



BY  
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## WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?

### ...MARK MCGWIRE AND SAMMY SOSA?

**BASEBALL GREATS MARK MCGWIRE** and **SAMMY SOSA** are both retired, and their careers were notable for their performances during the 1998 Major League Baseball (MLB) season, often referred to as the "Great Home Run Race", for their pursuit of the single-season home run record.

Mark McGwire played as a first baseman and is best known for his time with the Oakland Athletics and the St. Louis Cardinals. He had a powerful and prolific home run-hitting career. He finished the 1998 season with 70 home runs versus the 66 home runs by Sammy Sosa, a record that stood until Barry Bonds hit 73 home runs in 2001.

Sammy Sosa, a Dominican Republic native, primarily played as an outfielder. He is best known for his time with the Chicago Cubs, where he became one of the franchise's all-time greats. He played for several teams throughout his career, including the Chicago White Sox and the Texas Rangers.

McGwire and Sosa, along with other prominent figures in baseball, were called to testify before the United States Congress in 2005 as part of an inquiry into steroid use in the sport. The hearing was held by the House Government Reform Committee. During the hearing, both McGwire and Sosa addressed questions related to their possible use of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) and their knowledge of the prevalence of steroids in baseball.

McGwire's testimony was characterized by his refusal to answer specific questions about his past steroid use. He repeatedly cited the Fifth Amendment (which protects individuals from



↑ Sammy Sosa - Then and Now



↑ Mark McGwire - Then and Now

self-incrimination) and did not give direct answers to questions about whether he had used steroids during his playing career.

Sammy Sosa, on the other hand, denied ever using steroids and stated that he had never taken any performance-enhancing substances. He maintained that his accomplishments were the result of hard work and natural talent.

The congressional hearing in 2005 was a significant moment in the ongoing discussion about steroids and PEDs in baseball. The testimonies of players, including McGwire and Sosa, raised public awareness about the prevalence of performance-enhancing drugs in the sport and led to increased scrutiny and changes in MLB's drug testing policies.

Seven seasons after that record-breaking year, MLB and the MLB Players' Association began the first drug-testing policy with penalties - which began as a paltry 15-game suspension, but now has been strengthened to 80 games for first-time offenders.

In January 2010, Mark McGwire publicly admitted to using steroids and human growth hormone (HGH) during his baseball career, including before he achieved his record-breaking home run season in 1998. At the time of his admission, McGwire had recently been hired as the hitting coach for the St. Louis Cardinals.

In a statement released to the Associated Press, **McGwire expressed remorse for his actions and acknowledged that he had used steroids on and off for nearly a decade**, starting in the late 1980s. He stated that he took these substances to recover from injuries as an aid in his recovery and also for performance. The admission was a significant moment, as McGwire had been one of the central figures in the discussion about steroids in baseball.

McGwire's confession came against the backdrop of increased scrutiny on the use of performance-enhancing drugs in baseball and marked a departure from his previous stance, including his evasive testimony before Congress in 2005. The statement had implications not only for McGwire's personal legacy but also for the broader conversation about the impact of steroids on the integrity of the sport.

McGwire took a long hiatus from baseball but eventually returned as a coach. He reunited with the Cardinals taking on the hitting coach position in 2009. He moved west in 2012 to take on the same position with the Dodgers. After three seasons there, he jumped to the Padres to be their bench coach. In 2018, he again stepped away from baseball to spend more time with his family in Mission Viejo, CA where he spends a lot of his time watching his sons play

## THE FACTOR

### A BUILDING SHAPED LIKE A TRAIN



Moka Station

**MOOKA (A/K/A Mōka)** is a city located in central Japan with an estimated population of 78,720 in 30,203 households. The total area of the city is 64.61 sq mi. It is known for the Mooka Railway, which operates steam locomotives - and the station building headquarters. In the small city of Mōka, the station building company headquarters stands out. In 1997 it was transformed into a four-story replica steam train. Complete with a smokestack, headlight, and window wheels, **the Mōka Station is an architectural artwork** that serves not only as a train station but also contains a fourth-floor observation deck, and a ground-floor local information center.

### MORPHEUS AT CITY OF DREAMS

**MORPHEUS IS A NEO-FUTURIST** luxury hotel in Macau (a/k/a Macao) - a special administrative region of China (which means that it operates under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle.) The hotel was developed and is run by Melco Resorts & Entertainment. Opened in June 2018, Time Magazine described it as **"the world's first free-form exoskeleton-bound high-rise: a grid of steel envelops 40 stories of glass with a fluidity inspired by Chinese jade carving."** The interior has a gaming floor, a rooftop pool, a modern-art gallery, and restaurants by world-renown chefs.

The hotel's 772 rooms include nine two-story "sky villas," three of which have private pools. Designed by Zaha Hadid Architects and developed by Melco Resorts for \$1.1 billion, the hotel is the first building in Asia without a singular internal column and tops out at 520 feet. ■



Macau is an autonomous region on the south coast of China, across the Pearl River Delta from Hong Kong. A Portuguese territory until 1999, it reflects a mix of cultural influences. Its giant casinos and malls have earned it the nickname, "Las Vegas of Asia."



baseball. McGwire is the father of six children including triplets.

The two became friends on the field, but it has been more than 20 years since McGwire has seen or spoken with Sosa. McGwire retired in 2001. His admission added to the ongoing narrative about the challenges and complexities associated with the use of performance-enhancing drugs in professional sports. **Sosa retired in 2007 and has not made a similar admission to date.**

Sosa turned to the business world after his baseball career. He has declined to discuss specifics of his business ventures during a 2018 interview, but he has a truly global organization, ranging from oil in the Dominican Republic, stormproof housing in Panama, real estate in the UAE and beverages and hospitality in the United Kingdom. Sosa has houses in a number of places including Miami and Santo Domingo, but he lives in the United Arab Emirates. In addition to his business ventures, he also enjoys being a family man with his wife and their four children.

No stranger to controversy, the Dominican slugger is a proponent of skin bleaching; he has been using bleaching cream for well over a decade and has pulled off a Michael Jackson-esque transformation. He has also had noticeably straightened his hair.

Sosa and a few of his teammates have kept in touch. He has yet to be welcomed back by the Cubs, while McGwire remains idolized in St. Louis and Oakland, and is in frequent contact with former teammates and coaches. Both received a diminishing number of votes for inclusion in the Hall of Fame as the years have passed. McGwire is no longer eligible and Sosa is not likely to achieve that status either. ■

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