

AUG 11, 2003

OFFENSE COMING BACK FROM DEAD KONERKO SPARKS WHITE SOX

ALBERT CHEN

In early July the White Sox acquired second baseman Roberto Alomar from the Mets and Carl Everett from the Rangers in an effort to spark their moribund offense. (Chicago's 4.2 runs per game was the second lowest in the AL, ahead of Detroit, at the All-Star break.) But the answer has been right under their noses: first baseman Paul Konerko.

Konerko, who hit .304 with 27 homers and was an All-Star in 2002, batted .185 with three homers in the season's first three months. In the five weeks since, he has undergone a startling resurrection, hitting .341 with eight homers and 25 RBIs.

Konerko's resurgence has allowed White Sox manager Jerry Manuel, who used 87 different lineups in the team's first 94 games, to keep the order intact. It has also helped Chicago, which was scoring 7.1 runs per game since the break, make a run at AL Central-leading Kansas City. The White Sox had won 13 of their last 16 through Sunday and were two games in back of the Royals.



DEC 26, 2005

PAULIE REVERED

FIRST BASEMAN PAUL KONERKO EXPERIENCED A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OCTOBER, LEADING THE WHITE SOX TO THEIR FIRST TITLE IN 88 YEARS

TOM VERDUCCI

Every so often a ballplayer enjoys a season of such indelible pluck and timely success that he becomes the unofficial proprietor of that year. Luis Gonzalez owned 2001 the way Jack Morris did 1991 the way Kirk Gibson did 1988 the way Bret Saberhagen did 1985 the way Bucky Dent did 1978 and the way Roger Maris did 1961. It is a tribute either to the democracy of the sport or its nutty randomness that such eternal ownership can be claimed, as in each of the aforementioned cases, by a player not found in the Hall of Fame.

The synonymy of a ballplayer and a year is decided without debate or ballot or a five-year waiting period. It happens quickly, organically. And at precisely 11:01 Central Daylight Time on the night of Oct. 26 it was readily apparent that the baseball year of 2005 belonged in perpetuity to the same man who clutched the ultimate out: White Sox first baseman Paul Henry Konerko, who--like Fridge, Walter, Michael, Scottie and Sammy--will henceforth be known to even the most casual fans around Chicagoland by a monomial, familial handle: Paulie.

With his humility, his lunch-pail work ethic and his rise after a spotty start to his career, Konerko is a Paulie kind of guy. You don't call a guy with an entourage Paulie. End-zone exhibitionists, contract holdouts, self-serving horn tooters ... you won't find a Paulie among them. Paulie is a man of the people. Paulie's your buddy. Paulie helps you move into a new apartment. Paulie always buys the first round. Though now seemingly superfluous, the cacophonous Konerko--it sounds like a metal tool box being knocked over--cements the Everyman role.

As Paulies go, Konerko had a most extraordinary 2005. O.K., it was cool enough that the guy hit 40 home runs for a second straight season, made his second All-Star team, finished sixth in the American League Most Valuable Player voting and hit cleanup for the world champs. But in addition, in the span of 11 days in October, he was named the MVP of the AL Championship Series; witnessed the birth of his first child, Nicholas; hit the most dramatic grand slam in World Series history; and caught the last out of the first baseball world championship in Chicago since 1917.

Oh, and one more thing. Thirty-three days after the sweep of the Houston Astros, Konerko, 29, re-signed with the White Sox as a free agent for \$60 million over the next five seasons. The first round really is on him. Hey, there are still a few days left in 2005, still time for Paulie to buy a winning lottery ticket, solve the riddle of Lost and establish peace in the Middle East.

Albert Pujols had a fantastic year. Alex Rodriguez was superb. Bud Selig succeeded in getting the players' union to accept tougher steroid punishments and a ban on amphetamines. Youppi!, the abandoned mascot of the team formerly known as the Expos, found work with the NHL's Canadiens. But nobody in baseball had a better year than Paulie.

