

Ask a Canadian where they were when Joe Carter hit THAT homerun. I bet you'll have an answer in seconds! The Toronto Blue Jays are currently the only MLB team we have. And throughout the past 38 years, some phenomenal players have worn the Jays uniform.

Find out records that were set, honours that were bestowed, and accomplishments made by the Jays. Learn about how they almost weren't the Blue Jays and how far they have come.



50 facts



Ms. K. Carter

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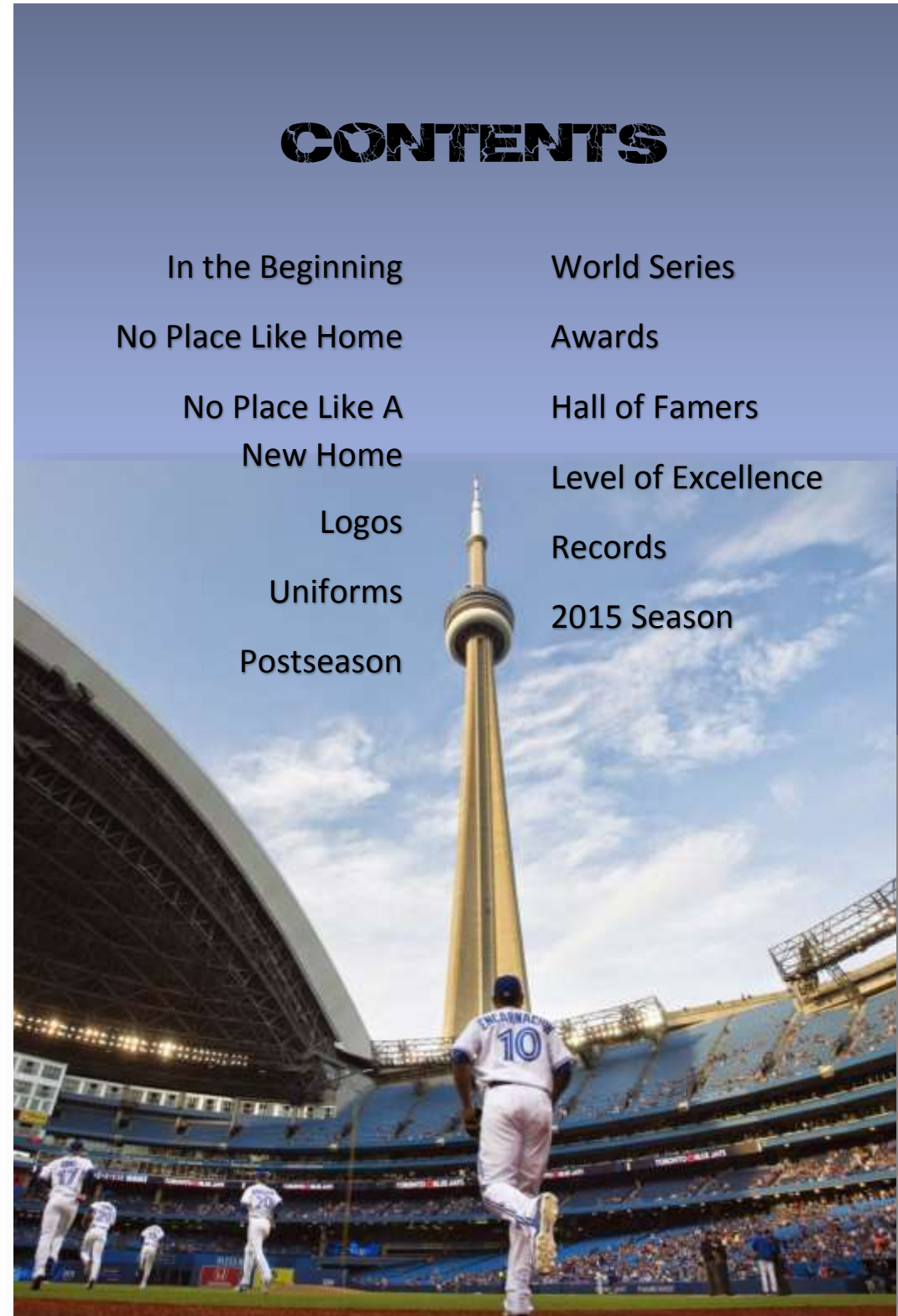
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Thank you to all of my brilliant students for their input and their suggestions.

