

# THE ROCKPILE

January 2026

## HAPPY 2026, BASEBALL FANS!

Joe Adona



So here we are at yet another turn of the calendar. Somehow, we've all managed to survive 2025. I hope that you had a pleasant holiday season and got to spend quality time with family & friends. And I hope that you all have a happy, healthy and prosperous 2026 and that you are able to keep your resolutions, at least through February.

At the time that I'm writing this, there are 49 days and 11 hours left until Pitchers & Catchers report to Spring Training -

<https://www.springtrainingcountdown.com/>

The 2025 season was full of great highlights and capped off with what was without question one of the best World Series ever. So, what can we expect in the 2026 season?

- Will the new ABS system call a perfect game for an obscure pitcher, who will then immediately retire to become an umpire?
- Will teams start predicting their seasons using only [marble races](#) and find the results are just as accurate as traditional analytics?
- After years of struggling to find a permanent home, will the Athletics play the 2026 season in a pop-up stadium constructed entirely of recycled hot dog wrappers in the middle of a desert, which will still somehow be an upgrade over their previous venues?
- Will the Rockies, in a desperate bid for offensive consistency, begin a radical experiment, signing [exclusively players named "Ryan"](#) to multi-year contracts, leading to an entire lineup of Ryan Cohens, Ryan McMahons, and Ryan Walkers?
- Will Pittsburgh Pirates ace Paul Skenes finish the season with a 30-0 record and a 0.50 ERA, and the Bucs still miss the playoffs due to only scoring one run per game?
- Will Shohei Ohtani continue his dominance to the point that the MVP award is simply renamed the "Shohei Ohtani Award for Excellence"?
- Will the Dodgers sign every remaining Japanese star pitcher, resulting in a 20-man rotation and several confused relief pitchers?

But in all seriousness, we're hoping that the Rox find some level of magic this year and somehow avoid becoming the first team since the 1962-65 Mets to lose 100 or more games in 4 straight seasons!

With new front office management in place and talented prospects Charlie Condon and Ethan Holliday in the pipeline, I guess we can muster up some optimism (can't we?).

## ASTROS LEFT-HANDER JOINS US AT OUR NOVEMBER LUNCHEON



At our chapter's monthly luncheon in November, we were treated to a very special guest speaker, Houston Astros talented young relief pitcher and Colorado native, [Bryan King](#).

Bryan attended Ponderosa High School in Parker where he finished his senior season with a 1.87 ERA and 7-4 record being named to the named first team All Continental League before going on to pitch for McNeese State. He was drafted in the 30th round by the Cubs in 2019. TJ surgery in August 2022 caused him to miss the entire 2023 season. He was claimed off waivers by Houston in December 2022 and spent part of 2024 and all of the 2025 season as their left-handed relief specialist setting up Brian Abreau and Josh Hader in the backend of their talented bullpen. He's the only player ever to wear #74 for Houston and the only current player in the majors with a master's degree.

Bryan spent over an hour partaking in Q&A and chatting with our chapter members.

A very special thanks to chapter member Brian Werner for arranging Bryan's appearance.

## 2026 RM SABR BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

A very big "thanks" to all who took the time to vote in our 2026 Chapter Board elections that were held in September.

We are pleased to announce the winners of the elections -

<b>President</b> (2-year term)	Joe Adona
<b>Vice President</b> (2-year term)	Kurt Wells
<b>Secretary</b> (2-year term)	Kerry Gleason
<b>Treasurer</b> (2-year term)	Mike Roberts
<b>Director At-Large</b> (4-year term)	John Salvino
<b>Director At-Large</b> (4-year term)	Karen Bent
<b>Director At-Large</b> (4-year term)	Peter Myers



Remaining on the board to serve out the last 2 years of their term as Director At-Large are Dave Mundo and Jamie Orcutt

Congratulations to all of the winners.

On behalf of the board, we look forward to serving our term and making the experience for our members a great one.

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## SEVEN GOLDEN PITCHES IN TORONTO

Alex Weinheimer

I anxiously watched the final outs of World Series Game 6 on my father's couch in Colorado, with a "go bag", including my passport, by my side. If the Blue Jays came back and won the game, clinching the series, my nine-year streak of attending at least one World Series game would come to an end, and I would have a relaxing weekend at home. However, when the Dodgers forced a Game 7, I was immediately en-route to the airport to see it myself.

