

NATL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

Moderator: Jon Shestakofsky
January 21, 2020
6:50pm CT

Operator: Greetings and welcome to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Conference Call with Derek Jeter. During the presentation, all participants will be in a listen-only mode.

Afterwards, we will conduct a question-and-answer session. At that time, if you have a question, please press the 1 followed by the 4 on your telephone.

At any time during the conference you need to reach an operator, please press star, 0. As a reminder, this conference is being recorded Tuesday, January 21, 2020.

I would now like to turn the conference over to Jon Shestakofsky, Vice President of Communications and Education. Please go ahead.

Jon Shestakofsky: Thank you Kevin and hello everyone. Welcome to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Conference Call with newly elected Hall of Fame member Derek Jeter. We're thrilled to have you joining us on this very special day for the Hall of Fame. As you know within the last hour, it was announced on MLB Network that Derek along with Larry Walker have been elected to the Hall of Fame via the BBWAA ballot.

And before we open for questions, I would like to congratulate Derek and offer him the opportunity to make an opening statement. Derek, feel free to go right ahead.

Derek Jeter: Thank you very much. I just want to say briefly thank you to all the baseball writers for electing me into the Hall of Fame. When you think about playing your career, you know, this is the highest honor that a player can receive and it's a very humbling day.

And I was happy I had an opportunity to share that with family and friends and I also want to take an opportunity to congratulate Ted Simmons, Larry Walker and the late Marvin Miller and family. So thank you very much.

Jon Shestakofsky: Thank you, Derek. And we will now have about 15 minutes for questions from the call participants. And Kevin, we are ready to open for those questions.

Operator: Thank you. Our first question is Ken Davidoff with the New York Post. Please go ahead.

Ken Davidoff: Derek, congratulations. Just wanted to get your sense of what this day was like and after thinking you're pretty confident entering the day with what happened was just the emotions that you are experiencing.

Derek Jeter: Thank you Ken. First of all, everyone told me, it was a foregone conclusion. I didn't buy it so it was not a relaxing day. There was a lot of anxiety. I was nervous, sitting around waiting for a phone call of something that is completely out of your control.

And once you get the phone call I quite - I don't even know if I said anything for a while because it is the ultimate honor and it's a very humbling experience and to be elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame is truly a dream come true.

Ken Davidoff: And then if I could just follow up obviously you were trending at 100% until the file number was announced and it look like you were going to follow Mariano's lead. What was the feeling in finding out it was one (unintelligible) vote short of perfection?

Derek Jeter: Well, I look at all the votes that I got and it takes a lot of votes to get elected in the Hall of Fame and, you know, trying to get that many people to agree on something, that's pretty difficult to do. So I'm just that's not something that's on my mind I'm just extremely excited and honored to be elected.

Ken Davidoff: Thank you, Derek.

Derek Jeter: Thank you.

Operator: The next question is from Bill Madden with the New York Daily News. Please go ahead.

Bill Madden: Hi, Derek congratulations. By the way, I wasn't the one.

Derek Jeter: Thank you.

Bill Madden: I just wanted to - in the, you know, you have always epitomized playing the game right which considering the current stage of baseball with this drug scandal - I mean, I'm sorry, with this cheating scandal that's developed in the game a lot of people are saying it, your election could not have come at a better time for baseball. What are your thoughts about that?

Derek Jeter: On my election, coming at a good time?

Bill Madden: Well, I mean just the fact that, you know, you epitomized the game, the way the game was played right. Right now, the game is in trouble with all these

cheating scandal going on and your elections, the person you were, the player you are coming at this point in time for baseball could not have come at a better time.

Derek Jeter: Well, thank you Bill. Well, one, I took a lot of pride in playing the game hard and doing my job every day and being consistent and, you know, caring about one particular thing and that was trying to help our team win, that's the bottom line.

Look, you know, there's situation that the sport has gone through, you know, throughout its history and at times it can seem pretty ugly. I also understand that people make mistakes. And unfortunately you have to pay for those mistakes, but I think the game is going to move on obviously and it's going to be a better place for it.

Bill Madden: Okay. Thank you.

Derek Jeter: Yes.

Operator: And as a reminder to register a question, press the 1 followed by the 4. Our next question is from Bryan Hoch with MLB.com. Please go ahead.

