

2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

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MLB6

Hall of Fame

Kevin Reed, Dodgers	
Ian Clark, Blue Jays	
Kevin Gibson, Mets	
Mike Sim, Rangers	
Alan Molloy, Giants	

TRIBE MOVE TO MINNESOTA

In a shock move the Cleveland Indians have uprooted and relocated to Minnesota. Cleveland leaves behind a lot of tradition as they were the 1st ever MLB6 World Champions. That was under Coach Mark Stinton who led the Indians for a season and half and was the most successful coach in franchise history with a 158-103 (.605) record and of course the World Series crown. Ken Hatton took over next and although he won the division for the next 3 seasons he did not quite live up to the high standards set by Coach Stinton. In saying that, a 275-235 (.539) overall record with three divisional titles is a lot more than a lot of coaches can put on their resume. David Kinghorn was next at the helm and although he steered

the Tribe to 2nd place in the division in season 6 the Indians decline had set



The new logo seen around MLB6 in culminating in last place in 2 of the last 3 seasons. Coach Kinghorn had a record of 377-487 (.436) despite not being here for some considerable time. Stuart Smith is the coach charged with the task of returning the now Twins to former glories and sitting just a game off the top of the division, this year could be the year. We all wish him luck and a long stay in MLB6.

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Perfect Mets Surge In The East

It was the Mets who captured the headlines in the National League this week as they recorded a perfect week. They opened with a good sweep in Atlanta, followed up with a comfortable sweep in San Diego and ended in fine style with a good sweep over St Louis to open a 7

game lead atop the division. Montreal started well with a great sweep in Philly but successive sweeps of their own in LA and at home to the Cubs left them with poor 3-6 return for the week. Philadelphia lost their 2nd series of the week on the road

in Chicago but they finished with a superb victory over the Giants for a below par 3-6 record for the week. Atlanta never got going as following on from their opening sweep they were swept in St Louis and beaten at home by the Rockies for a terrible 1-8 week.

Cincinnati took the honours in the Central as they started with a hard fought sweep of the Cubs, they followed up another sweep, this time in Colorado, and they finished with victory at home to the Padres for an excellent 8-1 record for the week. Pittsburgh started with a good sweep of the Cardinals and following their win in the 2nd series in San Francisco they seemed set for a big week. Their final series saw them lose at home to the Dodgers in a run feast of a series but looking back a good 6-3 week was a fair return for their efforts. Chicago recovered from their opening sweep to beat the Phillies and with a sweep of their own in Montreal in their final series a solid 5-4 return was their reward this week. St Louis recovered from their opening sweep to inflict a sweep of their own on Atlanta but their 2nd

sweep of the week in New York left them with a poor 3-6 record for the week.

Los Angeles started with a good sweep of their nearest rivals San Francisco, followed up with another sweep over the Expos and ended well with victory in Pittsburgh for an excellent 8-1 return for the week. Colorado were surprisingly beaten in San Diego in their opening series and when they were swept by Cincy in their next series things looked bleak. Victory on the road in Atlanta in their final series did rescue some pride from an otherwise poor 3-6 week. San Diego went downhill following their opening victory as they were swept at home by the Mets in their 2nd series and beaten in Cincinnati in their 3rd for a poor 3-6 record for the week. The Giants were beaten at home by the Pirates in their 2nd series and on the road in Philly in their 3rd for a very poor 2-7 week and probably the end of any chance they had of catching the Dodgers even at this fairly early part of the season.

Yankees Maintain Lead

In the American League there were no real stand out performances but the Yankees continue to hold the best record with 44 wins. They started the week with a good series win in Boston, Followed up with another series win, this time in Anaheim and ended the week with their 3rd straight series win beating the White Sox to record a good 6-3 return. Toronto started with a good series win over the D-Rays, followed with victory in Milwaukee and ended with their 3rd series win this time over the Rangers to match the Yankees good 6-3 week and maintain the pressure atop the division. Boston recovered very well from their opening loss to sweep the White Sox in Chicago and they ended the week with a home win over the A's for a 6-3 record and the 3rd team to record that score this week in this division. Tampa never got going at all this week as they were beaten in Seattle in their 2nd series and at home by the Brewers in their 3rd for poor 3-6 record for the week.

