Analyzing the 2016 Hall of Fame Vote

By Bill Gilbert

The Baseball Writers Association of America elected 2 players to the Hall of Fame this year, Ken Griffey. Jr. (99.3%) and Mike Piazza (83.0%). Griffey's percentage was the highest ever recorded, exceeding Tom Seaver's 98.84% in 1992.

Of those on the ballot who were not elected, Jeff Bagwell (71.6%) and Tim Raines (69.8%) were the closest and should be in good position for election in 2017.

Fifteen of the seventeen holdovers on the ballot received a higher percentage of the votes in 2016 than in 2015 led by Mike Mussina (+18.4%), Edgar Martinez (+16.4%), Bagwell (+15.9%) Alan Trammell (+15.8% in his final year on the writers ballot), Raines (+14.8%), Curt Schilling (+13.1%) and Piazza (+13.1%). The only holdovers to lose ground were Gary Sheffield (from 11.7% to 11.6%) and Nomar Garciaparra (from 5.5% to 1 8% which removes him from future ballots)

The voters are still largely negative with regards to players associated with Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs). Roger Clemens and Barry Bonds each picked up about 7.5% but are mired in the mid 40% range.

There was a significant change in the voting population in the 2016 election. Writers who have been inactive professionally for 10 years are no longer eligible to vote, reducing the total number of ballots cast from 549 in 2015 to 440 in 2016.. Thus, some players on the ballot who received a higher percentage of votes actually received fewer total votes.

Following is a list of candidates that received votes in the election this year. For the holdovers, vote totals for last year are also shown.

Player	Years on Ballot	2016 Votes	2016 %	2015 Votes	2015 %	Difference Votes	Difference %
Ken Griffey, Jr.	**1**	**437**	**99.3**				
Mike Piazza	4	365	83.0	384	69.9	19	13.1
Jeff Bagwell	6	315	71.6	306	55.7	9	15.9
Tim Raines	9	307	69.8	302	55.0	5	14.8
Trevor Hoffman	**1**	**296**	**67.3**				
Curt Schilling	4	230	52.3	215	39.2	15	13.1
Roger Clemens	4	199	45.2	206	37.5	-7	7.7
Barry Bonds	4	195	44.3	202	36.8	-7	7.5
Edgar Martinez	7	191	43.4	148	27.0	43	16.4
Mike Mussina	3	189	43.0	135	24.6	54	18.4
Alan Trammell	15	180	40.9	138	25.1	42	15.8
Lee Smith	14	150	34.1	166	30.2	-16	3.9

Fred McGriff	7	92	20.9	71	12.9	21	8.0
Jeff Kent	3	73	16.6	77	14.0	-4	2.6
Larry Walker	6	68	15.5	65	11.8	3	3.7
Mark McGwire	10	54	12.3	55	10.0	-1	2.3
Gary Sheffield	2	51	11.6	64	11.7	-13	-0.1
Billy Wagner	**1**	**46**	**10.5**				
Sammy Sosa	3	31	7.0	36	6.6	-5	0.4
Jim Edmonds	**1**	**11**	**2.5**				
Nomar Garciaparra	2	8	1.8	30	5.5	-22	-3.7
Mike Sweeney	**1**	**3**	**0.7**				
David Eckstein	**1**	**2**	**0.5**				
Jason Kendall	**1**	**2**	**0.5**				
Garret Anderson	**1**	**1**	**0.2**				

In addition to Griffey, two other ballot newcomers received enough votes to remain on the ballot. Both were closers, Trevor Hoffman (67.3%) and Billy Wagner (+10.5%). Hoffman's high vote total in his first year on the ballot suggests that he should get elected fairly quick[y. In something of a surprise, Jim Edmonds fell off the ballot in his first year with only 2.5% of the votes. In addition to Trammell and Garciaparra, Mark McGwire will also be removed from future ballots since he has completed ten years without being elected.

The following seven players were on the ballot but did not receive any votes: Brad Ausmus, Luis Castillo, Troy Glaus, Mark Grudzielanek, Mike Hampton, Mike Lowell and Randy Winn.

For the third straight year, the writers averaged over eight votes on their ballots versus the historical average of 6 -7. If this continues, the problem of an overcrowded ballot should gradually be relieved. The change that reduced a player's time on the ballot from 15 to 10 years will also help. The 2017 class of ballot newcomers, headlined by Vladimir Guerrero, Ivan Rodriguez and Manny Ramirez, is not as strong as some recent classes which should help ballot holdovers. Schilling and Mussina should move up since no other starting pitchers with serious Hall of Fame credentials are likely to be on the ballot

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