



MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL®
PLAYERS ALUMNI

FALL 2018

BASEBALL ALUMNI NEWS



LOCAL KIDS ENJOY LEGENDS FOR YOUTH CLINIC AT KANSAS CITY URBAN YOUTH ACADEMY

By Jeffrey Flanagan, MLB.com

KANSAS CITY — Fortunately, the Kansas City Urban Youth Academy has phenomenal and state-of-the-art indoor facilities.

That proved crucial at the free youth baseball clinic on Saturday, October 6 as heavy rains postponed outdoor activities. No problem, the event was moved inside a facility with a regulation infield, batting cages, a pitcher's mound and workout facilities.

And much to the delight of an energetic group of youngsters aged 7-16, the clinic ended with a real game, an intrasquad game, so to speak.

The clinic was presented by the Major League Baseball Players Alumni Association, with several former big-league stars on hand to provide instruction: Royals Hall of Fame pitcher Dennis Leonard, former Royals World Series star Willie Aikens, former Royal-Cub-Met Brian McRae, David Patterson, Stan Wall, Clay Christiansen, Ed Hearn, Bobby Dernier and Russ Morman.

The rainy weather outside didn't dampen the spirits of the children who participated, most with their parents watching attentively.

Story continues on page 3...



Former Gold Glove centerfielder Bob Dernier with a child at the Kansas City Legends for Youth clinic on October 6.



A PUBLICATION OF THE MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LOCAL KIDS ENJOY LEGENDS FOR YOUTH CLINIC AT KANSAS CITY URBAN YOUTH ACADEMY 1,3
MLBPAA HOSTS FINAL ALUMNI DAY OF MLB SEASON AT PETCO PARK..... 4-6
GIVING TUESDAY - 2018 INFORMATION..... 7
WHERE ARE THEY NOW? JOSÍAS MANZANILLO 8-9
NEW MEMBER BENEFITS 10
HAPPY 5TH ANNIVERSARY TO THE ALUMNI DAY SERIES! 11



– So Taguchi with his 2007 St. Louis Cardinals Heart and Hustle Award plaque.

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Former Royals pitcher Dennis Leonard observes pitching techniques at the Kansas City Legends for youth clinic on October 6.

What are the messages that instructors try to convey?

“The same stuff we’re talking to high school kids about, college kids about, even at Spring Training, is what we talk to these kids about,” McRae said. “Same basic fundamentals. The game has evolved in terms of terminology. But the game is still the same in terms of fundamentals. It’s still a game where whoever catches the ball or throws the ball or hits the ball best wins.

“And you can’t teach advance things until you establish the basic and fundamental things. Baseball can be a simple game but you have to start with the basic stuff first. It’s all about repetition. There’s no magic. It’s hard work.”

The instructors broke up into six teaching stations Saturday, ranging from baserunning to hitting to fielding to pitching.

Leonard obviously handled the pitching station.

“The thing is with most of these camps is that you’re dealing with some kids who have never pitched—they’re too young” Leonard said. “They’re playing T-ball and the concept of pitching hasn’t entered into their minds yet. So, you have to really break it down and just teach them the fundamentals of mechanics of throwing.

“It’s just things like keep your elbow up when you throw. They’re so young they don’t have the strength to really throw far and even if you teach them the mechanics, the ball probably won’t go very far. But the point is, as they mature and grow and get older, they will have the fundamentals in their mind and then they can really take off.”

The one question Leonard

typically gets from the youngsters: Were you a star?

“I tell them,” Leonard said, smiling, “I was a player when your parents were your age. That usually gets them thinking.”

Jeffrey Flanagan has covered the Royals since 1991, and for MLB.com since 2015.



Bob Dernier speaks to participants of the Kansas City Legends for Youth clinic.

MLBPAA HOSTS FINAL ALUMNI DAY OF MLB SEASON AT PETCO PARK

By Kirk Kienney, Special to MLB.com



A group of alumni at Petco Park at the San Diego Alumni Day on September 18.

SAN DIEGO — Three dozen or so former Major Leaguers got together for an MLB Alumni event on Tuesday, September 18th, at Petco Park.

The receptions are held at Major League ballparks across the country, giving alums an opportunity to reconnect, learn about projects and initiatives for alums and, of course, swap stories.

At one point, all of them got together for a group photo.

"All the short guys in the front," said Dan Boone, standing front and center for the picture.

Boone always has been small in stature, but that didn't prevent him from reaching the big leagues.

