and Mollwitz. Left on bases—Brooklyn, 7; St. Louis, 4. Base on balls—off Mamaux 4; off Henion, 2; off Goodwin, 1; off Koenigsmark, 1. Hits—off Goodwin, 6 in 7 innings; off Woodward, 1 in 1 inning; off Parker, 1 in 1 inning, none out in ninth; off Koenigsmark, 2 in 0 inning, none out in eighth; off Mamaux, 10 in 5 innings. Hit by pitcher—by Parker, (M. Wheat). Balk—Mamaux. Struck out—by Mamaux, 1; by Henion, 2; by Goodwin, 4; by Tuero, 1. Wild pitch—Tuero. Winning pitcher—Goodwin. Losing pitcher—Mamaux.

## Willis Koenigsmark [2 of 2]:

Earning a start for his performance against Beaumont, his brief stay in the Texas League comes to an end six days later after he fails to last one inning against the San Antonio Bears, allowing five runs on six hits and two walks. Relieved by Bill Buscha, Koenigsmark is spared a second loss when the Buffs rally for an 8-5 win.

Koenigsmark is demoted to the Spartanburg Pioneers of the South Atlantic (C) League where he finishes 9-9 with a 2.52 ERA.

Returning to Spartanburg for what proves to be his final season in organized baseball, Koenigsmark is 4-7 for the Pioneers when on May 17, he is "temporarily" loaned to league rival Columbia. Making his Comers debut against his old team on the same day of the trade/loan, Koenigsmark is forced to leave the game when he is injured in the fifth inning of a eventual 3-2 loss. Two weeks later, Charlotte returns the injured hurler to Spartanburg.

In the off season, a sore-armed Koenigsmark is traded back to Charlotte for 1920 Ohio University graduate Clyde Gatchel. It is a trade that eventually proves to be beneficial for neither team.

April 22, 1920  
West End Park, Houston, Texas

### BEAUMONT REQUIRES ELEVEN INNINGS TO DEFEAT BISONS

Houston, Tex., April 22.—In the best game seen on the local diamond this year Beaumont took the third game of the series from Houston by a score of 6 to 5 in an eleven-inning battle. Timely hits on both sides brought in the runs. Both teams scored four runs in the first inning. Sparks for Houston and Freeman for Beaumont lasted one-third of an inning each. Stellbauer for Houston was the hitter for the day with two doubles and a single. The score:

BEAUMONT.				HOUSTON.			
AB.	H.	O.	A.	AB.	H.	O.	A.
Demaggio, rf	5	1	3	0	0	0	0
Breaux, cf	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Mathes, lb	5	2	1	0	0	0	0
Easterly, c	2	1	7	3	0	0	0
Rader, ss	3	1	2	5	0	0	0
St.bury, 3b	5	2	4	2	0	0	0
Bartlett, lf	5	1	2	0	0	0	0
Monroe, 2b	4	0	2	6	0	0	0
Freeman, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
James, p	4	1	0	1	0	0	0

Totals 35 10 23 18 0 | Totals 35 7 33 18 0

By Innings—  
Houston .....400 000 010 00—5  
Beaumont .....401 000 000 01—5

Runs—Demaggio, Mathes 2, Easterly 2, Rader, Baggan 2, Ena, Stellbauer, Silcott.  
Summary—Two-base hits: Demaggio, Mathes, Stellbauer 2, Rader, Stolen bases: Trout, Mathes, Silcott, Demaggio. Double plays: Doyle to Leslie; Doyle to Trout to Leslie; Easterly to Monroe. Base on balls: Off Koenigsmark 2, off Freeman 2, off James 3. Struck out: By Koenigsmark 3, by Freeman 1. By James 1.

