

JOHN MCGOWAN RETIRES, EYES SENATE RUN

MOST DECORATED PITCHER EVER CALLS TIME ON NBBO CAREER AFTER TEN SEASONS

MILFORD, CONN. (Dec. 14, 1866) – The entire base ball world – players, coaches, executives, and fans alike – was left stunned this afternoon when telegrams and word of mouth hit the general public that John McGowan, the most decorated pitcher in the history of the National Base Ball Organization, had decided to [retire from the sport](#) and go into politics.

McGowan's career, spanning ten seasons with St. John's & Knickerbocker, ends as nothing short of legendary:

Year	Age	TM	LVL	W	L	SV	ERA	G	GS	IP	CG	SHO	HA	R	ER	HR	BB	K	AVG	BB/9	K/9	K/BB	NHIP	ERA+	WAR	WAR
1857	26	StJ	NBBO	8	4	3	2.97	22	9	94.0	5	0	116	62	31	0	16	7	.294	1.5	0.7	0.4	1.40	123	0.9	1.6
1858	27	StJ	NBBO	22	4	0	2.94	31	28	245.0	21	0	249	142	80	0	42	39	.256	1.5	1.4	0.9	1.19	127	4.2	6.9
1859	28	StJ	NBBO	25	8	0	2.78	35	35	297.1	27	0	346	189	92	0	38	36	.279	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.29	135	5.7	7.1
1860	29	StJ	NBBO	23	12	0	3.01	36	35	295.2	27	4	328	163	99	0	33	39	.274	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.22	131	5.8	9.5
1861	30	StJ	NBBO	25	10	0	2.74	39	35	305.1	23	0	356	196	93	0	49	38	.276	1.4	1.1	0.8	1.33	138	5.2	6.7
1862	31	StJ	NBBO	23	7	0	3.63	37	35	290.1	22	3	352	203	117	0	37	32	.286	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.34	109	5.1	5.8
1863	32	StJ	NBBO	24	11	0	3.58	39	35	291.2	22	0	371	195	116	1	35	30	.302	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.39	111	5.0	6.2
1864	33	KNI	NBBO	17	14	0	3.33	35	35	284.0	22	1	323	194	105	0	22	26	.271	0.7	0.8	1.2	1.21	112	5.1	6.6
1865	34	KNI	NBBO	27	5	0	2.46	35	34	292.2	26	2	266	149	80	1	19	31	.232	0.6	1.0	1.6	0.97	142	4.7	10.3
1866	35	KNI	NBBO	21	13	0	2.97	36	35	284.2	23	2	335	184	94	0	23	27	.279	0.7	0.9	1.2	1.26	120	4.8	6.9
TOTAL				215	88	3	3.05	345	316	2680.2	218	12	3042	1677	907	2	314	305	.274	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.25	124	46.4	67.6
Career Highs				27	14	3	2.46	39	35	305.1	27	4	371	203	117	1	49	39	.232	0.6	1.4	1.6	0.97	142	5.8	0.0
CAREER		KNI	NBBO	65	32	0	2.92	106	104	861.1	71	5	924	527	279	1	64	84	.261	0.7	0.9	1.3	1.15	124	14.5	23.9
CAREER		StJ	NBBO	150	56	3	3.11	239	212	1819.1	147	7	2118	1150	628	1	250	221	.281	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.30	124	31.9	43.8

McGowan's wins and winning percentage are unmatched, as is his career shutout total, and no other pitcher in NBBO history was the #1 starter for as many dominant teams as him. Yet, for all of his regular season excellence, his record in the postseason is even harder to believe:

Year	Age	TM	LVL	W	L	SV	ERA	G	GS	IP	CG	SHO	HA	R	ER	HR	BB	K	AVG	BB/9	K/9	K/BB	WHIP	ERA+	WAR	'WAR
1857	26	StJ	NBBO	0	0	2	2.70	3	0	3.1	0	0	3	3	1	0	1	1	.200	2.7	2.7	1.0	1.20	135	0.0	-0.0
1858	27	StJ	NBBO	4	1	0	3.73	5	5	41.0	3	1	43	24	17	0	5	1	.261	1.1	0.2	0.2	1.17	100	0.7	1.1
1859	28	StJ	NBBO	1	1	0	2.77	3	3	26.0	1	0	35	19	8	0	4	1	.310	1.4	0.3	0.2	1.50	136	0.4	0.4
1860	29	StJ	NBBO	3	2	0	2.60	5	5	45.0	4	0	48	23	13	0	4	4	.273	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.16	152	1.0	1.6
1861	30	StJ	NBBO	1	0	0	3.00	2	2	18.0	1	0	19	7	6	0	5	0	.271	2.5	0.0	0.0	1.33	126	0.2	0.9
1862	31	StJ	NBBO	5	0	0	2.89	6	6	53.0	5	0	59	33	17	1	10	9	.266	1.7	1.5	0.9	1.30	137	0.7	1.4
1863	32	StJ	NBBO	5	0	0	3.07	5	5	44.0	4	0	48	21	15	0	9	5	.286	1.8	1.0	0.6	1.30	129	0.8	1.7
1865	34	KNI	NBBO	5	0	0	1.80	6	6	50.0	5	0	51	19	10	0	2	6	.251	0.4	1.1	3.0	1.06	194	0.9	2.4
1866	35	KNI	NBBO	3	2	0	2.23	6	5	44.1	4	0	46	24	11	0	2	5	.246	0.4	1.0	2.5	1.08	160	0.8	1.5
TOTAL				27	6	2	2.72	41	37	324.2	27	1	352	173	98	1	42	32	.267	1.2	0.9	0.8	1.21	140	5.5	11.0

