

2 OUT BOTTOM OF THE 12th

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MLB6

WORLD SERIES

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



Texas are the top seeds for the play-offs but things didn't start according to plan as they were beaten at home in the opening Divisional Series game by Tampa Bay. Both starter were clattered in game 2 but the Texas bullpen did enough to knot the series. On to Tampa for game 3 and it was Texas who got on top early and they took advantage of the D-Rays bullpen to ease away for a comfortable win. Game 4 was a must win for Tampa but Benoit for the Rangers pitched 6 strong innings giving up a single run to east Texas through into the next round. A good effort from Tampa against the strongest team in the league and Coach Byrne should be proud of his teams achievements this year.

The Yankees travelled to Chicago to face the White Sox in their opening game and were shut out by a masterful pitching performance by Walsh who pitched a complete game 3 hitter to see Chicago to victory. Game 2 saw New York fight back in a real close encounter, both starting pitchers going 7 innings to take the game by the odd run in 7 and they took the lead in the series as they, again, got the better of Chicago by the odd run following another stellar performance by the starting pitchers. Chicago levelled the series on the back of a complete game by Davis who restricted the Bombers to a single run whilst his battery mates took apart the Yankees bullpen. Game 5 was back in Chicago and Walsh repeated his heroics of game 1 with another complete game shutout to progress to face Texas in the Penant Series.

In the NL New York faced the top seeded Pirates and things went to form in game 1 as the Pirates established an early lead behind Benson who was charged only for 2 unearned runs as the Mets late rally came up short. Game 2 saw the Pirates cruising after 4 innings leading 5-1 but 2 runs in the 5th and 9th and 3 in the 6th saw the Mets home in a strange game. Back to New York for game 3 and the Pirates were on the brink following a combined shutout by Buerhle and Jenkins who only let 3 batters past 1st all night. It was Trachsel in game 4 who provided the pitching to lead the Mets home. His complete game was the base needed for the bats to do their job and allow the Mets to set up a do or die 5th game. The decider was a great game for the spectators but a nightmare for both managers as New York took an early lead, extended it in the 3rd and held on by their fingertips to oust the Pirates from the post season. The key to the series win by New York was their bullpen who allowed only 2 runs in 11 innings over the 5 game series giving the Mets a surprise passage through to the next round.

Atlanta hosted the Giants in the other series and they started strongly with a hard fought 5-3 victory with the Braves bullpen keying the victory. Game 2 was a real surprise with San Francisco starter Gross being tagged for 5 runs and the Braves starter Pratt giving up a single run in 5 innings.

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The Atlanta bats had done enough to secure the win and they took a 2-0 lead to the West Coast to try to wrap up the series. San Francisco had other ideas though as they pounded the Atlanta starter Roberts for 7 runs in 6 inning controlling the game with their bats to give themselves a glimmer of hope. Game 4 was a real nail-biter with both starters only lasting 3 innings, Atlanta leading 4-3 at that point and that 1 run was to prove very decisive as they both tacked on a further 4 runs but it was the Braves who had done enough for the win where they will face their division rivals New York for the Pennant.

Continental Series

The first series in the AL saw the division rivals Toronto take on Boston and looking at the regular season the Blue Jays were firm favourites. The opening 2 games in Toronto went with the form book as both Halliday and Stone pitched complete games giving up only 1 run between them as the Boston bats failed to come to terms with such good hurling. Those Boston bats roared back to form against the Toronto pitching in game 3 as they pounded out 8 runs with their own starter Beckett going almost 7 innings without giving up a run to pull the series back to 2 games to 1. Game 4 was a cracking game, both starters giving up runs, but in the end the strength in depth of Toronto proved too much for Boston and they too the series by the odd run in 7 to advance.

