

Sir John Moores

Class – 2009

Category – Game builders

Though best known in British sporting circles for his chairmanship of Everton Football Club and his Littlewoods Football Pools, Sir John was instrumental in creating baseball's golden era in England, during the 1930s. In 1933, he began his efforts on behalf of baseball by convincing 18 teams in the Liverpool area playing under English baseball's code to take on American rules. John Heydler, who was the president of Major League Baseball's National League at the time, was so impressed by Sir John's work that he donated a championship trophy. Later, through Sir John's considerable financial backing and enthusiasm, baseball in England enjoyed its main period of professional and semi-professional status. Between 1935 and 1939, Sir John's National Baseball Association sponsored such professional circuits as the London Major Baseball League, the North of England League, and the Yorkshire Baseball League. His investment was sizeable: in 1938 alone, according to

historian William Morgan, Sir John spent £15,000 (equivalent to over £750,000 in 2009, the year of his induction into the British Baseball Hall of Fame). He was also central to driving international play – a commitment that led to Great Britain's greatest triumph on the world stage. In 1938, Moores backed a series of matches between a team representing the United States and one representing Great Britain. The British side won the series four games to one and earned the "John Moores Trophy", which was donated by Sir John. Today, the International Baseball Federation heralds Great Britain as the first amateur World Champions as a result of that triumph. Beyond his financial wherewithal, he also drew in numerous great athletes to baseball including famed association football player William "Dixie" Dean. The legacy of Sir John's efforts can still be seen today in such locales as Hull and Liverpool, where the foundations of his efforts are still remembered.