

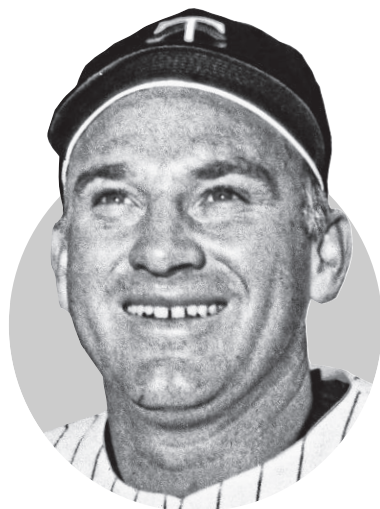
JOE MAUER HALL OF FAME

Growing list of excellence

Story by PHIL MILLER • phil.miller@startribune.com

When your bookends are Harmon Killebrew and Joe Mauer, you know you've got a high-quality collection of baseball players. The list of National Baseball Hall of Famers who spent time with the Twins is now 13 players long. Here's the rundown on the dozen — six of whom were enshrined with an M or a TC on their cap — players before Mauer with ties to the Twins in Cooperstown, N.Y.:

PLAYERS ENSHRINED AS TWINS



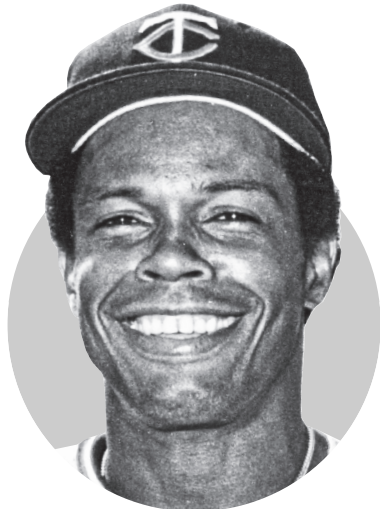
CLASS OF 1984

Harmon Killebrew

3B/LF/1B • 1961-74 WITH TWINS

When he retired in 1975, his 573 home runs were the fifth most in baseball history, yet Killebrew was named on only 59.6% of ballots in his first year of eligibility. Killebrew finally cleared the 75% mark for election three years later, becoming the Twins' first Hall of Famer. Over the course of his 22-year major league career, Killebrew put together eight 40-home run seasons.

Received 83.1% of vote • Fourth year on ballot



CLASS OF 1991

Rod Carew

2B/1B • 1967-78

In his 12 seasons with the Twins, Carew won seven American League batting titles, along with the 1967 Rookie of the Year award and 1977 Most Valuable Player award, and was chosen to the All-Star team in all 12 years. He finished his career with seven seasons with the Angels and was easily elected on the first ballot, heading a Hall of Fame class that included Gaylord Perry and Ferguson Jenkins.

Received 90.5% of vote • First year



CLASS OF 2001

Kirby Puckett

CF/RF • 1984-95

Glaucoma-caused blindness in his right eye cut Puckett's career short after only 12 seasons, but they were so spectacular — a batting title, six Gold Gloves and 10 consecutive All-Star appearances, not to mention leading the Twins to their only two World Series championships — that he was easily elected on the first ballot. He was drafted by the Twins in 1982 as the third overall pick.

Received 90.5% of vote • First year



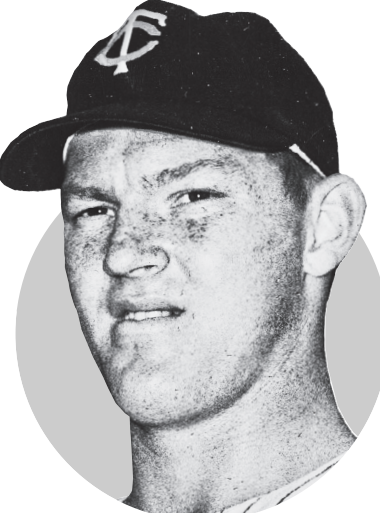
CLASS OF 2011

Bert Blyleven

PITCHER • 1970-76, 85-88

When he retired, only Nolan Ryan and Steve Carlton had struck out more hitters in baseball history, and only eight had pitched more shutouts. Yet Blyleven received only 17.5% of votes in his first year of Hall of Fame voting and didn't surpass 50% until his ninth. He finally was elected in 2011, one year before he would have fallen off the ballot. He played in two stints with the Twins, 1970-76 and 1985-88.

