

SPORTS

‘We All Loved Watching Hank’

Homerun king remembered for greatness

Reaction to Hank Aaron’s death from former presidents to fellow Hall of Famers to everyone who knew him followed a theme: How the home run king handled the racism he faced on the way to passing Babe Ruth’s hallowed record nearly 50 years ago.

Joe Carter met his childhood idol when he won the first Hank Aaron Award in 1986 after leading the majors in RBIs.

“You tip your cap to those guys, because they paved the way for guys like me. It’s something I’ll never take for granted. They were pioneers. Jackie Robinson. Hank Aaron. Satchel Paige. Those were guys you heard about, you knew about, and you followed them. That’s who the Black community followed,” Carter said Friday.

“They are heroes and legends and they played the game the way that it was supposed to be played. ... We all loved watching Hank,”



Atlanta Braves’ Hank Aaron holds aloft the ball he hit for his 715th career home run in this April 8, 1974 photo from Atlanta. (AP photo)

he said, adding: “Hammerin’ Hank, man. It’s definitely a sad day.”

Aaron died Friday in his sleep at 86.

“A child of the Jim Crow South, Hank quit high school to join the Negro League, playing shortstop for \$200 a month before earning a spot in Major League Baseball,” former President Barack Obama said.

“Humble and hardworking, Hank was often overlooked until he started chasing Babe Ruth’s home run record, at which point he began receiving death threats and racist letters — letters he would reread decades later to remind himself ‘not to be surprised or hurt.’ Those letters changed Hank, but they didn’t stop him,” Obama said.

Aaron broke Ruth’s record with his 715th home run for the Atlanta Braves in 1974.

Chipper Jones, a Hall of Famer who spent his entire career with the Braves, cherished his time around the batting cage with Aaron, who remained active in the organization long after his career ended.

“We’re not only talking about a transcendent baseball player, we’re talking about a transcendent person in American history,” Jones said. “Jackie Robinson kind of set the stage, but Hank took it to a whole other level.”

The Milwaukee Brewers, playing in the city where Aaron started and ended his big league career, said they will wear his No. 44 on their sleeves in the upcoming season.



Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (left) and Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady will go head-to-head in Super Bowl LV on Sunday, Feb. 7 in Tampa, Fla.

Teams Set for Super Bowl LV

The Kansas City Chiefs are set to face the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in Super Bowl LV, Sunday, Feb. 7 in Tampa, Fla. The Buccaneers will be the first team to play in a Super Bowl in their home stadium.

The Chiefs defeated the Buffalo Bills 38-24 in the AFC championship Sunday to make it to the championship game. Earlier Sunday, the Bucs beat the Green Bay Packers 31-26

in the NFC championship.

As quarterbacks, the Chiefs Patrick Mahomes and the Buccaneers’ Tom Brady have each won one of the last two Super Bowls, respectively. Mahomes and the Chiefs won the Super Bowl last year against the San Francisco 49ers. Brady, who was throwing for the New England Patriots at the time, defeated the Los Angeles Rams in 2019.



At the end of the day, our goal is to leave a positive, lasting impression on improving the Pacific Northwest. We honor Black History Month and acknowledge the legacy of celebrating, supporting and actively being a part of our local Pacific Northwest BIPOC communities.

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