

Sports

Chicago's pitching too much for San Francisco

After 162 games, each season is capped by the league championship series and World Series in which the team with the best pitching wins, no matter how adequate or mediocre the rest of the team. Just witness the Los Angeles Dodgers with Orel Hershiser, Orel Hershiser and Orel Hershiser in 1988.

With that thought in mind, the Chi-

D.J. Hoogervorst

N.L. Preview

Chicago Cubs will defeat the San Francisco Giants in the 1989 National League Championship Series beginning tonight. The Cubs have superior

pitching in all three departments: starting, middle relief and closing.

The Cubs' rotation consists of three excellent starters in Greg Maddux (19-12, 2.95), Mike Bielecki (18-7, 3.14) and Rick Sutcliffe (16-11, 3.66). Maddux, an All-Star in 1988, has been hotter than the sun since this year's mid-summer classic start for Chicago in game one.

Bielecki has been a pleasant surprise for the Cubs with his consistently solid pitching all season. Inexperience could be a drawback for the big right-hander, as 1989 is his first full season though he is not technically a rookie.

The veteran Sutcliffe anchors the staff but won't pitch 'til game three because he pitched Sunday.

If the starters can carry Chicago's

lead into the seventh or eighth, it could be over for the Giants. Mitch "The Wild Thing" Williams came over from Texas in a controversial trade in the offseason, but no one in the Windy City is complaining now. Williams, who has admitted that the hardest pitch for him to throw is a strike, saved 36 games for Chicago and gives the team a legitimate closer.

Manager Don Zimmer can set up Williams with righties Scott Sanderson and Les Lancaster (4-2, 1.36) or rejuvenated Paul Assenmacher and Steve Wilson from the left side.

Giants manager Roger Craig doesn't quite have the depth or quality in his pitching staff, and he made up for that with savvy in the regular season.

The Giants' rotation will use Scott Garrelts (14-5, 2.28) in game one, Rick Reuschel (17-8, 2.94) in game two and either Kelly Downs (4-8, 4.79) or Don Robinson (12-11, 3.43) in game three.

Garrelts had a magnificent year as a starter, after spending most of his career in the bullpen. He won the ERA title this season, with a little help from his home park, Candlestick.

However, don't be fooled. Reuschel is this staff's ace. At a tender 40 years young, "Big Daddy" has posted more than 40 victories for the Giants in just more than two years of service. Despite his 78 mph heater, he's Craig's main man because he wins with guile and cunning.

San Francisco, like Chicago, has a solid bullpen. Steve "Bedrock" Bedrosian and Craig Lefferts create a righty-lefty closer combination. Lefferts and Bedrock are complemented by right-handers Mike LaCoss and Jeff Brantley and lefties Atlee Hammaker and Trevor Wilson.

Craig's masterful job with a rag-tag staff (decimated by injuries during the regular season) helped keep the Giants alive, but what makes the team go is the one-two punch of Will Clark and Kevin Mitchell.

First baseman Clark (.333-23-111), known by some as Will the Thrill or The Natural, is the best player in the game today, and he knows it. Beautiful swing, leadership, defense and cockiness; it's all there.

As for Mitchell, not much more can be said. He had a GREAT start, all the world's media recognized it and published it. But, since the All-Star game, Mitchell has returned to good player status with human weaknesses. He's barely adequate in left field and pitchers have found some holes in his strike zone (namely inside fastball or outside breaking pitch), leading to more than 120 strikeouts. Still, 47 home runs and 125 RBIs in the cleanup spot simply can not be ignored.

Center fielder Brett Butler (.283) gives the Giants a true leadoff hitter with excellent speed. Butler is also a spectacular fielder.

Jose Uribe (.221) is a slick-fielding, no-hit shortstop. He, along with second baseman Robbie Thompson and Butler, makes San Fran strong up the middle on defense.

Chicago, which led the N.L. in runs scored, owns a well-balanced lineup led by second baseman Ryne Sandberg and right fielder Andre Dawson. Every spot in the Cubs order can do damage, especially with the late-season acquisition of Luis Salazar (.282), who will probably start at third.