Dedication:

For Jose Bautista 😊 Nice home run!



IN THE BEGINNING

The Blue Jays were almost the Toronto Giants. In 1976, the owner of the San Francisco Giants wanted to sell the team. Investors in Toronto wanted to buy it and were willing to pay \$13.25 million. They had a deal.



Unfortunately, the deal with San Francisco fell through. A judge ordered that the team could be sold, but not moved. The city of Toronto was disappointed but continued to fight for a team.

Toronto finally had a team. Major League Baseball decided in the 1977 season that they would expand by two teams. They awarded Toronto and Seattle the honour, bringing the total number of teams in the MLB to 26.



Now that they had a team, what would they call themselves? So owners had a “Name the team” contest. Over 4 000 suggestions were given. Labatt Breweries, one of the owners, chose the name “Blue Jays”. Many believe that it was a bit of a marketing ploy, because Labatt’s logo was predominately blue, and one of their products is called “Blue”.

The Toronto Blue Jays played their first game on April 7, 1977 against the Chicago White Sox. It was memorable, not only because they won 9 to 5, but there was a snow squall just before the game started and temperatures were freezing. Forty-four thousand six hundred forty-nine brand new Jays fans were in attendance.

The Jays’ first season wasn’t their best. They finished dead last in the whole league. Out of 161 games, they won only 54. Hopefully things would look up for these baby Blue Jays!



NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Exhibition Stadium was the very first home of the Blue Jays. It was built in 1959 primarily for football because Toronto didn't have an MLB team yet. The only professional team to play there was the Canadian Football League's Toronto Argonauts.

Did You Know??

ON APRIL 7TH, THE FIELD WAS SNOW-COVERED. SO THEY HAD TO BORROW THE ZAMBONI FROM MAPLE LEAF GARDENS TO CLEAN THE FIELD OFF SO THEY COULD PLAY BALL.



In 1976, the city of Toronto modified Exhibition Stadium believing that they were getting an MLB team. But as we know, that didn't happen until the following year.

Want to know an interesting statistic about Exhibition Stadium? In all of the MLB games played there, never was there a no-hitter pitched in the stadium.

The Jays' very first game was played on April 7, 1977 at Exhibition Stadium. With a capacity of 43 737, the stadium was home of the team till May 28, 1989.



