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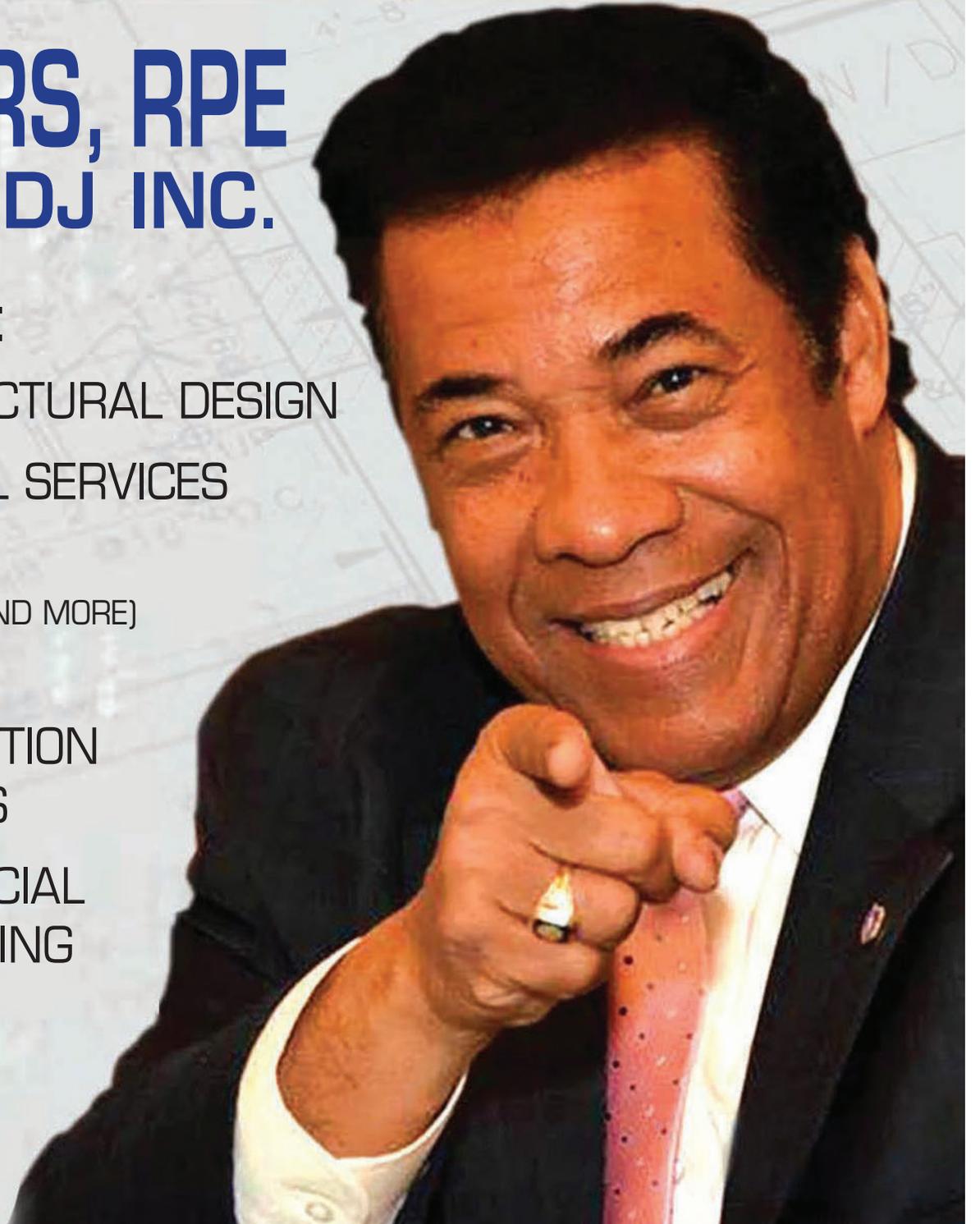
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# Ortiz hopes to become fount of wisdom for younger stars

BY MAC CERULLO  
CNHI Sports Boston

He calls it “the search.” During his playing career David Ortiz says he constantly sought out knowledge from more experienced players, hoping to learn from those who came before as he charted his own path forward.

This weekend that path will culminate with a place in Cooperstown among the game’s legends, and going forward Ortiz said he hopes to be a resource for the next generation of stars.

But speaking to reporters last week ahead of his Hall of Fame induction, the former Red Sox star expressed a tinge of disappointment. He said right now the sport has more talent than at any point he can remember, but for all the gifts today’s players possess, he isn’t sure they share his generation’s hunger for knowledge.

Or if they do, they aren’t seeking it from him.

“Since the day I retired a lot of things have changed. The players don’t search the way we used to,” Ortiz said. “In my day when I was trying to figure things out in the game I would’ve loved to have a friend like David Ortiz who gave me his thoughts about the game and about what he knows about what he’s learned. I’m a guy that’s open, always, but it’s not like you receive any phone calls from players trying to figure things out.”