This would be only my second time attending a game at Rogers Centre. The first was nine years prior, when I saw a winner-take-all game decided by an extra-inning home run (off of former Rockies pitcher Ubaldo Jimenez). It was great being back in Toronto, walking around the city before the game, with the anticipation that only a Game 7 can bring. Since the inception of the World Series in 1903, this would be only the 41st occurrence of a winner-take-all series finale. It would also become only the ninth game to feature something even rarer: a Golden Pitch.



In early 2016, SABR member and Dayton, Ohio mayor, Wade Kapszukiewicz, introduced the idea of a Golden Pitch. Simply put, it's a pitch that can result in either team winning the World Series. The requisite circumstance includes:

- A World Series Game 7
- The game is in the 9th inning or later
- The road team is pitching and has a small lead
- The home team has at least one runner on base

Kapszukiewicz's research indicates that fewer than 1 in 1,000,000 pitches in MLB history have been Golden Pitches, with only 42 estimated prior occurrences. The most recent were in 2016, when Michael Martinez grounded the second Golden Pitch from Mike Montgomery to Kris Bryant, who made the throw that ended the Cubs' 108-year curse.

I watched from the 500-level as the game slipped away from the hometown Blue Jays, and entered Instant-Classic territory when Miguel Rojas hit the first game-tying home run in the ninth inning or later in World Series Game 7 history. After a tense but scoreless 10th inning, and a go-ahead homer by Will Smith in the top of the 11th, the Blue Jays needed baserunners.

**[Continued on Page 12](#)**

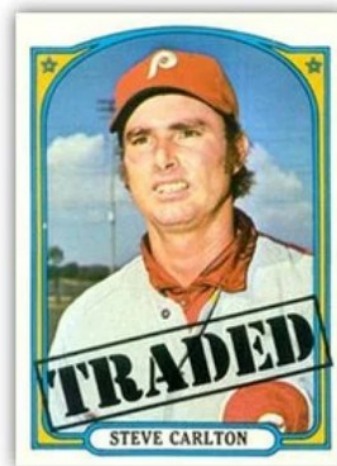
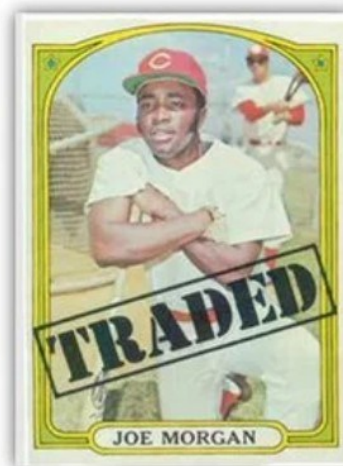
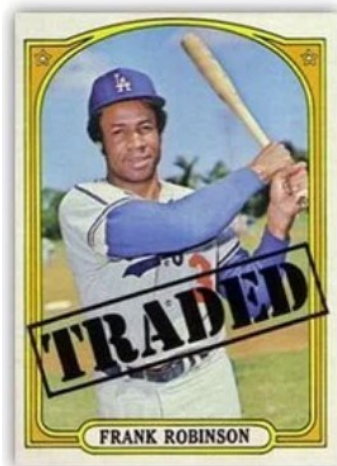
## BASEBALL'S GREATEST OFFSEASON

**Joe Adona**

For many baseball fans, the one thing that holds us over between the World Series and Spring Training is the off-season activity of the Hot Stove league.

So far this year, activity has been a bit quiet.

Some big names will be wearing new jerseys next year.



I and all my fellow Met fans are wearing black armbands right now with the departure of fan favorites Pete Alonso (Orioles - five-year, \$155 million), Edwin Diaz (Dodgers three-year, \$69 million contract), Jeff McNeil (traded to Oakland) and Brandon Nimmo (traded to Texas).

Lights-out closer Robert Suarez signed a 3-year contract with the Braves and elite slugger Kyle Schwarber reupped in Philly for another five years.

There are still a few big-name players unsigned (Kyle Tucker, Alex Bregman, Cody Bellinger) but these folks will likely be off the market before long.

