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In the wake of the news



Mike Downey

High time for Selig to pardon Weaver

Published October 20, 2005

Bud Selig, I have a favor to beg of you.

A request, really. A plea. An appeal to you as a decent, honest, red-blooded American who happens to be in charge of our national pastime. You are the commissioner of baseball. You have clout. You have influence. You have say-so.

How would you feel about being truly brave? About becoming a hero to the people of Chicago—and to one Chicago man's family in particular—here in a town that hasn't won a World Series for 86 years?

Grant amnesty to Buck Weaver.

The grave marker at Mt. Hope Cemetery, just off 115th Street, reads this way:

Husband

George D. Weaver

1890—1956

And that's it. Nothing else. Not a word about how Ty Cobb called him the greatest third baseman of his day.

Not a word about his .333 batting average in the 1917 World Series as the White Sox took the championship.

No mention of how he hit .324 in the 1919 Series and played each of its

eight games error-free.

Of how he never took a dive or took a dime.

Of how he was banned for life by the commissioner anyway.

Of how he was guilty of nothing except not being a snitch on his friends.

Of how he was the only one of the eight "Black Sox" defendants to ask for a separate trial.

Of how catcher Ray Schalk spoke during the case and for years thereafter of "the seven" Sox teammates who were crooks.

Of how the trial judge, Hugo Friend, reportedly instructed the jury that he would overturn a guilty verdict in Weaver's case (and his alone).

Of how 14,000 Chicago fans signed a petition in 1921, pleading for Weaver's reinstatement.

Of how until his death in 1956, Weaver was the only one of the "Eight Men Out" who remained here in Chicago—and the only one who maintained his innocence to the end.

Bud, this one's up to you.

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