



### **WHITE SOX HEADLINES OF OCTOBER 23, 2018**

"Matt Davidson thinks he can pitch. Will the White Sox let him?" ... Joe Knowles, Chicago Tribune

"Who are the former Cubs and White Sox players or coaches in the 2018 World Series?" ... Tim Bannon, Chicago Tribune

"Column: If Joe Girardi really wants to manage again, is his TV analyst job a conflict?" ... Phil Rosenthal, Chicago Tribune

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### **Matt Davidson thinks he can pitch. Will the White Sox let him?**

By Joe Knowles / Chicago Tribune / October 22, 2018

After making three relief appearances last season — in which he allowed no runs and just one hit — White Sox third baseman and designated hitter Matt Davidson reportedly is working more seriously on his pitching this offseason.

According to a Bruce Levine story on 670thescore.com, Davidson is incorporating pitching into his training regimen with the hope of enhancing his versatility and value.

"Who knows what could happen?" Davidson said after one of his relief stints last season. "The game is changing a little bit. In the next couple of years there might be more two-way players. You're seeing guys getting drafted who are two-way guys. Teams are a little more open to it."

According to Levine, the Sox appear to be open to the idea. And why not? They're in the midst of a rebuild, with little at stake other than the development of their young players.

And in an era of "bullpenning" — counting Davidson, the Sox used 30 pitchers in 2018— why wouldn't a team welcome an extra arm? Especially one that can hit 90 mph-plus on the radar gun, which Davidson did last season.

He needed only 13 pitches to retire the side in order June 29 against the Rangers, finishing the inning by striking out Rougned Odor, who has two 30-homer seasons on his resume. In Davidson's next outing, July 27 against the Blue Jays, he was even more efficient, requiring just 10 pitches in another 1-2-3 inning.

His final appearance, Aug. 6 against the Yankees, was less than perfect, but ultimately effective. He retired Brett Gardner on a weak comebacker, then struck out slugger Giancarlo Stanton before walking Didi Gregorius and allowing a line drive single to Aaron Hicks. Davidson then induced rookie hotshot Gleyber Torres to fly out to shallow right-center field.

"He throws the ball pretty much where the catcher is setting up," Sox pitching coach Don Cooper said after one of Davidson's outings last season. "He also has a breaking ball. (He) struck out Odor with it."

But, Cooper added, "if you want to be a top-notch pitcher, you have to put all your time, effort, thought and work into that."

Davidson's goals might be more modest. At 27, his future as a position player is unclear. While he has displayed considerable power — 26 homers in 2017, and 20 in 2018 — he also has struggled to make

consistent contact; he struck out 165 times in each of those two seasons. If he could add occasional bullpen duty to his skill set, he might be able to extend his career.

"I know I can help the team in this area," Davidson told the Score. "It's not an ego thing. I am a position player and hitter. If I can help the team pitching and be an asset for the organization, that would be great."

Sox manager Rick Renteria appreciated Davidson's efforts in an emergency role last season, but he didn't sound ready to use him in other situations.

"That would be putting a whole lot on his plate," Renteria said. "It would be premature to say that's where his career is headed."

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### **Who are the former Cubs and White Sox players or coaches in the 2018 World Series?**

By Tim Bannon / Chicago Tribune / October 22, 2018

You don't hear much anymore about the "Ex-Cub Factor," introduced in 1981 to show that teams with three or more former Cubs on their rosters rarely won the World Series. Tribune columnist Mike Royko simplified the rule — "Modified Cub Factor" — a few years later: The team with the most ex-Cubs will lose.

(There is, by the way, no such White Sox counterpart, because the Cubs had the longer history of failure.)

Using those formulas, the Red Sox would be the overwhelming favorites in this year's World Series. Regardless of what it foreshadows, here are the former Cubs and White Sox players or coaches on the Dodgers and Red Sox.

