

= Chad Mottola =

Charles Edward " Chad " Mottola (born October 15 , 1971) is an American retired professional baseball player who played five seasons in Major League Baseball (MLB) as an outfielder . Considered a journeyman , Mottola played professionally from 1992 through 2007 , appearing in 59 MLB games and 1 @, @ 801 minor league games . He was the hitting coach for the Toronto Blue Jays during the 2013 season , but his contract was not renewed for 2014 .

Mottola is an alumnus of the University of Central Florida (UCF) , where he played college baseball for the UCF Knights baseball team . A highly regarded prospect , Mottola was selected by the Cincinnati Reds with the fifth overall selection of the 1992 MLB Draft .

Mottola played in minor league baseball for different organizations , receiving major league playing time with the Cincinnati Reds in 1996 , the Toronto Blue Jays in 2000 and 2006 , the Florida Marlins in 2001 and the Baltimore Orioles in 2004 . As he received less playing time in 2007 , he began to mentor younger teammates , which helped him transition into a coaching career .

= = Career = =

= = = Amateur career = = =

Mottola attended St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Fort Lauderdale , Florida , graduating in 1989 . After leading all Broward County high school players in batting average (.573) , home runs (14) and runs batted in (RBIs) (48) as a senior , Mottola was named to Florida 's Class 3A All @- @ State first team . Out of high school , the Baltimore Orioles selected Mottola in the tenth round of the 1989 Major League Baseball Draft , with the 243rd overall selection . Mottola did not sign with the Orioles , opting to pursue a college baseball career .

Mottola then enrolled at the University of Central Florida (UCF) , which he chose to attend over the University of New Orleans , as it was closer to his home . At UCF , he played for the UCF Knights baseball team in NCAA 's Division I. As a freshman , he hit .321 in 57 games , but did not hit a home run . He gained 30 pounds (14 kg) for his sophomore season . As a sophomore , Mottola was named the American South Conference 's Player of the Week on April 3 , 1991 , after batting .542 with one home run and eight RBIs in six games . During the season , he batted .343 with nine home runs and 54 RBIs . During the college offseason , he played collegiate summer baseball in the Cape Cod Baseball League .

In his junior season , he batted .345 with 14 home runs , tying the UCF single @- @ season record . Professional scouts considered him a first round prospect , due to his intelligence , size , ability to hit for power , his strong throwing arm , running speed , instincts and polish .

= = = Professional career = = =

The Cincinnati Reds drafted Mottola in the first round of the 1992 Major League Baseball Draft with the fifth overall selection , one selection ahead of Derek Jeter . He signed with the Reds the day of the draft , receiving a signing bonus of \$ 400 @, @ 000 , as he attended the United States national baseball team tryouts for the 1992 Summer Olympics , and did not want to have his contract status on his mind during the tryouts . He was the first UCF athlete to be selected in the first round of an MLB draft .

In his first professional season , Mottola led the Billings Mustangs to the Pioneer League championship , batting .286 with 12 home runs and 37 runs batted in (RBIs) . Baseball America rated Mottola as the 71st best prospect in baseball before the 1993 season . Playing a full season for the first time in 1993 , he batted .280 for the Winston @- @ Salem Spirits with 21 home runs and led the Class @- @ A Advanced Carolina League with 91 RBIs . He was named a Carolina League All @- @ Star outfielder after the 1993 season . Prior to the 1994 season , Baseball America rated Mottola as the 43rd best prospect in baseball .

Mottola started the 1995 season with the Chattanooga Lookouts of the Class @-@ AA Southern League , receiving a promotion to the Class @-@ AAA Indianapolis Indians of the International League that season . Despite his minor league success , Mottola 's path to the Reds was blocked by outfielders Reggie Sanders , Curtis Goodwin , Eric Davis , Vince Coleman , Mike Kelly , Steve Gibraltar and Eric Anthony , all of whom the Reds had in spring training that season . General Manager Jim Bowden commented that Mottola needed more minor league seasoning before he would be promoted to the Reds . He made his major league debut with the Cincinnati Reds on April 22 , 1996 . In 35 games for the Reds , Mottola batted .215 with three home runs and six RBIs . For Indianapolis , he batted .262 with 9 home runs , 47 RBIs and nine stolen bases in 102 games .