The 5-foot-8 left-hander made the

Majors with the Padres in 1981 before being traded to the Astros during the 1982 season. His brief career seemed over after that season before Boone made a memorable return with the Orioles eight years later.

His career may have lasted longer if more teams had the gumption to go with the little guy.

"I believe I'm the lightest pitcher that's ever pitched in the big leagues," said Boone, 64, who was drafted out of Cal State Fullerton by the Angels in 1976. "I've never done a study, but I want to do that. I weighed 130.

"My baseball cards say different. I wanted to be 145 because maybe the Padres, Angels, or whoever, felt embarrassed having a 130-pound

pitcher on the mound because it's not in anybody's mind to see somebody that small."

Imagine the disparity during Boone's rookie season in '81 when Padres manager Frank Howard — at 6 feet 7 inches, the tallest manager in Major League history - would come out to make a pitching change.

"And he would stand right at the top of the mound," said Boone, shaking his head.

Say this for Howard, he gave Boone a chance to realize his dream. After being released by the Angels in 1980, Boone was signed by the Padres and spent another year in the Minors. He made the '81 team out of Spring Training, earning the 10th spot on the 10-man pitching staff.

Boone made it despite a fastball that topped out at just 83 mph. He had an extensive repertoire of other pitches — curveball, sinker, slider, screwball.

"He knew how to pitch," said former Padres pitcher Randy Jones, a contemporary of Boone's who won the 1976 National League Cy Young Award. "He was a lot like me, not overpowering stuff. He wasn't going to do that. He could extract a weakness from a hitter and could be effective doing that."

Boone made his Major League debut in a relief outing in the season-opening series against the Giants.

A few days later, he pitched 4 2/3 innings of relief in the Padres' home opener against a Cincinnati team that still had several cogs remaining from the Big Red Machine.

Particularly memorable was Reds future Hall of Fame catcher Johnny Bench booming a double off the 17-foot wall in center field at San Diego Stadium. Boone had that in mind two weeks later, when the teams met again at Cincinnati's Riverfront Stadium. Bench was at the plate again, and he was wearing Boone out again.

"I'm throwing curveballs,

screwballs, I'm throwing him everything," Boone recalls. "Anything close in his zone, 'Whack!' I threw a screwball to him, he took a hellacious swing and the ball is going right down the left-field line, two runners on bases and I'm thinking, 'Oh, Lord, please let it go foul.' It hooked at the last second and went foul."

With a new ball in his hands, Boone is thinking, "What do I throw this guy now?"

Padres catcher Terry Kennedy had an idea. Boone also threw a knuckleball, although that particular pitch was still waiting to make its Major League debut.

Kennedy squats back down behind the plate and puts down the sign, extending all five fingers.

"And he's just grinning from ear to ear from behind his mask," Boone said. "I can't smile or laugh or anything. It's the first time I've thrown it in a game.

"I throw it, and the ball is going right down the middle. Johnny Bench takes another hellacious swing and at the last second the ball takes a dip and he swings and misses it.

"Thank the Lord."

Boone was running wind sprints in the outfield before the following night's game when he bumped into Bench.

"Hey, they told me you had every pitch," Bench said, "but they didn't tell me you had a knuckleball. And it was a good one."

Said Boone: "My heart almost exploded hearing that from a Hall of Famer."

Boone made 37 appearances, all in relief, that season for the Padres, going 1-0 with two saves and a 2.86 ERA. He made 20 more appearances in 1982 before the midseason trade to the Astros.

The following season, Boone was back in the Minor Leagues. A year later, Boone was released in midseason by Triple-A Vancouver and his professional career was seemingly over.

Or so he thought.

In the mid-1980s, Boone worked in construction to support his wife and three daughters. He still played in a men's hardball league in San Diego. He dominated hitters - going 40-3 - while developing that knuckleball.

"I was settled in, taking care of my family," Boone said. "Never thought of (a comeback) for one minute."

Then, in 1989, the Senior Professional Baseball Association was founded in Florida for players 35-and-over.

Boone's dream was rekindled, and he walked away from a \$60,000-a-year job as a construction company superintendent.

He called his boss and said, "I know I probably won't have a job when I get back, but I've just got to

Story continues on next page...



Geoff Geary and Reed Johnson pose together for a photo at the San Diego Alumni Day at Petco Park on September 18.

go and test this out. I never heard from him again.”

Boone signed to play with the Bradenton Explorers. He went 4-3 with a 3.16 ERA. His knuckleball caught the eye of the legendary Birdie Tebbetts, then semi-retired in Florida and scouting for Baltimore.

