



All the Right Moves

In a life of (Boy) Scouting and (Baseball) Scouting, the Philadelphia Phillies' Pat Gillick Has Shown He's a True Winner.

By Mark Ray

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In 1977, their first season, the Toronto Blue Jays were the worst team in Major League Baseball. Notching just 54 wins against 107 losses, they were 45½ games behind the New York Yankees, the division rivals who would win their 21st World Series championship that October.

But the Blue Jays had a secret weapon: first-year general manager Pat Gillick, the Yankees' former coordinator of player development. Knowing he couldn't rely on the sort of marquee talent that filled his former team's roster, the 39-year-old Eagle Scout and his staff worked to recruit and develop rookies with potential, as well as more experienced players other teams had passed up. The *Toronto Star* put the team's opening day payroll at \$303,000, compared with \$1.495 million for the Yankees—a nearly five-fold difference.

Not surprisingly, it took time for the Blue Jays to become contenders. They marked their first winning season in 1983, beginning a streak of 11 straight years with winning records. During those years, Gillick became known as "Stand Pat" for his reluctance to trade many players. But he surprised the baseball world at the 1990 winter meetings by ending a 608-day trade drought to acquire Roberto Alomar, Joe Carter and Devon White, three players who would help lead the Blue Jays to back-to-back World Series championships in 1992 and 1993. He retired—for the first time—the following year.

"His ability to project talent into the future was one of his greatest strengths," Gord Ash, Gillick's successor in Toronto, told Canada's *National Post* in 2011. "He has

that ability to see what others couldn't." In the same article, current general manager Alex Anthopoulos called Gillick "the best GM of all time." Brian Cashman, general manager of the Yankees, called him "the architect of all architects" in a *Los Angeles Times* interview.

Those accolades all came upon Gillick's induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. He was just the fourth general manager inducted—and the first Eagle Scout. "I didn't think I'd have an opportunity," he says of his election. "I was completely surprised and humbled and very grateful."

From the Pitcher's Mound to the Front Office

Baseball players have dreams of getting called up to the big leagues—and nightmares of being sent down to Triple A or worse. Most baseball careers are a constant journey between bright lights and small cities.

Gillick knows that life. In 1956, after two years at Los Angeles Valley College, he traveled to Alberta, Canada—hitchhiking part of the way—to pitch for the semi-pro Vulcan Elks. The job paid \$65 a week, which he supplemented with a \$6-a-day job at the local grain elevator right-fielder Swede Robinson ran.

Midway through a season in which he hadn't won a game, Gillick traveled even farther north to play for the Granum White Sox in Calgary's Medicine Hat Tournament. The left-hander pitched a no-hitter to get the team into the finals, then pitched a four-hitter that won the team the tournament. (The folks back in Vulcan weren't impressed; they docked his pay by the amount the White Sox had paid him.)

From Vulcan, Gillick returned to his home state, where he pitched for the University of Southern California in 1957 and 1958. His senior season, the team won the College World Series.

Undrafted out of college, Gillick was considering law school but decided to give baseball another chance. He traveled back to Alberta to play semi-pro ball in the Western Canada League, doing well enough to attract the attention of the Baltimore Orioles. From 1959 to 1963, he played for a string of minor-league teams in the Orioles and Pittsburgh Pirates farm systems, from the C-League Stockton (Calif.) Ports to the Triple-A Rochester (N.Y.) Red Wings.

Gillick's playing career ended in Rochester, the victim of nagging arm issues and a self-imposed five-year deadline to make it to the majors. Graduate school beckoned again, but then Eddie Robinson, who'd scouted him for the Orioles five years earlier, recruited him to become assistant farm director for the Houston Colt .45s (renamed the Astros in 1965).

Scouting for Talent—and Character

It was the role Gillick was born to play. Even in his minor-league days, he had mentored younger players, some of whom thought he knew more about baseball than manager Earl Weaver. What's more, he had an encyclopedic memory, so much so that people nicknamed him "Wolley Segap" ("Yellow Pages" backwards).

He showed his recruiting prowess in 1967 on a trip to the Dominican Republic for the Astros, where he called on outfielder César Cedeño. When the Astro's local scout, Epy Guerrero, warned him that the St. Louis Cardinals were also in the hunt, Gillick outbid them, acquiring a player who would play in 2,006 games, record 2,087 hits and score 199 home runs during a 17-year career.

