

Veterans Committee names Grimm as Hall of Fame finalist

By Paul Ladewski

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No person in Cubs history wore more hats and enjoyed it more than Charlie Grimm, the baseball lifer who served as a player, manager, coach, personnel director and broadcaster at various stages in his 39-year career.

Twenty six years after his death, the Hall of Fame Veterans Committee will determine whether Grimm wore them well enough to deserve Hall of Fame induction next summer.

On Tuesday, the committee announced that Grimm was among 10 former managers and umpires who would be its Hall of Fame ballot this year. The man known as Jolly Cholly will be joined by managers Whitey Herzog, Davey Johnson, Tom Kelly, Billy Martin, Gene Mauch, Danny Murtaugh and Steve O'Neill and umpires Doug Harvey and Hank O'Day.

In order to gain induction, a candidate must be named on the ballots of at least nine of the 12 committee members. The results will be released at the annual winter meetings on Monday, Dec. 7, in Indianapolis.

A separate ballot for executives and pioneers will include Gene Autry, Sam Breadon, John Fetzer, Bob Howsam, Ewing Kauffman, John McHale, Marvin Miller, Gabe Paul, Jacob Ruppert and Bill White.

While most agree that Grimm falls short of Hall of Fame standards as a player or manager, his case becomes much stronger when judged by his volume of work.

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

After his retirement as a player, Grimm was no less successful in 19 seasons as a manager. In two tenures as Cubs field leader, he guided the team to three National League pennants. His 946 career victories are more than any Cubs manager in the Live Ball Era.

Grimm passed away on Nov. 15, 1983, in Scottsdale, Ariz.