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2005 Overview:

For the second straight year in a row, the Houston Astros overcame a horrible start and spotty offense to capture the National League wildcard. Houston rolled past the Cardinals en route to changing into National League Champions solely to lose in a four recreation sweep to the World Champion Chicago White Sox.

Despite lacking the first month of the season, slugger Lance Berkman (.293 24 eighty two RBI) was capable of establish himself as top-of-the-line energy hitters within the recreation whereas 3rd baseman Morgan Ensberg (.283 36 a hundred and one) also emerged as a major time offensive pressure leading the group in HR (36), RBI (a hundred and one), and slugging percentage (.557). The ageless marvel Craig Biggio (.264 26 69) joined Jason Lane (.267 26 seventy eight) and Mike Lamb (.236 12 fifty three) to assist complete the rest of the starting lineup.

On the pitching side, starter Roy Oswalt (20-12, 2.ninety four ERA) was in a position to combine robust energy numbers with wonderful management in 2005 while Andy Pettitte (17-9, 2.39 ERA) bounced again from an harm-ridden 2004 season to pitch over 220 innings. Roger Clemens (13-eight 1.87) on the age of 44 still was capable of submit respectable numbers joining celebrity reliever Brad Lidge (four-4 2.29 42 saves) to offer the Astros with a season ending 89-73 record.

Off Season Strikes:

The Astros didn't make too many strikes within the off season solely as a result of they really didn't want to. Their largest acquisition was signing free agent Preston Wilson (.260, 25 ninety) who was picked up to assist provide extra offensive stability and probably change Bagwell (who may or could not return in 2006). Reliever Trevor Miller (2-2 4.06) was also added to help an already strong bullpen.

2006 Analysis:

Much of the identical faces will return in 2006 with Craig Biggio (ninety four Runs) and Willy Taveras, who led the workforce in stolen bases with 34 setting the desk for the remainder of the lineup. The Astros are hoping Tavares will learn to become extra patient in his sophomore yr and produce extra walks. If Bagwell doesn't come back full-time, Berkman will seemingly move over to 1B with the newly acquired Preston Wilson anticipated to play leftfield.

Roy Oswalt is expected to once again return as the ace of the workers after putting together back-to again 20 win seasons. 33-year-previous Andy Pettitte has lost important time to accidents in 2 of the last 4 seasons so the Astros are hoping he will be healthy for an entire 2006 campaign. Clemens just isn't anticipated to return and his common season efficiency might be missed. He was not offered arbitration within the off season.

Houston is trying to their number 3 starter Brandon Backe (10-eight, 4.seventy six ERA) to search out more consistency in 2005. Whereas Wandy Rodriguez (10-10, 5.53 ERA) and Ezequiel Astacio (3-6, 5.sixty seven ERA) will stay the probably candidates because the fourth and fifth starters. With Brad Lidge, Chad Qualls, former Met Dan Wheeler, lefty Mike Gallo and newly signed Trevor Miller, the Houston bullpen is deep and maybe one of the best in all of baseball. Count on the Astros to obtain some competitors from the Cubs and St. Louis in 2006. If the pitching can maintain itself together and the offense not less than match the same numbers as final yr they should discover themselves within the thick of things throughout the NL Central.

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