And that wasn't even his best acquisition of the trip. At his Santo Domingo hotel, a Pan Am stewardess named Doris Sander asked him to fill out a customs form that was written in Spanish. A year later, the couple got married, beginning a union that has lasted 47 years.

Perhaps his background in (upper-case) Scouting made a difference in his (lower-case) scouting, because character always factored into his decisions. Even today, Gillick focuses more on intangibles like a player's work ethic. "You have to have somebody you feel is going to be able to stick to the program, is going to be able to show up every day, is going to be able to give their best effort," he says.

Character cuts both ways. In a 1994 interview with *Baseball America*, Jays pitcher Dave Stewart said, "Pat is straight with you, he's caring, he's approachable and he has no secrets. You always know where you stand with him."

And Wolley Segap has never forgotten the importance of scouts to a team's success. "I think what made us successful in Toronto was the fact that we hired the right people, we gave them the support they needed, and they went out and did their job and selected the right players for our team," he says. Today, he serves on the board of the Professional Baseball Scouts Foundation, which raises money to support scouts facing medical or financial challenges.

Encore Performances

When Gillick left the Blue Jays in 1994, his retirement didn't last long. He served as general manager of the Baltimore Orioles from 1996 to 1998, the Seattle Mariners from 2000 to 2003 and the Philadelphia Phillies from 2006 to 2008. His Baltimore and Seattle teams made the playoffs two years each, with the 2001 Mariners tying a 95-year-old record for the most wins in a season. He won his third World Series with the Phillies in 2008 before retiring for the fourth time. All told, his teams won 2,776 games during his 27 years as a GM.

Since 2008, Gillick has continued to serve the Phillies as a senior advisor, interim president and president. When Andy McPhail took over as president after last season, Gillick became a special advisor to the team. He spent this offseason scouting a half-dozen college players ahead of June's amateur draft, as well as supporting the team's international director in Latin America.

In 2016, the Phillies are far from their World Series glory. Last season, they notched just 63 wins against 99 losses, putting them 27 games behind the New York Mets, the division rivals who would go on to play in the World Series.

But the Phillies also have a secret weapon: Hall of Famer Pat Gillick. And he knows a thing or two about building champions.

A Start in Scouting (sidebar)

Conventional wisdom says kids have to choose between sports and Scouting. That wasn't the case for Pat Gillick, who was a Cub Scout, a Boy Scout, an Explorer and an active member of the Order of the Arrow.

A member of Troop 30 in Van Nuys, Calif., Gillick became an Eagle Scout in 1951, just before he turned 14. He attended the 1953 National Scout Jamboree at nearby Irvine Ranch and the 1954 National Order of the Arrow Conference at the University of Wyoming. Between baseball games, he continued to participate in Walika Lodge events, becoming a Vigil Honor member just a few months after winning the College World Series.

Gillick remembers the horned frogs Texas Scouts used as trading material at the jamboree, and he remembers spending two days in the desert when his lodge's NOAC-bound bus broke down. Most of all, however, he remembers learning to get along with people of all different backgrounds. "I think back to the Boy Scouts and think that learning respect for other people and learning how to get along with people certainly helped me a great deal in my career," he says.

Last May, the BSA's Cradle of Liberty Council presented Gillick with the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award. At the same event, he was inducted into the council's Eagle Scout Hall of Fame—the fourth hall of fame the legendary GM has joined.

Honors for Pat Gillick (sidebar)

- 1951 Became an Eagle Scout
- 1958 Won the College World Series with the University of Southern California
- 1958 Became a Vigil Honor member of the Order of the Arrow
- 1992 Won the World Series with the Toronto Blue Jays
- 1993 Won the World Series with the Toronto Blue Jays
- 1997 Inducted into the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame
- 2002 Inducted into the Toronto Blue Jays' Level of Excellence
- 2008 Won the World Series with the Philadelphia Phillies
- 2011 Inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame
- 2013 Inducted into the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame
- 2015 Received the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award
- 2015 Inducted into the Cradle of Liberty Council Eagle Scout Hall of Fame