Oakland opened their week with a good series win in Anaheim, they followed that up with a cracking sweep of the Twins but sadly they came unstuck in their final series on the road in Boston

for a good 6-3 week and a 1 game lead atop the division. Seattle started with a home loss at the hands of the Rangers and with subsequent victories at home over Tampa Bay and on the Road in Detroit the Mariners only have a slender 1 game deficit to make up following their solid 5-4 return. Texas went on from their opening victory to record a home win over the Tigers but defeat on the road in Toronto in their final series left them with only a solid 5-4 return for the week. Anaheim made it a hat-trick of 5-4 records for the division as after they were defeated in their 2nd series they swept Minnesota in their 3rd series to keep them in touch with the other 3 in the division.

It was a pretty poor week for the Central as all 4 teams ended up with poor 3-6 records. Detroit lost a home to Chicago in their opener, in Texas in their next series and at home to the Mariners in their 3rd. New boys Minnesota started off with a terrific sweep over the Brewers in a real hard fought series before going down to sweeps themselves in Oakland and at home to the Angels. Chicago didn't build on their good start as they were swept in Boston in their 2nd series and defeated

in New York in their 3rd. Milwaukee were beaten at home by Toronto in their 2nd series but they were the only team from this division to record a series win in the final round of games as they won in Tampa Bay and this win means they even though they are bottom of the division, they are

only 8 games off the pace.

The Season So Far

To be fair, this year seems to be running along near enough the same tracks as in previous years. The AL East has a familiar look with the slugging Yankees sitting on top of the division with the Blue Jays not far behind. The fact that it's the Yankee batting that is leading the way is the only surprise as it is usually these two teams who battle out the lead. Boston are not that far off the pace but they'll have to step up a couple of notches if they are to challenge the others. Tampa have the worst record in the AL and really must improve their hitting if they expect to contend. This year should be all about getting things in order for next season now.

The Central is intriguing with the top 3 in the division being covered by just 3 games. Detroit sit at the top of the division at present but with no funds to improve their brittle batting lineup they may just be there on sufferance at present. The newly relocated Minnesota Twins look the likely division winners to me as they are financially very stable and only need a few tweaks to both batting and pitching in order to assert themselves in the division. Chicago are much like the Tigers in they have few losing points to play with but I think they can push the Twins all the way with a few minor adjustments. Milwaukee are last in the division but only because their batting is so weak. On the other side of the ball they are fine but like the rest of the division their batting will be the key to their success.

The West is another fascinating division with any one of the 4 ballclubs more than capable of winning the division. Oakland are in the box seat at present with a slender 1 game lead. Their batting is their strong suit as they have scored more runs than every other team in the AL bar the Yankees. A couple of pitchers added to the roster in the 2nd half of the season would be a great benefit to the A's as I think their batting will stand up under pressure. Seattle have great pitching but may

just not have the strength in depth if their batting gets fatigued. Don't get me wrong, I think they'll be right up there come the end of the season but have they the financial clout to get a marquee player if one becomes available, Oakland does and that may be the difference. Texas have not had the best of seasons so far but you can never write them off. Pitching seems a little erratic at times but hell isn't nearly everyone's. They'll improve as the season goes on but they had better get a move on as both Oakland and Seattle look a picture of consistency so far. Texas will be up there when the going gets tough. The Angels have the same number of wins as the Rangers but so far don't seem to be able to get things going on either side of the ball. They do have plenty of funds available so look out for a 2nd half revival from the Angels and the best divisional battle in the whole of the league as I predict that not more than 10 games will separate the 4 teams come the end of the season.

