

Grimm falls short of induction, but all isn't lost in Hall bid

By Paul Ladewski

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Charlie Grimm posted 946 victories in his long and successful career as Cubs manager, but what would have been the biggest victory of all eluded him today.

The Hall of Fame veterans committee announced that former umpire Doug Harvey and manager Whitey Herzog had received the minimum 12 votes necessary for induction, a standard of which Grimm fell short by a considerable margin.

Grimm received three votes among the 16 that were cast, 11 fewer than Herzog despite their remarkably similar managerial careers. Harvey was named on all except one ballot.

Of the 10 candidates, Grimm was among five that received at least three votes.

“The committee members were instructed to keep their talks private, but I can tell you that we had a thorough discussion about Grimm and his career,” Baseball Writers Association of American secretary Jack O’Connell told the Chicago Baseball Museum. “He had the support of several people in the room, and that should be viewed as a positive. It bodes well for his candidacy in the future.”

A native of New Athlens, Ill., Herzog won 53 percent of his games (1,281-1,125 record) in 18 seasons with the Texas Rangers, California Rangers, Kansas City Royals and St. Louis Cardinals. His teams won as many as 90 games five times.

In 19 seasons, all or parts of 13 in a Cubs uniform, Grimm won 55 percent of his games (1,287-1,067) and reached the 90-victory plateau on four occasions. No Cubs skipper won more games in the Live Ball Era.

Herzog led his teams to two league pennants and one World Series championship, while Grimm’s captured three pennants and failed to win a World Series title.

Unlike Herzog, who was a reserve outfielder for much of his eight seasons with four different teams, Grimm made his mark as a player as well.

In 20 seasons, Grimm totaled 2,299 hits (132nd on the all-time list), 394 doubles (161st) and 1,078 RBI (194th) in 2,166 games. He also led the league in fielding percentage at this position nine times and received votes in three Most Valuable Player elections.

Widely considered to be the most respected umpire of his time, Harvey worked in five World Series, nine league championship series and six All-Star Games in 31 seasons.

Managers Davey Johnson, Tom Kelly, Billy Martin, Gene Mauch, Danny Murtaugh and Steve O'Neill and umpire Hank O'Day also were on the list of 10 former managers and umpires under consideration. Murtaugh and O'Day received eight votes apiece.

The selection panel included Hall of Fame members Jim Bunning, Tom Lasorda, Eddie Murray, Phil Niekro, Tony Perez, Robin Roberts, Ryne Sandberg, Ozzie Smith, Billy Williams and Dick Williams, former executive Jim Frey, current executives Roland Hemond (Arizona Diamondbacks) and Bob Watson (Major League Baseball) and veteran media members O'Connell, Tim Kurkjian (ESPN) and Tom Verducci (Sports Illustrated).

A separate 12-person committee that reviewed 10 former executives did not elect any of the candidates. Former Detroit owner John Fetzer received eight votes, one short of induction.

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