

= Stan Benjamin =

Alfred Stanley " Stan " Benjamin (May 20 , 1914 ? December 24 , 2009) was a right fielder in Major League Baseball for five seasons ; four with the Philadelphia Phillies (1939 ? 1942) , of the National League (NL) , and one with the Cleveland Indians (1945) , of the American League (AL) . The 6 ' 2 " , 194 lb . Benjamin batted and threw right @-@ handed , and was born in Framingham , Massachusetts . After graduating from high school , he attended Western Maryland College , now known as McDaniel College , where he played baseball , basketball , and football .

In addition to his major league playing career , he played in minor league baseball for ten seasons . He began at the age of 23 , with the Thomasville Orioles of the Georgia ? Florida League in 1937 , and finished as the player @-@ manager for the Fresno Cardinals of the California League in 1948 . During that time , he played in 955 minor league games , and batted .304 , and hit 52 home runs . In the early 1940s , he was an assistant football coach at Northeastern University . Later , during his minor league career , he began coaching high school football , part @-@ time , in his home town of Framingham , and then full @-@ time once his playing and managing career ended .

Starting in 1948 , he was the head baseball coach and assistant football coach for Greenfield High School in Greenfield , Massachusetts , and took over the head football coaching duties in 1958 . He held both positions , in addition to being a physical education teacher for a local middle school and part @-@ time basketball referee until 1964 . In 1965 , he was hired as a talent scout for the Houston Astros , a job he held for nearly 40 years . It was his evaluation of Jeff Bagwell that led the Astros to acquire him from the Boston Red Sox for Larry Andersen .

= = Early life = =

Born on May 20 , 1914 , in Framingham , Massachusetts , Benjamin graduated from Framingham High School in 1932 , and later attended Western Maryland College , later renamed McDaniel College , on an athletic scholarship . He played football , basketball , and baseball and claimed to have once competed against Ohio State University track star and Olympic gold medalist Jesse Owens . When he was an end on the college 's football team , he was presented with the game ball autographed by his teammates after a 12 ? 6 victory over Boston College .

= = Career = =

= = = Minor leagues = = =

Benjamin signed his first professional baseball contract with the Thomasville Orioles of the Class D minor league baseball Georgia ? Florida League in 1937 . He played for this team for the 1937 and 1938 seasons as their third baseman . In 1937 , he batted .310 , and hit one home run . In 97 games played during the 1938 season , he batted .348 , hit 32 doubles , 12 triples , and three home runs . For the 1939 season , he joined the Chattanooga Lookouts of the Class A1 Southern Association as an outfielder ; he batted .323 , and hit 27 doubles , eight triples , and five home runs in 135 games played . It was at the conclusion of this minor league season , that he became a late @-@ season acquisition of the Philadelphia Phillies .

= = = Major leagues = = =

Benjamin made his Major League Baseball debut on September 16 , 1939 , with the Phillies , and appeared in 12 games , fielding a variety of positions , including all three outfield positions , and third base as well . He had 50 at bats that season , and collected seven hits for a .140 batting average .

The next season , he was optioned by the Phillies to the Baltimore Orioles of the Class AA International League , one of their minor league affiliates , as an outfielder . During the 1940 season

, he played in 108 games , batted .304 , and hit 16 doubles , seven triples , and 11 home runs . At the conclusion of this season , he was a late @-@ season call @-@ up by the Phillies . He played in eight games and had two hits in nine at bats for a .222 batting average .

His most productive major league season came in 1941 , when he played a full season with the Phillies . He posted career @-@ highs in home runs (3) , RBIs (27) , runs scored (47) , hits (113) , doubles (20) , triples (7) , stolen bases (17) and games played (129) . In a game against the New York Giants on June 28 , Benjamin singled to bring home the game @-@ winning run in bottom of the 12th inning . On July 1 , he again produced a game @-@ winning single , this time in the bottom of the tenth inning , defeating the Brooklyn Dodgers . He began the 1942 season with the Phillies and batted .224 in 78 games before being sold , on August 5 , to the Louisville Colonels , a Class AA American Association affiliate of the Boston Red Sox .

= = = Return to the minors = = =

Benjamin finished the 1942 season with the Colonels as their third baseman . He appeared in 38 games , hit three home runs , and had a .303 batting average . Before the 1943 season , the Red Sox were in need of more outfielders , so manager Joe Cronin gave Benjamin a tryout in mid @-@ March ; however , he was not signed , and he continued to play with the Colonels , moving back to the outfield . In 123 games played , he hit just .237 , and did not hit a home run .