Bryan Hoch: Hi Derek congratulations. Just wanted to ask you, you obviously had such an opportunity to play with so many Hall of Fame-type players be around the legends with the Yankees all those years. Did you ever get that topic ever come up, did you ever talk about what it would be like to be part of that fraternity in Cooperstown?

Derek Jeter: You know that, it's a good question. I try to stay away from that conversation, you know, funny story is, you know, I had a great relationship and still do with Reggie Jackson. And Reggie used to constantly remind me when he

came to the park - he'd always tell me, "You're not a Hall of Famer yet," because we go back and forth and joke with each other.

So that's really the only conversations that I've had with any of the former players in the Yankee organization about that. But I am big on trying not to jinx things and, you know, I basically shy away from those conversations.

Operator: Next question is from Susan Slusser from San Francisco Chronicle. Please go ahead.

Susan Slusser: Hi Derek, congratulations. Here in the Bay Area, of course, everybody remembers you best for the flip. How much of a career-defining moment you feel that was, how often you get asked about it?

Derek Jeter: You know I get asked about that play quite a bit and, you know, I've said since it happened. Since it happened that I was just doing my job. I was basically in the area where I was supposed to be and, you know, my job is to redirect to throw a third base.

But fortunately I had an opportunity to get the out of the plate but yeah that's a play that I think is - I'm constantly remind - any time I am in the Bay Area ever since that happened I'm always asked that question.

So I think it is it one of the career-defining moments that I've had and, you know, fortunately for us it came at a good time because we ended up winning that series. But, you know, I've always enjoyed going out there to play - we played some great Oakland teams throughout the years and we have some great battles with them. So that is definitely a play that, you know, I see more often than that.

Operator: And our next question is from Kevin Kernan. Please go ahead.

Kevin Kernan: Derek congratulations.

Derek Jeter: Thank you, Kevin.

Kevin Kernan: You're welcome. It's an unbelievable honor to get into the Hall of Fame. But what does it mean to get into the Hall of Fame after spending your whole career as a Yankee and doing it as a Yankee?

Derek Jeter: Yes, you know what, Kevin I'd say you probably mean a little bit more than me than maybe some other people because, you know, I grew up a Yankee's fan. It's the only organization I ever wanted to play for. I was fortunate to play 20 years in New York parts of 23 professionally.

And a lot of thanks goes out to the Steinbrenner family because, you know, especially the boss. I mean, he was big on it, if you guys win we'll bring you back. And we had a lot of success and the entire family gave me an opportunity to finish my career playing in New York. So that's the one thing that I always wanted to be remembered as was to be remembered as a Yankee.

Kevin Kernan: Thank you.

Derek Jeter: Thank you.

Operator: Next question is from Marc Topkin with the Tampa Bay Times. Please go ahead.

Marc Topkin: Yes.

Operator: Your line is open.

Marc Topkin: Yes. Hello Derek, can you contrast how you feel tonight versus that first summer you were playing in Tampa in 1992 and if you would have thought then this could have happened?

Derek Jeter: Man that first summer I was in Tampa in 1992, I was trying to make it to 1993. I'm being honest with you, you know, I remember staying at the Bay Harbor Inn and being out on the balcony crying at night because I thought I was completely over- well, I think I was completely overmatched and thought I had made a mistake signing a professional contract.

So at that point in time getting to the major leagues was long ways away. So I mean thinking about the Hall of Fame never even crossed my mind. So although it was a long time ago, it still feels like it was almost yesterday.

Marc Topkin: Thank you.

Operator: As a reminder to register a question, press the 1 followed by the 4 on your keypad. You'll hear a three tone prompt that acknowledges your request. Next question is from David Waldstein with the New York Times and your line is open.

David Waldstein: Hi Derek, congratulations. One of the things everybody, you know, you were blessed with incredible talent obviously and you're known for working very hard. But I think a lot of people agree that your mental approach to the game and your determination is what took that talent to Hall of Fame level. And I was just wondering, like, how would you describe your drive and your mental approach to the game?

Derek Jeter: Yes, it's a good question. You know, my mental approach to the game was just to always remain positive regardless of what happened we're playing a sport that you're going to fail more than you succeed. But I always used to try

to look back on time that I had success and drop from that. I was pretty good at turning the page and I think you have to have that ability and I think a lot of times its mind over matter.

