

CUBS WORLD SERIES QUEST



Ernie Banks (from left), Billy Williams, Ron Santo, Fergie Jenkins, Andre Dawson and Ryne Sandberg all are Hall of Famers not lucky enough to play in a World Series with the Cubs.

This World Series championship is for all deserving fans and players, past and present

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Number One!

The Cubs are world champions.

This is for all the undyingly loyal fans who ran out of mortal lifetime to see it – Morrie Zutz, Red Mottlow, Sam Benson, “Papa Carl” Leone, “Chet” Chestnut, Marv Rich, Les Wolper and countless others.

The Cubs came from behind with a 3-1 deficit to become the first team since the Kansas City Royals in 1985 to stage such a World Series rally.

This is for the 1984 and 2003 teams, who needed just one win to reach the World Series, yet each lost three in a row in the NLCS to send the Cubs Universe into mass depression.

Fresh from a 4-for-4 game, including a homer, Kris Bryant used his legs to beat the Indians in Game 7 and fielded the final out with a huge grin on his face.

This is for World Series-ready Hall of Famers like Ernie Banks, Billy Williams, Ron Santo, Fergie Jenkins, Andre Dawson and Ryne Sandberg who never got a chance to play in the Falls Classic.

World Series MVP Ben Zobrist and Miguel Montero got clutch hits with the bases loaded in the 10th inning to seal the deal.

This is for past clutch hitters like Gentleman Jim Hickman, Keith Moreland, George Altman, Jerry Morales and Mark DeRosa who would have come through in the same situation but, like the Hall of Famers, did not get the opportunity.

The Cubs saved Joe Maddon from possibly one of the greatest managerial botch jobs when the pressure was on with his gross overuse of closer Aroldis Chapman and Capt. Hook handling of effective starters.

This is for Charlie Grimm, Leo Durocher, Jim Frey, Dusty Baker and Lou Piniella, whose mistakes under the gun could not be overcome by their respective teams in 1945, 1969, 1984, 2003 and 2007-08.

John Smoltz did some of the greatest broadcast analysis this side of Steve Stone throughout the World Series.

This is for Jack Brickhouse, Vince Lloyd, Lou Boudreau, Harry Caray and Arne Harris, who were of World Series quality in the booth or TV control truck, but never got there with the Cubs.

Aroldis Chapman was in tears when the Cubs went back to the clubhouse during a 10th-inning rain delay after failing to hold a hard-won lead.

This is for Phil Regan, Jack Aker, Lee Arthur Smith, Mitch Williams and LaTroy Hawkins, whose relief failures were not bailed out by similar rallies.

‘Grandpa Ross’ goes out in style

“Grandpa” David Ross homered in his final major-league contest and was lifted up on the shoulders of his teammates on the field.

This is for all the backup Cubs catchers, from Moe Thacker to Chris Krug to Bill Plummer to Steve Swisher to Rick Wrona to Tyler Houston to Henry “Hank White” Blanco, playing without reward or glory.

The Cubs overcame clutch hits by Rajai Davis, whose game-tying homer off Chapman belied his career record never reaching double digits in homers until this year.

This is for all the pitchers who tried to get out Mike Schmidt, Willie Stargell, Al Oliver, Joe Torre, Ted Simmons and a long, long list of Cubs Killers over the decades.

Zobrist made a conscious choice to put his lifetime love of the arch-rival Cardinals behind and sign with the Cubs as a free agent.

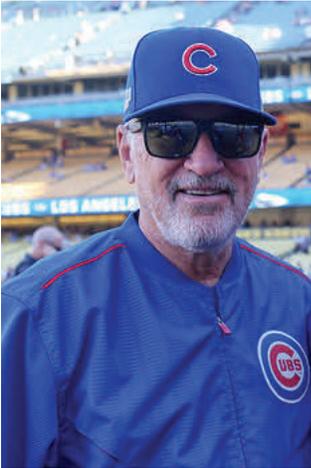
This is for all the Cubs executives who with good intentions signed free agents like Danny Jackson, Dave Smith, Mel Rojas, Milton Bradley and other expensive acquisitions who did not work out.



World Series MVP Ben Zobrist proved you can change from a Cardinals fan to Cubs producer.

Kyle Schwarber continued his astounding comeback with more hits in Game 7, promising to form a Big Three middle-of-the-lineup wrecking crew with Bryant and Anthony Rizzo for years to come.

This is for all those failed or underperforming position-player prospects like Corey Paterson, Felix Pie, Brooks Kieschnick, Karl Pagel and others who could not stick as Cubs.



Joe Maddon's brain cramps as manager were bailed out in the end by his players. Photo credit: [Arturo Pardavila III.](#)

Theo Epstein and Jason McLeod were together in the Progressive Field stands to watch the gut-wrenching Game 7 unfold.

This is for Tim Wilken and Jimmy Piersall, along with the late Buck O'Neil, Gordon Goldsberry, Bill Harford and Gene Handley, whose scouting and player development efforts never were matched by the Cubs organization as a whole. And especially for Wilken, whose admonition in the mid-2000s to select hitters high in the draft was duplicated by Epstein, McLeod and GM Jed Hoyer.

Kyle Hendricks "looked like a guy facing a J-V team...he was dominating," Alex Rodriguez said of the Cubs ace's artificially-abbreviated outing in Game 7.

This is for Greg Maddux – to whom Hendricks is often compared – who never wanted to leave the Cubs and probably could have brought a World Series to Wrigley Field 20 years ago if he hadn't been forced out as a free agent.

Jason Heyward continued to perform like a professional, sparkled on defense in right field and called a key team meeting during the 10th-inning rain delay, providing value despite a season slump to end all slumps.

This is for all new Cubs who came to Chicago with high expectations and failed, and got grief for their flops.

StubHub claimed they sold 43 seats behind the Cubs dugout for at least \$10,000 apiece, while thousands of Cubs fans somehow stormed Progressive Field, proving the fans travel better than most other sports teams.

This is for all Cubs fans who stuffed themselves four or five deep into cheap hotel rooms in St. Louis and other cities and saw their team get wiped out in disastrous road trips

Laura Castle fought off sleep and frustration, and erupted at airport-level noise when Bryant threw to Rizzo for the final out.

This is for all multi-generational Cubs fans who maybe now will develop a winner's attitude and will pay no attention to misdirection stories of billy goat curses and black cats.