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30 SECONDS WITH GOOSE GOSSAGE

Pinstripes Then, Now and Forever

By JOE BRESCIA



Goose Gossage, the former Yankees relief pitcher who was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2008, spends much of his time making appearances around the country with **Wish You Were Here Productions** and sharing stories with other retired players like **David Cone**, **Don Larsen**, Graig Nettles and Mickey Rivers. Every February, he heads to the Yankees' training camp to work as a special instructor.

Q. You were a starter and reliever before you settled on closing games. What roles do you think **Joba Chamberlain** and **Phil Hughes** should have on the Yankees staff?

A. I think Phil Hughes is a starter for sure. He can go deep into games. He's a power pitcher and he also knows how to pitch, with a nice curveball. He's got a good head on his shoulders. Personally, I think Joba is a relief pitcher. He's got that makeup, that aggressiveness. I think that he is more valuable in the bullpen. I think that he would be a great relief pitcher.

Q. Do you think **Mariano Rivera** is the best closer in baseball history?

A. I think that he is a tremendous relief pitcher. He's the best current-day, modern reliever. But it's just like you can't compare the 500-home-run club today to the old 500-home-run club. When I was inducted into the Hall of Fame, I was told that I had 53 saves with seven-plus outs. I was told that Mariano had one and Trevor Hoffman had two. So I think that says it in a nutshell.

Q. How do you think you would do if you were closing games today?

A. It's hard to say what my statistics would be if I was used for only one inning like these guys. I had longevity. When I got a one-inning save, I felt guilty. Guys would kid me: "You're going to take that? Does that count?"

Q. What do you think about [Francisco Rodriguez](#), Chamberlain and the other relievers who gesture and dance around the mound?

A. K-Rod is a clown. I don't think there is any place for it in the game. You respect that other team.

Q. How does the Yankees team that won the World Series last year compare to the teams you played on in the 1970s?

A. The Yankees had a very good club last year. But I would put our team up against anybody. With Mariano, I would say the bullpens were equal. I think we had better starting pitching with Guidry, Figueroa and Catfish. But I like Sabathia. He's a throwback to the way starting pitching used to be. He gives you plenty of innings.

Q. You played for Billy Martin. Does he belong in the Hall as a manager?

A. I was never that impressed with Billy as a manager. I would not vote for him if I had a vote. We didn't get along. To me, the mark of a great manager is how he handles the pitching staff. And Billy did not handle staffs well.

Q. Do you think [Mark McGwire](#) should be in the Hall of Fame?

A. No. And I mean no. In the Olympics when they catch them using performance-enhancing drugs, they strip their medals. I can't see any difference in baseball. None of the steroid users should get in.