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BACK STORY

The greatest losers of them all

The shadow over this lineup of San Francisco Giants symbolizes the team's heartbreaking failure to ever win the World Series, analyzed in **"Lords of No Rings"** (page 130). But according to the illustrator, Giants fan Mark Ulriksen, 51, the cloud shouldn't overshadow the truth: This dream lineup would stack up against any other team's best from the last half century.

Ulriksen, a longtime San Franciscan and *New Yorker* illustrator, picked his all-star Giants squad as if it were Opening Day or (perish the thought) a World Series game, and they were called to the field one at a time. Leading off, on the far right, is spectacular shortstop **Omar Vizquel**, number 13, the only current Giant in this lineup. Though Vizquel has only been on the team for three years, "who else was I going to pick," asks Ulriksen, "José Uribe?" For a double-play partner, he initially thought of fan favorite Robby Thompson, second sacker on the 1989 World Series team. But *San Francisco* editor-in-chief Bruce Kelley put in a plug for someday Hall of Famer **Jeff Kent**, who batted so well in front of Barry Bonds, winning an MVP award. "I agree," Ulriksen says, "even though Kent's a jerk, and anybody who goes to the Dodgers destroys their legacy in San Francisco."

The core of the lineup made for easier calls. The incomparable **Willie Mays** takes center field and bats

third. Left-fielder **Barry Bonds** bats fourth, his favorite spot. The only question was how to draw Bonds—like the young, lean, hip-shaking Elvis, or the old, bloated Vegas Elvis? "I wanted to make Barry look like the circus freak I consider him to be," the artist says.

Willie "Stretch" McCovey bats fifth, plays first base, and represents "that horrible '70s look," Ulriksen describes, with the orange-and-black band around his waist. Fellow Hall of Famer **Orlando Cepeda**, number 30, bats next. Although Cepeda was primarily a first baseman, Ulriksen put him in right field. (Who else would play the outfield—Candy Maldonado?) Another fan favorite from the 1989 team, four-time Gold Glover **Matt Williams**, plays third, chosen over 1989 MVP Kevin Mitchell or early Giant Jim Davenport. For catcher, Ulriksen considered Benito Santiago, who resurrected his career with three good years with the Giants; but the artist ultimately chose six-foot-four **Tom Haller**, a three-time all-star from the 1960s.

Pitching, and batting ninth, is the winningest Giant of all, **Juan Marichal**. But will the Dominican Dandy be able to keep his spot? Opening Day is around the corner. Matt Cain and Tim Lincecum look incredible. Hope springs eternal. ■ **DAN FOST**

TO DISPUTE ULRIKSEN'S PICKS, EMAIL US AT LETTERS@SANFRANMAG.COM