

1 DAVE NIEHAUS: Thank you, Tom. I just wish everybody
2 could experience the feeling that I'm having now. There
3 will never be anything like it again in my lifetime. And
4 about a month ago I was standing behind the batting cage at
5 Yankee Stadium and asked Reggie Jackson just what advice he
6 would give me at this exact moment and now I know I got his
7 very sage advice. He said, "Don't look behind you or you
8 don't have a chance. It can be very intimidating."
9 Those are real baseball cards back there, and to think that
10 a lot of them made such sweet sound in my bicycle spokes
11 many years ago, and it blows my mind to see them sitting
12 here behind me today.

13 When one receives an ultimate honor like this,
14 the fear is you're going to forget someone, and to him or
15 her, I hereby already apologize.

16 Come with me now to the front porch of 625 North
17 West Street, Princeton, Indiana, in 1946 on a hot, sultry
18 July evening just like today, about 8:30 at night and an
19 11-year old boy is chasing lightening bugs and capturing
20 them in a mason jar that had holes punched into it with an
21 ice pick. Every once in a while he would squish one between
22 his thumb and forefinger just to see the glow. Now come on
23 now, you know you've done that too. Dad is sitting on a
24 porch with a cold slice of watermelon on one knee and a hot

1 ear of buttered corn on the other with a cold beverage
2 sitting on the ground.

3 And suddenly, from the old Zenith floor model
4 radio in the living room comes this voice screaming, "It
5 might be, it could be, it is," and the young boy jumps about
6 three or four inches off the ground with each halting
7 phrase. Magic is happening in St. Louis Missouri, Stan
8 Musial hit another home run about a zillion miles away and a
9 career has germinated that ends up here in Cooperstown
10 today.

11 Your first thoughts on a day like this go out to
12 your most dearly beloved ones. A summer evening in 1963, I
13 had a date with a beautiful girl. I was going to take her
14 to Dodger Stadium to see again Stan Musial make his final
15 appearance in Los Angeles. I took her to dinner first,
16 asked her to marry me and never made it to the game. And
17 here she sits, 45 years later. I wouldn't be here without
18 you, Marilyn. You gave me two sons and a daughter and they
19 have given me six fabulous grandchildren. How lucky can a
20 man be?

21 To quote A. Bartlett Giamatti, "The real activity
22 was done with the radio, not the seeing, all falsifying
23 television, and was the playing of the game in the only
24 place it will last, the enclosed green field of the mind."

1 Radio plays with the mind, it gives you a mental
2 workout and delusions of grandeur, that's what Harry Caray
3 did to me. My dad took me to my first big league game at
4 Sportsman Park in St. Louis probably, I don't know, 1947,
5 '48, and quite frankly, I was never so disappointed in my
6 life. Caray had put these guys on such a pedestal, I just
7 knew it was a Parthenon that I was going to, not a ballpark.
8 You know what, years later I know I was right on both
9 counts.

10 Once you're bitten by the baseball bug, it never
11 goes away, and that's what happened with me. After college,
12 I was drafted into the Army and after basic training I was
13 assigned to the Armed Forces Radio and Television service,
14 and after six weeks of on-the-job training I was sent to New
15 York City to finish out my tour of military duty at 57th and
16 Broadway in the Fisk building. Tough duty to be sure.

17 Casey Stengel befriended this lonely GI and talked
18 baseball into the wee hours of the morning one day, at least
19 I think it was baseball we talked about. After Uncle Sam
20 was done with me, he asked me if I would work for him as a
21 civilian back in Los Angeles, which I did for some six
22 years, as a civilian for the Angels, the Dodgers, the
23 Lakers, you name it, the best experience a young man could
24 get.

1 Along came 1966 and I hooked up with Golden West
2 Broadcasters, owned by the legendary Gene Autry, who of
3 course owned the Angels. 10 years later, when I joined the
4 Mariners, Gene said to me, "David, you call a hell of a
5 game, not the game I'm watching, but a hell of a game." So
6 maybe I'm representing the guys who have added a little whip
7 cream and cherry to the great game of baseball for which I
8 plead guilty, and I'm very proud.

9 I've been blessed with incredibly talented
10 partners, Dick Enberg, one of my best friends, wish he could
11 be here today, Buddy Blattner, Don Wells, a guy who was like
12 a brother to me for 14 years, Ron Fairly. My current crew
13 in Seattle, the best, Rick Rizzs, Mike Blowers and Dave
14 Sims. My first partner in Seattle, Ken Wilson, is filling
15 in for me today in Toronto and I don't want to forget him,
16 or the world's best radio producer Kevin Cremin.

17 Every one of us has a pivotal moment in a career.
18 Mine came in 1976 at the baseball winter meetings in Los
19 Angeles, two new franchises would start the next year in
20 '97; one of course was the Toronto Blue Jays, the other the
21 Seattle Mariners. I was contacted by a salesman at KMPC in
22 Los Angeles and asked if I would be interested in the
23 Seattle lead job. What would you say? Of course you would
24 say yes. Les Smith and Danny Kaye, two of the original six

1 owners of the Mariners, interviewed me in Seattle, I
2 followed up with executives and the die was cast. Here I
3 am, 32 years later.

4 I've been very lucky with ownerships, all of them.
5 After the original ownership, ambassador George Argyros
6 bought the ball club, then Jeff Smulyan, and currently by;
7 Hiroshi Yamauchi, Howard Lincoln, Chris Larson, president
8 Chuck Armstrong, chairman emeritus John Ellis.

9 I thank all of you. I owe all of you for my
10 career. Millions of fans from the northwest stand here with
11 me today. Believe me, without them, I wouldn't be here
12 today. Over the years, they have been my biggest supporters
13 and they've been loyal to the Mariners through thick and
14 thin, and there was never a doubt in my mind about Seattle
15 being big league territory from the first pitch Diego Segui
16 threw to Jerry Remy 32 years ago, it's been quite a ride and
17 it's not over yet. Believe me, the best is yet to come.

18 Cooperstown makes your heart soar while buckling your
19 knees. Nothing will ever replace this moment for those of
20 us on this stage.

21 To Dick Williams, this is long overdue. Talk to
22 the winners who played for him and they'll swear he's the
23 best there ever was, although there are a few who would run
24 him down with a car. An incredible man, Dick Williams. I

1 was lucky to be with him in two places, Anaheim and Seattle.

2 So Goose Gossage, closing out his career with the
3 Mariners in 1994, not only closed out his career with pride
4 but class, and he was a mentor and a pro's pro. I'll never
5 forget one incident, he won't either. There was a number
6 one draft choice in the bullpen with Goose, his name will be
7 omitted here, and he talked a great game, he really did.
8 And finally, Goose went up to this kid and said, "Just how
9 many Cy Young awards have you won anyway?" And that was the
10 last time you ever heard him chirping.

11 My thanks to Lou Piniella for sharing ten
12 wonderful years of his life with me. Your legacy will live
13 on forever with the Mariners. And finally, I know there are
14 several bigger names who have preceded me in winning this
15 award. There will be several bigger names after me to win
16 this award, but no one will ever be more appreciative.
17 Thank you very much.