## Willis Koenigsmark Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	INN	H	BB	SO	ERA	
1917	Sherman Browns	Western Assoc.	D	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1919	Bellevue Athletic Club	Illinois	S-Pro	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1919	Perryville Red Sox	Northern Illinois	S-Pro	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1919	St. Louis Cardinals	NATIONAL	ML	0-0	0.0	2	1	0	***	
1920	2 Teams	South Atlantic/Texas	C/B	9-10	154.1	131	46	59	2.68	
1920	Houston Buffaloes	Texas	B	0-1	11.1	13	4	3	4.86	
1920	Spartanburg Pioneers	South Atlantic	C	9-9	143	118	42	56	2.52	
1920	Clifton, S.C.	Piedmont Textile	S-Pro	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1921	2 Teams	South Atlantic	B	6-11	170	211	52	66	4.61	
1921	Spartanburg Pioneers	South Atlantic	B	6-10	170	211	52	66	4.61	
1921	Columbia Comers	South Atlantic	B	0-1	-	-	-	-	--	
1923	Dawson, Georgia	Georgia State	S-Pro	-	-	-	-	-	--	
<b>Major League Totals</b>				<b>1 Season</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>***</b>
<b>Minor League Totals</b>				<b>3 Seasons</b>	<b>15-21</b>	<b>313.0</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>3.73</b>

ML Debut: September 10, 1919 at Robison Field, St. Louis: relieved Marv Goodwin at the start of the 8th inning in a 11-8 win over Brooklyn; faced three batters, walked one and allowed two hits and two runs.

August 7, 1920  
Warren Park, Augusta, Georgia

Koenigsmark outduels Orin "Lefty" Masters in an 18-inning South Atlantic League game in Augusta ... Koenigsmark allows two runs on 11 hits with five strikeouts and four base on balls.

### SEVENTEEN INNINGS PEACHES AND SPARTANS BATTLE TO A TIE, VISITORS WIN IN EIGHTEENTH

"Lefty" Masters and "Big Boy" Koenigsmark Go All the Way—Masters Loses but Has the Best of the Argument, Holding Spartanburg Runless During Fifteen Consecutive Innings—Final Count Is 3 to 2—Near Riot in Sixteenth.

Spartanburg.	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
Bass, lf	6	0	0	6	0	0
Crowell, 3b	5	0	2	5	6	0
Groh, 2b	5	0	1	2	4	0
Hill, cf	6	0	0	2	0	0
Harbison, lb	6	1	1	27	2	0
Braun, rf	5	1	2	4	0	0
Achinger, ss	7	0	1	10	0	0
Scharling, c	7	0	1	7	0	0
Koenigsmark, p	6	1	2	0	6	0
Totals	58	3	9	54	28	0

Augusta.	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
Mathews, 2b	7	0	2	7	6	0
Clancey, 3b	4	1	1	3	2	0
C. Brown, cf	7	1	1	1	0	0
Davis, lb	7	0	2	32	0	0
Casey, rf	7	0	1	1	0	0
P. Brown, ss	3	0	1	2	7	1
Hammock, lf	6	0	0	1	1	0
Agnew, c	7	0	1	7	1	0
Masters, p	7	0	1	0	7	0
Walker	1	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	61	2	11	54	20	1

Hit for Hammock in 15th.  
Score: Spartanburg 010 000 000 000 001—3  
Augusta 000 002 000 000 000 000—2

Summary—Two-base hits: Braun, C. Brown, Stolen bases: Clancey, Sacrifice hits: Crowell, Hill, Clancey, Davis, Bass. Struck out by Masters, 7. Koenigsmark 5. Bases on balls: Masters 6, Koenigsmark 4. Double plays: P. Brown and Davis, Mathews to Davis. Left on bases: Spartanburg 8, Augusta 14. Hit by pitcher Koenigsmark. Time 3:30. Umpires: Parker and Olsen.

Known for wearing three shirts when pitching, Koenigsmark is suspended by Charlotte manager Dick Hoblitzel on April 23, 1922, for "failure to round into shape". Given his recent history of arm problems, the *Charlotte News* writes that it is "doubtful" he will pitch in a single game the upcoming season. *The News* proves prophetic as Koenigsmark and outfielder Roy Ramsey (.263) are released by the Hornets on May 2.

Spartanburg follows suit six weeks later when it suspends Gatchel a second time for "failing to get into playing shape."

Koenigsmark is last heard of pitching in 1923 for a semipro team in Dawson, Georgia.

Koenigsmark passes away on July 1, 1972, at the age of 76.