


Pete Coscarart

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Peter Joseph Coscarart (June 16, 1913 – July 24, 2002) was a second baseman/shortstop in Major League Baseball who played for the Brooklyn Dodgers (1938–1941) and Pittsburgh Pirates (1942–1946). Coscarart batted and threw right-handed. He was born in Escondido, California. His older brother, Joe, was an infielder who played for the Boston Braves (1935–1936).

Signed out of San Diego State University, Coscarart debuted with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1938. Considered the top defensive second baseman in the National League in 1939, he finished with a .277 batting average, 22 doubles and 10 stolen bases. He followed that season with an All-Star Game appearance the next year, while hitting 24 doubles with career-highs in home runs (9), runs batted in (58) and games played (143). He also was a member of the Brooklyn team that faced the New York Yankees in the 1941 World Series, but as his hitting declined, he was replaced by Billy Herman and then traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates before the 1942 season. In his first year with Pittsburgh, Coscarart started at shortstop and switched to second base for the next three seasons. In 1944 he hit .264 with 30 doubles and 10 stolen bases in 139 games and also posted career-numbers in hits (146) and doubles (30). He was named to the National League All-Star team but didn't play in the game.

In a postwar era that foretold the sometimes rancorous relationship between major league players and owners, Coscarart was ahead of his time as he strongly supported efforts in 1946 to form a players union that could negotiate pension benefits. He voted, along with a

Pete Coscarart	
	
Second base - Shortstop	
Born: June 16, 1913 Escondido, California	
Died: July 24, 2002 (aged 89) Escondido, California	
Batted: Right	Threw: Right
MLB debut	
April 26, 1938 for the Brooklyn Dodgers	
Last MLB appearance	
May 17, 1946 for the Pittsburgh Pirates	
Career statistics	
Batting average	.243
Home runs	28
RBI	269
Teams	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brooklyn Dodgers (1938–1941) ■ Pittsburgh Pirates (1942–1946) 	
Career highlights and awards	

minority of his Pirates teammates, to strike, but he found himself out of the major leagues, sold to the San Diego Padres of the Pacific Coast League. Although a pension plan was adopted in 1947, it was too late for Coscarart, who never gave up fighting for the benefits he believed he deserved.

- National League All-Star: 1940
- Lifetime Fielding %
 - .940, 661 games at 2B
 - .956, 164 games at SS

Following his baseball career, Coscarart worked as a scout for the Minnesota Twins and the Yankees. While he was working with Minnesota, he signed Graig Nettles. He later worked in real estate for 30 years.

In 1996, Coscarart was inducted into the Brooklyn Dodgers Hall of Fame. The same year, he joined Frank Crosetti, Dolph Camilli, Al Gionfriddo, and 72 other players from his era, in suing major league baseball for lost benefits and rights of players to receive royalties for use of their images and memorabilia without the players consent. "There's no way of proving it, but I've always felt I was cheated," Coscarart said in an interview with *The San Diego Union-Tribune*.

A California Appeals Court ruled against the players in December 2001 as Coscarart was informed by Commissioner Bud Selig that he was not entitled to \$10,000 in annual pension benefits because of his suit against major league baseball. But many other pre-1947 major leaguers eventually received their benefits, in no small part thanks to Coscarart's efforts. After that, he received widespread media exposure in his appeals to Selig, but sympathy and support didn't translate into success.

A few months later, Coscarart died of an aneurysm in Escondido, California, at the age of 89.

Sources

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