Baseball has certainly undergone a rapid change since Ortiz retired after the 2016 season. The game has become much more analytical and if anything players are probably overwhelmed by the amount of information they have available to sift through.

But information isn’t a substitute for experience, and there are few players

in history with Ortiz’s level of experience and success coming through in clutch situations.

That success was a product of an old school mindset, Ortiz said, and developing the right mindset can be as essential for a player as anything else.

“Guys like myself, we have the mamba type of mentality about the game, we played the game in the toughest way, I would say. It was none of this babysitting [stuff] that’s going on with the game these days,” Ortiz said. “I think baseball has the best talent of all time as of right now, talent-wise the game is doing outstanding, but the game isn’t just about talent. Your mindset has to be lined up with your talent, so you can get the results you’re looking for.”

“There’s something that’s missing, and that’s something that’s related to the search,” Ortiz continued.

“And the search comes from the guys that have already played the game that have experience who can have a conversation with the player about figuring things out.”

Ortiz is hardly the first retired star to levy such criticism against a future generation of players, but it comes from an understandable place. Even five years after his retirement Ortiz remains one of the sport’s most visible figures, but as he enters the Hall of Fame the thing he wants most isn’t necessarily fame or recognition, but the opportunity to pay it forward.

He hopes to be a fount of wisdom for future players searching for their own greatness, and no matter how much his life changes going forward, that’s a gift he believes he’ll always be able to offer.

**Ortiz: ‘We have to keep Devers’**  
Recently Ortiz was asked about current Red Sox star



David Ortiz with Red Sox CEO Sam Kennedy.  
AP PHOTO

Rafael Devers, and the Boston legend didn’t hold back in his praise of the 25-year-old superstar. “When I see Devers it’s like I never left. He’s fearless,” Ortiz said. “Devers might be one of the top three pure hitters in the game. Not might, I’m 100% sure because I watched that kid kit and play the game so many times and when I watch him I’m expecting something.”

“I hope the Red Sox make

sense about the decision that they have to make with him” Ortiz continued. “We have to keep Devers around man, he’s the face of the organization right now and nobody can argue that.”

Ortiz later went on to say the same about shortstop Xander Bogaerts, adding: “They are the best players that can represent the Red Sox better than anyone else as of right now. We need to lock them in.”

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# New England has always known this day would come

BY MAC CERULLO  
CNHI Sports Boston

David Ortiz is one of the most important players in baseball history.

That isn't news to anybody in Boston. Around here we've known it for years. We all had a front row seat as Ortiz authored one iconic moment after another, and over the course of a decade taught one of the most cynical fan bases in sports how to believe.

Now, Ortiz is set to take his rightful place among baseball's all-time greats.

This weekend Ortiz will become the newest member of the Baseball Hall of Fame, joining era committee selections Buck O'Neil, Bud Fowler, Jim Kaat, Tony Oliva, Gil Hodges and Minnie Miñoso at Sunday's induction ceremony in Cooperstown, N.Y. Ortiz was the only player voted in by the BBWAA and is the 58th first-ballot Hall of Famer in baseball history, earning enshrinement on his first try with 77.9% of the vote.

Ortiz also becomes the fourth player from the Dominican Republic to earn induction, joining Vladimir Guerrero, Juan Marichal and Pedro Martinez, and the 15th whose plaque will feature a Red Sox insignia.

"It was crazy, I never dreamt of it," Ortiz said of his reaction to receiving the call. "I'm so thankful and grateful to be able to be part of this elite group."

It's hard to overstate how much Ortiz's induction means, and it's harder to explain how improbable it really is considering how his career started. The first six seasons of Ortiz's big league career were totally unremarkable, and when he signed with the Red Sox as

a free agent in 2003 the hope was only that he could compete for at-bats with Jeremy Giambi.

Instead, he turned into a three-time World Series champion and a legend.

Ortiz's 2004 postseason was instantly iconic. His walk-offs in Games 4 and 5 of the American League Championship Series fueled Boston's improbable 3-0 comeback against the Yankees, and that was after he also hit a series-clinching walk-off home run in the divisional series against the Angels.

Even if that was the high point of Ortiz's career, helping end the club's 86-year World Series drought would have made him a Red Sox legend forever. But it was only the beginning.

In 2006, Ortiz broke Jimmie Foxx's club record for home runs in a season, smashing 54 to deliver a jolt of excitement into an otherwise disappointing year. The following year he helped the 2007 club win another World Series title, and for years afterwards Ortiz remained an all-star caliber force anchoring the middle of the lineup.

Then, in 2013, Ortiz authored his best performance yet.

