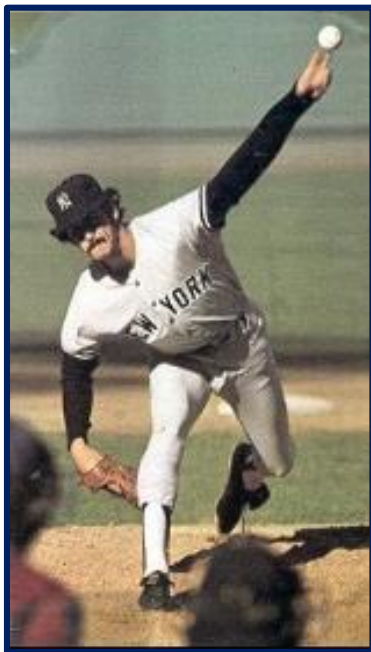


FROM FAILURE TO HONORS

His nicknames were *Louisiana Lightning* and *Gator*, and he became one of the best all-time left-handed pitchers in Major League Baseball history.

Ron Guidry played his entire 14-year baseball career for the New York Yankees from 1975 to 1988. He also was the pitching coach of the Yankees from 2006 to 2007.

Guidry won the American League Cy Young Award in 1978 as the best pitcher in the AL. He also won five Gold Glove Awards, given for superior fielding, and appeared in four All-Star games. He was captain of the Yankees from 1986 through 1988, and his number has been retired by the Yankees.



Amazing achievements for a professional baseball player! But you may not know that Guidry almost quit baseball when he was sent back down to the minors early in his career. The manager told him that he just wasn't ready for the big leagues.

Guidry felt his whole world begin to fall apart. He went home and told his wife, "That's it. I'm not going back to the minors! I've worked like the dickens to get here. I've made it and I can't go back."

They packed up and started driving to his home in the South. All the way, his wife kept encouraging him to go to the minors because baseball was his true love. Just as they were about to cross into their home state, they stopped at a restaurant. It was in that restaurant that Guidry picked himself up and dusted himself off. He said, "OK, one more time. I'm going to give it one more chance."

So they turned the car around and he reported to his new minor league team. With renewed determination, Guidry set new goals and worked on his control, his change-up, his curve, and a far superior pitching technique. He finished the season in great form and returned to the majors the next year.

In addition to his personal honors, Guidry helped lead the Yankees to a World Series championship in 1977 and 1978. In those two years combined, Guidry went 4-0 in the postseason with three complete games in five starts, allowing only nine earned runs in 37 innings pitched.

You don't see "reacting to failure" statistics in the record books, but they determine the rest of the achievements, or lack thereof.

(more)

People respond to failure in a variety of ways. Some turn to alcohol or drug abuse, overeating, a change of job or moving to a new location. Some sink into despair and depression. Others shut out their family and friends and pull into themselves. What these people really need to do is face up to the cause of the failure and take action to overcome it.

Continued despair and despondency are certainly not fitting attitudes for people who would be winners. The folks who win are those who steadfastly keep their eyes on the goal.

Endurance produces character, and character produces hope
(Romans 5:4 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter

