



## ***World Series predictors get kingly feeling for Royals***

*By George Castle, CBM Historian  
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Many World Series predictors feel they've got a Royal flush at hand.

Kansas City Mania is sweeping many media, players, former players and coaches. The Chicago Baseball Museum's fifth annual World Series predictions feature finds a groundswell of support for the upstart Royals, who have stunned baseball with eight consecutive postseason victories.

Perhaps the most enthusiastic endorser of the Royals' combo of speed, defense and a lockdown bullpen is the CBM's president, Dr. David Fletcher. His succinct forecast: "Royals sweep in four, (Lorenzo) Cain is the MVP!" Obviously, the bossman believes the speedy Cain will win the top award two series in a row while pushing his team to a quick title.

CBM design consultant Ron Niess said the Royals will, comparatively, dawdle, winning in six.

This history buff, though, puts credence in past precedent. Experience cannot be discounted. The Giants will prevail in seven thanks to their Fall Classic track record, having won two of the last four. Manager Bruce Bochy, who should gain entrée into the Hall of Fame someday, also provides an edge over suddenly-respectable Royals skipper Ned Yost.

Without further ado, here is our roster of forecasters:

**David Schuster**, reporter-host, 670 The Score and Harry Caray Sportscaster of the Year award winner from the Pitch and Hit Club: Giants in six. "It's almost blasphemy going against the Cinderella story. But the Giants had the experience winning the big thing."

**Bruce Levine**, baseball analyst-program host, 670 The Score: Giants in six. "World Series experience and the top pitcher in the series (Madison) Bumgarner gives Giants series in six."

**Fred Mitchell**, sportswriter, *Chicago Tribune*: Royals in six. "I believe in their speed and defense as a constant advantage regardless of their opponent."

**Cheryl Raye-Stout**, sportscaster, WBEZ-FM. Giants in six. "Viewing the two wild card teams making it to the World Series makes it a difficult prediction for the outcome. Both teams have played very well this postseason, especially Kansas City. Now it feels like the managerial moves may make the difference and that edge goes to San Francisco's Bruce Bochy. KC has great defense, timely hitting and one of the best bullpens we have seen in the post season. The Royals having home field advantage may come into play, but the Giants starting pitching, especially Madison Bumgarner, may be a bigger advantage. However, personally it would be great to see KC win it. Why, personally, last June the Royals selected a left hand pitcher from Glen Ellyn, Eric Stout (St. Francis & Butler University), who happens to be my nephew."

**Paul Sullivan**, baseball writer, *Chicago Tribune*: Royals in seven.

**Daryl Van Schouwen**, Sox beat writer, *Chicago Sun-Times*: Royals in six. "Too hot to handle."

**Bruce Miles**, Cubs beat writer, *The Daily Herald*: Giants in six. "They have the postseason experience and a Hall of Fame-caliber manager. Those two factors will help them prevail despite the Royals' recent run."

**Scot Gregor**, Sox beat writer, *The Daily Herald*: Royals in six. "Tempted to forecast another sweep, but Giants are a proven commodity in the Fall Classic."

**John Reyes**, Reyes and Reyes media: Royals in six. "In a facetious manner, and trying to be 'witty' at the time, in the visitor's dugout at the Cell on the Saturday before they clinched the following day, I said to Ned Yost: 'Skip, good luck. Get in and you could go all the way.' Am leaning on my unintended sarcasm and taking 'The Blue Man's Group' in six games. The Royals are as defensively sound as any team reaching the Series in a long, long time, going all the way back to the 'Go-Go White Sox.' As a matter of fact, they remind me of that 1959 team. Especially since the Giants do not have the pitching staff of the Dodgers team that was the Sox's '59 opponent."

**Rich King**, WGN-TV sportscaster and author, with Lindsey Eanet, of the autobiographical *Back in the Game* book: Royals in six. "Hot team, great bullpen and speed."

**Bob Vorwald**, WGN-TV production director and Jerome Holtzman Award winner from the Pitch and Hit Club: Giants in six. "It's an even year which favors them and I think Bruce Bochy gives San Fran an edge."

**Phil Rogers**, MLB.com columnist: Royals in six. "Speed and defense wins one for the 'Go-Go White Sox.' Yes, they're the same style team and since the 'Go-Go Sox' didn't win the (1959) World Series, (but) these guys should."

**Scott Merkin**, Sox beat writer, MLB.com: Royals in six. "Their overall defense, especially in the outfield, and the Herrera, Davis and Holland late-inning combination will be too much for the Giants."

**Jesse Rogers**, Cubs beat writer, ESPNChicago.com: Giants in six. "The battery combo of Bumgarner and Posey will slow down the Royals and experience will eventually mean something. The Giants have it and win their third since 2010."

**John Owens**, multi-media producer, *Chicago Tribune*: Royals in six. "MVP – Alex Gordon."

**Goose Gossage**, Hall of Famer and former Sox and Cubs reliever: Giants (but he can't pick how games). "My heart's with San Francisco because I know so many coaches on the team. It's great to see the Royals, a small-market team, doing what they do and the excitement they generated all throughout country. Speed is a lost ingredient, and it goes back to the way teams were built. I hope Kansas City isn't just happy to be there."

**Dick Allen**, 1972 AL Most Valuable Player with the Sox (relayed (through son Dick, Jr): Royals (no number of games). "My father likes KC with all that speed."

**Roland Hemond**, former Sox general manager, now Diamondbacks special assistant: Giants in six. "Experience helps. The Giants have done a real good job, they're quite consistent. But I kind of pull for the Royals as a young ballclub."

**Tyler Flowers**, Sox catcher: Royals in six. "Their pitching is pretty good. Their bullpen is continuing to be excellent. Pretty much everybody is swinging the bat. That's pretty much what you need. You're always aware of them, especially their speed guys. They're hot at the right time. They're going to be tough to beat."

**Don Cooper**, Sox pitching coach: Royals in seven. "My sentimental favorite is with my friend Dave Righetti (Giants pitching coach). But Kansas City has something going for it. It's almost tangible, you can feel it. Kansas City has the mojo. They have something going for them other than being a good team. I have to lean to the Kansas City bullpen. Bumgarner will do well against Kansas City. It just seems like Kansas City's time."



**Don Cooper says the Royals have "mojo."**

**Ed Farmer**, Sox radio play by play announcer: Royals (but no specific number of games). "Kansas City has the lockdown bullpen. Both are scrappy teams. But I give the edge to the Royals because of the bullpen. People aren't going to score against them. They've got great speed and work for their ballpark. I think both teams hit more home runs per game in the postseason than they did in the regular season."

**Chuck Garfien**, sportscaster and Sox pre- and post-game host, Comcast SportsNet Chicago. Royals in six. "I'll say I like their speed. They put a lot of pressure on opposing defenses. When the game's on the line, they're not looking to hit home runs and just trying to get base hits."

**Bill Melton**, Sox pre-game and post-game analyst for Comcast SportsNet Chicago and 1971 Sox AL home-run champion: Giants in seven. “It will be close because Royals don’t give you anything after the sixth inning. I took the Orioles. I look at the Royals like the Sox in 2005, but we had a little more star power. I’m not really sure everyone knows who the Giants are (other than Bumgarner). It’s pretty much a tossup. The fact both had (a long time) off gives both pitching staffs a rest. I give an edge to Kansas City in the bullpen. The fact the Giants won every other year gives them the edge for the series.”

**Ryan McGuffey**, award-winning documentary producer for Comcast SportsNet Chicago. Royals in six. “It’s Destiny vs Dynasty. The Royals appear as if they’ll never lose again, setting an MLB record with eight straight wins to start a postseason, knocking out two of the best teams in baseball along the way. The Giants, quietly, are aiming for their third World Series title in five years, a modern-day dynasty. I’m going with destiny in this one. The Royals, with a bunch of home-grown talent, have found a way to put it all together at the most important time of the season. Their confidence is sky-high. They believe they can’t lose. That’s a tough thing to beat. Not to mention, if the game gets to the seventh and the Royals have the lead, warm up the car. The game is over. The bullpen gets it done and brings Kansas City an unlikely title, and first since ‘85.”

