

Hardball Magazine: World Series and Fall Classic Reporting Guidelines

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I. Introduction – what we want to accomplish

Our purpose is to illustrate Hardball Magazine’s approach to reporting World Series and Fall Classic championship games. The goal of these guidelines is to create uniformity and consistency in our reporting, and to promote efficiency and timeliness of our coverage. Through the effective use of words, statistics and pictures, we aim to present a highlight-driven account of each championship game that credits those who played well both in the title contest and throughout the tournament. Additionally, we want to report any compelling human interest sub-plots that may present themselves. The finished product should be a quick and interesting read for baseball fans in general, and scrap-book material for those directly involved.

II. The Expanded Linescore

In an effort to achieve timely production of our World Series and Fall Classic coverage, we are dispensing with the use of the full box score in favor of what we call an expanded line score. (See Figure 1 in the appendix). The line score will contain the following elements:

1. Inning-by-inning scoring, and run, hit and error totals
2. Batteries -- names of all pitchers, the inning they entered, and the starting and substitute catchers
3. A listing of players with extra base hits
4. A listing of players with multiple hits and/or RBI’s and/or runs scored – or any combination thereof.

NOTE: the linescore information comes directly from the details in your official scorebook.

III. THE STORY

1. FORMAT

In most cases, use a **basic summary lead** then provide detail in ensuing graphs. Do not wait until the end of the article to tell us what happened.

Example of Standard Story Opening:

The San Jose Explorers edged the Tucson Titans, 3-2, to claim the 45+ Wood Bat Division championship contest. Ferdinand Magellan struck out ten batters and Christopher Columbus belted a three-run homer to gain the title for the Explorers. Sammy Sanchez pitched brilliantly in defeat, allowing no hits until the seventh inning when Art Bell and Bob Jones singled. Two outs later, Columbus hit a blow that cleared the left field fence by one foot.

2. STORY LENGTH – Please limit your word count to 300 words. If you find you have exceeded this limit, we will make the cuts during editing. This creates extra work, so please do your best to adhere to the 300 word limit

3. STORY ELEMENTS – these items should be in every story

1. The final score
2. Critical Highlights
3. Brief playoff recap and tournament overview that highlights key contributors to the cause.
4. If warranted, a mention of a compelling story line. For example, in the Fall Classic last year one team was playing to honor a dying teammate. In another case, all or most of the guys on a 52+ division team were retiring after the tournament – so this was their last shot.

IV. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Every reporter must gather the following basic information:

1. **Full Rosters - first and last names and player uniform number**
2. **Starting Batting Orders** for each team
3. **Team Manager Contact information** – including home, business and personal cell phone for the managers of both teams.
4. Accurate accounting of **defensive changes** to assure that we credit the right people in defensive highlights – especially where the pitchers and catchers are concerned.
5. A neat, readable and accurate set of scoresheets with **summary totals** at the end.
6. A **short interview** with team managers and also, if warranted, with a star player. Be sure to include direct quotes in your post-game notes.

V. Interview tips and suggested questions

1. PRE-GAME:

Managers are busy before a game. At a minimum you need to ask them (or a capable assistant) for a **full roster (with first and last names and uniform numbers); a starting batting order with positions; contact information** (including each manager's cell phone.) If the manager is willing to talk, get some additional information and background on the team's progression to the title game:

1. *What was your round robin record?*
2. *Who were your winning pitchers and key players in the playoffs?*
3. *Who were standout players throughout the tournament?*

(Note If a manager is reluctant to name specific players to credit their personal performances, repackage the question in a more detailed way: "Who were your most consistent hitters? Who were your workhorses on the mound? Etc...)

2. POST-GAME:

The following questions are good ones to include in any interview.

A. OBSERVATION QUESTIONS...tied directly to something that occurred in the game:

1. *Your opponent loaded the bases with none out in the sixth. What did you discuss when you went to the mound that inning?*
2. *Jones had three of your team's six hits today. How do you explain his success against a guy who seemed to shut down the rest of your batting order?*
3. *Gibson was hit hard in the first inning, then allowed just two hits the rest of the way. What changed?*

B. GENERAL QUESTIONS: These questions can be asked of winners or losers in close games or blowouts. They elicit quotes and insights. Examples include the following:

4. *What were the differences for your team today between winning and losing?*
5. *What was the turning point in the game today? (Or the key play?)*
6. *How pleased (or disappointed) are you in the outcome of today's game?*
7. *What surprised you about today's game?*
8. *What was your attitude entering this game?*
9. *How do you explain the outcome of today's game?*
10. *What if anything made winning this tournament so special?* (This question often yields the interesting human interest sub-plot like the dying teammate back home, or the teammate off at war, etc.)

