

THE LEGENDS' LEGEND

How Vin Scully affected fellow broadcasters and famous admirers

BY CARY OSBORNE

For 67 years from spring to fall, Vin Scully has come into our living rooms and been a passenger in our cars for three hours a day. He has called us “friends,” made us laugh and smile and cry. He has given us goose bumps, brought us to our feet with excitement and eased us to sleep.

We all have our Vin Scully stories and what he means to us. We thought we'd share some stories — compiled by the Dodgers during Vin's 67th and final season as Dodger broadcaster — from people close to Vin, people whom he has impacted greatly and people whose biggest moments were narrated by him.



▼ TOMMY LASORDA ON VIN'S SAINTHOOD IN HIS HOME

If I said a bad word about Vinny in my house, my wife would shoot me. She loves Vinny. She thinks Vinny is the greatest thing that God ever put on earth. You can't say anything bad in my house about Vinny. But I've seen him so much, and I know he used to come to me after a game when he knew I was down and he would immediately build me up. And that meant a lot to me. ... Nobody will ever be another Vinny, no way.

▲ PETER O'MALLEY ON VIN'S START AND WHAT HE MEANS TO THE DODGERS

I think my dad (former Dodger owner Walter O'Malley) deserves credit for sensing his talent. ... When my dad became president of the ballclub, Vin was a young man. But they bonded. They connected. Vin trusted my dad, my dad trusted Vin and that was the beginning of their relationship.

No one means more to the Dodger organization than Vin Scully. Not just because of the length of years that he has been behind the microphone, but his personality, his reputation, his work, professionalism — he embodies it all, and no one has done it better than he has.



The Greatest of All Time



◀ DON NEWCOMBE ON HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH VIN

When he joined the Dodgers, I think it was 1950, Vinny and I got to be friends. We used to fly in sometime, the Dodgers, from Pittsburgh, Cincinnati or wherever we played. ...Vinny was a young guy then, didn't have a car. So I was going to New Jersey where I lived, and he had to go see his mom in New Jersey. I said, "Well why don't you ride with me to New Jersey, and I'll take you to the train station and you can go see your mom." He loved that so much, and I loved taking him with me.

And we got to be friends because of a few of those trips. And I have admired him because of the way he acted then and the way he still does. He's just a fine man — never hurts anybody, never embarrass anybody or say anything vulgar. Never heard him say a curse word. Vinny has just been a wonderful man. ... I will never forget Vin Scully, because we call ourselves friends.

▶ AL MICHAELS ON WHAT MAKES VIN THE GREATEST

I first heard him when I was 6 years old. I was a kid who grew up in Brooklyn. (His voice) takes me back to my childhood, as it does I'm sure for so many people who grew up listening to Vinny all those years.

Of course, he has every story in the world and is a master orator. But the great thing about Vinny too is that he's a great listener. I think a lot of what Vinny collects in terms of stories comes from listening. So he's really good on that account, too.



JON SOOHOO



JON SOOHOO

◀ JUSTIN TURNER ON HIS CHILDHOOD MEMORY OF VIN

I tell the story all the time when people ask me if I grew up as a Dodger fan. One of my first baseball memories, my earliest memory, was laying on the floor of my grandparents' house in 1988, and that World Series where Kirk Gibson came up and hit the pinch-hit home run, and you know Vin's call of that play really resonates in my mind.

He's got that voice where it doesn't matter where you are. If you hear him or a game is on, you know exactly who is talking, and you know exactly who's playing — and he's just unbelievable. He just really knows how to paint a picture and gets your mind going wild to see everything that he sort of sees. So he is by far without a doubt the best in the business.

The Greatest of All Time

◀ MAURY WILLS ON VIN PROMOTING HIS NICKNAME

He referred to me as “the mouse that roared.” The great columnist for the L.A. Times, Jim Murray, might have coined that first, but Vin picked it up right away and he used it on the air. In fact, when we have the Old-Timers Game and Vin introduces Maury Wills, he uses that phrase: “The mouse that roared.” And I feel like I am 10 feet tall, and it makes me feel like I am the best because Vin Scully said it.



JON SOOHO

◀ BRYAN CRANSTON ON A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY GIFT

My wife brought me to the game on our 25th anniversary, and it was a dream of mine to always have an opportunity to meet Vin. And had I known that that was the plan before, I would have been nervous all day long, trying to think of what I would say to him. How could I convey what he has meant to me?

We go (into the broadcast booth) and all of a sudden I realize. ... And I took a little bit of a breath and held it. It was a little nerve-racking, but Vin is Vin and made me feel comfortable and was gracious and was easy to be with.

