

National League's Best Teams

Chapter Twelve

The 1991-97 Atlanta Braves: Does the NL's Best of the Century Come Last?

We've now come to the last decade of the 1900s, with the 1906-10 Chicago Cubs still the best National League team of the twentieth century, according to me as informed by my structured analytical approach. Neither the 1972-76 Cincinnati Reds nor the 1949-56 Brooklyn Dodgers quite measured up. The 1941-46 St. Louis Cardinals might have, but we must take account that half of their dominant years were during World War II, when the quality of play in the major leagues was depressed by some of the best players joining their fellow Americans in service to their country. Enter the Atlanta Braves.

Between 1991, when they took the Western Division title and National League pennant after having the worst record in the league the year before, and 2005, the Braves are officially credited with 14 consecutive division titles. Three were in the NL West and 11 in the NL's Eastern Division, to which Atlanta was shifted in 1994 when Major League Baseball (as it had now begun to be known) decided to divide each league—now 14 teams each—into three divisions. This was also when Major League Baseball introduced the wild card as a measure both to make three divisions practical and to artificially ensure that more cities were involved in pennant races—"artificially," in my view, since 162 games is long enough that a team ought to finish first to play in the post season and because wild card races could involve teams across the breadth of the league, not just a division rival. Those 14 straight first-place finishes, however, do not include 1994, when Atlanta trailed the Eastern Division-leading Montreal Expos by six games at the time the season was prematurely terminated after 114 games by baseball's most devastating strike. Major League Baseball chose to officially count for posterity every play of every game in 1994, but not the standings as of August 12 when the season abruptly ended (not without warning).

Would Atlanta have overtaken Montreal had the 1994 season played out? Given that the Braves came from nine games behind on August 11 in 1993, with a phenomenal 36-11 (.766) record the rest of the way, to overtake a San Francisco Giants team that won 103 games that year, it would not have been unreasonable to suppose that Atlanta could certainly

have done the same in 1994; after all, the Braves on August 11, 1994, when the season came to a dead halt, had less ground to make up than the year before, being only six games behind. I'm not convinced. Atlanta held a 3½ game lead over Montreal at the end of May, and a two-game lead on Independence Day. In the 38 days that turned out to remain of the season, however, Montreal surged to a comfortable lead in the standings with a 25-8 record, which included one eight-game and two six-game winning streaks, while Atlanta went a more pedestrian 18-17, losing ten games in the standings. The trend was clearly not in the Braves' favor. But of course, baseball can be a game of streaks and momentum shifts, and we'll just never know how the full season would have transpired.

Either way—whether you view it as 14 consecutive division titles or fourteen first-place finishes and one second place in fifteen years, as I choose to—the Atlanta Braves established an unprecedented record of achievement. But they also fashioned a legacy of disappointment that somehow they weren't as great as their accomplishments would indicate because they had only five National League pennants and one World Series triumph to show for their 14 straight division titles. They lost their first World Series in seven games to the 1991 Minnesota Twins, their second in six games to the 1992 Toronto Blue Jays, won their third World Series in six games over the 1995 Cleveland Indians, then lost their fourth and fifth World Series to the end-of-the-twentieth century Yankee dynasty in six games in 1996 and four games in 1999. As I made clear in my framework for analysis, however, I am not disposed to regard post-season frustrations as somehow diminishing great achievements over the course of a full 162-game (or 154-game, prior to expansion) season. Obviously, winning post-season championships cements a team's legacy of greatness, and my methodological approach accounts for this—but at only one-third the value of finishing first over a full season. As has been said many times by many experts and pundits (and again, this should not be an excuse), sometimes the teams with the best records over the long regular season can be derailed in short post-season series.