VI. APPENDIX

1. Figure 1 – the expanded linescore:

(Name of event:) 2007 World Series

(Division:) 45 Wood Bat

(Venue:) Tempe Diablo Stad. October 26, 2007

Innings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	R	H	E
(V:) So Cal Stars	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	5	15	1
(H:) Blue Stars	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	9	2

Hartley and Key; Pierce Simone (8) and Davis. W-Hartley. L-Pierce. 2B-(SoCal) Newell, Frolander, Walker. (Blue Stars) Davis. Leading Hitters-(So Cal) Newell 3x5, 2 RBI; Gelfarb 3x4; Suter 2x3; Woods 2x4; Goodchild 2x4; (Blue Stars) Hildebrand 2x3.

Note: for each category, list the visitor first, then the home team player. In the above example, Hartley and Key are the pitcher and catcher (battery) for the visitors. Pierce, Simone and Davis are the starter, reliever and catcher for the home team. In the leading hitters category, the number of hits per at-bats is indicated in the following style – hits x at bats. In the above example, Newell was 3-for-5, Gelfarb was 3-for-4, Suter was 2-for-3 and so on.

2. A list of questions you can ask when covering games

1. *What was your round robin record?*
2. *Who were your winning pitchers and key players in the playoffs?*
3. *Who were standout players throughout the tournament?*
4. *What was the difference between winning and losing today?*
5. *What was the turning point in the game today? (or the key play?)*
6. *How happy (or disappointed) are you in the outcome of today's game?*
7. *What surprised you about today's game?*
8. *What was your attitude entering this game?*
9. *How do you explain the outcome of today's game?*
10. *What if anything made winning this tournament so special?*

3. Suggested weapons in your reporting arsenal

1. A notebook and a couple of pens
2. A scorebook
3. A mini-cassette recorder (optional, but very nice to have. Use mini-recorders just as you would use a microphone.)
4. Sunscreen and a watch, a secretary and/or Peter Gammons.

4. An example of a story from the 2007 World Series

45 Wood Bat National

So Cal Stars 5, Dallas Blue Stars 1

Tempe Diablo Stadium, Oct. 26, 2007—Nearly flawless pitching by Mike Hartley, and five infield double plays were the difference as the Southern California Stars defeated the Dallas Blue Stars 5-1 to claim the 45 National Wood Bat title.

(This is a basic summary lead that tells us the score, who played, the division they played in, and the major reasons for the outcome – pitching and defense. It is the recommended style of lead in most cases.)

Hartley allowed nine hits and one unearned run while striking out four and walking none. Leadoff hitter and left-fielder Brian Newell paced the offense with three hits and two RBI. Steve Gelfarb added added three hits. Losing pitcher Steve Pierce allowed just five hits through five innings, but was touched for five runs and seven hits in the sixth and seventh innings.

So-Cal delivered the death blow in the sixth-inning on back-to-back doubles by Eric Frolander and Tony Walker. Walker scored the winning would-be winning run on player-manager Gino Suter's RBI single. Newell's two-RBI single plated Vinnie Woods and Chris Goodchild to highlight a three-run seventh. Those runners were moved into scoring position on a perfect sacrifice by extra hitter Ray Chatwick. Hartley, 19-13 in six major league seasons with the Dodgers, Phillies, Twins, Red Sox and Orioles, allowed just three runners past second base.

The game ended, quite appropriately, when Dallas centerfielder Roger Piacenti's come-backer turned into 1-6-3 double play.

"It's just perfect down here," said an ecstatic Suter after the win.

"Five double plays – that was the difference," said Dallas skipper Sam Kayea. They made the routine plays, and they hit the ball a little better than we did. Hartley mixed it up on us all day long," Kayea added. Dallas, who defeated Southern California on the last day of round robin play 10-9, was 5-1 entering the playoffs. They came from behind to beat the California Old Blues 4-2 in the semifinals. Pierce earned the win in relief of starter Dan Westbrook. Pierce entered the game with the bases loaded in the sixth inning and escaped with a rally killing double play. Tony Davis' seventh inning double highlighted a three-run rally. Southern California's 3-2 round robin record included the loss to Dallas. They were 6-0 winners over the Bristol Baseball club in the semifinals. Chris Goodchild needed only 94 pitches over nine innings to earn the complete-game, shutout win. Lorenzo Gray had three hits and Tony Walker doubled in the four-run fifth inning.

Thumbnail description of key plays, offensive and defensive, both teams (<i>inning, game situation, brief description of critical action</i>)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Notes on how the runs were scored: *Please attach notes on a separate sheet to clarify the score book account of how the runs scored. Example, Joe Smith is on first with two outs in the third inning. Smith runs on the pitch and Jones hits a ball into the gap in right center. Smith scores, but Jones holds at first because he is injured. No notes would be needed if Smith had been on second and scored after Jones had hit an ordinary single.*

Special Instructions:

Championship Game Roster & Lineup Sheet

1. Enter **full name** of each player, **and also include the player's uniform number**.
2. Check the spelling of each player's name against the roster provided by the team.
3. **Expand this Word document wherever needed to accommodate insertions.**

