

2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

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MLB6

WEEK 11 ROUNDUP

Hall of Fame

Kevin Reed, Dodgers



Ian Clark, Blue Jays



Kevin Gibson, Mets



Mike Sim, Rangers



Alan Molloy, Giants



Simon Greener, Yankees



Nigel Beck, Pirates



Week 11 saw the leaders in the AL East port great weeks, the chasing Yankees had two good sweeps at home to the D-Rays and Angels before dropping their only game of the week on the road in Chicago. Toronto kept the pressure on the Yankees to keep winning as they posted another good 7-2 week with wins over Boston and Seattle and a home sweep of the Brewers. Tampa cane back well from their opening sweep to sweep Oakland and beat Milwaukee for a solid week and the Red Sox beat Chicago before losing their 2nd series of the week in Texas.

The aforementioned Rangers had already beaten Seattle and swept Minnesota before the Red Sox fell in their final series and their lead atop the division looks a healthy one. Seattle bounced back from their opening loss to sweep Detroit but defeat by Toronto in their final series leaves them with a lot of ground to claw back on the streaking Rangers. The A's own the worst record in the league at present despite starting the week with a sweep of the Angels. A couple of sweeps inflicted by Tampa and Detroit leaves them with just 32 wins at under 3 wins a week for the first 11 weeks of the season. The Angels managed only 1 win this week in their final series against the Twins and must be along with the A's planning for next year.

In the Central Detroit beat the Twins, suffered a sweep at the hands of the Mariners then swept Oakland for a pretty up and down week but it does claw a little ground back on the division leading White Sox who had a pretty indifferent week with losses to Milwaukee, Boston and New York. Milwaukee were swept by Toronto in their 2nd series and beaten by the D-Rays in their 3rd for a poor week, a week matched by the Twins who were swept by the Rangers in their 2nd series but recovered to win in Los Angeles for a poor 3-6 return.

Over in the NL, the Pirates extended their lead in the Central by a couple of games following a good week. They beat Chicago, swept the Phillies and beat New York to open up a 5 game lead over the Reds who following a good start were pretty ordinary. That opening win was over Houston and things looked good as they swept San Francisco in their 2nd series but a sweep of their own inflicted by an out of form Colorado outfit wasn't the order of the day as at least the head the wild card race narrowly. Houston recovered from their opening loss to sweep the Padres but defeat in LA in their final series left them just a little short in pursuit of the big two and the wild card. Chicago swept Washington in their 2nd series but defeat at home to the Braves in their final series means next year beckons.

Atlanta opened with a good win over the Mets, they followed up with a sweep over Colorado and they beat the Cubs in their final series for a very good 7-3 return and even if the division looks gone the wild card is a definite possibility as Atlanta are finding their feet of late. New York recovered from that opening loss to defeat the Dodgers in their 2nd series but a heavy loss in Pittsburgh in their final series left the Mets with a below par effort even if players are taking a little break. Philly started with a great sweep in Washington but sweeps of their own by the Pirates and on the road in San Diego all but ends the Phillies season. The same applies to Washington who suffered their 2nd sweep of the week at home to Chicago and ended with victory in San Francisco for a very peculiar end to a terrible week for the Nationals.

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The Dodgers started with a sweep of the Rockies and despite losing to the Mets in their 2nd series they stormed back to beat Houston for a 6-3 week and a stranglehold on the division title. San Diego started with a win over the Giants, they were swept by the Astros in their 2nd series before recording a sweep of their own over the Phillies for a 5-4 week taking them off the bottom of the division for the moment. Colorado were lamped by the Braves for their 2nd sweep of the week in their 2nd series but they recorded a sweep of their own over the Reds for a pretty poor 3-6 week. The Giants are having a curious season and it continued again as they were awful again this week. Defeats by San Diego, a sweep by the Reds and another defeat by Washington left them with a 2-7 week and a mile to make up in the quest for post-season play.

WEEK 12 ROUNDUP

Toronto could have made the decisive move this week. They beat their nearest rivals New York in the opening series of the week and the swept both Minnesota and Oakland for an 8 game lead in the division. Tampa swept Boston to start the week and with further wins over Seattle and Minnesota moved 8 games out of the wild card berth. Boston swept Detroit in their 2nd series and won in Anaheim in their 3rd for a solid week but a lot of work to do if they are to make the post-season. New York went tits up this week despite their close opening loss to the Blue Jays. Series losses at home to Texas and on the road in Detroit leaves them at a pivotal point of their season with any more poor ones like this likely to be very costly.

