

# The 2010 Postseason

by David Golebiewski

The 2010 postseason featured, among other things, a no-hitter, haggard beards and ultimately, a World Series matchup making history for both teams. The Texas Rangers, who had never won a playoff series prior to 2010, advanced to the Fall Classic led by midseason pick-up Cliff Lee. The Giants hadn't won a World Series since Willie Mays made "The Catch" at the Polo Grounds in 1954, when the team was still in New York. San Francisco's first title since going West was the culmination of another superb playoff year.

To re-live the action, you'll find game recaps along with some measures that quantify those key, heart-racing moments. In last year's *The Hardball Times Annual*, Sky Andrecheck introduced the concept of Championship Leverage Index and Championship Win Probability Added. Championship Leverage Index (Champ LI), Sky said, "measures the importance of each game to a team's championship hopes." An average regular season game has a Champ LI of 1.0. A game with a Champ LI of 2.0 is twice as important as an average regular season game. The more crucial the game, the higher its Championship LI.

Champ LI, like regular Leverage Index, measures the importance of events *at the time they occur*. Said Sky: "One could make the argument that Game One and Game Seven of the World Series are equally important since they both count for one game in the series. However, the difference is that in Game One, it is uncertain whether the game will really affect the final outcome of the series, whereas in Game Seven, the winner of the game will *certainly* determine the winner of the series." Ditto for games in lopsided series: the outcome of Game Four in a 3-0 series could have an impact, but it's pretty unlikely. Therefore, the game has a comparatively lower Champ LI.

Clearly, playoff games are way, way more important than the average regular season game. Postseason contests range from 10 times more important than an average regular season game (in a 3-0 LCS or a 2-0 LDS) to 167 times more important in Game Seven of the World Series. Here's a chart showing the Champ LI for playoff games:

The chart confirms our intuitions: Games mean more as clubs advance further into the playoffs, and games in a tight series have greater importance than games when one team has a commanding series lead.

Championship Win Probability Added (Champ WPA) is similar to regular WPA, with the difference being that Champ WPA measures the number of championships won above average, instead of the numbers of games won above average. Following each series recap, you'll find a series MVP, a series goat, and the biggest play of the series, based upon Champ WPA. The MVP contributed the biggest part of a championship to his team, the goat ate away at his club's championship hopes the most, and the big play marks the individual series play with the largest Champ LI figure.

## ALDS: Minnesota Twins vs. New York Yankees

In the first-ever playoff game at Target Field (15.6 Champ LI), 2010 AL Comeback Player of the Year Award winner Francisco Liriano came out dealing. The resurgent lefty held the Yankees scoreless through five innings, with the Twins plating three runs on a Michael Cuddyer homer off CC Sabathia and a passed ball by Jorge Posada. After Nick Swisher struck out swinging to begin the sixth, the Twinkies had a nearly 88 percent chance of claiming victory.

The wheels began to come off for Liriano, however. Mark Teixeira doubled, then advanced to third on a wild pitch. Alex Rodriguez walked, then Robinson Cano singled in a run. Marcus Thames struck out, but Jorge Posada singled to make it 3-2 and then Curtis Granderson delivered the big blow. Granderson laced a triple to center field, scoring Cano and Posada and giving the Bombers a 4-3 lead. The play provided 2.8 percent of a championship for the Yankees. Minnesota's win expectancy dipped to 45 percent by the time Jose Mijares got the final out of the inning.

Sabathia began the bottom half of the sixth by whiffing Joe Mauer and retiring Delmon Young, but Jim Thome then drew a walk, Cuddyer advanced him to third on a double and Kubel drew ball four to load the bases. CC lost the zone

Championship Leverage Index of Playoff Games										
	0-0	1-0	1-1	2-0	2-1	2-2	3-0	3-1	3-2	3-3
One-Game Playoff	20.8	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Division Series	15.6	15.6	20.8	10.4	20.8	41.7	X	X	X	X
LCS	26.0	26.0	31.2	20.8	31.2	41.7	10.4	20.8	41.7	83.3
World Series	52.1	52.1	62.5	41.7	62.5	83.3	20.8	41.7	83.3	166.7

against rookie third baseman Danny Valencia, walking in the tying run before escaping the inning.

Mark Teixeira bailed him out in the seventh, however, popping a two-run home run off of Jesse Crain to give the Yankees a 6-4. That bomb proved to be the final score, as New York's middle relievers bridged the gap to the immortal Mariano Rivera, who notched a four-out save.

Andy Pettitte was superb in Game Two (7 IP, 2 ER, 1 BB, 4 K), other than allowing a run in the second and getting taken deep by Orlando Hudson in the sixth. While the Yankees got on base plenty against Carl Pavano in the early innings, the game entered the seventh inning tied 2-2 with New York scoring a run on an Alex Rodriguez sac-fly in the fourth and a Lance Berkman homer in the fifth.

They broke though in the seventh, however, with Posada walking to lead off the inning and Berkman hitting a double so deep to center field that the creaky-kneed catcher came around to score. Brett Gardner followed with a bunt single up the third base line that advanced Berkman, then Derek Jeter singled to give the Yankees a 4-2 lead. Mijares and Jon Rauch got out of the frame without further damage, but the game was largely over. Kerry Wood tossed a scoreless eighth, Granderson (who went 3-for-4) knocked in a run to make it 5-2 in the top of the ninth, and Mo closed the door in the bottom half.

