

2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

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MLB6 YANKEES TAKE WILD-CARD

Hall of Fame

Kevin Reed, Dodgers



Ian Clark, Blue Jays



Kevin Gibson, Mets



Mike Sim, Rangers



Alan Molloy, Giants



In a quick round-up this week, I'll start with the AL wild-card which went down to the wire as predicted by yours truly last week. The Yankees 1 game lead at the start of the week was history after the opening round of games as they lost in Toronto and the Rangers had an emphatic sweep on the road in Anaheim to hold the box seat going into the head to head series in New York. The Yankees took the opening game 1-0 to knot the Rangers and with the other 2 games in the series being split it was all level going into the final series of the season. It was all square following the opening game of the final series as both the Yankees and Rangers recorded wins, and following defeat in the next games it was still all square going into the final game of the season. The Rangers lost at home to suffer a rare home series loss and subsequently the Yankees prevailed on the road in Minnesota to progress to the post-season where they will face the runaway division leaders Toronto. Detroit lost their opening 2 series giving the Twins a squeak at the division but a sweep at home to the Devil Rays coupled with a Minnesota loss to the Yankees in their final series gave the Tigers the division by 4 games in the end.

Over in the NL the only real question to be answered was who would be the wild-card. The Giants held a 4 game lead and could have been in trouble following a second series sweep in New York but they fired back with a sweep of their own against the Cubs in their final series to clinch post-season play. The Reds fell short but they still had a great season and should be right amongst the action next year. All 3 divisional winners had good weeks with the Mets and Dodgers posting 8-1 returns and the Pirates a very good 7-2 so it should be a cracking round of games next time around.

In the NL East the Phillies are now managed by the father and son combo of Alan and Gordon Milnes and I will be compiling a brief history of their franchise next time around. Welcome to the league guys, don't get any silly ideas about winning divisional titles or stuff like that, I'll add you to the mailing list for electronic newsletters unless you let me know different next time.

Good luck to all coaches in the play-offs, if you didn't make it there is always next season. A special mention to Mike Sim who lost out in a nail biting week to the Yankees but still found the time to write in with an article and to Alan and Gordon who dropped me a line introducing themselves. I think I may have a battle on with the 3 teams in the East next year.

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YANKEE NOTES

Congratulations to all division winners, particularly Paul and his Blue Jays who totally stuffed the Yanks second half of the season.....I've the utmost sympathy for Mike and his Rangers, especially after that third game between us, it could easily have gone the other way and I'd have had no complaints. I have rather limped into the play-offs but will give it my best shot, as I always relish playing Toronto. Several of my players are suffering fatigue but this is where the star players show up and it could make my mind up regarding a few roster spots for next season....Good luck to everybody involved.

TEXAS TRIBUNE

Some words on the final week of the regular season from a disappointed, but not dejected Rangers camp. We tried everything to keep our streak of making the post-season alive. Standing 3rd in the AL West at mid-season I felt we'd need the best 2nd half in the AL to make the playoffs and we didn't really come close to matching the excellent Mariners during that time. We ended up 50-31 but lost the critical series in NY in the final week and that really took the confidence out of the side. It was a fantastic series though - game one was a pitching duel between the Rangers Erasmi Ramirez and the Yankees Donne Wall. At least it was after Yankees lead-off hitter Felix Martinez homered in the first AB of the evening. After that pitching dominated. The Rangers threatened to tie it in the 6th but a double play ended the threat. Two singles in the 7th chased Wall and the lead was turned over to the bullpen and Jamey Wright and Glendon Rusch were perfect to protect Wall's victory. Ramirez was the hard luck starter, giving up 4 hits in 8 innings, but that crucial lead-off homer was the difference. That tied the teams on 93 wins going to game 2. The Rangers sent another LHP to the mound in the shape of the erratic Joaquin Benoit and he pitched solidly though when he left, the Yankees were up 2-1 with Delvis Lantigua pitching well. This time Simon Greener stuck with his starter but that decision came back to haunt him as Berg tied the game in the top of the 9th doubling in Loaiza and then 3b Vina homered with 2 on giving the Rangers a 5-2 lead which Alex Moreno was able to protect for the win. So to game 3 with the Rangers 1 up with 4 to play. A win for Texas would probably seal the wild card. The Rangers sent Rosman Garcia to face Edwardo Sierra but it was not a good night for pitching. The Rangers scored first but the Yankees quickly struck back and lead 6-3 after 5 innings. The Rangers re-took the lead in the 8th to lead 9-7 and then 11-7 in the top of the 9th. The Yankees hit back with a Cabrera rbi single and then a 3 run HR from Derek Jeter to tie the game at 11. Into extra innings and the Rangers scored in the top of the 10th, to go 12-11 up but in the bottom of the inning an RBI double from ex-Ranger Shipley tied the game and to the delight of the home fans (and no doubt their skipper!) Derek Jeter's RBI single won the game and the series for the Yankees and crucially tied the teams at 94 wins with 3 to play.

