

Derek Jeter Media Availability 2021-09-02

Jon Shestakofsky

Well hello everyone and welcome to today's media availability with class of 2020 Hall of Fame inductee Derek Jeter. My name is Jon Shestakofsky. I'm Vice President of Communications and Education at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. On this coming Wednesday, September 8th, Derek will be inducted into the Hall of Fame right here in Cooperstown. The ceremony will be broadcast on MLB Network and is free and open to the public. Following this availability with Derek the Hall of Fame will have a separate media availability with Larry Walker, which will take place today at 3:30pm Eastern time. And please know that these media sessions are being recorded, and that transcripts will become available within the next 48 hours at the Hall of Fame's website baseballhall.org. Derek, we thank you for joining us on this call. And we are now ready to begin taking questions from the call participants. So if you would like to ask a question of Derek Jeter, please click reactions at the bottom of your screen and then click the raise hand button. And note that we are not accepting questions over email. So you'll have to have your hand raised on the Zoom format. When you are called on you'll be asked to unmute yourself at that time. So it looks like we are ready to begin and we will start with Tyler Kepner. Tyler, you can unmute yourself now.

Tyler Kepner

All right. You got me?

Jon Shestakofsky

Gotcha.

Tyler Kepner

All right. Hey, Derek, how you doing?

Derek Jeter

I'm doing all right. How about yourself?

Tyler Kepner

I'm good. I wanted to ask you about the position of shortstop. It was the only position you ever played. Why did you love it so much? What do you love about that position?

Derek Jeter

Well, first, I fell in love with the position because my dad was a shortstop. So my dad played shortstop at Fisk University in Tennessee, which I'm sure you've probably heard me say before Tyler, but he was, you know, because he played shortstop, that's the position I wanted to play. And when I was younger, actually, matter of fact, kind of funny because my dad coached me a couple years in little league. So he had me play second base and third base as well. So that's probably the only other time I didn't play shortstop was when I was playing for my dad, but I just wanted to be like him when I was younger.

Tyler Kepner

Did you ever entertain the idea of, of going to another position? And how did that become kind of part of your identity as a ballplayer?

Derek Jeter

Well, look, let me say one thing. It's not easy just to switch positions. I mean, that's difficult. When I was younger, I pitched a little bit, but I wanted to be an everyday player I like to play every day. So no, I never entertained playing another position. I remember being very young and telling my dad I thought it was easy to play outfield, and he put me in the outfield, hit me some fly balls, and I wasn't very good. So that was the end of the outfield experiment.

Tyler Kepner

Yeah. And lastly, for me, what, what did people maybe misunderstand or not get right about your defense? You know, the metrics, obviously said one thing, but you won all the time and you won Gold Gloves? So it must have worked out. What were any misconceptions about you on D?

Derek Jeter

Ah, I don't know. You know, I mean, yeah, look, I get analytics has entered the game a little bit more towards the end of my career. And look, I think as you get older, like I played my first game in New York when I was 20. I played my last one when I was 40. You probably slow down a little bit towards the end of your career. I think that's what's supposed to happen. And so I you know, I prided myself on being consistent. And yeah, I mean, is it fair to say, probably my last year wasn't as good as my, you know, the middle of my career. I'm sure it's fair to say that but my job is to be consistent, and day in and day out, be accountable. So yeah, I don't I don't really pay much attention to it. Now. I'm not playing anymore. So it really makes a difference.

Tyler Kepner

Thanks, man. See you next week.

Derek Jeter

All righty. Thank you.

Jon Shestakofsky

All right, our next question, we'll go to Anthony McCarron. Anthony you can unmute yourself.

Anthony McCarron

Hello, can you hear me?

Jon Shestakofsky

Yes.

Anthony McCarron

Great. Hi, Derek. Congratulations, again.

Derek Jeter

Thank you.

Anthony McCarron

I'd like to ask you about the flip play. It's always going to be associated with you and your career as a highlight all these years later, what do you make of that play and how it transpired? And what do you make of all the attention that it has gotten over all these years?

