

2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

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MLB6

BRAVES ASSERT

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



Alistair Brearley, Reds



Atlanta answered the challenge of the Mets this week with their best week for some time. They opened with good series win in Washington and then hit the afterburners with successive sweeps in Los Angeles and against Chicago for an excellent 8-1 week and an extended 11 game lead atop the division. Philadelphia started with a good series win at home to the Mets but defeats in Pittsburgh and at home to Colorado left them with a below par 4-5 record for the week. Washington were beaten in Chicago in their 2nd series and at home by the Giants in their final series for a poor 3-6 return for the week. New York blew the division this week as they were beaten in San Diego in their 2nd series and swept at home by Pittsburgh in their final series for a very poor 2-7 record for the week and any pressure on the Braves in the past few weeks down the river.

Pittsburgh were beaten in their opening series in Cincinnati but they stormed back with a good series win at home over Philadelphia and they rounded off their week with a cracking sweep in New York for a good 6-3 week and still an 8 game lead at the head of the division. Cincinnati were beaten in Colorado in their 2nd series but a home sweep against the Padres in their final series gave them a good 6-3 record for the week. Houston started their week with a cracking sweep at home to the Cubs, they were beaten in San Francisco in their 2nd series but a good home win over the Dodgers in their final series gave the Astros a good 6-3 record for the week. Chicago recovered from their opening sweep to record a series win over Washington but a sweep in Atlanta in their final series left them with a very poor 2-7 return for the week.

San Francisco were beaten in Los Angeles in their opening series but victories at home to Houston and on the road in Washington gave them a solid 5-4 return but the news that the Rockies nor have a hall of fame coach insitu was the major news in this division this week. Colorado under Coach Clark opened with a series loss in San Diego but victories over the Reds and in Philadelphia in their final series gave the Rockies a 5-4 week and plenty of positive signs for the future. San Diego beat the Mets in their 2nd series but a heavy sweep in Cincinnati in their final series left them with a below par 4-5 record for the week. Los Angeles were swept by the Braves in their 2nd series and defeated in Houston in their 3rd for a poor 3-6 record for the week.

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Tigers on the Prowl

Detroit finally showed their claws this week and announced their intentions with a great home sweep of Chicago, defeat in their next series in Seattle was a backward step but they collected their 2nd sweep of the week in their final series at home to Oakland for a very good 7-2 return for the week. Milwaukee started with victory in Minnesota who had new Coach Guy Handley in charge for the first time, they followed up with victory at home over the blue Jays in a real close series and ended a most consistent week with a win in Boston for a good 6-3 record. Chicago recovered from their opening sweep to beat the Yankees and ended in style with a sweep of their own on the road in Tampa for a solid 5-4 week. Minnesota didn't recover from their opening loss as they were shut out in Texas in their 2nd series but Coach Handley will feel a little better as he recorded his first series win in the final series at home to the Angels but a poor 3-6 week still leaves the Twins with the worst record in the league.

Texas started the week with a great sweep on the road in Los Angeles, their 2nd sweep of the week at home to the Twins followed with Benoit tossing a no-hitter in the process but defeat in Toronto in their final series left the Rangers with just a very good 7-2 week. Seattle were beaten on the road in Oakland in their opening series, they beat Detroit at home in their 2nd series but a sweep in New York in their final series left them with a poor 3-6 record for the week. Los Angeles recovered from their opening loss to defeat Boston at home but defeat in Minnesota in their final series left them with a below par 3-6 record for the week. Oakland didn't build on their good start as they were beaten at home by Tampa in their 2nd series and swept in Detroit in their 3rd for a poor 3-6 record for the week.

New York opened with a good series win at home to the division leading D-Rays, they were beaten in Chicago in their 2nd series but a cracking home sweep of the Mariners in their final series left them with a good 6-3 return for the week. Toronto went down at home to Boston in their opening series, they lost their 2nd on the road in Milwaukee but victory at home over Texas in their final series put respectability into a below par 4-5 week. Boston didn't build on their good start as they lost their 2nd series in LA and their 3rd at home to Milwaukee for a below par 4-5 return. Tampa recovered from their opening loss to win in Oakland but a sweep at home at the hands of the White Sox left them with a poor 3-6 record for the week and only a 5 game lead atop the division with New York and Toronto closing in.

