



Don Bates

Allen Sport Center
Seminole, Florida



What do you sell?

We provide uniforms, equipment and embroidering services to local sports teams and individuals. We work with a variety of organizations on a regular basis, from little league teams to professional athletes.

How long have you been in business?

We opened our doors in July of 1975. Seminole has been our home and headquarters for 40 years, and we have been ranked among the Top 25 team dealers in the nation by National Sporting Goods Dealer magazine for over 10 years.

How many employees do you have?

I have 33 employees, both part-time and full-time.

What is your favorite part about owning your business?

I really enjoy working with our employees, many who have been with us for over a decade. It is good to see grandkids of former customers now beginning to shop in our store. We really want to help each customer find exactly what they need to participate in any activity. We fit equipment, even if not purchased from us, just to make sure the person is as safe as can be.

How are you engaged in the community?

I am currently on the board of directors of the Seminole Chamber of Commerce. We also are proud to sponsor an All Star football game that gives scholarships to the players as well as the cheerleaders in our county. We have done this for 20 years and during that time, the game has been able to give over \$100,000 to worthy student athletes.

Every year we also sponsor youth league football, basketball and baseball teams throughout the Tampa Bay region.

How has the online sales tax loophole impacted your business?

With the rise of online shopping, we have adapted to compete with new retailers. The convenience of online shopping is great, but what usually happens is that customers will use my store as a showroom and then buy the product online to avoid sales tax. Not only do we lose sales because of this tax loophole, but my employees spend time helping another store's customer. We have over 200 years of combined retail experience at Allen – I don't want to lay off my employees to keep the doors open. Congress should pass efairness legislation to help small businesses like mine.