



BLEACHER CREATURE

Baseball Monthly for Fans of the New Orleans Zephyrs

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THE AMEN CORNER

Astonishing Astros Stormed Into Playoffs on Improbable Hot Streak

By Pasadena Rose

PASADENA, TEXAS— On August 22, before a big crowd at Minute Maid Park, the Houston Astros were manhandled by the Chicago Cubs, 11-6, to fall 6-1/2 games behind Chicago in the NL Wild Card race. Houston's record stood at 61-62, and things were looking plenty bleak for the Astros faithful. It wasn't over, but even the most optimistic souls among us were beginning to doubt whether the 2004 Astros had the right stuff to reach the postseason.

The next day, with an 8-4 victory over the Phillies behind Roger Clemens, a streak began that would

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Zephyrs Have a Role to Play in MLB's Long-Awaited Return to Washington

By Bill Catalanello

Two important announcements were made late last month. One will affect the immediate future of baseball in New Orleans, and the other will change the landscape of Major League Baseball.

The first was the much-anticipated announcement that the Zephyrs' new major league affiliate would be the Montreal Expos (see page 2). Local baseball fans were generally happy about this development, because the Expos organization has for years been very successful at developing its own talent and getting it to the big leagues. As a result, the Expos' minor league clubs have done very well in recent years, particularly on the higher levels. Zephyrs fans will no doubt see some of the top talent on the Triple-A level playing for the home team.

The second announcement came days later. Major League Baseball announced that it was returning to our nation's capital after a 33-year absence. The Expos, it was announced by baseball Commissioner Bud Selig, would be moved to Washington for the 2005 season. The club would be re-named and would play its games at



Washington's RFK Stadium until a new, \$400 million ballpark is completed.

For the time being, you might say that the Zephyrs' affiliate is the team to named later.

The Montreal Expos franchise came into existence along with the San Diego Padres when the National League expanded in 1969. There were several great seasons in Montreal, but, in recent years, the franchise has been in decline. The situation in Montreal had degenerated to the point that in 2002, ownership of the club was taken over by Major League Baseball,

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Zephyrs, Expos Have Deal Through 2006

The New Orleans Zephyrs have entered into a two-year Player Development Contract with the Expos, who will move to Washington for the 2005 season. The announcement was made jointly by Zephyrs Vice President and General Manager Dan Rajkowski and Expos Director of Player Development Adam Wogan.

"We feel that this is a great opportunity to partner with the Expos," said Don Beaver, New Orleans Zephyrs President and Owner. "The potential to get in on the front end of a new organization is very exciting for us."

The Expos have had one of the more successful Minor League Organizations over the past decade. The impressive run includes the Expos winning 5 League Championships in the past 9 years at Class AAA or Class AA.

The organization has an outstanding crop of young

prospects and talent that will make their way to Zephyr Field in the next few seasons.

"We are ecstatic to join forces with the Zephyrs," said Wogan. "With New Orleans and Zephyr Field, we are afforded access to a first-class city and a first-rate facility, the combination of which we feel is unrivaled in Triple-A baseball. I'd like to welcome Don Beaver, Dan Rajkowski, the Zephyrs front office and the community of New Orleans to the Expos family."

The Expos will provide the players and coaching personnel for the Zephyrs. The 2005 coaching staff will be announced later this fall.

The new affiliation will be the third in New Orleans Zephyrs history. The club was affiliated with Milwaukee from 1993-1996 (279-293) and with the Astros from 1997-2004 (567-572).

-from zephyrsbaseball.com

Big Day for Jason Alfaro and Growing Family

Jason Alfaro had a lot of phone calls to make when he returned to his hotel room following the Astros' September 9 doubleheader.

Having logged his first big league hit in the seventh inning in Game 2, Alfaro had plenty of friends and family to call, especially his wife, Stephanie, who was still in the hospital after giving birth to the couple's third child, Connor Daniel, that afternoon.

"I asked how she was. She said, 'I'm great. Congratulations on your hit. I saw it,'" Alfaro recalled. "All the nurses were in there watching it with her. She was excited."