He returned to the Baltimore Orioles of the International League for the 1944 season , which had switched its major league affiliation to the Cleveland Indians . He enjoyed a resurgence in his offensive statistics that season , as his batting average rose to .301 , and he hit 24 doubles , eight triples , and 12 home runs in 133 games played . The Indians called up Benjamin for the 1945 season , and even though he was part of their regular roster , he appeared in only 14 games , batting .333 . On March 26 , 1946 , he was released by the Cleveland Indians , and he would never appear in another major league game . In his five @-@ season major league career , Benjamin hit .229 with five home runs and 41 RBIs in 241 games .

He played for and managed the Nazareth Cement Dusters of the Class D North Atlantic League . He played several different positions that season , including two games at pitcher . He batted .312 and hit four home runs during his only season with the Cement Dusters . Benjamin played for several different teams in 1947 , beginning the season with the Houston Buffaloes , a St. Louis Cardinals affiliate , but later joined the San Antonio Missions , a St. Louis Browns affiliate . Both teams were in the Texas League . Late in the season , the Browns promoted him to their Class AAA team , the Toledo Mud Hens of the American Association . In 1948 , he played for , and managed , the Fresno Cardinals of the Class C California League , an affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals . In 125 games played that season , he batted .326 and hit 27 doubles , five triples , and nine home runs . After the season completed , he retired as a player .

= = Post @-@ playing career = =

= = = High school athletics = = =

After his baseball playing career ended , he moved to Greenfield , Massachusetts , and became an assistant football coach at Greenfield High School , while also working as a physical education teacher at a nearby middle school . Benjamin was Greenfield 's head football coach from 1958 to 1964 , as well as the head baseball coach from 1948 to 1964 . He coached the baseball team to several Western Massachusetts championships . Among the other duties , he also refereed high school and college basketball games in New England , as well as working as an assistant football coach at Deerfield Academy in 1964 and 1965 . He was also an assistant football coach for Northeastern University in the early 1940s .

= = = Scouting career = = =

Benjamin began his career as a talent scout for the Houston Astros in 1965 , and stayed in that capacity until retiring in 2002 . During his time with the Astros franchise he scouted amateur players in the New England region , as well as the American League East teams and their minor league affiliates . He later became the team 's scouting supervisor for the Northeast . He also scouted major league teams during spring training in Florida and spent many summer evenings evaluating some of the nation 's best college players in the Cape Cod Baseball League .

In 1970 , Mike Flanagan was suffering arm problems , and many scouts decided that he did not have a future baseball career , but he could hit well , so Benjamin suggested to the Astros that they could use him in that capacity and wait to see if his arm would recuperate . The Astros drafted Flanagan , but he decided not to sign , and instead attended University of Massachusetts Amherst on a baseball scholarship . During the 1990 season , the Astros were approached by the Boston Red Sox , who needed pitching and were interested in Larry Andersen . Benjamin recommended that they ask for Red Sox minor leaguer Jeff Bagwell in return . The Astros were hesitant initially due to Bagwell 's low home run totals , but Benjamin convinced them by explaining that his numbers were deceiving due to the large ballpark that he played in .

= = Personal life = =

Benjamin was married to his wife Barbara , maiden name Hall , from 1941 until her death 54 years later in 1995 . She was attending Framingham State Teachers College when they met , and school rules forbade female students from getting married or they faced expulsion . Town records didn 't publish marriages until after January 1 , each year , so the couple got married at 1 a.m. on New Year 's Day 1941 at her home in Raynham , Massachusetts . This prevented the school from learning about her marriage until after she had graduated . The Benjamins had one son , Richard , and three daughters , Nancy , Janice , and Joanne ; as well as 12 grandchildren , and 11 great @-@ grandchildren .

Benjamin died at the age of 95 , of heart failure , in his daughter 's home on December 24 , 2009 , in Harwich , Massachusetts . He is interred at Green River Cemetery in Greenfield , Massachusetts .

Benjamin was a member of both the McDaniel College and Massachusetts Baseball Coaches Association hall of fame , and in 2008 , he received a special recognition award from the Professional Baseball Scouts Foundation . Tal Smith , Astros ' president of baseball operations , said of Benjamin , " Stan 's positive evaluation of Bagwell was definitely a catalyst in our taking him ... He was a vital cog in our organization who had the ability to convey his opinion in a precise manner . You always knew where you stood with him . He was a longtime employee , but more important , a longtime friend . Smith also called him a " keen judge of talent . "