Sandberg (.290) had a career year with 30 home runs while playing his usual outstanding defense. He, Sutcliffe and Sanderson are the only remaining Cubs from the 1984 division winner.

Dawson (.252-21-77) finally gets his chance at a World Series. The Hawk still has a strong arm in right and power at the plate, but his wheels are slowly deteriorating.

Behind the shining examples of "Ryno" and Andre are first baseman Mark Grace, shortstop Shawn Dunston (.278-9-60), Salazar and rookies Jerome Walton, Dwight Smith, Rick Wrona and Joe Girardi. All can hit and field.

Dunston's improvement was the key this year for Chicago. He solidified the defense up the middle and, offensively, he started paying dividends on his potential. He learned what bases on balls meant and improved his average nearly 40 points. In essence, he became the catalyst of the team.

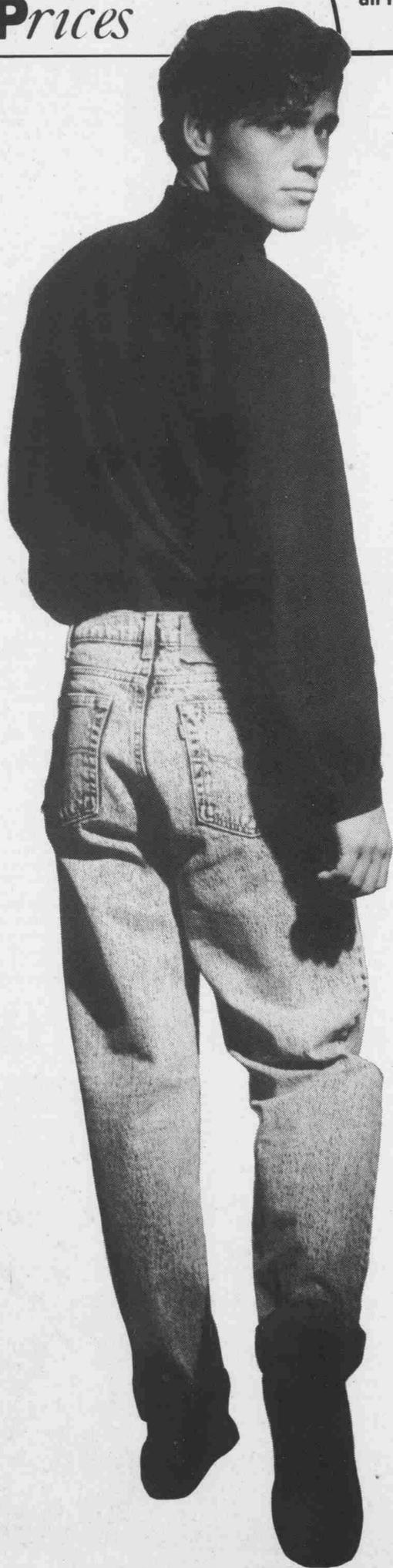
In Walton (.293) and Smith (.324-9-52), Chicago probably has the top two rookies of 1989. Both are quick, exciting, line-drive hitters and sparkling on the outfield grass.

In the dugout, Craig and Zimmer are equally unpredictable and successful. The major difference between the two is that Craig thinks about his unusual strategies, Zimmer goes on whims. If the series goes down to managerial moves, the Cubs are in trouble. But, it shouldn't.

Cubs in six.

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On Tap

Today
MEN'S SOCCER vs. Coastal Carolina,
Finley Field, 4 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 6
VOLLEYBALL vs. Liberty University,
Carmichael Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 7
FOOTBALL vs. Wake Forest, Kenan
Stadium, 12 p.m.
VOLLEYBALL vs. Texas A&M,
Carmichael Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.
FIELD HOCKEY at Maryland, College
Park, Md., 1 p.m.
WOMEN'S SOCCER at Maryland,
Washington, D.C., TBA
Sunday, Oct. 8
MEN'S SOCCER vs. Duke, Finley Field,
2 p.m.
FIELD HOCKEY at William & Mary,
Williamsburg, Va., 1 p.m.