

MLB ALDS & NLDS 2026

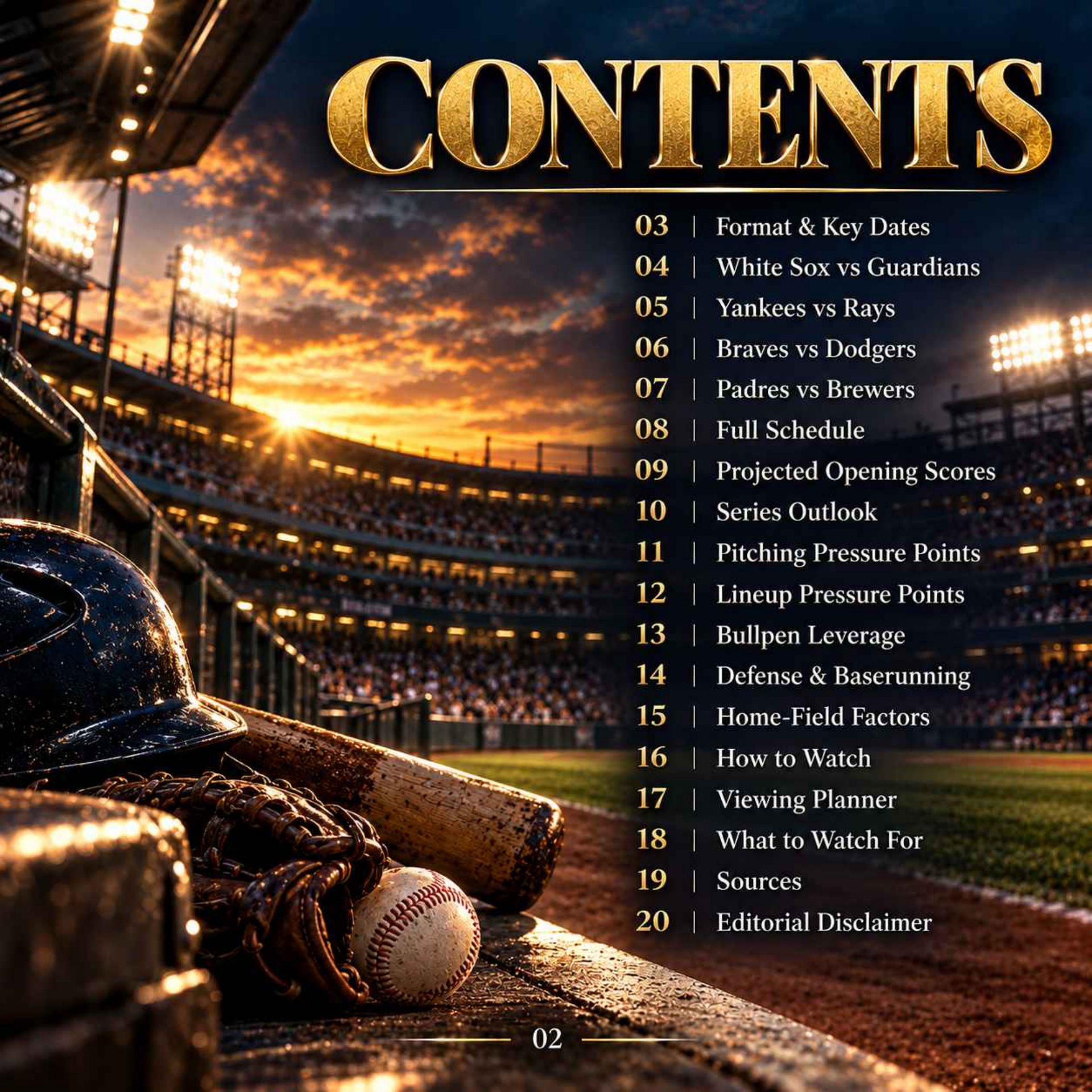
Schedule, Matchups & How to Watch

— Division Series Guide for October 3 & 10, 2026 —



4 Matchups • Up to 20 Games • Broadcast Guide

Digital World Pulse sports editorial preview

A dramatic photograph of a baseball stadium at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the sky and the stadium's seating areas. In the foreground, a dark baseball helmet, a wooden bat, and a baseball are resting on a wooden surface, possibly a bench or the edge of the field. The stadium lights are visible in the background, adding to the atmospheric lighting.

