

Chisox win first World Series since 1917

HOUSTON-The Chicago White Sox are World Series champions again at last, and yet another epic streak of futility is not just wiped away but swept away.

After seven scoreless innings, Jermaine Dye singled home the only run in the eighth, and the White Sox beat the Houston Astros 1-0 Wednesday night to win their first title in 88 years.

Just a year ago, the same story line captivated baseball when the long-suffering Boston Red Sox swept St. Louis to capture their first title in 86 seasons.

Who's next, the Chicago Cubs, without a championship since 1908?

"It's unbelievable, unbelievable," catcher A.J. Pierzynski said.

It was the third title for the White Sox, following wins in 1906 and 1917. And it was the first since "Shoeless" Joe Jackson and the "Black Sox" threw the 1919 Series against Cincinnati.

In the Windy City, where the Cubs have long been king, Chicago's South Side team for once trumped its North Side rival, no small feat for the Sox.

Owner Jerry Reinsdorf once said he'd trade all six of the Chicago Bulls' NBA titles for a single Series ring.

No swap is needed now: He's got the prize he dreamed of since he was a kid growing up in Brooklyn.

"I hope this is not a dream," he said, holding the trophy under his left arm like a kid clutching his first baseball glove.

White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said during the regular season that he might retire if his team went on to win the Series, and now he'll have to reveal that decision. He hinted after the game that he wanted a new contract.

"Now I'm going to make my money," he said playfully, looking at Reinsdorf.

Chicago's sweep, its eighth straight postseason win and 16th in 17 games overall, made it only the second team to go through the postseason 11-1 since the extra round of playoffs was added in 1995, joining the 1999 Yankees. But the White Sox fans didn't get to enjoy a single celebration in person: the division title and all three rounds of the postseason were won on the road.

"I wish we were in Chicago tonight," Reinsdorf said. "It's surreal."

Houston, which finally won a pennant for the first time since it joined the National League in 1962, be-

came the first team swept in its Series debut.

"They played well all year long," Astros manager Phil Garner said of the White Sox. "They played well against us. They deserve to be world champions this year."

On a night when pitching dominated, winner Freddy Garcia and Houston's Brandon Backe pitched shutout ball for seven innings, with Backe allowing four hits and Garcia five. They each struck out seven.

Brad Lidge, Houston's closer, came in to start the eighth, and Chicago sent up Willie Harris to bat for Garcia.

Harris lined a single to left leading off, and that led to Houston's downfall. Scott Podsednik bunted a difficult high pitch in front of the plate, and the speedy Harris took second on the sacrifice. Carl Everett pinch hit for Tadahito Iguchi and grounded to second, moving Harris to third.

Dye, the Series MVP, swung and missed Lidge's next pitch, took a ball, then grounded a single up the middle, clapping his hands as he left the plate. Harris trotted home from third, and the White Sox celebrated in the third-base dugout.

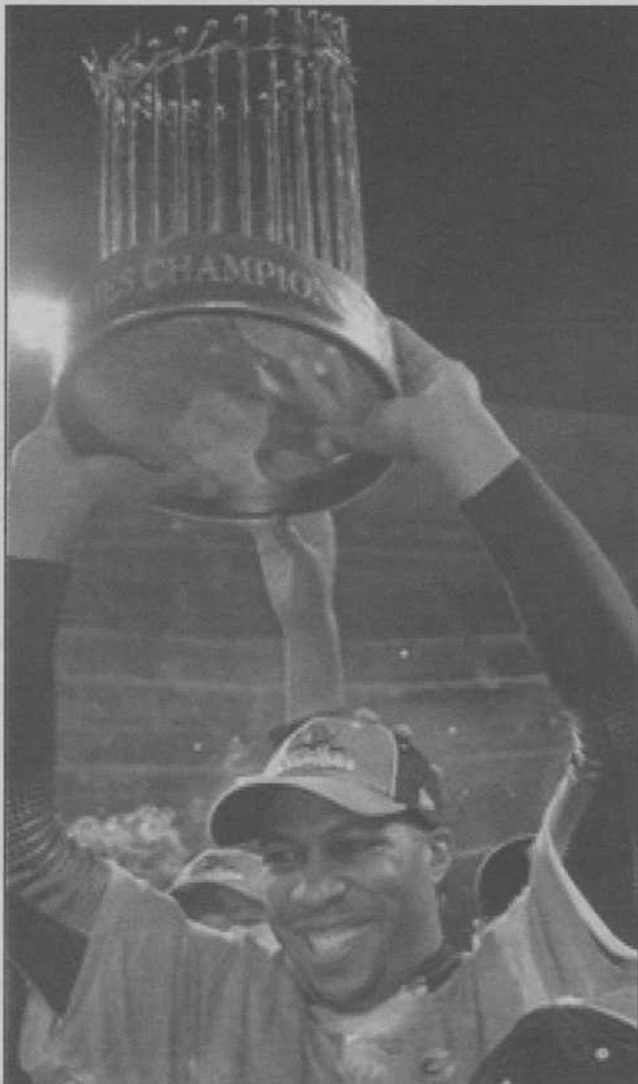
But it wasn't quite over yet.

Cliff Politte relieved to start the bottom half and hit Willy Taveras on the hand with one out. Politte bounced a wild pitch on his first of-

fering to Lance Berkman, moving Taveras to second, then intentionally walked Berkman, nearly throwing away the next pitch.

Morgan Ensberg flied to right-center, dropping him to 1-for-10 with runners in scoring position in the Series, and Chicago brought in left-hander Neal Cotts to face pinch-hitter Jose Vizcaino, who hit a broken-bat grounder to shortstop.

Juan Uribe charged in. (See Chisox, Page 15)



Chicago White Sox's Jermaine Dye holds up the World Series trophy after the White Sox defeated the Houston Astros in Game 4 to win the World Series on Wednesday in Houston. Dye was also the series MVP.

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