

# THE SPORTIER

## Tom Seaver, 1944-2020

One week ago today, Hall of Fame pitcher Tom Seaver passed away due to complications with his longstanding Lewy body dementia and COVID-19. Seaver, though he played on four teams during his 20-year career, will be most remembered for his 12 years with the New York Mets. A true professional and workhorse that was nicknamed both "Tom Terrific" and "The Franchise" in Queens, Seaver helped bring a struggling Mets team who had not yet finished above .500 since their establishment in 1962 to winning 100 games and eventually a World Series in 1969. Though Tom Seaver threw a no-hitter later in his career as a member of the Cincinnati Reds, his most outstanding performance may have come in the 1969 season. In July of 1969, with the Chicago Cubs sitting in first place in the NL East Standings in front of the Mets, Seaver pitched an incredible 1-hitter with 11 strikeouts, with his perfect game only being lost with one out in the ninth inning. This game started a 39-14 run in the month of August that would push the Mets above the Cubs in the standings and into the playoffs. Though Seaver was fantastic, winning 3 Cy Young awards in New York and appearing in 9 All-Star Games as a Met, his teams also suffered through many mediocre seasons. Making the playoffs only one more time from 1970-1976, in which they lost to the Oakland Athletics in Game 7 of the 1973 World Series while having an unremarkable 82-79 regular season record, the Mets struggled to field a good enough team around Seaver. Seaver's relationship became frosty when he believed ownership made little effort in improving the team. In the middle of the 1977 season, when Seaver was preparing to sign a contract extension with the Mets, Daily News columnist Dick Young suggested that Seaver's wife, Nancy, was jealous that Nolan Ryan, another former Mets pitcher, was earning more money with the California Angels. Angered that his family was pulled into the situation and believing Mets chairman M. Donald Grant was instrumental in fostering the story, Seaver demanded a trade out of New York and was quickly dealt to the Reds in one of the most unfortunate trades in Mets history on June 15, 1977, known in baseball lore as "The Midnight Massacre."

While Seaver pitched well for 6 seasons with the Reds, the Mets could not even scratch across 70 wins in a season in that span. Seaver did return for one season with the Mets in 1983, though the Mets again won just 68 games and Seaver was no longer the same pitcher that he once was. Luckily for the Mets, a young star pitcher named Dwight Gooden was just around the corner and the Mets were able to put together one of the greatest seasons in MLB history in 1986. Seaver's last season was in 1986 season, funny enough, on the Boston Red Sox, who lost to none other than the Mets in the 1986 World Series. He did sign with the Mets in June of 1987, retiring that same month, officially as a Met. Predictably, he was voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1992, the first Met to achieve the honor.



### Tom Seaver Career Stats:

1967 NL Rookie of the Year

3x Cy Young Award Winner

12x NL-All Star

ERA: 2.86 (126th)

Wins: 311 (18th)

Strikeouts: 3,640 (6th)

Pithing WAR: 106 (7th)

1992 Baseball Hall of Fame: First-ballot,  
98.84% of total votes (3rd-highest  
percentage)

## Djokovic Defaults

Number one ranked men's tennis player Novak Djokovic was thwarted only by his own actions over this past weekend. The star tennis player who was competing in the US Open, and trying to achieve his 18th major title, defaulted after he inadvertently blindly hit a ball following a point that struck a linesperson in the throat. After injuring his shoulder, then falling behind in the set 6-5, Djokovic walked over to his bench and pulled a ball out of his pocket and hit it behind him without looking. The rules of United States Tennis Association (USTA) agree with the disqualification of Djokovic, as in a statement, the USTA wrote, "Following his actions of intentionally hitting a ball dangerously or recklessly within the court or hitting a ball with negligent disregard of the consequences, the US Open tournament referee defaulted Novak Djokovic from the 2020 US Open." Djokovic later apologized about the incident, also acknowledging that he did not intentionally hit the linesperson in the neck. Regardless, Djokovic's run in US Open run has come to a close after his dismissal on Sunday.



Novak Djokovic on Sunday prior to being disqualified

Sources:

[NY Times](#), [Baseball Reference](#), [MLB](#), [Baseball Hall of Fame](#), [USA Today](#)