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## **Willie Mays Personal Collection to be Sold to Benefit the Say Hey! Foundation**

*Important Collection of Memorabilia Relating to one of the Greatest Athletes in American History*

**Philadelphia, PA (7/8/2025)** – Hunt Auctions is extremely honored to present an important live auction event offering the personal collection of National Baseball Hall of Fame member, Willie Mays. Per Mr. Mays' wishes, all proceeds from this auction will go to delivering education, training, and health services for youth through the Say Hey! Foundation which Willie Mays founded in 2000. The auction will take place on September 27, 2025 at the King Street Warehouse event space adjacent to Oracle Park.

Willie Howard Mays, Jr. began his meteoric rise within the game of baseball as an outstanding multi-sport athlete at Fairfield Industrial High School. He would quickly turn fully towards the game of baseball signing with the Birmingham Black Barons of the Negro American League in 1948. The New York Giants would sign Mays to his first MLB contract in 1950 and after a brief stint in the minor leagues he would join the club in 1951 leading the Giants to a National League pennant earning him Rookie of the Year honors. After serving for two years in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, Willie Mays rejoined the Giants in 1954 to lead the club to a World Series title and NL MVP Award honors. Mays would follow the Giants to San Francisco in 1958 beginning a lifelong love affair with the Bay Area that continued long after his playing career ended. Many athletes who reach the most elite level of their particular sport for any lengthy period of time historically end their career with impressive cumulative statistics. Willie Mays was different with categories of statistics virtually invented due to his unique all-around skill set some of which earning records that still stand today. As often quoted, Ted Williams famously remarked, *"They invented the All-Star Game for Willie Mays."* Although impossible to completely capture Mays' career accomplishments, they are truly unequalled in total by any other player. During his career between 1951 and 1973 Willie Mays collected 3,293 Hits, 661 Home Runs, 1,909 RBIs, Two NL MVP Awards, 1954 World Series championship, Twelve NL Gold Glove awards, twenty-four NL All-Star team selections, MLB All-Century Team, Induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1979, and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015. His career may well be best summarized in a quote by Willie Mays himself, *"Maybe I was born to play ball. Maybe I truly was."*

*"For all of his extraordinary achievements as a baseball player, Willie Mays wanted his enduring legacy to be helping children," said Willie Mays' friend and chair of the Say Hey! Foundation, Jeff Bleich. "Willie believed that every child deserves the chance to make the most of their talents. He was always looking out for kids, often taking time to play stickball with neighborhood children even when he was playing major league ball for the Giants. Willie said that he would not have become 'Willie Mays' without caring adults in his life who helped him get the education, skills, healthy diet, and inspiration that he needed. Growing up poor and assigned to a segregated school that did not even have a baseball team, Willie knew he wouldn't have achieved all that he did without his father Willie ("Cat") Mays, Sr., his Aunties, his teacher Mrs. Rice, players from the industrial leagues, and other people who looked out for him. Willie never forgot them. He preserved his most treasured awards so that one day he could pay it forward. He wanted to share these items with his fans so that together they could raise as much as possible to support other kids starting out in life the way he had. His one instruction to Dave Hunt at Hunt Auctions was 'make this the best auction ever to help those kids.'"*

*"We are deeply humbled and grateful to Willie Mays for having been selected to represent this important offering of his personal collection." said David Hunt, President, Hunt Auctions. "Willie embodies the American success story from his humble beginnings in Fairfield, Alabama through his ascension to become the greatest all-around player in the history of the game of baseball. Perhaps more impressively, Willie lived a life of service matched by very few. Whether sharing his knowledge of the game with young players or helping underserved communities to better their lives he was fervently committed to help those whose shoes he once occupied so many years ago. Willie has ensured his generosity will continue long into the future with the wonderful work that his Say Hey! Foundation has accomplished with the proceeds of this auction going to help further that good work. This auction will undoubtedly stand the test of time as one of the most important player collections ever to be publicly offered and may well become yet another "greatest all-around" event befitting of the iconic legacy of the Say Hey Kid."*