New York should win the East only because the Expos have parted company with Coach Townend. The Mets are a decent side don't get me wrong, their batting is up there with anyone apart from perhaps the Dodgers and Yankees but their pitching is fickle and easily disrupted. The ageing Leiter looks to be past his sell by date and he will be moved once recovered from injury. The rest of the staff have potential and are good sometimes but it's consistency which counts for more than anything in this league. Montreal are no mugs with the timber but with the leather they struggle badly. Not much money, no coach and a 7 game lead to pull back, not this year. Both Philadelphia and Atlanta have been very disappointing this year. I did expect either one of these team to post a challenge but sadly that challenge has not materialised. Philadelphia need at least a couple of batters as a matter of urgency as their pitching will get by at a push. They have few funds though and will struggle for the remainder

of the year. Atlanta are in the same boat but need batting and pitching. They do have funds and must invest now if they are to improve.

In the Central the Pirates look good as they are solid on both sides of the ball. A top batting lineup coupled with a solid pitching staff and finances available to strengthen either side make the almost certainties for the divisional crown. Cincinnati have stormed back to life following a poor year last year and a rather sluggish start to this year. They are a solid team on both sides of the ball but may lack the strength in depth or resources to seriously challenge the Pirates this year. They should push hard for the wild-card berth. For St Louis I should just say ditto because like the Reds they are a solid team with the potential to go far. Like the Reds I can only see wild-card as the Pirates are better at present. Chicago must sort out their pitching as quite frankly they are not up to scratch. Their batting is lacking a little too but could be improved but I'm afraid it's

wooden spoon again this year for the Cubs.

With a 12 game lead the Dodgers are home and hosed especially with that batting lineup of theirs. The pitching is steady but not spectacular but it seldom has to be as the bats normally more than make up for any pitching frailties. The Giants have imploded over the past couple of weeks and now must set their sights on the wild-card. They will have a better second half of the season but they will rue the costly frailties of the past couple of weeks. Colorado are getting there, a little slower that I thought they might but they are getting there. The batting needs strengthened and I'm sure they will invest soon, they have the funds and the team is on a sound financial footing so I expect next year we will see the best of the Rockies. The Padres are weak and will continue to struggle until they find a coach. Number 1 draft pick again.

How You Rank

<u>Franchise</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>%age</u>	<u>Str</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Agnst</u>	<u>Diff</u>
Los Angeles Dodgers	46	17	0.730	W2	529	313	216
New York Yankees	44	19	0.698	W2	484	308	176
Pittsburgh Pirates	44	19	0.698	L2	385	267	118
New York Mets	39	24	0.619	W10	399	316	83
Toronto Blue Jays	39	24	0.619	W2	286	214	72
Oakland Athletics	38	25	0.603	L1	351	282	69
Seattle Mariners	37	26	0.587	L1	304	241	63
Cincinnati Reds	34	29	0.540	L1	333	290	43
San Francisco Giants	34	29	0.540	L2	328	306	22
St Louis Cardinals	34	29	0.540	L3	296	294	2
Detroit Tigers	34	29	0.540	W1	285	295	-10
Minnesota Twins	33	30	0.524	L6	326	305	21
Montreal Expos	32	31	0.508	L6	338	341	-3
Boston Red Sox	31	32	0.492	W1	306	314	-8
Chicago White Sox	31	32	0.492	L2	279	339	-60
Texas Rangers	29	34	0.460	L2	310	312	-2
Anaheim Angels	29	34	0.460	W3	270	351	-81
Milwaukee Brewers	26	37	0.413	W2	233	273	-40
Colorado Rockies	26	37	0.413	L1	268	320	-52
Philadelphia Phillies	23	40	0.365	W2	253	329	-76
Atlanta Braves	22	41	0.349	W1	265	357	-92
Chicago Cubs	21	42	0.333	W4	270	407	-137
Tampa Bay Devil Rays	18	45	0.286	L2	216	369	-153
San Diego Padres	12	51	0.190	W1	192	363	-171

Deadline for Contributions: Saturday 28th August 2004