The Atlanta Braves' unprecedented and unmatched (even if we count only the eleven straight since 1995) string of first-place finishes transcended at least two generations of baseball players; in my "Framework for Analysis," you will recall, I defined a "baseball generation" as five-to-seven years. Of the 15 seasons that the Braves dominated the National League (including the strike-terminated 1994 season whose final standings don't officially count because they weren't "final"), the seven years of the **1991 to 1997 Atlanta Braves** were the most stable as far as keeping core players intact. These were also the most successful years in Atlanta's run, with the Braves winning four National League pennants (in 1991, 1992, 1995, and 1996) and the 1995 World Series.

The core players who were the heart of the 1991-97 Braves were first baseman Fred McGriff (acquired from San Diego on July 18, 1993, when Atlanta—eight games behind San Francisco—seemed hopelessly behind), second baseman Mark Lemke, shortstop Jeff Blauser, third baseman Terry Pendleton (through 1994, after which Chipper Jones took over at third), right fielder David Justice, and left fielder Ryan Klesko and catcher Javy Lopez (both of whom became regulars in 1994) as position players, and a starting rotation featuring Tom Glavine, John Smoltz, and (joining the Braves as a free agent in 1993) Greg Maddux. Before Maddux, Steve Avery joined with Glavine and Smoltz to form a dominant triumvirate of starting pitchers. Avery remained in the rotation through 1996, but did not pitch as effectively as from 1991 to 1993. Even with Maddux, Glavine, and Smoltz, the Braves would not have won the West in 1993 without Avery's excellent 18-win season, as Atlanta came from behind

to beat the 103-win San Francisco Giants by one game in the last—because of the wild card—*the last* (repeated for emphasis) true pennant race in major league baseball history. Had the wild card been in effect, it would not have mattered who finished first or second because both the Braves and Giants—each with more than 100 wins—were guaranteed to be in the post-season, and each would have played the last week of the schedule to line up their starting rotations and otherwise prepare for the playoffs, not to win the division, nice as that might have been.

While Manager Bobby Cox, Maddux, Glavine, and Smoltz, and pitching coach Leo Mazzone provided continuity and remained the face of Atlanta's end-of-the-century dynasty into the first half-decade of the twenty-first century, there was a virtual wholesale turnover of the Braves' core position players by 1998. McGriff was dispatched to the expansion Tampa Bay Devil Rays in the American League after the 1997 season ended to be part of their inaugural season; both Lemke and Blauser left as free agents after the 1997 season; Pendleton had been replaced at third by Chipper Jones; and Justice had been traded before the 1997 season to the Cleveland Indians, along with center fielder Marquis Grissom, for center fielder Kenny Lofton and pitcher Alan Embree. With essentially same core starting pitching and a new core of position players, the Atlanta Braves kept right on winning division titles—eight more in a row after 1997—but as essentially a different team based on their core players, according to me.

Taking into account their relative achievement, the 1991-97 Atlanta Braves, with six division titles and four pennants—all of which had to be won in League Championship Series—in seven years, *accomplished more* than either the **1906-10 Chicago Cubs**, who only had to finish first to win their four pennants in five years, or the **1972-76 Cincinnati Reds**, whose four division titles in five years were split by a second-place finish in 1974. In winning their six division titles—the first three in the Western Division and the next three in the Eastern Division—the Braves had the best record in the National League five times. Only their first division title, in 1991, was not the best record in the league; the Braves won the second-most games after the still-Bonded Pirates. Atlanta also had the second-best record in the National League in 1994, when the strike ended their season second to Montreal in the NL East. The Big Red Machine, by contrast, had the best record in the National League in three of the four years they won their division

With regard to the front-end “dominance” factors of my methodological approach—number of 100-win seasons and number of pennant races won by blowout margins—if taken in isolation, the 1991-97 Braves edge out the Big Red Machine. Atlanta had two 100-win seasons, won their division by margins greater than eight games four times, were at least five games better than the team with the second-best record in the league three consecutive years from 1995 to 1997, and proved they could win tight pennant races by beating out the Dodgers by a single game in 1991 and the Giants by a single game in 1993. Had the 1995 season been played in full—the season was limited to 144 games because the players' strike was not resolved until the end of March—the Braves could have had a third season with more than one hundred victories; their 90-54 record would have projected to 101 wins over 162 games had they maintained the same pace. The 1972-76 Reds also had two 100-win seasons and won three of their four division titles by at least eight games. However—

