

2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

Issue 190 Editor: Kevin Gibson, 31, Jedmoor, , Hebburn, Tyne & Wear, NE31 1ET. Email:kevin@mets91.freemove.co.uk

MLB6

RANGERS CONCEDE?

Hall of Fame

Kevin Reed, Dodgers



Ian Clark, Blue Jays



Kevin Gibson, Mets



Mike Sim, Rangers



Alan Molloy, Giants



Twenty seven games remaining and I think it's time to concede the division to Troy's Mariners. We've enjoyed our stint as AL West champs but I just can't see us pulling back 11 games on the Mariners who have become a model of consistency, going 6-3 or better most of the season. We do play them for the last time but even a sweep would leave us 8 back with 24 to play and a sweep seems very unlikely. Not going to congratulate Troy yet lest he accuse me of trying to hex his team!

So perhaps a wild-card spot is within our reach? The Yankees must be disappointed to be in possession of that spot right now having played so well early in the season only to see the Blue Jays overhauling them. Unlike the AL West, the AL East is not yet set and the Yankees may yet bounce back but it's looking harder each week. It's more likely we'll be going head-to-head for the wild card spot. But let's not rule out the Red Sox whose 8-1 week really thrust them back into the race. I think it's those 3 teams only though as I can't see the Athletics or anyone in the Central pulling back that sort of gap.

So how will it end up? I'm hoping the Rangers slightly better recent form will see us home. We've added 2 quality bats in 2B Berg and C Davis and have reason to be optimistic when it's our turn to bat. The Yankees can certainly say the same as they are top scorers in the AL by some distance. The Red Sox are a quieter team at the plate but are toughing out the wins. Of the three, the Red Sox are the better pitching squad, though the Yankees probably have the edge on Texas - their ERA higher courtesy of the smaller stadium rather than a difference in quality.

So what does Texas need to do to win the wild card? Simple - up our home form. 38-28 at home is not good enough for a playoff team - we need to score earlier in games and not rely upon our bullpen which is a weakness. It's fair to say it's a weakness for most teams though. It's been a great season and I'd like to wish Simon and Alan all the best for the remaining 3 weeks.

Quick word on the rookie list - that's not a bad bunch though really only three or four players are what you'd call star players. Those teams picking early will get the benefit of what looks a pretty deep draft and the early 2nd round picks should provide good value.

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Musings from the Bronx

Things have gone less than swimmingly the last few turns, leaving me to firstly admire the strength of the Blue Jays and then to wonder about several of the personnel decisions I've made this season. My best recent acquisition appears to be Donne Wall, a veteran pitcher who looked nothing special but has been a star when compared to Felix Martinez, a player who arrived with a great reputation. The season isn't over by any means but I am disappointed by our recent collapse and will battle Toronto and Boston for this division until the last game...the off-season may be interesting, as I'm giving plenty of thought to going back to my pitching oriented days.

Boston Bugle

The Red Sox sparked back into life with an impressive 8-1 record in week 15, but to stand a chance of catching the Yankees and Rangers for the Wild Card the team will have to keep it up. With series against the Yankees this week and the Rangers next week, the fate of Red Sox Nation hangs very much in the balance.

The offense has done just enough and the pitching staff has come up big when it matters most. The revolving door in the rotation has slowed right down, leading to more stability from the starters. The bullpen is hanging together just enough to pick up results. Some of the ERA's are ugly, but they get the job done.

The offense doesn't always hit, but they seem to get on base. Paul Young is the prime example. He does a great job in the two-hole with an average of only .257 but an OBP of .350. The everyday players have been picking up injuries recently and fatigue is a problem, but they keep battling through it. Fingers crossed for the next few weeks...

Mets Wire

Nine batters over .290 tells you where the strength of the Mets has been this year, 4 of them over .350 also tells us that the Mets have some big time players, if only they would all do it at the same time. Mind, no complaints from me as we seem to get the job done on this side more often than not. Pitching, however, is another story. Trachsel and Glavine are doing their part but the other are a total bloody enigma to me. Just when you think they are going in the right direction they are panned by a poorer batting lineup than usual and things are right back to square one. It's really doing my head in but hopefully they'll get things sorted sooner rather than later.