Days after the Boston Marathon bombings rocked the city, Ortiz took the microphone at Fenway Park and said exactly what we all needed to hear. "This is our [bleeping] city!" From there, he delivered his best season in years and helped lead the Red Sox on a stunning worst-to-first turnaround.

Once in the playoffs, Ortiz turned back the clock and delivered that old October magic once more. His game-tying grand slam in Game 2 of the ALCS saved



AP PHOTO

David Ortiz was responsible for a generation's worth of memories for Red Sox fans throughout his career.

the Red Sox season and flipped a series that was quickly slipping away. His performance in the World Series was nothing short of legendary. Between his hitting .688 and the passionate dugout speech he delivered in Game 4, Ortiz might have been the biggest slam dunk World Series MVP in history.

Finally, there was the unforgettable end to Ortiz's career, when the 40-year-old hit 38 home runs, led the AL with 127 RBI and posted a 1.021 OPS in his farewell season. The Red Sox didn't even wait a year to retire his number 34, and by the time he was finished Ortiz was without question among the most recognizable faces in

baseball.

You could argue he still is today.

Despite all of that, Ortiz's Hall of Fame induction was never a certainty. Some voters still resist the idea of enshrining a career DH, and many also believe he might have used performance-enhancing drugs. Those factors are the main reason why Ortiz's induction wound up as close as it was.

But Ortiz always did have a flair for the dramatic, and regardless of the journey he'll now go down as the all-time great Red Sox fans have long known him to be.

Email: [mcerullo@northof-boston.com](mailto:mcerullo@northof-boston.com). Twitter: @MacCerullo.

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## DAVID ORTIZ CAREER STATISTICS

Year	Age	Team	Lg	G	PA	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	BA	OBP	SLG	OPS	OPS+	TB	GDP	HBP	SH	SF	IBB	Pos	Awards
1997	21	MIN	AL	15	51	49	10	16	3	0	1	6	0	0	2	19	.327	.353	.449	.802	108	22	1	0	0	0	0	1B/DH	
1998	22	MIN	AL	86	326	278	47	77	20	0	9	46	1	0	39	72	.277	.371	.446	.817	111	124	8	5	0	4	3	1B/DH	
1999	23	MIN	AL	10	25	20	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	12	.000	.200	.000	.200	-43	0	2	0	0	0	0	DH/1B	
2000	24	MIN	AL	130	478	415	59	117	36	1	10	63	1	0	57	81	.282	.364	.446	.810	101	185	13	0	0	6	2	DH/1B	
2001	25	MIN	AL	89	347	303	46	71	17	1	18	48	1	0	40	68	.234	.324	.475	.799	107	144	6	1	1	2	8	DH/1B	
2002	26	MIN	AL	125	466	412	52	112	32	1	20	75	1	2	43	87	.272	.339	.500	.839	120	206	5	3	0	8	0	DH/1B	
2003	27	BOS	AL	128	509	448	79	129	39	2	31	101	0	0	58	83	.288	.369	.592	.961	144	265	9	1	0	2	8	DH/1B	
2004	28	BOS	AL	150	669	582	94	175	47	3	41	139	0	0	75	133	.301	.380	.603	.983	145	351	12	4	0	8	8	DH/1B	AS, SS
2005	29	BOS	AL	159	713	601	119	180	40	1	47	148	1	0	102	124	.300	.397	.604	1.001	158	363	13	1	0	9	9	DH/1B	AS, SS
2006	30	BOS	AL	151	686	558	115	160	29	2	54	137	1	0	119	117	.287	.413	.636	1.049	161	355	12	4	0	5	23	DH/1B	AS, SS
2007	31	BOS	AL	149	667	549	116	182	52	1	35	117	3	1	111	103	.332	.445	.621	1.066	171	341	16	4	0	3	12	DH/1B	AS, SS
2008	32	BOS	AL	109	491	416	74	110	30	1	23	89	1	0	70	74	.264	.369	.507	.877	124	211	11	1	1	3	12	DH	AS
2009	33	BOS	AL	150	627	541	77	129	35	1	28	99	0	2	74	134	.238	.332	.462	.794	102	250	9	5	0	7	5	DH/1B	
2010	34	BOS	AL	145	606	518	86	140	36	1	32	102	0	1	82	145	.270	.370	.529	.899	137	274	12	2	0	4	14	DH/1B	AS
2011	35	BOS	AL	146	605	525	84	162	40	1	29	96	1	1	78	83	.309	.398	.554	.953	154	291	24	1	0	1	12	DH/1B	AS, SS
2012	36	BOS	AL	90	383	324	65	103	26	0	23	60	0	1	56	51	.318	.415	.611	1.026	173	198	6	0	0	3	13	DH/1B	AS
2013	37	BOS	AL	137	600	518	84	160	38	2	30	103	4	0	76	88	.309	.395	.564	.959	159	292	21	1	0	5	27	DH/1B	AS, SS
2014	38	BOS	AL	142	602	518	59	136	27	0	35	104	0	0	75	95	.263	.355	.517	.873	140	268	18	3	0	6	22	DH/1B	
2015	39	BOS	AL	146	614	528	73	144	37	0	37	108	0	1	77	95	.273	.360	.553	.913	142	292	16	0	0	9	16	DH/1B	
2016	40	BOS	AL	110	463	394	57	123	38	1	27	93	2	0	64	62	.312	.406	.619	1.025	164	244	18	1	0	4	13	DH/1B	AS

