

Tony Oliva Press Conference 7-23-22

CRAIG MUDER: Welcome to our final media availability today with Tony Oliva. Tony has failed to have Hall of Fame after gaming and get ready for induction We'll take questions for Tony again raise your hand and wait for the mic to come to you walking over here.

QUESTION: Hey, Tony Jackson tell me what does it mean to you to be inducted into the Hall of Fame with Buck O'Neil and Minnie Miñoso?

TONY OLIVA: I met with Buck O'Neil many, many times. Every year he used to have a golf tournament. He's a very nice, funny and sweet man. Miñoso, I remember when I was a little boy listening to the radio while he played in the Cuban Winter League. Miñoso is a big, big name in Cuba.

QUESTION: David Ortiz was talking about the lessons and the sacrifices and all the things players of your generation endured as far as being African American early in their careers. What kind of sacrifices did you make?

TO: I don't believe it for me that that was a sacrifice for me. It wasn't a job. I played baseball. I enjoyed baseball. I know I played here in America managed to have a different role. I know what we had to do if we wanted to succeed. But I don't think that was a sacrifice for me.

QUESTION: Tony, Randy Shaver, talk a little bit about going in with Jim Kaat. Rod Carew is here, Harmon Killebrew you played with him, all these great Twins it's just seems like a great big Twins weekend. Can you just talk about how special it is for you to be around?

TO: Jim and I played in the instructional league in St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1961. He was in the big leagues. Rod Carew, he was my roommate for 10 years. We had great times. And I tell everybody I was his big brother when he first came out to the big leagues. For me to be a Minnesota Twin for 61 years, that has been special.

QUESTION: Hey, Tony, Tom Henninger Baseball Digest. You know, you think back 60 years ago, you're new to the country. You're still finding your way learning the language. I think you were always a confident hitter. But did you ever envision this is where it would all end up?

TO: I'd never intended to come to America to play baseball. My goal was to play baseball in Cuba. Then the Twins offered me the opportunity to come to America. I said you know I maybe have a chance to get into the big leagues. But not to be in the Hall of Fame. I have never dreamed of something like that happening to me

QUESTION: How special is it that your brother is here?

TO: It was a pleasure that my brother has the opportunity to come from Cuba and be here in the United States for me to be inducted in the Hall of Fame. You know that (my family) never had a chance to see me play in the United States.

QUESTION: You mentioned that you never imagined a kid from Cuba, from the farms of Cuba would be receiving the highest honor and baseball. What advice would you give to Cuban children in the farms today?

TO: First of all, you have to be given you the opportunity. Play baseball like you to go to school. You go to school, you do your homework, and you work hard. Practice, practice and do it the right way.

QUESTION: (In Spanish).

TO: (Answer in Spanish).

CRAIG MUDER: Thank you Tony. This concludes our media availability for today.