“He told me he was looking for a guy that pitched in the big leagues who had come up with a pitch he didn’t use as a main pitch back in the day,” Boone said. “And that was my No. 5 pitch. That’s what keyed him in.”

The Orioles signed him to a Minor League contract and assigned him to Triple-A Rochester. Boone split his time between starting and relieving, going 11-5 with a 2.60 ERA.

The performance earned him a September call-up. At 36, Boone was back in the big leagues, where one more memorable moment awaited.

After three relief appearances, Boone made his first - and only - start in the Major Leagues in the second game of a doubleheader at Cleveland on Sept. 30, 1990.

“It was a dream come true, and I have (Baltimore manager) Frank Robinson to thank for that,” Boone said. “I was nervous as heck, but it was at the end of the season.

It wasn’t that big of a deal. I was thinking, ‘Just go out and do what you did all year long. Throw the knuckleball.’”

Boone pitched 4 2/3 innings, allowing eight hits and three runs — two of them coming in the fifth when Indians DH Candy Maldonado tagged him for a home run.

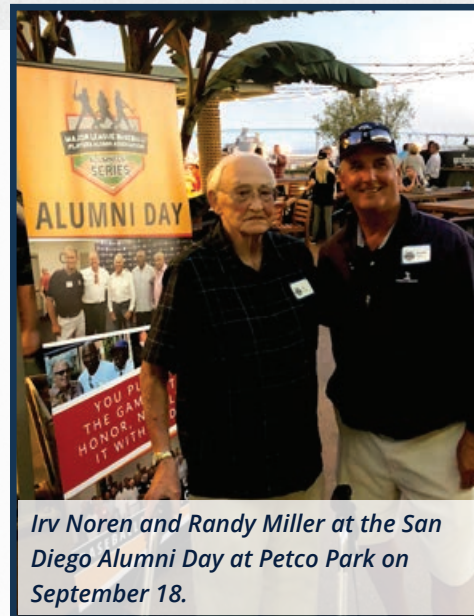
“I knew better,” said Boone, who did not get a decision in the 7-3 loss. “I tried to throw a 100 mph fastball. I meant to go outside, it came inside and he hit it out of the ballpark.”

Boone went to Spring Training the following season with Baltimore, but he knew his days were numbered when he walked into Robinson’s office one day and saw the Orioles’ pitching plans.

“Nowhere on it was my name,” Boone said. “So I knew I wasn’t going to get a chance. I was so disappointed.”

Boone was released by the Orioles that spring, but played that season for the Rangers’ Triple-A team in Oklahoma City. That’s where his second stint at pro ball ended. Boone started his own cabinetry business in San Diego shortly thereafter.

“Even when he got out of professional baseball, I kept hearing his name every five years that



Irv Noren and Randy Miller at the San Diego Alumni Day at Petco Park on September 18.

he’s still pitching somewhere,” Jones said. “I couldn’t believe he wasn’t out of innings yet. He just continued and continued.

“Even talking to him today, he finally gave it up, but it looks like the notion’s still there that he thinks he can pitch.”

Said Boone: “God gives us abilities to do things in life. It’s up to us to develop them to the maximum of whatever we can do. I feel for being as small as I was, I got to the top with what God gave me.”

Kirk Kenney is a contributor to MLB.com.



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JOIN US ON GIVING TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27TH AS PART OF OUR 24-HOUR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO DIRECTLY SUPPORT THE LEGENDS FOR YOUTH CLINIC SERIES.

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IN REMEMBRANCE OF BASEBALL LEGENDS

Visit baseballalumni.com/necrology for our updated obituaries and archive. May they rest in peace.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By Luis Barranco, MLBPAA



Manzy's energy for what he does is impossible to ignore. He just has a surplus of it; and that's what parents and kids love most about him. They really feel that he cares for them.

"I believe my enthusiasm and passion comes from God," Manzy said. "I know what I like to do most and that's to teach kids. I like to provide kids with an opportunity, make them feel like they belong, let them know they can realize their dreams. Whether it's baseball or not, it reminds me of my childhood, making myself a professional and being able to realize my dream of reaching the major leagues."

He takes pride in being a person that kids can look up to. One message that he always relays to them is, "to believe in themselves, and to never allow something or someone to obstruct their passion or vision in whatever they are doing or trying to make their reality." Most of all Manzy tells the kids he mentors to, "follow their vision and heart."

