

A's News Clips, Friday, October 23, 2009

NOTES

Phillies not bored with the taste of champagne

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle

Pedro Martinez broke out the first bottle of champagne, Ryan Howard and Jayson Werth puffed on victory cigars, and beer flew everywhere.

Celebrations are becoming a tradition for the Philadelphia Phillies. It doesn't get old.

"We won the World Series last year, but we want to win it again," pitcher Cole Hamels said. "We've done everything right to get there. We want to go to the next level."

The defending champs beat the Los Angeles Dodgers in Game 5 of the NLCS on Wednesday for their second straight pennant, the first team to do that since the New York Yankees in 2000-01.

The Phillies, who beat Tampa Bay in last year's World Series, are trying to become the NL's first repeat champion since the Cincinnati Reds in 1975-76. The Yankees were the last team to win consecutive titles when they captured three in a row from 1998-2000.

While they enjoyed the party after eliminating Manny Ramirez & Co. in the NLCS for the second straight year, there's still some work to do.

"This is great and all that, but we have four games to win," said Werth, who hit two of his five postseason homers in the clincher.

Now, the Phillies have to wait nearly a week to play again. The World Series begins Wednesday night in the American League city.

Rust shouldn't be a concern for these Phillies, who had six days off last year while the Rays only had two after defeating Boston in seven games.

The waiting isn't a problem, either. After all, the Phillies have looked forward to this moment since last October's Broad Street parade. A few more days is no big deal.

Manager Charlie Manuel gets a chance to set his rotation and players have plenty of time to rest. After a day off Thursday, the Phillies will return to the field for a workout today.

Veteran ump's: Stung by a rash of blown calls in the playoffs, Major League Baseball is breaking tradition and sticking with only experienced umpires for the World Series.

Longtime crew chiefs Joe West, Dana DeMuth and Gerry Davis, along with Brian Gorman, Jeff Nelson and Mike Everitt, will handle the games, three people with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press this week.

CB Bucknor was in line to work the World Series for the first time this year. But he missed two calls in Game 1 of the division series between the Red Sox and Angels, damaging his chance to get picked, one of the three people said.

Duchscherer return? The A's have touched base with Justin Duchscherer's agent, Oakland general manager Billy Beane and the agent, Damon Lapa, said Thursday. Duchscherer, who is a free agent, missed the first portion of the season after minor elbow surgery and the second half after being diagnosed with clinical depression.

Beane said upon the conclusion of the season that the team might consider signing a veteran starter; Duchscherer, a free agent, is a two-time All-Star with the A's but has made five trips to the disabled list in the past four seasons.

The A's have had interest in Cuban defector Aroldis Chapman, a 21-year-old left-handed pitcher, but they are not among the teams meeting with the left-hander in New York this week.

- Susan Slusser

Briefly: A lawyer for Dodgers CEO Jamie McCourt says she has been fired after her marital separation from the team's owner, Frank McCourt. ... Red Sox right-hander Tim Wakefield said he has no plans to retire after undergoing back surgery Wednesday. ... Randy Ready, who remains a candidate to become manager of the Astros, was one of six coaches agreeing to contracts to return to the Padres' staff. San Diego manager Bud Black said that if Ready doesn't get the Astros job, he'll be back with the Padres. ... Tigers All-Star third baseman Brandon Inge will undergo surgery on both knees Nov. 3 to address patella tendinitis.