

= Billy Bates (baseball) =

William Derrick Bates (born December 7 , 1963) is a former Major League Baseball (MLB) second baseman and pinch runner who played for the Milwaukee Brewers and the 1990 World Series champion Cincinnati Reds . In 29 career games , Bates had a batting average of .125 with six hits , two runs batted in (RBI) , 11 runs , ten strikeouts , and eight stolen bases . Though defensively he played as a second baseman , the Reds primarily used Bates as a pinch runner . After he scored the winning run in Game 2 of the 1990 World Series , Bates never played in MLB again .

Born in Houston , Bates attended the University of Texas and , in his freshman season , won the 1983 College World Series as a part of the Texas Longhorns baseball team . For the next two seasons , Bates was named to the College Baseball All @-@ America Team , a team composed of the best collegiate baseball athletes in America . Drafted by Milwaukee in the 4th round of the 1985 MLB draft , he rose through the Brewers ' farm system and teams that he played for won multiple minor league titles . He subsequently made his MLB debut in 1989 , after Milwaukee 's starting second baseman became injured . A trade sent Bates to Cincinnati in 1990 , where the Reds used him as a pinch runner at the end of the regular season and into the postseason . Facing the Oakland Athletics in the World Series , Bates reached base on a pinch hit single against Dennis Eckersley and later scored the winning run in Game 2 , as the Reds ultimately swept the Athletics , four games to none . Following the World Series championship , Bates spent two years in minor league baseball , one for the Reds and one for the Chicago Cubs , and last played exhibition baseball in 1995 . After retirement , he worked as an equipment supplier in the oil and gas industry in Houston and coached his daughter 's softball team .

= = Early life = =

Bates was born on December 7 , 1963 , in Houston , Texas , and attended Aldine High School . When the Philadelphia Phillies selected him in the 8th round of the 1982 MLB draft , Bates became the second player ever to be drafted out of Aldine . Instead of signing a professional contract with the Phillies , Bates chose to attend the University of Texas at Austin .

= = = Collegiate career = = =

Bates enrolled at the University of Texas at Austin in 1983 , and played baseball in his first year there . The 1983 Longhorns finished with a 61 ? 14 win ? loss record and were ranked as the number one team in the nation by Collegiate Baseball Magazine . To determine which team would represent the Central Regional in the College World Series , the Longhorns played against the Mississippi State Bulldogs ; the Longhorns defeated the Bulldogs and advanced to the World Series . Though the World Series followed a double @-@ elimination format , the Longhorns never lost and defeated the Alabama Crimson Tide 4 ? 3 to win the championship . After the Series , Bates was named to the World Series All @-@ Tournament team , composed of the best players from the series . Writers for Baseball America named him to their honorary Freshman All @-@ America team .

= = Professional career = =

= = = Rise to the majors = = =

Bates began playing professionally for the Class A @-@ Advanced Stockton Ports , a Brewers farm team which competed in the California League . Though the Ports only had two future MLB position players on their roster (Bates ; and LaVel Freeman , who played in two games for the Brewers in 1989) , the team had seven future MLB pitchers . Under manager Tom Gamboa , the Ports finished

with an 82 ? 63 record and reached the California League playoffs , which consisted of four teams playing in a best @-@ of @-@ five game series ; the two winners advanced to play for the League championship . In the first series , the Ports defeated the Modesto A 's , three games to one . In the championship , Stockton faced the Fresno Giants , who defeated the Salinas Spurs to reach the finals . With a 2 ? 1 series lead , Stockton lost the final two games , and the Giants won the California League title . Individually , Bates batted .298 and tied for fourth @-@ best on the team , with 18 stolen bases in 59 games played .

In 1986 , the Brewers promoted Bates to the Double @-@ A El Paso Diablos , a team that played in the Texas League . The eight home runs that Bates hit and his 75 RBI became the highest of his career at any professional level . The Diablos finished the regular season with an 85 ? 50 record and made the Texas League playoffs , eventually winning the League title for the first time since 1974 . El Paso 's 85 wins were the most in the managerial career of Duffy Dyer , which lasted eleven years . Bates led the club with 23 stolen bases , but was caught stealing ten times , also a team high .

