

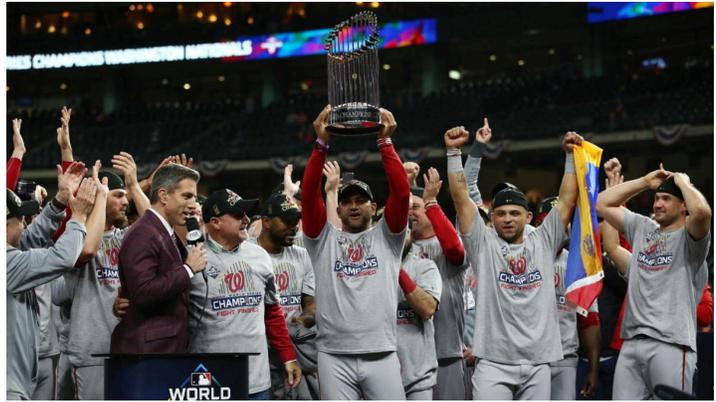
THE SPORTIER

A New World Series Champ Has Arrived

On Wednesday, October 30th, as Nationals pitcher Daniel Hudson struck out Astros outfielder Michael Brantley on a 3-2 slider, history had been made. Navy blue and red jerseys spilling out of the visitor's dugout, the Washington Nationals won their first ever World Series in their 50-year history being the Nationals and Montreal Expos. It was also the first time since 1924 that our nation's capital had a baseball championship team since 1924, with the Washington Senators having been the last team to win it. Though the Nationals won it all, it was surely not easy for them. Through their first 50 games, the Nationals were just 19-31, coming off a 4-0 sweep at the hands of the New York Mets. Though they started poorly, they got hot, reaching the All-Star break with a record of 47-43, good for 2nd in the National League East. Great production from their hitters, like a .304 average and 20 home runs from MVP candidate Anthony Rendon, and a .300 average and 15 home runs from blazing hot 2nd year player Juan Soto. As for the second half of the season, they went on a tear. With a record of 46-26 second half record, their 93-69 overall record propelled them to an NL Wild Card berth. Facing a Brewers team that was missing their 2018 NL MVP Christian Yelich, the Nationals trailed 3-1 heading into the 8th inning. With the bases loaded and two outs, Juan Soto hit a ground ball through the infield to right field, which was good enough to tie the game. The Nationals got very lucky, as the right fielder botched the ball and it slid right past him, scoring three runs, giving the Nationals a 4-3 lead that they would hold on to the rest of the game. Next, they had to face the NL-best LA Dodgers. In a surprisingly tightly contested series, the Nationals won in the fifth and final game of the series, with 38-year-old Howie Kendrick launching a grand slam in the top of the 10th to carry the Nationals to a whopping 7-3 victory, completing an improbable series finish. Their next stop was St. Louis, to take on the Cardinals. Shocking the world once again, the Wild Card Nationals swept the Cardinals in four games, carrying them to their franchise's first World Series appearance. But then, the real test began, facing the MLB best Houston Astros. Loaded with talent top to bottom, with some of the greatest hitters and pitchers in the game, the series looked like it would be a sweep. But right away, a funny thing happened. The Nationals took a 2-0 lead in the series, winning in Houston both times, including one victory of 12-3. The Astros would not go down without a fight, though, as they challenged the Nationals by tying the series 2-2 in Washington, D.C. Back in Houston for Game 5, the Nationals offense was stopped by CY Young candidate Gerrit Cole, as the Nationals could only scratch across one run in a 7-1 loss. Facing elimination in Game 6, the Nationals yet again fought back, winning 7-2 after another offensive explosion. Finally, in Game 7, after trailing 2-0 for the first 6 innings, the Nationals score 6 unanswered runs in the last three innings, capping off a 6-2 Game 7 victory and completing an extraordinary playoff run for the first-time champs.

The Association Begins

As the MLB concludes its season, a new one begins. The NBA season has recently begun, and this season will definitely be a good one. The Lakers and Clippers have had huge changes, as three top free agents landed at the Staples Center. Anthony Davis teamed up with LeBron James and the Lakers, and Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard concluded his short but highly successful stint in Toronto by teaming up with Paul George on his hometown Clippers. The Warriors have a whole new look this year. After relocating to San Francisco, their powers have thinned out significantly, as they have lost Kevin Durant to the Nets and Klay Thompson to an ACL injury. They did receive All-Star point guard D'Angelo Russell, but with Stephen Curry out three months with a broken hand, will that be enough to keep the Warriors afloat? Finally for the West, the New Orleans Pelicans have a whole new revamped look, with the entire Lakers young core heading to Louisiana. Highly anticipated rookie Zion Williamson will be out for the first two months of the season, though, so it should be interesting how the Pelicans are able to compete without him. The Eastern Conference has had some large changes too. Though Kevin Durant will be out the rest of the season, the Brooklyn Nets added Kyrie Irving to join KD. Kyrie will play this year, and next year, with Kevin Durant healthy, that duo could be unstoppable. The Celtics were able to snatch Kemba Walker from free agency, adding to their all-around solid core. Finally, after a disappointing offseason, will the Knicks be able to play competitively, led by college standout and number 3 pick RJ Barrett and young power forward Julius Randle?



Nationals Manager Dave Martinez hoists the Commissioner's Trophy

In The Rulebook

Did you know?: In baseball, the dugouts must be at least 25 feet away from the base lines (path that players run in). Additionally, they must also have a roof and walls on the back and on either side.



Sources:

[MLB](#)

[NBA](#)

[MLB Rules](#)