NO PLACE LIKE A NEW HOME

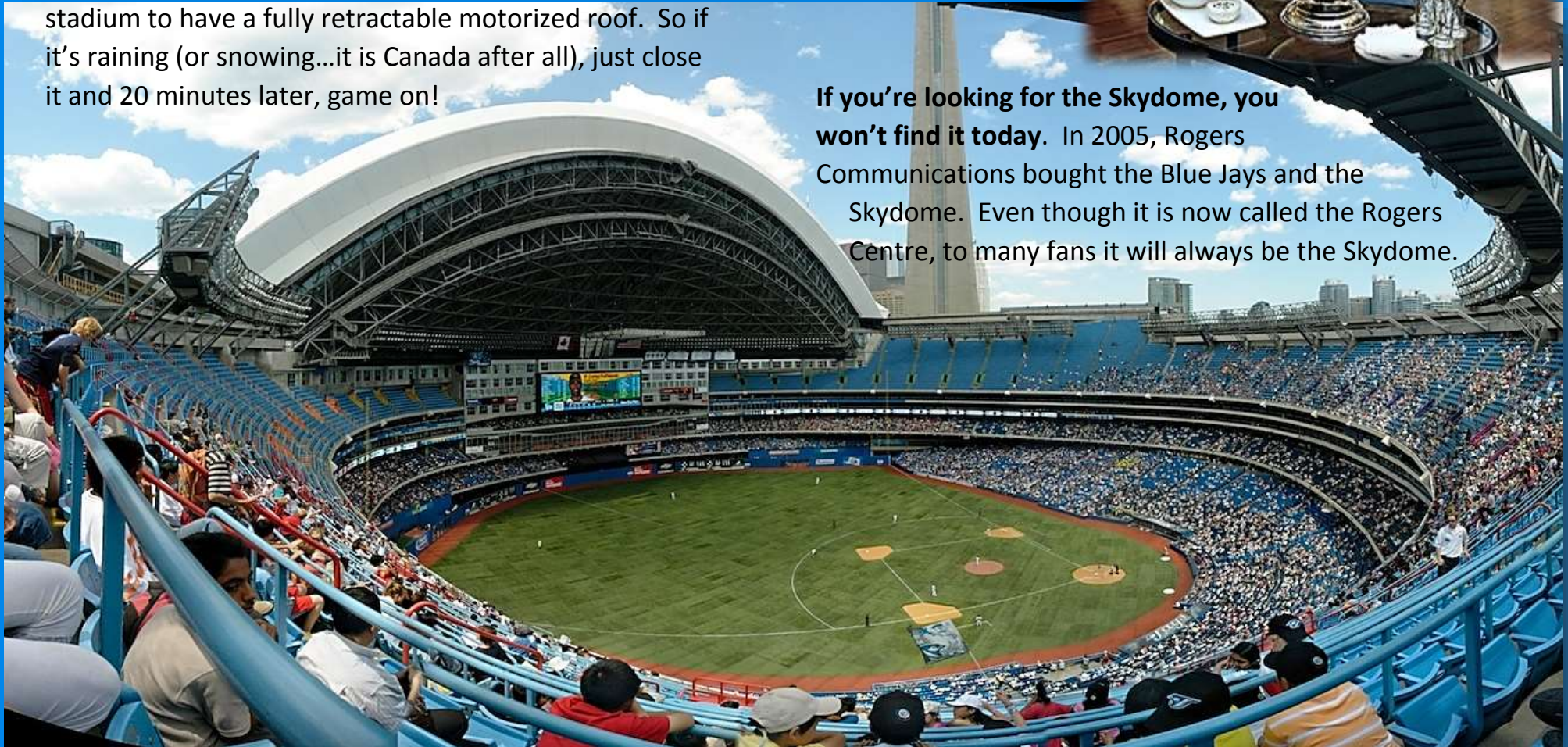
On June 3, 1989, the Skydome became the second home of the Jays. It was a multipurpose stadium and became home to the Argonauts as well.

They Jays will never have a rained out game as long as they are playing at the Skydome. It was the very first stadium to have a fully retractable motorized roof. So if it's raining (or snowing...it is Canada after all), just close it and 20 minutes later, game on!

The Skydome cost \$570 million to build. But it wasn't just a stadium, it was also a hotel, consisting of 348 rooms, 70 of which overlook the field.



If you're looking for the Skydome, you won't find it today. In 2005, Rogers Communications bought the Blue Jays and the Skydome. Even though it is now called the Rogers Centre, to many fans it will always be the Skydome.



LOGOS

In 1997, they changed the logo by taking the maple leaf and making it more prominent by making it bigger and placing it in the background. The Jays' head is just designed a little differently.



The very first Blue Jay logo in 1977 was the head of a blue jay with a baseball in the background. Because at the time they were only 1 of 2 Canadian teams in the MLB, there was a good sized maple leaf on it too.

1997

2000

A Jay with attitude!

In 2000, just three years after a logo change, they tried to toughen up the blue jay by giving him a tattoo of a maple leaf on his sizable gun.



