

# 2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

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## MLB6

## DOWN TO THE WIRE

### Hall of Fame

Kevin Reed, Dodgers



Ian Clark, Blue Jays



Kevin Gibson, Mets



Mike Sim, Rangers



Alan Molloy, Giants



Realistically, there are only three issues to finalise in the final week of the season. In the AL, the West is the Mariners bar an absolute miracle as they only need to win 2 games and the Rangers must win all their games. The East is Toronto's to lose as they have a 5 game lead over the Yankees and unless the Yankees sweep the opening series of the week I can't see them wasting that sort of lead. That leaves the two issues to be resolved in the AL. The Central is a dogfight between the Tigers and the Twins, whoever wins the division advances to the play-offs, whoever loses starts their vacation next week. Detroit holds a 1 game lead over Minnesota and with the Twins more difficult schedule this week the odds are stacked in favour of the Tigers. That leaves the wild-card where the Yankees have a 1-game lead over the Rangers. The second series of the week should determine the wild-card as they meet each other and I think the winners of this series will take the wild-card. Which ever way it goes it should be an exiting week in the AL.

In the NL things are a lot clearer. The Mets have the East sewn up, the Pirates have the Central won and the Dodgers need a perfect week to emulate last seasons remarkable feat of 117 wins for the season. That leaves us with the wild-card. As it stands the Giants have a 3-game lead over the Reds and that could be enough of a cushion to clinch it especially as the Giants open their week against the Padres. Then it's all routes through New York as first the Giants come to town to face the Mets and then the Reds host the Mets in their final series of the season but my guess is the Giants should have clinched it by then. As in the AL it should be a nail biting week things

## Milwaukee Messenger – Paul Denyer

Well we can call our season over now, it's down to Detroit and Minnesota to fight it out for the divisional title - good luck to both. Our downfall as past seasons as been with the bat, a decision to move to a large stadium a few seasons ago has proved to be a bad one and I am thinking of moving back to small and upgrading it to give us some more financial punch in the free agency market if we decide to dabble. Our power hitting is the worst in the league with Belliard accounting for just under 30% of those home runs, we need someone to help out Ron though SS Lansing showed some potential in the area and hopefully can build on that in the off season. Pitching - we missed Matt Ford for all those weeks and am predicting we will be losing four starters in the off-season; Belcher, Morris, Browning and Eldred but on the upside Mieses, Buddie and Johnson could turn into starters for season 12.

So onto the draft, what are we looking for? well bats, bats and more bats is the first thought but if we lose the aforementioned four pitchers we will need some help in the bullpen.

Good luck to all still involved in the playoff race, seven into four doesn't go and I bet messers Greener, Clements and Sim who all sit in second or third place at the moment in their divisions wished they were playing in the AL Central!

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## Toronto Tribune – Paul Beaumont

With eighteen games of the regular season the Blue Jays won't be counting their chickens just yet. A slip up now and all the good work so far goes to waste. Consistency has been the name of the game for the Jays. More of the same and Toronto should be back in the playoffs.

The Yankees had been sliding recently, letting the Jays take the lead in the division, but have bounced back with a six game win streak to remain one game up in the wild-card race. The Mariners look like they'll win the West, with the Rangers coming from way back to be one game behind the Yankees. The Red Sox are also flying, but they may well run out of games. If any of these teams slip up in the remaining games then their place will likely be snapped up by one of the others.

They have been no stellar performances by the higher rated players in the Blue Jays staff but all have contributed. Special mentions should go to pitcher Norm Charlton who has made the fifth starter spot his own with a 7-1 record, .156 HAvg, and 2.43 ERA in ten games. On the other side of the ball back-up SS Desi Relaford has played 104 games in various roles hitting .272, making 35 FS's and has a FldP of .994. It's been a team effort so far, and will be until the end of the season.

The Blue Jays have had the funds in place to sign a 'difference maker' for the playoffs (if they are reached) but this won't happen now as the free agency window closes. Will the Blue Jays regret the 'one that got away'? The Blue Jays had hoped to sign ex-Blue Jay and Yankee 2B Dave Berg but waited to pull the trigger on the deal and the Rangers stepped in. Failing to make the signing could prove even bigger should the Jays and Rangers meet in the post-season.

### Editors Note

Sorry about the last newsletter, I just got completely lost with the dates over Christmas and it wasn't until I got to work and was greeted by Mr Greener and his turn-sheet I realised I'd dropped a goolie. It will be heartbreaking for three teams this week as they will miss out on post-season play but I'm sure those teams who do miss out will redouble their efforts next season. It will be a bitter pill for the Yanks if they don't get through as they looked awesome early season, but all credit to the Jays who have proved to be the more consistent team. The Tigers and Twins will take it to the wire for the Central and the Rangers will have to beat the Yanks for the wild-card, you couldn't write that sort of script.

Good luck to all teams in this final week, Happy New Year to all of the Coaches and I hope to hear from a lot more of you this year as I feel the newsletter has fallen away a lot over the second half of the year. MLB6, from strength to strength.

**Deadline for Contributions: Saturday 22nd January 2005.**