—Neither team dominated the league to the extent of the 1906-10 Chicago Cubs, who won over 100 games four times, and took the pennant by eight games or more three times. It

is worth noting that Atlanta and Cincinnati each finished only once with a record at least eight games better than the first-place team in the other division (or divisions, in Atlanta's case). Moreover, the Braves' 21-game edge to win the NL East in 1995—the largest of their 14 straight division titles—came in a year when Atlanta was the only team in the division with a winning record; the tied-for-second Mets and Phillies were both six games *below* .500. This does not, in and of itself, diminish the achievement of blowing out their own division, but it does magnify the early-century Cubs' accomplishments, especially considering how good Chicago's rivals were. The Cubs played 23 percent of their games from 1906 to 1910 against other teams in the league with at least 90 wins, with a winning percentage of .560; the Big Red Machine played only 13 percent of their games against such teams, but were nearly as good as the Cubs with a .559 winning percentage. As for the 1991-97 Braves, they played a higher percentage of games against 90-win teams (including teams that were on a pace to win at least that many in the two seasons shorted by strikes) than the Reds, 17 percent, but with a substantially lower .530 winning percentage. The difference in victories against 90-win teams over a notional 162-game season between the Cubs and Reds and these Braves was 91 to 86 victories.

As for my back-end “dominance factors”—leading the league in scoring and in fewest runs allowed—and the contemporary and historical legacies of their “core players”, the 1972-76 Reds were more about hitting and the 1991-97 Braves about pitching, while the 1906-10 Cubs had both an outstanding offense and excellent pitching and defense.

Cincinnati's Big Red Machine was a dominant offensive team, featuring a fearsome combination of hitting prowess, power, and speed with the likes of Pete Rose, Joe Morgan, Johnny Bench, and Tony Perez in the line-up. This Cincinnati team twice led the league in scoring, but they also had decent pitching, especially when Gary Nolan (who missed two full seasons) and Don Gullett (who spent much of two seasons on the disabled list) were healthy. While never the stingiest team in the league, the Reds were third out of twelve National League teams in fewest runs allowed three times. Indicative of the strength of the Big Red Machine being overwhelmingly centered on their offense, Cincinnati's position players accounted for 82 percent of their team's collective player value as measured by the wins above replacement (WAR) metric, pitchers for only 18 percent. None of the Reds' starting pitchers, according to me, were either among the five best pitchers in contemporary context or in the surrounding decade, although I do count Cincinnati reliever Clay Carroll as the best in the league from 1968 to 1975. The Big Red Machine, however, had three among the NL's 10 best position players in the surrounding decade based on their best consecutive years—Morgan, Bench, and Rose (who were, according to me, three of the *four* best)—and those three, plus Perez and shortstop Dave Concepcion as the best at their position for all or the majority of the years under consideration for their team. Morgan, Bench, and Rose all have century-plus legacies for the best consecutive seasons of their careers including all or the majority of the Big Red Machine years.

The 1991-97 Atlanta Braves were almost the opposite of the 1972-76 Reds. While the Reds had a dominant offense and decent pitching, the Braves had superb pitching and a proficient offense. In 1991, when Glavine and Avery suddenly blossomed to join Smoltz as accomplished pitchers, the Braves were third in the league in fewest runs allowed. For the next six years, Atlanta not only led the league in fewest runs allowed every year, but led both major leagues. Adding Maddux to the rotation in 1993 certainly helped. In fact, Atlanta gave up the fewest runs in the major leagues for nine consecutive years, from 1992 to 2000,

and in the National League for eleven, every year up to and including 2002. With such great pitching, it didn't matter that Atlanta only finished as high as second in runs scored in 1991 and 1992, and as high as third in 1993 and 1997. The other seasons, including during continuing first-place finishes into the new century, the Braves tended toward the middle of the league in scoring.

