

Cubans Oliva and Miñoso to Cooperstown Hall of Fame

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Havana, December 6 (RHC)-- Cuban baseball added another chapter to its rich history with the election of Tony Oliva and Orestes Miñoso to the U.S. Major League Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

Oliva and Miñoso will join in the Hall of Immortals their compatriots Tony Pérez, who was elected by the traditional ballot; Martín Dihigo, Cristóbal Torriente, José de la Caridad Méndez and businessman Alex Pompez who were elected by the Negro Leagues Special Committee.

The former right fielder Oliva had a brilliant career in the Big Tent from 1962 and 1976, always with the Minnesota Twins jersey and for his lifetime he batted .304, achieved an OBP of 353 and a slugging of 476, with 1,917 hits, 220 home runs, 947 runs batted in and 86 stolen bases.

He won the American League Rookie of the Year award in 1964, when he won the first of his three batting titles (the others in 1965 and 1971), played in eight All-Star Games, led the young circuit five times in hits and four times in doubles, won a Gold Glove and twice (1965 and 1970) finished second in the voting for Most Valuable Player.

Miñoso was the first black Latin American player to play in the Major Baseball League (MLB), with the Chicago White Sox.

Called to seven All-Star Games, Miñoso finished his career with 186 home runs, 83 triples, 205 stolen bases and an OPS of 848. He also led the American League in stolen bases three times and won three Gold Gloves in left field.

Miñoso retired for the first time in 1964, but returned to the White Sox in 1976 at age 50, connecting for one hit in eight innings. He also had a pair of home runs in 1980, giving him five different decades in the Big League.

In addition to the two Cubans, Buck O'Neil, an advocate for black ballplayers on and off the diamond, as well as Gil Hodges, Jim Kaat and Bud Fowler, will also be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Oliva and Kaat, both 83 and former teammates with the Minnesota Twins, are the only two new inductees still alive.

The six new members will be inducted in Cooperstown in upstate New York on July 24, 2022, along with the new members elected by the Baseball Writers' Association of North America.

The two selection committees awarded 14 votes to Miñoso, O'Neil received 13, while Hodges, Oliva, Kaat and Fowler each received 12.

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