Every year, there are a handful of marquee players who jump to a new team - Soto last year, Ohtani the year before, Kris Bryant in 2022 (kidding), and so on. This has been particularly true since the advent of free agency in 1974. But few years, if any, match the number of superstar players and Hall of Famers who swapped jerseys **than in the 1971-72 offseason.**

Again, this is pre free agency and are all trades. Here they are In chronological order **(Hall of Famers are in bold)**

- The Chicago Cubs traded Ken Holtzman to the Oakland Athletics for Rick Monday.

Holtzman would go on to be one of the key members of the great Oakland starting rotation that won 3 straight World Championships

- The Cincinnati Reds traded Tommy Helms, Lee May and Jimmy Stewart to the Houston Astros for Ed Armbrister, Jack Billingham, César Gerónimo, Denis Menke and **Joe Morgan.**

This trade was met with resounding criticism from Reds fans at first. Morgan would become a 2 time MVP and a key cog in the 75-76 champion Big Red Machine.

[Continued on Page 10](#)

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## Denver Card Shows Enter a New Era at the National Western Complex

Andrew Orcutt



The Denver Card Show took another significant step forward this winter, with the most recent show running December 12-14, marking both a change in venue and a glimpse into the hobby's rapidly-evolving future. The show officially moved into a new home at the National Western Stockyard Event Center, with this show held in the Livestock Center, a larger and more modern space.

By the numbers, the December show was impressive. With over 400 tables spanning sports cards and trading card games (TCG), it represented one of the larger Denver-area shows to date. However, for many sports card collectors, and especially vintage-focused collectors like myself, the composition of the floor told a more complicated story. Eyeballing it, the split appeared to be roughly 60 percent Pokémon and other TCG

cards and about 40 percent sports cards. While that imbalance caused some understandable frustration among long-time sports dealers and collectors, it also reflected broader national trends in the hobby, where Pokémon and modern TCG continue to dominate table counts and foot traffic similar to the rapid sports card growth during the pandemic.

Several external factors also shaped the December show's dynamics. Most notably, many of the largest buyers and out-of-state dealers who typically travel to Denver were instead attending the massive Philadelphia show held the same weekend. As a result, fewer destination collectors made the trip west, and the show leaned more heavily on the local and regional crowd than usual, which heavily favors TCG.

Still, all is far from lost for sports cards, and especially vintage, at future Denver shows. Approximately four to five vintage dealers who regularly set up in Denver were absent in December, along with a number of other established sports dealers. Those dealers are expected to return for the next show, bringing more depth, balance, and diversity back to the sports side of the floor.

That next show, scheduled for February 27 through March 1, represents not just a rebound but a massive leap forward. Despite already growing by more than 100 tables between the October and December shows, the February event is projected to more than triple in size from December, with over 1,000 tables planned. In a major development, PSA will also be accepting submissions on site, a move that further underscores the show's national aspirations and should draw serious collectors from beyond Colorado.

While Denver may not yet have the same deep local collector base as cities like Chicago or Philadelphia, its regional pull, particularly throughout the Mountain West, should increase dramatically at this scale. There are still open questions about logistics, crowd flow, and how effectively such rapid expansion can be managed, but the trajectory is unmistakable.

If February's show is handled well, it is not hard to imagine that by summer Denver could host one of the largest, and potentially one of the best, card shows in the country, serving both the sports and TCG markets. For vintage dealers and collectors in particular, the coming months may prove pivotal in determining whether Denver can strike the right balance between the current TCG momentum and the hobby's roots.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY “KONG”

Joe Adona

December 21st was the 77th birthday of David Arthur Kingman.

Late Mets broadcaster Bob Murphy used to emphasize the “Arthur” every time he came to bat. He also used to remark how his mile high popups would be “home runs in a silo” and is largely credited for giving him several nicknames, most notably “Kong”

Kong was a three-time MLB All-Star with 442 career home runs and 1,210 RBIs in 16 seasons. In his career, Kingman averaged a home run every 15.1 at bats, tied for 19th best all-time. His best season was in 1979, when he batted .288 with a National League-leading 48 homers and 115 RBIs. He hit three home runs in a game twice that season and had a Slugging Average of .613 which was almost 50 points higher than that of his next closest NL competitor (Mike Schmidt).