-Alyson Footer
astros.com

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Bleacher Creature is a conversation among baseball fans. It has been published monthly eleven times a year, since 1993. It is independent of the New Orleans Zephyrs ballclub and is made possible by our wonderfully loyal subscribers, supporters, contributors and friends.

World Series Facts and Figures

As we approach the 2004 World Series, we note that this year's Fall Classic will mark the one hundredth anniversary of the meeting between the American and National League champions to decide the World Series title.

It all started in 1903, and it became an annual event with two exceptions. The Series was not played in 1904 and 1994.

The following are some of the stories that have been written in the 99 World Series to date:

- The American League has won 58 World Series titles to 41 for the National League.
- A total of 584 games have been played. Here's how they break down:

	W	L	T
American	318	263	3
National	263	318	3
- A total of 106 shutouts have been pitched in the World Series.
- A total of 53 extra-inning games have been played. The longest was a 14-inning affair in which Babe Ruth of the Boston Red Sox defeated Brooklyn's Sherry Smith by a score of 2-1 on October 2, 1916.
- There have been 774 home runs hit in World Series play, 443 by the AL and 331 by the NL.
- Mickey Mantle hit the most World Series home runs. He hit 18 in his 12 World Series.

A World Series attendance record was set on October 6, 1959 at the Los Angeles Coliseum where 92,706 watched the Dodgers lose a 1-0 game to the Chicago White Sox.



- The home run record for one World Series game is three. Babe Ruth did it twice (1926 and 1928), and Reggie Jackson once (1977).
- Pepper Martin and Paul Molitor are tied for the highest batting average in a World Series career. Each of them made 23 hits in 55 times at bat, for an average of .418, best among players with at least 50 times at bat.
- The highest scoring World Series game was Toronto 15, Philadelphia 14, on October 20, 1993.
- The largest official attendance at a World Series game was 92,706 at the Los Angeles Coliseum in 1959. The smallest was 6,210 at Detroit in 1908.

- The only World Series triple play was unassisted, by Bill Wambsgans of Cleveland against Brooklyn in 1920.
- The only no-hit game was a perfect game by Don Larsen of the Yankees in 1956. Four one-hit games have been pitched: Ed Reulbach (1906) Claude Passeau (1945) Bill Bevens (1947) Jim Lonborg (1967)
- Yogi Berra holds the record for appearing in the most World Series, 14, all with the New York Yankees. In 259 World Series at bats, Berra batted .274 with 12 home runs and 39 RBIs. His 71 World Series hits included 22 for extra bases.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Washington NL Team

1. What will the team be called?

The team name will be changed. To what, exactly, will be determined later. It is common for new clubs to solicit suggestions from its new fan base. The Montreal club was known as the "Expos" to commemorate the Montreal Exposition that was held in 1967, two years before the club's expansion season. For those wondering if the club will become the latest iteration of the "Senators," it's anyone's guess.

2. Will the team stay in the National League East?

Yes.

3. What about the logo and team uniforms?

Say goodbye to the familiar cursive and red, white and blue "M" that has adorned the Expos' caps - - a logo that might have worked had the club moved instead to Monterrey, Mexico. Everything, from the team colors to the logo, is up in the air now.

4. Where will the Washington team play?

The club will play for the next three seasons at RFK Stadium while a \$400 million ballpark is being built at a location along the Anacostia River waterfront near M and South Capitol Streets, which is now the preferred site among the four proposed in D.C. last year. RFK Stadium has not had baseball regularly since the Senators moved to Texas after the 1971 season.

5. Is the move from Montreal official?

The move ultimately must be approved by a 75 percent vote of the Major League owners, who have owned and operated the Expos since the team was purchased from Jeffery Loria and his minority partners just before the opening of Spring Training in

2002. That approval is considered a formality. The deal is also dependent on the District's City Council passing the funding for the new ballpark, including a \$13 million package to refurbish 43-year-old RFK Stadium.

6. What kind of club will Washington fans see in 2005?

Probably a competitive one, if recent history is any indication. Although the Montreal Expos never made it to a World Series after joining the Majors in 1969, in recent years they have had an uncanny knack for fielding competitive clubs despite a constant battle of attrition involving marquee players. In 2003, Montreal was among the teams fighting for the National League Wild Card until the season's final week.

