

San Diego Hall of Champions Honors Goose Gossage, Gary Johnson & Buzzie Bavasi

HOFMAG.com Staff

The San Diego Hall of Champions is pleased to announce the Breitbard Hall of Fame Class of 2007 to be inducted at the 61st annual Viejas Salute to Champions dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 13 at the Town and Country Resort. The three Hall of Famers are Padres relief pitcher Rich "Goose" Gossage, Chargers defensive tackle Gary "Big Hands" Johnson and Padres executive Emil Joseph "Buzzie" Bavasi. Gossage and Johnson were voted into the Breitbard Hall of Fame by the Executive Board and Bavasi was named by the Veterans Committee.

In addition to inducting the Hall of Fame Class of 2007, the Salute to Champions dinner will honor the Stars of the Year in professional and amateur sports, the Disabled Athlete Star of the Year and the Community Champion. The evening includes the Parade of Champions when Stars of the Month from 2006 for professional, amateur and high school sports are recognized.

Goose Gossage, Padres, 1984-87

Gossage's acquisition on the eve of the 1984 season strengthened the Padres' credibility as contenders for post-season play for the first time in franchise history. The Padres went on to win the National League West division and beat the Chicago Cubs in National League Championship Series for the NL pennant before falling to the Detroit Tigers in the World Series. Gossage was a two-time All-Star for the Padres in the 1984 and 1985 seasons. One of the most intimidating relievers in baseball, he was on the mound when the Padres clinched the NL West in 1984 and led the team with 25 saves. He also led the team with 26 saves in 1985 and 21 in 1986. He played four (1984-87) of his 23 Major League seasons with the Padres and was a nine-time All-Star who won the 1978 American League Rolands Relief Award with the New York Yankees. He played on the Yankees' World Series championship team in 1978 and in division playoffs in 1980 and 1981.

Gary Johnson, Chargers, 1975-84

Johnson was a cornerstone to the Chargers' Air Coryell playoff teams as one of the NFL's top defensive linemen. HE played 10 years for the Chargers (1975-84) as the Chargers won three straight AFC West titles in 1979-81 and advanced to the playoffs a fourth straight season in 1982 as a wild-card entry. He was named to four straight Pro Bowls and was a starter in three straight (1981-83). Johnson was a first-round draft pick in 1975 as the eighth pick overall from Grambling. He holds the Chargers' season record for sacks when he recorded 17.5 in 1980. His 67.0 career sacks is second in franchise history. He was inducted into the Chargers' Hall of Fame in 1999. He finished his career playing two seasons with the San Francisco 49ers after a trade a month into the 1984 season, when earned a Super Bowl ring with the 49ers.

Buzzie Bavasi, Padres, 1969-1977

Bavasi helped bring Major League Baseball to San Diego when the National League awarded the city a franchise. The Padres began play in the 1969 season with Bavasi the president and part-owner. Bavasi and C. Arnholt Smith, the franchise's first owner, began efforts in 1967 to land an expansion franchise. He served the Padres as president from 1969 to 1977 and remained a San Diego resident with a home in La Jolla. Bavasi was inducted into the Padres Hall of Fame in 2001. His baseball career began with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1939. He came West with the Dodgers as Southern California's first Major League Baseball team. He was the Dodgers' vice-president and GM from 1951 until he resigned to join the effort to bring Major League Baseball to San Diego.

The Breitbard Hall of Fame Class of 2007 will be inducted at the 61st Salute to Champions dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2007. For ticket information, call 619-699-2309