A relative giant in his playing days at 6’6”, he hit a lot of home runs. LONG home runs. This included the third one that he hit in a game at Wrigley Field while playing for the Cubs in a 23–22 loss to the Phillies in May 1979 which was likely the longest home run of his career, and believed to be the longest in the history of Wrigley Field which landed on the third porch roof on the east side of Kenmore Ave, a shot estimated at 550 feet (although every time this story is told, an extra 5-10 feet get added to the distance).

There are plenty of Paul Bunyan stories about Kong hitting long HRs with just a check swing or one-handed. Many of these are probably true. At Shea stadium, there were signs in the parking lot beyond the left field bullpen declaring them “Kingman Fallout Zones” stating that parked cars that might be damaged were not the responsibility of the Mets.

The Mets could be down by 6 or 7 runs in the late innings, but if Kingman was due up again, you hung around to see the at bat. He was that explosive and that exciting to watch. He added excitement to some dreadful teams and made rooting for them a tad easier.

Along with those monster home runs came strikeouts. A LOT of strikeouts. His 1,816 strikeouts were the fourth-highest total in MLB history at the time of his retirement.

Born in Oregon, in 1948, Dave Kingman and his family moved to Denver in 1951 where they lived for 3 years. He was a three sport star at Prospect High School in Illinois; a center / forward on the basketball team, being named All-Area; a wide receiver and safety on the football team; and a star pitcher on the baseball team. He threw a no-hitter against Niles North High School in 1967 and in his final high school game, he hit four home runs and pitched a two-hit shutout.



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## **KINGMAN** continued from Page 6

He was drafted by the California Angels out of high school in the second round of the 1967 MLB draft but opted for college instead where he was a standout pitcher at USC. In 1969, Kingman had a 11–4 win–loss record with a 1.38 ERA. In 1970, he was named an All-American and led the Trojans to the College World Series.

He made it to the bigs as an outfielder / first baseman with the San Francisco Giants, making his major league debut on July 30, 1971, pinch running for Willie McCovey. He hit a grand slam in his next game and hit two more HRs a day later.

In 1977, he became one of only a handful of players to play for four major league teams in the same season and the only one to play in each division in baseball in a single year (since the establishment of divisional play in 1969).

Although he had his best statistical years as a Cub, most of my memories of him were from the two stints he served as a NY Met (75–77) and (81–83). There were games in 1983 when Kingman, Darryl Strawberry and George Foster were all in the lineup for New York. The low flying planes taking off from nearby LaGuardia airport weren't safe during those games. Kong was made expendable when the Mets traded for Keith Hernandez on June 15th of that year.

In 1992, his first year of eligibility for the Baseball Hall of Fame, he appeared on just three ballots, excluding him from future Baseball Writers' Association of America voting, making him the first player to hit 400 or more home runs without being eventually inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Kong was widely regarded as a one-dimensional player. Mammoth home runs were interspersed with an enormous number of strikeouts and accompanied by atrocious defense and little to no speed. But if not just for that reason, any mention of Cooperstown is quickly muted because of Kingman the person.

Kingman's reputation throughout his major league career was as someone disliked by most reporters, many fans and numerous teammates. At his best, he was moody and petulant. At his worst, he was a complete a\*\*hole who would regularly flip off many autograph seekers including children.

In 1980, Kingman (whose personality former Mets teammate John Stearns had once compared to a tree trunk), dumped a bucket of ice water on Daily Herald reporter Don Friske's head late in spring training.

In August of that year, the Cubs held a Dave Kingman T-shirt Day promotion at Wrigley Field in a game against the Pirates, but Kingman was a no-show, opting to make a commercial appearance for Kawasaki Jet Skis at Navy Pier instead, leaving thousands of fans who expected to see him angry and disappointed.

The most infamous example of his disdain for reporters was during his final year in Oakland in 1986 when he sent a pink gift box to Sue Fornoff, a sportswriter for The Sacramento Bee. Inside the box was a live rat, with a tag attached to it that read, "My name is Sue." Fornoff claimed that Kingman had told her that women do not belong in the clubhouse, and that he harassed her several times since she began covering the team the year before. Kingman claimed that it was intended as a harmless practical joke. The A's fined him \$3,500 and warned that he would be released if a similar incident occurred again.