Received 79.7% of vote • 14th year



CLASS OF 2022

Jim Kaat

PITCHER • 1961-73

No pitcher has ever won more games or pitched more innings for the Twins than the durable lefthander, and only Blyleven has struck out more. Yet even Kaat said he didn't consider himself a Hall of Famer, and the BBWAA electorate agreed, never even giving him 30% of the vote in 15 elections. But 39 years after his retirement, the Golden Days Committee overruled and elected Kaat in 2022.

Elected by the Golden Days Committee



CLASS OF 2022

Tony Oliva

RF/DH • 1962-76

His career included three AL batting titles, the 1964 Rookie of the Year award and two runner-up finishes in MVP voting, but it was cut short by serious knee injuries that limited him to DH duty over his final four seasons. The injuries also kept him from HOF election for 15 years, as he never reached 50%. But as with Kaat, the Golden Days Committee finally welcomed him to Cooperstown in 2022.

Elected by the Golden Days Committee

PLAYERS ENSHRINED WHO PLAYED FOR THE TWINS

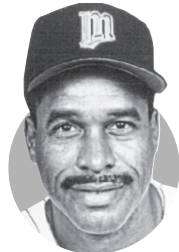


Steve Carlton

1994 • P • 1987-88

Earned four Cy Young awards with the Phillies and won 329 games — but only one with the Twins, whom he joined in 1987 for the final two months of the season at the age of 42. It didn't go well: Carlton went 1-6 with an 8.54 ERA in 13 games in Minnesota, didn't pitch during the Twins' championship post-season, and retired after just 9½ innings the following April. Still, he was left off only 20 ballots of 456 cast.

95.6% of vote • First ballot



Dave Winfield

2001 • OF • 1993-94

The St. Paul native was 41 years old and had already played 19 stellar seasons when he joined the Twins in 1993, but he was still a productive hitter. Winfield batted .264 and hit 31 homers over two seasons in Minnesota and collected his 3,000th hit, a single off future Hall of Famer Dennis Eckersley, in the Metrodome. He joined Puckett, his former teammate, as a first-ballot selection in the Class of 2001.

84.5% of vote • First ballot

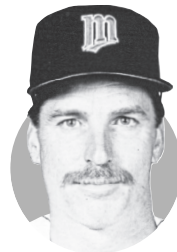


Paul Molitor

2004 • INF/DH • 1996-98

Like Winfield, the St. Paul native was a Twin when he reached 3,000 hits in 1996, making his election to the Hall of Fame a formality. It came in 2004, his first year of eligibility, the culmination of a 21-year career spent mostly in Milwaukee, where he received MVP votes nine times. The seven-time All-Star retired in 1998. He managed the Twins from 2015-18, earning the 2017 AL Manager of the Year award.

85.2% of vote • First ballot



Jack Morris

2018 • P • 1991

Another St. Paul native who returned to Minnesota, albeit for only one season, as his career wound down, Morris turned in the most famous pitching performance in Twins history, a 10-inning shutout of the Braves to win Game 7 of the 1991 World Series. But his 186 career losses and 3.90 career ERA were deemed unworthy by many Hall voters, and Morris never received more than 67.7% of BBWAA voting.

Elected by Modern Baseball Era Committee



Jim Thome

2018 • INF/DH • 2010-11

Thome played only 179 games, just 7% of his 22-year total, with Minnesota, but the slugging DH became one of the most popular Twins ever. He hit his 600th career home run in a Twins uniform in 2011, one of only nine players ever to reach that milestone, and was easily selected for the Hall in his first election. When he retired, the five-time All-Star had totaled 1,583 runs scored, 612 home runs and 1,699 RBI.

89.8% of vote • First ballot



David Ortiz

2022 • DH/1B • 1997-2002

Despite his .809 OPS, the Twins gave up on Ortiz, one of the few Hall of Famers ever to be released, after six seasons, a historic mistake. Ortiz landed in Boston, where Big Papi became a beloved figure, helping to lead the Red Sox to three World Series titles. Voters overlooked suspected links to steroids, which scuttled several other notable candidacies, to elect Ortiz on the first ballot. He retired with 541 homers and 1,786 RBI.

77.9% of vote • First ballot