

# 2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

Issue 185 Editor: Kevin Gibson, 31, Jedmoor, , Hebburn, Tyne & Wear, NE31 IET. Email:kevin@mets91.freemove.co.uk

## MLB6

## BOSTON SURGE

### Hall of Fame

Kevin Reed, Dodgers



Ian Clark, Blue Jays



Kevin Gibson, Mets



Mike Sim, Rangers



Alan Molloy, Giants



Boston closed the gap on the big two in the division following a successful week of Inter-league play. They opened with victory on the road in Philadelphia, followed up with a cracking sweep on the road at the high flying Pirates and rounded the week off in style with a home sweep of the Padres for an excellent 8-1 return. The Yankees increased their lead atop the AL East following another good week. They started with victory on the road in Montreal, followed with a hard fought sweep in Colorado but stumbled on the road in Pittsburgh but even so their 6-3 week increases their lead by a game over the Blue Jays. Toronto started well with a road wins in Atlanta and Cincinnati but defeat in their final series at home to the Dodgers only gave them a solid 5-4 return and they slip a little further behind the Yankees. Tampa were crushed by the Mets in their opening series going down to a big sweep. Further sweeps in San Francisco and at home to Cincinnati saw the end of Coach Houghton as the D-Rays went 0-9 but more of that later in the newsletter.

Seattle could so easily been the headline makers this week as they mirrored the Red Sox excellent 8-1 week. They opened with a series win in San Diego, followed up with sweeps at home to St Louis and on the road in Philadelphia to open up a 4 game lead at the top of the West. Texas suffered an early set back as they lost their opening series in Colorado but they bounced back with wins at home to the Expos and on the road in St Louis for a solid 5-4 return and that keeps them well within striking distance of the top of the division. Oakland started with a cracking series win in San Francisco but that must have took a lot out of them as they were soundly beaten in New York in their next series and by the Cubs in their 3rd for a slightly below par 4-5 week but they still remain close up in 2nd place in the division. Anaheim were beaten but not disgraced in LA in their opening series, they lost at home to the Cubs next up but fought back well to beat the Braves in their final series for a below par 4-5 week and a fair bit of work to do if they are going to catch the other 3 this year.

The AL Central is the tightest division in the league with only 3 games covering first to last. Milwaukee opened with a good win in St Louis, they followed up with an emphatic sweep in San Diego holding their hosts to a single run in the series but they ended limply with a home defeat by the Rockies but their good 6-3 week keeps them well in the thick of the action. The White Sox were swept by their cross town rivals the Cubs in their opening series but that was the un-

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doubted low point as they surged back to win on the road in LA and to sweep the Giants for a much better than average 5-4 week. Detroit started their week by recording successive victories on the road in Cincinnati and at home to the Braves but a final series sweep by the Mets spoiled their week leaving them with a below par 4-5 return. Minnesota started with a crushing sweep on the road in Pittsburgh and despite fighting back in their 2nd series to record a home win over the Phillies, defeat in Montreal in their final series left them with a poor 3-6 record but that was just enough to keep them ahead of the other 3 even though it's only by 1 game.

## **METS BATS CATCH FIRE**

That's more than can be said for their real life counterparts but I digress. The Mets had one of their best weeks for some time as they blasted their way through week 10. They averaged 11 runs per game in racking up an 8-1 week which should see them to the division title bar miracles from the others. Montreal, Atlanta and Philadelphia all had losing week and look like they are fighting a losing battle to catch the runaway Mets.

In the Central the Cubs burst into life with an excellent 8-1 week and it's not as if they were playing any mug teams. They seem to be getting their act together and although it is too late for this season the habit of winning will breed confidence amongst the squad and they may be a force next year. Pittsburgh had a solid week and still boast the 2nd best record in the league and they will take heart from the fact that their nearest rivals the Reds could only match their record and from the fact that a 2-7 from the Cardinals saw the end of Coach Perez.

Mediocrity reigned in the West this week but LA are still the best team in the league and a solid 5-4 return seems like failure by their high standards. The Giants had another below par week and are in danger of slipping out of the wild-card race but I suspect that they'll be there challenging when post season play comes around. The Rockies had a below par 4-5 week too but they are like the Cubs getting stronger and will be better next year. The Padres won't be better this year, next year or the year after unless they make a coaching appointment.

## **CARDINALS SACK PEREZ**

The St Louis Cardinal have been slumping lately and they did record a 2-7 record this week but it still came as a shock to learn that Coach Perez had been dismissed. Coach Perez has easily been the best coach in franchise history as you will see as I chart the history of the franchise.

The Cards began life as the Houston Astros under Coach Paul Lancaster and he boasted a record of 428-445 (.490) leading the franchise to it's only divisional crown in season 5. He left in season 6 to be replaced by interim coach Neil Coulson who had a 29-43 (.403) record. Coach Coulson was replaced in season 6 by Eric Van Genderen 39-87 (.310) who lasted to season 7 when the franchise was relocated to St Louis under Coach Perez. Coach Perez boasted a 315-263 (.545) record at the helm of the Cards and he led them to over 90 wins in each of the last 2 seasons. Matthew Christie has been charged with bringing glory to the franchise and we all wish him luck in his quest.

