



Rivera Deserved Easy Entry

By Dave Lukow

There's a long list of legends, but nobody's ever entered baseball's shrine with such ease.

On January 22, former New York Yankee standout Mariano Rivera appeared on all 425 ballots cast, becoming the first player in history to be voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame unanimously. Rivera, who flourished as a closer, is part of a class that includes Roy Halladay, Edgar Martinez and another former Yankee, pitcher Mike Mussina.

The group enters after a vote by the Baseball Writers Association of America.

A native of Panama, Rivera played for New York from 1995-2013. He made 1115 appearances, only 10 of which were starts, compiling an overall record of 82-60. The right-handed reliever totaled 652 saves, while holding opposing hitters to just a .211 batting average. He finished his career with a 2.21 ERA.

During his time in the Bronx, the Yankees won the World Series five times. An AL All-Star on 13 occasions, Rivera was MVP of the game in 2013, the same season he was named AL Comeback Player of the Year. He won the Babe Ruth Award in 1999.

Halladay, who began his career with Toronto in 1998, died in plane crash, at the age of 40, in 2017. He finished with a 203-105 record and 2117 strikeouts. His ERA was 3.38. The right-handed starter won the AL Cy Young in 2003 and the NL Cy Young, as a member of the Phillies, in 2010. He was an All-Star eight times.

Edgar Martinez spent his whole career with Seattle, where he hit .312 with 1219 runs, 2247 hits, 514 doubles, 1261 RBI and 1283 walks. Born in New York City, Martinez was an AL All-Star seven times and captured five AL Silver Sluggers. His on-base percentage was .412.

Mussina ended his career with a 270-153 record, 2813 strikeouts and a 3.68 ERA. He was named an AL All-Star five times and won seven Gold Gloves. After starting his career with Baltimore, he spent his final eight seasons with New York.

The 2019 Hall of Fame Weekend takes place July 19-22 in Cooperstown, N.Y.

