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30-For-30 Assignment

This 30-for-30 is about the impact the Core Four had on the New York Yankees during the 1990s-2000s. Derek Jeter (shortstop), Jorge Posada (catcher), Andy Pettitte (starting pitcher), and Mariano Rivera (relief/closing pitcher) made up the Core Four during the time they all played on the Yankees together. They went on to help win four World Series championships, and this group of guys also show the importance of teamwork and friendship.

The story of the Core Four starts in the early 1990s when Derek Jeter, Jorge Posada, Andy Pettitte, and Mariano Rivera were either drafted by or signed with the New York Yankees. They played together in the minor leagues and were eventually all called up and made their major league debuts in 1995. They all contributed to the Yankees' 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2009 World Series victories.

The Core Four was the glue that held the team together. They always knew they were special, for it is rare to see this kind of group of players, but they never flaunted it; they always stayed humble. They did not care about personal accomplishments as much as they cared about the team winning. Now, Derek Jeter and Mariano Rivera are considered some of the greats, but they never acted like it while they were playing. None of them had big egos. They were very loyal to the organization and were all team players, which is one of the most important things when you are part of a team.

Derek Jeter, Mariano Rivera, and Jorge Posada played together for seventeen consecutive years together in the major leagues. This is longer than any other group in any other North American professional sports' history. Andy Pettitte was absent for three of those years when he decided to play for his hometown team, the Houston Astros. Besides Pettitte leaving for three years, they were all very loyal to the New York Yankees. They never lost sight

of the important things; they never let money come in the way of what it meant to be a Yankee. Derek Jeter has even said that any time he had thought about playing for another team that he could have gotten more money from, he always kept in mind what it meant to play for the Yankees; money was not as important as other things to him. All four of them went up to the major league with the Yankees, and they also all retired with the Yankees.

Friendship is a key aspect as to why the Core Four became who they were. They were all very close; they had a bond like none other. The reason Andy Pettitte left the Yankees from the 2004-2006 seasons was to be closer to his family. He made the decision to play for his hometown team, the Astros, and was planning on retiring when his contract ended. It was only because of his friends, Jeter, Posada, and Rivera telling him that they needed him back in New York that he decided to go back and play for the Yankees again. Pettitte retired in 2010, but in 2012, he came out of retirement to play for the Yankees for two more seasons.

A lot of their life milestones were shared between these four. They were not just teammates; they were very good friends -- they were family. Derek Jeter was even Jorge Posada's best man at his wedding. The four of their friendships ran so deep that they were able to just look at each other and know what was going on in their heads. They often came to each other to talk about things rather than having the whole clubhouse know their business.

There was never any jealousy between them. They were all proud of each other; they still are. In July of this year, Mariano Rivera was inducted into the baseball Hall of Fame, and his three former teammates, Jeter, Pettitte, and Posada were all there in Cooperstown to support him. Although they have all retired and their baseball careers have ended, they are still friends to this day.

Although these four guys were all team players, some of their personal accomplishments were key factors in the team's success. Derek Jeter had a very successful career with a

numerous amount of accomplishments. He was an American League All-Star fourteen times, New York Yankees Player of the Year five times, American League Gold Glove Award winner five times, American League Silver Slugger Award winner five times, Rookie of the Year (1996), and the list of his awards, honors, and records goes on. He helped the Yankees win five World Series titles. Jeter also became the Yankees' fifteenth captain and is one of the most common names associated with the franchise.

Mariano Rivera also had a very successful career playing for the Yankees. His final win-loss record is 82-60, saved 652 games, and had a 2.21 ERA. Rivera was a thirteen time American League All-Star, an All-Star Game MVP, won the American League Roloids Relief Man Award five times, and the list of his accomplishments continues. He, along with Jeter, was part of five of the World Series titles. He was most recently inducted into the baseball Hall of Fame, being the only person to be unanimously voted in.

Andy Pettitte's final win-loss record is 256-153 with a total of 2,448 strikeouts. He was an American League All-Star three times, was the ALCS Most Valuable Player in 2001, Yankees Mid Season Cy Young winner in 2010, and has a few other awards/recognitions. He also has five World Series titles with the Yankees.

Jorge Posada was an American League All-Star five times, awarded with the American League Silver Slugger Award five times, and had a few other awards over his years playing. Posada was also a part of four World Series titles along with his fellow Core Four teammates.

The members of the Core Four did not like to boast about their accomplishments, but they all played a significant role in all of their seasons played for the New York Yankees. The story of the Core Four is important, not just because of the accomplishments, but because of the values the four of them brought: teamwork and friendship can bring you a long way. The Core Four is an important part of the Yankees' history.