So the Rangers twice saw victory snatched away and it upset them. The shaky home form then came back to haunt the team as the Brewers, managed by my good friend Paul Denyer came to Arlington and shook off a disappointing game one defeat to win games 2 and 3, frankly out-playing the Rangers in those 2 games. I knew we'd need to win the series to have a shot at advancing and when I checked the final tallies, it turned out that the final 7-5 loss to the Brewers was crucial, though in my heart I knew the damage had been done by the Yankees come from behind

13-12 win in game 3. Many congratulations to Simon Greener whose great first half deserved a playoff-spot and I'm sure he'll relish another battle with the Blue Jays. In the final analysis, out inexperience on the mound cost us. We couldn't find a reliable bullpen and although our starting pitching was good, if you kept the game close against us, you could get runs against our bullpen. Only 2 pitchers have more than 5 year's major league service and the skipper has to take the blame for not securing the services of an experienced arm for the playoff-run. On offence we rode the hot bat of Ryan Church most of the season but weren't quite able to support him at the end. Church has to be in with a great shot at league MVP and the Triple Crown of BAvg, HR and RBI leader. His final marks were .389, 58 HR, 184 RBI and if this turns out to be his final season it will be one heck of a way to go out. The season did start out as a rebuilding year and 95 wins is a good return, though not quite good enough. Good luck to all in the playoffs.

THE MILNES CHECK IN

We have just taken over the Atlanta Braves and whilst it will be a couple of turns before we are able to say something sensible about our team here's a bit of background on us. BTW I work in the same company as David Trice and know Rob Crowther - Rob sent us some back copies of the Newsletter.

"10 years after he last coached in the majors Alan Milnes is back in the NL East. However this time it's not the MLB1 Phillies but the MLB6 Braves that he will be managing. Milnes brings with him his son Gordon, who was only 9 years old the last time Milnes Sr. was in the big leagues.

Both Milnes bring a long history of success on the Football field with them but it remains to be seen if they can translate their success from the gridiron to the diamond. Milnes Jr is the Coach of the current NCAA5 champions OSU and Milnes Sr. is Coach of the two time champion NFLBC Pittsburgh Steelers. Milnes Jr. also won a title in NFLAR with the Vikings and Milnes Sr. won two National Championships with the NCAA3 UCLA Bruins.

Speaking shortly after his appointment Alan Milnes said 'We look forward to the challenge, especially with the Mets in our Division, but we hope to be competitive in our first season and contesting a wildcard place in the second'. "

FINAL STANDINGS

Franchise	Won	Lost	%age	Str	For	Agnst	Diff
Los Angeles Dodgers	116	46	0.716	W7	1351	798	553
Seattle Mariners	105	57	0.648	W6	906	683	223
New York Mets	104	58	0.642	W2	1174	838	336
Toronto Blue Jays	102	60	0.630	L1	831	652	179
Pittsburgh Pirates	101	61	0.623	W3	956	769	187
New York Yankees	96	66	0.593	W1	986	786	200
Texas Rangers	95	67	0.586	L2	965	738	227
Boston Red Sox	91	71	0.562	L3	766	718	48
San Francisco Giants	89	73	0.549	W3	874	757	117
Cincinnati Reds	85	77	0.525	L2	838	792	46
St Louis Cardinals	82	80	0.506	W1	821	806	15
Detroit Tigers	81	81	0.500	W3	728	747	-19
Oakland Athletics	80	82	0.494	W2	810	836	-26
Minnesota Twins	77	85	0.475	L1	756	776	-20
Colorado Rockies	74	88	0.457	L1	740	886	-146
Chicago White Sox	74	88	0.457	L2	682	833	-151
Milwaukee Brewers	71	91	0.438	W2	630	751	-121
Chicago Cubs	68	94	0.420	L6	694	854	-160
Anaheim Angels	67	95	0.414	W1	638	823	-185
Philadelphia Phillies	66	96	0.407	L3	707	877	-170
Montreal Expos	66	96	0.407	L4	687	934	-247
Atlanta Braves	59	103	0.364	L4	675	914	-239
Tampa Bay Devil Rays	48	114	0.296	L3	524	872	-348
San Diego Padres	47	115	0.290	W3	554	863	-309