But baseball isn't his only focus. On his time away from the diamond, Manzy is involved in the community.

"I serve the church with my wife and kids, I feel very blessed to help my family in any way," Manzy said.

Manzy is extremely proud to be with his family and to be a "present father to his children."

He wants to continue to teach the game of baseball to youth and spread his passion for the game. "I want to reach out to countries in Latin America where baseball is not the prominent sport and teach the game to the youth."



JOSÍAS MANZANILLO (1991-2004)



Josías Manzanillo, mejor conocido por la gente como "Manzy", es un ex lanzador de las grandes ligas. Es originario de la ciudad del Caribe que produce más jugadores extranjeros de las grandes ligas, San Pedro de Macorís, República Dominicana. La historia de Manzy y el béisbol comenzó durante su niñez cuando jugaba en las calles con sus amigos, muchas veces tres contra tres.

Manzy comenzó a jugar béisbol gracias a dos hermanos mayores que le enseñaron el juego. Uno de ellos es Ravelo Manzanillo, también ex lanzador de las grandes ligas, que jugó para los Medias Blancas de Chicago y los Piratas de Pittsburgh. "Yo veía a mis dos hermanos mayores jugar y me gustaba mucho," dijo Manzy. "Mi inspiración empezó con ellos dos, en el barrio yo escuchaba sobre lo bueno que era mi hermano mayor Ravelo y yo sentía un orgullo inmenso."

Manzanillo empezó a jugar béisbol organizado a los trece años. "En la República Dominicana practicábamos entre lunes y viernes y jugábamos tres juegos entre sábado y domingo."

Con el talento que le dio Dios, él pudo desarrollar su potencial al punto que los Medias Rojas de Boston lo firmaron tres años después. Su debut fue el 5 de octubre de 1991 en un juego entre los Medias Rojas de Boston y los Cerveceros de Milwaukee.

El no recuerda mucho de su debut pero lo que sí recuerda es que tenía los nervios incontrolables, que logró hacer 3 outs, y que fue en el estadio "histórico" de Fenway Park.

"Fue una experiencia inolvidable, los nervios más que nada," dijo Manzy. "Mis piernas no paraban de temblar; yo no podía dominar mis piernas, no había manera de que pararan de temblar. Me recuerdo que Tony Peña, el catcher para nosotros, vino hacia mí para intentar calmarme, pero como quiera los

By Luis Barranco, MLBPAA

nervios eran tantos que no podía. Yo soy un latino moreno y allí yo parecía blanco como un papel. Caminé a jugadores y tuve las bases llenas, anotaron par de carreras pero pude terminar la entrada y hacer los tres outs, no me recuerdo cómo, pero gracias a Dios pude terminar la entrada."

Manzy fue lanzador profesional por 21 años y de esos 8 fueron en las grandes ligas. El jugó para ocho equipos de las mayores: Cerveceros de Milwaukee, Medias Rojas de Boston, Mets de Nueva York, Yankees de Nueva York, Marineros de Seattle, Piratas de Pittsburgh, Rojos de Cincinnati y Marlins de la Florida.

Cuando alguien juega por ocho años en las grandes ligas, se crean memorias que duran toda la vida. Las memorias favoritas de Manzy son de sus días jugando con los Piratas de Pittsburgh. "Yo disfruté mi tiempo allí más porque fue la ciudad que me abrazó y me apoyó más durante mi carrera," dijo Manzy. "Yo en verdad me sentí parte de esa ciudad y disfruté mi experiencia en la ciudad de Pittsburgh y jugar para los fanáticos de ahí".

El tener una vida de atleta profesional hace que uno viva experiencias muy diferentes a las normales, especialmente si es una carrera de jugador en las grandes ligas. Hay ciertas cosas que Manzy extraña de sus días en las mayores. Gracias a esa experiencia y a su retiro él ahora tiene una nueva visión sobre las cosas importantes de la vida. "En verdad extraño jugar el juego porque no hay nada como eso, donde todo el mundo te conoce por las habilidades que Dios me dio," dijo Manzy. "Uno tiene que comenzar a vivir una vida normal, pero no lamento nada. Yo he aprendido otros valores desde mi retiro que son sumamente importantes en la vida que no es sólo el dinero, como poder tener la bendición de tener una carrera por la que siento pasión y tener una bella vida".

