

Where Will the Rocket Land?

Contributed by Norm Hitzges
Sun, May 28, 2006, 11:04 AM

The Rocket's plan may be exploding.

All along it appeared Roger Clemens master plan involved getting millions and millions and millions of dollars to pitch only 4 months for his hometown Houston Astros.

Publicly, Clemens and his representatives kept saying 4 teams were all serious contenders for his services—NY Yankees, Boston, Rangers and Astros.

Clemens suggested that he'd simply make a decision whether or not to pitch again and who to pitch for several weeks into the season. AND that he'd inspect all four teams closely because he wanted to pitch for a winner.. But privately everyone suspected that hometown Houston was the significant favorite for Clemens' services.

But here we are at Memorial Day with 3 of those 4, Clemens suitors playing well and one collapsing. The Rangers and Red Sox each have two game leads in their divisions. The Yankees sit right on the Red Sox heels and, even if they don't win the AL East, figure to be in the Wildcard battle the entire year.

And the 'Stros? They stink. They've lost 16 of 22. Staff aces Roy Oswalt and Andy Pettitte are struggling. Closer Brad Lidge has been very poor. The offense hasn't been bad. But it can't cover for Houston pitching that night after night is mediocre at best.

Houston's fallen to 4th place in the Central, 7.5 games behind St. Louis. And with 8 other teams ahead of them in the Wildcard race.

What if this Houston tumble continues?

Could the Rangers actually become a viable contender for Clemens' services? Stay tuned.