



Willie Horton

Willie Horton is known as one of the strongest men ever to play Major League Baseball. Perhaps that is as a result of being the youngest of 21 children in the Horton family!

Willie played in the majors for 18 years, including 15 with his beloved hometown Detroit Tigers. He was a key player for the Tigers when they won the 1968 World Series. In fact, his throw to home plate to nab the speedy Lou Brock in Game 5 is still talked about.

His accomplishments in the game are many. In 1975 and 1979, he won the AL Designated Hitter Award and also in 1979, was voted AL Comeback Player of the Year. He also selected to the All-Star team five times. In over 2,000 games, Willie clubbed 325 homeruns, collected 1,163 RBI's, and fell just short of 2,000 hits (1,993). Following his playing career, Willie went on to coach for several major league teams.

In addition to these tremendous statistics, Willie was the ultimate team player who was respected by his teammates and opponents alike. Willie is a man who never forgot those cold and hungry days of growing up in Detroit, or the pain and despair of the tragic loss of his parents at a young age. During the Detroit riots of 1967, Willie risked his own life by going into the streets to talk to the rioters and looters to bring calm back to the city. Willie has since gone on to work for the Detroit Police Athletic League, Detroit Lions Club blind youth program, the United Way and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, to name just a few. He maintains a vision to clean up the nation's streets, making them safe for children. In Willie's own words, "What I'm doing will make a difference for our grandkids. I left baseball and came home, home to work with kids, because it was in my heart, like a calling. It was something I had to do. I'm not special. I'm just me, but if my name and my past can help the kids, that's good! Oh yes, that's good!"

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