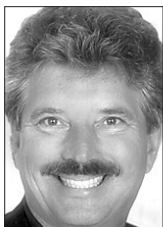


Meet the broadcasters

Dewayne Staats

The voice of the Rays and one of the most respected voices in baseball, Staats has been the Rays' television play-by-play announcer since the beginning. This will be his 32nd year calling Major League Baseball and his 11th with the Rays. He is approaching 5,000 games as a big-league broadcaster after calling games for the Astros (1977-84), Cubs (1985-89) and Yankees (1990-94), as well as national broadcasts before joining the Rays.

What we like about him: Pleasant, but distinctive voice who calls the action, gives his color analyst room to talk yet inserts strong commentary when necessary, such as last season when he criticized Delmon Young for not running out a popup. Never a homer, never an apologist, but gets appropriately excited when the Rays do something good. It's hard to imagine watching the Rays without Staats.



Joe Magrane

Like Staats, Magrane has been calling Rays games since the start of the franchise. The former major-league lefty went 57-67 with the Cardinals (1987-93), Angels (1993-95) and White Sox (1996), including an 18-win season with the Cards in 1989.

What we like about him: Extremely knowledgeable, but not in an arrogant well-when-I-played type of way. Can be funny, but doesn't dominate his air time trying to be funny. Not afraid to be critical, but doesn't spend the broadcast pointing out mistakes. Never a know-it-all, Magrane strikes the right balance between passing along information and analysis and adds the light entertainment in the Rays' TV broadcasts.



Andy Freed

Freed begins his fourth season on the Rays radio broadcasts. Before joining the Rays, Freed worked three seasons calling games for the Red Sox's Triple-A affiliate in Pawtucket and six seasons calling minor-league games in Trenton, N.J.

What we like about him: Laid-back style and works well with his partner. Realizes he's not an ex-player so doesn't try to pass himself off as an expert, and instead sticks to describing the situation at hand. Never goes off on long storytelling expeditions, which can be frustrating to the radio listener. Within seconds of turning him on, the listener has been caught up to what is going on, but Freed doesn't do it in a boring way.



Dave Wills

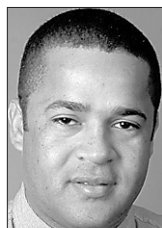
Also came aboard for the Rays radio broadcasts in 2005. He came to the Rays after spending 11 seasons on the White Sox radio broadcasts in the pre- and postgame capacity, as well as fill-in duty. Also had several stints working the minors and once worked as the pitching coach at Elmhurst College in Illinois.

What we like about him: The more humorous of the radio tandem, but never gets carried away with a shtick and his humor is more self-deprecating than anything else. Also works well with his partner, a great improvement over the previous radio tandem of Paul Olden and Charlie Slowes. Wills and Freed have a good on-air exchange of two guys who love baseball and like one another. Wills is honest in his assessment of the game, even if the Rays aren't playing well.



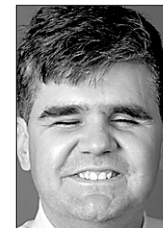
Ricardo Taveras

This will be his sixth season calling Rays play-by-play on Spanish radio. Has 22 years of radio experience, including two years as a sports commentator in the Dominican Republic.



Enrique Oliu

Providing color on the Rays' Spanish radio broadcasts for the 11th season. Oliu, who is blind, previously announced games for Jacksonville Expos and the St. Petersburg Pelicans of the old Senior Professional Baseball League.



Compiled by Tom Jones, Times staff writer

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