CONTENTS

03		Format & Key Dates
04		White Sox vs Guardians
05		Yankees vs Rays
06		Braves vs Dodgers
07		Padres vs Brewers
08		Full Schedule
09		Projected Opening Scores
10		Series Outlook
11		Pitching Pressure Points
12		Lineup Pressure Points
13		Bullpen Leverage
14		Defense & Baserunning
15		Home-Field Factors
16		How to Watch
17		Viewing Planner
18		What to Watch For
19		Sources
20		Editorial Disclaimer



Best-of-Five Baseball

— FORMAT & KEY DATES —

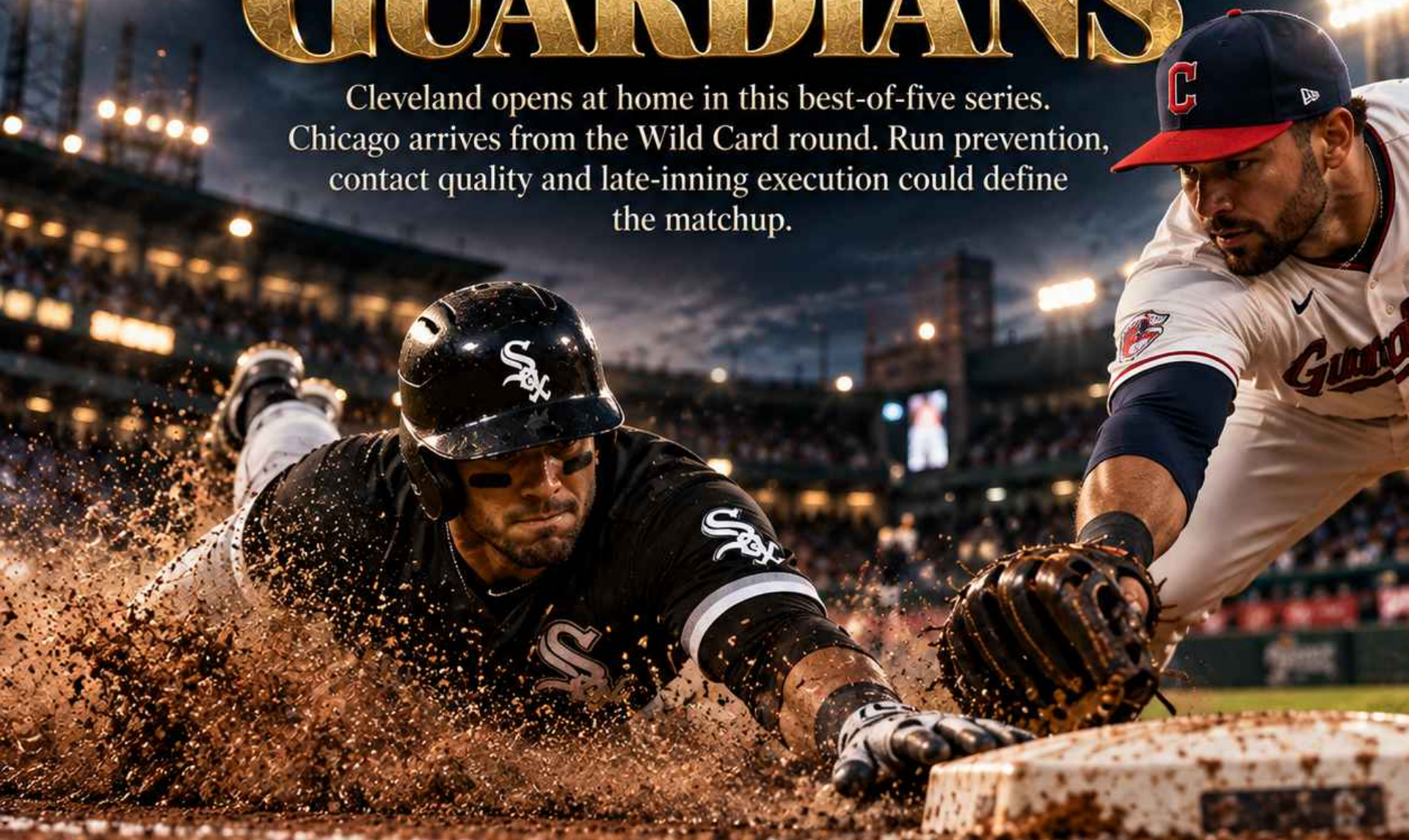
Each Division Series is a best-of-five matchup. The first team to three wins advances to the League Championship Series. All four series open Saturday, October 3, 2026. Potential NLDS Game 5s fall on October 9, while potential ALDS Game 5s fall on October 10.