Derek Jeter

I'd say it's probably the one play I get asked about the most it's the one play I see the most. And I look I was where I was supposed to be. I mean, I tell people that all the time. You know, it's interesting because after the election, we went To MLB studios, and Harold Reynolds actually was doing an interview and he showed me actually in that same place the same area of the field on another play a few years later. So that's something that we worked on in spring training. You were down in spring training, maybe you saw us do it, but that's where I was supposed to be. I mean, you know, actually flipping into home is not part of part of the job. But, you know, I sort of improvise there at the end, but I was in the area I was supposed to be in. And, you know, fortunately, everything worked out for us. And I've been asked about the, you know, Jeremy Giambi, if he would have slid would have been safe, probably. But he didn't. So that's why I think that the place stands out, but I was in the area I was supposed to be. You're on mute. Anthony.

Anthony McCarron

One follow up. Are you okay with with the idea that, that this is like, you know, the Derek Jeter signature play? Or would you pick another one? And if so, what would it be?

Derek Jeter

You know, I'm fine with it. I mean, it's ,I don't know if I've ever looked at one say I can think I think the jump throw people mentioned quite a bit. But look, that was a postseason game. And, you know, we're on the brink of elimination. So I think just the fact that we're in the playoffs and I think that that made the importance of the play, stand out a little bit more. So no, I'm, I'm fine with that.

Anthony McCarron

Thank you.

Derek Jeter

Yep.

Jon Shestakofsky

Next up, we're gonna go to Mark Feinsand. Mark, go right ahead.

Mark Feinsand

Hey, Derek, how you doing? Congratulations.

Derek Jeter

Excellent.

Mark Feinsand

First question I have for you is it's been a long time since the election actually happened? How much have you been looking forward to this week, finally getting here and actually going up there and being inducted?

Derek Jeter

I don't want to jinx anything, Mark. I mean, so I'm hoping that it happens next week. You know, it's, there were so many things going on in the world that, you know, for the first year, so I really didn't think about it much, you know, early on. I was I was getting excited for it. And then it was canceled. And then your mind goes in other places. So I am looking forward to getting up there. You know, next week. Hopefully, I'm knocking on wood. But yeah, it's been a long time coming.

Mark Feinsand

I know, you're a guy who has always said you don't look ahead, you just look at the present. But I'm sure you've been thinking about this day. Have you thought about what it's going to be like? Have you thought about what you're going to feel like up there and just sort of, you know, this is not a situation where somebody's throwing a ball, and you have to anticipate a pitch but you have some control over what this day is going to be like for you. Have you thought about what this day is gonna be like? And do you think it's a matter of, you know, meeting expectations?

Derek Jeter

You know, as strange as this sounds, or may sound, I'm trying not to think about it, because I just want to go there and experience it experience for the first time. You know, I went to Mariano's induction a couple years ago. That's the first time I've been to Cooperstown in years. I went when I was very young. First time. I've been there in years. And so I'm looking forward to getting up there and going to the museum and meeting with all the Hall of Famers and spending some time with them. And then, you know, obviously, the ceremony and the speech. And, you know, those are things that, you know, I'm trying to keep out of my mind, because I do want to, I want to go in there with no preconceived notions of what may happen, and I want to experience it and try to enjoy it.

Mark Feinsand

And the last question I had, you're obviously being inducted for your play on the field he did on the field. But the captaincy was such a part of your persona and your identity for the last, you know, bunch of year, decade or so of your career. What did it mean to you to have that title? And did you did you try to take a particular leadership style in that in that role?

Derek Jeter

You know, it meant a lot because I know it's a title that's not thrown around too lightly in our organization. And prior to when the Boss named me the captain, there were whispers that it may happen. And you know, one thing when he called me and he told me, or he asked me, actually, if I was okay with being named captain, the one thing he told me said, Listen, I don't want you to change anything I want you to continue to do and handle yourself how you've handled yourself up to this point.

That's why I'm naming you the captain. So, you know, I think as you get a little bit older, and you're around a little bit longer, you may be a little bit more vocal behind the scenes and marquee covers for a long time. I mean, I wasn't a guy that spoke just for the sake of speaking, I spoke when I had something to say and I did a lot of it behind the scenes. I did a lot of it where other people didn't know. So the responsibility of being the captain is a big one with our organization. And, you know, as a title I didn't take lightly.

Mark Feinsand

Thanks Derek, enjoy next week.

Derek Jeter

Thank you.

Jon Shestakofsky

Thanks. Next up, we'll have David Ben. David, go right ahead.

David Venn

Hey, Derek, congratulations.

Derek Jeter

Thank you.

