

Oakland, Toronto square off in ALCS

TORONTO (AP) — To see exactly how much and how fast baseball is changing, just look at the lineups for Toronto and Oakland now and compare them to the Blue Jays and A's that met in the 1989 AL playoffs.

Only three years ago, the starters for Toronto in October were: Fred McGriff, George Bell, Tony Fernandez, Lloyd Moseby, Mookie Wilson, Lee Mazzilli, Nelson Liriano, Ernie Whitt and Kelly Gruber.

Recognize those guys? Only Gruber will be on the field tonight when Game 1 begins. The rest are long gone, out of Toronto or out of the game, and have been replaced by the result of an aggressive strategy of making trades, signing free agents and developing young players.

Other clubs have tried to do what the Blue Jays have done. None, though, have been more successful at changing players without changing the winning results.

"This is a better team than we had back then," manager Cito Gaston said. "We certainly have more power, and our pitching is better. But, it's not at all the same team we had."

Jack Morris will start the opener for Toronto and be fol-

lowed by David Cone. Gaston has not announced who will pitch Game 3 in Oakland, although it appears Juan Guzman has the edge.

Even though Toronto is the only team in the majors with 10 straight winning seasons, a streak that includes four AL East championships in eight years, the Blue Jays have never advanced to the World Series.

"People have labeled us chokers and I know (Milwaukee manager Phil) Garner said a couple of times, 'We'll get them, we know their reputation,' and this and that," reliever Tom Henke said. "Hey, we stayed focused and won the games."

"This is my fourth time winning the division," he said. "I want to go to the next step."

Not many of the Blue Jays have been beyond that first step. The current Toronto players have combined for 43 appearances in the playoffs, but have won only five pennants and three World Series. Morris has been on two World Series winners — he won the MVP award last October — and Alfredo Griffin was on one.

By comparison, Oakland's players have totaled 55 appear-

ances in the playoffs and advanced 42 times. The result has been 16 World Series rings.

The A's, however, also have something to prove. They're still smarting from the period of 1988-90, when they won three AL pennants and believed they were the best team in baseball each time but won just one World Series.

The only time Oakland made it all the way was 1989, when Henderson tore up the playoffs and Dave Stewart and Mike Moore dominated the earthquake-torn World Series against San Francisco.

Stewart and Moore will pitch the first two games this year against Toronto, but Oakland also will bring a different team — both in athletes and attitude.

Gone is the Bash Brothers mentality. Jose Canseco is out; Ruben Sierra is in right field.

Henderson's strut is slowed by back spasms. Dave Henderson's smile is sagging because of hamstring problems.

"Rickey had a great series in 1989," Oakland manager Tony LaRussa said. "If you look at all the great stuff we had going that season, you can understand why we won."

ASSISTANT

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sion II during the 1977 campaign.

Zomboukos decided to head north in 1979, taking an assistant coaching job at Oregon State for a year before joining the Ducks in 1980.

"I've had a lot of good kids through the years," Zomboukos said. "Gary Zimmerman (1981-83) was a great player and an excellent athlete, and Scott Shepard (1980-82-83) was a really dedicated young man. Ryan Zinke (1980-83), Brad Smith (1983-86) and Chris Husko (1986-88) are some of the other kids who stick out in my mind."

As if Zomboukos didn't have enough responsibilities, he also does some recruiting for the Ducks. Some of the standouts Zomboukos has brought to Eugene include Bill Musgrave, Derek Loville, Joe Farwell and Alex Molden.

"I am honest and straightforward with the kids," said Zomboukos of his recruiting techniques. "We are fortunate that some kids can see through the used-car

salesman attitude that some recruiters have. I also believe that Oregon is a good school, and that helps a lot."

Musgrave was offered recruiting trips but not scholarships by Stanford and UCLA, but Zomboukos says he knew the Grand Junction, Colorado native was something special.

"He was a winner," Zomboukos said of the current San Francisco 49ers quarterback. "He had an unbelievable record in high school and that is something that I look for in a kid."

As for Molden, the red-shirt freshman who is having an outstanding first year for the Ducks, Zomboukos expects him to only get better.

"If Alex continues to work hard he can be as good as any cornerback this school has ever had," Zomboukos said. "And we have had some great ones."

As for Zomboukos, he will remain the man behind the scenes at Oregon, taking care of the important — but unheralded — tasks needed to make a successful football team.

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