Before the 1987 season , Bates attempted to make the Brewers ' Opening Day roster by playing in Milwaukee 's spring training camp . A writer for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel noted there was " a lot of recent publicity " around Bates , and another Journal Sentinel reporter said he " impressed many with his play " . Despite this , the Brewers sent Bates to their minor league camp in Peoria , Arizona , in March . He spent the entire season playing in Triple @-@ A for the Denver Zephyrs of the American Association (AA) and played in 130 games , the second most on the Zephyrs to Brad Komminsk 's 135 . He was named the AA 's All @-@ Star second baseman , and finished the season batting .316 with 51 stolen bases , second most in the AA to Gary Thurman of the Omaha Royals , who stole 58 . His 117 runs scored also led a Denver club that won its final 11 games to finish 79 ? 61 , one game ahead of the Louisville Redbirds for the best record in the AA . In the first round of the playoffs , Denver faced the Oklahoma City 89ers , defeated them , and advanced to the League championship series . In the match , the Indianapolis Indians defeated the Zephyrs four games to one to win the AA title for the second straight year .

In a Brewer 's spring training game in early March , Bates committed two errors against the Chicago Cubs in the top of the 11th inning , as the Cubs scored the winning run without recording a hit , but his 4th @-@ inning single scored two runs . He was again cut from the MLB roster prior to the start of the 1988 season , as Milwaukee manager Tom Trebelhorn named Paul Molitor their starting second baseman . Now in Triple @-@ A , Bates had a five RBI game against the Iowa Cubs on April 12 in a Zephyrs ' victory . Hindered throughout the season by a leg injury , Bates hit .258 with 29 stolen bases , a loss of 22 from a season ago , as the Zephyrs finished 72 ? 62 ; it was the first time in Bates ' professional career that a team he played for missed the playoffs .

= = = MLB debut = = =

After the 1988 season , the Brewers added Bates to their winter roster as the 1989 season approached . However , when 12 @-@ year Brewer second baseman Jim Gantner re @-@ signed with the club , Bates was demoted to Denver , and the Journal @-@ Sentinel predicted that he would remain there due to his limited defensive versatility . Bates began the season with the Zephyrs and in July was named to the Triple @-@ A All @-@ Star Game . On the MLB level , the Brewers suffered multiple injuries to starting players , having 9 athletes on the disabled list (DL) on August 22 and 14 total players on the DL up to that point . In a game against the New York Yankees on August 15 , Gantner played at second base as the Brewers tried to hold on to a 1 ? 0 lead . With Marcus Lawton on first base , Yankees batter Wayne Tolleson hit a ground ball to shortstop Bill Spiers for a potential double play . Lawton ran into Gantner , who had trouble fielding a low throw from Spiers ; umpire Dave Phillips called both Lawton and Tolleson out due to Lawton 's illegal roll @-@ block , but Gantner tore the medial collateral ligament in his left knee and was placed on the DL . Bates was called up as his replacement .

After the injury , Milwaukee 's general manager Harry Dalton said that Bates " is expected to join [the MLB team] by game time [August 16] " , adding " he won 't be in the starting lineup , but he

could play if necessary " . Bates made his MLB debut on August 17 as a part of a double switch against the Boston Red Sox : when Dan Plesac replaced Tony Fossas as the pitcher , Bates entered the game for Gus Polidor . Wade Boggs hit a ground ball to Bates , but he committed an error that allowed Boggs to reach and Dwight Evans to advance to third base . No runs were scored in the inning and the Brewers won , 8 ? 4 . Bates made his first career start two days later , and his first MLB hit came on August 20 when he reached base on an infield single . Bates then stole second base , and scored on a single by Robin Yount . While he was running out a base hit on August 22 , Bates slipped on wet grass and suffered a separated right shoulder . The Brewers placed him on the 15 @-@ day DL ; as a replacement , Milwaukee acquired Ed Romero from the Atlanta Braves . Bates returned to the team for three more games in September before the end of the season . Over seven MLB games , he batted .214 with three hits , three runs , and two steals .