Konerko is just one of many reminders how stardom in baseball, more so than in most sports, often does not come ready-made. It slow cooks. Yes, Konerko was a first-round draft pick in 1994, taken 13th by the Los Angeles Dodgers out of Chaparral High School in Scottsdale, Ariz. But potential in baseball is so difficult to forecast; for instance, from that draft one out of four first-round picks would never reach the major leagues.

The Dodgers drafted Konerko as a catcher but rather quickly decided that he would not get to the big leagues at that position. Wearing number 66, he started his first game with L.A. in 1997 as a third baseman and then was cast the following year as the heir apparent to Eric Karros at first base. After Konerko hit .212 in only 55 games over those two seasons, the Dodgers shipped him to Cincinnati in '98 in one of those classic midseason deals--anonymous youngster for name veteran--to obtain relief pitcher Jeff Shaw. (Los Angeles never reached the postseason in the four seasons Shaw pitched there.)

Konerko batted .219 for the Reds before they dealt him to the White Sox for centerfielder Mike Cameron. At age 22 Konerko owned a .214 career batting average in the big leagues and had been traded twice in less than five months. As it turned out, though, he had found a home. After seven seasons in Chicago, Konerko has hit the fourth-most homers in White Sox history (203) while averaging 30 homers and 95 RBIs and establishing himself as the team's unofficial captain.

Konerko hit five home runs in the 2005 postseason, including his grand slam in Game 2 of the World Series five days after his wife, Jennifer, gave birth to Nicholas. The Astros, up 4-2, were seven outs from tying the Series at one game apiece, but Konerko blasted the first pitch from reliever Chad Qualls to put Chicago in front. (The White Sox would need a ninth-inning walkoff homer from Scott Podsednik to win the game.) It was only the 18th grand slam in 101 Fall Classics but the first that put the trailing team into the lead as late as the seventh inning.

"How lucky am I," Konerko said after that game, "that I hit a grand slam in the World Series and it's still the second-best thing to happen to me this week?"

Konerko had no interest in keeping the baseball that ended the White Sox' 88-year drought, an extremely valuable totem. Instead, he turned the ball over to a visibly moved White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf at the team's championship rally in Chicago two days later.

In late November, while Konerko was finalizing his new contract with Chicago, newspapers also carried stories about the Red Sox' petitioning a judge to get their hands on the World Series ball that had ended their 86-year drought in 2004. The first baseman who caught that last Series out, Doug Mientkiewicz, laid personal claim to the ball, and a year later the rather awkward dispute that ensued remained unresolved.

For the White Sox the return of Konerko was more important than that of the baseball. The Baltimore Orioles had offered Konerko more money, \$65 million over five years, and the Los Angeles Angels had offered him an opportunity to play closer to his Scottsdale home. But Chicago offered him something on top of the \$60 million that no other ball club could.

"It's as simple as where your heart is," Konerko said the day his deal was announced. "That's what brought me back."

For the record Luis Gonzalez hit 29 fewer home runs in 2002 and has not been back to the postseason since. Jack Morris was 0-2 in the 1992 World Series. Kirk Gibson hit .213 and missed more than half of the 1989 season with injuries. Plagued by pain in his right shoulder and foot, Bret Saberhagen was 7-12 in 1986. Bucky Dent hit .230, his career-worst as a regular, in 1979. Roger Maris hit 28 fewer home runs in 1962.

That's how it goes when you achieve something as rare as your own personal year. Konerko will hit more home runs, make more money, maybe even win more world championships, but the experience will never be so fresh and so dense in newfound joy as it was this year, his year. Paulie will have 2005. Always.

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In fact, his best chance is probably going to be the Veterans Committee, which will take a while.

Making the case for Konerko's HOF worthiness is not all that difficult as there are nine very distinct reasons why Konerko deserves the honor.

[@SuggestSmith](#)

Coby White with the And-1!



9. Konerko Is Not Done Playing

1 OF 9

Yes, he had surgery to clean up bone [Next](#) his wrist after the season ended, but there has been no indication that it is going to prevent him from playing next year.