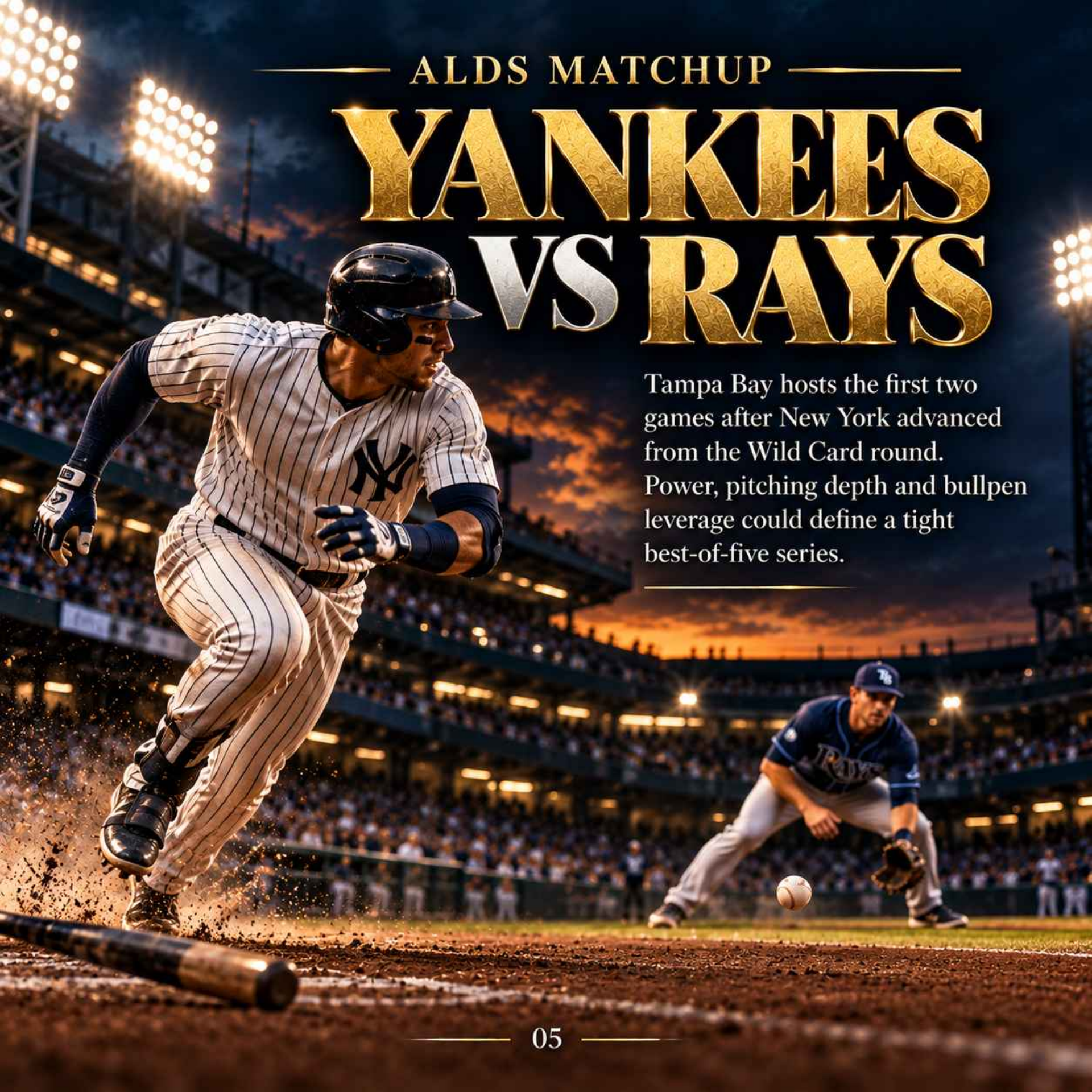
OCTOBER 3 & 10, 2026

ALDS MATCHUP

WHITE SOX VS GUARDIANS

Cleveland opens at home in this best-of-five series. Chicago arrives from the Wild Card round. Run prevention, contact quality and late-inning execution could define the matchup.



