

### **Best Athlete of 2025:** Shohei Ohtani – (Sean Beney, *Beyond the Score*)

While it is difficult to compare athletes across sports, it is difficult to make a case that any athlete was more accomplished, versatile, and dominant than Shohei Ohtani. The Dodger phenom amounted a total of [9.4 WAR](#), per FanGraphs, despite being a DH—which [WAR inherently penalizes through a positional adjustment of -17.5 runs per season](#) due to lack of defensive contribution—and only pitching 47 innings. Both of which due to recovery from Tommy John surgery. His 2025 WAR total trails only his fellow superstar Aaron Judge who played [95 of his 152 games in Right Field](#), a far less taxing and more traditional position. Ohtani not only played both ways but did so at an elite level. Ohtani’s [172 wRC+](#), essentially valuing his offensive contribution to be 72% above league average, and 55 home runs were first and second in the National League, respectively. On the mound, Ohtani finished with a 2.87 ERA, 1.90 FIP, and 11.87 K/9 in the regular season. While it is fair to be skeptical of these stats due to his lack of innings, [among Starting Pitchers who've thrown at least 40 innings](#) Ohtani has the 4<sup>th</sup>-best K/9 and best FIP in all of MLB.

Ohtani brought it all together on one day, in one game, in Game 4 of the NLCS, putting on [possibly the single greatest performance in sports history](#). He became the first player since 1906 to reach double-digits in bases (12) and strikeouts on the mound (10). He went 3-3 with 3 HRs at the plate, along with 6 shutout innings to go along with his 10 K’s.

Aside from these stats, it’s advantage-Ohtani as well. He was the [unanimous NL MVP for the third year in a row](#), and was [voted 2025 Male Athlete of the Year](#) by the Associated Press, receiving 29 of 47 votes. To put it into perspective, Swedish Pole Vaulter Armand Duplantis was second with just 5 votes, while the next-best American Athlete, Alex Ovechkin, earned just 3. Putting a bow on it all, Ohtani’s Dodgers repeated as World Series champions, becoming the first repeat champs since 2000, behind Ohtani’s [.333 average, 3 homers, and 224 wRC+ in the Fall Classic](#).

The world has seen few, if any, athletes like Shohei Ohtani.