Después de su retiro de la MLB, Manzy rápidamente se dedicó a enseñarle el juego de béisbol a la juventud y encontró su propósito de vida en lo que hace hasta hoy en día. En el 2011, él fundó "Manzy's Pitching Farm". Allí

DONDE ESTÁN AHORA?

el desarrolla el talento de niños en el sur de la Florida. Desde niños en escuela primaria hasta jóvenes universitarios. Él ha entrenado jugadores que han firmado con equipos de las grandes ligas, atletas que han recibido becas para universidades de división 1, y también a los mejores talentos de escuela secundaria del área.

La energía que Manzy posee es difícil de ignorar. Él tiene un exceso de ella; y eso es lo que a los padres y a los niños les gusta y aprecian. Ellos sienten que él les da importancia. "Yo creo que mi entusiasmo y apasionamiento viene de Dios", dijo Manzy. "Yo sé qué es lo que más me gusta hacer y es enseñar a los niños cómo jugar el béisbol. Me gusta darle la oportunidad a los niños, que se sientan bienvenidos, y que sepan que pueden realizar sus sueños, ya sea en béisbol o en otra cosa. Me recuerda mi niñez, y el haberme hecho un profesional y tener la oportunidad de realizar mi sueño de llegar a las grandes ligas."

Él está orgulloso de ser una persona a la que los niños pueden ver como un ídolo. El mensaje que él siempre le dice a la juventud es que "siempre crean en sí mismos, y que nunca dejen que algo o alguien obstruya su pasión o visión en lo que sea que hagan o estén tratando de hacer realidad." Pero sobre todo Manzy les dice que "sigan su visión y corazón".

El béisbol es algo muy importante en la vida de Manzanillo pero no es lo único. En su tiempo fuera del diamante Manzy está involucrado en la comunidad. "Yo sirvo a la iglesia con mi esposa y niños, y me siento bendecido de poder ayudar a mi familia en lo que sea," dijo Manzy. Él se siente extremadamente orgulloso de poder estar con su familia y poder ser "un padre presente para sus hijos."

Quiere seguir enseñando el juego de béisbol a la juventud. Si hay más gente que tenga la combinación del conocimiento y la pasión para enseñar el juego de béisbol, pues el juego seguirá por buen camino. "Yo quiero seguir ayudando a la juventud y enseñarle cómo jugar el béisbol en países en Latinoamérica en los que el béisbol no es el primer deporte." ●

Photos courtesy Josias Manzanillo

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The Word to the Wives Chat Series was designed to give quick overviews of important topics – pension, healthcare, member benefits, involvement opportunities and so much more! These free “chats” are held the first Friday of every month. Keep an eye out for postcard mailers with more information. Interested in getting involved?

Give Kaitlyn McNicholas a call at (719) 477-1870, Ext. 124.



“Thanks for a great evening. Always great seeing old teammates and making new friends.”
- SCOTT FREDRICKSON, HOUSTON



“When you finally call it a career, it’s nice to know that what you did all your life for MLB, [MLBPAA is] there to help.”
- RANDY JOHNSON, ARIZONA

HAPPY 5TH ANNIVERSARY TO THE ALUMNI DAY SERIES!



No matter the location or number in attendance there’s a common thread shared among Alumni Day events: the reconnections made between teammates from long ago and the opportunity to meet other former players in the area. It doesn’t take long before conversations erupt into laughter and complete strangers hit it off, sharing old baseball stories and memories.

Prior to an MLB home game, the MLBPAA proudly hosts a pre-game reception for retired Major League players and their spouses. Not only do participants get to reconnect over dinner, drinks and a ballgame, but

Alumni staff gain a pulse on member needs and can help accordingly.

Over the last 5 years, the MLBPAA has hosted Alumni Days in 28 Major League stadiums, with participation from more than 1,600 players. We hope members walk away with a greater sense of pride in their exclusive fraternity and a stronger connection to the baseball family.

We hope to see you at the ballpark in 2019!



SAN FRANCISCO



“It is always fun to rekindle old friendships and make new ones. [We] had a wonderful time and look forward to the next.”
- JIM NETTLES, SEATTLE



“[We] were very impressed with the whole event and can’t thank the MLBPAA and team enough for making us feel so welcomed and special. It confirms that it is a small fraternity regardless of the service time everyone achieves that makes this event so special.”
- RON MERIDITH, MINNESOTA



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MLBPAA Mission Statement

To promote the game of baseball, raise money for charity, inspire and educate youth through positive sport images and protect the dignity of the game through former Major League players.



San Diego area youth pose for a group photo following the Legends for Youth clinic at Petco Park on September 8.