One of the club's best assets, at least right now, is its manager: Frank Robinson, the Hall of Famer fondly remembered by many who watched him help the Orioles achieve elite status starting in the late 1960s. Right-handed workhorse Livan Hernandez (11-15, 3.63 ERA) was the Expos' representative at this year's All-Star Game, and he is the club's only starting pitcher with double-digit victories. Tony Batista, who took over for Cal Ripken Jr. at third base during his run with the Orioles, is the biggest bat with 32 homers and 110 RBIs this season. Brad Wilkerson was hitting .253 with 31 homers and 64 RBIs; Brian Schneider has emerged as a promising catcher, and was hitting .257 with 12 homers and 47 RBIs; and Jose Vidro, one of the game's best second basemen, was hitting .294 with 14 homers and 60 RBIs.

-from MLB.com

Washington Franchise Will Partner with the Zephyrs

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which will soon sell the franchise to the new Washington ownership. Major League Baseball has owned and operated the Expos franchise for three seasons.

Baseball has been absent in the nation's capital since the Senators relocated to Arlington, Texas to become the Texas Rangers in 1972. The Rangers, incidentally, still own the rights to the name Senators since their days in Washington. (See page 5 for a history of the movement of franchises.) Baseball has had a long, rich history in Washington, most of it in the American League. In fact, National League baseball has not been played in the District of Columbia since 1900.

The new Washington team will remain in the National League East. Having a National League affiliate will ensure that the fans in at Zephyr Field will see the DH only when the Zephyrs play against a team with an American League affiliate. As has been the case over the last eight years, when two National League affiliates compete against each other, the pitchers will bat.

Montreal was always considered a "small-market" team. Once permanent ownership takes over the new Washington club, we'll see how it chooses to build its major league club. Zephyrs fans are hoping that the Expos' approach of building through the minor league organization is embraced by the new Washington owners.

In any case, it's going to be a very interesting off-season. We'll keep you posted.



Baseball Franchise Chronology

NATIONAL LEAGUE (1876-present)

1876 - National League officially formed with eight franchises:

Boston; Chicago; Cincinnati; Hartford; Louisville; New York; Philadelphia; St. Louis

1877 - Philadelphia and New York expelled from National League

1878 - Louisville dropped out of National League

1878 - National League admitted three franchises in Providence, Indianapolis and Milwaukee for 1878 season

1878 - Indianapolis resigned from National League

1878 - National League admitted three franchises in Syracuse, Buffalo and Cleveland for 1879 season

1879 - National League expanded with a franchise in Troy, New York for 1879 season

1880 - Cincinnati expelled from National League; Detroit joined National League for 1881 season

1880 - Syracuse dropped out of National League; replaced by Worcester

1882 - Troy and Worcester were removed from National League; replaced by Philadelphia and New York

1885 - Cleveland dropped out of National League; replaced by St. Louis

1886 - Washington, D.C. and Kansas City admitted to National League; replaced Buffalo and Providence

1887 - St. Louis relocated to Indianapolis

1887 - Kansas City dropped out of National League; replaced by Pittsburgh



1888 - Detroit resigned from National League; replaced by Cleveland

1890 - Brooklyn and Cincinnati joined National League; replaced Indianapolis and Washington, D.C.

1892 - National League expanded with franchises in St. Louis, Washington, D.C., Louisville and Baltimore

1900 - National League contracted four franchises: Louisville, Baltimore, Washington, D.C. and Cleveland

1953 - Boston Braves relocated to Milwaukee

1958 - Brooklyn Dodgers relocated to Los Angeles

1958 - New York Giants relocated to San Francisco

1962 - National League expanded with franchises in New York and Houston

1966 - Milwaukee Braves relocated to Atlanta

1969 - National League expanded with franchises in Montreal, Canada and San Diego

1993 - National League expanded with franchises in Denver, Colorado and Miami, Florida

1998 - Milwaukee Brewers moved to National League from American League

1998 - National League expanded with a franchise in Phoenix, Arizona

2005 - Montreal Expos relocating to Washington, D.C.