Game Three had a 10.4 Champ LI—with New York up 2-0, the chances that the game would impact the outcome of the series was lower. The Yankees sent Phil Hughes to the bump to close out the series, and he didn't disappoint. Hughes went seven scoreless innings, striking out six Twins batters and issuing just one walk. He didn't jump ahead in the count often, getting a first pitch strike against 11 of 25 batters faced, but he battled back and stayed out of trouble.

Brian Duensing got dinged for five runs in 3.1 innings. Cano tripled to deep center to begin the bottom of the second, and Posada drove him in later in the inning. A Teixeira single scored Swisher in the third, and Thames went deep in the fourth. The Yankees built their lead to 6-0 off the Twins bullpen by the seventh, with Swisher delivering a dinger of his own.

Wood made things slightly interesting by surrendering a run and loading the bases in the top of the eighth, but Boone Logan got Kubel to pop out and Dave Robertson got Delmon Young to fly out. Rivera ended Minnesota's postseason aspirations in the ninth.

**Series MVP:** Teixeira. He was worth 3.1 percent of a championship, with the biggest contribution being his ninth-inning homer in Game One off Crain. Granderson and Rivera were on Teixeira's heels for this honor.

**Series Goat:** Crain, who served up the aforementioned tater to Teixeira in Game One. He gave up 2.9 percent of a championship in his only series appearance.

**Big Play:** Granderson's sixth-inning, two-run triple in Game One off Liriano won 2.8 percent of a championship for the Yankees.

### ALDS: Texas Rangers vs. Tampa Bay Rays

In Game 1, a pair of lefty aces game out flinging fastballs. Cliff Lee threw a heater on 82 of his 104 pitches, mixing in an occasional cutter, curve or changeup, while David Price reared back and fired on 83 of his 107 pitches, sprinkling in some curves and changeups as well.

Both racked up impressive strikeout totals, but Lee was sharper. Texas' midseason mercenary whiffed 10 batters in seven innings pitched, showing surgical control by throwing 76 of his pitches for strikes and walking none. He gave up one earned run. Price punched out eight Rangers in 6.2 innings, also avoiding ball four entirely while throwing 77 strikes, but he surrendered four earned runs in the process.

The Rangers got on the board with a Jeff Francoeur double in the second inning, and Bengie Molina followed later in the frame with a single to plate Frenchy. Nelson Cruz belted a solo shot in the third, and Molina followed suit in the fourth. The outcome of this game was set early on: by the time Vladimir Guerrero hit a run-scoring double to put Texas up 5-0 in the fifth, Tampa's win expectancy was down to 5.3 percent. Ben Zobrist's solo shot off Lee in the seventh inning provided the only offense for the Rays, as Texas glided to a 5-1 victory at the Trop.

Tampa Bay got shut down by another southpaw in Game Two, as reliever-turned-starter C.J. Wilson combined with the Texas 'pen to blank the Rays 6-0. Wilson surrendered just two hits in 6.1 innings, with 7 K's and 2 walks.

James Shields wasn't near as effective, getting the hook after giving up four earned runs in 4.1 innings. Shields made an errant throw attempting to catch Elvis Andrus sleeping at first base, allowing Matt Treanor to jog home in the third inning. Ian Kinsler cracked a solo homer the next inning. Chad Qualls came on in the fifth with runners on first and second and promptly allowed a three-run laser of a home run to Michael Young, hit to straight-away center field. Texas tacked on another run on a Kinsler single later in the fifth, and Wilson and a pair of Darrens (O'Day and Oliver) kept the cowbells silent for the remainder of the game.

Facing elimination in Game Three, the Rays sent Matt Garza to the Arlington mound to take on Colby Lewis, who turned in a fantastic 2010 season in his first year back from Japan. Texas got on the board in the third inning. Mitch

Moreland doubled, then advanced to third on a John Jaso passed ball. Moreland scored on an Andrus grounder.

Lewis kept the Rays scoreless through five-plus innings while walking a tightrope, whiffing and walking five batters each, but Tampa tied the game off the Texas bullpen in the sixth with B.J. Upton delivering a game-tying double off Alexi Ogando. Kinsler put the Rangers back on top in the seventh with a solo shot off Garza, but the game got away from Texas in the eighth.

Dan Johnson doubled off Dan Oliver and was replaced by pinch-runner Desmond Jennings. Carlos Pena (who had a 2-4, two-walk game) singled to even up the game. Texas brought in O'Day, who punched out Upton, then turned to closer Neftali Feliz to put out the fire.

Unfortunately for Texas, he stoked it instead. Feliz walked Jason Bartlett, then Jaso followed with a single that scored Pena, giving the Rays a 3-2 advantage. The eighth seriously dented Texas' win probability, taking it from 79 percent at the beginning to 33 percent by the time the third out was recorded.

In the top of the ninth, Carl Crawford took Feliz deep, and Dustin Nippert proved no more effective by giving up a two-run shot to Pena later in the inning. Entering the bottom of the ninth, the Rangers had less than a one percent chance of victory. Cruz hit a solo home run off Rafael Soriano in the bottom of the ninth, but the Rays lived to fight another day with a 6-3 victory.

The next afternoon in Game Four (Champ LI 20.8), Tampa evened the series behind a quality outing by Wade Davis and big days at the dish from Evan Longoria and Pena. Pena tripled off the left center wall in the top of the second. Matt Joyce then hit a fly ball to shallow right field that second baseman Kinsler tried to grab while backpedaling, but he botched it and allowed Pena to plate the day's first run.

With Davis dealing, the Rays built up a big lead in the middle innings. