

STAGING

Rodman dealt to Bulls for veteran

DEERFIELD, Ill. (AP) — Dennis Rodman, the flamboyant forward who led the NBA in rebounding the last four seasons but repeatedly exasperated San Antonio management, was traded Monday to the Chicago Bulls for center Will Perdue.

"I think it's great, I think he's excited, I think it's a perfect fit," said Neil Draddy, Rodman's agent. "They need some work off the boards and the extra defense he will give them."

"We are happy to acquire Dennis Rodman," said Jerry Krause, Bulls general manager. "We think he is the best rebounder in the game and the best defender at his position. He gives us a dimension we have lacked and enables us to take more advantage of the skills of Toni Kukoc."

Tigers lose spark as Anderson resigns

DETROIT (AP) — Sparky Anderson will always follow the Detroit Tigers. He just won't manage them again.

Anderson, the winningest manager in Tigers' history, resigned Monday after 17 years that included a World Series championship in 1984 and the AL East title in 1987.

Anderson, his eyes welling, made the announcement at a news conference packed with media, coaches, players and friends. He would like to manage another club, but only a contender.

"I think it would be good to go inside with a W," said Anderson, whose Tigers compiled a 60-84 record this year. "We were having one [win] maybe every three weeks. I was forgetting how to shake hands."

Barry signs with L.A.

LOS ANGELES (AP) — First-round draft pick and former Oregon State star Brent Barry has signed a three-year contract with the Los Angeles Clippers.

The signing was announced Monday by Elgin Baylor, the Clippers' vice president of basketball operations.

Barry, a 6-6 guard who averaged 21 points, 3.9 assists and 2.7 steals per game for Oregon State in 1994-95, was the 15th player selected in the National Basketball Association draft last June, by Denver.

Denver and the Clippers swapped their first-round choices in a draft-day trade with the Nuggets getting Antonio McDyess of Alabama.

"[Barry is] a fierce competitor with an understanding and knowledge of the game," Baylor said. "We also like his background — son of a great NBA player [Rick Barry] and brother of NBA player Jon Barry."

Mariners finally claim AL West crown

■ **PLAYOFF:** Seattle beats California 9-1 to win its first-ever league championship

SEATTLE (AP) — With a crowd of 52,356 wildly cheering for Randy Johnson as if it were the seventh game of the World Series, the Seattle Mariners finally won the opportunity to get there Monday.

The Mariners reached the postseason for the first time in their 19-year history, winning the AL West title by beating the California Angels 9-1 in baseball's first one-game playoff since 1980.

Johnson (18-2), maintaining his menacing stare on every pitch, was perfect for 5½ innings and finished with a three-hitter and 12 strikeouts. Leading 1-0, the Mariners broke open the game in the seventh when Luis Sojo's bases-loaded double — aided by pitcher Mark Langston's throwing error — turfed into a four-run play.

"I felt a little bit of weight on my shoulders," Johnson said. "But I thrive on that and it was probably my biggest game ever. I had a lot of emotion built up."

Johnson beat the Angels for the third time in four decisions, having lost to them the last time he faced them in Anaheim Aug. 1. In that game, the 6-foot-10 left-hander went 7½ innings, giving up seven runs on 10 hits and two walks.

"The last time I pitched against the Angels, they roughed me up pretty good," he said. "And they've been extremely hot. But you have to rise to the occasion and I think I did."

Seattle's victory finished off a roller-coaster season for the Mariners, who trailed California by 13 games on Aug.

AL West Division Champions

American League West Division champions since the divisional system began in 1969:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1969—Minnesota Twins | 1983—Chicago White Sox |
| 1970—Minnesota Twins | 1984—Kansas City Royals |
| 1971—Oakland Athletics | 1985—Kansas City Royals |
| 1972—Oakland Athletics | 1986—California Angels |
| 1973—Oakland Athletics | 1987—Minnesota Twins |
| 1974—Oakland Athletics | 1988—Oakland Athletics |
| 1975—Oakland Athletics | 1989—Oakland Athletics |
| 1976—Kansas City Royals | 1990—Oakland Athletics |
| 1977—Kansas City Royals | 1991—Minnesota Twins |
| 1978—Kansas City Royals | 1992—Oakland Athletics |
| 1979—California Angels | 1993—Chicago White Sox |
| 1980—Kansas City Royals | 1994—Strike |
| 1981—Oakland Athletics | 1995—Seattle Mariners |
| 1982—California Angels | |

MATT GARTONE/Emerald

2. The Mariners missed a chance to wrap up the division by losing Saturday and Sunday while California won twice for a tie.

"We were never a team that had a 13-game lead like the Angels," Johnson said. "We were a team that was striving to be the wild-card team."

The Mariners will play wild-card winner New York in the best-of-5 first round. The series begins Tuesday night at Yankee Stadium with Chris Bosio likely to start for Seattle against David Cone.

Seattle was 9-4 against the Yankees, including a 3-3 mark in New York.

"When he stepped on the field today ... there was something about him," Mariners star Ken Griffey Jr. said of Johnson. "It was like, 'Give me one run and I'll take care of the rest.'"

Johnson, who won on three days' rest, will not be ready to pitch until at least Game 3 Friday night at the Kingdome. The Mariners hoped to save their ace for Game 1, but they

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— Randy Johnson
Mariners Pitcher

needed him to win the most important game in franchise history.

Johnson, the leading candidate for the AL Cy Young Award, led the majors with 294 strikeouts. He walked just one, and lost his shutout when Tony Phillips homered to open the ninth.

Johnson won his fourth AL strikeout title in a row and captured his first league ERA title with a mark of 2.48. In addition, it was Johnson's 66th career game in which he struck out 10 or more batters.

An unforgettable season readies fans for more

The long-awaited major league baseball playoffs have finally arrived. It has been a little over two years — equaling roughly 8,000 games, 24,000 hours, 76,000 innings and 2,000,000 pitches — since fans have had the chance to see the best teams in both leagues square off for the prized World Series trophy. But now that the agony has come to a close, everybody can sit back and watch some of the most unlikely of teams play each other during the next three weeks in the new six-team playoff format.

A sport that usually starts off with a bang — because of the long October to April offseason that fans and players must wait through — began more like a gigantic thud this season. The long and painful strike/lockout took its toll on the fans, meaning lower turnouts at the ballparks and more turn-offs on the tube. The bickering between the players and owners over millions of dollars that the

average Joe can only dream about having, proved to be costly at the beginning of the shortened 144-game schedule.

However, the paying public did return quickly — although the owners don't want you to believe that — with the smell of beer, peanuts and freshly cut grass in the air.

With the return of the packed stadiums, players grabbed the headlines and cutlines of newspapers, magazines and radio and television stations across the nation with their impressive performances. One of the many was Tim Wakefield, a knuckleballer who was dropped by the Pittsburgh Pirates right before the season began after winning two National League Championship games for them as a rookie in

1992. Wakefield, who had a miserable 1994 season, posting a 5-15 record at the triple-A level, was given possibly his last chance to stay in baseball by the Boston Red Sox. The Red Sox immediately hired retired knuckleball pitchers Phil and Joe Niekro to help Wakefield reclaim his 1992 dominance.

The now-AL Cy Young Award candidate made his start for Boston in late April and proceeded to baffle the batters he faced on his way to a 14-1 record in the middle of the season, carrying the Roger Clemens-less team to the division lead.

The right-hander's comeback story might be the best ever, depending on what he and the Red Sox do in the playoffs. However, the story of all stories this year was Cal Ripkens' amazing record-breaking feat.

Nobody ever thought that another ballplayer would come along and eclipse Lou Gehrig's 2,130 consecutive games-

played record, but there Cal stood in early September at Camden Yards with 2,131 consecutive games to his credit. I'm sure all baseball fans will remember that night for the rest of their lives, watching Cal take his victory-like lap around the walls of the field, giving high fives to almost every fan that leaned over to catch a glimpse of the legend.

Even though people will remember Cal for his athleticism and longevity, this season may not be recognized for his achievements because of the 13-game deficit the Seattle Mariners overcame forcing a one-game playoff — only the eighth in baseball history — with the California Angels at the Kingdome. Seattle pitcher Randy Johnson turned in the best and most important performance of his career Monday — topping his no-hitter versus Oakland a few years ago — going the distance in the 9-1 victory.

Johnson struck out Tim Salmon for the fourth time to end the game, and then the celebration started. Johnson threw his arms in the air and hugged catcher Dan Wilson. Fireworks exploded overhead as he ran off the field with his arms still raised, and fans ran onto the field and tried to dig up home plate.

For the Angels and Langston (15-7), who was traded by Seattle to Montreal for Johnson May 25, 1989, the loss marked their final disappointment.

The Angels, who led the AL West by 11 games on Aug. 9 before one of baseball's biggest collapses, won their last five games to force the playoff.

The last time baseball needed a one-game playoff was in 1980, when Houston defeated Los Angeles for the NL West title. The last one-game playoff in the AL was 1978, when Bucky Dent's home run lifted the Yankees over Boston at Fenway Park for the AL East title. Lou Piniella, now the Mariners manager, made a key play in the outfield late in that playoff for the Yankees.

The key play in this, only the eighth one-game playoff in major league history, came with two outs in the seventh, the bases loaded and Seattle ahead 1-0.

Sojo hit a broken-bat grounder down the line that barely made it past fine-fielding first baseman J.T. Snow. The ball rolled into the bullpen as Mike Blowers and Tino Martinez scored, and Langston

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