AMERICAN LEAGUE (1901-present)

1901 - American League officially organized with eight franchises

Baltimore; Boston; Chicago; Cleveland; Detroit; Milwaukee; Philadelphia; Washington, D.C.

1902 - Milwaukee Brewers relocated to St. Louis and became the Browns

1903 - Baltimore Orioles relocated to New York and became the Yankees

1953 - St. Louis Browns relocated to Baltimore and became the Orioles

1954 - Philadelphia Athletics relocated to Kansas City

1961 - Washington Senators relocated to Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota and became the Twins

1961 - American League expanded with franchises in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

1967 - Kansas City Athletics relocated to Oakland

1969 - American League expanded with franchises in Kansas City and Seattle

1970 - Seattle Pilots relocated to Milwaukee and became the Brewers

1972 - Washington Senators relocated to Arlington, Texas and became the Rangers

1977 - American League expanded with franchises in Toronto, Canada and Seattle

1998 - Milwaukee Brewers moved to the National League

1998 - American League expanded with a franchise in Tampa Bay

Source: MLB.com

2005 Zephyrs Season Ticket Packages are Available Now! Call the Zephyrs Ticket Office at (504) 734-5155 and reserve your seats.

Pirates Rookie Babe Adams Stole the Show With 3 Victories in 1909 Series

The 1909 World Series between the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Detroit Tigers was a matchup of two of baseball's biggest stars of the day, Honus Wagner and Ty Cobb. A rookie righthand pitcher named Charles "Babe" Adams, however, became an overnight sensation in the baseball world by defeating the Tigers three times in the best-of-seven Series, including a shutout in the deciding game 7.

Adams was a spot starter and reliever for player/manager Fred Clarke's Pirates during the regular season. He put together a fine year for Pittsburgh, posting a 12-3 record with a sparkling 1.11 ERA. Clarke had 25-game winner Howie Camnitz ready to open the Series in brand new Forbes Field, but, acting on a hunch, he chose the 27-year-old rookie Adams. Adams' mound opponent in the opening contest was Tiger ace George Mullin, who won a major league best 29 games during the 1909 season.

Ty Cobb scored the Series' first run off Adams in the top of the 1st on an RBI single by Jim Delahanty. A 4th-inning home run by Clarke tied the game. The Pirates took the lead for good scoring two unearned runs in the bottom of the 5th on some sloppy fielding by the Tigers, who committed 4 errors in the game. Meanwhile, Adams blanked Detroit the rest of the way to come away with a 4-1 complete game victory, to give Pittsburgh a 1-0 Series lead.

Five days later, after a home loss and a split of two games in Detroit,

the Pirates once again gave the ball to Adams with the Series tied at two games each. His pitching opponent for the pivotal game 5 was the Tigers' Ed Summers, who collected 19 wins during the regular season. Once again, Babe Adams surrendered a first-inning run, this time on a lead-off homer by Detroit left fielder Davey Jones. In a tight battle, the score was 3-3 after six innings. In the Pittsburgh 7th, a 3-run homer over the center field fence by Fred Clarke gave the Pirates the lead and made a winner, once again, of Adams by a final score of 8-4. In his second World Series win, Adams went the distance; he gave up just six hits and one walk and struck out eight.

The Pirates' pitchers had not performed well in the Series, and Clarke chose Adams to pitch the decisive game 7 in Detroit. Tigers manager Hughie Jennings selected veteran Bill Donovan, who won only eight games that season.

Pittsburgh struck first, taking advantage of four walks by Donovan for two 2nd inning runs. Donovan's wildness caused Jennings to bring in Mullin out of the bullpen. The Pirates greeted Mullin with two more runs in the top of the 4th on a bases-loaded single by second baseman Dots Miller, which gave the Pirates a 4-run lead. In the 6th



a 2-run triple by Honus Wagner padded the Pittsburgh lead. With all the run support, Adams coasted. He shut the Tigers out on just six hits; he walked one and struck out just one.

The Pittsburgh Pirates, who won 110 games in the 1909 regular season, had captured their first World Series, and Babe Adams had become the only rookie pitcher to win three games in a World Series. He held the Tigers, who had a team batting average of .267 during the season, to a .183 average in the Series. Against Adams, AL batting champion (.377) Ty Cobb, hit only .181.

