

Many kids dream of becoming a professional athlete when they grow up, but more often than not their dreams come to an end too soon. However, Rome, Georgia native got the opportunity to play professional baseball at just 18 years old and will be heading into his 11th season this year.

Tyler Wilson is a pitcher for the Cleburne Railroaders in Cleburne, Texas. Over the past 10 years, Wilson has learned that even though the sport can be mentally and physically taxing, the adrenaline rush and competitive feeling that it brings him are worth the sacrifices he has had to make.

Wilson has been on the field since he was 5 years old. He played through high school and decided his senior year that he wanted to pursue the game professionally despite getting an offer to play at Kennesaw State University.

While in high school, he threw two no-hitters, was a Rawlings All-American and was named Rome City Player of the Year in 2008.

In 2008, Wilson was drafted out of high school by the Boston Red Sox in the 13th round of the MLB draft.

After starting for the Red Sox Gulf Coast League affiliate, Wilson then played in the minor leagues for the Lowell Spinners and the Greenville Drive then transitioned to the independent leagues in 2013 and played for the Trois-Rivieres Aigles.

He played for three other independent league teams before being traded to the Railroaders in 2018. The team is part of the American Association of Independent Professional Baseball.

“The league is for people who were released or are looking for opportunities to get seen from the big leagues,” Wilson said. “In 2017 I played with nine former big-leaguers.”

While Wilson has enjoyed his time professionally, there have been some setbacks. However, concussions, muscle strains and a broken hand couldn’t stop the athlete from pursuing his childhood dream as a professional pitcher.

The pitcher’s wife, Shari, said that she has seen Wilson grow not only as a baseball player but also as a person.

“I believe baseball will be a lifelong relationship for Tyler. It has broken him, pissed him off, fueled his passions and developed him into the man he is today. Tyler has a love that will not cease for the game,” Shari said.

Last season, Wilson averaged 15 strikeouts per nine innings and was one of the top pitchers in the American Association. In the 2019 season, the pitcher hopes to possibly make it to the big leagues.

The Railroaders begin spring training on May 3rd and their first game is at home against the Sioux Falls Canaries on May 16th at 7:06 p.m.

As Wilson prepares for his 11th season, he can't help but be grateful for the amount of time he has been able to spend playing baseball, but he wants kids chasing the same dream as him to always keep other options in mind incase sports don't work out.

“You never know what is going to happen in life,” Wilson said, “Professional sports are risky and nothing is guaranteed. Not too many people can say they got to chase their dreams as long as me.”