Kong was one of the more polarizing figures in baseball during his playing days providing a near equal number of thrills and disappointments. I'm sure Kingman will get into the Hall of Fame someday. But to get there, he'll have to drive to Cooperstown and pay for a ticket just like you and me.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT—David Wallack



Long time member Dr. David Wallack is one of several native New Yorkers in our chapter. His family went against the trend of the time and reverse migrated from the suburbs of Long Island to the Bronx when he was only 5, settling just five short blocks from Yankee Stadium which was in view from their apartment window. He attended his first game when he was a student at PS 114 on **April 26, 1947 vs Washington** and began his lifelong love of the NY Pinstripers. He went on to earn his undergraduate degree from Columbia University where he played freshman baseball and JV basketball and then onto SUNY Buffalo where he received his doctorate.

David served for a year in Vietnam during the conflict as a doctor, running an aid station for an Air Calvary Squadron of 1,100 men. Back stateside, he finished his tour of duty at West Point. On his last day of service, he received a letter of acceptance from UC Medical Center and came out west to Colorado, eventually starting a multi-specialty private practice in Littleton.

David's earliest participation in a SABR meeting was back in 1992 with Dante Bichette and Gerald Young in attendance. He is an active contributor to our chapter as the craftsman and facilitator of our annual SABR Day Trivia Contest and makes a presentation at each of our monthly luncheons. When not focused on his passion for baseball, he is involved in art history and serves as a guide at the Denver Art Museum.



### 2026 NATIONAL SABR CONVENTION

SABR will be heading to Cleveland, Ohio for our 54th annual convention on July 29-August 2, 2026, at the Hilton Cleveland Downtown hotel. Registration information for SABR 54 and our special hotel room block will be available at [SABR.org/convention](https://www.sabr.org/convention) in early 2026.

The [Hilton Cleveland Downtown hotel](https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/clev-downtown-hilton-cleveland-downtown-hotel/) includes a top-floor bar above Cleveland's skyline with views of Lake Erie and it is conveniently located near many restaurants and attractions on East 4th Street. The hotel is also a short walk from Progressive Field, where the Cleveland Guardians will host a weekend series against the Arizona Diamondbacks. The SABR 54 convention logo was created by acclaimed sports graphic designer and SABR member Todd Radom.

## STAT of the MONTH—Expected Weighted On-Base Average (xwOBA)

### Definition

Expected Weighted On-base Average (xwOBA) is formulated using exit velocity, launch angle and, on certain types of batted balls, Sprint Speed.

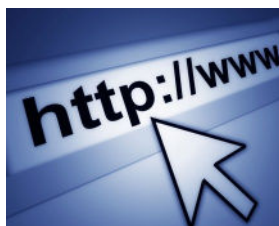
In the same way that each batted ball is assigned an expected batting average, every batted ball is given a single, double, triple and home run probability based on the results of comparable batted balls since Statcast was implemented Major League wide in 2015. For the majority of batted balls, this is achieved using only exit velocity and launch angle. As of 2019, "topped" or "weakly hit" balls also incorporate a batter's seasonal Sprint Speed.



### Why it's useful

xwOBA is more indicative of a player's skill than regular wOBA, as xwOBA removes defense from the equation. Hitters, and likewise pitchers, are able to influence exit velocity and launch angle but have no control over what happens to a batted ball once it is put into play.