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surgery that [Konerko is expected to be ready for spring training next year](#).

As we will see later on, Konerko has already achieved as much as many of the men already enshrined in Cooperstown, so anything else would be icing on the cake.

Three modest seasons would put Konerko in line for 500 home runs and over 1500 RBI, which is rarefied air, indeed.

No one can predict what the future holds for a player, but Konerko is most certainly not done adding to his already impressive resume.

8. 2005 ALCS and World Series Performances

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Konerko had quite a run in 2005.

During the American League Championship Series against the Los Angeles Angels, Konerko hit .286, knocked two first-inning home runs and drove in seven runs en route to the series [MVP](#). It was as timely a performance as there ever was.

In the World Series against the [Houston Astros](#), Konerko only hit .250, but delivered a monster grand slam off Chad Qualls in the seventh inning of Game 2.

HOF players produce when it matters the great ones do.

Next

the postseason is simply not what

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career and while Konerko was hitless in 2000 against the [Seattle Mariners](#), he cemented his legacy as a clutch performer in 2005.

7. The Steroid Era Has Forever Changed the Way Historians Look at Statistics

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The [Steroid Era](#) is redefining the criteria for inclusion.

2013 marks the zenith of accused performance-enhancing drug users on the HOF ballot. Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens and Sammy Sosa headline the [group of eligible players](#) and that is sure to stir up the memories of a tainted era and baseball's continuing struggle with PEDs.

If a player's name was included in the [Mitchell Report](#), everything he accomplished as a player is already being called into question and getting into the HOF becomes that much more difficult. Since Konerko has never been publicly linked to PEDs, his statistics will be viewed accordingly.

Rumors and speculation have brought into context what constitutes great career numbers and Konerko fits the bill.

It would be short-sighted to believe that Konerko's extended slash line (.283/422/1336/.359/.499) is insufficient for inclusion given the questionable nature of baseball's recent offensive explosion

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6. A Man's Character Has Never Mattered More

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The measures of greatness have expanded recently because of the Steroid Era. No longer are numbers, which Konerko has, the only measure of worthiness.

[C. Trent Rosencrans from CBS Sports](#) noted that future HOF merit conversations in the future will not necessarily revolve “around numbers, but less concrete things—like beliefs, morals, laws and character.”

Check, check and check.

There is something about the way Konerko carries himself that demands attention. It is as if he commands a room by being the least assuming one in it. With a quiet determination, Konerko has become the leader in a clubhouse that has always been full of strong personalities.

It is leadership and character that are becoming more and more important to the voters.

Remember, the [Baseball Writers Association of America](#) (BBWAA) is an evolving organization. As such, many of them must be sensitive to how the public views the game and wish to put the dysfunctions of the Steroid Era behind them.

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5. The Voting Process Itself Works in Konerko's Favor

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Another reason Konerko could get into Cooperstown revolves around how the HOF voting process works.

Very few players are elected in their first year by the BBWAA and [there has never been a unanimous selection](#). Typically, the percentage of votes a player receives goes up in relation to the number of years he is on the ballot until he receives the 75 percent needed for HOF induction.

In essence, the BBWAA makes a player sweat it out and [Billy Williams](#) is a perfect example.

In 1982, his first year of eligibility, Williams received just 23.4 percent of the vote. Five years later, Williams netted [85.7 percent](#) and was elected to the HOF. Williams simply had to wait his turn just like Konerko may.

While this may not be the most exciting reason Konerko might make it into the HOF, it is very real and must be taken into consideration.

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4. Konerko's Offensive Numbers Rank Alongside Other White Sox Hall of Famers

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Konerko has had an incredible offensive career.

Even if he never picks up a bat again for the White Sox, Konerko's numbers rank among the best in [franchise history](#). A look at his numbers is an exercise in excellence.

He ranks second in White Sox history in home runs (415), RBI (1307) and total bases (3778). He is also third in doubles (382) and runs created (1349), while ranking fourth in hits (2135).