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<b>Boston (14 yrs)</b>	<b>1912</b>	<b>8235</b>	<b>7020</b>	<b>1182</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>1496</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1117</b>	<b>1387</b>	<b>.290</b>	<b>.386</b>	<b>.569</b>	<b>.955</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>3995</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>194</b>					

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Year	Age	Team	Series	Opp	Result	G	PA	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	BA	OBP	SLG	OPS	TB	GDP	HBP	SH	SF	IBB	Awards
2002	26	MIN	ALDS	OAK	W	4	13	13	0	3	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	5	.231	.231	.385	.615	5	0	0	0	0	0	
2002	26	MIN	ALCS	ANA	L	5	16	16	0	5	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	5	.313	.313	.375	.688	6	0	0	0	0	0	
2003	27	BOS	ALDS	OAK	W	5	23	21	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	7	.095	.174	.143	.317	3	0	0	0	0	1	
2003	27	BOS	ALCS	NYN	L	7	30	26	4	7	1	0	2	6	0	0	3	8	.269	.367	.538	.905	14	1	1	0	0	0	
2004	28	BOS	ALDS	ANA	W	3	16	11	4	6	2	0	1	4	0	0	5	2	.545	.688	1.000	1.688	11	0	0	0	0	3	
2004	28	BOS	ALCS	NYN	W	7	35	31	6	12	0	1	3	11	0	1	4	7	.387	.457	.742	1.199	23	0	0	0	0	0	MVP
2004	28	BOS	WS	STL	W	4	17	13	3	4	1	0	1	4	0	0	4	1	.308	.471	.615	1.086	8	0	0	0	0	0	
2005	29	BOS	ALDS	CHW	L	3	12	12	2	4	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	.333	.333	.750	1.083	9	0	0	0	0	0	
2007	31	BOS	ALDS	LAA	W	3	13	7	5	5	0	0	2	3	0	0	6	1	.714	.846	1.571	2.418	11	0	0	0	0	2	
2007	31	BOS	ALCS	CLE	W	7	33	24	7	7	3	0	1	3	0	0	6	5	.292	.424	.542	.966	13	2	1	0	2	0	
2007	31	BOS	WS	COL	W	4	17	15	4	5	3	0	0	4	0	0	2	3	.333	.412	.533	.945	8	0	0	0	0	0	
2008	32	BOS	ALDS	LAA	W	4	20	17	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	4	.235	.350	.294	.644	5	0	0	0	0	0	
2008	32	BOS	ALCS	TBR	L	7	32	26	3	4	1	1	1	4	0	0	6	9	.154	.313	.385	.697	10	0	0	0	0	1	
2009	33	BOS	ALDS	LAA	L	3	12	12	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	.083	.083	.083	.167	1	0	0	0	0	0	
2013	37	BOS	ALDS	TBR	W	4	18	13	4	5	1	0	2	3	0	0	5	2	.385	.556	.923	1.479	12	1	0	0	0	0	
2013	37	BOS	ALCS	DET	W	6	25	22	1	2	0	0	1	4	0	0	3	4	.091	.200	.227	.427	5	0	0	0	0	0	
2013	37	BOS	WS	STL	W	6	25	16	7	11	2	0	2	6	0	0	8	1	.688	.760	1.188	1.948	19	0	0	0	1	4	MVP

<b>8 years (17 series)</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>.295</b>	<b>.409</b>	<b>.553</b>	<b>.962</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>						
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G: games PA: plate appearances AB: at bats R: runs H: hits 2B: doubles 3B: triples HR: home runs RBI: runs batted in SB: stolen bases CS: caught stealing BB: walks SO: strikeouts BA: batting avg. OB: on-base pct. SLG: slugging pct. OPS: on-base pct. + slugging pct. OPS+: adjusted OPS (100 is league avg.) TB: total bases GDP: grounded into double play HBP: hit by pitcher SH: sacrifice hits SF: sacrifice flies IBB: intentional walks Pos: position. AWARDS — AS: All-Star SS: Silver Slugger



