

CGI Baseball Focused On Crafting Ballplayers' Futures

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MICHAEL TINNEY IS THE GENERAL MANAGER OF CGI BASEBALL, INC.'S FACILITY AND ITS BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL PROGRAMS, THE CGI BRAVES AND CGI LADY WARRIORS.

For 15 years, Huntington native Rob Steinert has been working with baseball and softball players across the northeast. Steinert, a former ballplayer for the Major League Baseball's Toronto Blue Jays organization, has worked with three MLB players, 144 Division I scholarship athletes, 33 All-State stars, and much more, including Northport High School graduate Ian Dickson, who currently pitches for the Washington Nationals organization.

Steinert has been able to do this with a simple philosophy: sacrifice a bit of today for success in the future – and he's teaching that at CGI Baseball, Inc. in Huntington Station.

"Our philosophy is a little different," Michael Tinney, general manager of the facility and its subsequent baseball and softball programs, said. "While we play games and do tournaments where everybody is always chasing the win or chasing a trophy, we prefer to really work on mechanics."

The 13 teams bearing the CGI name – baseball's Braves and softball's Lady Warriors – compete year-round in leagues and tournaments, but the focus is always placed on practice, Tinney said. Athletes from ages 8-18 form a bond with the CGI facility, its four batting cages and workout area, which are spread across 6,000 square feet. Once based in Deer Park and then East Northport, CGI Baseball has found a home in Huntington Station for the last five years.

"We want people, players and parents to understand it has to be beyond winning," Tinney, of Farmingdale, said. "These kids picked a very hard game [baseball or softball]... So we're trying to stay ahead of the curve and, maybe, sacrifice a little of the present to grow in the future."

For example, of the 175 players in the CGI program, not one is permitted to throw curveballs – commonly associated with arm injuries – before they're 16 years old. Reviewing footage of swinging and pitching mechanics is a common practice, and instruction from a coaching staff assembled from teachers and coaches on and around Long Island is to be expected.

"That's the balance... That's where we're OK with being a little different," Tinney said.

Private pitching and hitting baseball lessons, and hitting, fielding and pitching softball lessons are available starting at \$65 per session. Strength training, batting cage rentals, team workouts, clinics, after-school baseball classes and birthday parties round out the remainder of CGI Baseball's lineup.

For more information on how to step up to the plate – and information as to how new players can try out for the Braves or Lady Warriors – visit www.cgibaseball.com or contact Tinney at Mike@cgibaseball.com.