David Venn

Derek given the global nature of baseball and the popularity of the Yankees, your personal popularity is certainly global. And I wanted to ask you, are you aware of your personal following specifically in Latin America? Even a couple weeks ago, Miguel Rojas said that he was so honored to be playing shortstop for the team of his idol on the Marlins. And so I wanted to know how aware you were of your personal following in Latin America? And if so, what that meant to you?

Derek Jeter

You know, I'm aware of it, David, because I've spent a lot of time in Latin America, you know, I've had teammates, you know, from all over the world, and I've been to Venezuela, I've been to the Dominican, I've been to Panama, I've been to Cuba, I've been to these places in Latin America. And there's a big Yankee following in all of those countries and look, you mentioned, Miggy, you know, I'm a little bit older than Miggy is and you know, a lot of times you especially now, you meet players who are currently playing and they say they grew up watching you, and whether you were a Yankee fan, or not, most people watched the postseason. And we were in the postseason year in and year out. So, you know, I do understand the fact that the Yankees brand and the Yankees is global. But in terms of Latin America, I was aware of it. I am aware of it, because just because of the time that I've spent in those countries.

David Venn

Thanks, Derek.

Derek Jeter

Yep.

Jon Shestakofsky

And next up will be Tara Sullivan. Tara, go right ahead.

Tara Sullivan

Hey, Derek, how are you? Congratulations.

Derek Jeter

Kara. What's up? How are you? Thank you.

Tara Sullivan

I'm good. Thank you. I just was, I was gonna follow a little bit of what Tyler and Anthony were asking about your defense, which I actually find interesting, because I was wondering if it seems odd or different to at all that many of your signature plays or moments are on defense? And yet you kind of get asked about it a lot. Do you have a favorite one? The stands? Or was it flip? or whatever? I know, I'm putting you kind of on the spot. Easy. But does it seem strange that defense really does come up as much as it does with you? Thank you.

Tara Sullivan

Yeah. Like I said, I only played one position, I played it for 20 years, analytics sort of came into the game towards the end of my career. So I think a lot of the defensive whisper started towards the end of my career and look, you know, looking back, it's understandable. I mean, it's understandable as you get towards the end of your career, but, you know, I prided myself on being consistent. And, you know, when you play needed to be made, I felt as though I was going to make it. And, you know, I argue that my teammates had confidence in me making the plays as well, so I don't really pay much into it, right, because I don't think it's possible to have that much success as a team, if you had someone that was just so poor defensively.

Tara Sullivan

So if you get asked about the flip the most, where does that jumping into the stands and coming up bloody land?

Derek Jeter

Ah, I think it's a little bit further down the line. You know, I think they it's the foot play. I think it's the jump throw. I think it's some of the relays. But yeah, they do mention that because of our opponent, or, you know, we're playing Boston at the time. So. So that does get brought up quite a bit as well.

Tara Sullivan

Thank you.

Jon Shestakofsky

Next up is John Kekis. John, go right ahead.

John Kekis

Hey, Derek, congratulations.

Derek Jeter

Thank you.

John Kekis

Are you aware that your name is mentioned by executives and players as an influence and how to play the game? And what does that mean to you?

Derek Jeter

I've heard it somewhat. I mean, I'm not I'm not privy to all the information that other you know, organizations are saying, but I look, I tried to play the game the right way. I try to play it hard. You know, I tried to play hard every single day. And then I felt as though that was my responsibility. And anytime you have someone that mentions your name with, with playing the game the right way, it makes you feel good. It's humbling. Because you know, a lot of organizations, you know, I do my best to try to beat them throughout the years. And then for them to have respect for how you played the game. It makes you feel really good.

John Kekis

And one other question. Do you like the new rules and baseball? And do you think that the game needs to be speeded up?

Derek Jeter

I'm sorry, was that the first part?

John Kekis

Do you like the new rules in baseball and do you feel like the game still needs to be speeded up?

Derek Jeter

I don't even necessarily know if the game needs to be sped up. I just think there needs to be a little bit more action in the game. I think when fans come to the games, they want to see things happen. And then unfortunately, at this point in time, there's a lot of time during the game, where there's not a lot of action, so I like to see more action. I think there's some of the rules that I do. Like, you know, I'm a fact I like the runner on second base in extra innings. I do so it's uh, yeah, I think every sport, you know, every sport changes and evolves over time. And I think baseball is at the point where they're making some adjustments to it as well.

John Kekis

Thank you.

Derek Jeter

Yep.