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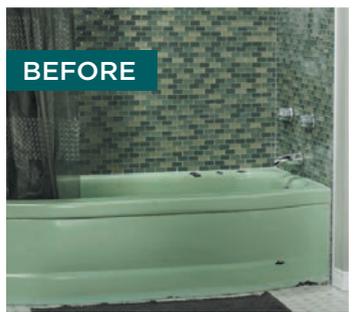
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# David Ortiz's 10 GREATEST RED SOX MOMENTS

## APRIL 27, 2003 ORTIZ'S FIRST RED SOX HOMER

It's hard to believe, but when David Ortiz first joined the Red Sox, he was basically a complementary piece, an extra bat who mostly sat on the bench while battling Jeremy Giambi and Shea Hillenbrand for playing time. It wasn't long before Ortiz began showing flashes of the player he would soon become, and the first big moment came on April 27, 2003.

That night, with the Red Sox embroiled in a 14-inning marathon with the Anaheim Angels, Ortiz hit his first career home run with the Red Sox, drilling a solo home run to give Boston the lead. The Red Sox went on to win 6-4, and within a month, Ortiz had supplanted his competition to become the team's full-time designated hitter.

## GAME 4 OF 2003 ALDS ORTIZ STAVES OFF ELIMINATION

By the time the 2003 playoffs came around, David Ortiz had cemented himself as the team's breakout star, finishing the regular season with 31 home runs and 101 RBIs. But with the Red Sox trailing the Oakland A's 2-1 in the ALDS, and down by a score of 4-3 in the eighth inning of Game 4, the Sox looked to be in trouble.

Then, facing future teammate Keith Foulke, Ortiz ripped a two-run double to put the Red Sox ahead 5-4.

The lead would stand, and Boston went on to win Game 5 as well to win the series and advance to the ALCS against the New York Yankees. It was the first of many clutch playoff hits to come.

"I can't think of any better time to do that than when he just did," said Red Sox manager Grady Little after Game 4. "He's been in slumps before this year. He's come out with some big hits at the right time for the Boston Red Sox. That's what makes him so special."

## GAME 3 OF 2004 ALDS ORTIZ HITS SERIES-WINNING WALK-OFF

David Ortiz officially became the most clutch hitter in Red Sox history in October of 2004, but often overlooked is his series-winning walk-off home run to beat the Angels in Game 3 of the 2004 ALDS, completing a sweep and sending the Red Sox to their second straight ALCS matchup with the Yankees.

Ortiz's home run came in the 10th inning, shortly after Vladimir Guerrero hit a game-tying grand slam to make it 6-6 in the seventh inning. Guerrero's home run silenced the Fenway Park crowd, but the fans would go home happy after Ortiz blasted a two-run home run over the Green Monster.

After the game Angels manager Mike Scioscia marveled at how far Ortiz had come since his days in Minnesota. "You saw the potential," Scioscia said. "I know he was



David Ortiz is greeted at home plate by Jason Varitek after hitting his first home run for the Red Sox in the 14th inning against the Anaheim Angels in Anaheim, Calif., on April 27, 2003. Varitek also homered in his next at bat, powering the Red Sox to a 6-4 victory.

AP FILE PHOTO

looking for a job I think a couple of years ago as far as what clubs were going to sign him. Found a home here and he's been incredible, to say the least."

## GAME 4 OF 2004 ALCS ORTIZ STUNS THE YANKEES IN THE 12TH

With the Red Sox trailing the Yankees 3-0 in the 2004 ALCS, the team looked to be in really bad shape, but after Dave Roberts' steal and Bill Mueller's game-tying hit in the ninth inning, the Red Sox had new life. Then, in the 12th inning, Big Papi stepped up to the plate and hit probably the most iconic home run of his career, a two-run shot to right field off Paul Quantrill to give the Red Sox a 6-4 win.

With that home run, Ortiz became the first player to ever hit two walk-off home runs in the same postseason, and the Red Sox, previously facing seemingly insurmountable odds, now had new life.

"Paul always makes good pitches on me," Ortiz said after the game. "The fastball comes right at me. He gave it

to me a couple of times and I was kind of looking for it."

## GAME 5 OF 2004 ALCS: ORTIZ DOES IT AGAIN

If there were any remaining doubts about Ortiz's ability to come through in the clutch, they were silenced for good the next night. At the end of a 14-inning game that lasted five hours and 49 minutes, Ortiz stepped up to the plate with two outs and Johnny Damon on base, and after a 10-pitch at bat, singled off Esteban Loaiza to give the Red Sox the dramatic 5-4 win.

That came after Ortiz also hit a solo home run in the eighth inning, cutting the team's deficit to 4-3 and helping start a rally that would eventually tie the game and force extra innings. And with the win, the Red Sox seized the momentum and went on to win the series in seven games. Ortiz also had a home run in Game 7, and was named ALCS MVP for his heroics.

