



Sosa Takes First Step in Hall of Fame Bid

*By Paul Ladewski, Executive Director
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Let the debates begin . . .

In what promises to be the most controversial election to date, former Cubs slugger Sammy Sosa will make his debut on the Hall of Fame ballot this year, the Baseball Writers' Association of America made official today.

Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens also will make their first appearances on the ballot. Along with Sosa, whose 609 home runs rank eighth in major league history, they will join Mark McGwire and ex-Cub Rafael Palmeiro on the growing list of candidates who are widely suspected to have used performance-enhancers in their careers.

Others on the 37-member ballot who played with Chicago teams: Sandy Alomar Jr., Royce Clayton, Julio Franco, Roberto Hernandez, Kenny Lofton, Fred McGriff, Tim Lincecum, Lee Smith, Todd Walker, David Wells and Rondell White.

Among the locals, Smith (50.6 percent), Raines (48.7) and McGriff (23.9) received the most consideration in the last election. Each fell far short of the 75 percent approval rate required for induction.

The results will be announced on Wednesday, Jan. 9.