#	Name	Team	G	PA	HR	R	RBI	SB	BB%	K%	ISO	BABIP	AVG	OBP	SLG	wOBA	xwOBA
1	Aaron Judge	NY Yankees	152	679	53	137	114	12	18.3%	23.6%	.357	.376	.331	.457	.688	.463	.458
2	Juan Soto	NY Mets	160	715	43	120	105	38	17.8%	19.2%	.262	.270	.263	.396	.525	.390	.427
3	Shohei Ohtani	LA Dodgers	158	727	55	146	102	20	15.0%	25.7%	.340	.315	.282	.392	.622	.418	.423
4	George Springer	TOR Blue Jays	140	586	32	106	84	18	11.8%	18.9%	.251	.340	.309	.399	.560	.408	.404
5	Kyle Schwarber	PHI Phillies	162	724	56	111	132	10	14.9%	27.2%	.323	.253	.240	.365	.563	.391	.402
6	Ben Rice	NY Yankees	138	530	26	74	65	3	9.4%	18.9%	.244	.271	.255	.337	.499	.358	.396
7	Ketel Marte	ARI Diamondbacks	126	556	28	87	72	4	11.5%	14.9%	.233	.290	.283	.376	.517	.381	.389
8	Pete Alonso	NY Mets	162	709	38	87	126	1	8.6%	22.8%	.252	.305	.272	.347	.524	.368	.385
9	Vladimir Guerrero Jr.	TOR Blue Jays	156	680	23	96	84	6	11.9%	13.8%	.175	.313	.292	.381	.467	.366	.384
10	Michael Busch	CHC Cubs	155	592	34	78	90	4	9.5%	23.5%	.261	.292	.261	.343	.523	.369	.378



### ROCKY MOUNTAIN SABR WEBSITE

For all the latest news and events, recorded meetings, past newsletters, etc. of our chapter, visit our website <https://rmsabr.org/>.

Be sure to check out our [blog](#) section to read the latest member submitted articles.

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## **GREATEST OFFSEASON— Continued from Page 4**

- The Cleveland Indians traded Sam McDowell to the San Francisco Giants for Frank Duffy and **Gaylord Perry**.

What appeared to be an even trade on paper was anything but. Perry won 24 games with a sub 2 ERA in '72 taking home the AL Cy Young Award. McDowell, coming off 4 straight All-Star appearances, was a bust in SF and his career was all but over.

- The Chicago White Sox traded Steve Huntz and Tommy John to the Los Angeles Dodgers for **Dick Allen**.

In a trade that benefitted both teams, Allen would win the AL MVP in '72 and eventually end up in Cooperstown. TJ would go 40-15 over the next 3 years before getting his eponymous surgery. He would come back and have 3 more solid years with LA and help lead them to the NL Championship in '77 and '78 then pitch 11 more seasons winning 288 games over his career,

- The Baltimore Orioles traded Pete Richert and **Frank Robinson** to the Los Angeles Dodgers for Doyle Alexander, Bob O'Brien, Sergio Robles and Royle Stillman.

Unlike when the Reds traded him to Baltimore in 1966, Robinson's best days were now truly behind him. He'd put up decent stats for a few different teams and become the first black manager in MLB history in 1974 with Cleveland.

- The California Angels traded Jim Fregosi to the New York Mets for Frank Estrada, Don Rose, **Nolan Ryan** and Leroy Stanton.

Forty three years later, Met fans are still tasting bile over this trade as it was truly one of the worst in baseball history. Former all-star Fregosi was a dud while Ryan was brilliant the remainder of his career. The Express would strike out 329 and an all-time record 383 in his first 2 seasons in California and go on to win 295 games and throw 7 no-hitters after leaving the Mets.

- The Philadelphia Phillies traded Rick Wise to the St. Louis Cardinals for **Steve Carlton**.

In a trade that was borne from a \$5k salary dispute between Carlton and St. Louis, Cards owner Gussie Bush decided to move the lefthander to Philadelphia for Wise. In '71, Wise was an all-star and 17-game winner. He also made history that year by being the only pitcher to ever throw a no-hitter and hit 2 HRs in the same game. Carlton would have one of the greatest pitching seasons in MLB history in '72, winning the triple crown with 27 victories, 310 Ks and an ERA of 1.97 for an awful Phillies team that only managed 59 wins. Wise would have his moments and go on to pitch 10 more serviceable but unremarkable seasons.

- The Boston Red Sox traded Sparky Lyle to the New York Yankees for a player to be named later and Danny Cater.

Lyle would slowly rise to prominence in the back of the Yankees bullpen eventually winning the AL Cy Young Award in 1977, the second year of 3 straight Yankee AL titles. Lyle's tenure as the Yanks closer was short lived as he was replaced by Goose Gossage in '78.

