# The Shortstop Reference

**The shortstop** is one of the most dynamic and pivotal positions on a baseball field. Known for their agility, quick reflexes, and strategic importance, shortstops are often considered the backbone of a team's defense. They serve as the link between the middle infielders and the outfield, orchestrating plays and preventing the opposing team from advancing bases. Whether you're a baseball enthusiast, aspiring player, or simply interested in understanding this critical role, this comprehensive guide delves into the history, responsibilities, skills, and notable shortstops who have left a lasting legacy in the sport.

## Understanding the Role of the Shortstop in Baseball

### Defining the Shortstop Position

The shortstop, abbreviated as SS, is positioned between second and third base on a baseball diamond. Playing just to the left of second base, the shortstop is a central figure in the infield defense. Their primary responsibilities include fielding ground balls, catching line drives, turning double plays, and covering bases.

### Importance of the Shortstop on the Field

The shortstop's role is crucial for several reasons:

- **Defensive Anchor:** Acts as the leader of the infield, coordinating plays and positioning.
- **Preventing Base Advancement:** Quickly reacting to hits and preventing runners from advancing or scoring.
- **Supporting Pitchers:** Providing reliable fielding to back up pitchers and maintain team morale.
- **Strategic Playmaking:** Initiating double plays and executing cut-off throws to control the game.

## Historical Evolution of the Shortstop Position

### Early Days of Shortstops

In the early 19th century, shortstops were often larger, less agile players primarily tasked with fielding and throwing. Their role was less specialized, often overlapping with other infield positions.

### Rise of the Athletic Shortstop

By the mid-20th century, the position evolved into a showcase for athleticism. Shortstops like Honus Wagner and Pee Wee Reese exemplified agility, strong arm strength, and fielding prowess.

### Modern Shortstops

Today, shortstops are typically among the most athletic players on the team, combining speed, power, and defensive skill. Players like Derek Jeter, Ozzie Smith, and Francisco Lindor have set standards for excellence in this role.

## Key Skills and Attributes of a Successful Shortstop

### Defensive Skills

A shortstop?s defensive capabilities are fundamental to their success:

- **Fielding Ground Balls:** Quick reflexes and glove work to secure hits.
- **Range:** Ability to cover a wide area of the infield.
- **Arm Strength:** Strong throws to first base and other bases under pressure.
- **Double Play Execution:** Smooth pivoting and accurate throws to turn two.

### Offensive Skills

While primarily valued for defense, modern shortstops also contribute offensively:

- **Speed:** Stealing bases and taking extra bases on hits.
- **Batting Ability:** Consistent contact, power-hitting, or situational hitting depending on the player's style.
- **Plate Discipline:** Ability to draw walks and handle high-pressure situations.

### Intangibles

Beyond physical skills, certain mental attributes enhance a shortstop's effectiveness:

- **Game Awareness:** Reading hitter tendencies and anticipating plays.
- **Leadership:** Communicating effectively with teammates and coaches.
- **Resilience:** Maintaining focus and performance under pressure.

## Training and Development for Shortstops

### Fundamental Drills

To excel, shortstops should engage in specific drills:

- **Ground Ball Fielding:** Repeatedly practicing fielding balls hit at various angles and speeds.
- **Footwork and Agility:** Ladder drills and cone exercises to improve quickness.
- **Throwing Accuracy:** Target practice to develop strong, precise throws.
- **Double Play Turns:** Simulated scenarios to perfect pivoting and quick throws.

### Physical Conditioning

Given the demands of the position, shortstops benefit from:

- Strength training for arm and core stability.
- Cardiovascular exercises for endurance.
- Flexibility routines to prevent injuries.

## Notable Shortstops in Baseball History

### Legends of the Past

Many players have defined the position through their exceptional skills:

- **Honus Wagner:** Known as one of the greatest shortstops of the early 20th century, with a combination of batting and fielding excellence.
- **Pee Wee Reese:** A beloved leader for the Brooklyn Dodgers, praised for his glove and leadership qualities.
- **Ozzie Smith:** The "Wizard of Oz," renowned for his defensive prowess and acrobatic plays in the 1980s.

