



## **Mike Lavalliere**

Mike will always be remembered for a play at the plate during the 1992 National League Championship Series against the Atlanta Braves. The Pittsburgh Pirates, for whom Spanky, as he was nicknamed, was a catcher took a 2-1 lead into the bottom of the 9<sup>th</sup> inning in game 7 when Sid Bream was ruled safe on a play at the plate, having slid under Mike's tag according to the umpire. To this day, Lavalliere insists Bream was out.

Mike was the Pirates catcher for six seasons, including their run of three consecutive appearances in the NLCS from 1990 to 1992, twice batting .300+. In 1987, his first season in Pittsburgh, Mike won his only Gold Glove Award as the National League catcher judged to have exhibited superior individual defensive skills at his position. Over his career, Lavalliere threw out 37% of base stealers, ranking him amongst some of the great of the game.

After his successful years with the Pirates, Mike moved on play for the Chicago White Sox and they promptly made it to the ALCS in 1993, making it four consecutive seasons in which Spanky participated in the post-season.

Mike arrived in Pittsburgh as a part of a blockbuster trade with the St. Louis Cardinals where he had played in 1985 and 1986. He started his career with the Phillies in 1984.

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