

David Aardsma - A Red Sox Player Profile

In my initial quest to profile every Boston Red Sox player ever, Aardsma was one of the first I ever wrote about. Aardsma was a guy that the Sox probably gave up too quickly on, and considering he was a relief pitcher, that's saying just how good David really was at his peak.

On January 28, 2008, [the Boston Red Sox traded Willy Mota and Miguel Socolovich to the Chicago White Sox for relief pitcher David Aardsma](#). The Red Sox wouldn't miss either of those guys. Mota never made the Majors. Socolovich would have a few appearances in the majors, but never have much of an MLB career.

It makes sense why the Red Sox wanted Aardsma. Despite inconsistent results and some problems with walks, Aardsma had strikeout stuff. Despite an ugly 6.40 ERA in 2007 with the White Sox, his FIP (Fielding Independent Pitching) was just 4.29, a mediocre, but OK number, especially for a middle relief pitcher. He was also just a year removed from his 2006 Chicago Cubs season, where he had okay results (4.08 ERA) but a bad FIP (5.15). The Red Sox clearly felt they could get something in the middle from Aardsma, and the price was quite reasonable.

Unfortunately, Aardsma would post negative 0.3 WAR for the Sox. His walk rate ballooned from a manageable 4.7 walks per nine innings to 6.5. Despite striking out a batter per inning (9.1 K/9), he gave up 49 hits in 48 and two thirds innings. While he'd be credited with 4 wins to his name with only two losses, that archaic win-loss stat didn't reflect how poor his performance actually was.

After a bad 2008 season, the Red Sox would trade Aardsma on January 20, 2009 to the Seattle Mariners for relief pitcher Fabian Williamson. Sadly, the Red Sox gave up on Aardsma too soon. Williamson never made the majors, although he'd hang around baseball through the 2019 season mostly playing in the Mexican League. Ironically, Williamson had the same problem as Aardsma, an inability to limit his walks.

However, in Seattle, Aardsma would have his two best MLB years in the Emerald City. He'd be worth 1.7 WAR in 2009 and 0.7 WAR in 2010. The good news is that the Red Sox would get something out of Fabian Williamson, trading him to Oakland for utility player Eric Patterson, who would be a slight positive. Still, the Sox would lose almost 2 wins of value overall over the next two seasons.

Aardsma would get hurt and miss the 2011 season with a hip injury, [signing with the Yankees for a half million dollars for the 2012 season](#). He'd pitch only one game for the Yankees, facing 5 batters and giving up one run in one inning. Aardsma would bounce back with the Mets in 2013, pitching OK but nothing special, and finished his MLB career in 2014 with the Braves.

He'd try to hang on for a few more years before officially hanging it up after a failed spring training chance with the Blue Jays in 2016. Aardsma would finish his professional baseball playing career on a high note, though, pitching to a 2.01 ERA in 23 games for the independent Long Island Ducks.

Fortunately for Aardsma, he's still in the game of baseball, working with the Toronto Blue Jays front office since 2018 as a player development coordinator. His focus seems to be on getting the most velocity out of the fastballs of minor league pitchers for the Jays, something Aardsma obviously had a lot of experience with in his career. Still Aardsma and his family certainly benefited from David's decent Major League career, one that probably should've lasted longer with the Red Sox.

~ Amelia Desertsong