

Dick Wagner Dead at 78

Written by The Staff
Saturday, 07 October 2006 03:18

Our condolences to the Wagner family...

Dick Wagner, the former GM and President of the Cincinnati Reds and Astros has died from complications due to a car accident in 1999. Wagner was 78.

Wagner joined the Reds in 1967 as Assistant GM, a position he held till 1978 (official titles during this time were: Assistant to Executive Vice President ('67-'73) Assistant to President (1974), Vice President, Administrative ('75-'76), Executive Vice President and General Manager (1977)).

On February 2, 1978, Wagner became GM of the Reds, a position he held under different titles until he left the club in 1983 (official title during this time was President and Chief Executive Officer). Wagner was hired on September 13, 1985 by the Astros, where he was the GM (official title President and General Manager). He resigned from the club on October 23, 1987.

As reported:

"Dick Wagner dedicated his life to the game of baseball," Commissioner Bud Selig said in a statement released on Friday evening. "He played an integral role with the Cincinnati Reds during the heyday of the 'Big Red Machine', serving as general manager and later president of the club during the late-1970s and early '80s. After a term as the president of the Houston Astros in the early '90s, at my request, he oversaw our New York offices and helped build our organization to what it is today.

"All of us in baseball will miss him. My sympathies and condolences go out to his wife, Gloria, and to his family and friends. Baseball has lost another of its true gentlemen."

The Reds won consecutive World Series championships in 1975-76 with Wagner and general manager Bob Howsam as the architects. When Howsam stepped aside following the 1977

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season, Wagner assumed control of the Reds' baseball operations.

An opponent of the free agent movement, Wagner tried to stem the rising tide of expensive player salaries and was part of one of the more difficult eras in the club's history. Big Red Machine stalwarts Pete Rose, George Foster and Don Gullett left the club and popular manager Sparky Anderson was dismissed.

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