In opposite juxtaposition to the Big Red Machine, none of the 1991-97 Braves' core position players were among the 10 best in the National League in the surrounding decade, and none would be the best in the league at his position until third baseman Chipper Jones beginning in 1995—which I, perhaps misleadingly but deliberately, do not count for this team since my requirement is for any “best” player to be so for at least half the years under consideration for the team. This is not to suggest, however, that the Braves did not have formidable offensive players. Third baseman Terry Pendleton's leadership and MVP-year in 1991 was critical to the Braves unexpected emergence from the worst team in the National League to the best in the West in only one year. The trade acquisition of first baseman Fred McGriff in mid-July proved to be the catalyst for the Braves' incredible drive to overtake the Giants in 1993. After McGriff joined the line-up, with Atlanta eight games out and in desperate straits, the Braves won 51 and lost only 18 the rest of the way to win out over San Francisco. In 68 games for the 1993 Braves, McGriff hit 19 of his 37 home runs for the season, drove in 55 of his 101 RBI, hit .310, and had an on-base-plus-slugging percentage exceeding 1.000. And right fielder David Justice was equally as critical in that 1993 season, with 40 home runs and 120 RBI, and remained a dangerous bat in the line-up until a dislocated shoulder early in the 1996 season effectively ended his career with the Braves. (Justice was traded to the Indians before the next season began.)

Also in opposite juxtaposition to the Big Red Machine, who had none, the 1991-97 Atlanta Braves had three starting pitchers—Maddux, Glavine, and Smoltz—who I count as being among the NL's five best pitchers in both contemporary context and in the surrounding decade. Greg Maddux, according to me, was the National League's *best* pitcher of the *entire* twentieth century based on his best consecutive years of 1992 to 1998 (the first of those with the Cubs, the rest with the Braves). To be absolutely clear about such a provocative judgment: at his best, I believe Greg Maddux was better than Mathewson, Alexander, Hubbell, Dean, Koufax, Gibson, Seaver, Randy Johnson, and everybody else at their best in the modern history of the National League. In his first six years with the Braves, 1993 to 1998, Maddux won 107 and lost only 42 for a .718 winning percentage, had an ERA of 2.15, and allowed less than one base runner per inning. His adjusted ERA—normalized for both the context of the times and for his home park—in his first six years with Atlanta was more than 150 percent better than the average National League pitcher in 1994 and 1995, and close to twice as good two other years. Tom Glavine also has a century-plus legacy for this Atlanta team, according to me; John Smoltz has a century-plus legacy of his own, but his extends from 1995 to 1999—effectively straddling two different Atlanta teams, the 1991-97 Braves and the 1998-2005 Braves.

While the collective WAR of the 1972-76 Cincinnati Reds was overwhelmingly in favor of their position players, the player value balance between position players and pitchers for the 1991-97 Atlanta Braves was almost exactly 50:50. But the Braves' equilibrium is not a good thing in comparison to the 1906-10 Chicago Cubs because, as implied by Bill James when he developed “win shares” to measure players' contributions to their teams' success, position players collectively *should* contribute more than pitchers. The Cubs' near 60:40 split

between position players and pitchers seems closer to the optimum for a truly dominant team. Indeed—

—The early-century Chicago Cubs excelled in *all* facets of the game. They had a dynamic multi-dimensional offense, scoring more runs than any other National League team between 1906 and 1910, even if they led the league only once; they were second the other four years. They had brilliant defense—Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance, anyone?—and superior pitching, giving up the fewest runs in the league in four of those five years. The 1906-10 Cubs, according to me, had four position players and two pitchers who were the best at their positions in contemporary context; four position players (three the same, one different) and the same two pitchers who were among the 10 best position players and five best pitchers in the surrounding decade; two twentieth century legacy players based on their best consecutive seasons including all or most of the years between 1906 and 1910—second baseman Johnny Evers (which I acknowledged in NL Chapter Three on the 1906-10 Cubs is almost certainly a controversial choice) and pitcher Three-Finger Brown—and one pitcher, Ed Reulbach, with a half-century legacy as one of the NL's 15 best pitchers from 1901 to 1950.