2004

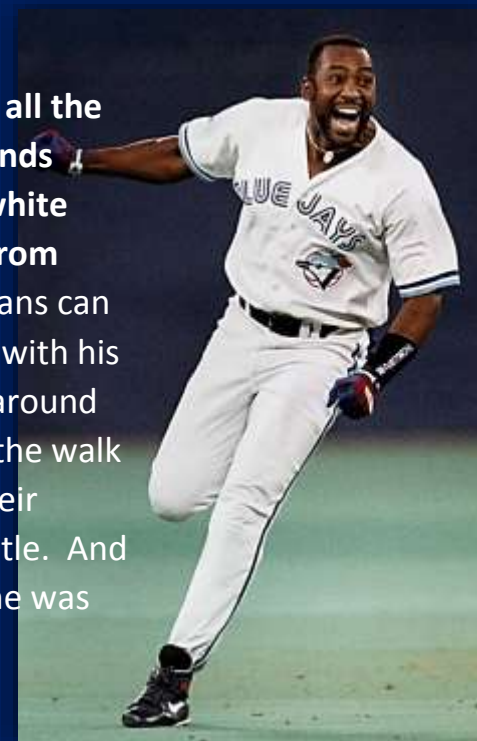
It's all in the logo. In 2012, many believe as a way to get back to the glory and success of the past, they went back to the logo they were wearing when they won their two World Series titles. Let's hope it works!

UNIFORMS



Fans were polled on which uniforms were their favourites. The fourth most famous was the grey away uniform that the Jays wore from 1989 to 1996. They were wearing this uniform as they celebrated their first World Series title in Atlanta.

The most favourite of all the Blue Jays uniforms hands down, has to be the white home uniform worn from 1989 to 1996. Many fans can still picture Joe Carter with his hands raised running around the bases after he hit the walk off homerun to win their second World Series title. And guess which uniform he was wearing?!



TORONTO BLUE JAYS®
PRIDE OF A NATION



POSTSEASON

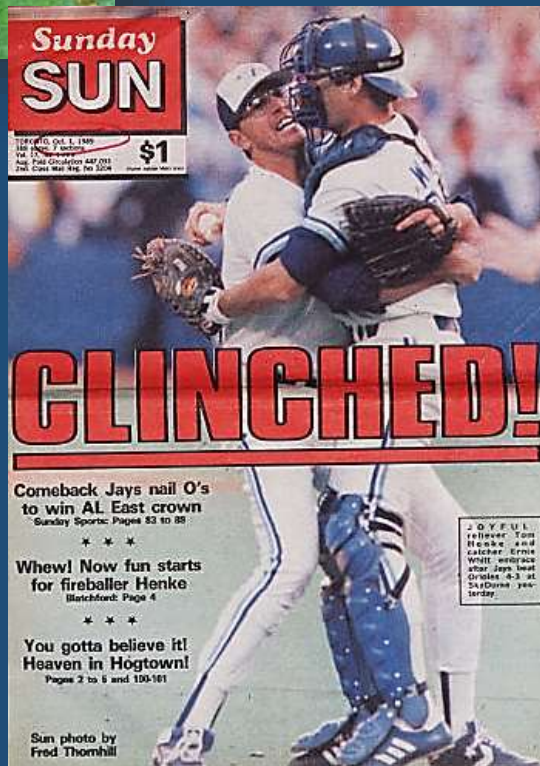


The Blue Jays were eight years old before they saw postseason action. In 1985, they finished first in the American League East division. But they lost to the Kansas City Royals in seven games.

For the third time in six years, the Jays won a playoff position in 1991 by finishing first in their division, the AL East. But unfortunately, for the third time, they lost in the first series against the Minnesota Twins.



Four years later, in 1989, the Jays once again finished first in their division. And once again, those KC Royals ended the Jays post season, defeating them in five games.

