



Five Hall of Famers for 2017 Elected

The Players Selection Committee of the Baseball Hall of Fame (345 members) has elected Tsutomu ITOH from among 16 eligible candidates (4 new candidates and 12 returnees) in the Players Division prepared by the screening committee. The Expert Division of the Players Selection Committee (120 members) has elected Senichi HOSHINO and Masaji HIRAMATSU from among 14 eligible candidates (5 new candidates and 9 returnees) prepared by the screening committee.

The Special Selection Committee (14 members), on the other hand, has selected the late Hiroshi GOSHI and the late Mirei SUZUKI from among the 10 eligible candidates.

The membership in the Baseball Hall of Fame now stands at 197, including 43 living Hall of Famers. The site and date of the 2017 Induction Ceremony are to be decided in due course.

ITOH, Tsutomu

Born in Kumamoto Prefecture on Aug 29, 1962.

In 1982, Itoh joined the Seibu Lions as their first draft choice. In 1984, he established himself as the regular catcher and since then he contributed a great deal to build the golden age of the Lions in the 1980s and 1990s.

As an excellent defensive catcher who set the Pacific League record for consecutive errorless chances by a catcher, and with his skilled handling of pitchers, he played an active part in leading the team to the fourteen league pennants and eight Japan Series victories.

He was selected for the best-nine catcher ten times, second only to Katsuya Nomura (1989 Hall of Famer), and won the most Golden Glove awards as a catcher with eleven. He threw and batted right.



His career records include: 2,379 games, 7,050 AB, 1,738 H, 811 RBI, 156 HR, and .247 BA. Best Nine Team ten times, Golden Glove Award eleven times, Shoriki award once (2004), most sacrifice hits (Pacific League record. 305 all-time), best fielding percentage by a catcher in a single season twice (PL record. 1.000 in 1997, 2003), most consecutive errorless chances by a catcher in a single season (PL record. 943 from April 5 to October 12, 1997), most consecutive errorless chances by a catcher in consecutive season (PL record. 1,263 from Sep 7, 1996 to May 27, 1998). He appeared in the All-Star Series sixteen times. (Photo: BBM)

HOSHINO, Senichi

Born in Okayama Prefecture on Jan 22, 1947.

Upon graduation from the Meiji University, Hoshino joined the Chunichi Dragons as a first-round draft choice in 1968. Hoshino was a solid pitcher for the Dragons and would fill multiple roles from starter to reliever. In 1974, he led the team to capture the league pennant and earned the Sawamura award.

As a manager, he led the Dragons to win the league pennants twice in 1988 and 1999, and the Tigers to win the first league pennant in 18 years in 2003. In 2011, he was appointed manager of the Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles and led the team to advance to their first league pennants and the Japan Series title in 2013, nine years after the team's founding in 2005. As a manager, Hoshino accumulated 1,181 wins which is currently ranked in the top ten managers in wins in NPB. He threw and batted right.

His career record as player: 500 G, 146 W, 121 L, 2,128.2 IP, 1,225 SO, 3.60 ERA, best win-loss percentage once (1975), most saves once (1974), and Sawamura award once (1974). He finished in the top ten in ERA three times and appeared in the All-Star Series six times.

His record as manager: 17 seasons, 2,277 games, 1,181 wins, 1,043 losses, with .531 WA, league title four times (1988, 99, 2003,13), Japan Series title once (2013), and Shoriki award twice (2003, 13). (Photo: BBM)



HIRAMATSU, Masaji

Born in Okayama Prefecture on Sep 19, 1947.

As an ace pitcher for the Okayama Higashi Commercial High School, Hiramatsu won the 1965 Spring National Invitational High School Baseball Tournament. Afterwards, he went on to play for the Nippon Oil Corporation. He was a first-round pick in the 1966 draft by the Taiyo Whales and joined the Taiyo after the 1967 Intercity Baseball Tournament, in which he was presented with the Hashido award (MVP).

The pitching ace played an active role for Whales with his fearsome breaking ball, which was often described as “Kamisori Shuuto” (a razor breaking ball). In 1970, Hiramatsu won the Sawamura award with a record of 25-19 and a 1.95 ERA. From 1969 onwards, he won double-digit games twelve years in a row and became the first pitcher to achieve 200 wins on the team. He notched 51 of his 201 wins against the Giants and was often referred to as the “Giants killer.” After 18 years with the Whales, serving both as a starter and a closer, he retired in 1984. He threw and batted right.

His career records include: 635 G, 201 W, 196 L, 3,360.2 IP, 2,045 SO, 3.31 ERA, best ERA once (1979), most wins twice (1970-71), best pitcher award twice (1970-71), Sawamura award once (1970), and Best Nine Team twice. He finished in the top ten in ERA four times and appeared in the All-Star Series eight times.(Photo: BBM)



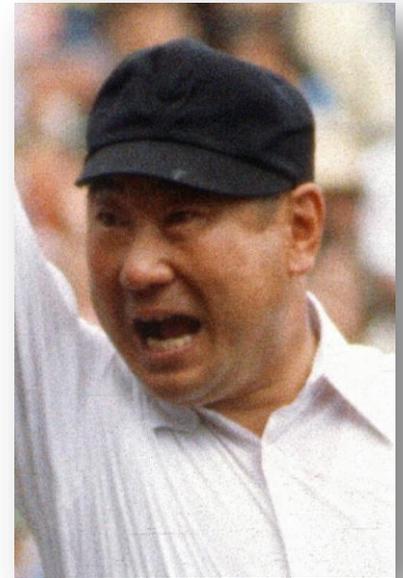
GOSHI, Hiroshi

Born in Hokkaido on January 19, 1932 and died on December 12, 2006.

In his school days at the Meiji High School, Goshi became involved in the world of the umpiring with the encouragement of Kichiro Shimaoka (1991 Hall of Famer), the then-manager of the Meiji High School Baseball Club. In the decades to follow, Goshi would stand behind the plate in number of games from the high school to university levels, and to the industrial league.

In 1964, he started umpiring for high school tournaments and since then he served as a crew member for a total of sixteen Spring National Invitational High School Baseball Tournaments and fifteen Summer National High School Baseball Tournaments. In particular, he was the home plate umpire during one of the most legendary games in tournament history, when the Matsuyama Commercial High School and the Misawa High School ended in a tie after eighteen innings and rematched on the following day during the 1969 Summer National High School Baseball Tournament final.

Working for many years as umpire and as a member of the baseball rules committee, Goshi took a great part in the development of Japanese amateur baseball. (Photo: BBM)



SUZUKI, Mirei

Born in Hyogo Prefecture on September 3, 1921 and died on October 11, 1991.

Following cooperative consultation between the representatives of the Japanese professional and amateur baseball organizations in December 1955, in which both agreed to establish standardized baseball rules for the leagues, Suzuki was highly involved in writing and compiling the *Official Baseball Rules 1956*, the first unified rules and regulations for the Japanese baseball world.

Afterwards, Suzuki devoted his entire life to, and played the leading role in, developing the *Official Baseball Rules*. He also authored several rule books such as *Answers to Complicated Questions about Baseball*, *A Concise Guide to the Official Baseball Rules* and *Baseball Rules – One Thousand and One Nights*. These books illustrated complex baseball rules in an easily-comprehensible manner. His efforts culminated in encouraging the correct interpretation of baseball rules. Therefore, Suzuki contributed significantly to the development of baseball rules in Japan.