The 1906-10 Chicago Cubs were so dominant in all aspects of the game that no other National League team since the start of the twentieth century over any five-year period is even close to the percentage by which they outscored their opponents. From 1906 to 1910, the Cubs outscored the teams they played by 53 percent, averaging 226 runs per year more than their opponents scored against Chicago's vaunted pitching and defense. The National League team that comes closest, the St. Louis Cardinals from 1942 to 1946—outscored their opponents by 43 percent—did so during World War II years that stripped the major leagues of both established veterans and promising young players. Only two other NL teams since the dead ball era even approached outscoring their opponents by 30 percent, one of which was the Big Red Machine, with baseball's most formidable line-up at the time and decent (not great) pitching, who scored an average of 179 runs per year—29.5 percent—more than the teams they played from 1972 to 1976; the other team was the 1920-24 New York Giants. The 1991-97 Braves, by contrast, with exceptional pitching and a proficient offense, outscored their game opponents by only 24 percent, which was the lowest differential among the *seven other best National League teams* of the twentieth century. Atlanta averaged only 137 runs more per season than the teams they played these seven years, a number that probably would have been higher had the 1994 and 1995 seasons been played in full, but not by much.

In answer to any objection that the Cubs played in the dead ball era and the dregs of the league were quite possibly as bad as they ever were, it is worth remembering—as already mentioned—that they played a much higher percentage of their games against other teams with at least 90 wins than other teams that we have considered for the National League's best in the twentieth century, and they were very successful in those games. The 1906-10 Cubs have by far the highest combined total of percentage of games played against 90-win teams and winning percentage against them. In just the games they played against the eight other 90-win NL teams during those years, the Cubs outscored them by 16 percent; the 1972-76 Reds outscored the seven other 90-win NL teams in their games over five years by only 7 percent; and the 1991-97 Braves scored 9 percent more runs than their opponents in their match-ups against the eleven other NL teams that won at least 90 games and four whose records projected to 90 wins in two strike-shortened seasons.

8 BEST NL TEAMS (chronology) 1901-2000	WAR Balance		Vs. 90-Win Teams			% Outscore Opponents
	WAR % Position	WAR % Pitchers	% Games	Win %	Combined	
1904-08 Giants	64.2	35.8	25.9	.460	719	37.5
1906-10 Cubs	58.3	41.7	22.9	.560	789	53.2
1910-14 Giants	58.9	41.1	14.1	.472	613	31.7
1920-24 Giants	74.6	25.4	14.3	.509	652	29.4
1941-46 Cardinals	58.8	41.2	12.1	.589	710	39.4
1949-56 Dodgers	74.0	26.0	14.5	.480	625	25.1
1972-76 Reds	81.5	18.5	12.7	.559	686	29.5
1991-97 Braves	50.1	49.9	17.1	.530	701	24.1

It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that—

—Whatever misfortunes have plagued the Chicago Cubs over the last one hundred three years (as of 2011), whatever curse devoted Cubs’ fans may believe has stricken their team because they have not been to a World Series since 1945 and have not won one since 1908, *from 1906 to 1910 Chicago’s Cubs had the best team in National League history*. So these are the saddest of possible words for all the outstanding National League teams that came after: Tinker-to-Evers-Chance . . . and Mordecai “Three-Finger” Brown. That’s according to me.

