



Glass Half-Full for Simmons

by Brian Stull

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<http://www.stlbaseballweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/5-4-15-Ted-Simmons-1-on-1.mp3>

Nobody in franchise history has caught more games (1564) for the St. Louis Cardinals than Ted Simmons. His total of hits (1704), runs batted in (929), and home runs (172) still remain the best for a catcher in franchise history. For those reasons and so many more, Simmons has been voted by fans to be part of the 2015 St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame class.

“It’s pretty special stuff,” shared Simmons before Monday’s game. “It’s head-scratching stuff. It’s great company and really nice to be connected with this new group. I remember them all very, very well and honored and humbled by it all.”

Simmons is joined by the late Curt Flood, Bob Forsch, and George Kissell to be honored as Hall of Famers this year.

Drafted as the 10th overall pick in the 1967 draft, Simmons made his debut with the Cardinals at the age of 19 on September 21, 1968 with a base hit against the Los Angeles Dodgers. He would soon establish himself as an All-Star (6x) in the National League—regularly batting around .300 with 20 homers and 100 RBIs.

He was traded to Milwaukee before the start of the 1981 season where he continued to put up numbers that many feel should have earned him a spot in Cooperstown by now.

“Everything that’s come to me, I’ve deserved,” explained Simmons. “The good, I’ve deserved. The bad, I’ve deserved. I don’t look back on my life or career and say ‘you know, if I’d have been this or if I’d have been that or if people had seen this or seen that my life would’ve been better’—I’ve lived about as charmed a life as any human being there is on this earth.

“I don’t regret anything in retrospect. I only look forward to the future. The glass is always half-full with me, no matter what conversation we’re having. That’s how I go forward in my life. Like the guy on Saturday Night Live said a long time ago, ‘baseball been very, very good to me’ okay?”

As for the Cardinals current backstop, Simmons couldn’t be more complimentary of Yadier Molina.

“I’m convinced he could probably manage this team, he could be the pitching coach, he could be the hitting coach, he could catch everyday—he could do all of these things at the same time,” praised Simmons. “He’s really one of the most talented, awareness people I’ve ever seen on the baseball field. People don’t really fully understand how good this guy is.”

Simmons also points to Molina’s return from injury and the Cardinals climb back to overtake Milwaukee for the National League Central title last season as a credit to what Yadi brings to the team.

“For those who don’t realize that is not a coincidence haven’t seen enough baseball,” stated Simmons. “This guy is really the heart and soul of this club. He’s absolutely, in my judgment, a first-ballot Hall of Fame catcher and really one of the finest players I’ve ever seen in terms of awareness and at the catcher’s position in my life.”

Simmons still lives in St. Louis and currently works for the Seattle Mariners as a Special Assistant to the General Manager.