## SEPT. 21, 2006 ORTIZ BEATS FOXX

While the Red Sox were in

the midst of a brief step back in between championships in 2006, David Ortiz was at the height of his power. For much of the season, Ortiz kept pace with former Red Sox great Jimmie Foxx, and on Sept. 21 against the Minnesota Twins he broke Foxx's single-season Red Sox home run record with his 51st of the season.

The record-breaking home run came off Johan Santana, the eventual Cy Young Award winner, in the first inning, and Ortiz would actually hit a second later in the game as well. Ortiz finished the season with 54 home runs, a team record that still stands to this day.

"I'm very proud of all he's accomplished in his career. It's unbelievable," said Santana, who came up in the Twins' system with Ortiz. "The only way I wasn't going to give up a home run to him was not to throw the ball."

## APRIL 20, 2013 "THIS IS OUR F\*\*\*ING CITY!"

Five days after the Boston Marathon bombings, the Red Sox returned to Fenway Park for their first home game

since the attack. At the end of a pregame ceremony, Ortiz stepped up to the microphone and said what everybody in Boston needed to hear.

"All right, Boston. This jersey that we wear today, it doesn't say Red Sox. It says Boston. We want to thank you, Mayor Menino, Governor Patrick, the whole police department for the great job that they did this past week," Ortiz said, before delivering the big quote. "This is our f\*\*\*ing city! And nobody's going to dictate our freedom. Stay strong. Thank you."

Despite the moment being broadcast live on TV and radio, the Federal Communications Commission declined to issue any punishment over the expletive, and President Obama later praised Ortiz, saying the moment was "probably the only time that America didn't have a problem with somebody cursing on live TV."

## GAME 2 OF 2013 ALCS ORTIZ HITS SERIES-SAVING GRAND SLAM

The 2013 ALCS hadn't gotten off to a great start for the Red Sox, who were nearly

no-hit in a Game 1 loss and then were shut down through seven innings by Detroit ace Max Scherzer in Game 2. Once the Red Sox got to the bullpen, however, the team's bats came to life, and after Dustin Pedroia hit a single to load the bases, Tigers manager Jim Leyland went to his closer, Joaquin Benoit, to face Ortiz.

With his team trailing 5-1, Ortiz smashed a first-pitch changeup into the bullpen to tie the game, which the Red Sox later won on a walk-off single in the ninth. A photo of Tigers right fielder Torii Hunter, ironically one of Ortiz's best friends from their days as teammates in Minnesota, tumbling over the short right field fence as a nearby police officer raises his arms in celebration, became an iconic image from the season.

"David so many times has come up big," said Red Sox manager John Farrell. "Whether it's regular season, postseason, none bigger than tonight."

**GAME 4 OF  
2013 WORLD SERIES  
ORTIZ DELIVERS  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
EFFORT**

Nine years to the day after the Red Sox beat the St. Louis Cardinals to end their 86-year championship drought, the Sox again found themselves facing the Cardinals in the Fall Classic, only this time they were going into Game 4 trailing 2-1 in the series.

Needing a spark, David Ortiz went a perfect 3-for-3 at the plate with two doubles to help the Red Sox win 4-2 and tie the series up. Ortiz was also caught on camera delivering a pep talk to his teammate between innings in the game. He would ultimately go 11-for-16 in the series to lead the Red Sox to their third championship in 10 years, winning World Series MVP for his efforts.

"He's as hot as anyone you're going to see this time of year," said Cardinals manager Mike Matheny after the series.

**SEPT. 15, 2015  
ORTIZ HITS HIS  
500TH CAREER  
HOME RUN**

While it didn't happen at Fenway Park, David Ortiz became only the 27th player in major league history to hit 500 career home runs with his fifth-inning solo shot off Matt Moore. The home run was Ortiz's second of the game and his 34th of the season. He would end up finishing with 37.

Since then, Ortiz has continued to pound home runs in his final season, and going into Aug. 17, he had 27 home runs on the year and 530 for his career, ranking 19th all-time just four behind Jimmie Foxx and six behind Mickey Mantle.

"This is something you don't see every day. It's going to be very special," said Ortiz, who wore a black cap with a Superman logo to his post-game news conference afterwards. "I'm going to take a lot of pride in that."

We have all been privileged to watch the building of a Hall of Fame career.

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Carl Yastrzemski, shown in his Triple Crown year of 1967, retired in 1983. "He's a big part of the Red Sox family," he says of David Ortiz.



*"I love that about him, his competitiveness. I lived for those moments, too. He was clutch. You have to want to be in that position."*

Carl Yastrzemski on David Ortiz

# Yastrzemski sees a lot of himself in Big Papi

## HALL OF FAMER TIPS HIS CAP TO ANOTHER RED SOX LEGEND

BY BILL BURT

Carl Yastrzemski feels like a proud papa these days.

