

giving
back

By Jon Hindman

GOING TO BAT

Dennis Gilbert has utilized his baseball knowledge and influence to help some charitable causes

Dennis Gilbert is a star among stars: The one-time minor-league baseball player turned life insurance salesman accumulated a slew of Hollywood clients, including Sally Field, Nicolas Cage, Rod Stewart, Reba McEntire, The Beach Boys, Robert Duvall, Quincy Jones and Madonna. Baseball's field of dreams continued to beckon, as

well, and Gilbert made the transition into a career as a sports agent, negotiating more than 1,000 contracts for the likes of Barry Bonds, Mike Piazza, Curt Schilling, Rickey Henderson and Jose Canseco, among many other well-known players and legends of the game.

While Gilbert eventually landed back in the insurance business as CEO of Gilbert-Krupin Insurance and Investment Planning of Beverly Hills (which specializes in estate, business and retirement planning, in addition to selling life insurance), baseball has remained one of his foremost passions. He is currently special assistant to the chairman of the Chicago White Sox, helping the organization with

contract negotiations, and he has personally devoted his money and time to causes associated with America's favorite pastime.

Play Ball!

Gilbert, who grew up not too far from South Central Los Angeles in Gardena, says that he was forced to play baseball on dirt fields in adverse conditions when he was younger, and that not much had changed in the inner city since his youth. So a few years ago he set out to make a difference.

"The biggest thing these inner-city kids didn't have was a place to play baseball, other than dirt fields with water fountains in the outfield and no fences. So what I did is I contracted with RBI [Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities] and I built a state-of-the-art stadium."

With financial backing from Gilbert (who also donated his time and expertise), RBI, a youth outreach program co-managed by Major League Baseball and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, built Dennis Gilbert Field on the campus of Los Angeles Southwest College. The stadium, which celebrated its opening day on Jan. 20, 2002 and is available to youth programs in the area, has a grass infield, grandstands, a press box, fences, batting cages and bullpens.

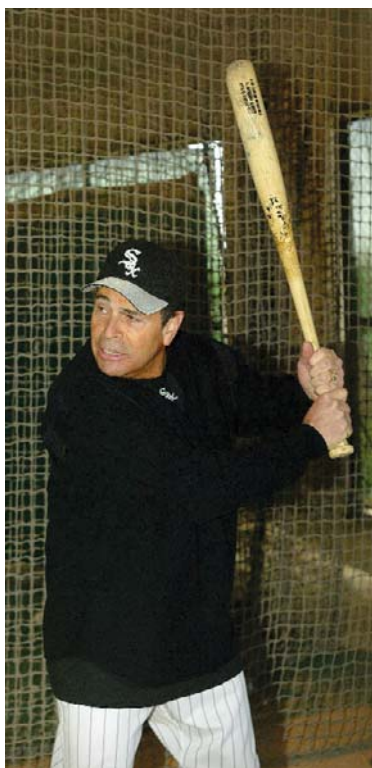
Currently, Gilbert sits on the RBI board and says that his mission is to offer a helping hand to inner-city kids and continuously make upgrades to the stadium so that it remains a staple of the community.

Professional baseball scouts have also benefited from Gilbert's generosity. Gilbert is chairman of the Professional Baseball Scouts Foundation, which provides financial relief to former baseball scouts in need, and he has helped to raise more than \$300,000 for scouts who have fallen on hard times due to job loss, illness, retirement or other financial setbacks. Gilbert says that in the high-paying world of professional baseball, scouts are generally underpaid and receive minimal health benefits.

For the most part, though, Gilbert is devoted to L.A., where he continues to reside. He was recently approached by Major League Baseball to help maintain another new baseball complex in Compton, he serves on the board of governors at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and is involved with the local Jewish community. He even holds season tickets for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim.

"I'm really an L.A. guy," he says. "I love this town."

California CEO managing editor Jon Hindman grew up as a New York Mets fan and also roots for his hometown San Diego Padres.



Dennis Gilbert combines his passion for baseball with his joy of giving back to the L.A. community.

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