



Reuss Fondly Recalls STL

by Brian Stull

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Like David Freese a few decades later, Jerry Reuss knows what it's like to be a hometown kid wearing the St. Louis Cardinals jersey. Drafted out of Ritenour High School in 1967, the left-hander began his 22-year big league career with the Cardinals and won 22 games for St. Louis before he was traded to Houston—over wanting a few thousand dollars more in salary or having a mustache.

<http://www.stlbaserballweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/1-28-15-Reuss-on-mustache-or-money.mp3>

“I think it was both of them, but there's still some more circumstances around that,” explained Reuss on St. Louis Baseball Weekly.

“Mr. Busch was a bit upset because of 1969 when the players held out in Spring Training. He was a bit upset because everybody was coming to him for a raise at one time, even though the production wasn't probably as improved as he would've liked. But, everybody was hitting him—and why not? Because the Cardinals won in '64, '67, and were a game away in '68 from being World Champions three times in five years. He was a bit upset about the players wanting to unionize and then of course a squabble with Steve Carlton one year that resulted in a two-year contract. The second time Carlton did it, he got traded to the Phillies.

“Now with me, I thought, I was still the only left-hander in the starting rotation and that would secure me a place but Mr. Busch said ‘nope, we gotta get rid of him’. Initially, I thought it was over money only later to find out with a meeting with Bing Devine some twenty years into the future, it was because of the mustache.”

Reuss, who would go on to win 220 games before he retired in 1990, has several more stories in his book, “[Bring in the Right-Hander! My 22 Years in the Major Leagues](#)“, including how he lockered between Henry Aaron and Eddie Mathews during his tryout with Atlanta at Busch Stadium and what it was like to be warming in the bullpen when Jack Clark hit his 1985 NLCS home run off Tom Niedenfuer...

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After hanging up his spikes, Reuss moved into broadcasting and worked for ESPN and now is part of the Dodgers radio and television team.