And every time I was in a situation. I felt as though I was still playing a little league. I had fun with it. I enjoyed the competition. I didn't shy away from it and I wasn't afraid of failure. So I think, yes, I think obviously you have to have some physical abilities but I think the mental side is where I was at my strongest.

David Waldstein: And then that would also explain what you're - you did as well in the post season, as you did in the regular season that never shying away and treating at the same?

Derek Jeter: Yes, it was the same game whether it's a game in spring training or it's a Game 7 in the World Series it's still baseball. And, you know, lot of times I think, you know, the moment it's pretty big for people. But I prided myself on being prepared and I felt as though when I was in those situations. I was prepared and therefore, you know, it was just the same game and the game slowed down.

David Waldstein: Thanks, Derek. Good job.

Operator: Next question is from Octavio Sequera with ESPN reporter, Miami. And your line is open.

Octavio Sequera: Congratulations Mr. Jeter.

Derek Jeter: Thank you.

Octavio Sequera: Considering what you have said about how important is your family in your career, how do you visualize that moment as standing at the podium in Cooperstown and seeing and watching your mom and dad in the audience? How do you visualize that moment and - just because you've said in the past and you've shown in the past how important your family has been throughout your career?

Derek Jeter: You're trying to make me emotional, huh?

Octavio Sequera: It's not my intention.

Derek Jeter: Yes, no, I mean, it's a good question. I don't know what to expect, I mean, I just talked about prided myself on being prepared. I don't know if you can necessarily prepare yourself for that situation. So just like the phone call that I got today, yes, I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know how I would feel. I didn't know how I would react and I think the same goes for when we get to Cooperstown in the summer.

So, you know, I will spend a lot of time thank you my family, thank you my friends, thank you my support group. But I really don't know what it's going to feel like but I'm pretty sure it's going to feel special.

Octavio Sequera: Congrats Derek. Thank you.

Operator: Next question is from Gary Phillips with the Yankees Magazine. Please go ahead.

Gary Phillips: Derek congratulations.

Derek Jeter: Thank you.

Gary Phillips: You struggled your first year proball have been well documented. There were lot of calls with your parents to keep you focus. Was there a moment for you when the self-thought when it's, you know, click for you mentally?

Derek Jeter: It clicked for me mentally. I was fortunate I went to major league spring training.

My first spring training just because it was in my contract not that I deserved it. And it was only for a couple weeks and then when I was at major league spring training I thought some of the players and, you know, I said, you know, they're not necessarily hitting the ball further even though they were throwing it harder, running faster, they were just doing it more consistently.

And I think for me getting an opportunity to see what a major league player looks like and how they carry themselves and how they work. I think that's what flipped it for me. And then I had an opportunity to go take classes at the University of Michigan in the offseason and I got a little bit more acclimated to be in away from home. So I think the combination of those two.

Jon Shestakofsky: And we have time for just one more question.

Operator: So then our final question is from Brandon Gould with NJ Advance Media. Please go ahead.

Brandon Gould: Derek congratulations.

Derek Jeter: Thank you.

Brandon Gould: How big was New Jersey and your New Jersey leagues to forming your entire personality, your entire life understanding that you were born here but also you spent a lot of times in your grownup?

Derek Jeter: That's a good question, you know, my New Jersey roots. I was born in New Jersey and moved to Michigan when I was probably around four years old. My dad was getting his PhD at Western Michigan in Kalamazoo. And my mom have 13 brothers and sisters. So every summer I spent in New Jersey with all my cousins. And my grandmother was a huge Yankee fan, that's where my love affair came with the Yankees.

And, you know, coming from such a big family and, you know, seeing the work ethic from my grandfather and I think that helped mold who I was as a person. Obviously, I grew up in Michigan but, you know, spending a lot of time in New Jersey in the summers really shaped my mind in terms of being not only just a baseball fan but being a Yankee fan.

Brandon Gould: Thank you, Derek.

Derek Jeter: Thank you.

Jon Shestakofsky: Derek, thank you again for joining us and again congratulations on your election to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. As a note to me, Derek along with Larry Walker will be available tomorrow at a press conference taking place at the St. Regis Hotel in New York City at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time which will be broadcast live on MLB Network.

Media planning to attend the press conference are asked to email the Hall of Fame's Communications Director Craig Muder at cmuder@baseballhall.org. Thank you all for joining us.

Operator: So that does conclude our conference call for today. We thank everyone for participating and you may now disconnect.