



## ***New Season Provides Reasons for Optimism***

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Opening Day has arrived, and I'm more optimistic than ever.

Here are 10 reasons why:

10. Anthony Rizzo and Dayan Viciedo. Meet Chicago's two newest stars . . .
9. Alfonso Soriano and Paul Konerko. And don't forget the oldest ones.
8. Jeff Samardzija and Chris Sale. They have the stuff to become staff anchors before long.
7. Carlos Marmol and Addison Reed. The ninth inning will be in good hands again.
6. Darwin Barney and Starlin Castro. Solid defense begins up the middle.
5. Alexei Ramirez and Gordon Beckham. See above.
4. Edwin Jackson and Jeff Keppinger. They could be two of the better off-season moves around.
3. Dale Sveum and Robin Ventura. They're not rookie managers any more.
2. Two wild card berths. Any number of teams could be in the hunt in each league.
1. Pre-season predictions. Most have the White Sox in third place, the Cubs in last. Fortunately, they're almost never right.