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OCT 9, 2023

Texas Rangers Rebuilding Efforts Pay Off in Postseason Run

LAURIE LAULETTA-BOSHART



Evan Carter, the 21-year-old rookie outfielder who made his MLB debut on Sept. 8, has factored largely in the postseason success of the Texas Rangers. (Greg Fume/Getty Images)

BALTIMORE — After a seven-year hiatus, which included multiple 100-loss seasons for both teams, the Texas Rangers and the Baltimore Orioles returned to the postseason to face off in the ALDS. The Orioles had the easier path, earning a bye after winning the American League East with an enviable 101-61 winning record. The Rangers and Houston Astros finished dead even at the top of the table in the American League West, with the tie breaking in Houston's favor. The Rangers took the more circuitous route, but handily swept the Tampa Bay Rays in the Wild Card Series to earn a spot in the ALDS.

During their respective multi-year droughts, both the Texas and Baltimore franchises invested heavily to reposition their teams for a future playoff run. Here's where the Rangers have the edge. They coaxed Bruce Bochy—arguably one of the most successful managers to coach baseball—out of retirement, they brought on experienced players like Corey Seager and Marcus Semien, bolstered their pitching staff with Jacob deGrom, Nathan Eovaldi, Jordan Montgomery and Max Scherzer (who was placed on the injured list in September) and began grooming young talent like Josh Jung and Evan Carter who flew under the radar before their MLB debuts. So far, all the decisions have paid off. Bochy, who had a long-standing playing and coaching career, including three World Series titles with the San Francisco Giants in 2010, 2012 and 2014, has had the fastest two-year turnaround for a team in franchise history, taking the Rangers from a losing side to competing for another postseason title.

“This has been a calculated team effort that has included many moving parts,” said Bochy, who took over as the Rangers skipper in 2021. “All the pieces are coming together at just the right time.” He's got that right: Montgomery and Eovaldi have been excellent in the postseason with back-to-back wins in the Wild Card Series, followed by a sound Montgomery performance in Game 2 of the ALDS. Carter went from an unknown high school prospect, to an overall 50th round draft pick in 2020. His meteoric rise through the minors culminated in a Sept. 8 MLB debut where he earned a spot in the starting lineup with a .307 batting average and solid defense in left field. He reached base in his first six plate appearances of the postseason.

The Rangers strong 2-0 start in the ALDS bodes well for the team, as they travel to play on home soil at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas. The Orioles face a must-win game against a Rangers club that hasn't had a loss this postseason. Game 3 starts on Tuesday, Oct. 10 at 8:03 p.m. ET. Texas right-hander Nathan Eovaldi will face off against either Baltimore's Kyle Gibson or Dean Kremer.



After Slump, Trea Turner Roars Back As the Star the Phillies Knew He Could Be

After signing an 11-year contract, the shortstop struggled mightily until August. But now he's leading Philadelphia on its quest for a World Series title.

BY STEPHANIE APSTEIN · 3 HOURS AGO



The Orioles Seemingly Didn't Prepare for Their Worst-Case Scenario

Baltimore fell into an early hole against the Rangers in Sunday's Game 2, and manager Brandon Hyde didn't meet the moment to give his team a shot.

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Phillies Stars Dim Braves' Spotlight in Stellar NLDS Game 1 Win

Philadelphia handed Atlanta its first home shutout loss in two years, united behind a common motto.

BY STEPHANIE APSTEIN · OCT 8, 2023