### Modern Era Stars

Contemporary shortstops continue to impress:

- **Derek Jeter:** The Yankees icon known for clutch hitting and leadership.
- **Francisco Lindor:** Known for his agility, power, and infectious enthusiasm.
- **Fernando Tatís Jr.:** A young superstar with explosive athleticism and offensive skills.

# Impact of the Shortstop on Team Success

## Defensive Impact

A skilled shortstop can significantly reduce the number of runs allowed, which is crucial for a team's overall success. Their ability to turn double plays and prevent extra-base hits often sets the tone for the game.

## Offensive Contribution

While defense is their primary role, a shortstop's offensive production can provide the necessary edge in close games. Top-tier shortstops often serve as offensive catalysts, setting the stage for rallies.

## Leadership and Intangibles

Many shortstops serve as team leaders, motivating players and making strategic decisions on the fly. Their presence can elevate team morale and focus.

# Choosing the Right Equipment for Shortstops

## Gloves

A shortstop's glove should be:

- Quick to open and close for fast plays.
- Made of durable leather with a shallow pocket for quick transfers.
- Properly fitted to the player's hand for comfort and control.

## Cleats

Proper footwear provides:

- Good traction for quick starts and stops.
- Support for lateral movements.

## Accessories

Additional gear includes:

- Batting gloves for grip.
- Protective gear such as sliding shorts and knee pads.

## Conclusion: The Shortstop's Legacy and Future

The shortstop remains one of the most exciting and vital positions in baseball. As the game continues to evolve, so too will the skills and athleticism required to excel at this role. The best shortstops combine defensive mastery, offensive prowess, and leadership qualities, leaving a lasting legacy that inspires future generations. Whether in historical highlights or modern-day plays, the shortstop's impact on the game is undeniable, symbolizing agility, intelligence, and teamwork at its finest.

Optimizing for SEO:

For those seeking to improve their understanding or skills as a shortstop, consider exploring training programs, watching game highlights of legendary shortstops, and studying defensive drills. Incorporating keywords like "shortstop skills," "shortstop training," "best shortstops in baseball history," and "shortstop defensive techniques" can enhance visibility for audiences interested in baseball development.

The Shortstop: An In-Depth Examination of the Infield's Dynamic Anchor

The shortstop, often regarded as the keystone of the infield in baseball, occupies a unique and demanding position that combines agility, intelligence, and a deep understanding of the game. As a pivotal player in both defensive maneuvers and offensive opportunities, the shortstop?s role extends beyond mere fielding; it embodies the strategic heart of a baseball team. This investigation delves into the history, responsibilities, skill set, evolution, and cultural significance of the shortstop, providing a comprehensive understanding of this quintessential position.

## Historical Evolution of the Shortstop

### Origins and Early Development

The shortstop position emerged in the 19th century, evolving from the need to fill the gap between second and third base as baseball?s rules and gameplay strategies matured. Initially, the shortstop was primarily a defensive position, often played by slower or less skilled players because of its perceived lesser importance compared to other infield spots.

### Transition to a Central Defensive Role

By the early 20th century, as the game became faster and more complex, the shortstop?s

responsibilities expanded. The advent of more powerful hitters and increased base-running tactics necessitated a player with exceptional range and quick reflexes. The legendary Honus Wagner, who played from the late 19th century into the early 20th, exemplified the evolving archetype of the shortstop ? a player with both offensive prowess and defensive mastery.

### Modern Shortstop: The Complete Package

Today, the shortstop is regarded as one of the most challenging defensive positions, demanding a blend of agility, arm strength, and mental acuity. The evolution reflects a shift from a secondary role to a central figure in both defense and offense, with some of the most celebrated players in baseball history, such as Derek Jeter, Ozzie Smith, and Francisco Lindor, redefining what it means to excel at this position.

