



JAY BELL NAMED ROCKET CITY TRASH PANDAS FIRST MANAGER

18-Year MLB veteran infielder, two-time National League All-Star recognized as one of MiLB's top skippers for his knowledge of the game

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE: 4:00 PM (CST)

MADISON, Alabama – January 7, 2020 — The Rocket City Trash Pandas today announced that Jay Bell, a veteran of 18 Major League seasons, has been named the team's first manager by the Los Angeles Angels.

The Trash Pandas, Double-A affiliate of the Angels, begin their inaugural season in April.

"Reuniting Minor League Baseball with Madison and the greater Huntsville area is thrilling," Bell said. "I am ecstatic to manage the first Trash Pandas team and cannot wait to go to work daily at Toyota Field.

"I'm excited for our new state-of-the-art facility and I am certain the fan experience here will be second to none. Although I can't promise a championship, I will promise that the players who play for Rocket City will represent the fans, city, and the Angels organization well."

Trash Pandas President and CEO Ralph Nelson, who signed Bell as a player with the Arizona Diamondbacks in 1998, said the Angels made an outstanding choice.

"I have known Jay for 23 years and can't think of anyone better qualified to be the manager of the Trash Pandas than he is," said Nelson. "He is unsurpassed in his knowledge of the game of baseball – both off the field and on. Importantly, he brings championship experience to our dugout.

"But personally, I am most excited for our community to learn what I've known for decades – that Jay Bell is a man of exemplary character and integrity who will lead our young players by example. He was also one of the smartest players I encountered in my 25 years in MLB. I have little doubt he will be a major league manager in the not so distant future."

Bell, who was a two-time All-Star and played for five Major League teams, was the manager for the Scranton/Wilkes Barre RailRiders, the New York Yankees Triple-A affiliate in 2019, where his team won the International League Northern Division a 76-65 record. In three years as a manager in the Yankees organization his teams have been in the league playoffs each season.

The Trash Pandas also announce their inaugural coaching staff. **Tim Norton** comes with Jay Bell from the Yankees and will serve as Pitching Coach; **Matt Spring** has been named hitting coach; **Derek Florko** is the defensive coach; **Matt Morrell**, was Team Trainer last season in Mobile, and will serve the same role with Rocket City; **John Hill** rounds out Jay Bell's staff as Strength and Conditioning Coach.

"I'm excited about sharing my vision with the players entrusted to me this season. I have high expectations for them and my staff," Bell said. "We will work hard, play hard, and will constantly seek excellence."



“As a former All-Star, Gold Glove winner, and World Series champion, Jay brings to the Angels organization a tremendous level of experience and knowledge from his playing and coaching career,” said Los Angeles Angels General Manager Billy Eppler; “We are excited about the leadership that he will bring to our club in Rocket City and look forward to having him lead the Trash Pandas in their inaugural season.”

Bell played for the Cleveland Indians (1986–88), Pittsburgh Pirates (1989–96), Kansas City Royals (1997), Diamondbacks (1998–2002) and New York Mets (2003).

With the Diamondbacks in the 2001 World Series, Bell scored the winning run in Game 7 against the Yankees and, as he crossed home plate, he jumped into Matt Williams’ arms – an iconic moment forever enshrined in the team’s history.

In his career, Bell hit .265 with 1,964 hits and scored 1,123 runs. He had 195 home runs and 860 RBIs to go with 394 doubles, 67 triples and 91 stolen bases.

He was named to the National League All-Star team in 1993 (Pirates) and 1999 (Diamondbacks).

With the Pirates in 1993, Bell won the National League Gold Glove, breaking a streak of 13 straight NL Gold Gloves at shortstop won by Ozzie Smith. He also won the Silver Slugger award in 1993, when he hit .310 and had a .983 fielding percentage with just 11 errors on 794 chances, turning 100 double plays with 567 assists.

His first managerial job was with the Class A (Advanced) Tampa Yankees in 2017. Later that year, he was named manager of the Scottsdale Scorpions in the Arizona Fall League.

He was promoted to manager of the Yankees’ Double-A affiliate Trenton Thunder in 2018.

In 2012, he served as the hitting coach for the Mobile BayBears, then the Double-A affiliate of the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Bell serves as a member of the advisory board of the Baseball Assistance Team, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to helping former Major League, Minor League, and Negro League players through financial and medical difficulties.

Bell and Laura, his wife of 33 years, have three children - Brianna, Brantley, Brock; and two grandchildren, Zane and Zahra. Their sons, Brantley and Brock play baseball professionally – Brantley for the Reds and Brock for the Red Sox.

The Trash Pandas open the 2020 Southern League season April 9 at the Birmingham Barons for a five-game series. They make their Toyota Field debut April 15 when the Mississippi Braves visit.

“I am very fond of the Southern League, am thankful to be part of this new chapter in its history and am thrilled to be spending my summer in the great state of Alabama,” Bell said.

###