

Jeter the Player vs. Jeter the Brand

Written by Maury Brown
Wednesday, 06 October 2010 07:37



This is not the season that Derek Jeter would have liked. In his 16 career seasons, he's never had so many opportunities (663 at bats) to perform, and yet struggled. His batting average is the lowest of his career when accounting for more than the 15 games he played as a rookie (.270). He had 16 more strikeouts than he did last season (106) and is the highest he's had since 2005. His OBP? The lowest of his career outside of those scant 15 games he played as a rookie. Home runs? Down 8 from last season. At 10, it's the lowest homerun total for Jeter since having 10 in 1997.

For Jeter, much can be made up in the next month. The postseason is where he is known to shine, and if so, the contract renewal he is most assuredly going to land may come with less squirming on Brian Cashman's side of the table.

After all, how much is Jeter's value worth outside of what he does on the field? What is his iconic value?

Brian Costa of the Wall Street Journal broaches the topic today (see [For Jeter, It's All About October](#)). As Costa writes:

What to do with their aging captain?

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With Mr. Jeter's 10-year contract about to expire, the Yankees are approaching one of the most unique free-agent negotiations in the history of professional sports.

Costa asked me about Jeter's unique situation, and as I said:

*"He is the brand representative of the Yankees," said **Maury Brown**, president of the Business of Sports Network, a group of sports business websites. "His worth off the field is worth millions. Now, is it 10 million? Is it 20 million? It's hard to quantify. You don't want to disrespect him. So how do you weigh that within being reasonable?"*

Being reasonable will be gauged, in part, on how Jeter performs in the postseason. But, whether it is this year, or in the next few to come, Jeter's natural decline due to age will come to the forefront. As J.P. Ricciardi says in the article, "When you think of Derek Jeter, you think of Joe DiMaggio and Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig..." In that, there is little denying. But, as was the case with all those players, when the time comes to hang up the cleats...

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