

= Will Venable =

William Dion Venable ( born October 29 , 1982 ) is an American professional baseball outfielder in the Los Angeles Dodgers organization . He has also played in MLB for the San Diego Padres and Texas Rangers . Venable is the son of former Major League outfielder Max Venable as well as the older brother of Canadian Football League safety Winston Venable .

Venable played basketball for Princeton University , as well as San Rafael High School . He was the second athlete to earn first @-@ team All @-@ Ivy League honors in both baseball and basketball . In the 2005 MLB Draft , the Padres selected Venable in the seventh round . He made his major league debut on August 29 , 2008 , against the Colorado Rockies , collecting his first hit . Although he broke into the Major Leagues as a center fielder , he has played mostly right field since his second season . Venable has frequently batted lead off and has on several occasions come within one hit of the cycle . As of November 2013 , he has finished among the top ten in the National League in triples four times and in stolen bases twice . He has the most Major League Baseball career hits and home runs of any Princeton alumnus .

= = Amateur career = =

= = = High school = = =

Venable was born in 1982 in Marin County , California , at a time when his father Max Venable was a Major League Baseball player for the nearby San Francisco Giants . He grew up travelling around the country with his father and also lived in Japan and the Dominican Republic . In high school , he envisioned himself as more likely to be a professional basketball player than baseball player . Prior to his freshman year , his mother , Molly , objected to him quitting baseball to focus on basketball . As both a high school sophomore and a high school junior , Venable was second @-@ team San Francisco Bay Area All @-@ Metro basketball player for San Rafael High School . He was the Marin County Athletic League ( MCAL ) most valuable player in basketball as a freshman , sophomore and junior . As a sophomore , he led his team to the MCAL League Championship . As a senior , he gave up the responsibility of being point forward .

= = = College carer = = =

Venable chose to attend Princeton University , not for its academics , but for its tradition of basketball excellence . He respected their tradition of qualifying to participate in the NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Championship Tournament . During his time at the University he was a part of two teams that qualified for post season play : 2004 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament and 2002 National Invitation Tournament ) . Princeton recruited him as a basketball player . He did not play baseball as a freshman , but his father had directed him to Scott Bradley , Princeton 's baseball coach , during his recruiting visit .

Venable , who was a member of the class of 2005 at Princeton University , was the second athlete in Ivy League history ( after his Padres teammate Chris Young ) to be first @-@ team All @-@ Ivy in both basketball and baseball and he played on Ivy League Champion National Collegiate Athletic Association ( NCAA ) Championship tournament participants in both sports . He played in two NCAA Championship tournaments in both sports and earned a B.A. in anthropology .

In basketball , he averaged over 10 points and over 30 minutes per game in his 2002 ? 03 sophomore season through his 2004 ? 05 senior season .

Bradley had left the door open for Venable to come take batting practice if he ever had the urge . As a sophomore , at the suggestion of his mother , Venable resumed baseball . He posted modest numbers in his first season , but in 2004 , he hit for a .344 batting average , earned All @-@ Ivy honorable mention , and was drafted by the Baltimore Orioles in the fifteenth round of the draft ( 439th overall ) . Bradley felt that Major League Baseball scouts undervalued Venable because he

did not participate in the Cape Cod League for college baseball players . Thus , instead of signing and giving up his amateur status , Venable returned for his senior season and posted a league leading 9 home runs and runner @-@ up .385 batting average while earning All @-@ League honors . Subsequently , the Padres drafted him in the seventh round ( 215th overall ) ; he was signed by the Padres ' Northeast Scouting Director , Jim Bretz .

= = Professional career = =

= = = Minor League Baseball = = =

After graduating from Princeton , Venable made his professional debut in minor league baseball with the Arizona League Padres of the Arizona League in 2005 . He hit for a .322 batting average in 15 games and was soon promoted to the Eugene Emeralds of the Single @-@ A Northwest League .

In 2006 , Venable was the Padres Minor League Player of the Year . With his father as a team hitting coach , Venable posted a .314 batting average , .389 on @-@ base percentage ( OBP ) , and .477 slugging percentage for the Fort Wayne Wizards of the single @-@ A Midwest League ( MWL ) , which earned him both mid @-@ season and post @-@ season MWL All @-@ star honors . That season he tied for the MWL lead in runs scored and was among the top four Padre farmhands in RBIs , batting average , and stolen bases . Among his highlights for the Wizards were his team @-@ high two grand slams and a five @-@ hit performance .

Subsequently , for the 2006 West Oahu CaneFires of the Hawaii Winter Baseball , Venable posted a .330 batting average , .390 on @-@ base percentage ( OBP ) , and .473 slugging percentage . He won the batting title that season and was named league most valuable player . He also led the league in doubles and was second to John Otness in OBP . In the outfield , Venable made no errors . Before the 2007 season , Venable was listed as the fifth best prospect in the Padres organization by Baseball America , and they named him the # 11 prospect in the league . They also named him as a Baseball America Low @-@ A All @-@ Star .