▶ PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING COLUMNIST GEORGE WILL ON VIN'S WORDS

Aristotle said human beings are language-using creatures. What makes us human really is our ability to use words to connect with one another. And no one uses words to connect with so many people for so long in so many ways so wonderfully as Vin Scully.

Vin Scully works alone because he's not alone. He's talking to everyone at the other end of his microphone one at a time. That's the feeling you get — that he's not talking to a crowd, that he's talking to you.



GETTY IMAGES

The Greatest of All Time



▲ ROSS PORTER ON VIN BEHIND THE SCENES

Everyone knows what an exceptional baseball announcer Vin is. Not everyone knows what kind of a person he is. I was with him for 28 years. He was the one who selected me to join the broadcast team, and I have been with him in a number of situations both in Dodger Stadium and on the road. I have seen him in many different situations, and what is very impressive to me — and you have to realize what the reputation of this man is around the country — I have never seen him be rude to one person. He is so humble, and he is so grateful and he is so thankful to God who gave him his talent, that that stands out more than anything else that I can think of about him. In 28 years, I have never had a cross word with Vin.

Vin is one of the most religious people I have ever known. Undoubtedly, he will tell you his success is because of God. I don't believe that in all the years I have known him I have seen him miss Mass on a weekend at home or on the road. I remember there were Saturday afternoons when the Dodgers played a day game, and he always checked to see what time Mass began that afternoon in that visiting city, and then he had a taxi cab waiting for him and he'd go right to the church. He has always been very grateful to what God has done for him and his career.



JON SOOHO

◀ ANDRE ETHIER ON VIN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PLAYERS

If you get there at the (stadium) at a certain time, you have a chance to see him around sometimes coming into the elevator. Then he makes his rounds through the clubhouse and down through the food room and grabs a snack down there.

He made a point (in 2015) especially to make quite a few visits to the clubhouse before the game, and it was just nice seeing him. He stops and shares a few words with a couple guys, has some conversations — then moves on to go up (to the booth) and start doing it.

The Greatest of All Time



JILL WEISLEDER

◀ OREL HERSHISER ON BROADCASTING ADVICE HE RECEIVED FROM VIN

I think the No. 1 thing that Vinny has told me is advice that he got, which was, "There's one thing that you bring to the broadcast booth and that is yourself." And he received that from somebody else, and he has passed that on. And that one thing alone, it makes you relax and makes you say, "The more of myself that I bring into this booth, the better off I'm going to be."

▼ FRANK ROBINSON ON VIN'S STYLE

He doesn't announce the game. To me, I just look at it like he paints a picture of what is going on on the field, and it makes you feel like you were there and you feel very comfortable sitting there and listening to him.

He has a very soft voice, and he doesn't get himself involved in the game. He tells you what is going on on the field, and I've never heard Vin Scully second-guess or question anything that happened on the field that's negative. He just tells you what happened on the field and allows the umpires and the managers and the players to settle it.



JON SOOHOO



JON SOOHOO

▲ BRYCE HARPER ON GROWING UP LISTENING TO VIN IN LAS VEGAS

He sounded like a preacher. Everything he says is quotable. I think the biggest thing is he talks about family on air, talks about the stories. As much as he talks about the average and things like that ... he always has these little stories. And I think that's the cool thing about him. He always has a story. He has something nobody knows about, and he always does his homework. It's fun to hear.

The Greatest of All Time



▲ RICK MONDAY ON VIN'S PREPARATION

When I came to the Dodgers, I was really interested to find out what it was that seemed to make Vinny's broadcast always so special, and what I saw was a man that came to the ballpark extremely well prepared. Not just showing up and "I'm going to do a game," but showing up really with the lifeblood of the game.

And by that I'm talking about the inside stories of different players. Most of the people know about many of the stories about Dodger players, but Vinny understood a long time ago that it was interesting to be able to tell stories about the life off the field of the players coming in and visiting players. He never lost sight of that, and Vinny, with all the things he has accomplished, has never been bigger than the game — and that is the way he works. It's the game that is important, it's the moments that are important and how he builds the game into a crescendo as it goes along.

► KIRK GIBSON ON VIN MOTIVATING HIM FOR HIS MAGICAL 1988 WORLD SERIES HOME RUN

I just remember in the bottom of the eighth inning as they were panning out, going to commercial, and Vin looking into the dug-out and saying, "It doesn't appear Kirk Gibson will play tonight." I stood up and said, "My ass," and then I told Mitch (Poole), the batboy, "Go set the tee up." And we started hitting balls off the tee — and you know we got into a pretty special moment after that."

