



CSNC lands Mandy Patinkin to narrate 2005 Sox doc

By George Castle

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Editor's Comment: In October 2013, Comcast came out with their first feature documentary on a pivotal moment in Chicago baseball history-- a stand-out documentary entitled '5 Outs,' capturing the roller-coaster tragic events of the '03 Cubs play-offs that is forever seared into the collective memory of Cubs fans and part of the franchise DNA. The work done by **Emmy award-winning production team of Sarah Lauch and Ryan McGuffey (along with David Kaplan)** garnered them the **2014 Holtzman award** given by the CBM in recognition of outstanding achievement in documenting Chicago baseball history. In 2014, they followed up with a documentary on Frank Thomas and his road to Cooperstown.



Ryan McGuffey and Sarah Lauch.

Now, in keeping with the high bar they have set, the amazingly talented team of Lauch and McGuffey have tackled the subject of the White Sox World Series win in 2005 with ten years of hindsight and historical perspective.

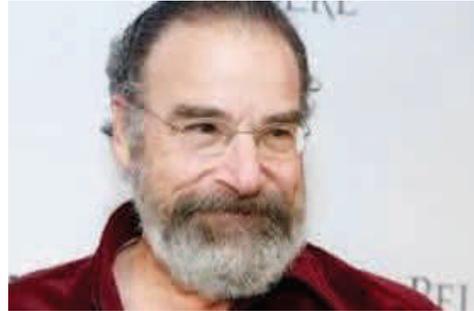
In 2005, because of my Black Sox expertise and because I represent the Buck Weaver estate, I did multiple media interviews about the Black Sox (since the 8 banned players were members of 1917 World Series team that won the last White Sox World Championship 88 years before.)

On Sun, Apr. 12 at 7:00pm CT, Comcast SportsNet will premiere “Believe: The Story of the 2005 Chicago White Sox,” an original, 90-minute documentary film chronicling that unexpected, nerve-filled, yet triumphant season that occurred ten years ago. Below is a story from Reel Chicago about the latest documentary.

Could Ryan and Sarah be the first to win the Holtzman award twice with their latest effort? I guess we will have to watch the film.

David Fletcher, CBM Founder and President

Chicago actor Mandy Patinkin, a lifelong White Sox fan and skilled narrator seemed a natural to front a 90-minute Chicago Sports Net Chicago (CSNC) documentary about the South Side team that airs April 12.



Actor Mandy Patinkin narrates Sox doc. Photo courtesy ReelChicago.com.

“Believe: The Story of The 2005 White Sox” producers Ryan McGuffey and Sarah Lauch landed almost all the big names from Chicago’s only World Series winner in the past 98 years.

“Who doesn’t love Mandy Patinkin?” said McGuffey. “He’s a brilliant, award-winning performer and his narration skills are second-to-none. Once I realized he was a South Side native and a huge White Sox fan, he immediately was our number one choice.”

“Mandy was the ultimate professional and truly mastered the script,” McGuffey continued. “When he finished, he recalled stories from his youth about his father taking him to games after synagogue and that his father was smiling in heaven while he was narrating this one.”

Patinkin sets the tone for a litany of behind-the-scenes stories and emotions from the likes of 2005 Sox manager Ozzie Guillen, chairman Jerry Reinsdorf, general manager Kenny Williams and provocative catcher A.J. Pierzynski.

Assisted by camera operators Eric Fogle, Jeff Korbitz, Mike Cappozzo and Todd Williams, McGuffey and Lauch had the good fortune of landing most of their guests at U.S. Cellular Field or while they were passing through Chicago.

Season-long chase of Pierzynski

But McGuffey had to endure a season-long chase of Boston Red Sox-turned St. Louis Cardinal Pierzynski. McGuffey began his quest in Chicago in April, journeyed to Boston and Cooperstown later in the summer and finally concluded the interview in Chicago in late September when Pierzynski returned with the Cardinals.

Pierzynski was the centerpiece of one of the craziest plays in postseason history in 2005, when he reached first base on a controversial dropped third strike against the Los Angeles Angels at The Cell. Only his version of the story was told, though. Despite receiving Major League Baseball’s permission, the plate umpire who allowed Pierzynski to reach first declined the producers’ request to interview Doug Eddings.

Ace left-hander Mark Buehrle was the other major Sox figure from 2005, who “respectfully” declined several interview requests. Lauch speculated that late in his career, the modest Buehrle is simply taking a lower media profile.

“The obvious thing that stood out when you sat down and talked to these guys about ’05 was the raw emotion they felt when they saw stuff like the post-season championship parade,” said McGuffey.

“Ozzie (Guillen) is unbelievable. He’s got specific stories about when the walls were caving in against Cleveland (a late-season Sox slump). He’s got great story about a game where he over-managed and couldn’t sleep at night.”

So Guillen, taped in Miami, second guesses himself from the vantage point of a decade later?

“He does. That’s an accurate statement,” McGuffey said.

McGuffey and Lauch estimated they have spent more than 500 hours on the doc. With the airdate two weeks away, the pair continue to put the finishing touches in the editing bay they jokingly call “The Bunker.”

Although the majority of the 12 hours of taped footage won’t make the final cut, McGuffey and Lauch said the copious leftovers could appear on other CSN Chicago programs and CSNChicago.com throughout the season.

They raised the possibility of a separate show on Guillen to take advantage of his colorful comments and personality.

“You could run it raw and people will love it,” Lauch said of Guillen’s stream of consciousness.

George Castle is a longtime Chicago sportswriter and sports historian.

Thanks to Ruth Ratny of Reel Chicago for allowing us to reprint this story.

[Read the Press Release for “Believe: The Story of the 2005 Chicago White Sox”...](#)