All totaled, McGowan's career accomplishments break down like this:

- 4x NBBO Champ (1857-58, 63, 65)
- 6x All-Star (1859-63, 65)
- 5x Team of the Year (1859-62, 65)

- 5x NEL Leader in Wins (1859-63)
- 4x Leader in Shutouts (1860, 62, 65, 66)
- 2x NEL Leader in WAR (1859-60)

- Career leader in Wins with 215 (Joe Cunningham 2nd w/ 184)
- Career leader in Win % with .710 (Paul Goehring 2nd w/ .683; min 1,000 IP)
- Career leader in ERA with 3.05 (Jim Creighton 2nd w/ 3.08; min 1,000 IP)
- Career leader in Complete Games with 218 (Joe Cunningham 2nd w/ 213)
- Career leader in Shutouts with 12 (Bernard Schmidt 2nd w/ 11)
- Career leader in RA/9 WAR with 67.6 (Carl Bancroft 2nd with 56.5)
- 2nd in Career WHIP with 1.25 (Jim Creighton 1st w/ 1.16; min 1,000 IP)
- 3rd in Career Hits/9 with 10.22 (Charlie Mitchell 1st w/ 10.12; min 1,000 IP)
- 3rd in Career Walks/9 with 1.05 (Jim Creighton 1st w/ 0.96; min 1,000 IP)

- 3rd in Career WAR with 46.4 (Bernard Schmidt 1st w/ 50.7)
- 5th in Career Innings with 2,680.0 (Joe Cunningham 1st w/ 2,868.0)
- Postseason leader in Wins with 27 (Rainer v. d. Hout & Grover Wright 2nd w/ 11)
- Postseason leader in Win % with .818 (three pitchers tied for 2nd w/ .800 (4-1); min 5 decisions)
- Postseason leader in Games Started with 37 (Rainer van der Hout 2nd w/ 24)
- Postseason leader in Complete Games with 27 (Grover Wright 2nd w/ 13)
- Postseason leader in Innings with 324.0 (Rainer van der Hout 2nd w/ 188.0)
- Postseason leader in WAR with 5.5 (Jim Creighton 2nd w/ 4.1)
- Postseason leader in RA/9 WAR with 11.0 (Rainer van der Hout 2nd w/ 3.9)
- 2nd in Postseason ERA with 2.72 (David Roberts 1st w/ 2.11; min 50 IP)
- 2nd in Postseason Strikeouts with 32 (Jim Creighton 1st w/ 59)
- One of three pitchers with a postseason Shutout (Peadar Daly, Eddie Morse)

Given the caveat that Jim Creighton likely has another decade left in his career, there is absolutely no pitcher that can come close to John McGowan's list of achievements. Surely, nobody will best his three straight 5-0 Tucker-Wheaton Cup performances or his sixteen postseason victories between defeats. McGowan was 18-2 in the Round Robin era of the cup, and those four postseasons alone offer up a superior playoff resumé to that of any other pitcher who has ever held a ball.

The loss of McGowan leaves Knickerbocker in a bind, but they still have a top-ten pitcher in Peadar Daly and they also have a highly regarded 23-year-old named Grover Anderson who could become a top-tier talent if given a chance.

Milford native McGowan is reportedly eyeing a Senate seat as a Republican representing home state of Connecticut, but he will have to wait until at least 1868 to have his chance since the Connecticut State Congress [just chose Orrin Ferry](#) to be their newest senator over two-term Senate member Lafayette Foster. McGowan may need to wait his turn, as popular Connecticut governor [William Buckingham](#) is said to want to join the Senate and that means the legislators will likely choose him in the next Senatorial election. McGowan just might have to settle with being a state-level legislator to start with, but no doubt his [combination of intelligence & leadership](#) will see him placed in a very important position before long.

John McGowan gave the sport of base ball ten unforgettable seasons, and in time he will almost certainly be remembered as the greatest pitcher of the foundational days of the sport.