#### **Willie Mays Collection Highlights:**

- 1954 Willie Mays New York Giants World Series ring (Est.\$500,000-\$1,000,000)
- \*1962 Willie Mays San Francisco Giants home uniform photo matched to MLB All-Star Game (Est.\$500,000-\$1,000,000)
- 1954 Willie Mays National League Most Valuable Player Award (Est. \$250,000-\$500,000)
- 1965 Willie Mays National League Most Valuable Player Award (Est. \$250,000-\$500,000)
- Important Willie Mays Presidential Medal of Freedom (Est. \$50,000-\$100,000)
- \*Willie Mays 1954 National League Batting Championship Silver Bat Award (Est. \$200,000-\$400,000)
- 1963 Willie Mays All-Star Game Professional Model Baseball Bat (Est. \$50,000-\$75,000)
- 1963 Willie Mays MLB All-Star Game Most Valuable Player Award (Est. \$20,000-\$40,000)
- \*Willie Mays Professional Model Baseball Glove c.1955 (Est. \$75,000-\$150,000)
- Multiple Willie Mays NL Gold Glove Awards c.1957-1968 (Est. \$50,000-\$100,000ea)
- Willie Mays National Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ring (Est. \$100,000-\$300,000)
- 1973 Willie Mets New York Mets National League Championship Ring (Est. \$50,000-\$100,000)
- Rare 1962 Willie Mays Babe Ruth Sultan of Swat Award Crown (Est. \$75,000-\$150,000)
- Willie Mays San Francisco Giants Professional Model Warm up Jacket c.1962 (Est. \$40,000-\$60,000)
- 1977 Stutz Blackhawk VI: Custom Made for Willie Mays with Personalized Label (Est. \$50,000-\$100,000)

The auction will take place on September 27, 2025 at the King Street Warehouse event space adjacent to Oracle Park. An Online Only offering for hundreds of additional Willie Mays Collection items will follow on Sunday, September 28, 2025. Several special event previews will take place in the San Francisco Bay Area in advance of the live auction with details to follow. The first public display of the collection will occur at the National Sports Collectors Convention in Chicago, IL between July 30<sup>th</sup> and August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.

For more information regarding the auction please visit [www.huntauctions.com/Mays.cfm](http://www.huntauctions.com/Mays.cfm) or call 610.524.0822. Hunt Auctions is currently accepting consignments for its 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory Live Auction in November 2025. \*Denotes items that were reacquired/consigned by the Willie Mays Collection for benefit of the Say Hey! Foundation.



#### **ABOUT HUNT AUCTIONS**

Exton, Pennsylvania based Hunt Auctions has been a leader in the sports memorabilia auction industry for 35 years. Numerous former players and their families have trusted their collections with Hunt Auctions including Babe Ruth (HOF), Ted Williams (HOF), Joe DiMaggio (HOF), Bill Russell (HOF), Roberto Clemente (HOF), Willie Mays (HOF), Walter Payton (HOF), Gino Marchetti (HOF), Brett Favre (HOF), Reggie White (HOF), Whitey Ford (HOF), Curt Flood, Gale Sayers (HOF), Vin Scully (HOF), Ray Berry (HOF), Tony Dorsett (HOF), Tony Gwynn (HOF), Joseph Carr (HOF), Leo Durocher (HOF), Robin Roberts (HOF), Earl Weaver (HOF), Commissioner Bowie Kuhn (HOF), Warren Spahn (HOF), Johnny Bench (HOF), Johnny Unitas (HOF), John Hannah (HOF), Thurman Munson, Roy Campanella (HOF), Harmon Killebrew (HOF), Bill Mazeroski (HOF), Tom Heinsohn (HOF), Charles "Kid" Nichols (HOF), Jim Palmer (HOF), Walter Johnson (HOF), Bill McKechnie (HOF), Willie Mosconi, Randall Cunningham, Joe Frazier (HOF) and Norm Van Brocklin (HOF). Hunt Auctions is also the Official Auction Company of Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory and the Official Auctioneer of the MLB All-Star PlayBall Park®. Hunt Auctions has worked with numerous institutions to include: The National Football League, Philadelphia Phillies®, Pittsburgh Pirates®, Baltimore Orioles®, Boston Red Sox®, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Chicago Bulls, National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame and Baseball Assistance Team