## DEVIL RAYS SACK HOUGHTON

The D-Rays front office sacked Coach Houghton this week and immediately appointed Rob Byrne as the new Coach. Simon Creasey 89-73 (.549) was the original coach at the Baltimore Orioles and he led them to the divisional crown that year. He was replaced in season 2 by Keith Finch 297-234 (.559) who led them to the divisional title in season 3 the same season they were AL Champions going down 4-1 to the Mets in the World Series. David Houghton 409-473 (.464) took over the franchise which was relocated to Tampa Bay as the Devil Rays. The division is probably the toughest in MLB6 but in one of the most exciting coaching appointments of recent years the D-Rays finally lost patience with David Houghton and appointed Rob Byrne. Coach Byrne is a winner and that's what attracted Tampa to him. He is pitched into a tough division but if anybody can turn the D-Rays around it's Rob. Welcome mate and I'm glad you're in the AL where you can bug Coaches Greener, Beaumont and Clements. Good luck and we hope to hear from you soon when you find your feet.

### Toronto Talk – Paul Beaumont

Halfway through the season and the Blue Jays are 48-33; five games out in the division, but one game ahead in the wildcard race. Fifteen games over .500 midway through the season should be cause for celebration but the mood in Toronto is different. "We're a good team and should be in a similar position to where we are. However, we aren't, for reasons unknown to us, playing to our full capabilities. We'll keep working on stuff, making slight adjustments, until we consistently reach the level of play that we are capable of." The first series of last week in New York has shown the inconsistency that has troubled Toronto over the last couple of seasons. The first game the Blue Jays were blown out by the Yankees 13-0. However, they turned things around with 10-2, and 9-0 wins to take the series 2-1 over the team with the best record in the American League. This season The Jays added CF Jordan to the line-up, hoping he will help to ignite the offence. Jordan has played well and is third on the team batting .289. The Jays have a loaded batting line-up but only one player is batting over .300, catcher Sanchez. "Several players are playing below the level they are capable of, they aren't playing badly, but they aren't stepping up either. If we want to reach the post-season, and go deep into the playoffs (which is Toronto's goal) then players need to step up now." The second half of the season starts with inter league games. Toronto need the pitchers to re-focus and regain their early season form, which has slipped the last few weeks. And the stars in the line up need to step up, now, if the Blue Jays are to challenge the Yankee batting machine.

### Yankees Yak – Simon Greener

No complaints from this side of New York, things are ticking along and the division race is hotting up nicely. I made a necessary change to the pitching when I purchased free agent Donnie Wall in exchange for Jim Bouton, a pitcher who has done well for me but who was now surplus to requirements given the progress of my rookies. I was delighted to get Felix Martinez, a player who has done serious damage to us in the past... I'm hoping that, like Brady Anderson, he can turn that around and do some damage for me. Nice to see the new lads coming in, good luck to them and let's hope they stick around.

## Milwaukee Messenger – Paul Denyer

After an ugly start we are now levelling out at the normal 5-4 weeks that never seem to get us much further on in the standings. Why can't we break that 5-4 barrier in a consistent manner? well just look at the team stats, we can't hit and we can't hit for power either. This is a error by myself at the start of last season in moving to a LARGE stadium without the tools on offence to play in a stadium like that. We have the basis of a solid team, Hammonds, Burnitz, Belliard with catcher Johnson coming through as well as big hopes in the future for Helms and Grebert and Perez. Defensively, you have to start with Matt Ford who has been brilliant in his 14 starts this season, an Era of 0.93, hitting average of .183 and a 7-2 record. The three players with no potential, Browning, Eldred and Morris are doing a job but after seeing how Gameplan Baseball treats players with zero potential in the off season I feel we will be rebuilding the starting rotation at the end of the season but they are doing a job at the moment for me. We need a another rightie for the bullpen and missed out on Steve Pearce this week (thanks Alastair!) so we move our attentions to someone else this week. With 90 games what are the Brewers' chances of making the playoffs? well we are only 9 games back but need our bats to move up a notch while keeping the same standards with the pitching. The AL Central has always been tight since I took over the Brewers but I have a nagging feeling that the Twins may have a chance to dominate the division this season and it could leave us fighting for second spot.

### How You Stand

Franchise	Won	Lost	%age	Str	For	Agnst	Diff
Los Angeles Dodgers	63	27	0.700	L1	753	453	300
Pittsburgh Pirates	61	29	0.678	W1	544	383	161
New York Yankees	59	31	0.656	L1	605	430	175
New York Mets	56	34	0.622	W4	641	467	174
Seattle Mariners	55	35	0.611	W6	451	355	96
Toronto Blue Jays	53	37	0.589	W1	462	394	68
Cincinnati Reds	52	38	0.578	W4	489	422	67
Oakland Athletics	51	39	0.567	W1	489	447	42
Texas Rangers	50	40	0.556	W1	487	401	86
San Francisco Giants	48	42	0.533	L3	472	425	47
Boston Red Sox	48	42	0.533	W6	426	424	2
St Louis Cardinals	46	44	0.511	L1	430	409	21
Minnesota Twins	45	45	0.500	L1	444	447	-3
Detroit Tigers	44	46	0.489	L3	410	451	-41
Milwaukee Brewers	43	47	0.478	L2	358	370	-12
Chicago White Sox	42	48	0.467	W4	391	476	-85
Colorado Rockies	41	49	0.456	W2	411	466	-55
Anaheim Angels	41	49	0.456	W1	403	482	-79
Montreal Expos	40	50	0.444	W1	423	527	-104
Chicago Cubs	35	55	0.389	L1	399	541	-142
Atlanta Braves	32	58	0.356	L1	409	509	-100
Philadelphia Phillies	29	61	0.322	L3	351	509	-158
Tampa Bay D-Rays	24	66	0.267	L12	276	508	-232
San Diego Padres	22	68	0.244	L6	272	500	-228

Hopefully back to normal with the newsletter, sorry for the missing weeks. Good luck to all.

**Deadline for Contributions: Saturday 9th October 2004.**