Seattle edged the regular season against Milwaukee but that seemed far away following the opening 2 games in Milwaukee where the hosts skipped into a 2-0 lead with great pitching and solid batting. Game 3 in Seattle saw the Mariners pitching come to the fore as they shut out the Brewers on the back of a great start from Rhodes and a single walk by the bullpen to half the Brewers lad. Game 4 was a blowout as the Milwaukee bats got to the Seattle starter Garcia early and pounded out a comfortable 9-1 victory. The surprising thing about facing the Blue Jays in the next round is they will go in a slight favourites as they had a winning regular season record against them. Which ever way this one goes I think it will be very close.

In the NL the Reds are very unfortunate not to be in the real play-offs and they seemed to be saving all that pent up frustration for their next opponents who happened to be the Padres. Game 1 was a blow-out as the Cincy bats pounded Lyon out of the game after only 3 innings with 7 runs against his name. They scored another 4 against the bullpen for an easy victory. Game 2 followed a similar pattern with the San Diego starter gone after 3 innings, 5 runs against his name and then a pounding of the bullpen for another 10 runs and a comfortable win and 2-0 lead in the series. Game 3 was much tighter in San Diego thanks mainly to the Padres starter Dumeresque who went 7 innings for 1 run but the Padres bullpen couldn't convert his great start and they gave up a couple of runs which was enough for them to suffer the sweep and advance the Reds to the next round.

I expected the Rockies Cubs match-up to be very close due to their regular season 6-6 record against each other and so it proved. Colorado travelled to Chicago and routed the home team on the back of a fine outing by Lopez. Chicago bounced back on the back of an even better outing by Gough who pitched a complete game shut out to knot the series. Colorado got the better of game 3 but it was a cracking game as the batters took over, 13 runs between the sides and the Colorado bullpen just doing enough for the win. Chicago levelled again in game 4 despite 7 innings for 1 run by Cook to take the game to a decider in Chicago. The final game was another slugfest and again it was the Rockies power which won the day by the odd run in 15. A great series between 2 emerging teams both of whom should be right up there next year when the real honours are dished out.

National Series

Minnesota travelled to Los Angeles to face the Angels and were soon on the back foot after a masterful pitching performance by Miller who tossed a complete game shutout to open the series. Minnesota bounced back in game 2 with a 5-2 victory keyed by a good effort by the bullpen. To Minnesota for game 3 and the Twins needed extra innings to put away a stubborn Angels outfit and open up a 2-1 lead. It was all over following game 4 as Baez pitched 6+ shutout innings and his battery mates pounded Angels starter Carlyle to seal the series.

Detroit were expected to steamroller Oakland in the other match-up and things looked like they were going according to plan as they took game 1 at a canter and outlasted them in game 2 in 10 innings to establish a 2 game lead. Oakland showed great fighting qualities at home as they knotted the series on the back of excellent pitching to take the series to a decider. Game 5 was a real shock for the home crowd in Detroit as Atherton hurled a complete game shutout for the visitors to progress them to the next round to face the Twins.

In the NL Houston quickly established a 2 game lead as their bats out-pounded the Philadelphia bats. Game 3 saw the Phillies bounce back with an 11 inning win and the series was knotted following game 4 where the Philadelphia pitching dominated. Game 5 was a cracker with both sides fighting hard and it was the Astros who just had enough to seal the win by the odd run in 5 to advance. The regular season meetings between these two were close and so the post-season proved with the Astros just edging out a game Philadelphia outfit.

Things looked ominous for Washington as they travelled to Los Angeles in game 1 as they were pounded into the ground by the Dodgers. Sanders was tagged for 7 runs in 2 innings and the bullpen for a further 13 in the rout. Unfazed, the Phillies responded well in game 2 with a shutout to square the series, starter Sele going 6+ innings to key the win. Game 3 was a slugfest and so LA win? Wrong, the Nationals were stronger than the Dodgers and won 9-7 to edge ahead in the series. Game 4 and it was all over for the Dodgers as Washington scored early and held on well to defeat the best team ever to play the game in this league and advance to play the Astros in the next round.

Phew, what a week. Good luck everyone still left involved in the post-season.

Any thoughts on the Hall of Fame, drop me a line.

Los Angeles Angels franchise history next time.