

# Age-old axiom to be tested in World Series

By BEN WALKER  
AP Baseball Writer

ATLANTA— That scowl on Albert Belle's face, that monster mash mug and those lips muttering who-knows-what, all started way before he heard how pitching would win this World Series.

True, the Atlanta Braves and Cleveland Indians led their leagues in ERA. And true, both staffs seemed to get even stronger in the playoffs.

"Good pitching has stopped good hitting. That has always been the rule," three-time Cy Young winner Greg Maddux said.

One of baseball's oldest truths, however, is about to be put to a test. Because while everyone seems to be pitchin' pitching this October, Belle and Fred McGriff and friends are bringing big bats.

"Their staff, they say, is the best staff in baseball," Indians hitting coach Charlie Manuel said Thursday. "At the same time, both teams have a lot of power. The Colorado Rockies scored some runs against Atlanta and I'm kind of hoping we will, too."

The Indians led the majors in hitting, scoring and home runs this season.

A main reason was Belle, who hit 50 homers and is the only player in the major leagues to

connect for 30 or more home runs in four straight years.

The Braves were next-to-last in batting, but second in the NL in home runs. McGriff homered 27 times, though the shortened season ended his streak of seven straight years with at least 30.

"All season long, we just missed clicking together at one time," McGriff said. "We've got a lot of power hitters, and you ain't going to go up there bunting."

McGriff hit .382 with four doubles and two homers, drove in six runs and scored nine in eight playoff games against Colorado and Cincinnati.

# Astros may consider leaving Houston

By MIKE DRAGO  
Associated Press Writer

HOUSTON— The NFL appears poised to abandon Houston for Nashville. Major league baseball might not be far behind, headed for the East Coast.

Within three years, the Astrodome's only tenants might be the occasional monster-truck extravaganza and the horses, cows and hogs that drop in once a year for a livestock show.

And the nation's fourth-largest city could be down to one major sports franchise — the two-

time defending NBA champion Rockets.

Houston Astros owner Drayton McLane confirmed this week that he has discussed the club's possible sale to a group that would move the Astros to Virginia.

The NFL Oilers, whose demand for a new, taxpayer-financed stadium was rejected by the city, already have a foot out the door, wooed by a \$300 million taxpayer-financed deal in Nashville.

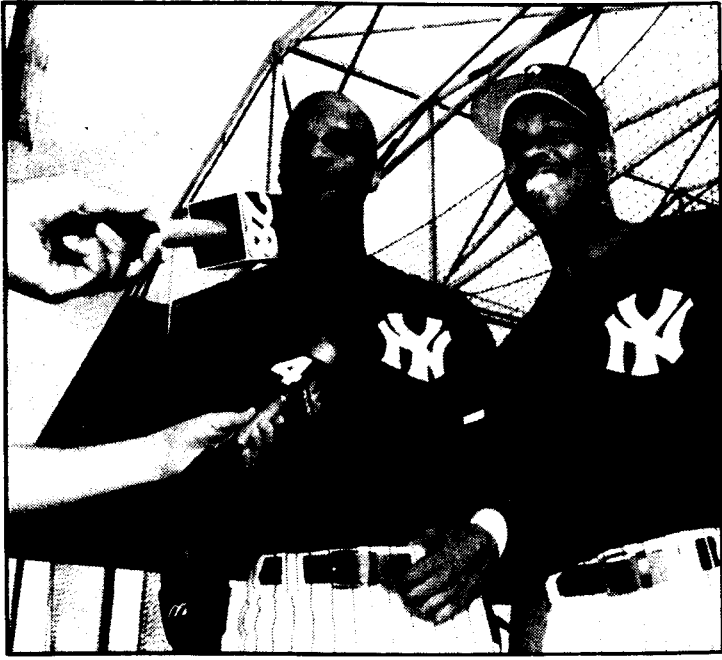
McLane's situation is much different. He's perfectly happy at the Astrodome, where he holds a long-term lease and collects rent from

the Oilers. Dismal fan support for the Astros, however, is forcing McLane to consider a sale simply to protect his personal fortune.

He claims to have lost \$65 million in the three years since he bought the Astros and he could lose another \$20 million next year.

According to published reports, the Virginia group, headed by businessman Bill Collins, would move the Astros to RFK Stadium in Washington, D.C., while a new stadium is built in the Northern Virginia suburbs.

The Washington area has been without baseball since the Senators left for Texas.



AP Photo

*If I have to pee in another cup...*

Darryl Strawberry and Dwight Gooden talk to the media at the New York Yankees training facility in Tampa, Fla. Both are attempting comebacks from drug addictions.

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