



Sports

by Jerry Keys

It all looked so genuine. The tearful goodbye, the accolades, and the fact he left at the top of his game. Just as soon as he announced his retirement, speculation swirled about a return to action. At least when Michael Jordan retired, he would wait a couple of years before returning.

The Green Bay Packers front office continually made attempts to coax Favre out of retiring and returning for another year. It had almost become a rite of passage for Favre to contemplate retirement during the off-season. He decided to make it official soon after the NFL season concluded.

The Packers would enter the 2008 season without their star quarterback.

Before finalizing a commitment to structuring an offense around their new QB, Aaron Rodgers, sources indicated Favre was asked if he was absolutely sure he was retired. So Green Bay moved on.

Fast forward several months and we have Favre itching to play

again. The Green Bay front office has been placed in a awkward situation of either releasing him, trading him, or reinstating him at QB.

At the time of print, Favre did not report to training camp but was asked not to by the Pack-



Where will Favre end up?

ers. The team wanted a little extra time to decide what they were going to do. Imagine Packer fans seeing their living legend being sent to another team. A majority of the fans would blame the front office for this outcome. They shouldn't... they can look to Favre for that.

What once was a captivating retirement tribute has turned into a no-win

situation for everyone. The only way out of this mess is for Rodgers to happily offer to hold a clipboard for one final year so Favre can try once more for a second Super Bowl win. A highly unlikely outcome.

If the Pack trade him, exactly how much value would he have? How do interested teams know if

Favre would not re-retire? And how would they gauge his value? Of course Green Bay would wish to receive a couple of first round draft picks in return for Favre. A steep price for most likely one year of service.

How about just inviting him to camp and having him compete for the starting job? That is the worst thing one could do to Rodgers, a 2005 1st round pick. If Favre beat him out for the job, you might as well trade him. Rodgers would either be a head-case the rest of his career or have a chip on his shoulder and live for the chance of upending

To Favre or Not to Favre

Green Bay down the road.

If Rodgers did best Favre for the starting nod, the first game-deciding mistake he made, the boo-birds would be heard in Fiji. Danny White, an extremely talented QB, was vilified in Dallas when he took over for Roger Staubach.

Favre should have taken more time to make a final decision. We all know "you don't know what you've got until it is gone" and "hindsight is always 20/20" but when you retire on your own terms, it comes with the territory. Now it has turned into a circus of "he said this, they said that". Green Bay has a young team and is coming off a very successful season. This type of distraction could derail the team in 2008.

Favre is one of three QB's I would want to have driving my team downfield for the winning touchdown (other two are Joe Montana and John

Elway). He is the type of competitor you would want on your team. Nevertheless, the hole he dug is a hole he dug himself. The Green Bay front office should not be held hostage for what he does if he returns for another team. They made triple-sure he was not coming back and moved on.

Should Green Bay welcome him back, they would give him a license to hold them hostage next year if he chose to do so. A distraction no head coach would enjoy having. A once story-book ending has now turned into a tabloids bo-

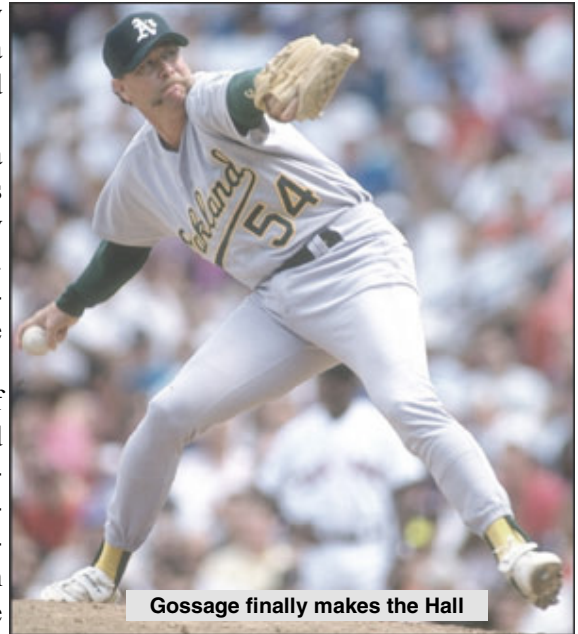
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A final note...the baseball Hall of Fame ceremonies took place today. I have watched these for over 25 years. Usually I watched them to see the new inductees. Today I did so for the same reason but noticed something else.

Before the new inductees were announced, the ones present from past years were introduced. I noticed I remembered watching most of them play. It seemed it was only a few years ago Cal Ripken was a fresh-faced kid playing an instrumental

immortal...larger than life. To some degree, I still do. In contrast of having the highest respect for players I watched decades ago, I have very little for today's stars.

Most are vain, greedy, and arrogant. Some opine, "It's a business, I have to look out for myself". Heaven forbid the team you played the last nine seasons for only offers you \$9,000,000 a year for three years; whereas another team offered you \$12 million for four years. I guess only nine million a year is an insult to today's players.



Gossage finally makes the Hall

It would take a combination of 300 school teacher salaries to equal what they earn. Manny Ramirez has been constipated the Red Sox have not picked up his 2009 option year where he will earn

\$20,000,000. He has recently asked to be left out of the line-up. Just Manny being Manny? Whatever. But it seems like a déjà vu.

I found myself thinking back when dad was upset when players started making \$1,000,000 per year. It dawned on me maybe it is just a generation gap. The players I admire were the ones he bashed and complained about being overpaid. The ones he admired, I can only read about. My son's favorite player is Albert Pujols. He sees him as I saw Cal. Maybe it is a generation gap.

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