## Core Responsibilities and Skills of the Shortstop

### Defensive Duties

The primary responsibility of the shortstop is to prevent hits from turning into extra bases and to support the pitcher by controlling the infield. Specific defensive tasks include:

- Covering second base during double plays
- Fielding ground balls and line drives
- Making quick throws to first base to record outs
- Covering third base on bunt plays or steal attempts
- Communicating effectively with other infielders and the catcher

### Required Skills and Attributes

Success at shortstop hinges on a unique skill set encompassing physical and mental attributes:

- Agility and Range: The ability to cover large areas of the infield swiftly
- Arm Strength and Accuracy: Making strong throws across the diamond
- Quick Reflexes: Reacting rapidly to unpredictable batted balls
- Fielding Technique: Reliable glove work and proper footwork
- Game Intelligence: Anticipating hitters? tendencies and coordinating with teammates
- Mental Toughness: Maintaining focus during high-pressure situations

## The Offensive Dimension of the Shortstop

### Contributions at the Plate

While traditionally valued more for defense, modern shortstops are expected to be offensive contributors. Their offensive skills include:

- High batting averages
- Power-hitting capabilities
- Speed on the bases for steals and advancing runners
- Situational awareness for strategic hitting

### Notable Offensive Players

Some shortstops have distinguished themselves offensively, including:

- Derek Jeter: Known for clutch hits and leadership
- Alex Rodriguez: A power-hitting shortstop with a Hall of Fame career
- Francisco Lindor: A well-rounded hitter and baserunner

## Evolution of the Shortstop?s Role in Modern Baseball

### Shift in Defensive Strategies

Advancements in analytics and defensive positioning have transformed how shortstops operate. The use of defensive shifts ? repositioning players based on hitter tendencies ? has increased the importance of the shortstop?s ability to read plays and adapt quickly.

### Impact of Advanced Metrics

Sabermetrics and other advanced statistics have quantified defensive value, emphasizing metrics such as:

- Range Factor
- Defensive Runs Saved (DRS)
- Ultimate Zone Rating (UZR)

These tools have helped teams evaluate shortstops more precisely, valuing defensive range and reliability alongside offensive output.

### Era of the Versatile Athlete

Today?s shortstops are often among the most versatile players on the roster, expected to contribute in multiple facets of the game. Players like Fernando Tatis Jr. exemplify this trend, combining exceptional defensive skills with offensive explosiveness.

## Cultural and Symbolic Significance of the Shortstop

### Leadership and Team Identity

Historically, the shortstop has often been viewed as a leader on the field, sometimes serving as team captain or a clubhouse figure. Their position demands a high baseball IQ and the ability to rally teammates.

### Iconic Shortstops in Baseball Lore

The position has produced legendary figures whose influence extends beyond the field:

- Honus Wagner: The first true superstar shortstop
- Ozzie Smith: Known as ?The Wizard? for his defensive magic
- Derek Jeter: Embodying clutch performance and leadership

Their legacies have cemented the shortstop as a symbol of excellence, agility, and strategic intelligence.

## Challenges and Future Outlook

### Physical Demands and Longevity

Playing shortstop is physically taxing, with constant lateral movement, sudden dives, and throws. Injuries and fatigue can impact performance and career longevity.

### Emerging Technologies and Training

Innovations such as biomechanical analysis, virtual reality training, and data-driven positioning are shaping how shortstops develop their skills. These advancements aim to enhance reaction times, fielding technique, and strategic understanding.

### Changing Player Archetypes

While traditional shortstops have been characterized by agility and defense, there is a growing trend toward taller, more power-oriented players. This shift could redefine the archetype and expectations for future generations.

## Conclusion

The shortstop remains one of the most dynamic and vital positions in baseball, embodying a blend of athleticism, intelligence, and leadership. From its humble origins to its modern-day prominence, the role has continually evolved in response to the sport?s increasing complexity and strategic depth. As analytics and training methods advance, the shortstop?s importance is only set to grow, ensuring that this position remains a focal point of excellence and excitement in the game of baseball.

In essence, the shortstop is more than just a defensive player; it is the heart of infield strategy, a symbol of versatility, and a testament to the athletic and mental demands of baseball. Understanding this position offers deeper insight into the game?s intricacies and the qualities that define some of its greatest heroes.

QuestionAnswer Who is considered the greatest shortstop of all time? Many consider Ozzie Smith or Derek Jeter as the greatest shortstop of all time due to their exceptional defensive skills and leadership on the field. What are the primary responsibilities of a shortstop in baseball? The shortstop is primarily responsible for fielding ground balls, covering second and third bases, and acting as a key defensive player in the infield, often coordinating double plays. Which shortstop holds the record for most Gold Glove Awards? Ozzie Smith holds the record for the most Gold Glove Awards won by a shortstop, with a total of 13. How has the role of the shortstop evolved in modern baseball? In modern baseball, shortstops are expected to be both excellent defenders and capable hitters, with many also contributing offensively, leading to a more versatile role compared to earlier eras. Who are some current standout shortstops in Major League Baseball? Current standout shortstops include players like Francisco Lindor, Fernando Tatis Jr., and Corey Seager, known for their defensive prowess and offensive contributions. What skills are essential for a successful shortstop? Key skills include quick reflexes, strong arm strength, agility, good fielding technique, and the ability to make accurate throws under pressure.

