

= Jeff Banister =

Jeffery Todd Banister (born January 15 , 1964) is an American retired professional baseball player and current manager of the Texas Rangers of Major League Baseball . Before joining the Rangers , Banister spent 29 years within the organization of the Pittsburgh Pirates as a player and coach in both the Pirates ' major and minor league system .

Banister played baseball at La Marque High School in La Marque , Texas . He developed bone cancer in his sophomore year , which almost necessitated the amputation of his leg . While playing college baseball for Lee College , he suffered a home plate collision that broke three vertebrae in his neck , leaving him paralyzed for ten days . After rehabilitating , he was named a Junior College All @-@ American the next season , and received a scholarship to the University of Houston , to play for the Houston Cougars baseball team . He was then drafted by the Pirates in 1986 . After playing in Minor League Baseball , he appeared in a major league game on July 23 , 1991 , recording a hit in his only plate appearance . He did not appear in another major league game , and ended his playing career after the 1993 season .

Following his playing career , Banister remained with the Pirates . He served as a manager for their Minor League Baseball affiliates from 1994 through 1998 , and then as a minor league and major league field coordinator until 2010 . The Pirates considered him for their managerial vacancy before the 2011 season , but hired him as their bench coach . He served in the role through the 2014 season . The Rangers hired Banister as their manager during the 2014 ? 15 offseason , and he was named the American League Manager of the Year for 2015 .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Amateur career = = =

Banister attended La Marque High School in La Marque , Texas . At La Marque , Banister played for the school 's baseball , basketball , and American football teams . During his sophomore year of high school , Banister injured his right ankle while playing baseball . During an examination of his ankle , which was slow to heal , he was diagnosed with bone cancer . He had developed cysts that required skin grafting to treat . An infection in his leg led to the development of osteomyelitis , which spread from his right ankle to just below his knee . Doctors recommended amputation in order to save the rest of his leg , but Banister refused , as he hoped he would be able to continue his baseball career . Doctors performed seven operations on his leg , which saved it from being amputated . In his senior year , Banister suffered a knee injury playing American football , which nearly led to him being cut from the baseball team due to his decreased mobility . His father suggested he change positions and become a catcher , which allowed him to remain on the baseball team .

At a tryout conducted by professional scouts , Banister was noticed by the coaches at Lee College , a junior college in Baytown , Texas . They recruited Banister to play college baseball at Lee . While catching in a 1983 game , he suffered a collision at home plate , where the baserunner attempted to jump over him , and hit Banister in the head with his knee . The collision broke three of the vertebrae in his neck . Banister was not originally scheduled to play in that game ; a scout for the New York Yankees of Major League Baseball (MLB) told Lee 's coach that he hoped to see Banister catch , which resulted in Banister being added to the starting lineup in a last @-@ minute change . As a result of the collision , Banister was paralyzed from the neck down for ten days . Doctors initially warned him that he may never walk again . He had another three operations performed on his back and learned how to walk again during the 1984 season . Entering the hospital weighing 225 pounds (102 kg) , he weighed 139 pounds (63 kg) when he was discharged . Banister recovered and played another season for Lee in 1985 , and was named a Junior College All @-@ American . He transferred to University of Houston after the season to play for the Houston Cougars baseball team on a scholarship in 1986 .

= = = Professional career = = =

The Pittsburgh Pirates selected Banister in the 25th round of the 1986 Major League Baseball Draft ; he was the 621st player chosen in the draft . Playing in Minor League Baseball , Banister made his professional debut as a member of the Watertown Pirates of the Class A @-@ Short Season New York ? Penn League in 1986 . He had a .145 batting average in 46 games played . In 1987 , he played for the Macon Pirates of the Class A South Atlantic League , and batted .254 in 101 games . Banister then played 71 games for the Harrisburg Senators of the Class AA Eastern League in 1988 , batting .259 . He returned to Harrisburg in 1989 , when he batted .238 in 102 games . He was named an Eastern League All @-@ Star in 1989 . He returned to Harrisburg for the 1990 season , and recorded a .269 batting average in 101 games . During the 1990 season , he received a promotion to the Buffalo Bisons of the Class AAA American Association . In 12 games for the Bisons , Banister batted .320 .

Banister began the 1991 season with Buffalo . The Pirates promoted Banister from the minor leagues on July 23 , 1991 , when catcher Don Slaught was injured and placed on the disabled list . Manager Jim Leyland used Banister as a pinch hitter for pitcher Doug Drabek in the eighth inning of that day 's game against the Atlanta Braves at Three Rivers Stadium . Using Cecil Espy 's bat , Banister hit a ball from Dan Petry and just beat shortstop Jeff Blauser 's throw to first base . Banister is one of only 15 batters (excluding pitchers) in baseball history to record a hit in his only major league plate appearance .

