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## Braves derail Subway Series

by Jason Reid  
Los Angeles Times

ATLANTA - They already have carved a significant place in baseball history because decade - long success stories can't be ignored. Now, the Atlanta Braves are working on their closing chapter. The Braves earned the right to finish the '90s in the World Series after finally clinching the National League pennant - rallying to escape potential embarrassment by defeating the equally resilient New York Mets, 10-9, in 11 innings on Andruw Jones' bases-loaded walk in Game 6 of the Championship Series Tuesday night. Kenny Rogers, the Mets' eighth pitcher, walked Jones on a full count to force in Gerald Williams with the winning run, ending the 4-hour 25-minute marathon. Jones was engulfed by teammates after reaching first base, igniting wild celebrations on the field and in the crowd of 52,335-the largest ever at Turner Field. The Braves captured their fifth pennant during the decade, winning the series, four games to two, after becoming only the second team forced to play a sixth game after taking a 3-0 series lead. They thwarted another stunning comeback attempt by the new-edition Amazin' Mets, who faced 5-0 and 7-3 deficits in the clincher. Then it was the Braves who had to come back from 8-7 and 9-8 deficits.



Atlanta overcame losing key players because of injuries and illness, remaining focused through the hurdles. The Braves will face the American League champion New York Yankees, who defeated them in six games in the 1996 World Series. Atlanta catcher Eddie Perez, who batted .500 in the series and drove in two runs Tuesday night, was selected the Most Valuable Player. The Braves nearly stumbled among the path to their ultimate goal this season - but they found a way again. "This is just too awesome, too awesome," Jones said between being showered with champagne during the Braves' typically wild clubhouse celebration. "We had the lead, then they had the lead, and we just kept going at each other, again and again." "But even when they got the lead again, everyone still believed we would win. Everybody said just to be patient and we could do it." Tom Glavine has been part of the Braves' run since it began in 1991. Glavine said this championship is probably the Braves' most significant. "1991, the first one, that's going to be awfully hard to top," said the left-hander, who would have pitched Game 7. "But when you look at everything that's happened this year, when you look at everything we went through, we always found a way to come through. So for all of that, this one probably is (the most satisfying)." Chipper Jones agreed. "Yeah, this one is real sweet," he said. "We lost lost guys who were tough to have out of any lineup, and we kept overcoming things just to get here." Jose Hernandez contributed to victory with a two-run, pinch-hit single in the sixth inning that gave the Braves a 7-3 lead. "I didn't get a chance to start," he said. "I was on the bench, and

everyone on the bench believed we were going to win. Nobody ever got down. We always knew we could do this, even when the Mets went ahead. I just wanted to go up there and help us." The Mets took the lead, 9-8, in the 10th on backup catcher Todd Pratt's sacrifice fly against Atlanta closer John Rocker. The Braves tied the score, 9-9, on pinch-hitter Ozzie Guillen's run-scoring single against Met closer Armando Benitez. That set the stage for the show-ending moment. Rogers entered in the 11th. The left-hander has struggled throughout his career in the playoffs, being labeled a guy who fails under pressure. His outing Tuesday won't help his reputation. Williams doubled down the left-field line to get things started. He advanced to third on Bret Boone's sacrifice bunt. Chipper Jones and Brian Jordan - the Nos. 3 and 4 batters, respectively - were walked intentionally. Enter Andruw Jones. The gifted player, who made his mark as a rookie in the 1996 series against the Yankees, had struggled during the series, batting only .167 before Tuesday. Jones singled twice and scored three runs, and his biggest contribution occurred because he was patient. "He (Rogers) always wants to try to make you chase pitches," Jones said. "I just told myself I was going to go up there and have a good at-bat. I wasn't