Adams went on to manage in the minor leagues when his big league playing career came to an end.

Adams' totals for the 1909 World Series:

G	GS	IP	H	BB	SO	W-L	ERA
3	3	27	18	6	11	3-0	1.33

...and for his career:

482	355	2995	2841	430	1036	194-140	2.76
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Several Former Zephyrs Were Heroic in Astros' Playoff Run

continued from pg. 1

eventually reach 14 wins in the next 15 games, to propel our team right into contention. That streak included winning three out of four games over the Cubs at Wrigley Field on the last weekend in August.

When it was all said and done, from August 23 until October 3, the season's last day, the Astros won 31 and lost 8. On the road they were 13–8; at Minute Maid park, 18–0. It was an incredible run, and it turned out to be just enough to nose out San Francisco for the NL Wild Card spot by one single game. For six weeks the Houston team played some great ball, and many heroes emerged. A lot of the heroes are players you Zephyrs fans know pretty well.

Roy Oswalt battled in every start. He kept his team in the game and usually did what it took to win. He managed to win 20, and several of them were in “must-win” situations. With Andy Pettitte and Wade Miller sidelined for most of the year, the pressure was on Roy, and he came through.

Lance Berkman was in the middle of the lineup, getting extra base hits and driving in runs in big games all season long for the Astros.

Brad Lidge was the one constant in the bullpen. He rewarded the complete confidence Garner showed in him over and over again. Who in the NL has nastier stuff than Lidge?

Morgan Ensberg provided some huge RBIs for Houston, despite splitting time at third with Mike Lamb, who was also very productive.

With Andy Pettitte and Wade Miller sidelined for most of the year, the pressure was on Roy, and he came through.

Jason Lane, Raul Chavez and Eric Bruntlett were important “role players” for Phil Garner. Lane had a couple of game-winning hits. Chavez surprised us all, not only with his clutch hitting, but with his skill and toughness behind the plate. Bruntlett proved to be a valuable utility player who became even more valuable when starting shortstop Adam Everett went down.

Everett, before his injury in August, showed that he is among baseball's elite shortstops. His hitting seemed to just get better and more consistent. We're hoping we'll see him back at shortstop if the Astros go deep into the playoffs.

My husband Louis back in May purchased tickets (good seats, too) to the season's final two home games October 2 and 3, against Colorado at Minute Maid Park, in the hope that they would be meaningful. He had no idea how glad we'd be to sit in those seats when the season's final weekend came.

When we headed for the ballpark on Saturday, we knew the Astros were tied with the Giants for the last playoff spot, and that they had won their last 16 consecutive home games.



Photo by Eugene Witek

Roy Oswalt as a member of the New Orleans Zephyrs around April, 2001

The atmosphere at the park that day was one of joy and expectation. The team rewarded their fans with one of the year's best efforts. Six home runs supported Oswalt's tremendous pitching performance and he secured his 20th win. Jeff Kent broke the career record for homers by a second baseman. What a great day to be in the ballpark, but the loudest cheer of the day came late in the game. A big 7 went on the scoreboard in the Dodgers column in their game at Dodger Stadium against San Francisco. After being shut out all game long, L.A. rallied in the 9th to beat the Giants, 7–3. We knew then that the Astros' fate was in their own hands. Only a victory Sunday stood between the Astros and the playoffs.

Sunday was a love fest at the ballpark. We all showed up expecting to win, and the ballclub came through for us. Brandon Backe's heroics on the mound and with the bat added another name to the list of former Zephyrs who played big roles in Houston's unlikely run to the playoffs. Just astonishing!

BLEACHER CREATURE

is the region's only all-baseball monthly. We've been at it since 1993, supporting Zephyrs baseball and exchanging stories about the game and its players, past and present. We're also into the wit and wisdom, heroes and villains, and facts and fables about professional baseball. On-line newsletters are fine, but we offer real paper and ink. Sign up today to receive 11 monthly issues by First Class Mail. A subscription to the *Bleacher Creature* is only \$10 a year!

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