#### **Red Sox**

Chris Sale, starting pitcher

Sale will start Game 1 of the World Series on Tuesday. The White Sox drafted him in first round (13th overall) in the 2010 draft, and he made his major league debut on Aug. 6 of that year. Sale, 27, was 74-50 for the White Sox with a 3.00 ERA, 14 complete games, two shutouts and 1,244 strikeouts in seven seasons. He is the team's single-season record holder with 274 strikeouts, set in 2015. On Dec. 7, 2016, The White Sox traded Sale to Red Sox for Yoan Moncada, Michael Kopech, Luis Basabe and Victor Diaz. For Boston, Sale has started the past two All-Star Games and has gone 29-12 with a 2.56 ERA and 545 strikeouts in 372 1/3 innings.

Tom Goodwin, first base coach

He played 14 years in the majors as an outfielder, the final two for the Cubs (2003-04), for whom he hit .254 and stole 24 bases. Goodwin ranks 96th among the all-time stolen base leaders with 369. After his playing career ended, he worked as a coach in the Red Sox minor league system. He replaced Mookie Wilson as the Mets' first-base coach in 2011 and took the same job with Boston in November 2017.

#### **Dodgers**

Rich Hill, starting pitcher

The Cubs picked Hill in the fourth round of the 2002 draft. He is in his 14th major league season, the first four with the Cubs, where he was 18-17 with a 4.37 ERA. Considered to have one of the best curve balls in the game, he is now in his third season with the Dodgers with a 26-15 record and a 3.30 ERA. The Dodgers have won both playoff games he started this month. Hill, who grew up in the Boston area, is expected to start Game 2 at Fenway Park.

Dylan Floro, relief pitcher

Floro is in his third major league season. In 2017, after the Cubs claimed him off waivers from the Rays, he appeared in three games and threw 9 2/3 innings with a 6.52 ERA. This summer, the Reds traded him to

the Dodgers, and this postseason he has made five appearances, going 4 1/3 innings and giving up no runs.

Mark Prior, bullpen coach

The Cubs picked him second overall in the 2001 draft. Prior pitched five years in the majors, all for the Cubs, ending with 42 wins, 29 losses and a 3.51 ERA. His best year was 2003, when he went 18-6 and had a 2.43 ERA. After several injuries and several failed comeback attempts, he retired and went into coaching. Now he is finishing his first year as the Dodgers' bullpen coach. The key to his new job "is listening," Prior told the Tribune's Teddy Greenstein in June. "Listening and finding out what works for each individual, what language they speak, what makes them feel good. I'm a big believer in that everybody's different."

READ MORE: Dodgers and Red Sox to contend with cold for first 2 World Series games »

Brant Brown, assistant hitting coach

Drafted by the Cubs in the third round of the 1992 draft, Brown played five years in the majors, three with the Cubs (1996-98). He's most famous for what happened Sept. 23, 1998, in a game between the Cubs and Brewers at County Stadium. With the Cubs up 7-5, two outs and the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth, Geoff Jenkins hit a fly ball to Brown in left. "It was not an easy play," Cubs radio play-by-play announcer Pat Hughes recently told the Tribune's Paul Sullivan. "It was in the afternoon shadow-and-sun period of the day, and it was very bright. ... He was not the first guy to drop a ball at that time of day in that ballpark. But at the same time, it's a play he should've made. ...

"I said, 'Brant Brown drops the ball,' and I heard Ron Santo in my headset bellow out, 'Oh, nooo!'" Hughes said. "It was the kind of despair you'd associate with someone losing a member of their family. His call will live on in Cubs lore — in infamy, you could say, because it was such a tough loss." All three runners scored and the Cubs lost.

After Brown retired as a player, he coached for the Rangers and the Mariners before joining the Dodgers in December.

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### **Column: If Joe Girardi really wants to manage again, is his TV analyst job a conflict?**

By Phil Rosenthal / Chicago Tribune / October 22, 2018

The latest speculation — and it's just chatter for now — about MLB Network's Joe Girardi someday returning to managing, possibly in Chicago, highlights a need for media reform.

