Sports

Californians, Canadians to take pennants

The final jeopardy answer is: Blue Jays Expose Athletic Giants.

The question: Include all four of 1989's major league baseball division winners in one complete-sentence, eye-catching headline.

Yes, it's that time again. Almost August, in fact. Pretty soon you'll be hearing all about the "dog days of summer" and how it's 135 degrees on the artificial turf and how "these guys are really earning their \$2.1 million today, Vin."

You'd think all these guys were left out on the Astroturf, leashes tied to the foul pole, under the scorching rays of the sun while the fans were away on vacation.

It happens every year.

All of a sudden, every game becomes a life and death situation. Pitchers throw fastballs at batters' heads. Batters throw punches at pitchers' heads. Managers throw fits at umpires. Umpires throw managers out of games. It's a beautiful game, isn't Oakland Raiders and the Baltimore



it?

The casual observer might think that these games actually count more in the standings than the ones in April and May. (They don't.) They're all just kind of cramming for that one big final exam, er, post-season paycheck. And it makes for some great baseball.

It also serves as a great time for the self-proclaimed expert prognosticators to dig themselves out of their proverbial holes with some well-adjusted predictions to make up for the ones they made in April. You'd be surprised how many people remember - only if you're wrong, of course - who you picked to win a 1972 preseason NFL game between the Colts. (I was five years old. I took the Raiders. I lost. I still owe my dad five bucks.)

N.L. East — I originally had the New York Mets and the Montreal Expos in first and second place, and I still do, except in reverse. This turnaround is due to the opposite directions the teams' pitching staffs have taken.

The Expos have added an ace to their starting staff in mid-season, an unusual and extremely impressive accomplishment. Mark Langston turned a good Expos staff into a great one with the first hurl from his golden left arm. Old reliables Bryn Smith and Dennis Martinez are a combined 19-4. If either Kevin Gross or Pascual Perez can gain some consistency (probably Gross), the Expos will have a starting four that is difficult to match.

Meanwhile, the Mets (-4 1/2 games) have lost the ace of their staff, Dwight Gooden, for more than a month. Just as a pitching ace can be

the biggest addition to a team, it can be the most disrupting subtraction. Bob Ojeda, David Cone and Ron Darling have struggled all year long. Jeff Tapani and David West, cast into the role of savior, have been disappointing. They might have to move hard-throwing right-hander Rick Aguilera from the bullpen back into the rotation to stay in the race while Gooden is healing. The Cubs (-3 1/2) and Cardinals

(-7)? Well, the idea of Mitch Williams saving a pressure-packed Cubs game in September is enough to make me think twice. But thin starting pitching and a starting eight that is greener than the ivy on the outfield walls at Wrigley don't help either. As for the Cards, the simple fact that Whitey Herzog has kept the Cards in the race thus far is truly amazing. But even

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ACC non-revenue sports to be included in cable programm

From Associated Press reports

The Atlantic Coast Conference and the cable televison network Home Team Sports have entered into a multiyear programming and marketing partnership that will include a minimum of 15 non-revenue events a year.

The ACC-HTS package includes baseball, lacrosse, soccer and women's basketball and the league championship games in each of those sports.

"We are extremely pleased to be working with Home Team Sports on

exciting ACC events."

UNC Athletic Director John Swofford also said he was pleased the project came to fruition.

"Certainly our institution and the ACC as a whole has prided itself for years on broad-based programs and the success of its non-revenue sports teams," Swofford said. "It's not easy to give those sports exposure and recognition, and I think the HTS ar-

enjoy the opportunity to watch these rangement with the ACC will provide that opportunity."

> The schedule of events to be shown on HTS is not complete yet.

> Already agreed upon by the two parties, however, is the televising of three-regular season ACC baseball games, three regular-season ACC men's soccer games, three regularseason ACC lacrosse matches, and three regular-season ACC women's basketball games.

