



### **Tommy Lasorda**

Regarded by many as baseball's most popular ambassador, Tommy Lasorda begins his 60th season in the Dodger organization and fourth as Special Advisor to the Chairman. He was named Vice President in 1996 after retiring as manager, a position he held for the previous 20 seasons. Lasorda assumed all player personnel responsibilities when he was named the Dodgers' interim General Manager on June 22, 1998. He relinquished his General Manager duties when he was promoted to Senior Vice President on Sept. 11, 1998.

In his current position, Lasorda reports directly to the Office of the Chairman, serving as an advisor on all areas of the Dodger organization for Owner & Chairman Frank McCourt and Vice Chairman & President Jamie McCourt. Lasorda's current responsibilities include scouting, evaluating and teaching minor league players, acting as an advisor and ambassador for the Dodgers' international affiliations, and representing the franchise at more than 100 speaking engagements and appearances to various charities, private groups and military personnel each year. He has spoken to troops at more than 35 military bases around the world.

Lasorda compiled a 1,599-1,439 record and won two World Championships, four National League pennants and eight division titles in an extraordinary 20-year career as the Dodgers' manager. He ranks 13th with 1,599 wins and 12th with 3,038 games managed in Major League history. His 16 wins in 30 NL Championship Series games managed were the most of any manager at the time of his retirement in 1996. His 61 postseason games managed rank fifth all-time behind Bobby Cox (132), Joe Torre (126), Tony LaRussa (107), and Casey Stengel (63). He is only one of four managers to manage the same team for 20 years or more, joining Walt Alston, Connie Mack and John McGraw.

Lasorda's role in the globalization of the game of baseball is now more evident than ever before, as Commissioner Selig appointed him as the Official Ambassador of the inaugural World Baseball Classic in 2006, and again for the 2009 Classic to be played at Dodger Stadium. In that capacity, Lasorda served as a spokesperson for the tournament and continued his travels around the globe to promote the game of baseball, as he has visited 22 countries in his lifetime - Australia, Canada, Columbia, China, Chinese Taipei, Cuba, Denmark, England, the Dominican Republic, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Monaco, Norway, Panama, Puerto Rico, Scotland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Venezuela, and throughout the United States. He has made countless trips to Japan over the years, serving as a key liaison between the Dodgers and the Orix Buffaloes in their "friendship" agreement. Lasorda was also the Dodger ambassador for other "friendship" agreements that the Dodgers had with other Asian teams including the LG Twins from Korea and the Sinon Bulls from Taiwan. He also threw out the first pitch in the China Baseball League's first "World Series" in 2002. In 2008, he was awarded with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette by the Emperor of Japan for his contributions to Japanese baseball.

As baseball's ambassador, Lasorda was called upon by Commissioner Allan H. (Bud) Selig to star in an ad campaign on behalf of Major League Baseball during the 2006 postseason. The

campaign, entitled "Tommy's Tough Love," featured Lasorda in a tuxedo, motivating fans to continue to watch baseball even though their favorite team was not in postseason play.

During his six-decade career, Lasorda has met seven U.S. Presidents - Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush, who asked Lasorda to serve as a delegate to the U.S. National Day at the World Exposition in Aichi, Japan in June 2005. The World Exposition was not the first time that President Bush has called upon Lasorda for his assistance, as the Hall of Fame manager participated in the festivities surrounding the President's inauguration in January 2005. Two months later, Lasorda accompanied Frank and Jamie McCourt, in addition to the family of Jackie Robinson, during a visit to the White House to represent the Dodgers in a ceremony that posthumously awarded Robinson with the Congressional Gold Medal. Last season, Lasorda joined Dodger legend Don Newcombe in leading a contingent of Little Leaguers from Los Angeles to Washington D.C. for a tee-ball game on the South Lawn of the White House.

In 1997, Lasorda was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame by the Veterans Committee in his first year of eligibility. He was the 14th manager and 52nd Dodger inducted into the Hall of Fame. In 2007, Lasorda was asked by the Hall of Fame to be a member of the committee on managers and umpires, leading to the elections of Billy Southworth and Dick Williams to Cooperstown, who will be inducted this summer.

Though the National Baseball Hall of Fame is his most prestigious, Lasorda has been enshrined in nine different Halls of Fame, including the Pacific Coast League HOF (2006), Canadian Baseball HOF (2006), Italian American Sports HOF (1989), California Sports HOF (2006), Montgomery County Coaches HOF (2002), South Atlantic League (2001), Albuquerque Baseball HOF (2007), and the Louisiana Italian American HOF (1985). This summer, he'll add four Halls to the list - the Los Angeles Dodgers HOF, the Brooklyn Dodgers HOF, the Pennsylvania HOF and the International League HOF.