In late March , Trebelhorn projected that Bates would be Milwaukee 's starting second baseman for the 1990 MLB season , although Dale Sveum was bearing down on the starting spot . Bates started at second on Opening Day against the Chicago White Sox , and despite a 2 ? 1 Brewers ' loss , Bates ' play was complimented . Facing the Red Sox on April 14 , Bates hit his only MLB extra base hit , a double , in the 8th inning but committed two errors on defense . He later scored the go @-@ ahead run on a Gary Sheffield double in a 9 ? 5 Milwaukee victory . Previously , he stole second base and home plate in the 2nd . His second (and final) MLB RBI occurred on April 18 . Rob Deer scored on his single , after Bates entered the game in the 6th inning to replace Sveum , who had been hit by a pitch an inning earlier . By April 27 Bates was hitting .103 over 29 at bats , as Molitor came off the DL and expected to take over at second : Seth Livingstone of The Telegraph called the switch " merciful " . Four days later , Bates was demoted to Denver , where he was the team 's all @-@ time leader in steals . For the Zephyrs , he batted .327 in 25 games before Milwaukee traded him to the Cincinnati Reds on June 9 . This occurred as part of a four @-@ player deal , in which Bates and outfielder Glenn Braggs were sent to Cincinnati for pitchers Ron Robinson and Bob Sebra . Reds general manager Bob Quinn said he made the trade because , while " we felt comfortable with our pitching staff , we didn 't feel comfortable with the right @-@ handed hitters off the bench " . Bates later said that he repeatedly asked the Brewers to trade him .

= = = Cincinnati Reds = = =

When he arrived with the Reds organization , Bates was assigned to the Triple @-@ A Nashville Sounds of the AA . In a play @-@ in game to determine the leader of the AA Eastern division , and thus the team that qualified for the playoffs , the Sounds played against the Buffalo Bisons . Nashville manager Pete Mackanin called the contest " the most absurd game I 've ever seen in my life " : the match , which lasted 18 innings , ended when Chris Jones hit a double that scored Bates . Nashville played another extra @-@ inning game , this time a 20 @-@ inning contest on September 7 , against the Western @-@ champion Omaha Royals in the playoffs and lost . Later , the Sounds lost the series three games to two ; Bates ' season , however , was not over , as the Reds added him to their MLB roster . In his Cincinnati debut on September 11 , Bates came into the game as a pinch runner and scored on a Billy Doran hit . Doran ? a second baseman the Reds acquired from the Houston Astros in a " last @-@ minute " deal before the trade deadline ? was hospitalized with back pain and spasms on September 29 . Doctors performed an operation on October 3 , which would hold him out of postseason play as Cincinnati won the National League West ; the Reds were the first team in National League history to lead a division for an entire 162 @-@ game season . In a move that surprised Bates , who already prepared to return to his Houston residence after the Reds ' last regular @-@ season game , the club added him to their postseason roster .

In the 1990 National League Championship Series , the Reds faced the Pittsburgh Pirates in a best @-@ of @-@ seven game series . In Game 1 , the Reds , the home team , opened up a 3 ? 0 lead but trailed 4 ? 3 as the game entered the bottom of the ninth inning . Todd Benzinger led off the inning with a pinch @-@ hit single against Bob Patterson . Patterson walked the next batter , Eric Davis , but forced an out at third base when Ron Oester tried to sacrifice Davis over . Manager Lou Piniella put Bates into the game as a pinch runner for Oester . Davis , at second , tried to steal third ,

and Bates followed ; while Davis was safe , Pirates catcher Mike LaValliere threw to second and Bates was out by three feet , which made the second out in the inning . Speaking about himself , Bates said he thought he " had a better jump than [he] did " , and added that he should not have attempted the steal . The Reds failed to score that inning and lost the game . Bates ' next postseason appearance came in Game 3 , when he pinch ran for Joe Oliver and scored a run as the Reds won 6 ? 3 . Cincinnati ultimately defeated the Pirates and moved on to the World Series , where they would play the Oakland Athletics for the league championship .