He turns 83 on Aug. 22, and the time is coming for the next Red Sox legend to take the franchise's torch and carry it into the next two or three decades.

That's what Yaz did after leaving the game and the Red Sox in 1983. And that "next" guy appears to be David Ortiz.

That means heading down to Fort Myers for spring training. That means some ceremonial first pitches. That means being an integral part of the franchise long after his last home run.

If that's the case, it couldn't happen to a better guy, says Yaz.

"He's a big part of the Red Sox family," said Yastrzemski. "He's not only been a great player and helped bring three World Series championships, but he's been great for the community. And that's important, too."

Yaz doesn't get down to Fenway Park as much as he used to. Fishing and golf usually get in the way. So does his family.

But he has been watching Red Sox games since retirement, and he puts Ortiz up there with the best he ever saw or played with in Boston.

"I know people say it's not easy to play here because of the scrutiny, but I disagree," said Yaz. "The energy at the park every day is incredible. I used to eat it up. David does, too, I believe. If you play hard and do your best, the fans appreciate that."

Working hard is something Yaz knows well. He had a long history of being the first player at the park and the last to leave.

Captain Carl said he saw Ortiz many times in Fort Myers putting in the extra

work required to be great.

"That impresses me about him," said Yaz. "He'd hit a bunch of balls off the tee. He'd take soft toss. He'd hit more off the tee. I really respected that. He didn't take his success for granted. I didn't either."

Yaz saw another trait in Ortiz that he saw in himself.

Ortiz wanted to be the guy at the plate with the game on the line.

"I love that about him, his competitiveness," said Yaz. "I lived for those moments, too. He was clutch. You have to want to be in that position."

"Your team depends on you in those moments, and that feels good, too," said Yaz.

Ortiz was lucky to have had over his career an ownership that demanded a winner and surrounded him with other stars.

"I give ownership a lot of credit," said Yaz. "They will do anything to put a great club on the field. I really admire that. I expect that David does, too."

But it was his ability to focus on his role that made Ortiz one of the most successful designated hitters ever, Yaz said.

"I didn't like the DH role," said Yaz. "It was tough to keep concentrating. I like to think a lot during a game. And when you are in the field, you are able to take your mind off what might have happened at the plate. David mastered that part of it. Trust me, it isn't easy."

Yaz said while Ortiz has put up some incredible numbers over his 14 seasons, including the three championships, his relationship with teammates and fans is what made him so beloved.

"He's a great guy. You can see that," said Yaz. "His teammates respond to him. The fans respond to him. I've been very proud of his career and the way he has represented the Red Sox family. Very proud." ▲



Hall of Famer Carl Yastrzemski hugs David Ortiz after throwing out the ceremonial first pitch at Fenway Park in September 2013.

ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO

# Santo Domingo:

## WHERE THE 'BIG PAPI' LEGEND WAS BORN

By MAC CERULLO

Red Sox fans across New England were devastated when the New York Yankees' Aaron Boone ended the team's 2003 season on a Game 7 walk-off homer. Older fans were left to wonder whether they would ever live to see the day their team would win the championship.

We all know what happened a year later.

The Red Sox, in large part thanks to the heroics of David Ortiz, answered the fans' prayers that October and the Sox went on to win two more World Series championships, in 2007 and 2013, with Ortiz leading the way.

But long before Ortiz's famous walk-off home run in Game 4 of the American League Championship Series against the Yankees, or his walk-off single in Game 5 the next day, or his game-tying grand slam against the Detroit Tigers in the 2013 ALCS, or any of his other big hits over the years, Ortiz had already become the answer to someone's prayers, someone whose prayers meant the most to him.

In his 2008 autobiography "Big Papi," which he co-authored with sports reporter Tony Massarotti, Ortiz recounts his upbringing in the Dominican Republic. He writes positively about the relationship he had with his father, Americo Enrique Ortiz, and one particularly poignant passage tells a story his father often told him growing up.

The story goes that when Enrique was young, he was a great pitcher, a righty who many thought could one day make it to the big leagues. At some point he met a woman named Angela Arias, and soon they fell in love.



Outside Baseball City, Dominican Republic.

PHOTO BY SHAWN BOBURG

In the summer of 1975, they learned they would have a child. Enrique traveled to the small town of Higüey to visit Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia, or Our Lady of High Grace, the most famous church in the country.

Ortiz explained what happened next.

"I prayed," my father told me. "I said, 'God, I am going to leave this game that I love and I do not need to explain why. Angela is due to have our first baby. I am soon going to be a father. Maybe you can bless me with a boy. And maybe someday he could be a major league player,'" Ortiz recounted. To this day, he makes a trip to that same church every winter to thank God for all he has given him.

"I thank him mostly for allowing my pop's wishes to come true."

