

(This small piece has nothing to do with typical baseball stuff. It's mainly my opinions and emotions.)

This one was hard. As much as Vin Scully was the Voice of the Dodgers, Tommy Lasorda was the heart of the Dodgers. I've been to tons of Dodger games in my short adult life, but I have seen Tommy at a handful of games. And each time his face showed up on screen, the fans roared so loud it could shake the stadium. To casual fans, you might not know of this Dodger legend since he wasn't a good player, but you must understand that Tommy Lasorda encapsulated the heart and spirit of being a Dodger for life.

I'm only 24 years old, but I grew up watching the Dodgers since I was 8. I also watched a ton of T.V. (probably an unhealthy amount) and when the cartoons were over, I watched Dodger documentaries. That's how I came to know legendary stories of [Jackie Robinson](#), [Kirk Gibson](#)'s home run in the 1988 World Series, [Ron Cey](#)'s game tying grand slam in the 1981 NLCS, and the time 5 Dodgers won Rookie of the Year back-to-back. All of these stories led me to fall in love with the Dodgers, but behind all of them was the man running the team: Tommy Lasorda. Even as a kid my favorite part of the documentary was hearing Tommy speak about what he was thinking and explaining the clips they played earlier. He remembered every detail and spoke with such crassness, like he always told it how it was. An example of this I remember was when he gave [Orel Hershiser](#) his nickname "Bulldog" because he didn't want opposing batters calling him "Oral".

Tommy the manager was a sight to behold. He honestly wasn't a manager, but more like that stubborn grandpa you had to listen to. I remember him constantly cussing out his pitchers to either motivate them or take them out of the game, but I believe it was to make them tougher and give them that drive to dominate. Tommy didn't just yell at his players to be hurtful, but he understood people and what was best for them. During Game 4 of the NLCS against the Mets, who were the best team in the MLB that season, [Jesse Orosco](#) was brought in to get the last 2 outs in the 12th. Unfortunately it was against [Keith Hernandez](#) and [Darryl Strawberry](#), both who were crushing it at the plate that series. Orosco got ahead on Hernandez 1-2, but proceeded to throw 3 balls in a row to walk him and the bases loaded. Orosco then threw another ball at Strawberry, causing Tommy to have a mound meeting, where he only said "What the fuck are you doing?" Well, it worked since Strawberry popped out on the next pitch and helped secure a Game 4 win.

The moments I'll always remember are when he got into fights with the Phillie Phanatic and Youppi, both mascots for the Phillies and Expos respectively. Tommy was the manager for one of the best teams in baseball and the best franchise of all time, but that didn't stop him from being petty and starting fights. When the Phanatic made a Tommy Lasorda doll, Tommy grabbed it and beat him up with it right before the game started, you know, when you should be focusing on the game. He didn't take crap from no one and his passion would sometimes show as violence. As for the latter, Youppi was bothering Tommy the whole night, dancing on top of the Dodger dugout and trying to lighten the mood in a grueling 22 inning game. Eventually, Youppi fell asleep (comically) on the Dodger dugout roof, and Tommy told the umpire to throw

him out. Listen, if you had to sit through a 22 inning, roughly 7 hour game, you'd be pretty irritated too, but even so this may be the first, and last time we'll ever see a mascot ejected from a game, all because of Tommy.

All this to say, Tommy Lasorda is a one of a kind man. I've never had the honor of meeting him in person, but I have been in the same stadium as him and even that was enough for me. He had such a passion for the Dodgers that no one in the last 60 years has matched. All of the Dodgers' success in the last 60 can be attributed to Tommy, but it fills my heart with joy knowing one of the last things he witnessed was a Dodger World Series Championship again, the first one since his 1988 team. Rest in peace you legend, till we meet on the Field of Dreams.

"I've already told my wife that when I do go, I want our home schedule attached to my tombstone. I want people who are in the cemetery visiting their loved ones to say, 'Let's go to Lasorda's grave and see if the Dodgers are playing home or away'... I love this organization so much I want to be working for it even after I'm dead." - Tommy Lasorda