

= Phil Nevin =

Phillip Joseph Nevin ( born January 19 , 1971 ) is an American professional baseball manager for the Reno Aces , the Arizona Diamondbacks ' Triple A affiliate in the Pacific Coast League . He spent twelve seasons as a player in Major League Baseball ( MLB ) from 1995 through 2006 , playing for the Houston Astros , Detroit Tigers , Anaheim Angels , San Diego Padres , Texas Rangers , Chicago Cubs , and Minnesota Twins .

Nevin attended California State University , Fullerton where he played college baseball for the Cal State Fullerton Titans team . He led the Titans to the championship game in the 1992 College World Series ( CWS ) , after which he was named the CWS Most Outstanding Player and won the Golden Spikes Award . Chosen with the first overall pick in the 1992 Major League Baseball draft , Nevin went on to play in MLB for seven teams across 12 seasons . He was selected to appear in the 2001 Major League Baseball All Star Game .

After retiring , Nevin stayed involved in baseball . He briefly went into broadcasting , then managed the unaffiliated Orange County Flyers for a season . He managed the Class AA Erie SeaWolves and the Class AAA Toledo Mud Hens in the Tigers organization before joining the Diamondbacks organization in 2014 , managing the Aces .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Amateur career = = =

Nevin attended El Dorado High School in Placentia , California . After graduating , he was selected by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the third round of the 1989 Major League Baseball draft with the 82nd overall selection . He decided to attend California State University , Fullerton after turning down an offer that included a signing bonus of \$ 100 ,000 .

A two sport star , Nevin played American football and baseball for the Cal State Fullerton Titans , competing in the Big West Conference of NCAA Division I. He was a punter and placekicker on the Cal State Fullerton Titans football team . He was named an All American placekicker his freshman year for the Titans as he connected successfully on his first nine field goal attempts and finished the year with a 15 for 21 field goal percentage . His longest field goal of the season was 54 yards ( 49 m ) . In his junior year , he averaged 40.9 yards ( 37.4 m ) per punt .

For the Cal State Fullerton Titans baseball team , Nevin batted .358 with 56 runs batted in ( RBI ) as a freshman . The Titans won the conference championship and reached the 1990 College World Series ( CWS ) that year . The Titans lost two games in the 1990 CWS , however , and were eliminated . Nevin batted .335 in his sophomore season . As a junior , he batted .391 with 20 home runs and 71 RBI , winning the Big West Conference Triple Crown . Collegiate Baseball and Baseball America named Nevin the College Player of the Year . He credited his past CWS experience with allowing him to remain calm .

In three seasons at Cal State Fullerton , Nevin had a .364 average with 39 home runs and 184 RBI . He led the Titans to the finals of the 1992 CWS , where the Titans lost to the Pepperdine Waves baseball team , which represented the West Coast Conference . Despite the loss , Nevin was voted the CWS Most Outstanding Player after he batted 10 for 19 with two home runs and 11 RBI . He also won the Golden Spikes Award , given to the best amateur player in the nation .

= = = Draft = = =

The Houston Astros chose Nevin with the first overall pick in the 1992 Major League Baseball draft . Hal Newhouser , a scout for the Astros , had evaluated Derek Jeter extensively prior to the draft . Convinced that Jeter would anchor a winning team , Newhouser lobbied team management to select Jeter , and quit in protest over the Astros ' decision to take Nevin instead . The Astros believed that

Jeter would insist on a salary bonus of at least \$ 1 million to forgo his college scholarship for a professional contract . Signing bonuses given to the best player in the draft were increasing rapidly . Todd Van Poppel , regarded by many at the time the first pick of the 1990 MLB draft , signed for \$ 1 @. @ 2 million , while the 1991 MLB draft 's first pick , Brien Taylor , signed for \$ 1 @. @ 55 million after insisting he would otherwise enroll in college . Meanwhile , the Astros were unable to sign their first @- @ round draft pick in 1991 , John Burke , who insisted on a bonus of \$ 500 @, @ 000 as the sixth overall selection . Consequently , the Astros passed on Jeter in the draft .

