

# Strawberry, Darryl (1962-) Encyclopedia Article

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# Contents

<a href="#">Strawberry, Darryl (1962-) Encyclopedia Article.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Strawberry, Darryl (1962—).....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>

## Strawberry, Darryl (1962—)

Darryl Strawberry's life reads like a soap opera. This major league ballplayer was the first pick overall in the 1980 free-agent draft, selected by the New York Mets. Without a doubt, he possessed the raw talent that could have earned him a spot in the Hall of Fame, but his erratic career has been a textbook case of overindulgence resulting in underachievement.

Professionally speaking, Strawberry's best years were the late 1980s. Yet while he was entrenched as a slugger-hero for the Mets, he never blossomed into superstardom. Furthermore, he was to earn as much publicity for drinking, drugs, and marital and tax problems. By the 1990s he had evolved into an injury-prone underachiever. A low point came in 1993, when he hit a measly .140 in 32 games for the Los Angeles Dodgers. In the mid-1990s, however, an older, humbled Strawberry was resurrected by the New York Yankees. Although he did not complain that he was relegated to part-time status, he spent most of 1997 on the disabled list; near the end of the 1998 season, as the Yanks were on their way to a record-breaking 125-win campaign, he faced the biggest challenge of his life when he was diagnosed with colon cancer.

### Further Reading:

Klapish, Bob. *High and Tight: The Rise and Fall of Dwight Gooden and Darryl Strawberry*. New York, Villard Books, 1996.

Saxon, Walt. *Darryl Strawberry*. New York, Dell, 1985.

Strawberry, Darryl, with Art Rust, Jr. *Darryl*. New York, Bantam Books, 1992.