

# Chicago Tribune

## **Charles Albert Comiskey II: 1925 - 2007**

**Ex-White Sox executive**

### **Grandson of legendary owner ran team during its 1950s resurgence**

By Robert Channick  
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Born into the first family of Chicago baseball, Charles Albert Comiskey II left a lasting legacy of his own. Inheriting the reins of the club founded in 1901 by his namesake and grandfather, Mr. Comiskey helped revive the long-dormant White Sox in the 1950s, culminating in an American League pennant in 1959.

"He helped do an awful lot developing the farm system with the White Sox," said Billy Pierce, the ace of the White Sox pitching staff from 1949 to 1961. "A lot of the fellows that he originally looked at and brought up were key men on our ballclub."

Weakened by Type 2 diabetes, which he developed late in life, Mr. Comiskey, 81, died in his sleep Sunday, Aug. 26, at his longtime Hinsdale home, family members said.

Raised in Hyde Park on Chicago's South Side, Mr. Comiskey attended De La Salle High School, where he played football and baseball, according to his family. He attended the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota, where he also played football, then enlisted in the Navy.

After the death of his father, J. Louis Comiskey, in 1939, his mother, Grace Comiskey, took control of the White Sox. Mr. Comiskey joined the family business and in 1948 was appointed vice president, becoming an integral part of the Go-Go Sox, a winning ballclub and one of the hottest tickets in town during the 1950s.

"He made some of the big changes of this ballclub from being a team that was quite down in the '30s and '40s to a team in the '50s and '60s that was a pennant-contender and a great, fan-pleasing ballclub," Pierce said.

In his 20s, when he assumed management responsibilities, "Chuck" Comiskey was well liked by the players throughout his tenure, Pierce said.

"You'd never know he owned the ballclub," Pierce said. "He was very friendly, very nice. He always mingled with the ballplayers."

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In 1955, Mr. Comiskey became co-general manager, but with the death of his mother the following year, a struggle for control of the team ensued. After a lengthy court battle, Bill Veeck gained majority ownership in 1958, the year before winning the pennant.

In 1961 Veeck sold his stake to Arthur Allyn Jr., and the following year Mr. Comiskey relinquished his stake as well.

Married for 57 years to Donna Jo Curran Comiskey, the couple raised their family in Hinsdale, where after selling his interest in the White Sox, he became active in local real estate, developing an office building and a subdivision there, along with projects in Oak Brook and Tucson.

In the early 1970s, he owned and operated Carriage Transfer, a Hinsdale taxi and limousine company.

While baseball was no longer his profession, he remained a lifelong Sox fan and season-ticket holder. He was nonetheless disappointed when Comiskey Park, built by his grandfather in 1909 at 35th Street and Shields Avenue and synonymous with South Side baseball for eight decades, gave way to a new Comiskey Park across 35th Street in 1991. It was later renamed U.S. Cellular Field.

"There's financial reasons that it was done, and he understood that," his son Charles A. Comiskey III said of the 2003 name change. "But it's a shame that money won out over tradition. There's certain things that should be sellable and some things that just don't have a price on them."

The name change didn't diminish Mr. Comiskey's enthusiasm when the White Sox won the World Series in 2005, the team's first since 1917, when his grandfather was still in charge.

"The Sox were always his team," said his son. "He was just ecstatic about it."

Besides his wife and son, Mr. Comiskey is survived by another son, Francis "Beau" Comiskey; two daughters, Colleen Comiskey Kelley and Patti Comiskey Slaga; and seven grandchildren.

Visitation is scheduled for 3 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Gibbons Elliston Funeral Home, 60 S. Grant Street, Hinsdale. A memorial service will be held at 10 a.m. Wednesday in St. Isaac Jogues Catholic Church, 306 W. 4th St., Hinsdale.

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