Names like Eddie Collins, Luke Appling, Nellie Fox and Frank Thomas surround him on the all-time list for the White Sox. Each of them is either in the HOF already, or will be shortly.

Konerko is in rare company among White Sox greats and is therefore among the greats in baseball history.

3. Konerko Is a Model of Offensive Consistency

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He has had two down seasons (2003 and 2008), but otherwise has been a consistent offensive force.

In fact, Konerko's 162-game average of 31 home runs, 29 doubles and 101 RBI is a testament to an extended run of exceptional production and is yet another example of Konerko's HOF credentials.

Granted, Konerko never had that one defining year when he hit 45 home runs, drove in 125 runs, finished with a .325 batting average and won the AL MVP, but he didn't have to.

What Konerko does is remain one of the top first baseman in the American League year after year and consistency matters to both the BBWAA and the Veterans Committee.

2. The Bagwell Effect

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The closest comparison (as far as I can tell) of a Hall-eligible first baseman to Konerko is [Jeff Bagwell](#).

Bagwell played 15 seasons with the [Houston Astros](#), earning an MVP and five All-Star nods while collecting 449 home runs

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On average, that is only three more home runs and 14 more RBI per season than what

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slugging (.948 to .858), but overall the numbers stack up, especially when the lineups are taken into consideration.

Something else to take into consideration is that, although he had a poor finish to the 2012 season, Konerko has put his best stretch of baseball together the last three years while Bagwell went the other way his final three.

If the numbers are comparable, then so should their HOF chances.

In 2011, Bagwell received 41.7 percent of the vote from the BBWAA, while in 2012 he netted 56.0. Just as the voting process normally plays out, Bagwell is getting more votes as the number of years he is on the ballot increases.

Expect Bagwell to make it to the HOF in the next few years and then for Konerko to go through the same waiting process when he is eligible.

1. Konerko's Career Numbers Already Measure Up with Current HOF First Basemen

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Konerko's [career offensive statistics](#) stack up very well when measured the stats of the [18 first basemen already in Cooperstown](#).

- He has more home runs (422) than 14 of them, including Tony Perez, Orlando Cepeda, Hank Greenberg and Johnny Mize.
- He has more RBI (1336) than several [Next](#) first basemen, including George Sisler, Roger Connors, George Kelly and Greenberg.

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Perez.

- With the exception of [Lou Gehrig](#), Konerko is better in at least one offensive measurable than each of the current HOF first basemen over his 16-year career.

Bottom line, Konerko's numbers are comparable to some of the first basemen currently in the HOF and that is the biggest reason Konerko is HOF material.



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The other farewell retiring tour: Paul Konerko

Bob Nightengale USA TODAY Sports

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CHICAGO -- He's the *other* guy retiring.

He's the guy who doesn't get lavish gifts in every city, the standing ovations from the visiting crowds, and all of the national headlines.

Paul Konerko is the Chicago White Sox's version of Derek Jeter.

Konerko, just like Jeter in New York, will have his number retired by the White Sox. They already created a space for No. 14 - between Luis Aparicio's No. 11 and Ted Lyons' 16 - ahead of Konerko's farewell tribute Sept. 27.

"Don't be surprised if you see a statue out there for him, too," White Sox chairman Jerry Reinsdorf tells USA TODAY Sports. "Don't be surprised."

Yes, he's that big in White Sox history, and will forever be a legend in Chicago.

Konerko was a captain, too, just like Jeter, but never wore a "C" on his jersey.

He helped deliver a World Series championship for the White Sox in 2005, the first one for the city of Chicago in 88 years, but not five World Series titles like Jeter.

"I don't know if Paul is going to the Hall of Fame like Jeter," says Greg Walker, Konerko's former hitting coach, "but I do know that he will go down as one of the greatest players who ever played in the city of Chicago."

Really, Konerko epitomizes what the White Sox organization is all about. They represent the South Side, the Windy City's Off Broadway, and boast a loyal fan base largely devoid of pretense.