**Related keywords:** baseball, position, glove, fielding, inning, player, team, sport, throw, catch

## Who Is Derek Jeter

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Who Is Derek Jeter? A Deep Dive Into Baseball?s Iconic Shortstop

## who is derek jeter is a question that sparks immediate recognition among baseball fans

and sports enthusiasts alike. Derek Jeter is not just a name; he is a symbol of excellence, leadership, and consistency in Major League Baseball (MLB). Known primarily for his incredible career with the New York Yankees, Jeter?s impact transcends the diamond, in?uencing sports culture and inspiring generations. But what exactly makes Derek Jeter such a legendary ?gure? Let?s explore his life, career, and legacy in detail.

## Early Life and Background: The Making of a Superstar

Before Derek Jeter became a household name, he was a young boy in Pequannock Township, New Jersey, with big dreams and a passion for baseball. Born on June 26, 1974, Jeter showed early signs of athletic prowess, excelling in multiple sports during his high school years. His dedication to baseball, however, set him on a path toward greatness. Jeter attended Kalamazoo Central High School in Michigan, where his talent caught the attention of scouts. He was drafted by the New York Yankees in the ?rst round of the 1992 MLB Draft, an early indication that his future in professional baseball was bright.

## Who Is Derek Jeter on the Field? A Career Overview

Derek Jeter?s professional career is a testament to skill, perseverance, and leadership. Playing as a shortstop, he spent his entire 20-year MLB career with the Yankees, a rarity in modern sports where players often switch teams multiple times.

## Career Highlights and Achievements

**Five-time World Series Champion**: Jeter was instrumental in leading the Yankees to championships in 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2009.

**14-time All-Star**: His consistent performance earned him repeated recognition among the league?s best.

**Five Gold Glove Awards**: His defensive skills at shortstop were top-notch.

**Five Silver Slugger Awards**: Jeter wasn?t just a defensive player; he was a formidable hitter.

**3,465 Career Hits**: Ranking sixth all-time in MLB history, this milestone underscores his longevity and consistency.

## A Leader Both On and O? the Field

Jeter?s leadership qualities set him apart. He served as the Yankees? captain from 2003 until his retirement in 2014, earning respect not just from teammates but from opponents and fans worldwide. His calm demeanor under pressure and clutch performances in critical moments earned him the nickname "Captain Clutch."

## The Legacy of Derek Jeter: Beyond the Statistics

While statistics provide a glimpse of Jeter?s greatness, his true legacy is richer and more nuanced. He is often celebrated for his sportsmanship, professionalism, and ability to remain humble despite immense fame.

## Impact on Baseball Culture

Derek Jeter helped elevate the shortstop position, traditionally seen as a primarily

defensive role, into one that demands o?ensive production and leadership. Young players have looked up to him as a role model, aspiring to emulate his work ethic and approach to the game.

## Community Involvement and Philanthropy

O? the ?eld, Jeter has been deeply involved in charitable work. Through the Turn 2 Foundation, which he founded, Jeter promotes healthy lifestyles among young people, emphasizing education and athletic achievement as pathways to success. His commitment to giving back highlights another dimension of who is Derek Jeter ? a ?gure dedicated to making a positive di?erence beyond baseball.

## Life After Baseball: Continuing In?uence and New Ventures

Retirement from professional sports does not mean the end of in?uence, especially for someone like Derek Jeter. After hanging up his cleats, he transitioned seamlessly into various roles that keep him connected to the sport and its community.

## Business and Media

Jeter co-founded The Players' Tribune, a media platform that allows athletes to share their stories directly with fans. This venture revolutionized how sports narratives are told, giving athletes a voice and fostering a deeper connection with audiences.

## Ownership and Executive Roles

In recent years, Jeter has taken on executive responsibilities, including part ownership and a leadership role with the Miami Marlins. His involvement in team management demonstrates his commitment to shaping the future of baseball from a di?erent angle.