In 2007 , Venable batted .278 with a .337 OBP in 134 games for the San Antonio Missions of the Texas League . This again earned him both mid @-@ season and post @-@ season league All @-@ Star honors . A highlight occurred on May 30 , 2007 , when he hit for the cycle . After the season ended , he was invited to play for the San Diego affiliate in the Arizona Fall League , but he was afflicted with tendinitis in his shoulder and only hit .228 .

During 2008 spring training , he had two home runs and eight runs batted in his first twelve at @-@ bats . He then posted a .292 batting average , .361 on @-@ base percentage and .464 slugging percentage in 120 games for the Portland Beavers of the Pacific Coast League in 2008 .

= = = San Diego Padres = = =

= = = 2008 ? 2011 = = =

Venable had been expected to be a September 2008 call @-@ up , but when Scott Hairston was forced onto the disabled list , Venable was called up ahead of schedule . On August 29 , 2008 , in his debut , he tripled in his first at @-@ bat and came around to score a run . He is the twenty @-@ fifth Princeton alumnus to play in the Major Leagues , but he is the first African @-@ American alumnus . He posted his first Major League home run in his sixth game on September 4 , 2008 , during a 5 ? 2 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers at Miller Park . His only other home run for the 2008 San Diego Padres was also in a victory on the road on September 19 , 2008 in an 11 ? 6 victory over the Washington Nationals at Nationals Park . During this game , Venable posted his first three @-@ hit performance and first three @-@ RBI performance . When Venable batted leadoff for the Padres on September 28 , 2008 against Pittsburgh , he became the first Princeton batter to

oppose a Princeton pitcher ( Ross Ohlendorf ) . In 2008 , Venable accumulated only 110 Major League at bat , and rookie year is considered to be the season in which one accumulates his 130th at bat . He only played centerfield in 2008 . Following the season he played winter baseball in the Dominican Professional Baseball League , where he struggled .

Although in 2008 Baseball America projected Venable as an every day starter for the Padres in 2010 , some experts questioned whether he would be a long term solution in center field for the team . Venable started the 2009 season with the Padres ' Triple A affiliate , Portland Beavers , but he was recalled by the Padres on June 3 . His father , Max , served as the Beavers ' hitting coach in 2009 . Following the July 5 trade of Scott Hairston to the Oakland Athletics , Venable shared right field with Kyle Blanks . On July 12 against the San Francisco Giants , he had his first home run of the season in his first career four hit game . Between July 30 and August 5 , he homered in five of seven games . In an August 23 game against the St. Louis Cardinals , he was involved in a bench clearing incident when Albert Pujols thought he threw an elbow while being tagged out . In 2009 , he posted 12 home runs and tallied 38 runs batted in ( RBI ) , while defensively 493 of 2 of his 643 innings were spent in right field and only 117 in center field .

In 2010 , he finished 8th in the National League in triples ( 7 ) , and 9th stolen bases ( 29 ) . He executed some delayed steals by taking off with the toss back to the mound " when neither infielder is covering second and the catcher is nonchalant with the ball after receiving the pitch " . On April 11 against the Atlanta Braves , he had his first career 5 RBI game , falling a double shy of the first cycle in Padres history . On May 19 , Venable moved into the lead off position in the lineup and he fell a home run shy of the franchise 's first cycle against the Los Angeles Dodgers , going 4 for 5 at the plate after getting a triple in the 1st inning and a double in the third . In June 23 , June 25 and 27 , Venable hit tie breaking home runs in Padre victories against the Florida Marlins and Tampa Bay Rays . On July 3 , he went on the 15 day disabled list due to back problems . On September 29 against the Chicago Cubs , he stole two potential home runs ( from Alfonso Soriano and Aramis Ramirez ) on deep fly balls . In the game he achieved his career high 10 game hitting streak . He also led National League outfielders with 5 errors . He set new career highs with 13 home runs and 51 RBI . Again , the majority of his innings were in right field ( 600 of 936 innings ) . He split his remaining time between left field ( 171 of 2 ) and center field ( 164 of 1 ) .

In 2011 , Venable started slowly , hitting only .205 in April and was eventually optioned to the Tucson Padres on May 23 before being recalled on June 9 . At the time of his demotion , he had no home runs and a .224 batting average in 134 at bat . He was recalled after going 16 for 58 with 3 doubles , 3 triples , 3 home runs and 3 stolen bases in 14 games . In one minor league game on May 27 he homered twice against the Salt Lake Bees . On July 20 , Venable scored 3 times in the first two innings as the Padres jumped out to a 13 ? 0 lead against the Florida Marlins . In late July , he missed a few games due to back spasms . On August 10 against the New York Mets , Venable had four hits again missing the cycle by a home run when he posted a second double in a ninth inning at bat . On August 21 , Venable delivered a lead off home run and the game winning bases loaded walk off hit on Trevor Hoffman Day . On September 28 , he got his first grand slam home run against the Chicago Cubs off of Ryan Dempster . For the season , his totals dropped to 9 home runs and 44 RBI with the Padres , and he again totaled 7 triples , this time finishing 10th . He played 662 of 2 of his 793 of 2 innings in right field .