**Sarah Lauch**, award-winning documentary producer for Comcast SportsNet Chicago. Giants in six. “MVP -- former Phillie Hunter Pence. Loved seeing the Royals and Pirates in the postseason. They have come a long way. Fun to watch them succeed.”

**Mark Prior**, former Cubs pitcher, now Padres front-office assistant: Giants in six. “It’s a tough time picking against Bruce Bochy. The Giants are a veteran team with great leadership behind the plate in Buster Posey. Everyone sees what they need to do to win ballgames. Experience doesn’t hurt. It’s a must. You need it. They’ve won in multiple fashions. They pitch well enough. My heart would like the Royals to win. The Royals get the slight edge in the bullpen if they stay hot.”

**Ted Lilly**, former Cubs pitcher, now Cubs special assistant: Giants in seven. “Brandon Crawford will hit a big two-out, three-run homer to win the deciding game in the eighth off (Kelvin) Herrera. I think it’s going to be a battle. I don’t think the Royals will just continue to walk through. It will come down to the eighth inning of the seventh game.”

**Jim Riggleman**, former Cubs manager, now Triple-A manager for the Reds: Giants in seven. “Experience is the only word I can explain it. Several of their players have gotten this far before. That’s why it’s going to seven. Kansas City is so talented, but experience will play out.”

**Bob Anderson**, former Cubs pitcher and Hammond, Ind. native: Giants in six. “But my heart is with Kansas City. I once lived there. I was a big George Brett fan.”

**Pat Brickhouse**, Chicago public relations ace: Royals in seven. “I just feel the Royals are hot, hot, hot. What they have now is they have the momentum going for them. They are a surprise package. They’re going to give it their all.”

**Leigh Ann Young**, blogger at [baseballlovestory.com](http://baseballlovestory.com): Giants in six. “Throwing all my love to the Giants and Madison Bumgarner (aka Big Country, #MadBum) who hails from my home town (Lenoir, N.C.) and still lives there on a farm in the off-season. He defeated the Cardinals and their ‘devil magic.’ Somewhere Mike Matheny is still shaking his head. It's going to be a great series. The last time the Giants won the pennant on a (walk-off) shot like Travis Ishikawa's, my uncle (Al ‘Rube’ Walker) was the catcher for the Dodgers and (Bobby) Thomson hit the home run.”



**Leigh Ann Young (left) recalls the last time the Giants won the pennant on a walk-off homer, her uncle Al "Rube" Walker (right) called the pitch — to Bobby Thomson.**

**Tom Shaer**, Chicago media consultant and former longtime Chicago sportscaster: Giants in six. “San Francisco has better offense, experience and manager. Kansas City has a better bullpen and defense, but not by margins big enough to overcome San Francisco’s experience, manager and offense. They’ll split in Kansas City. The Royals will be lucky to win ONE game in SF (insane ballpark and fans) and then San Francisco will win a heartbreaker in Game 6 in Kansas City.”

**John Sciacotta**, Chicago attorney, sports agent and backer of Barrington youth baseball: Royals in six. “I think it is their year.”

**Pete Caliendo**, president of the Pitch and Hit Club and longtime amateur baseball coach: Royals in seven. “The Royals are destined to win with their energy, youth, defense, pitching (especially the relief pitching) and constant tenacity at the plate.”

**Dionne Miller**, WLS-TV sports anchor/reporter. Royals in five. “They have something on their side that’s something’s different. It starts with their chemistry. Giants have the more experienced group. They’ll continue to build on what they have.”

**Eddie Olczyk**, analyst for Blackhawks and NBC hockey telecasts, and lifelong Chicagoan: Giants in six. “Been there, done that, because of their experience. There’s something for not knowing any better, and what the Royals have is special and has captivated any sports fan. For me, there is something to that experience to being there, and the Giants have a little bit of an edge that way.”

**Sarah Kustok**, YES Network reporter and former Comcast Sports Net anchor/reporter: Giants in six. “MVP Buster Posey.”

**Kenny McReynolds**, sports director, WCIU-TV and ME-TV: Royals in six. “San Francisco is the much better team, but I’m pulling for Kansas City because it’s great to see the little guys win. Kansas City has the best bullpen.”