A New York Yankees player in a white pinstriped uniform is sliding into a base, kicking up a cloud of dirt. In the background, a Tampa Bay Rays player in a blue uniform is crouched, ready to catch the ball. The scene is set at night under bright stadium lights.

ALDS MATCHUP

YANKEES VS RAYS

Tampa Bay hosts the first two games after New York advanced from the Wild Card round. Power, pitching depth and bullpen leverage could define a tight best-of-five series.

NLDS MATCHUP

BRAVES VS DODGERS

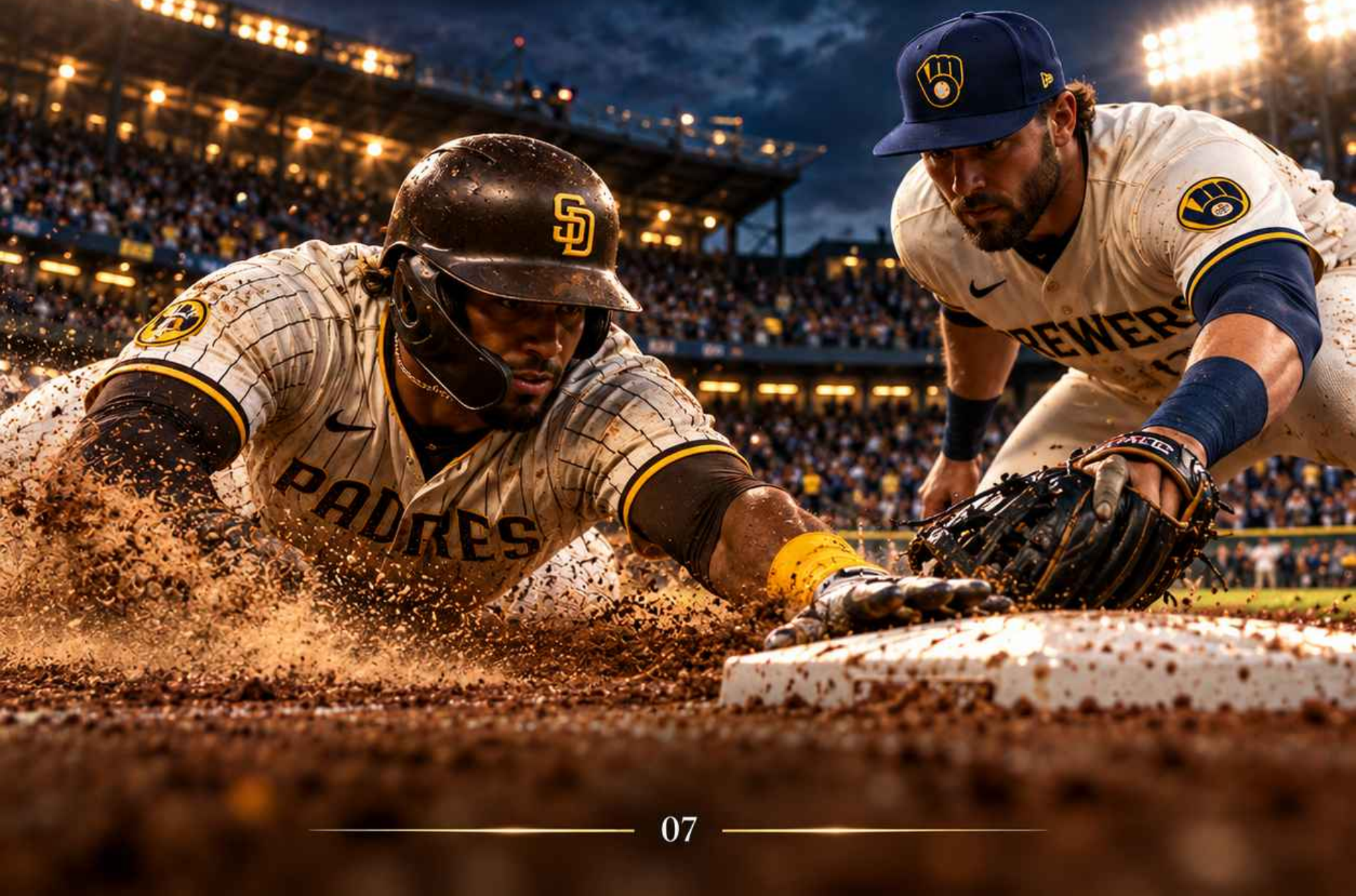
Atlanta advanced from the Wild Card round to face Los Angeles. The Dodgers hold home-field advantage. Rotation depth, star power and timely extra-base hits could shape this best-of-five series.