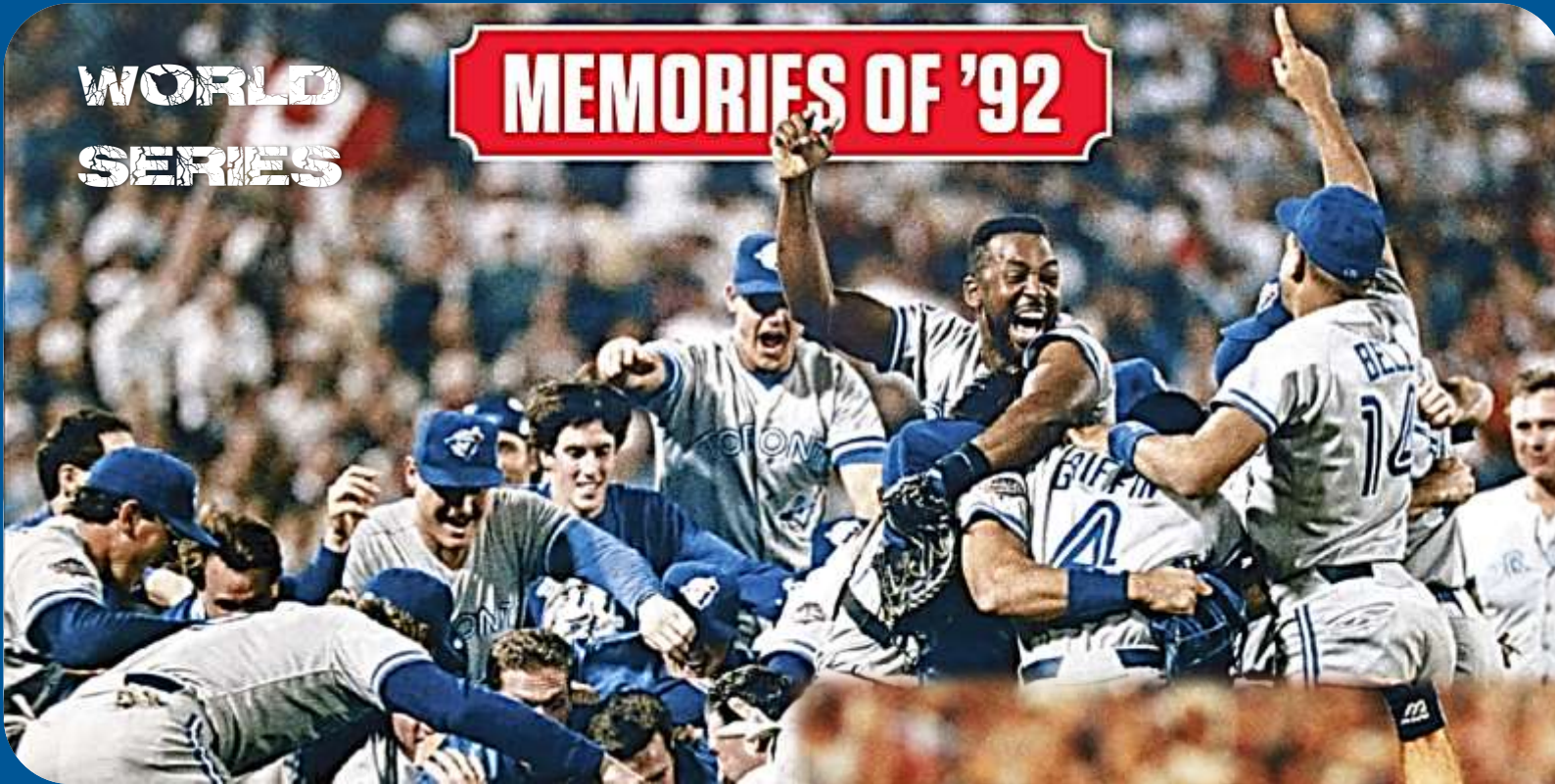


The Blue Jays didn't see playoff action again for 22 years. In 2015, the Jays held off the New York Yankees to finish first in the AL East. The team defeated the Texas Rangers, but lost to the Kansas City Royals in the American League Championship Series in six games.



WORLD SERIES

MEMORIES OF '92



In 1993, the Jays did something not many professional teams have done. They won back-to-back World Series titles. Finishing first in their division, the team went on to defeat the Philadelphia Phillies in six games. But this time they were able to celebrate the win on Canadian soil.

