Minoso, Santo Take Their Best Shots at Hall Honors

By Paul Ladewski

Former White Sox outfielder Minnie Minoso and third baseman Ron Santo will get another swing at Hall of Fame induction next month, and this may be their best chance to connect yet.

Today the Hall of Fame announced that Minoso and Santo are among 10 candidates who will be considered for induction by the Golden Era Committee, formerly known as the Veterans Committee.

The 16-member panel of Hall of Fame players, executives, historians and media members includes former White Sox general manager Roland Hemond, Cubs manager Gene Michael and outfielder Billy Williams as well as Chicago Tribune baseball writer Dave van Dyke. Twelve votes are required for induction.

Despite a late start, Minoso was a nine-time All-Star and three-time Gold Glove Award-winner in his career. According to official baseball records, Minoso was 25 years old when he played his first full season in the major leagues.

The Cuba native was the first Hispanic star in the major leagues, which some contend makes him worthy of the honor alone. He totaled 1,963 hits and 186 home runs in 17 seasons, 12 of which were in a White Sox uniform.

Many observers regard Santo as the best third baseman not in the Hall of Fame currently.

A Cub for all except one of his 16 seasons, Santo had a .277 batting average and 342 home runs in his career. The five-time Gold Glove Award-winner took part in nine All-Star Games. He passed way after a life-long battle against diabetes last winter.

This will mark the first time that Santo will have his fate decided by a veterans committee. Previously, he was considered by a group of Hall of Fame players, who did not elect any candidate on their own before the process was changed.

Former players Ken Boyer, Gil Hodges, Jim Kaat, Tony Oliva, Allie Reynolds and Luis Tiant and executives Buzzie Bavasi and Charles O. Finley round out the ballot.

The vote will take place at the winter meetings in Dallas next month. The results will be announced on Jan. 9.
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