



**Bill Thompson**  
General, Broadcaster 2002

Thompson, a Burbank high school and Glendale College baseball catcher, came to Fresno to take a job as a salesman for KMJ radio in 1957.

Little did he know that this move would start him on a path to the big leagues as a baseball announcer and producer for the San Francisco Giants and then back to Fresno as general manager of the city's California League franchise.

Thompson began his on-the-air duties with a 15-minute daily sports show and soon was doing three shows a day that included commentary as well as scores, a first for the Fresno market. Thompson also broadcast Fresno State baseball and Fresno Giants baseball games and in 1962 became the first sports director at KMJ, Channel 24 television, which later became KSEE.

Three years later, Thompson joined KFSO radio in San Francisco as a producer-announcer with the legendary broadcast team of Russ Hodges and Lon Simmons. After Hodges retired, Thompson worked with Simmons and then part of the 1974 and '75 seasons with Al Michaels. His Bay Area experience included television duties on Giants broadcasts.

Thompson worked in radio upon his return to Fresno in the mid-1970s before becoming general manager of the Fresno Giants in 1978. He twice was named California League Executive of the Year, quite a feat considering the team played in an aging ballpark that was torn down after the 1987 season.

Thompson was an original board member of the Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame and served three years as chairman of the Fresno Hot Stove League dinner.