Though he was considered a top prospect , the Reds held him out of winter league baseball during the 1995 ? 96 offseason . The Reds added Deion Sanders and Rubén Sierra to their outfield competition for the 1997 season , prompting Mottola to question the Reds commitment to him . After he spent the 1997 season in the minors , the Reds traded Mottola to the Texas Rangers for a player to be named later in April 1998 . He spent most of the 1998 season with the Oklahoma City RedHawks of the Class @-@ AAA Pacific Coast League (PCL) , but suffered a broken thumb that required surgery , limiting his season .

Granted free agency after the 1998 season , Mottola signed with the Chicago White Sox for the 1999 season . He batted .321 with 164 hits , 32 doubles and 20 home runs for the Charlotte Knights . With the Syracuse SkyChiefs , the Class @-@ AAA affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays , in 2000 , Mottola batted .309 in 134 games with 505 at @-@ bats , 156 hits , 85 runs , 25 doubles , 3 triples , 33 home runs , 102 RBI , 37 walks , 30 stolen bases and 99 strikeouts . He led the league in home runs and also in slugging percentage , had the second highest RBI , was fourth in the league in hits and extra @-@ base hits , and had the seventh highest batting average . He was named an International League All @-@ Star outfielder in 2000 , and won the International League Most Valuable Player Award . He was also named the Blue Jays minor league player of the year that season , and earned a promotion to the Blue Jays in September .

After the 2000 season , the Blue Jays traded Mottola to the Florida Marlins for a player to be named later or cash . He played for the Marlins ' Class @-@ AAA affiliate , the Calgary Cannons of the PCL , and appeared in five games for the Marlins . In 2002 , Mottola returned to Syracuse . He began the 2003 season with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays organization , playing for the Class @-@ AAA Durham Bulls , but was released . He signed with the Boston Red Sox on June 12 to replace Julio Zuleta , who had signed to play in Japan , on the Class @-@ AAA Pawtucket Red Sox . Mottola signed with the Orioles for the 2004 season , splitting his time between MLB and the Class @-@ AAA Ottawa Lynx . In 2005 , he returned to the Blue Jays organization , playing with Syracuse . He was promoted to MLB in 2006 , but spent the majority of the 2005 through 2007 seasons with Syracuse .

= = = Transition to coaching = = =

Mottola retired after the 2007 season . During his final seasons , Mottola began to play less and serve as a mentor to younger players , making for a transition into a coaching career . After the 2007 season , Mottola accepted a job as the hitting coach of the Gulf Coast Blue Jays of the Rookie @-@ level Gulf Coast League . On October 6 , 2008 , Mottola was announced as the Blue Jays roving minor league hitting instructor for the 2009 season . From 2010 to 2012 , he was the hitting coach for the Las Vegas 51s , Toronto 's Triple @-@ A affiliate at the time .

On November 24 , 2012 , Mottola was promoted to be the Toronto Blue Jays hitting coach for the 2013 season . On October 7 , 2013 , the Blue Jays announced that Mottola would not be returning for the 2014 season .

In November 2013 , Mottola was hired by the Tampa Bay Rays as their minor @-@ league hitting co @-@ ordinator .

= = Personal = =

Mottola was born in Augusta , Georgia and grew up in Pembroke Pines , Florida . When Mottola signed with the Reds in 1992 , he bought his parents a house . Mottola 's father , Chuck , died of a heart attack at the age of 50 in October 1995 . His mother , Elaine , works as an administrative assistant at St. Bernadette 's School in Davie , Florida .

Mottola met his wife , Emily , at UCF . She played for the school 's volleyball team . They had their first son , Luke , in 2005 .