Does that make the 1906-10 Chicago Cubs the best team in major league history? Well, there is the matter of the 1936 to 1942 New York Yankees.

Which still leaves the question: were the 1991-97 Atlanta Braves a better team in NL history than the 1972-76 Cincinnati Reds? If the Braves have an edge over the Big Red Machine in overall accomplishment, despite their failure to win more than one of the four World Series they reached (while the Reds won two of their three), and Cincinnati has a significant advantage in “best players”—what with Morgan, Bench, and Rose all having century-plus legacies based on their best consecutive years from 1972 to 1976 (while the Braves have Maddux and Glavine with a century-plus legacy, with Smoltz having a century-plus legacy straddling the 1991-97 and 1998 to 2005 Atlanta teams)—I judge their relative dominance of the league to be comparable, with perhaps a slight advantage even here to the Braves. However, particularly taking into account the Reds’ much higher percentage in outscoring their game opponents, I am of the opinion that the Big Red Machine was the better all around team: the 1972-76 Cincinnati Reds’ formidable, multi-dimensional (hitting, speed, power) offense and decent pitching—including a very effective bullpen—trumps the 1991-97 Atlanta Braves’ exceptional pitching and proficient offense.

5 BEST NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAMS, 1951-2000

	D-P-WS	W - L %	Ach	Dom	Play	Total
Cincinnati Reds, 1972-76	4 - 3 - 2	502-300 .626	41	35	32	108
Atlanta Braves, 1991-97	6 - 4 - 1	651-417 .610	39	43	22	104
Brooklyn Dodgers, 1949-56	5 - 1	767-466 .622	28	31	37	96
Milwaukee Braves, 1956-60	2 - 1	453-319 .587	26	25	29	80
New York Mets, 1984-88	2 - 1 - 1	488-320 .604	30	45	13	88

P = Pennant WS = World Series Ach = Achievement Score
Dom = Dominance Factors Score Play = Players Score Total = Total Score

FINAL STANDINGS
BEST NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAMS OF THE 20TH CENTURY
(ACCORDING TO ME)

8 BEST NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAMS, 1901-2000

	D-P- WS	W - L %	Ach	Dom	Play	Total
Chicago Cubs, 1906-10	4 - 2	530-235 .693	32	60	33	125
Cincinnati Reds, 1972-76	4 - 3 - 2	502-300 .626	41	35	32	108
Atlanta Braves, 1991-97	6 - 4 - 1	651-417 .610	39	43	22	104
Brooklyn Dodgers, 1949-56	5 - 1	767-466 .622	28	31	37	96
St. Louis Cardinals, 1941-46	4 - 3	606-319 .655	32	50	21	103
New York Giants, 1904-08	2 - 1x	487-278 .637	22	40	24	86
New York Giants, 1910-14	3 - 0	478-286 .626	26	45	21	92
New York Giants, 1920-24	4 - 2	461-306 .601	32	25	22	79

x = no World Series in 1904

P = Pennant WS = World Series Ach = Achievement Score
Dom = Dominance Factors Score Play = Players Score Total = Total Score

TRANSPARENCY ANNEX

ATLANTA BRAVES, 1991-1997

3 NL Western Division Titles (1991, 1992, 1993)
3 NL Eastern Division Titles (1995, 1996, 1997)
4 Pennants (1991, 1992, 1995, 1996)
1 World Series Win (1995)

ACHIEVEMENT

1 st place (x 3)	2 nd place (x 2)	3 rd place (x 1)	World Series (x 1)	Score
6 x 3 = 18	1 x 2 = 2	0	1 x 1 = 1	
+ 4 pennants = 4				
+ 5 NL1 (x .5) = 2.5				
24.5	2	0	1	27.5