Bring on 1992...the year that changed the franchise. The Jays finished first in the division and went on to win their first World Series title. Under manager Cito Gaston, they defeated the Atlanta Braves in six games.

Did You Know??

THE ONLY GAME 7 WALK OFF HOME RUN TO WIN A WORLD SERIES WAS IN 1960. BILL MAZEROSKI GAVE THE PIRATES THE WIN OVER THE YANKEES.



AWARDS

Only once has a manager wearing the Jays uniform won the award for **Manager of the Year**. It was Bobby Cox in 1985. He is the fourth most winningest manager in baseball history and leads the MLB in ejections with 158.



In 1987, George Bell was given the honour of being named the Most Value Player of the American League. That year, he won the Silver Slugger Award and led the AL in RBIs. Bell played with the Jays from 1981 to 1990.



A Jay has been awarded **Rookie of the Year** twice:

Alfredo Griffin in 1979 and Eric Hinske in 2002.



In the Blue Jays franchise history, a Jay has been given the pitcher's most prestigious award, the **Cy Young Award** four different years:

- o 1996 - Pat Hentgen
- o 1997 - Roger Clemens
- o 1998 - Roger Clemens
- o 2003 - Roy Halladay



Did You Know!!

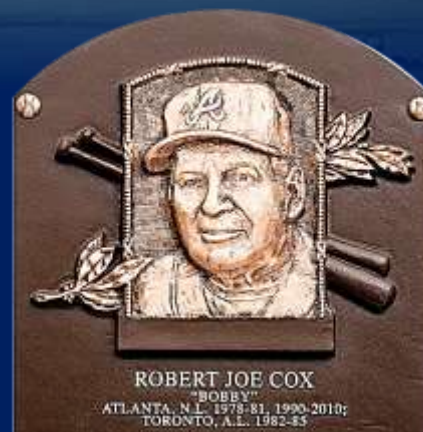
GRIFFIN IS NOW THE FIRST BASE COACH FOR THE LA ANGELS.

HALL OF FAMERS

No other Blue Jay will ever wear the number 12. The Jays have only ever retired one number. It belonged to Roberto Alomar. He played with the Jays for five years (1990 - 1995) and was the first Hall of Famer to be inducted as a Jay.



Only one manager to wear the Blue Jays uniform has been inducted into the Hall of Fame. That was Bobby Cox. He managed the Jays from 1982 to 1985.




Besides Alomar, five former Jays are members of the Hall of Fame:

- Rickey Henderson (1993)
- Paul Molitor (1993-1995)
- Phil Niekro (1987)
- Frank Thomas (2007-2008)
- Dave Winfield (1992)



General Managers can also be inducted into the Hall of Fame. Pat Gillick was the GM of the Jays from 1978 to 1994. He saw the Jays win both World Series titles.



The Toronto Blue Jays created a “Level of Excellence” along the 4th level of the Skydome. All along this level are the names of exceptional people who have been associated with the team over the past four decades.

Naturally, Hall of Famers Pat Gillick and Roberto Alomar are on the level.

Another famous Blue Jay to be given a permanent place on the Level of Excellence is pitcher Dave Stieb. As a Jay, Stieb was selected to the All-Star team a franchise record of seven times.



Level of Excellence


Manager Cito Gaston earned his place on the Level of Excellence by leading the Jays to their back to back World Series titles in 1992 and 1993. He managed the team from 1989 to 1997 and once again from 2008 to 2010.



Level of Excellence

COMMEMOR

Joe Carter hit one of the most famous home runs in Blue Jays history. He smoked a ball over the wall at the Skydome in 1993 to end the game that won them a World Series title. So it's quite fitting that his name is on the 4th level.



RECORDS

In 1977, the Jays broke a record in the MLB for a first year expansion team. It took them only 50 games to reach an overall attendance of 1 219 551 fans.