In Game 1 , the Reds defeated the Athletics 7 ? 0 in what Associated Press writer Jim Donaghy called " a stunning combination of power and pitching " : Cincinnati scored four runs off of Dave Stewart , who had a six @-@ game winning streak in the playoffs , while pitchers José Rijo , Rob Dibble , and Randy Myers combined for a nine @-@ hit shutout . The game ended the Athletics ' ten @-@ game postseason win streak . Bates did not play . Like Game 1 , Cincinnati was the home team for Game 2 , where Danny Jackson of the Reds faced Bob Welch of the Athletics . Oakland opened the scoring with a run in the top of the first inning , a ground ball by Jose Canseco that scored Rickey Henderson . The Reds responded for two runs in the bottom of the first . Oakland scored three more runs in the third , and Piniella removed Jackson from the game as the Athletics led the Reds 4 ? 2 . Cincinnati added a run in the bottom of the fourth and managed to tie the game in the eighth as Billy Hatcher hit a triple and scored on a groundout . After nine innings , the game remained tied , 4 ? 4 . Rob Dibble came into pitch in the ninth and held the Athletics scoreless for the two innings he pitched ; Oakland countered with future Hall of Fame inductee Dennis Eckersley for the bottom of the tenth . Leading off for the Reds was Davis , who grounded out to shortstop . The next batter was supposed to be the pitcher Dibble but Bates entered the game to pinch hit . Hitting coach Tony Pérez told him to " put the ball in play " and " run like Hell " . Eckersley pitched Bates to an 0 ? 2 ball ? strike count when he hit the ball weakly to the third baseman and beat out an infield single ; it was Bates ' first hit against a right @-@ handed pitcher in his MLB career . Chris Sabo advanced Bates to second on a single , and Oliver scored Bates on another single to win the game . Bates called the situation a " dream come true " .

The Reds won Game 3 after scoring seven runs in the top of the third inning off of Mike Moore . Pitcher Tom Browning earned the win for Cincinnati , as the game ended at a score of 8 ? 3 . The Athletics took a lead in Game 4 , as Carney Lansford hit a single that scored Willie McGee from second base . In the eighth inning , however , the Reds loaded the bases after singles by Barry Larkin and Herm Winningham , and an error that allowed Paul O 'Neill to reach base . Larkin scored on a groundout and Winningham scored on a sacrifice fly to give Cincinnati the lead , 2 ? 1 . The lead held , as Myers came in for Rijo after one out in the bottom of the ninth inning , and the Reds became World Series champions . Bates did not play in either game . As with all players on the World Series champion Reds , Bates received a World Series ring and visited the White House .

= = = Later career = = =

In January , Bates signed a one @-@ year contract to stay with the Reds . In spring training , Cincinnati sent Bates to their minor league complex for reassignment to a team in the Reds ' farm system . He started the season in Triple @-@ A. Doran , still with a back injury , went on the DL in May , but Bates was not able take his spot due to a back injury of his own . He played the entire 1991 season for the Sounds , where he batted .242 over 49 games with one stolen base out of three attempts , as the team finished with a 65 ? 78 record . The Reds did not re @-@ sign him . On May 7 , 1992 , Bates signed a contract with the Chicago Cubs and played for the Iowa Cubs , Chicago 's Triple @-@ A affiliate . Over 91 games played , he hit .241 with 62 hits and two stolen bases as Iowa finished 51 ? 92 . From 1992 ? 1994 , he worked for his father @-@ in @-@ law in a Houston pipe fabrication business . In February 1995 , the Brewers invited Bates to their spring training camp as a possible replacement player due to the 1994 ? 1995 MLB strike . When the strike ended Bates returned to his wife and children in Houston , instead of continuing his career elsewhere , citing physical reasons for his retirement .

= = Personal life = =

When he played , Bates stood at 5 feet 7 inches (170 cm) , something that teammates taunted him about : in Milwaukee spring training camp , players threw a cap on the ground and addressed it as if it were Bates . During the MLB off @-@ season , he worked as a substitute school teacher in Houston . Before the World Series , Bates raced against an unchained cheetah in a promotional event for the Cincinnati Zoo at Riverfront Stadium . The premise of the event was to show that a cheetah could defeat a human (with a five @-@ second head start) in a 100 @-@ yard race . The cheetah was supposed to chase a toy , but about halfway through the race , Bates ' hat fell off , and instead , it went after the hat ; Bates won the race . In 2000 , the University of Texas inducted him into their Men 's Athletics Hall of Honor . As of 2010 , Bates lives in Houston and works for an equipment supplier in the oil and gas industry . He also coaches his daughter 's softball team outside of work .