=== 2012 ? 2015 ===

In 2012 , Venable and Chris Denorfia formed a platoon in right field , with Venable getting most of the starts against right handed pitchers and batting .270 against them . Venable made 80 starts in right , but appeared in a then career high 148 games for the year . When not starting in right , he made occasional starts in center and left field and made 26 pinch hitting appearances . On May 15 , 2012 , Venable had a single , double and triple by the fourth inning against the Washington Nationals , but his 4 hit effort again fell short of the franchise 's cycle . On May 23 , Venable had his sixth career lead off home run and added a single in the second inning

and a double in the fourth against the St. Louis Cardinals . He ended up one hit shy of the cycle for the fifth time , this time a triple . On June 3 , Venable suffered a strained oblique muscle and left the game , missing four more games with the injury . Venable finished the year batting .264 with 9 home runs and 45 RBI . He collected 8 triples , finishing 9th in the league , and also committed 7 errors , tied for first among NL outfielders .

Coming into 2013 , Venable was again expected to platoon with Denorfia in right , but injuries to center fielder Cameron Maybin and left fielder Carlos Quentin expanded his playing time . He made 68 starts in right and 52 in center and played in a career @-@ high 151 games . Venable entered the season with 401 hits , which was 48 shy of the record for an alumnus of Princeton Tigers Baseball held by Moe Berg . His 46 home runs were already a school best . For the week of August 12 through August 18 , 2013 , Venable won the National League Player of the Week Award . During the week Venable tied his single @-@ game career high with 4 hits , joined the Padres ' 100 @-@ steal club , hit a walk @-@ off home run , made a home run stealing catch and surpassed his previous career best hitting streak by 5 to 15 . It marked his first Player of the Week Award as he hit .406 ( 13 @-@ for @-@ 32 ) with two home runs , two doubles , a triple and seven runs scored . On September 13 , David Hale ( Princeton class of 2011 ) made his major league debut for the Atlanta Braves , and it became the second Princeton vs. Princeton batter @-@ pitcher matchup in major league history . Hale struck out Venable and eight other Padres in his debut for the Braves , setting a franchise debut record . Venable was voted the Padres ' Most Valuable Player for the 2013 season by local baseball writers and other members of the media as he became the 8th player in Padres history to record at least 20 home runs and 20 steals in a season . For the year , Venable hit .268 with 22 home runs and a .796 on @-@ base plus slugging , all new career highs . He also stole 22 bases and finished tied for 5th in the league with 8 triples .

On September 2 , 2013 , Venable signed a two @-@ year contract extension with the Padres to keep him in San Diego through the 2015 season . Venable batted .224 with eight home runs in the 2014 season . His batting average , .288 on @-@ base percentage , .325 slugging percentage , and 38 RBIs were all career lows for a full season . During the 2014 ? 15 offseason , the Padres acquired outfielders Matt Kemp , Justin Upton , and Wil Myers , shifting Venable into a reserve role . For the Padres in 2015 , Venable hit .258 with six home runs , 10 doubles , and 11 stolen bases through mid @-@ August .

= = = Texas Rangers = = =

On August 18 , 2015 , the Padres traded Venable to the Texas Rangers for catcher Marcus Greene and a player to be named later ( PTBNL ) . The Rangers needed another outfielder to supplement players like Josh Hamilton , who have dealt with injuries in the past . The PTBNL was announced as Jon Edwards on August 21 , after Edwards cleared waivers and could be traded .

= = = Philadelphia Phillies = = =

On February 28 , 2016 , Venable signed a minor league deal with the Cleveland Indians . On March 27 , he was released by the Indians . The next day , Venable signed a minor league contract with the Philadelphia Phillies . On June 11 2016 , Venable opted out of his minor league deal with the Phillies and became a free agent .

= = = Los Angeles Dodgers = = =

On June 14 , 2016 , the Los Angeles Dodgers signed Venable and added him to their major league roster . He appeared in six games for the Dodgers and had one hit ( a double ) in 10 at @-@ bats before he was designated for assignment on June 24 . He cleared waivers and accepted an outright assignment to AAA Oklahoma City . On July 1 , the Dodgers brought him back to the active roster when Joc Pederson went on the disabled list . The following week he was again designated for assignment and he again accepted an outright assignment to Oklahoma City .