NLDS MATCHUP

PADRES vs BREWERS

Milwaukee opens at home after San Diego advanced from the Wild Card round. Swing-and-miss pitching, baserunner traffic and late-inning bullpen execution could shape this best-of-five series.



FULL SCHEDULE

OCT 3

White Sox at Guardians
Braves at Dodgers
Yankees at Rays
Padres at Brewers

OCT 4

Padres at Brewers
Braves at Dodgers

OCT 5

White Sox at Guardians
Yankees at Rays

OCT 6

Dodgers at Braves
Brewers at Padres

OCT 7

Guardians at White Sox
Rays at Yankees
NLDS Game 4s if necessary

OCT 8

ALDS Game 4s if necessary

OCT 9

NLDS Game 5s if necessary

OCT 10

ALDS Game 5s if necessary

PROJECTED OPENING SCORES

EDITORIAL GAME 1 OUTLOOK

White Sox **3** • Guardians **4**

Yankees **4** • Rays **5**

Braves **3** • Dodgers **6**

Padres **3** • Brewers **4**

*Editorial score estimates only — not guarantees.
Starting-pitcher announcements, bullpen availability and lineup changes
can alter the outlook.*

FOUR OPENING GAMES • OCTOBER 3

SERIES OUTLOOK

GUARDIANS OVER
WHITE SOX 3-2

RAYS OVER
YANKEES 3-2

DODGERS OVER
BRAVES 3-1

BREWERS OVER
PADRES 3-2

Editorial series estimates based on
matchup structure, home-field position
and expected leverage patterns.
Analysis only; not guarantees.

Pitching Pressure Points

Starting rotations, bullpens, and key arms to watch in the ALDS & NLDS.



Starting Rotations

Each team's top starters will face intense scrutiny. Look for recent form, pitch mix, and how they match up against opposing lineups.



Key Pitching Metrics

Strikeout ability, walk rates, and pitch efficiency are crucial in shorter postseason series.



Matchup Factors

Handedness, lineup construction, and historical performance can reveal potential advantages.



Bullpen Roles

Late-inning decisions and high-leverage arms often determine playoff outcomes.



Lineup Pressure Points

Key offensive trends and matchup factors to watch in the ALDS & NLDS.



Two-Strike Contact

Hitters who put the ball in play with two strikes can extend at-bats, raise pitch counts, and create scoring chances.



Extra-Base Damage

Doubles, triples, and home runs change games quickly. Look for hitters with power and the ability to drive the ball to all fields.



Walks Before Power

Disciplined hitters who get on base set the table and force pitchers into the zone, creating more opportunities for big innings.



Situational Hitting

Runners in scoring position, late-inning at-bats, and high-leverage spots separate good lineups from great ones.



Lineup Depth

Productive bottom-of-the-order hitters can keep innings alive and turn a lineup over for the heart of the order.



Bullpen Leverage

How and when managers use their relievers can swing a postseason series.



Late-Inning Roles

Closers handle the highest-leverage spots, but setup men often face the heart of the order in the 7th and 8th innings.



Earlier Deployment

Expect top relievers to enter before the 9th when leverage demands it, especially in tight games or tough matchups.



