

**BB:** I would love to have McDowell here, but I'm not the Giants' wallet. I think this organization has done the best job it can to put a winning team together. They signed Oswaldo Fernandez, they got some pitchers in the Royce Clayton deal. I don't think you can expect them to do everything when they're already paying this guy \$8 million, that guy \$6 million, another guy \$5 million.

**IS:** Do you dream about playing in a World Series, about delivering the first World Series championship to San Francisco?



DAVID DUROCHINSKI/INSIDE SPORTS

*"It's not as easy for me to play now. I don't feel like fighting anymore."*

**BB:** About 400,000 times a day. Every day I wake up and every night I go to sleep I think about that.

**IS:** How close are you to having that dream come true?

**BB:** Well, we won 103 games in 1993 when no one expected us to do that well. A lot of things have changed since then, but we still have the players to do some great things. There's so much luck involved. Remember, the Twins won a couple of World Series [1987 and 1991] that no one expected them to, and the Phillies got to the [1993] World Series when no one gave them a chance. So you never know.

**IS:** Are you obsessed to prove that you can perform just as well in postseason play as you do in the regular season?

**BB:** Not exactly. This is a team game. The fact I hit .191 in three playoffs is one thing. Two of those series went to seven games, the other six games. There are nine guys on the field, 25 on a team. One guy doesn't determine victory, unless it's a dominant, dominant pitcher, like Orel Hershiser in '88, and even then you need some help. I tried, man, and I didn't get it done in the playoffs. *We* didn't get it done. We were three outs away from the World Series in '92. Believe me, it still hurts, but you can't let it kill you.

**IS:** The next time you're in the playoffs, will you approach it any differently than the others, maybe by putting less pressure on yourself?

**BB:** I can guarantee one thing: You'll see a lot of smiles from me, a lot of happiness. When people bring up Reggie Jackson's three home runs, I won't get upset. I'm a different Barry Bonds today. I handle things much better, much more maturely, much more professionally.

**IS:** You've played for only two managers, Jim Leyland and Dusty Baker. How do they differ, as people and in the way they manage a game?

**BB:** Leyland is much more experienced, but Dusty will get there. Leyland has to deal with young players and mold them his way. Dusty has veteran players, and some of them aren't even molded. With as many veterans as we have, you shouldn't have to mold

them or stress certain fundamentals. Leyland has to prepare a young team to be great. He's already done it, and he's probably going to do it again. Dusty has a potentially great team that hasn't won enough. The biggest difference between the two is that in Pittsburgh it's done Leyland's way; in San Francisco, it's the Giants' way.

**IS:** Is Matt Williams the best everyday player you've played with?

**BB:** I'd say so. Andy Van Slyke is way up there, too. So is Will Clark.

**IS:** Speaking of Clark, the Giants never really replaced him. Was it a mistake to let him go?

**BB:** I think so. The great thing about Willie is, he kept everyone in the game for nine innings. He always had you on your toes, from the first pitch of the game to the last. He was a great teammate, a great guy to have on your club. I really, really like him and really miss him. He was our backbone.

**IS:** Had you received the 1991 MVP, you would be the only player in history to win the award four times. As it is, you're the only one who's won three in four years. Does it burn you that Terry Pendleton barely edged you out in '91?

**BB:** Sort of. But in my heart, I know I easily could have won. I'm happy for Terry Pendleton because he's a great player and a great guy who had a great season, but I had a great season, too, and could have easily won the award. I don't want to dwell on things like that anymore.

**IS:** Do you still see Sid Bream in your nightmares steaming around third base, heading for home with the run that deprived you of a chance to go to the World Series in '92?

**BB:** Once in a while. Hell, I still think he was out. I still think Mike LaValliere got the tag down. Frankly, I think it's amazing it was that close because I didn't have a legitimate chance to get him at the plate. The only way is if I was playing behind the shortstop. But I made a strong throw, and anyway, who's to say we would have won that game had it gone to extra innings? The Braves kicked our asses all year.

**IS:** Many people don't realize what a committed player you are—how you break down every one of your at-bats, how you analyze pitchers, how you sit on the bench and almost manage a game in your head. How did you become this way?

**BB:** I've always been into the game within the game. Always. Even in college. I feel I could manage, but I never will. I'm not patient enough. I'd be screaming too much. I'd have to hold back a lot. One of the guys who really helped me become more astute about the game is [former Pirates pitcher] Rick Rhoden. He has a brilliant baseball mind, and I picked up a lot of things just by listening and talking to him.

**IS:** What does it mean to be the only player in history other than Willie Mays, your dad, and Andre Dawson to have 300 home runs and 300 steals?

**BB:** It'll feel better when I have 400 homers and 400 steals. Then I'll be the only one in history to do that. Then I can't be compared with anyone. Then I'll be the only one on a pedestal. Just me. All alone. That the way I want it. ■