### Humble beginnings

Ortiz's big league stardom was far from preordained, and while he had the physical and mental tools to succeed, he didn't have many of the advantages that children born in

the United States take for granted.

Ortiz grew up in Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, and lived there until he was about 14 or 15 years old. His family had a house with a big backyard, and while the family was poor, he never felt like it when he was young.

Once he was in high school, the family moved to Bajos de Haina, a city just outside Santo Domingo. Their house there was small and didn't have a backyard, but the high school was nearby, and Ortiz played basketball and baseball there.

At numerous points in the book, Ortiz describes baseball as a religion in the Dominican Republic. The players who make it in the big leagues become national heroes, none more so than Juan Marichal, who was the first Hall of Famer from the country.

Baseball is also an escape for kids in the Dominican.

Kids will play baseball all day, gathering on the streets outside their houses to play until the sun goes down.

Sometimes kids even try to sneak out of school early to play.

Almost any big league player from the Dominican Republic can tell similar stories. Ortiz recalls how when he joined the Red Sox in 2003, Pedro Martinez used to say that when he needed a baseball, he would sometimes snap the head off a doll, rip out its hair and play with that. Ortiz said he got a kick out of that story, since he used to do the same thing, even though he knew his sister would be furious.

Anything that could be used as a bat or ball was used as such. Ortiz said one of his innovations was to take one of his dad's socks, stuff it with plastic bags then wrap the slack tightly to make a waterproof ball.

When they couldn't find a ball, sometimes they used to just play with a bottle cap, which could be easily thrown in a curve. Ortiz said this actually helped him develop his skills as a hitter early on, particularly with off-speed pitches.

"I've always been able to hit a curveball, and I think



Juan Marichal was the only Hall of Famer from the Dominican Republic until Pedro Martinez joined him in 2016. David Ortiz becomes the third this weekend.

one of the big reasons is because I learned how to hit a bottle cap with a broomstick when I was growing up," Ortiz said. "Think about it. I mean, if you can hit a bottle cap with a broomstick, you can pretty much hit anything, right?"

### Getting noticed

The ultimate dream for every young ballplayer growing up in the Dominican Republic is to get noticed by one of the buscones, or street scouts, with connections to big league clubs. Ortiz said that when he was young, he used to be compared to Fred McGriff, a longtime first baseman who hit 493 home runs in his career.

When he was 16, Ortiz was invited to a Florida Marlins camp.

The Marlins had just been approved as an expansion team and wouldn't actually join Major League Baseball until 1993, but they were still permitted to begin developing minor league players. Ortiz was one of the only first basemen in the camp, which led to his arm

getting overworked. When he developed a sore elbow and was unable to throw, he was sent home.

It was the first big setback of Ortiz's career, and he wrote that during this time, his father helped him refocus and press on. Even though his parents had recently separated, his father remained closely involved in his life, and that made a huge difference during some difficult times.

"My pop might have stopped being married to my mom, but he never stopped being my father," he said.

As it turned out, another buscone had been watching Ortiz. When the Marlins sent Ortiz home, the buscone, whose nickname was Machepe, reached out and asked him to work out with him. Over the next few weeks, Machepe tailored a workout that had Ortiz hit and field, but not throw, giving his elbow time to rest and heal.

During that time, Machepe spread word throughout the local baseball community that he had a hot hitting prospect on his hands, and he eventually got Ortiz into a Dominican Summer League batting practice session. Not long after, on Nov. 28, 1992, Ortiz signed his first professional contract. The Seattle Mariners gave him a \$7,500 signing bonus. To celebrate, his father went out and bought some new equipment, and he and his son went to work on achieving the big league dream.

It took some time, but eventually that dream came true. Ortiz made his major league debut for the Minnesota Twins on Sept. 2, 1997, answering his father's prayer for a major leaguer son after 22 years. 🏆



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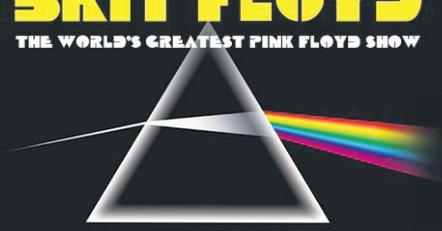
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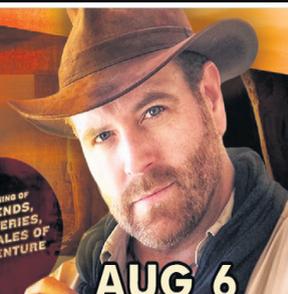
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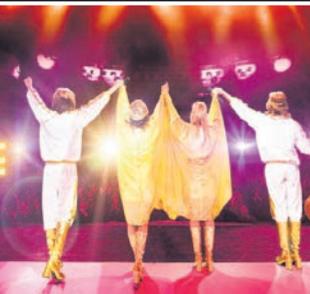
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