Bill Wood , the Astros ' general manager , said the team believed Nevin was close to a major @- @ league level and would require little development in minor league baseball . As evidence for this , the Astros pointed to Nevin 's training with the wooden bats used in professional baseball in an effort to prepare himself for the transition from metal bats . The Astros believed he would be a solid power hitter and have a strong work ethic . Nevin also did not intend to seek a signing bonus approaching those received by Van Poppel and Taylor . The Astros decided to employ Nevin as a third baseman . Not wanting to draw out his contract negotiations , Nevin signed with Houston in June , receiving a \$ 700 @, @ 000 bonus .

= = = International career = = =

Nevin tried out for the United States national baseball team in the summer of 1990 to play in that year 's Goodwill Games and World University Baseball Championship ( WUBC ) . To prepare for those tournaments , the team played a series against Japan and a game in Cuba . Nevin played second and third base for Team USA in 13 of its 22 games , batting .229 . The team released him before the Goodwill Games and WUBC as it cut players to meet the roster maximum . Nevin was also considered for the 1991 Pan American Games .

Nevin tried out for Team USA again before the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona . The team embarked on a 30 @- @ game tour and 38 @- @ city exhibition @- @ game schedule in the United States before leaving for Spain . He made the team and served as its starting third baseman throughout the tournament . Olympic coach Ron Fraser called Nevin an excellent player and student of the game . The United States finished fourth out of eight teams in the Olympics .

= = = Professional career = = =

= = = Prospect years ( 1992 ? 1997 ) = = =

Nevin traveled with the Astros at the end of their 1992 season but was not on the team 's roster . The Astros sent Nevin to the instructional Arizona Fall League during the off @- @ season . Before the 1993 season , Baseball America ranked Nevin as the 30th @- @ best prospect in baseball .

The Astros considered sending Nevin to the Jackson Generals of the Class AA Texas League to start his professional career . The team also considered promoting him directly to the major leagues , skipping the minor leagues entirely . At the Astros ' spring training in 1993 , Nevin batted .350 and showed good power hitting . The Astros weighed bringing Nevin to Houston for Opening Day as they sought to add a right @- @ handed batter to complement the left @- @ handed power of Luis Gonzalez , Steve Finley and Eric Anthony and make the team less vulnerable to left @- @ handed pitching . But with Ken Caminiti in the first year of a three @- @ year contract to play as the starting third baseman , Nevin had nowhere to play defensively . The Astros assigned him to the Class AAA Tucson Toros of the Pacific Coast League , one level below the major leagues , where he made his professional debut .

While Nevin was with the Toros , the Astros asked Toros manager Rick Sweet to play Nevin as a left fielder , which would allow the Astros to promote Nevin sooner , as he and Caminiti could play different positions . Veteran first baseman Jim Lindeman served as Nevin 's mentor , helping him keep his composure under significant attention and pressure to perform . Nevin started the 1993 season with a .247 batting average , but batted .309 with baserunners in scoring position and had

49 RBI . By July , he had made ten starts in left field , without committing an error . The Astros , however , were concerned that Nevin did not apply the level of intensity he had in " clutch " situations to cases where there were no baserunners and the score was not close .

Nevin 's intensity almost got the best of him during a June 1993 game with Tucson . He was taunted by a man seated in the front row , and nearly attempted to jump into the stands to confront the fan before he was restrained by teammates . The fan was arrested .

Nevin played third base and left field in 1993 . He batted .286 that season , with 10 home runs and 91 RBI . He had a .359 on @-@ base percentage ( OBP ) and .413 slugging percentage ( SLG ) . Baseball America rated him the 24th best prospect before the 1994 season . He returned to Tucson that year , posting a .263 batting average with 12 home runs and 71 RBI . He had a .343 OBP , and .393 SLG . Nevin also played first base . His major @-@ league debut , however , was delayed both by his defense ( 61 errors in his first two seasons ) and the MLB 1994 ? 95 work stoppage .

The Astros traded Caminiti to the San Diego Padres before the 1995 season . With Caminiti no longer blocking his path to the major leagues , Nevin hoped he would be named the Astros ' starting third baseman . But the Astros did not invite him to spring training . Nevin attributed the snub to his refusal to work out with replacement players during the work stoppage . Not wanting to be seen as " scabs " by the Major League Baseball Players Association , minor league players who felt they would play in MLB after the resolution of the strike felt pressure to avoid playing with replacement players , while career minor @-@ leaguers were happy to get a taste of the major leagues . When prospects including Nevin and Billy Wagner refused to play with the replacement players , Astros ' general manager Bob Watson issued an ultimatum , saying anyone who refused to play in the team 's first exhibition game would be sent out of camp until further notice and be held in breach of contract . The Astros sent Nevin back to Tucson to start the 1995 season , while Dave Magadan started at third base on Opening Day . The Astros also planned to use Shipley and Chris Donnels at third base .