Back-to-Back Workload

Many relievers can pitch on consecutive days, but fatigue, pitch count, and velocity trends help signal potential limits.



Platoon Matchups

Managers often use relievers based on hitter handedness, bringing in specialists to neutralize tough lefties or righties.



Inherited Runners

Relievers frequently enter with runners on base, and stranding those runners is a key measure of bullpen effectiveness.



Defense & Baserunning

How teams create and prevent runs with athleticism, instincts, and execution in the ALDS & NLDS.



Outfield Routes

Efficient reads, first-step quickness, and clean routes turn potential extra-base hits into outs.



Relay Accuracy

Fast, accurate relays from the outfield cut down runners and prevent big innings.



Stolen-Base Decisions

Timing, pitcher tendencies, and catcher pop times help teams decide when to run and when to hold.



First-to-Third Reads

Aggressive, well-timed reads can turn singles into triples and put pressure on defenses.



Clean Defense

Fundamentals, communication, and reducing mistakes are critical in high-leverage postseason games.



Home-Field Factors

How ballpark environment, routines, and early series dynamics can shape the ALDS & NLDS.



Opening at Home

Hosting Game 1 can set the tone, giving teams early momentum and the chance to establish their style in a familiar setting.



Early Series Pressure

Home teams often face intense expectations to deliver early, which can influence decisions, approach, and lineup construction.



Familiar Dimensions

Knowing the nuances of the ballpark — from wall heights to foul territory — can give hitters, pitchers, and fielders an edge.