That's Konerko, whose 432 homers and 1,432 RBI are second in White Sox history to Hall of Famer Frank Thomas. Only Hall of Famer Luke Appling played in more games. Only Nellie

Fox and Appling produced more hits. And no one generated more total bases.

"He probably didn't mean exactly what Derek meant to the Yankees," former Detroit Tigers manager Jim Leyland says, "but it's pretty darn close. He'll go down as one of the greatest White Sox players to ever play, and he one of the most respected hitters in the American League.

"He's going to be missed."

Yet Leyland was initially unaware Konerko was even retiring.

"It's a shame he didn't get his world tour like Jeter, with both captains going out together," says St. Louis Cardinals catcher A.J. Pierzynski, Konerko's longtime former teammate. "He's just as special, but in his own way.

"He's always had an under-the-radar career. He's a borderline Hall of Fame, but he's just never been one to go out of his way to garner the attention and get the spotlight.

"I know Paul doesn't want all of the recognition that Jeter is getting, but it sure would be nice for some people to know."

If truth be told, Jeter says, he'd like his farewell to be just as understated as Konerko, a man who he admires and respects. And if you ask Konerko, he loves being the backup singer to Sinatra.

"When I saw Jeter's announcement that he was retiring," Konerko says, "I said, 'Perfect!' I'm not a big fan of being the whole focus of attention.

"Derek knew 10 years ago that he was going to have a ceremony for him, but, I don't know any player who says, 'I'm looking for a ceremony at the end of my career.' I just put my head down and played.

"Now, with Derek, I think the game should stop once he walks away. He's meant that much to the game."

And Konerko has meant that much to the city of Chicago.

Memorable delivery

Konerko, who broke a bone in his hand Sept. 2, and hopes to return this weekend, almost singlehandedly delivered that World Series championship to the White Sox. He hit five home

runs and drove in 15 during the 2005 postseason, including, of course, his grand slam in Game 2 against the Houston Astros.

"People ask me if the grand slam was the moment I'll remember the most," says Konerko, who debuted in 1997 with the Los Angeles Dodgers and came to the White Sox in a November 1998 trade with the Cincinnati Reds.

"I'd love to say, 'Yes,' but it's not. I remember hitting it, but I can't really tell you anything about it.

"Now, the hit I remember the most is my first one. It was my first at-bat with the Dodgers. Dennis Cook got ahead of me real quick, tried to throw me a fastball away, and I hit it to right field. Obviously, it wasn't as meaningful compared to other situations, but I remember that at-bat as crisp as any I had in my career."

If Konerko wants any reminders, all he needs to do is look near the leftfield bullpen. Section 159. Seventh row. Seat 4. It's the seat, now painted blue, where Konerko hit the only World Series grand slam in the seventh inning or later that turned a deficit into a lead. It's still the last slam hit in the World Series.

"Paul may not have great memory of it," Walker says, "but we all sure do."

And certainly, no one in Chicago will forget the moment during the White Sox's World Series parade when he pulled out the baseball from the final out, turned toward Reinsdorf, and said, "This belongs to you."

"I was stunned," Reinsdorf says. "I'll remember that moment forever."

Says Pierznyski: "We used to kid him about that. We said, 'Hey, you were just sucking up to Jerry so you can get a new contract.'"

Konerko, spurning bigger offers from the Baltimore Orioles and Anaheim Angels, wound up signing a five-year, \$60 million deal to return to the White Sox.

"Our doctors told him that he was not likely to play out his whole contract because of his hips," Reinsdorf says. "But we just won the World Series, and I knew how important he was to the team. I couldn't let him leave.

"And I knew he didn't want to leave."

Final run

Now, nine years later, and Konerko is in the final week of his career. He returned this year knowing he would be only a part-time player, and is leaving with no regrets. He couldn't walk away after last season, he says, not with the White Sox losing 99 games, while he had his worst season - batting .244 with 12 homers and 54 RBI.

