



OAKLAND ATHLETICS

Media Release

Oakland Athletics Baseball Company • 7000 Coliseum Way • Oakland, CA 94621
510-638-4900 • Public Relations Facsimile 510-562-1633 • www.oaklandathletics.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 31, 2010

Legendary Oakland A's Announcer Bill King Again Among Leading Nominees for Ford C. Frick Award

On-Line Balloting Begins Tomorrow and Continues Through Sept. 30

OAKLAND, Calif. – Is it finally time to crown the King?

Bill King, former legendary voice of the Oakland Athletics and the leading national vote-getter in fan balloting in both 2005 and 2006, is long overdue for Hall of Fame recognition. Starting tomorrow, King's legion of ardent supporters will have the opportunity—yet again—to demonstrate why he is generally regarded as the most popular broadcaster in Bay Area history when on-line balloting begins on the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum's Facebook site for the 2011 Ford C. Frick Award.

Online voting for fan selections for the award will begin at 7 a.m. PDT Wednesday, Sept. 1 at the Hall of Fame's Facebook site, www.facebook.com/baseballhall and conclude at 2 p.m. PDT Sept. 30. The top three fan selections from votes tallied at the site during September will appear on the final 10-name ballot for the award. The 2001 Frick Award winner will be selected by a 20-member electorate, with the winner to be announced at baseball's Winter Meetings in Orlando in December.

"Bill is such a legendary figure in Bay Area broadcasting and he played such a prominent role in our history," said Ken Pries, the A's vice president of broadcasting and communications. "Following his passing, he won the on-line national voting process by landslide margins in both 2005 and 2006, yet failed to be selected by the committee. For A's fans everywhere—or just Bill King fans in general—it's time to finally show the nation just how special Bill was. So our message today is: don't wait, vote now. This should be the year that Bill King finally receives his just due."

King, who passed away at age 78 in 2005, broadcast Oakland A's games for 25 seasons, beginning with the "Billy Ball" teams of the early 1980's, continuing with the "Bash Brothers" era that saw the A's make three consecutive World Series appearances from 1988-90 and concluding with the Giambi and Big Three (Hudson, Mulder and Zito) years that reaped four consecutive playoff appearances from 2000-03. Over the years, King called so many great moments in baseball history, ranging from Rickey Henderson's record-setting single season and career stolen bases, to Kirk Gibson's improbable World Series home run off Dennis Eckersley, to Dave Stewart's MVP performance in the 1989 World Series, to the A's record-breaking 20-game winning streak in 2001.

King's passion for painting a visual account of the action made his broadcasting style an art form. His trademark exclamatory phrase, "Holy Toledo," has been imitated and cherished by Bay Area sports fans for many decades.

Perhaps the most telling story about King's worthiness for the Hall of Fame was chronicled by long-time *Oakland Tribune* columnist Carl Steward, who in 2005 wrote: "King was in the audience two years ago at Cooperstown when his longtime broadcasting pal, Lon Simmons, received this lasting honor. Several times that weekend, Simmons noted that King would have been a more worthy selection than himself and urged King's prompt nomination and receptions for the award. Time to second the motion...en masse."

Ken Korach, the current voice of A's baseball, offered even stronger praise: "Bill was the greatest sportscaster this country has ever produced. The depth of knowledge, the passion, the crisp description, the attention to detail, the command of the language—Bill was a master, like a Mozart or a Rembrandt behind a microphone."

Jon Miller, another former A's broadcaster who was named this year's Ford C. Frick Award winner for his many years of local and national baseball announcing, is another big fan of King's on-air wizardry.

"He's the Tony Bennett of broadcasters," said the current ESPN and San Francisco Giants announcer. "They say Tony Bennett is the entertainer's entertainer. Bill is the broadcaster's broadcaster."

Simmons, who has worked with Hall of Famers Russ Hodges and Miller during various Giants' seasons, concludes with these glowing words about his former A's broadcast partner:

"I've voted Bill No. 1 on every ballot I've had. When you think of play-by-play, you have to think of Bill King as one of the bet there ever was. He certainly has all the qualifications."

Presented annually since 1978 for excellence in baseball broadcasting, the Ford C. Frick Award is given to an active or retired broadcaster with a minimum of 10 years of continuous major league broadcast service with a team, network, or a combination of the two.

The voting electorate includes all living award-winners and five historians/veteran media members appointed by the Hall of Fame. The living award-winners include Marty Brennaman, Jerry Coleman, Gene Elston, Joe Garagiola, Milo Hamilton, Jaime Jarrin, Tony Kubek, Denny Matthews, Jon Miller, Dave Niehaus, Felo Ramirez, Vin Scully, Lon Simmons, Bob Uecker and Bob Wolff. The five historians and veteran media members are Bob Costas (NBC/MLB Network), Barry Horn (Dallas Morning News), Stan Isaacs (formerly of New York Newsday), Ted Patterson (historian) and Curt Smith (historian).

###