Stop with the speculation maybe? Nice try.

How about requiring ex-managers and coaches working as TV commentators to spend a sports season off-camera before they can return to the bench or sidelines?

Sure, it might be construed as restraint of trade, but there are prohibitions on people in certain government positions from immediately transitioning into lobbyists.

Big-time college sports transfers have to sit out a season before being allowed back into the game.

So why not?

Who wants to listen to former Yankees and Marlins manager Girardi critique some other manager's strategy on MLB Network and wonder whether he's actually gunning for the guy's job?

That's not fair to viewers, it's not fair to MLB Network and, ultimately, it's not fair to Girardi, who's probably an upstanding fellow undeserving of being tarred by the appearance of a conflict of interest.

But this is where we are.

Ken Rosenthal, the super-connected reporter for Fox Sports and The Athletic, tweeted Friday that Girardi had taken his name out of consideration for the Reds managerial job and would return to MLB Network but still hoped to manage again.

Jon Heyman of Fancred repeated that in a Sunday-morning tweet that added, “Industry speculation: (H)e’s waiting a year on Chicago.”

From there, it was off to the races. The internet lit up with speculative stories, spurred on by NBCSports.com.

Citing Heyman’s “industry speculation” tweet, NBC Sports’ Bill Baer wrote a Sunday story — “Report: Joe Girardi waiting for opening with a Chicago team” — that was pushed by Yahoo Sports.

NBC Sports Chicago’s Vinnie Duber on Monday put out a longer version of Baer’s “industry speculation” report under the headline, “Report: People around baseball believe Joe Girardi is waiting for managerial job with Cubs or White Sox.”

And you wonder why Joe Maddon’s agent might be just a wee bit peeved about how the media “fired everything up” concerning his client’s future with the Cubs?

Before getting too carried away with this line of thinking on Girardi, who held a gig with YES Network before managing the Marlins and again before managing the Yankees, let’s return to the question at hand:

What safeguards are there to ensure analysts’ TV perches aren’t co-opted to further their own interests at the expense of the candor and true insight viewers and employers have every reason to expect?

If someone such as Girardi really is interested in managing again, isn’t it a conflict of interest to second-guess moves made by potential rivals or future peers?

Even if one has faith in Girardi’s ethics, is everyone in a similar position trustworthy? Might a dig find its way into commentary subconsciously?

If a season off isn’t palatable in such situations, perhaps it would be enough to have an on-screen disclaimer saying, “Wants to manage again.” Awkward, but effective.

Frankly, there must be people willing to work for MLB Network without seeing it as waiting room or springboard back into a dugout position.

You watch games, share your insights, give your opinions and go to bed without your stomach turning because your bullpen blew up again. You get paid. Sounds all right.

That is just speculation, however.

Credit it to someone close to a TV.

Bearing up: TV ratings continue to be way up year-to-year for the Bears, but Sunday’s loss to the Patriots on CBS-2 earned only their fourth-highest ratings locally through six games this season.

The top two games — against the Packers and Seahawks — were in prime-time. The 24.67 household rating for the Patriots game, representing more than 800,000 Chicago-area homes, was down 9 percent from the Bears’ overtime loss to the Dolphins a week earlier.

On the plus side, the 38-31 loss to Tom Brady and company did hold sway over 53 percent of all households in the market that were watching television Sunday.

Future vision: The NBA's Clippers have taken a step toward a future of customizing live sports coverage.

They have introduced the Los Angeles market to a beta version of what they're calling Clipper CourtVision, which offers alternative viewing experiences with varying graphics and information.

These include "mascot mode," which uses animated graphics to playfully jazz up the look of a game; "coach mode," which diagrams plays as they're run; and "player mode," which calculates and shows each player's chance of making a shot at any given moment and point on the floor.

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