going to give in." The Braves came under fire from Atlanta batting instructor Don Baylor because of their free-swinging approach in a 4-3, 15-inning loss in Game 5 on Sunday. They were determined to perform better Tuesday. "We all knew we had to do a better job at the plate to beat these guys," Jordan said. "This was what it is all about. All the hard work and everything we've been through. This is what it's about." The Mets also overcame a lot during their season-changing, heart-racing ride. Tuesday was no exception. The Braves couldn't preserve a 5-0 first-inning lead, helping the Mets almost escape from the postseason cliff again. Banged-up catcher Mike Piazza tied the score, 7-7, in the seventh with a two-run home run to complete a four-run inning against John Smoltz, pitching in relief of two days' rest because the Braves finally realized tomorrow isn't guaranteed against this unyielding bunch. After the former Cy Young Award winner failed, Met rookie Melvin Mora continued his starring role on the postseason stage. His eighth-inning, run-scoring single provided the go-ahead run. The Braves tied the score, 8-8, in their half of the inning on Brian Hunter's run-scoring single after Piazza's second throwing error helped Otis Nixon advance to third. That was it until the 10th. "You have to give the Mets a lot of credit," Chipper Jones said. "They kept coming back at us too. Every time we would try to pull away, they would be right there again." "It was that type of game the whole series. Fortunately for us, we just had a little more at the end."

## Curses, foiled again: Sox bow out to Yanks, 6-1

by Mike DiGiovanna  
Los Angeles Times

BOSTON - Whether he is 30 or 34 or 44 years old, whether he escaped Cuba rowing a leaky wooden raft or a having mai-tais served to him on the deck of a 78-foot luxury yacht, none of this matters to the New York Yankees. All they care about is that Orlando "El Duque" Hernandez is wearing a Yankee uniform and a navy blue cap with the interlocking "NY" insignia, and not a uniform that says Indians, Mariners or Angels across the chest. The Yankees won a bidding war for the crafty right-hander with the outrageously high leg kick before the 1998 season, and they continued to reap the benefits of that investment when Hernandez pitched them to their 36th American League pennant Monday night. Braving chilly temperatures and a biting New England wind, Hernandez gave up one run on five hits and struck out nine in seven innings Monday night in a 6-1 AL championship series-clinching Game 5 victory over the Boston Red Sox before 33,589 in Fenway Park. The Yankees drove yet another dagger into the hearts of Red Sox fans - on top of eliminating the Sox in their home park, they did it with 1978 playoff hero and Fenway villain Bucky Dent watching from the stands - and they'll go for their 25th World Series title, and second in a row, against either the New York Mets or Atlanta Braves beginning Saturday. It may take them a day or two to shake the Red Sox from their memories, though, especially after Boston gave the Yankees a major scare in the bottom of the eighth of a marathon that took 4 hours 9 minutes to complete. Jason Varitek led off with a homer off Hernandez, and Boston, trailing, 4-1, loaded the bases with one out off a trio of Yankee relievers, Mike Stanton, Jeff Nelson and Allen Watson. Manager Joe Torre summoned Game 2 hero Ramiro Mendoza, who escaped a bases-loaded, one-out jam in the eighth inning of a 3-2 Yankee victory Thursday night, and the right-hander pulled off Houdini II, striking out pinch-hitter Scott Hatteberg on a full-count pitch in the dirt and getting Trot Nixon to hit a pop foul to third. Jorge Posada then gave the Yankees some breathing room in the ninth, blasting a two-run homer to right for a 6-1 lead, and Mendoza retired the side in order in the bottom of the ninth, touching off yet another pennant-clinching Yankee celebration. "I can't say enough about what Mendoza has meant to this team," Torre said. "We call him the Ice Man. He has saved our you-know-whats a number of times." Torre thought it interesting that Mendoza got the save for Hernandez Monday night, because it was Mendoza who had to yield his spot in the rotation to Hernandez last season. A No. 4 starter in 1998, his first season in New York, Hernandez emerged as the Yankees' ace this past June. He now has a career 4-0 record and 0.97 earned run average in five playoff starts, and he earned ALCS most valuable player honors Monday night. "It seems like 100 years ago when I saw him throw on the side in spring training in 1998," Torre said. "I thought, 'Wow, this big leg kick, I don't know if he can do this.' Then you watch him grow." "Ever since Game 4 (of the 1998 ALCS against Cleveland, a 4-0 win) he has dared people to beat them. That first inning tonight was phenomenal." Hernandez, the Man With a Thousand Arm Angles, was an escape artist Monday night, pitching his way out of a first-and-third, no-out jam in the first, a first-and-second, two-out jam in the second, and a runner-on-third, one-out jam in the sixth. After Chuck Knoblauch opened the game with a single and Derek Jeter homered off Red Sox starter Kent Mercker for a 2-0 lead in the top of the first, it appeared the Red Sox would rebound quickly in the bottom of the first, when Jose Offerman singled and took third on John Valentin's hit-and-run single. But Hernandez struck out Varitek, got Nomar Garciaparra - who admitted to having five cortisone shots in his right wrist since getting hit with a pitch on Sept. 25 - to pop to third and Troy O'Leary to fly to left, snuffing out the rally.