Jon Shestakofsky

Next up will be Bruce Levine. Bruce, go right ahead.

Bruce Levine

Derek, first of all, thank you for all the wonderful things that you gave to baseball. And also, it was a real pleasure watching you play all the time. Thank you for that.

Derek Jeter

Thank you.

Bruce Levine

I wonder where the next Derek Jeters will come from in baseball, and if you being you know, major influences and owner right now can identify a winning player for people to go out and scout and sign and develop in this era of, you know, the homerun player.

Derek Jeter

Well, you know, look, I think what people need to understand is that the most important thing when you're playing is to win. And I and I've said this before, I don't know if you've heard me say before, probably not. But I think one of the things what that that is an issue for, you know, some players nowadays is, you know, you go to all these showcases, right? And it's all about how hard you throw how fast you run, how far you can hit it. And then when you get players you need to teach them how to win. You know, winning is something that you have to learn to do, it doesn't come easy. You know, there's a way to do it. There's a way to play the game. And there's a way to be unselfish. So I think you know, one thing we try to do in our organization, we try to teach everyone how to win. And that's a process, it takes a little bit of time. But I think people need to understand that the ultimate goal is for you to win.

Jon Shestakofsky

Great, we have time for two or three more questions. And we'll go now to Craig Mish, Craig.

Craig Mish

Thank you, Derek. Congratulations.

Derek Jeter

Thanks, Craig.

Craig Mish

Derek, I know that I believe you had mentioned that while you were going through it and winning the World Series that you did all those with the Yankees that it was kind of hard to appreciate it because you're always looking to get to the next year and win the next one. And I'm wondering, you know, in terms of challenges, because now you have the challenge, you know, going on with Miami obviously as owner and CEO, where did that come from with you? Where were when did that start happening for you where you're always, you know, wanted to be challenged? You know, similarly, I would think to you

know, Michael Jordan kind of goes through that to always with that challenge, the great players have had that, where did that come from with you?

Derek Jeter

I think it's a it's innate, I think it's something that I always you know, you always have to you know, you talk about competition, right? You, competition eliminates complacency, and, and you pay attention to your competition. But I think at the same time, you know, you're competing with yourself, and never being satisfied. And I've always said, I never wanted my career to be over. And then for me to say, well, I wish I would have done a little bit more. And ultimately, you're judged, especially in New York, you're judged by winning, you know, that's what makes old timers day so important. And so special is because you know, guys come back and there's memories, and they remember you if you win. And you know, it was funny, because I always had Yogi Berra used to come in the locker room. And, you know, he every time we'd want to come over and remind me of how many rings he had. And, you know, I used to joke with him and say, well, you know, it's a little bit harder now, because there's more rounds in the playoffs, he went straight to the World Series. And his response was, you can come over my house and count the rings anytime you want. So I always felt as though you're trying to chase something and I think that's the only way you have to you can be is that's the only way you're gonna improve is you always got to try to get better and for me getting better meant winning more.

Craig Mish

And as a follow up to that as your career you look back on it and certainly you accomplished everything possible as a major leaguer, and here we are on the on the doorstep of you being inducted into the Hall of Fame was that part of taking the challenge as being the CEO of the Marlins, too, was just, you know, something else to challenge yourself at that moment.

Derek Jeter

Yeah, I like to compete, you know, I like to compete, I became vocal probably the last, you know, 10 or so years in my career is that, you know, what I wanted to do next and I wanted to be a part of an ownership group and I want to be I have an opportunity to build something that was special and, and the, you know, the teams don't come up for sale that often. And then, you know, we were fortunate to get the opportunity here. So look at the people say it's a challenge, but I look at it as an opportunity and we're still competing, just not on the field. Me personally, not on the field, but you're still competing on the field.

Craig Mish

Thank you. Congrats.

Derek Jeter

Thank you.

Jon Shestakofsky

Next up, we have Bill Francis. Bill, go right ahead.

Bill Francis

Congratulations, Derek.

Derek Jeter

Thank you, Bill.

Bill Francis

You mentioned your induction speech earlier, I'm guessing this is going to be one of the most important speeches of your life so far. Can you talk about the process of writing the speech?