**Continued on next page**

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## **GREATEST OFFSEASON— Continued from Page 10**

- The Montreal Expos traded Rusty Staub to the New York Mets for Tim Foli, Mike Jorgensen and Ken Singleton.

This trade didn't happen until April 5th, but it was still the off-season because of the delayed start of the '72 season due to a work stoppage. "Le Grande Orange" was a hero in Montreal and the trade didn't sit well with fans north of the border, but it paid quick dividends for the Mets as he was a big part in their winning the 1973 NL Championship.

- The New York Mets traded Charlie Williams and \$50,000 to the San Francisco Giants for **Willie Mays**.

So, this wasn't an offseason trade (May 11th), but how can it not be mentioned? The legendary Say-Hey Kid would come back to finish his career where he started it in New York. As a perfect ending for his career, his last games would be played for the Mets in the 1973 World Series.

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## **FRIENDS of BASEBALL BREAKFAST— JAN 31st**

Since 1988, the Friends of Baseball have proudly hosted the Breakfast of Champions, an iconic annual event that brings together baseball legends. Over the years, this prestigious gathering has featured renowned figures such as Nolan Ryan, Tommy Lasorda, Tim Lincecum, and Darryl Strawberry, making it a must-attend event for baseball enthusiasts. In addition to the chance to hear from these legends, the Breakfast of Champions includes an exquisite auction, offering high-end, exclusive items that appeal to serious collectors and supporters alike. The proceeds from this event help to support youth baseball in Northern CO, including funding local recreation programs, providing an annual scholarship to a deserving applicant, and so much more. This year's guest speaker will be 9x All-Star and member of the 500 HR Club, Gary Sheffield.



The event will take place at the **Island Grove Event Center at 421 N 15th Ave, Greeley** from 8:00 AM – Noon

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## **ROCKIES DECEMBER - JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**



Braxton Fulford	December 9th (27)
Zac Veen	December 12th (24)
Jaden Hill	December 22nd (26)
Brady Blalock	December 25th (25)
Austin Nola	December 28th (36)
Yanquiel Fernandez	January 1st (23)
Kris Bryant	January 4th (34)
Luis Peralta	January 6th (25)
Anthony Molina	January 12th (24)
Antonio Senzatela	January 21st (31)

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## **GOLDEN PITCHES — Continued from Page 3**

Vladimir Guerrero Jr doubled and advanced to third on a sacrifice. They had a baserunner, and the Golden Pitches began. Yoshinobu Yomamoto threw four Golden Pitches to Addison Barger, which resulted in a walk. With runners on the corners, one out, and Alejandro Kirk coming to the plate, the possibilities were endless.

Golden Pitches aren't just viewed, they're excruciatingly experienced. They can make the stomach of even a neutral observer sink. In the ensuing moments, one team is likely to experience a cruel end to their season, while the other celebrates still in shock. They also make the mind race. Is Alejandro Kirk really going to be the World Series hero? [Foul ball - Strike One] Will this go long enough for Ohtani to get back up? [Called Strike 2] Is this game also going to go 18 innings?

Then it's suddenly over. The seventh Golden Pitch from the World Series MVP is now a groundball on its way to Betts, who touches second and throws to Freeman at first. A stadium where nobody had left early instantly fell silent as fans processed that the 49th Golden Pitch was the end for the 2025 Blue Jays, and that the Dodgers had just repeated as champions. Some exited seconds later, some were still silently despondent in their seats an hour later.

There's nothing quite like a Golden Pitch. I hope I get to see the 50th!

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## **RM SABR DAY CELEBRATION IS FEBRUARY 7th!**



Join us on Saturday February 7th for our annual SABR Day Gathering. This year's guest speakers will be former Rockies Clint Barmes and Denny Stark. In addition, we will have the presentation of our annual Herb Shankman Award and our Trivia Contest. The venue and starting time will be announced soon. Please check your email or our website for details. We hope to see you all there.

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## **ROCKIES FEST—JAN 24th**

Rockies Fest will feature player/coach autograph sessions, Q&A sessions, behind-the-scenes fan experiences, Kids activities, Rockies Family Feud, Garage Sale, baseball card show and many more exciting events and activities. All proceeds will benefit the Colorado Rockies Foundation. **TICKETS**

