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MLB World Series Recap and Free Agency

The 2023 Major League Baseball season has come to an end, with the Texas Rangers being crowned 2023 World Series Champions. This championship is the Rangers' first championship in their 63-year franchise history. Now, there are only five teams who have yet to win a World Series Championship. The Rangers' Championship comes following a 3-0 win in game 5 of the World Series over the Arizona Diamondbacks. The Rangers won the series four games to one. This was the Rangers' first World Series appearance in 12 years since they lost the 2011 World Series to the St. Louis Cardinals and the Diamondbacks' first appearance in 22 years since they won the 2001 World Series against the New York Yankees. The match-up between the Texas Rangers and the Arizona Diamondbacks features two teams coming off 100+ loss seasons in 2021. The Rangers became the third team to win the World Series two years after losing 100+ games.

The Rangers went a perfect 11-0 on the road. They become the first team to win that many road games in the Postseason, setting the longest Postseason road win streak. Road team dominance was the common theme this Postseason. Road teams went 26-15 and had a win percentage of .634, which is the highest win percentage in the Wild Card Era since 1995.

Manager Bruce Bochy led the Rangers to the championship in his first season with the team. He became the sixth manager to win four Championships, the fifth to win with two different teams, and the third to take three different teams to the World Series. This championship comes 13 years to the exact date of game 5 of the 2010 World Series when Bruce Bochy led the San Francisco Giants to their first championship since relocating to San Francisco against the Texas Rangers. Bochy is 6-0 in game 7s, most winner-take-all wins as manager.

Rangers' shortstop Corey Seager won the Willy Mays Most Valuable Player award. He became the second player to win World Series MVP with two different teams, but the first to win in both the American League and National League. Seager becomes the fourth player to win the award multiple times.

Rangers' reliever Will Smith became the first player in MLB history to win three consecutive World Series titles with three different teams. He also became the first player in MLB, NHL, NFL, and NBA history to appear in at least one game with three different championship-winning teams in three consecutive seasons. Before the 2023 World Series, Smith won the 2021 World Series with the Atlanta Braves and the 2022 World Series with the Houston Astros.

With the 2023 season over, teams now look towards free agency with some of the biggest stars set to hit the market this winter. This year's winter free-agent market is filled with starting pitchers, with star pitchers such as Shohei Ohtani, Blake Snell, and Aaron Nola hitting the market. Ohtani is the biggest name in free agency as he is a one-of-a-kind two-way player. Due to his two-way player status, there has been speculation on what his contract will look like since the last two-way player was Babe Ruth, and signing Ohtani is the equivalent of signing two players in one. The biggest star position player set to hit the free agent market is center fielder, 1st baseman Cody Bellinger who opted out of his contract with the Chicago Cubs. Star Japanese right-handed pitcher Yoshinobu Yamamoto is set to join the MLB next season making him one of the biggest names to follow this winter.