Derek Jeter

Yes. Still going through the process right now. So I have not finished, you know, Jon is probably upset with me now, because they told me I had to get it in like a month before. But it's something that I've tried to take my time with. Write down notes, I didn't want to get help from anyone. I didn't want anyone to see it. Or see it before I deliver it. But I've had that I've had some speeches that I had to address the crowd before, you know, we closed Yankee Stadium. So in terms of addressing the crowd, I've done that before. But this is a little bit longer. I mean, talking about a speech, that's 10-15 minutes. So it's kind of hard to, to cover your entire career in that short period of time, but I'm still working on it.

Bill Francis

And you mentioned you had been a Cooperstown as a youth, any memories of how old you are and how that experience back then?

Derek Jeter

I don't. I don't I was very young. I remember going there. But I don't remember any of the details. So that's why I'm looking forward to actually going through the museum when I get up there.

Bill Francis

Thanks, Derek.

Derek Jeter

Yep.

Jon Shestakofsky

And last question. We'll go to David Edelstein. David, go right ahead.

David Edelstein

Derek, congratulations.

Derek Jeter

Thank you.

David Edelstein

I know that we missed you. I'm the local media television station in Cooperstown. So I know that we had that on the calendar back in last February. And the world kind of fell apart right before you made it

up here. So looking forward to seeing you here next week. And hopefully, you get a chance for that tour. I get a lot of opportunities to talk with the Hall of Fame staff in this area about what the Hall of Fame is really about. It's not just a museum. It's not just a plaque gallery. They talk a lot about how it's about the legacy that the players leave not only during their Playing career, but then transition at this moment at their induction into kind of a new legacy in a new role. You specifically have multiple roles as a player, you were captain, you're an owner of a team now, wondering what you want your legacy to be or your role in baseball to be going forward now as a Hall of Famer, with this global and world recognition that you have.

Derek Jeter

Yeah. Well, that's a good question. I don't know if I can answer in a short period of time. You know, my, the most important thing during my career, the most important thing, people say what I wanted to be remembered as I wanted to be remembered as Yankee as a Yankee. That was it. That was the only thing i the only team ever wanted to play for, since I as far back as I could remember. So that's what I wanted my legacy to be. As you start playing your career, you start thinking about legacy and so much more than what you do on the field. It's a legacy leave off the field. And whether that's work with my foundation through my foundation in New York, Michigan, and Florida. It's what I'm doing down here in Miami, you know, baseball's been a big part of my life, and it will continue to be so I think when you talk about legacy post-playing career, I think I'm still working on it. But during my career was just to be a Yankee.

Jon Shestakofsky

Awesome, and I think David may have had another one. I've kind of lost him. Tiny are you able to?

David Edelstein

There we go. All right. Yes, we don't have permission to unmute ourselves. 2021 problem. Derek, I just wanted to ask also, with the 20th anniversary of 9/11 coming up, you played in the city, obviously, those 20 years ago, and it it had I mean, I don't need to describe it for you, but what kind of impact baseball's had and bring the community together and just everything. So another question that might be huge, but what what is going through your mind now just knowing that it's the 20th anniversary, what was it like to play in that game? What still stands out to you from those 20 years ago as well?

Derek Jeter

Yeah, I mean, you mentioned it sports has it has a great way of bringing communities together. You know, I just remember back then it was it was it was almost an uncomfortable feeling, I think for for all of us, when we first got back to playing baseball, because you know, the first thing you think about is does this really matter? I remember we were playing a sport. And then we had we had a chance to meet a lot of the families and firefighters and EMS workers and you know, the thing that we figured out was, even if it was for a short period of time, three hours a day we gave people something to cheer for. So we felt as though we were playing for more than just ourselves. We felt as though we were playing for all of New York and you know a lot of stories that a lot of people we had an opportunity to meet and get to know a lot of smiles we put on people's faces. And that was probably as loud of a World Series or three games, I should say in New York. As I've heard, and unfortunately we didn't win, but you know, it just goes to show you that sports plays a big role in my mind in the healing process for a lot of

communities at certain points and we gave New Yorkers I think something to cheer for, even if like I said before, if it was for three hours a day.

Jon Shestakofsky

Thank you so much, Derek for spending part of your afternoon with us. We appreciate it and we look forward to celebrating your career next week here in Cooperstown. So thanks also to all the media members for joining us on this call. And as a reminder, Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony takes place Wednesday, September 8th right here in Cooperstown and we will continue our conference call schedule next with class of 2020 inductee, Larry Walker, which will take place on a separate Zoom beginning today at 3:30pm Eastern time. Thanks again for joining us.