With the Toros in 1995 , Nevin 's batting average improved to .291 . He also posted a .367 OBP , and .463 SLG , while contributing seven home runs and 41 RBI . The Astros promoted him on June 10 , 1995 , and he made his major @-@ league debut a day later . Nevin played 18 games for the Astros during the 1995 season . He struggled with the Astros , however , batting .117 with no home runs , one RBI , a .221 OBP , and .133 SLG in 60 at @-@ bats . When he learned of his demotion to Tucson on July 5 in Colorado , Nevin cursed at Watson and Astros manager Terry Collins . After Watson called for an apology , Nevin said he would use the incident as a learning experience in controlling his temper .

The Astros acquired pitcher Mike Henneman from the Detroit Tigers for a player to be named later on August 10 ; Nevin was identified as the player five days later . In 1996 , Nevin played in Class AA for the Tigers with the Jacksonville Suns of the Southern League , where he was converted into a catcher .

= = = = Recovering from earlier struggles ( 1998 ? 2001 ) = = = =

After the 1997 season , the Tigers traded Nevin and catcher Matt Walbeck to the Anaheim Angels , where Collins was manager , for minor league player Nick Skuse . After an injury to starting catcher Todd Greene , Collins gave Nevin the opportunity to compete for the starting job with Walbeck . Nevin , by then well known for his volatile temper , tore off his jersey while arguing balls and strike calls with the home plate umpire in a 1998 game .

Before the 1999 season , the Angels traded Nevin and minor league player Keith Volkman to the San Diego Padres . Nevin made a late @-@ career break with the Padres , appearing in 100 games for the first time during the 1999 season . He then had the best offensive years of his career : he hit 31 home runs with a .916 on @-@ base plus slugging ( OPS ) during the 2000 season . He was named to the National League All @-@ Star team in 2001 , when he hit 41 home runs with 126 RBI and had a .976 OPS . He also led major @-@ league third basemen in errors , however , with 27 , and had the lowest fielding percentage of all major league third basemen ( .930 ) .

== = Injuries and final seasons ( 2002 ? 2006 ) = = =

Nevin in 2002 played first base , which was considered his strongest defensive position . But injuries shortened his 2002 and 2003 seasons . In 2002 , he missed time with a strained left elbow . Three games after returning from the elbow injury , he broke his arm diving for a ground ball , causing him to miss another six weeks . After being heckled by a fan during a September 2002 game , Nevin gave the fan the finger , for which he apologized .

Nevin suffered a dislocated shoulder in spring training in 2003 while making a diving catch . He had surgery on his left shoulder and returned to the Padres in June . The Padres acquired Rondell White to replace Nevin , and White went on to have an All @-@ Star season in left field . Ryan Klesko filled in at first base and rookie Sean Burroughs played well at third base , Nevin 's favorite position . Nevin offered to be used in a utility role , alternating with White , Klesko , and Burroughs , as well as Xavier Nady in right field . In 2004 , Nevin had more than 100 RBI for the third time in his career , but underwent arthroscopic surgery to repair torn cartilage in his right knee in July .

Nevin was often frustrated with the dimensions of Petco Park . He hit a double during a 2004 game that he believed would have been a home run in other stadiums ; when he reached second base , he pointed toward Padres ' general manager Kevin Towers ' suite and threw down his helmet , resulting in a postgame argument . Towers said the two had a " love @-@ hate " relationship .

Two nights after San Diego Padres management informed Nevin that Xavier Nady would replace him as the starting first baseman , Nevin rejected a trade to the Baltimore Orioles for Sidney Ponson on July 25 , 2005 . Nevin exercised a clause in his contract that gave him the right to block transactions that would send him to any of eight franchises , one of which was the Orioles . He was instead traded on July 30 , a day before the non @-@ waiver trade deadline , to the Texas Rangers for Chan Ho Park , whose salary the Rangers wanted to dump . In his first thirteen games with the Rangers , the team posted a 1 ? 12 record as Nevin batted 5 @-@ for @-@ 44 . That put his season batting average under .200 , known as the " Mendoza Line " . The Rangers benched Nevin in September , giving his starts to prospect first baseman Adrian Gonzalez after the team was eliminated from playoff contention . In his first game back in the lineup on September 24 , his average dropped to .182 . He refuted opinions that he was losing bat speed .