## Who Is Derek Jeter in the Eyes of Fans and the Media?

The public perception of Derek Jeter is shaped by both his on-?eld heroics and his o?-?eld persona. Known for his clean image, professionalism, and clutch performances, he has been a favorite among fans, sportswriters, and broadcasters.

## Iconic Moments That De?ne Jeter

**The Flip Play (2001 ALDS)**: A defensive maneuver that showcased his quick thinking and athleticism.

**Final Game at Yankee Stadium (2014)**: A poignant farewell that brought fans worldwide to tears.

**Consistent Playo? Excellence**: Jeter?s ability to deliver in high-pressure playo? games is legendary.

These moments, among many others, contribute to the narrative of who is Derek Jeter ? not just a player who excelled statistically, but a clutch performer whose legacy is cemented in baseball lore.

## Tips and Lessons from Derek Jeter?s Career

For aspiring athletes and anyone aiming for success, Derek Jeter?s journey o?ers valuable lessons:

## Consistency is key: Success often comes from steady, reliable performance over

1.

time.

## Leadership matters: Being a leader means setting an example and inspiring

2.

others.

## Handle pressure with grace: Jeter?s calm under pressure is a model for

3.

managing stress.

## Give back: Using one?s platform to help others enriches both the community and

4.

the individual.

These insights make Jeter?s story relevant beyond sports, applicable to many areas of life.

Who is Derek Jeter? He is a baseball legend, an enduring symbol of the New York Yankees,

and a model of professionalism and leadership. His story is one of talent, hard work, and a

commitment to excellence that resonates well beyond the baseball diamond. Whether

you?re a die-hard sports fan or someone curious about the qualities that de?ne greatness,

Derek Jeter?s life and career o?er inspiration and lessons worth exploring.

## Question

## Answer

Who is Derek Jeter?

Derek Jeter is a former professional baseball

shortstop who played 20 seasons in Major League

Baseball (MLB) for the New York Yankees.

What are some of Derek Jeter's

career achievements?

Derek Jeter is a 14-time All-Star, 5-time World Series

champion, and was inducted into the Baseball Hall of

Fame in 2020.

When did Derek Jeter retire

from baseball?

Derek Jeter retired from professional baseball at the

end of the 2014 MLB season.

What team did Derek Jeter play

for during his MLB career?

Derek Jeter spent his entire 20-year MLB career

playing for the New York Yankees.

What is Derek Jeter doing after

retirement?

After retirement, Derek Jeter became a businessman

and was the CEO and part-owner of the Miami Marlins

baseball team.

Where was Derek Jeter born?

Derek Jeter was born in Pequannock Township, New

Jersey, United States.

Why is Derek Jeter considered

one of the greatest baseball

players?

Derek Jeter is considered one of the greatest due to

his consistent performance, leadership, clutch hitting,

and contributions to ?ve World Series championships.

What number did Derek Jeter

wear for the New York Yankees?

Derek Jeter wore the number 2 jersey during his

entire career with the New York Yankees.

Derek Jeter: The Iconic Yankee and Baseball Legend

## who is derek jeter is a question that resonates deeply within the world of professional

baseball and sports enthusiasts globally. Derek Jeter is not merely a former Major League Baseball (MLB) player; he is a symbol of consistency, leadership, and excellence, especially known for his tenure with the New York Yankees. His career, marked by numerous accolades and an indelible impact on the game, makes him one of the most celebrated athletes in baseball history.

## Early Life and Career Beginnings

Derek Jeter was born on June 26, 1974, in Pequannock Township, New Jersey. From an early age, Jeter displayed a remarkable talent for baseball, and he excelled throughout his high school years. His athletic prowess earned him a scholarship to the University of Michigan, but his trajectory changed when the New York Yankees selected him sixth overall in the 1992 MLB Draft.

His early years in the minor leagues showcased his dedication and skill, paving the way for his MLB debut in 1995. Despite intense competition and high expectations, Jeter quickly proved his ability to perform under pressure, earning a permanent spot as the Yankees? shortstop.

## Career Highlights and Achievements

Over a 20-year career with the New York Yankees, Derek Jeter amassed an impressive list of accomplishments that cemented his legacy. His career statistics include over 3,400 hits, 260 home runs, and a batting average of .310. Jeter was a 14-time All-Star and won ?ve World Series championships with the Yankees (1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2009).