"Everything went so bad for the team and I contributed to that badness," Konerko says, "I couldn't leave with such a bad taste in my mouth. This year was a good way to transition out of the game. Never once did I have a regret about coming back, so it tells me it was the right thing to do.

"I came here with so much energy and intensity to do well, and I literally walk out of here with nothing left. I gave it everything I possibly could. And that feels good."

Konerko, who says that he's been blindsided by the outpouring of well-wishes by opposing players, broadcasters, clubhouse attendants and even stadium ushers, had a chance to say good-bye last month in New York. The Yankees signed a first-base bag, and Jeter was the one to present it. It was a chance to talk, knowing it may be the final time they even see one another.

"Taking to Derek, you wanted to make this season as normal as you can," Konerko says, "but you can't walk five steps without someone talking about it. And, really, it's pretty overwhelming. You play your career not really paying attention to other things, and now you have all of these people coming up and telling you how much you affected them."

"I don't take that lightly."

Konerko, who originally feared that his season would be over when X-rays showed a broken bone in his hand Sept. 2, has one last aspiration when he steps to the plate his final time. He wants a fastball. And he wants that pitcher to throw it as hard as he possibly can.

He'll live with the consequences.

"Ever since I picked up a bat," Konerko says, "I've never feared anybody throwing hard. I've faced some great pitchers, and the best raw stuff I ever saw was from Pedro Martinez, but I always felt good on the fastball. So I'd love to be challenged, and see what happens."

Well, as fate would have it, the Royals' tentative scheduled starter for the White Sox on Konerko's celebratory day is 23-year-old Yordano Ventura. He just so happens to throw 100 mph.

And there's not a single White Sox teammate, or former teammate, who believes that Konerko won't figure out a way to hit him.

"He's the smartest person I've ever been around," says Oakland DH Adam Dunn, a former teammate. "You ask him what time it is, he'll spend 20 minutes telling you how the clock was made."

Says Pierznyski: "You ask him what's the best way to go from the clubhouse to the field, and he'll give you a 20-minute dissertation, telling you 25 different ways to go. He's the only player I've ever seen who could actually make adjustments on his swing in the middle of an at-bat."

And maybe next week, when Konerko gets that final at-bat, facing a flame-thrower like Ventura, he'll finally get that recognition.

"He's one of the greatest fastball hitters of his generation," says Walker, "and revered almost like a heavyweight boxing champion back in the day.

"Just one last time, I'd give anything for Paul to remind everyone how great of a career he had."



MLB

Slugger Paul Konerko returns to White Sox for 16th season

Bob Nightengale USA TODAY Sports

Published 12:46 p.m. ET Dec. 4, 2013

Story Highlights

Konerko signed a one-year, \$2.5 million contract

Konerko will be used as a DH against left-handed pitching

Chicago White Sox captain Paul Konerko plans to retire one day, but he wasn't ready to go out after last year's miserable season.

Konerko officially decided to play another season, just as his teammates told USA TODAY in September, and signed a one-year, \$2.5 million contract, with \$1 million deferred until 2021. Konerko, who was being paid \$1 million annually through 2020, now will be tied to the White Sox until he's 45 years old.

"Paul Konerko has been the constant face of the White Sox organization and the heart of our clubhouse over the past 15 seasons," White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf said. "He certainly earned the right to make this decision on his own, and we are very pleased that he has decided to return for another season.

"While the accomplishments speak for themselves -- six All-Star Games, a World Series title, 427 home runs with the White Sox -- anyone who is in our clubhouse day in and day out knows the value Paul brings to our franchise as a leader, as a teammate, as a mentor and as our captain."

Konerko will be used as a DH against left-handed pitching, GM Rick Hahn said, while tutoring Cuban first baseman Jose Abreu, who signed a six-year contract in November.

"I'm looking forward to coming back in a new role," Konerko said in a statement, "where I can help both the organization and my teammates get turned around in the right direction and also do some productive things on the field."