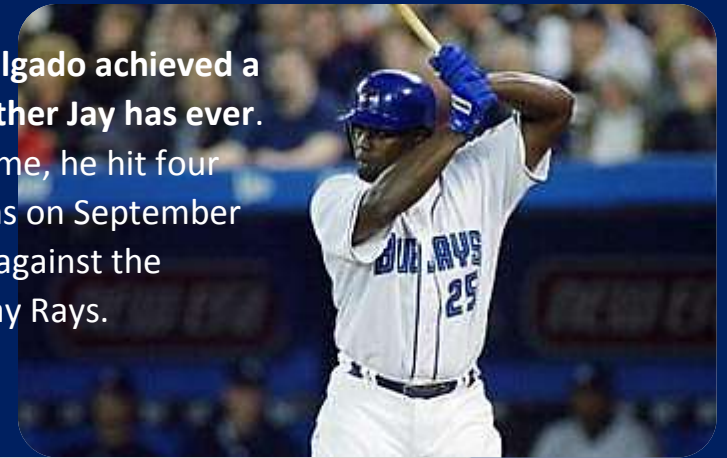


In 1991, they set another attendance record. The Jays became the first MLB team to attract over four million fans. What made it amazing was that they accomplished this feat in only 14 years.



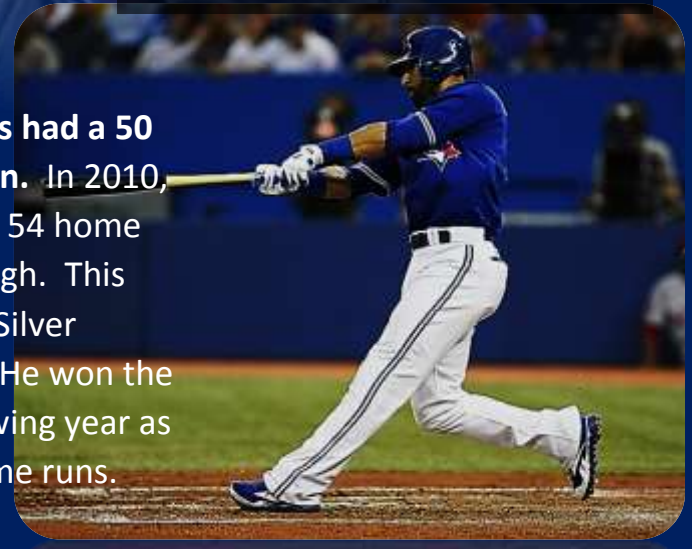
The Jays hold the record for the longest game played on opening day. On April 5, 2012 against the Cleveland Indians, they went 16 innings. They could have counted that as two games played!

Carlos Delgado achieved a feat no other Jay has ever. In one game, he hit four home runs on September 25, 2003 against the Tampa Bay Rays.



The only Blue Jay to pitch a no-hitter was Dave Stieb. It was against the Cleveland Indians on September 2, 1990. Two years before that, in 1988, Stieb had two back to back home game starts that were no hitters into the 9th inning with two outs and two strikes but were broken up.

One Blue Jay has had a 50 home run season. In 2010, Jose Bautista hit 54 home runs, a league high. This earned him the Silver Slugger Award. He won the award the following year as well with 43 home runs.



2015 SEASON

On September 25, 2015 the Jays ended the longest playoff drought in North American professional sports. The team hadn't seen postseason action since 1993, the last time they won the World Series.



The 39th season of the Blue Jays, they won 93 games of the 162 they played. They finished the regular season six games ahead of the rival New York Yankees.

The Jays had a great at-home record. They won 53 games and lost only 28. Their away record you could say, they won half of the time they played on the road, with 40 wins and 41 losses.

On September 30, the Jays defeated the Texas Rangers in five games to win the American League East division. The team was down two games to none, but came back to win the series in dramatic fashion.



Unfortunately, 2015 wasn't the year the Jays were going to win their third World Series. In the ALCS, they lost to the Kansas City Royals in six games. Currently, the Royals are battling the New York Mets.