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MLB Groundskeepers Induct Dick Ericson, Harry Gill to the 2014 Hall of Fame

(LAWRENCE, Kan.) - In voting prior to their 16th annual meeting in January of 2014, the Association of Major League Baseball (MLB) Groundskeepers selected Mr. Dick Ericson, retired from the Minnesota Twins, and the late Mr. Harry Gill, formerly of the Milwaukee Brewers, as 2014 inductees to the MLB Groundskeepers Hall of Fame.

To be considered for induction to the MLB Groundskeepers Hall of Fame, a candidate must have ceased to be employed full-time in the profession for at least five years and have made a significant contribution to groundskeeping and the sports turf industry at the Major League level. An individual's impact on the community is also considered.

Ericson began his career as a teenager at Lexington Park in St. Paul, MN, home of the St. Paul Saints. After serving in the Navy during the Korean War, Ericson returned to work at Nicollet Park in Minneapolis, home of the AAA Minneapolis Millers. As Head Groundskeeper, he moved with the team into brand new Metropolitan Stadium of Bloomington, MN in 1956. In 1961, he continued in his role at the Met as MLB brought the Minnesota Twins to the Twin Cities. From 1961 to 1981, he maintained the field for both the Twins and the Minnesota Vikings of the NFL. In 1982, Ericson moved with both teams to the Metrodome, where he served as Superintendent until his retirement in 1995. In a career spanning six decades, Ericson helped host three World Series and two MLB All-Star Games, as well as countless other events at both multi-use facilities. He was also elected the first President of the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) in 1981.

Gill, long recognized as the Founder and driving force behind the formation of the STMA, had a career as a golf course superintendent prior to being hired by the Milwaukee Brewers as Superintendent of Grounds & Maintenance for the 1975 season. He became one of the most influential figures in his profession. His first season at Milwaukee's County Stadium included the 1975 All-Star Game, in addition to three concerts. He also helped host the 1982 World Series. Gill spent 16 seasons tending the grounds in Milwaukee, as well as the NFL's Green Bay Packers. After the 1990 season, with plans to retire at the end of the year, Gill passed away on October 26.

More than anything, he was a catalyst and a leader, the individual most responsible for bringing together the sports turf industry.

Inductees to the MLB Groundskeepers Hall of Fame are honored on the Gary Vanden Berg trophy – named in honor of the late Mr. Vanden Berg, Mr. Gill's successor in Milwaukee. Previous inductees are Emil Bossard (Cleveland Indians), George Toma (Kansas City Royals) and Joe Mooney (Boston Red Sox). Ericson and Gill will be honored on January 26, 2014 at the MLB Groundskeeper Meetings at Marlins Park in Miami.

STMA is the recognized leader in strengthening the sports turf industry. In 1981, when a small group of turfgrass managers, including Ericson, Gill and Toma, believed sports turf could be improved through sharing of knowledge and exchange of ideas, the STMA was officially formed.

About STMA

STMA is the not-for-profit, professional association for men and women who manage sports fields worldwide. Since 1981, the association and its 34 local chapters have been providing education, information and sharing practical knowledge in the art and science of sports field management. Its more than 2,600 members oversee sports fields and facilities at schools, colleges and universities, parks and recreational facilities, and professional sports stadiums.

For more information: www.stma.org, 800.323.3875

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