# WORLD SERIES '99 YANKEES VS. BRAVES

GAME 1 @ Atlanta

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23  
8:05 p.m. on NBC

## Lakers adopt a triangle offense that has L.A. roots

by Mark Heisler  
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES - It's a new chapter in Laker history, with a new coach who brings with him an exotic new offense that comes all the way from ... Jefferson and Figueroa? There in the Shrine Auditorium, USC's basketball team played most of its home games in 1946 with a squad that included a little senior guard named Tex Winter, a hot-shot freshman named Bill Sharman and a returning Army veteran named Alex Hannum. The coach was Sam Barry, who ran something called "the center option," a forerunner of the offense Winter would devise, the "triangle," that he taught the Chicago Bulls under Phil Jackson, after which they won six NBA titles in the '90s. Hannum also used it with the Philadelphia 76ers, who won an NBA record 68 games in the 1966-67 regular season. Sharman's Los Angeles Lakers then won 69 five years later, using some triangle, a record that stood until the Bulls won 72 in 1996. "The funny thing was, we didn't win with it," says Sharman, remembering their days at USC. "We were 10-14." "Then Hannum plays it with the 76ers, and they win 68 games. Then we used it a little bit with the Lakers, and we win 69. Then Tex runs it with the Bulls, and they win 72." Of course, the 76ers had Wilt Chamberlain, Billy Cunningham, Chet Walker, Luke Jackson and Hal Greer. The Lakers had Wilt, Jerry West and Gail Goodrich. The Bulls, who eclipsed both, had Michael Jordan, leading some skeptics to describe the triangle as "three ways to get the ball to Jordan."

Nor were skeptics hard to find in a league in which almost everyone runs the static "pro set," in which the offensive team throws the ball to its best post-up player - an easy matter since the rules limit sagging and bar double-teaming off the ball - hopefully forcing a double-team which leaves three defenders on four offensive players. In practice, few players move and teams go deep into the clock, as the defense waits as long as it can to double-team, running the offense out of time. Also, in practice, scoring went into a steep, decade-long decline in the '90s when the pro set became the standard. Nevertheless, it's easy to run, compared to the fluid triangle, which has no set plays, only passes and cuts, with players constantly forming triangles, all based on reading the defense. In recent years, Jim Cleamons, a former Bull assistant who has rejoined Jackson with the Lakers, installed it in Dallas and was fired soon thereafter. Cotton Fitzsimmons, a Winter disciple, put it in in Phoenix, started 0-8 and promptly retired for good. "You can't run a continuity offense in the NBA," says a former assistant coach. "The problem is the 24-second clock." "The Bulls couldn't have done that without Jordan. How many times did you see the 24-second clock run down at the end and then Michael save them - 15 times a game?" Nevertheless, purists love the triangle. San Antonio Coach Gregg Popovich, who uses the standard NBA dump-it-in scheme, once sneered at his own offense, noting one of his reserves, former Bull Steve Kerr, had recently run "a real offense," as opposed to "this pro thing" the Spurs were using.

