

Yankees, D-Backs to face off in Series

BY BEN WALKER
AP BASEBALL WRITER

Mark Grace will get to see Yankee Stadium a lot sooner than he expected.

In a matchup of baseball's most storied franchise vs. one of its newest, the New York Yankees will meet the Arizona Diamondbacks in the World Series.

Game 1 is Saturday night at Bank One Ballpark, with the Diamondbacks hoping their 1-2 pitching power of Curt Schilling and Randy Johnson can derail Derek Jeter and the Yankees' bid for a fourth straight championship.

"Well, I think people are excited to see Arizona because they're new," Yankees star David Justice said. "They might not be excited to see us, but they're excited to see Arizona."

The Yankees have never played Arizona, either in the regular season, postseason or in an exhibition.

But New York had nine scouts at Turner Field watching the Diamondbacks beat Atlanta 3-2 Sunday night to clinch the NL championship series in five games.

"I know I'm going to know more about them than we know now," Yankees manager Joe Torre said Monday night after his team took a 12-3 win over Seattle to win the ALCS in five games.

"When we get our scout reports, we'll know. I think we know enough to realize the series will be tough for us. We hope we can make it tough for them," he said.

New York and Arizona are scheduled to meet next June 10-12 at Yankee Stadium in an inter-league series. Now, they'll see each other even earlier.

This summer, Grace was thrilled when he found out about Arizona's trip to Yankee Stadium next year.

"I'll go out and be like a little geek. I'll check out the monuments and everything. It'll be fun," the Diamondbacks first baseman said. "I've been to New York, but never to Yankee Stadium."

Grace is among many Arizona veterans making their first trip to the World Series, joined by the likes of Johnson, Luis Gonzalez and Jay Bell.

Craig Counsell, MVP of the NL championship series, is the only Arizona player with a World Series ring. He got his with Florida in 1997.

Manager Bob Brenly will try to become the first manager to win a title in his first year since Ralph Houk with the Yankees in 1961.

While the Diamondbacks won their first pennant in just their fourth year of existence, the Yankees won their 38th AL flag. They have won 26 World Series championships, including four in the last five years.

The Yankees, like the Diamondbacks, rely heavily on their starting pitching.

Andy Pettitte was the ALCS MVP and is part of a rotation with Roger Clemens, Mike Mussina and Orlando Hernandez.

Clemens won 20 games and is the favorite for a sixth Cy Young Award, and Hernandez is one of the best postseason pitchers in baseball history.

Mussina, signed to an \$88.5 million deal as a free agent in the winter, won key games at Oakland and Seattle in this year's playoffs.

He'll be making his first World Series appearance, knowing the Yankees must find a way to handle Schilling and Johnson.

"With those guys pitching four games, if not five out of seven, it will be a tough challenge for us," Mussina said.

Holtz fears all aspects of Tennessee squad

BY MATT RAVEN
THE GAMECOCK

The 12th-ranked USC football team travels to Knoxville, Tenn., this week to take on No. 9 Tennessee. Carolina head coach Lou Holtz remains wary of the Volunteers because he feels they pose the biggest threat of any team thus far into the season.

"Our preparation this week will be rather difficult. I have no idea how our team will react," Holtz said. "Playing Tennessee is never very easy, but playing them Knoxville is even more difficult. They're returning 18 starters from last year's team."

When asked about last year's 16-14 loss to Tennessee in Columbia, Holtz remarked, "We had some degree of success early throwing the football. They just locked up man coverage in the last half of the football game, rushed us and pressured us and we couldn't get free. We couldn't

get free last year, and it concerns me this year."

Tennessee's defense ranks among the top in the SEC. The Volunteers have the best rush defense in the conference and in overall defense are right behind Florida at number two.

"They just dominate the game up front. I felt [John] Henderson was as good of a football player as there was in the conference last year," Holtz said. "But if you try to double him, then you're going to have problems with the others, because [Albert] Haynesworth and [Will] Overstreet are too good to leave alone."

Holtz knows the Tennessee offense also can pick a team apart - like they did with Peyton Manning and Tee Martin at quarterback.

"Here we go again, another good quarterback. Casey Clausen is one of the best in the country. He completes close to 70 percent of his passes," Holtz said.

"You have a good running back in [Travis] Stephens; I think he is averaging 150 yards a game. He is very deceptive with excellent speed, and he has the best body control I've ever seen on a running back since Lee Becton, a guy I coached previously. I think he is as good a tailback as I've seen in the last year of two. He is really exceptional."

"Their offensive line is very good. Very big, very strong and very fundamental. When I look at a football team, the first thing I look for is how good of a fundamental team are they. This team is very good. Defensively last year we did a nice job against them. Clausen made some key plays. It is going to be a real challenge for us because there is not a weakness on the team. They know how win and they like to win."

Holtz believes Georgia was very fortunate to get out of Knoxville with a win and knows

the Vols one loss could be deceiving.

"I know they feel they should be undefeated. Georgia's receivers, who are very good, beat them deep a couple times, and Georgia ran back a punt. That's how they beat Tennessee."

As far as his own players are concerned, Holtz knows they will have to have a clean game to take on one of the top teams in the nation.

"We really haven't played all that well on defense," Holtz said. "Offensively, we hadn't been turning the ball over, and for the most part, the defense hasn't been giving up the big play. We certainly can't afford to do that this week."

Saturday's game will be nationally televised on ESPN2. Kickoff will be at 6 p.m.

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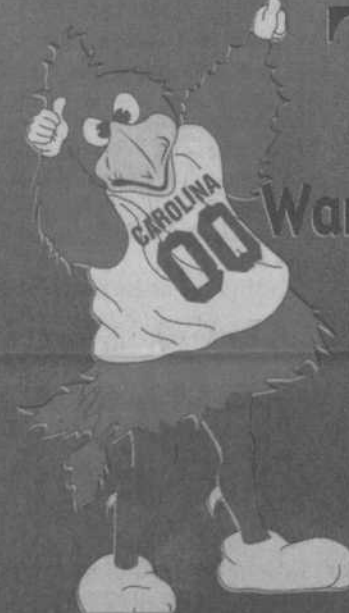
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Almond

Soccer player needs to keep his political opinions to himself

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

there's no way you would do that. It's just not fair. ... On the MLS tip, props go out to Dwayne

DeRosario on a nice game-winner, but Dwayne, keep the political statements out of it. For all you non-soccer fans, DeRosario used part of his post-game interview to condemn the war in Afghanistan. ... I'm not even going to touch PETA. ... Charlie Mac, thanks for the kind words ... Last but not least, FC Bartstadt is the illest.

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