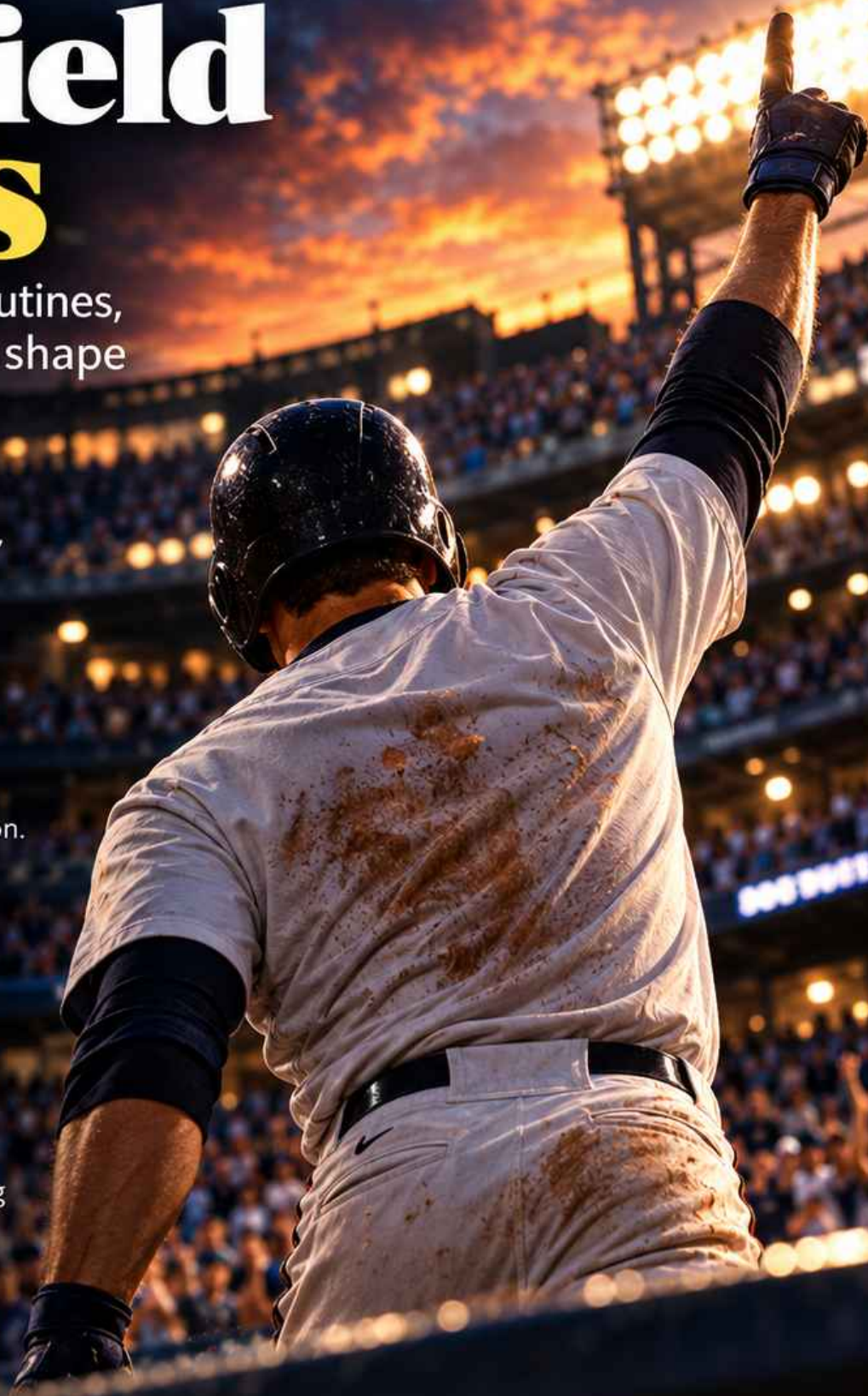
Routine and Logistics

Staying in a familiar city, routine, and travel schedule helps teams maintain focus and energy during a demanding postseason stretch.



Crowd Environment

A passionate home crowd can elevate performance, create pressure on opponents, and change the game's momentum.



How to Watch

Your guide to TV and streaming for the 2026 ALDS & NLDS.



ALDS Coverage

The 2026 ALDS will be televised on TBS, truTV, UniMás, and HBO Max.



NLDS Coverage

The 2026 NLDS will be televised on FOX or FS1, FOX Deportes, and FOX One.



Game Assignments

Exact channel assignments can vary by game. Check your local listings for the most up-to-date information.



Times & Listings

All game times are Eastern. Confirm listings with your TV or streaming provider before first pitch.



Viewing Planner

Your day-by-day guide to the ALDS & NLDS, from opening weekend to potential Game 5s.



Saturday, Oct 3

Four Game 1s (ALDS & NLDS).



Sunday, Oct 4

Two NLDS Game 2s.



Monday, Oct 5

Two ALDS Game 2s.



Tuesday, Oct 6

Two NLDS Game 3s.



Wednesday, Oct 7

ALDS Game 3s and potential NLDS Game 4s.



Thursday, Oct 8

Potential ALDS Game 4s.



Friday, Oct 9

Potential NLDS Game 5s.



Saturday, Oct 10

Potential ALDS Game 5s.



What to Watch For

Five key storylines that can shape the ALDS & NLDS.



Early Leads

Getting on the board first can change the entire complexion of a series, forcing opponents to alter their plans.



Road Pressure

Playing in hostile environments brings added challenges, with crowds, travel, and momentum all playing a role.



Lineup Adjustments

Managers will tweak batting orders, platoons, and matchups to find an edge against opposing pitching.



Manager Aggression

Bold decisions — from early pitching changes to hit-and-run situations — can swing close games.



Momentum

A big inning, a key defensive play, or a clutch hit can quickly shift the energy and direction of a series.



Sources

Key references for the ALDS & NLDS matchups, schedules, and broadcast information.



Primary Source

Major League Baseball postseason schedule and game coverage.



MLB.com 2026 Postseason Schedule

Official postseason schedule including ALDS and NLDS game dates and times.



MLB.com Wild Card Results and Division Series Qualifiers

Wild Card results and Division Series qualifiers for the 2026 postseason.



MLB.com Division Series Broadcast Assignments

National and regional broadcast assignments for ALDS and NLDS games.



Schedule Verification

Schedule checked October 2, 2026, and assignments remain subject to change.



Editorial Disclaimer

Important information about this guide and how to use it.



Independent Editorial Content

This guide is independent editorial content and is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or connected to Major League Baseball, its clubs, broadcasters, or sponsors.



Projections, Not Guarantees

Projected scores, matchup analysis, and series outlooks are speculative editorial estimates based on available data and analysis. They are not guarantees and should not be considered betting advice.



Verify Official Information

Always confirm game schedules, start times, and broadcast availability through official sources, as details may change.

