



Mickey Lolich

He may not have looked like the consummate professional athlete, but could the man ever pitch! How well? How about MVP of the 1968 World Series for the Detroit Tigers by capturing three complete game victories over the favoured St. Louis Cardinals.

Mickey had the proverbial rubber arm as he never had arm troubles while pitching over 3,600 career innings in his 16 seasons in the bigs. That's amazing as left-hander Lolich was actually a right-hander as a child. A broken arm in his youth led Mickey to learn to pitch left-handed.

Mickey played for the Tigers for 13 years and was a model of consistency. He won 14 or more games in a season for 11 consecutive years. In fact, he topped 20 wins by winning 25 games in 1971 and 22 in 1972. He was named an all-star three times in 1969, 1971 and 1972 and finished second for the Cy Young Award in 1971 and third in 1972. But 1971 was a stellar season as he led the American League in innings pitched (376), strikeouts (308), games started (45), complete games (29), and batters faced (1,538).

After his first mediocre season of his career in 1975 when he went 12-18, he was traded to the New York Mets for Rusty Staub. After one season in New York, he finished his career with two seasons largely as a reliever for the San Diego Padres.

At the time of his retirement, Lolich was the left-handed career leader in strikeouts with 2,832. He has since been passed by Steve Carlton and Randy Johnson.

As alluded to, Mickey was a bit portly on the pitching mound which led him to a great quote *"All the fat guys watch me and say to their wives, 'See, there's a fat guy doing okay. Bring me another beer'."*

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