Score Book Protocols

1. **If two players share the same spot in the starting batting order**, use the symbol "**AH**" (alternate hitter). List both batters in the spot they occupy, marking the first to hit with "(a)" and the second to hit with "(b)" and then using the "a" or "b" when scoring the result of the player's at bat in the score book.
2. A player who is in the starting order but not in the field is either a "**DH**" or an "**EH**." For example, if ten players are listed in the batting order, with only six of those players also listed as defensive starters, then the batting order has three DH entries, and one EH.
3. Anytime a player is entered into the batting order as a substitute for one of the players listed in the starting batting order, that player is regarded as a pinch-hitter or "**PH**". Enter the name of pinch hitter in the correct spot in the batting order and note the inning the pinch hitter entered the batting order. In addition, draw a vertical line immediately to the left of the cell in the score book where the result of the pinch hitter's plate appearance is recorded.
4. Anytime a new pitcher enters the game, draw a horizontal line in the scorebook that is immediately above the result of the first batter who faced the new pitcher. For example, suppose a new pitcher enters at the start of the fifth inning. The first batter he faces is Jose Ruiz. Mark a horizontal line just above the cell that shows the result of Ruiz's plate appearance in the fifth inning. Also, for each relief pitcher, be sure to enter the pitcher's uniform number on the *Defensive Chart* the inning the pitcher entered
5. **Defensive Alignment Chart.** Update the *Defensive Chart* each half inning. Mark the number of the player at each position. Keep separate sheets for home and visiting teams. Remember, in an MSBL game, a player does not have to be in the batting order to play in the field. Umpires do not announce defensive changes, so you will have to be vigilant.

What we need from you: We need you to provide (1) a completed *World Series Championship Game Roster & Lineup Sheet*; (2) an accurate and complete *Scoresheet* showing the result for both the home and visiting teams; (3) a completed *Defensive Alignment Chart* for each team, showing the inning by inning defense. If your scoresheet has an E9 in the third inning, we need to know who was in right field in that inning. Please deliver a complete set of game documents to Dan Piro.

Who to contact: If you have any questions or need assistance of any kind, please contact **Dan Piro**, the HardBall Coordinator, at 760-497-4623. If you cannot reach Dan, call the HardBall office at at 760-732-3477.

Batting Leaders (both teams) – (player name, hits, 2B, 3B HR, RBI, etc.)

1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
4.		4.	
5.		5.	
6.		6.	

Thumbnail description of key plays, offensive and defensive, both teams (inning, game situation, brief description of critical action)

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

Notes on how the runs were scored: *On a separate sheet add any notes you believe appropriate to clarify the score book. Example, Joe Smith is on first with two outs in the third. Smith takes off on the pitch and Jones hits a ball into the gap in right center. Smith scores, but Jones holds at first because he is injured. No notes would be needed if Smith had been on second and scored after Jones had hit an ordinary single to left.*

Playoff, Round Robin Recap: Visitors

Names (and stats if available) of winning pitchers, game-saving closers of playoff games and round robin games)

1. Semifinals:

2. Quarterfinals:

3. Earlier playoff games (if any):

4. Round Robin games:

Names (and stats if available) of hitting stars in playoffs and round robin:

1. Semifinals:

2. Quarterfinals:

3. Earlier playoff games (if any):

4. Round Robin games:

Team MVP (Who and Why?)

Round Robin and Playoff Notes: Please Attach Notes on Important Developments (human interest included) during tournament prior to championship game. If possible, please include quotes from managers and players.

Playoff, Round Robin Recap: Home Team

Names (and stats if available) of winning pitchers, game-saving closers of playoff games and round robin games)

1. Semifinals:

2. Quarterfinals:

3. Earlier playoff games (if any):

4. Round Robin games:

Names (and stats if available) of hitting stars in playoffs and round robin:

1. Semifinals:

2. Quarterfinals:

3. Earlier playoff games (if any):

4. Round Robin games:

Team MVP (Who and Why?)

Round Robin and Playoff Notes: Please Attach Notes on Important Developments (human interest included) during tournament prior to championship game. If possible, please include quotes from managers and players.

Left Fielder / 7

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

Center Fielder / 8

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

Right Fielder / 9

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

Second Baseman / 4

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

Shortstop / 6

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

Pitcher / 1

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

First Baseman / 3

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

Third Baseman / 5

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

HardBall

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Insert player number each inning to provide a complete and accurate accounting of all defensive changes.

Catcher / 2

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	

Baseball Diamond

Defensive Alignment Chart

DATE: ___/___/2009

DIVISION: _____

TEAM: _____

Reporter: _____

The Baseball Scorecard

<input type="checkbox"/> Visitor:	Date:	Start Time:	Weather:
<input type="checkbox"/> Home:	Scorer:	End Time:	Time of Game:

#	Line Up	Pos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				
			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇				

S	Runs											
U	Hits											
M	Errors											
S	Left on Base											

#	Opposing Pitchers	W/L/S	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HB	BK	TBF

#	Catchers	PB

Umpires	
HP:	3B:
1B:	
2B:	