Banister was sent back to Buffalo without playing in another game for Pittsburgh . He finished the Class AAA season with a .244 average in 79 games . He missed the 1992 season when he suffered a right elbow injury that required surgery . Banister served as a player @-@ coach for the Carolina Mudcats of the Class AA Southern League in 1993 . Playing in only eight games , he had a .333 batting average . After the season , he ended his playing career . He retired with a career .247 batting average in 515 minor league games played .

= = Coaching / managing career = =

= = = Overview = = =

After retiring as a player , Banister remained with the Pirates ' organization . From 1994 through 1998 , Banister served as a manager in the Pirates ' minor league system . He served as the manager of the Welland Pirates of the New York ? Penn League in 1994 . A year later , he managed the Augusta GreenJackets of the South Atlantic League , and led them to win the league 's championship . Banister managed in the Hawaiian Winter League in the 1995 and 1996 offseasons . From 1996 through 1997 , he was the manager of the Lynchburg Hillcats of the Class A @-@ Advanced Carolina League . Midway through the 1997 season , he was named the manager of the Carolina Mudcats , a position he held through the 1998 season . Banister had a 299 ? 330 win @-@ loss record (a .475 winning percentage) as a manager from 1994 through 1998 .

From 1999 through 2002 , Banister worked as Pittsburgh 's Major League Field Coordinator on the coaching staffs of managers Gene Lamont and Lloyd McClendon . He was then assigned the job of Minor League Field Coordinator , and served in that role from 2003 through 2010 . In 2004 , he served as the interim manager of Lynchburg when Jay Loviglio resigned from the position due to personal reasons . Banister became the interim pitching coach for Lynchburg in 2008 when Bob Milacki resigned from the position . Mike Steele then took the job from Banister in 2009 . Banister managed the Scottsdale Scorpions of the Arizona Fall League (AFL) in 2009 .

On August 8 , 2010 , Banister was named the Pirates ' interim bench coach after Gary Varsho was fired by the organization . At the end of the 2010 season , the Pirates fired manager John Russell . Banister and Clint Hurdle were the two finalists for the position . The Pirates named Hurdle as their manager , and Banister was named their full @-@ time bench coach . As the Pirates bench coach ,

Banister learned about sabermetrics from a quantitative analyst who traveled with the team . Banister learned to use quantitative data to inform his decisions on when the Pirates should employ defensive shifts in the field . He was initially chosen to manage Scottsdale in the AFL after the 2014 season , but he was replaced by Pirates ' special assistant Frank Kremblas due to the possibility of the Pirates reaching the MLB postseason .

After the 2014 season , Banister interviewed with the Houston Astros as a candidate to fill their managing vacancy , following the firing of Bo Porter . The Astros instead hired A. J. Hinch . He also interviewed with the Texas Rangers , and was a finalist for the position along with Rangers ' interim manager Tim Lincecum and pitching coach Mike Maddux . On October 16 , 2014 , the Rangers named Banister their new manager . He signed a three @-@ year contract with an option for a fourth season . Jon Daniels , the Rangers ' general manager , indicated that Banister will help the Rangers to incorporate analytics into their baseball decisions .

As Banister and Daniels began to discuss the coaching staff for the 2015 season , it was decided that Lincecum , who had a 14 ? 8 record (.636 winning percentage) after Ron Washington 's resignation , would not return to the Rangers under Banister . Banister retained Maddux and hitting coach Dave Magadan on his coaching staff , but third base coach Gary Pettis left for the Astros and first base coach Bengie Molina did not return to the team in that role . Banister guided the Rangers to the American League West division championship with a record of 88 wins and 74 losses . The Rangers would end up losing to the Toronto Blue Jays in the American League Division Series . Banister was named the American League Manager of the Year after the season .

During the 2015 ? 16 offseason , the Rangers extended Banister 's contract through the 2018 season , with an option for the 2019 season , while also releasing pitching coach Mike Maddux and hitting coach Dave Magadan . Banister later hired former Texas Ranger , Doug Brocail as the new pitching coach and Anthony Iapoce as the new hitting coach .

= = = Managerial record = = =

As of July 11 , 2016

= = Personal life = =

Banister was born on January 15 , 1964 . He is originally from Weatherford , Oklahoma . At the age of six , the Banisters moved from Weatherford to La Marque . His father , Bob , coached Jeff at La Marque High School on both the American football and basketball teams . His mother , Verda , was an algebra teacher at La Marque . He has a sister , Carey . In 1988 , his father died at the age of 48 due to a heart attack . His grandfather died of a heart attack three weeks later .

Banister met his wife , Karen , while they were students at the University of Houston . Karen worked as a teacher at Clear Lake High School in Houston . The Banisters have two children : Alexandra and Jacob . Alexandra is a college volleyball player . The Banisters reside in Arlington , Texas .

Banister won the inaugural Gilda Radner Courage Award . In 2011 , Banister won the " Pride of the Pirates " award for demonstrating his " sportsmanship , dedication and outstanding character " .