Yankee News

Five turns to go and there's still a chance of post-season, though the likeliest route looks like the wild-card given how well Tampa Bay are playing. Rob should get some sort of award regardless of where they finish, he's turned them around completely. Gone are the days when Devil Rays series were automatic 2-1 victories (I rarely sweep anybody) and as if this division isn't hard enough, a ghost from the not-too-distant past has landed in Colorado to haunt us (Welcome back Ian, and welcome to Guy). Last turns 6-3 was a welcome effort but if previous weeks are anything to go by it could be a sign of struggle to come. The consistency has been lacking badly, not wholly unexpectedly given that I plumped for a young starting rotation, and I see now the difference that a quality 5th starter would have made, perhaps a pitcher will be the priority in the next draft...or maybe not, given the age of the batters. The bullpen is okay, but I will have trouble next season with hitting. 7 of my starting line-up have either 1 or 0 potential so a lesson is being learned here, even though the numbers are good on a stats sheet. I don't have the balance between bat, ball and glove that I like and Paul's Power Ratings were merely a confirmation of how removed I have become from my former belief that pitching and fielding would always beat good (even great) hitting. As usual, there's always next season if it doesn't happen this season.

Twins Appoint Handley

Minnesota made moves this week to stop a dramatic downturn in fortunes for this franchise with the appointment of a new head coach Guy Handley. This has not always been the case for this franchise which started life in Cleveland and were the first winners of the MLB6 World Series under the expert guidance of Mark Stinton 158-103 (.606) who led them into season 2 where Ken Hatton 275-235 (.539) led them to a further 3 divisional titles. From here things didn't quite go to plan as David Kinghorn 377-487 (.436) took over in season 6 and stayed to season 11 without ever getting the franchise back to the heady heights of the past. Coach Kinghorn was replaced in season 11 by Stuart Smith 125-253 (.331) who upped and moved the franchise to Minnesota where it sits today. Coach Handley has the unenviable task of turning around the Twins and I for one wish him the best of luck and hope he can resurrect these sleeping giants.

Rockies Get Very Lucky

My eyes lit up when I saw the name of the new Rockies coach and my suspicions were confirmed to my absolute delight when I received an email from the new coach. When a non achieving franchise gets a Hall of Fame coach coming out of retirement you can imagine the mood in Colorado. For the record Ian Clark 679-473 (.589) coached in Toronto for 7 seasons appearing in no fewer than 3 World Series and winning the lot in season 5. His experience will be invaluable to the Rockies and in time they will become a major force in the league. The franchise itself started under Ronald Shreij 181-152 (.544) the most successful coach in franchise history who won 98 games in the opening season but were still unable to beat the Dodgers. Stephen Montague 314-325 (.491) took over in season 3 and he led them through to season 7 when Stewart Jones 175-257 (.403) replaced him. Coach Jones held office until season 9 when Robert Dorman 180-261 (.408) took over and for a time coach Dorman looked like he was turning things around but he left in season 12 to be replaced by Stuart Alger 91-116 (.440) who again looked like he was about to turn things around until this weeks big news story occurred. Good luck Ian, I know it won't be long before you get the Rockies into top gear, good luck except when you play my Mets.

What a week, the best I've had for a while despite my lot getting a good kicking. The return of a Hall of Fame Coach, still cant get over it.

I go on my holidays on 13th August so I may be able to get a newsletter out before I go, if I can't manage then unless I get a volunteer to edit one whilst I'm away the newsletter will return when I get home. Good luck everybody for the rest of the season and if you require an emailed version of the newsletter just drop me an email and I'll get you on the mailing list.

Deadline for Contributions: Saturday 12th August 2006