Texas are home and hosed following another fantastic week as they swept Oakland and Milwaukee sandwiched around a great series win in New York for an 8-1 return and easily the best record in the AL so far this year. Seattle were beaten by the Angels in their opening series, by Tampa in their 2nd and only victory over the White Sox in their final series rescued something from an otherwise poor week. Los Angeles didn't build on their good start as they were beaten in Milwaukee and at home to the Red Sox for a below par 4-5 week. Oakland on the back of a 6 game losing streak extended it by another 9 to 15 as they were swept by Texas, Chicago and Toronto respectively keeping them anchored at the foot of the division with the worst record in the league.

Chicago returned to form as they opened with a sweeps of the Twins and A's before ending a little timidly with a road loss in Seattle but their 16 game lead looks large enough to secure the division unless there is a massive meltdown. Milwaukee started well too with a sweep in Detroit and a win over the Angels but a sweep in Texas in their final series left them with only an average week and little to no chance of making the post-season. Detroit were swept by Boston in their 2nd series and despite winning at home to the Yankees in their final series they too can kiss the post-season goodbye. Minnesota were swept by Toronto in their 2nd series and beaten by Tampa in their 3rd for a terrible 1-8 week and the wooden spoon in the division.

The Dodgers started with a good sweep in San Francisco and despite falling to a shock defeat in Chicago in their 2nd series they stormed back to sweep the Phillies for a very good 7-2 week and the division almost sealed. San Diego put together back to back winning weeks as they recovered from opening losses in Colorado and New York to sweep the Cubs and move themselves a further game out of last place in the division closing to within 6 of the Giants in 2nd place. Colorado didn't build on their opening win as they were swept by the Pirates in their 2nd series but they showed fight to come back and win their final series against the Nationals for a below average week. The woes of the Giants continue as they were beaten by the Braves in their 2nd series and despite winning at home to the Pirates last up the Giants fans must be tortured by a dismal season.

New York put behind a poor week 11 and made hard work of beating Washington, San Diego and Cincinnati to record a good 6-3 week and keep themselves with the best record in the NL for the moment anyway. Atlanta were beaten by Philly first up but they came back to beat the Giants and Astros to establish themselves as serious wild card contenders. Washington had a good week, Philadelphia didn't but both sides are finished for the year unless there is a miracle.

Alan Molloy - Giants

Despite how it has looked over the past year I can confirm that I am still in charge of the San Francisco Giants. For what felt like about hundred different reasons I have only sent in about half a dozen turn sheets over the last year and a bit. Nothing serious, just study, a PC that has crashed twice, work and other competing priorities however I'm hopeful that I can now devote some time to the game again.

So what has changed in my absence? Well not much. The Dodgers are still winning the West. As for the Giants well we've definitely slipped and as the average age of the team has crept up it looks like there is a rebuilding job to be done (wasn't there always?). Pitching looks to be the problem it always was. The league is dominated by hitting and getting a good young pitcher is nigh on impossible. We have a mix of experience and youth but with our top class pitchers showing signs of coming to the end of the road then we will need to invest in youth over the next couple of months. The good thing is that it is virtually a league wide problem so at least we aren't that far behind and do have a bit of time on our hands to get the mix right. On the other side of the ball we've been largely under achieving. We have some big bats, although again age is a bit of a concern when looking to the future, but if I can get the line-up right I'd hope to see some improvement in our hitting figures which should help take some of the strain of the bull pen. Our aim this year is to make the playoffs as the wild card which won't be easy as my negligence means I have a starting line-up high on fatigue and I'll need to rest a few starters in the coming weeks. There is also the problem of so many teams being competitive that one bad week can virtually end your chances of postseason ball.

State of Play

This is the state of play report at the end of week 12. The AL East is the only division in my humble opinion that is in a race. The Jays lead well but could be overhauled by the Yankees if Simon ever gets his finger out. More realistically the Yankees will be the wild card contenders and will have to qualify for the post season that way, the D-Rays and Red Sox are good enough to be wild card challengers but can they out together a series of consistent weeks between now and the end of the season? The Central and West look wrapped up by the White Sox and Rangers respectively with the only other team in contention the Mariners a serious threat to the Yankees for the wild card. The rest of the teams can start planning summer holidays and the rebuilding plans for next year.

In the NL the Mets look home and hosed in the East and the Dodgers in the West but the Central is still up for grabs. Pittsburgh are in the box seat but the Reds won't go down without a fight. The wild card looks to be between the Reds and Braves with perhaps the Astros and Giants coming with a late surge but I wouldn't count on it.

Editors Note - Sorry for the lack of a newsletter over the last few months but various things have conspired against me and probably a bit of apathy too as I thought why should I be bothered when nobody else is bothered. My motivation appears to have returned after my holidays in Benidorm so with your help the newsletter should get back to it's usual high standards.

Deadline for Contributions: Saturday 17th September 2005