## Leadership and Intangibles

What sets Derek Jeter apart from many of his contemporaries is not solely his statistical output but his leadership qualities. As the Yankees? captain from 2003 until his retirement in 2014, Jeter was known for his calm demeanor, work ethic, and ability to inspire teammates. He earned the nickname ?Captain Clutch? for his performances in critical moments, particularly in the postseason.

## Defensive Skills and Playing Style

While Jeter was often praised for his o?ensive capabilities, his defensive contributions were also signi?cant. Employing a smooth and e?cient playing style, Jeter was known for his reliability at shortstop. Though he never won a Gold Glove Award, his defensive prowess was evident through his ability to make di?cult plays look routine and his strong, accurate throws.

## O?-the-Field In?uence and Legacy

Beyond his on-?eld accomplishments, Derek Jeter?s in?uence extends into philanthropy, business, and media. He launched the Turn 2 Foundation, aimed at helping young people avoid drug and alcohol addiction, showcasing his commitment to community and youth development.

## Business Ventures and Media Presence

Post-retirement, Jeter has remained active in baseball and business. He became the CEO and part-owner of the Miami Marlins, demonstrating an interest in shaping the future of MLB beyond his playing days. Additionally, his media presence includes contributions as a sports analyst and involvement in various endorsements, re?ecting his marketability and widespread appeal.

## Comparative Impact in Baseball History

When analyzing who is Derek Jeter within the context of baseball history, comparisons often arise with other legendary shortstops such as Cal Ripken Jr., Ozzie Smith, and Alex Rodriguez. Unlike some peers who were known for extraordinary defensive skills or power

hitting, Jeter?s combination of consistent o?ensive production, postseason success, and leadership sets him apart uniquely.

## Cal Ripken Jr. ? Known as "The Iron Man" for his consecutive games played record,

1.

Ripken was a durable and powerful shortstop.

## Ozzie Smith ? Renowned for his defensive wizardry and agility at shortstop.

2.

## Alex Rodriguez ? A proli?c hitter with a complex career due to controversies.

3.

Jeter?s clean image, clutch performances, and loyalty to one franchise di?erentiate him in a modern era often marked by player movement and o?-?eld controversies.

## Impact on New York Yankees and Baseball Culture

Derek Jeter?s identity is inseparable from the New York Yankees, one of the most storied franchises in sports history. His career coincided with a resurgence of Yankees dominance in the late 1990s and early 2000s, helping to de?ne a golden era for the team. Jeter?s presence was a stabilizing force amid changing rosters and managerial shifts.

Moreover, his style and demeanor in?uenced baseball culture by embodying professionalism and humility. In an age where athletes often face criticism for perceived arrogance or o?-?eld distractions, Jeter maintained a reputation for respect and class.

## Fan Reception and Media Portrayal

Throughout his career and beyond, Derek Jeter enjoyed immense popularity among fans and media. His autograph and memorabilia are highly sought after, re?ecting his status as a sports icon. Media outlets frequently highlighted his postseason heroics, and he was a favorite subject for sports documentaries and biographies.

Yet, his career was not without criticism. Some analysts questioned his defensive metrics and occasionally pointed out moments of inconsistency. Nonetheless, the overall narrative around Jeter remains overwhelmingly positive.

## Who Is Derek Jeter Today?

Since retiring in 2014, Derek Jeter has transitioned smoothly into roles that keep him connected to baseball and public life. His position with the Miami Marlins marks a new chapter in his baseball journey, where he applies his experience and leadership o? the ?eld.

He also continues to engage in philanthropic e?orts and media projects, reinforcing his multifaceted in?uence. For many, Derek Jeter represents the archetype of a sports professional who combines talent, dedication, and character, making him a lasting ?gure in both baseball and American sports culture.

The question of who is Derek Jeter encompasses more than a mere biography; it re?ects an exploration of an athlete whose career and persona have shaped the contours of modern baseball. His legacy as a player, leader, and role model endures, inspiring generations of fans and players alike.

Derek Jeter, New York Yankees, baseball, MLB, shortstop, Hall of Fame, Yankee Stadium,

captain, World Series, professional athlete

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