"It (the triangle) is the best offense in the NBA from my point of view," says Pete Newell, former California coach, now a Cleveland Cavalier consultant. "Offensively, players are moving all the time. That makes it hard to double the ball. It makes it difficult to help out because you're worried about somebody picking you off." "One of the reasons Michael was as great as he was, the spacing was always so good, it was very difficult to double-team him. You have to go quite a distance to get a second man on him." "Of course, Michael would make any offense look good but no other offense would have made him look as good." In fact, the Bulls' opponents found they were doomed if they double-teamed, and also if they didn't. After Jordan made a last-second 20-footer in Game 1 of the 1997 finals, Utah's Jerry Sloan was criticized for playing him one-on-one. In a similar situation in Game 6, Sloan sent a second man at Jordan, who quickly passed to Kerr, who knocked down the series-winning shot. OK, now all the Lakers have to do is become the second team in the '90s to successfully put the triangle in, and time's running out. After USC, Winter became an assistant at Kansas State under Jack Gardner, another Barry pupil, and ultimately the head coach there. Tex started refining his theories of offense, based on things he had learned from Barry, Newell and another great, Everett Dean and published "Triple Post Offense" in 1962. His later career included stints coaching the San Diego Rockets (hired by Newell, then GM) and Long Beach

State. He was semi-retired in 1985 when Jerry Krause, a young scout he had befriended, became the Bulls' GM and brought the 63-year-old Winter to Chicago. Krause's enthusiasm for the triangle wasn't shared by Krause's pro-style coaches, Stan Albeck and Doug Collins. However Jackson, taking over in 1989, had played for the New York Knick champions in 1970 and 1973 that were known for unselfishness and movement. In Chicago, where Jordan owned the ball, Jackson wanted an offense that would engender a new spirit. "We were together as assistants," Winter says, "and we used to talk about how stereotyped pro offenses were getting. He was looking for a system that was similar to the way they played in New York, when he played there, when they won those championships. That was a team that read defenses beautifully and moved the ball." "I just think I happened to be at the right place at the right time. He embraced it. I was very fortunate to be there or I probably would have been long ago retired." Jordan, who couldn't understand why it was better to have the ball in Horace Grant's hands than his, called it an "equal opportunity offense," which he didn't mean as a compliment. Nevertheless, Jordan tried it, and the Bulls caught on. "It was very simple," says West, who ran the triangle in the '70s. "This offense to some degree is simple, but players have to change their thought process a little bit. It becomes a little more of an instinctive thing...." "It was an offense we really designed more for centers, because centers touch the ball a lot. Chicago didn't use it that

way because when it got down to it, Michael Jordan really was kind of a post player for them." Of course, instincts aren't what they used to be since NBA players are so rarely asked to read defenses and think on their feet any more. The Lakers last season traded Elden Campbell, a big, talented player, because he couldn't figure out how to complement Shaquille O'Neal. When the defense rotated toward O'Neal, all Campbell had to do was cut to the basket for a pass, crash the boards or drift to an open spot. Instead, mostly, he watched. In Chicago, as the Bulls eventually learned, some players picked the triangle up right away. Some would be lost for a few weeks. And one or two who were never found. "I think it's pretty simple," says Kerr. "It's just so different from what everybody's used to playing. Most teams come down, call a play and everybody runs to their spots and they make the pass where everybody knows it's going to go." "In the triangle, five guys get to their spots but you can pass to any of the four guys. When you make the pass, there's a cut. It depends on how the defense plays you." And if Jordan still winds up with the ball whenever the clock runs down or it's crunch time? "That's kind of the beauty of it, even though people kinda laughed at it, it allows players to get into a position to bail their teammates out," Kerr says. "I think Kobe (Bryant) is going to enjoy that, and Shaq will enjoy it as well." Well, after a while they may anyway.

## NFL SCHEDULE

Week 7  
Sunday, October 24

Detroit@Carolina	1:00
Cincinnati@Indianapolis	1:00
Denver@New England	1:00
New Orleans@NY Giants	1:00
Philadelphia@Miami	1:00
San Francisco@Minnesota	1:00
Cleveland@St. Louis	1:00
Chicago@Tampa Bay	1:00
Washington@Dallas	1:00
Green Bay@San Diego	4:05
NY Jets@Oakland	4:15
Buffalo@Seattle	4:15



Monday, October 25

Atlanta@Pittsburgh	9:00
Bye Week:	Arizona Jacksonville Tennessee

### GAME OF THE WEEK

#### "COWBOYS AND INDIANS"

#### WASHINGTON VS. DALLAS

	
CRAIG HAZELWOOD DALLAS	24-17
JASON SNYDER WASHINGTON	34-10
MATT WIERTEL WASHINGTON	36-24
KATIE GALLEY WASHINGTON	24-7