Lasorda's uniform number (2) was retired by the Dodgers on Aug. 15, 1997 and the main street that leads to the entrance of Dodgertown in Vero Beach, FL was renamed Tommy Lasorda Lane on March 5, 1997. He also threw out the first pitch in Game 7 of the 1997 World Series.

During the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, Lasorda managed an underdog United States team to the Gold Medal over the highly favored Cuban National team just five days after celebrating his 73rd birthday. The Olympic Gold Medal, which Lasorda considers his greatest professional achievement, marked his return to the dugout after his retirement in 1996.

Lasorda posted a 3-1 record as the NL manager in four All-Star Games. He joined St. Louis' Gabby Street (1930-31) as the only managers in NL history to win league titles in his first two seasons when he led the Dodgers to titles in 1977-78. Lasorda also managed nine of the Dodgers' 16 Rookies of the Year, more than any other big league skipper in history.

Prior to replacing Hall of Famer Walter Alston as manager on Sept. 29, 1976, Lasorda spent four seasons in Los Angeles on Alston's coaching staff from 1973-76. He spent eight seasons as a manager in the Dodgers' minor league system at Pocatello (1965), Ogden (1966-68), Spokane (1969-71) and Albuquerque (1972). Lasorda also spent four years as a Dodger scout after retiring as a player following the 1960 season. An astounding 75 players Lasorda managed in the minor leagues went on to play in the Majors and he serves as a godfather to nearly a dozen of their children.

Lasorda compiled an 0-4 record and 6.52 ERA as a left-handed pitcher in parts of three Major League seasons with the Brooklyn Dodgers (1954-55) and Kansas City Athletics (1956). In all, he spent 14 seasons in the minor leagues from 1945-60 and he served two years in the military from 1946-47.

He has won numerous awards throughout his career, including being named Minor League Manager of the Year by The Sporting News in 1970, Manager of the Year by UPI and AP in 1977, Manager of the Year by AP in 1981 and N.L. Manager of the Year by Baseball America and Co-Manager of the Year by The Sporting News in 1988. He was the recipient of the Association of Professional Baseball Players of America's inaugural Milton Richman Memorial Award with Sparky Anderson in 1987, the BBWAA Philadelphia Chapter's Humanitarian Award in 1993, Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce's Award of Merit in 1997, Touchdown Club of Columbus' Baseball Ambassador of the Year in 1997, Arete's Courage in Sports Award in 1997, and was honored by the President of the Dominican Republic in 1997 for his dedication to the game of baseball throughout his career. In September 2006, Lasorda received the Branch Rickey Award from the Denver Rotary Club for his lifetime of community service.

Lasorda has been a spokesperson for the American Heart Association and regularly visits patients at the Tom Lasorda Heart Institute at Centinela Hospital Medical Center in Inglewood, CA, which opened on Nov. 6, 2000. He is a founding member of the Professional Baseball Scouts Foundation and serves on its Board of Directors. The PBSF now gives an annual award in his name for the most outstanding manager of the year and in 2006, the first year of its existence, Lasorda received the award as the Manager of the Century. Lasorda also sits on the board for the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Foundation.

Last year, Lasorda was part of the selecting committee for the All-Time Rawlings Gold Glove Awards and was also asked to be a part of a committee to rank the 100 Most Powerful People in Sports by BusinessWeek and ESPN.

He has received honorary doctorate degrees from Pepperdine University, St. Thomas University, Cal State Long Beach, University of Phoenix, Concordia University and the University of Hawaii. In February 2003, he was honored by Cal Tech when he became only the second person to ever have an asteroid named after them. His asteroid is #6128, otherwise known as Asteroid Lasorda.

Many of Lasorda's greatest accomplishments and stories have been compiled in "I Live For This," his autobiography that came out last season, which he wrote with Los Angeles Times columnist Bill Plaschke. His first book, "The Artful Dodger" was released in 1986.

Lasorda and his wife, Jo, have been married for 58 years. They reside in Fullerton, CA, and will celebrate their 59th wedding anniversary on April 14, 2008. The couple renamed a gymnasium and youth center in memory of their son, Tom Jr., in Yorba Linda, CA on Sept. 7, 1997. They are also the proud grandparents of Emily Tess (13), the child of their daughter, Laura and son-in-law, Bill Goldberg.

## **Speech Topics**

An entertaining and powerful speaker, Lasorda captivates, educates and energizes his audiences with his colorful stories, humor, and lessons for life.

- Building A Great Team
- Outstanding Attitudes Produce Outstanding Achievements
- America's Favorite Pastime ? The Great Game Of Baseball