The final 3 weeks of the table look like being really exciting as there are still a few divisional titles up for grabs, the wild card races look tighter than ever so season 11 is boiling up just nicely. Good luck to all players still involved in type of battle and to the rest of you, get building next season is just around the corner.

Split Standings

1st Half Standings

	W	L	Pct.
AL East	53	28	.654
Yankees	48	33	.593
Blue Jays	40	41	.494
Red Sox	24	57	.296

	W	L	Pct.
AL Central	42	39	.519
Indians/Twins	40	41	.494
Tigers	37	44	.457
White Sox	37	44	.457

	W	L	Pct.
AL West	47	34	.580
Mariners	47	34	.580
Athletics	45	36	.556
Rangers	37	44	.457
Angels			

	W	L	Pct.
NL East	48	33	.593
Mets	36	45	.444
Expos	29	52	.358
Braves	27	54	.333
Phillies			

	W	L	Pct.
NL Central	56	25	.691
Pirates	47	34	.580
Reds	44	37	.543
Cardinals	28	53	.346
Cubs			

	W	L	Pct.
NL West	58	23	.716
Dodgers	44	37	.543
Giants	44	.457	
Rockies	21	60	.259
Padres			

2nd Half Standings

	W	L	Pct.
AL East	36	18	.667
Blue Jays	34	20	.630
Red Sox	26	28	.481
Yankees	17	37	.315
Devil Rays			

	W	L	Pct.
AL Central	27	27	.500
Indians/Twins	27	27	.500
Tigers	25	29	.463
White Sox	21	33	.389
Brewers			

	W	L	Pct.
AL West	41	13	.759
Mariners	32	22	.593
Rangers	21	33	.389
Athletics	21	33	.389
Angels			

	W	L	Pct.
NL East	34	20	.630
Mets	27	27	.500
Phillies	21	33	.389
Expos	20	34	.370
Braves			

	W	L	Pct.
NL Central	30	24	.556
Pirates	32	22	.593
Cubs	25	29	.463
Reds	21	33	.389
Cardinals			

	W	L	Pct.
NL West	40	14	.741
Dodgers	27	27	.500
Giants	27	.500	
Rockies	16	38	.296
Padres			





Current Standings – AL

	Wins	Losses	Best Week	Worst Week	Winning Weeks
AL East	84	51	7-2	4-5	13
Blue Jays	79	56	8-1	2-7	10
Yankees	74	61	8-1	2-7	9
Red Sox	41	94	6-3	0-9	3
Devil Rays					

	Wins	Losses	Best Week	Worst Week	Winning Weeks
AL Central	69	66	9-0	2-7	6
Indians/Twins	67	68	7-2	2-7	6
Tigers	62	73	6-3	1-8	7
White Sox	58	77	6-3	1-8	7
Brewers					

	Wins	Losses	Best Week	Worst Week	Winning Weeks
AL West	88	47	8-1	3-6	12
Mariners	77	58	8-1	3-6	10
Rangers	68	67	6-3	1-8	8
Athletics	58	77	5-4	2-7	4
Angels					

Wild Card Race – AL

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>GB</u>
 Yankees	79	56	–
 Rangers	77	58	2
 Red Sox	74	61	5
 Athletics	68	67	11

Wild Card Race – NL

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>GB</u>
 Reds	72	63	–
 Giants	71	64	1
 Cardinals	65	70	7
 Rockies	64	71	8

Editors Message – Thanks to all who have contributed to the newsletter over the past year. Big thanks especially to Rob Crowther who has been converting the Publisher file to PDF to enable you to read it. Next time will be the last newsletter before Christmas so get the contributions in early if you can. Good luck again to you all and I hope you and your families have a good year.

**Regards
Key**

Deadline for Contributions: Saturday 18th December 2004