**Jerry Bonkowski**, NBCSports.com. Royals in six. “Ned Yost's team appears to be one of destiny and will not be denied. The Giants are a great team, no doubt, but as the late Jerry Reed used to sing, ‘When you're hot, you're hot.’ And the Royals are indeed the team with the hottest hand going into the World Series. “

**Al Yellon**, managing editor, BleedCubbieBlue.com: Giants in seven. “The Royals are this year's darlings, but I fear they're the 2007 Rockies -- a team that went on a glorious run that wasn't quite that good, and ran into a buzzsaw in the World Series.”

**Jordan Bernfield**, reporter-host, WGN-AM and WGWG-FM: Giants in 6. “It’s hard not to love the story of the Kansas City Royals. After failing to reach the post season for 29 years, they have yet to lose a playoff game in eight tries. But this Giants team has now reached the World Series in three of the last five seasons, and won’t be intimidated by ‘Blue October.’ With the weekend off, Bruce Bochy can reset his rotation with Bumgarner in Game 1. The Giants have the experience and the poise under pressure. And once the Royals’ win streak ends, they don’t have the experience on which to fall back, much like the 2007 Rockies.”

**Josh Liss**, sports director, WBBM-AM: Royals in six. “The Royals potent 'pen and rat-a-tat-tat baserunning will be the difference in a series where all six games are decided by two runs or less.”

**Dave Kerner**, reporter-anchor, WBBM-AM. Giants in six. “It has been a magic carpet ride for the Royals. No losses since Paul Konerko said goodbye some three weeks ago, and it’s as if Ned Yost can do no wrong...until now. The Giants are playoff battle tested, have depth on the pitching staff, and know how to grind out victories. Could Bruce Bochy be considered a Hall of Fame manager if the Giants win this World Series?”

**Kellon McFarlin**, Big Ten Network baseball analyst: Royals in six. “I’ve always been a big believer in momentum. That’s one of the things I looked at in JRW (championship team). A force you can’t explain. Everything’s falling that way. The Royals can make up their lack of power in so many different ways. I’m a speed guy so I like to see guys who can run and steal bases. Jarrod Dyson turns a single into a triple. When you can manufacture runs, you can win these close games.”



**Kellon McFarlin is appreciative of the Royals' speed.**

**Bob Ibach**, president of Ibach and Associates, and former Cubs media relations and publications director. Royals in seven. “Both teams play terrific situational baseball, know how to move runners around; both are terrific defensive teams and both have excellent closers and set-up guys out of the pen. The difference? More speed on the bases by the Royals and that will get the job done. That, and the fact that the Royals hold the home-field advantage. It'll be a Series to remember.”

**Howie (Disco Schloss) Schlossberg**, Columbia College journalism professor and former Shea Stadium vendor: Royals in six. “Giants are the better team. Royals are the team of destiny.”

**Rich Budziak**, Chicago baseball historian: Royals in six. “Better bullpen.”

**Kyle McNary**, Double Duty Radcliffe biographer: Royals in six. “Bullpen’s awesome and basically playing six-inning games. They remind me of the ’90 Reds Nasty Boys. I’m hoping (Alex) Gordon rises to the occasion. They’re kind of a team of destiny. They also remind of my ’87 Twins. I’m rooting for them to win. San Francisco’s got a better manager and more talent, but I’m going with my heart.”

**Paul Dickson**, author of *Bill Veeck: Baseball's Greatest Maverick*. Giants in seven.

**Richard Smiley**, Chicago chapter head, Society for American Baseball Research (SABR): Royals in seven. "MVP -- James Shields. Due to the expanded (lower) strike zone and removal of age-defying steroid drugs from the game, baseball is in the midst of a transition period where younger and quicker players are becoming more important to success. While not completely returning to the dead-ball era or 1968, the game is taking on a shape which magnifies the importance of individual runs -- especially in the postseason. This actually is an exciting style of play to watch, but it will be enhanced if the experiments to speed up the game prove successful."