Nevin had one year remaining on a contract worth \$ 9 million . Manager Buck Showalter said that despite Nevin 's benching at the end of the 2005 season , he was his starting designated hitter for the 2006 season . Despite hopes that help from renowned hitting coach Rudy Jaramillo and the hitter @-@ friendly Ameritrust Field would increase Nevin 's offensive production in 2006 , he continued to struggle . He batted .216 with nine home runs and 31 RBI in 46 games . The Rangers promoted rookie Jason Botts on May 23 , and Botts began to receive Nevin 's playing time .

Nevin had only two hits in his last 32 at @-@ bats with the Rangers , though both of them were home runs . The Chicago Cubs sought a slugging first baseman to replace the injured Derrek Lee , and the Rangers traded Nevin to Chicago on May 31 , 2006 . The Rangers received second baseman and outfielder Jerry Hairston , Jr. in return . The Rangers also agreed to pay the difference in the two players ' salaries . On August 31 , the deadline for trades of players who had cleared waivers , the Cubs traded Nevin to the Twins for cash and a player to be named later . To make room for Nevin , Twins ' outfielder Shannon Stewart was placed on the 60 @-@ day disabled list .

With the Twins , Nevin stopped worrying about his statistics and enjoyed playing in a pennant race . Nevin appeared in the MLB postseason for the first time in his career with the Twins in 2006 . The Twins were swept by the Oakland Athletics in three games ; Nevin appeared in one of the three games , batting 0 @-@ for @-@ 3 .

= = Post @-@ playing career = =

Unsigned at the beginning of the following season , Nevin announced his retirement on May 12 , 2007 . During his twelve @-@ season career , Nevin had a .270 batting average with 208 home runs and 743 RBI in 1 @,@ 217 games . After retiring , Nevin joined the Padres ' pre @-@ game radio show . He also joined ESPN as an analyst for the college baseball regionals during the

College World Series .

Two seasons removed from his playing career , Nevin decided to return to baseball as a manager in 2008 . That December , he was named the manager of the Orange County Flyers in the independent Golden Baseball League ( GBL ) . The Flyers finished with a 37 ? 39 record in 2009 , fourth in the five @-@ team GBL . Nevin planned to return to the Flyers in 2010 , but a chance meeting at baseball 's winter meetings led to Nevin 's hiring as manager of the Erie SeaWolves , the Class @-@ AA minor @-@ league affiliate of the Detroit Tigers . He replaced the previous manager , Tom Brookens after Brookens was promoted to the Tigers ' major @-@ league first @-@ base coach .

Nevin managed the SeaWolves for one season . On November 11 , 2010 , Nevin was named manager of the Toledo Mud Hens , the Tigers ' Class AAA minor league affiliate . He is considered a potential future MLB manager . Catcher Omir Santos described his managing the Mud Hens as " like having a big league manager in [ Class AAA ] . " On August 31 , 2013 , Nevin was fired after the team 's final home game of the season . Nevin 's record as manager was 192 ? 238 ; the team never finished higher than third in the International League 's West division .

The Arizona Diamondbacks named Nevin as manager of the Reno Aces , their Class AAA affiliate , for the 2014 season . In his first season with Reno , he guided the Aces to a Pacific Coast League @-@ best 81 @-@ 63 record and an eventual Pacific Coast League Championship Series berth . After the season , the Astros interviewed Nevin for their open managerial position . However Nevin remained the manager of the Reno Aces for the 2015 season and returned as manager in 2016 .

= = Personal life = =

Nevin 's first daughter , Koral , was born during his freshman year at Cal State Fullerton ; he is no longer in a relationship with Koral 's mother . He met his wife , Kristin , at Cal State Fullerton . The couple have two children together ; though they were separated during the late 1990s , the couple reconciled . His son , Tyler Nevin , was drafted by the Colorado Rockies as the 38th pick in the 2015 MLB draft .

Nevin lives in the Heritage Estates neighborhood of Poway , California , along with San Diego sporting figures including Bruce Bochy and LaDainian Tomlinson . The neighborhood suffered significant damage in the October 2007 California wildfires .

Nevin hosted a baseball camp for children aged six through 16 in 2010 .