

Dontrelle Willis

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Dontrelle Wayne Willis, nicknamed “The D-Train” is a graduate of the Alameda, California Babe Ruth League, and a former Major League pitcher. He played in Major League Baseball for the Florida Marlins, Detroit Tigers, Arizona Diamondbacks and Cincinnati Reds. He was named the 2003 National League Rookie of the Year.

Dontrelle Willis seemed to be a classic baseball hero. He had a trademark style, with an ultra-high kick reminiscent of 1960s great Juan Marichal, and an unusual, deceptive windup. He wrote his mother’s name inside his distinctive flat-billed cap. And best of all, he electrified the Florida Marlins team and its fans with his game, nearly shutting opposing players down completely during sensational hot streaks.

Dontrelle was raised by his mother, an ironworker. After work she was active at the top levels of Bay Area amateur softball. She taught Dontrelle to play baseball, and by the time he was in the fourth grade he could surprise an umpire with a curveball – something most young players don’t master until their teenage years.

In addition to being named the 2003 NL Rookie of the year, Dontrelle was a 2X All-Star, World Series Champion and a NL wins leader.



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Photo of Dontrelle Willis (back row, third from left) with his Alameda, California Babe Ruth League team.