Konerko, whose 434 homers rank fifth among active players, hit just .244 with 12 homers and 54 RBI last season. It was his lowest totals since his rookie season in 1998 with the Los Angeles Dodgers and Cincinnati Reds.



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Paul Konerko: The trade that brought him to the Chicago White Sox

by Stephen Forsha 6 years ago Follow @HCPSportsEditor (https://twitter.com/HCPSportsEditor)

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(https://southsideshowdown.com/files/2014/09/paul-konerko-mlb-chicago-white-sox-detroit-tigers1.jpg) Sep 23, 2014; Detroit, MI, USA; Chicago White Sox first baseman hitter Paul Konerko (14) is honored before the game against the Detroit Tigers at Comerica Park. Mandatory Credit: Rick Osentoski-USA TODAY Sports
Paul Konerko (http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/k/konerpa01.shtml?utm_campaign=Linker&utm_source=direct&utm_medium=linker-southsideshowdown.com) became a Chicago White Sox on Nov. 11, 1998 because of an offseason trade, and one that day the entire course of White Sox, and even part of MLB history was changed.

(<https://southsideshowdown.com/files/2014/09/paul-konerko-mlb-toronto-blue-jays-chicago-white-sox.jpg>) Aug 16, 2014; Chicago, IL, USA; Chicago White Sox designated hitter Paul Konerko (14) hits an RBI single during the sixth inning against the Toronto Blue Jays at U.S Cellular Field. Mandatory Credit: Dennis Wierzbicki-USA TODAY Sports

The trade that went down on Nov. 11, 1998, saw Konerko be traded from the Cincinnati Reds to the White Sox for outfielder [Mike Cameron](http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/c/camermi01.shtml?utm_campaign=Linker&utm_source=direct&utm_medium=linker-southsideshowdown.com) (http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/c/camermi01.shtml?utm_campaign=Linker&utm_source=direct&utm_medium=linker-southsideshowdown.com).



Since that trade, Konerko has become one of the most beloved and greatest players in franchise history, spending what is 16 seasons with the White Sox.

Konerko is retiring from the game following the conclusion of Sunday's season finale against the Kansas City Royals at US Cellular Field, leaving a legacy that will be unmatched for whomever the next Captain of the "Good Guys" will be sometime in the future.

Konerko has played over 2,200 games with the White Sox, but looking at that trade exactly what did the White Sox give up to obtain Konerko?



Da Windy City with Mark Carman

NBC's Mike Berman talks Bears playoffs plus the 1
00:00 / 47:38

Cameron played from 1995-98 with the White Sox, including two seasons of over 100 games in '97 and '98. With the White Sox, Cameron batted .229 with 23 home runs and 100 RBIs, but once he was traded to the Reds, he only played the '99 season with that franchise.

Paused

Eventually Cameron played for the Seattle Mariners, New York Mets, Boston Red Sox, San Diego Padres, Milwaukee Brewers and the Florida Marlins, equaling an 18-year MLB career and a .249 career batting average.

As for Konerko ... he stayed, and the White Sox got the best part of the trade.

Cameron was a very solid MLB player, in fact, one of the first MLB games I can remember attending he hit two home runs while playing for the Reds, but that is a story for another day.

Just thinking about how fortunate the White Sox were to be able to trade for a player like Konerko is something that just doesn't happen everyday.

Cincinnati gave up on Konerko after 26 games played with the franchise, but he has went on to play 2,265 games for the White Sox, and since the '06 season he "officially" became the Captain of the team.

The White Sox may never get another trade like this ever again, but the trade for Konerko changed the entire history

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Without the trade for Konerko, there is no 2005 World Series Game 2 grand slam against the Houston Astros, and without him, there is no World Series championship that season.

Getting a player who turned out to be a career .281 batter in a White Sox uniform, a player who and who has hit 432 home runs with the White Sox, and a player who has become the face of the franchise for many seasons, the White Sox were fortunate.

Was the trade for Konerko the best trade in franchise history?

I believe so.

Thoughts?

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