

# Thursday, July 7, 2011

## Frequently Asked Questions

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As professional athlete and member of a championship team, I am asked to attend many functions and it is not uncommon to be asked to speak to the audience. The topics are usually predetermined by the organizers. Part of my presentation requires me to allow the people in attendance to ask questions. This is always the highlight of the evening. I will take this opportunity to answer some of those most frequently asked questions.

#### How did you get the name Mookie?

Contrary to a previously publicized explanation, I did not get my name because of not being able to pronounce the word milk nor did my grandmother give it to me. I don't know how I got the name and I don't know what it means. To my knowledge, it has no specific meaning. Sorry, that's the best I can do.

#### Do you miss playing?

Most players will not admit it but they are some that would love to turn back the clock to get one more chance to play the game that they love. This is not to say that they miss playing but they miss the competition. When you get to a certain age, playing is easy but preparing to play is what becomes difficult. No, I don't miss playing but I do miss the thrill of competition.

#### What field was your favorite to play on?

Every ball player prefers playing at home because he always has the fans behind them and playing on the road can be difficult because of the fan factor. That being said, there are ballparks that have great playing surfaces, good hitting backgrounds and perfect lighting. Wrigley Field was that park for me.

#### What manager did you enjoy playing for the most?

During my career, I played for 5 managers but for discussion purpose, I will only name the 3 that I had for a length of time, David Johnson, Joe Torre, and Cito Gaston. All were very good managers that communicated well with their players. Because of his coaching style, I must say Cito Gaston. He seemed to embrace the running game more which I enjoyed the most. It must also be noted that I was a little older at this time and was more accepting to the managing and coaching philosophy. In other words, I had a better understanding of the game and the manager's job.

#### Do you ever see or talk to Bill Buckner?

People ask this question a lot and they appear surprised when I give them the answer. Bill and I have become very good friends over the years and we either see or speak to each other quite often. As a matter of fact, we are currently working on a joint project that will hopefully be announced in the near future.

**How often do you get asked about the Buckner play?**

I'm asked about that play very often. If it is baseball season, the topic comes up every day.

**What were you thinking when you hit the ball to Buckner?**

Because of censorship, I can't say what I was thinking, just trust me, you don't want to know.

**Would you have beaten Buckner to the base?**

I would love to tell you yes because it would work wonders for my ego. In all honesty, I don't know. Bill and I have talked about this many times and we both agree that it would have been interesting to know what would have happened.

**Do you feel sorry for Buckner?**

I do not and he doesn't want me or anyone else to. I do regret that both of our careers have come to be defined by one play. If you are a baseball fan, you must know how good of a player Bill was.

**Would you like to manage in the future?**

Yes! I don't think that there are many coaches in the majors or minors that would not want to try managing at some point. As coaches, we must keep in mind that being good players and coaches does not always mean that you will be a good manager, but I think that I can handle it.

The questions can go on for hours but just like at most events, I have to stop at some point. See you next week.