ACHIEVEMENT SCORE = 27.5 / 7 years x 10 = **39**

DOMINANCE

100 Wins	8 Games Ahead	NL1/Runs Scored	NL1/Fewest Runs Allowed	Score
2	4	0	6	12

DOMINANCE SCORE = 12 / 28 (4 x 7 seasons) x 100 = **43**

PLAYERS

CORE REGULARS	WAR 1991-97	BEST at POSITION	Decade 1990-99	2 nd 1/2 20 th C	20 th C +
1B Fred McGriff, 1993-97	10.9	no	no		
2B Mark Lemke, 1991-97	5.3	no	no		
SS Jeff Blausler, 1989-1997	18.5	no	no		
3B Terry Pendleton, 1991-94	13.6	no	no		
LF Ryan Klesko, 1994-99	6.2	no	no		
RF David Justice, 1990-96	21.4	no	no		
C Javy Lopez, 1994-2003	6.9	no	no		
P Greg Maddux, 1993-2003	36.4	1988-2002	1992-98	yes	yes
P Tom Glavine, 1988-2002	32.0	1993-2002	1991-98	yes	yes
P John Smoltz, 1989-2007	27.2	1989-98	1994-99	^	^
P Steve Avery, 1990-1996	14.6	no	no		
RP-P Kent Mercker, 1990-95	6.5	no	no		
RP Mark Wohlers, 1993-97	3.8	no	no		
TEAM WAR, 1991-97 = 282.4	203.3				
Core WAR= 72.0 % of Team	69.3 / 10	3 / 13 x 10	3 x 1	2 x 2	2 x 3
40.3 Av. Team WAR + 72 %	6.9	2.3	3	4	6

^ Smoltz has a century-plus legacy for his best years of 1995-99.

PLAYERS SCORE = 6.9 (Base WAR) + 2.3 (Best at Position) + 13 (NL Best) = **22.2**

BEST PLAYERS IN SURROUNDING DECADE

(based on best consecutive years, informed by wins above replacement)

1991-97 BRAVES		
	10 BEST NL POSITION PLAYERS, 1990-1999	
	Barry Bonds, OF, 1990-98	
	Jeff Bagwell, 1B, 1993-99	
	Craig Biggio, 2B, 1995-99	
	Mike Piazza, C, 1993-98	
	Barry Larkin, SS, 1991-99	
	Matt Williams, 3B, 1990-95	
	Larry Walker, OF, 1992-99	
	Tony Gwynn, OF, 1991-97	
	Ryne Sandberg, 2B, 1990-96 (-2)	
	Mark Grace, 1B, 1992-97	
	5 BEST NL PITCHERS+ BEST RELIEVER, 1990-1999	
	<i>Greg Maddux, 1992-98</i>	
	<i>Tom Glavine, 1991-98</i>	
	Jose Rijo, 1990-94	
	<i>John Smoltz, 1994-99</i>	
	Doug Drabek, 1990-94	
	Trevor Hoffman, RP, 1994-98	

BEST AT POSITION

1B	(87) Clark-----→Bagwell-----→Helton-----→
2B	(83) Sandberg-----→Biggio-----→Kent-----→
SS	Larkin-----→Furcal-----→
3B	Williams-----→C.Jones-----→ Rolen-----→
OF	(84) Gwynn-----→A.Jones-----→
OF	(86) Strawberry→Walker-----→ Edmonds-----→ Sosa-----→
OF	Bonds-----→
MP	Bonilla, OF/3B-----→Alfonzo, 3B/2B-----→Pujols, OF/3B-1B-----→
C	(87) Scioscia-----→Piazza-----→ Kendall-----→
P	Maddux-----→Webb----→(08)
P	D.Martinez-----→Glavine-----→Zambrano→(07)
P	Smoltz-----→R.Johnson-----→
P	Drabek-----→Schilling-----→
P	Rijo-----→ K.Brown-----→Oswalt-----→
P	P.Martinez-----→
RP	Dibble-----→Hoffman-----→Wagner-----→
	88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05 06