

South Bay Realtor Grabs National Spotlight

Manhattan Beach based Sport Star Relocation sets the bar for superior service

By Tony Ballejos

The recent buzz of the professional sports world is centered on **Ed Kaminsky's** Manhattan Beach based **Sport Star Relocation**. And no wonder—it's a brilliant concept; a relocation and concierge operation that caters specifically to professional athletes. A turn-key service that handles all the tedious logistics of short notice relocating, including but not limited to; quick fair market sale (or lease) on a previous residence, locating and handling the purchase (or lease) and mortgage on a new residence, shipping the sport figure's fleet of exotic automobiles, even finding a new masseuse.

Literally, any of the dozens of tiny details involved in a sudden trade or draft relocation, which could potentially take an athletes mind off his game, is handled with the utmost care and professionalism by SSR. And the great thing for the athlete is; it's all free. That's right--no catch. Sport Star Relocation generates its revenue from any commissions it would realize from a sale, listing, or auction of the homes in a transaction. The staff at SSR—on a complimentary basis--professionally handles coordinates all the details involved in a major, short-notice move. And these modern day gladiators, already deserving of being indulged, are eating it up.

In just over 12 months, the company's network of agents has assisted such A-list clients as **The Yankees' Alex Rodriguez**, **NY Giants** shortstop **Omar Vizquel**, **Gary Sheffield** and **Kevin Brown**. Even retired—still on the run—players like **Steve Young** and **Terrell Davis** have benefited from working with agents within the network, as has former **Boston Celtic** player **Vin Baker**. Sport Star Relocation even helped coordinate with the agent representing **Johnny Damon's** sudden move from **The Boston Red Sox** organization to the **The NY Yankees**, as well as **Coco Crisp's** family with their recent shift.

The company is the brainchild of 43-year-old **Ed Kaminsky**, a Manhattan Beach based Realtor who is one of the top guns in high-end residential real estate in the South Bay's prestigious beach town communities of Manhattan, Hermosa and Redondo Beach. In the last several years, Ed has consistently placed in the top 100 of *all* real estates agents in the nation, representing close to \$100 million in property sold each year. Already a favorite of the growing professional athletes' population in the South Bay, Ed has represented more professional athlete clients than any other local realtor in the past 20 years.

"I saw a lot of professional athletes who weren't well taken care of when they had to relocate," says Kaminsky. "The idea was to create a resource that would be a stress relief for these individuals when they face the shock of having to move quickly from one city to another." In just a short amount of time, Sport Star Relocation has secured a nationwide network of over 2,100 real estate agents as well as propriety business arrangements with the nations top movers, private jet, limousine, and vehicle transport services, as well as property managers, remodeling contactors, house keepers, gardeners and more. Not to mention boutique services like masseurs and private trainers.

The player's wives are the ones who ultimately benefit most from utilizing SSR's services, because it is the wives who usually are left with the looming task of coordinating a major move. SSR is no less than a god send for them.

Cheryl Clemons, wife of **New Orleans Hornets** assistant coach **Jim Clemons** says "she nor [her husband] are set up to work with realtors in other states, nor do [they] have the manpower to research the best vendors or know the important details about neighborhoods, schools, grocery stores or child care." With Kaminsky's network all that is now easily manageable in an ultra-organized process. "Having to relocate is traumatic both for the players and the family; especially the kids, and the spouse often has to handle it," says Clemons. Sport Star not only located a home in New Orleans for the Clemons to purchase, they coordinated the entire move. When Katrina struck, the company stepped up and aided the family when they were forced to evacuate the city. "The staff at Sport Star was our Katrina relief," says Clemons, herself a successful new media entrepreneur. "They were incredible. They got us a place to stay, a temporary office location for me to conduct my business from--even food and shoes! If we had wanted to auction our home off quickly, they would have handled that as well." (Kaminsky also co-owns **Premiere Estates Auction Company** with **Todd Wohl**, a high-end residential real estate Auction Company.)

Former **Boston Bruin** left winger and client **Ken Belanger** says, "The appeal [of Sport Star Relocation] is that it takes the load off teams, agents, players and their spouses. For professional athletes it's all about convenience and reliability." Belanger used the company to help find his family a home in Los Angeles after he was traded to the **Los Angeles Kings** in 2001. "Ed has earned my trust. My house is now worth double what I paid for it."

"Sport Star's word of mouth recommendations in locker rooms is the company's most effective marketing tool," says **Jeff Roberts**, Vice President of Business Development. Roberts brings a sports marketing background to the company, which currently has a home office staff of 15. Roberts spends most of his time traveling to team offices, visiting agents and making presentations to coaches and players to ensure the company is on the team referral list. "Our staff tracks every trade and which new players are being drafted," says Roberts whose experience within the sporting world stems from previous positions with **ABC Sports** and **Upper Deck** trading card company before joining Sport Star last year.

Kaminsky sees the company as a high-end concierge service that helps manage superstar clients through the pesky details of life at a time when the most important thing on their minds should be training and optimum performance on the field, court or ice.

A top priority: Discretion. SSR screens all of its service providers and agents through an intensive certification process to ensure that any broker or vendor won't be a source of embarrassment for the client. "Beyond that, the three most important things to the relocating athlete typically seem to be; where his new team practices, where they play, and how close the airport is" says Kaminsky. "Players also like to live near each other. Very often they even sell houses to one another. SSR's auction division recently sold **Thomas Smith's** estate in Lake Forest Chicago, formerly of The **Chicago Bears**. He had bought it from **Will Purdue** of the **Chicago Bulls**."

Sport Star has also targets college players, much like traditional sports agents similar to **Jerry McGuire** would. “We are building relationships with these young athletes. Today’s minor leaguer is tomorrow’s star player,” says Kaminsky, who has been making the TV and radio guest appearance rounds of late. Recently, he was on **KISS FM** in Boston as popular **DJ Max Siegel** interviewed him about Sport Star’s services. Two weeks ago, it was an appearance on **ESPN’s** top rated **Hot List** with **J.W Stewart**. Last week, Ed flew to New York for a guest appearance on the set of **Cold Pizza**, ESPN’s highly popular morning show.

Sport Star Relocation has arrived and the professional sports world has definitely taken notice. More importantly, the players unquestionably like what they see. The future of professional athlete targeted relocation seems wide open for this newly discovered industry and Kaminsky’s company seems to have a massive half nelson on the big sport stars.

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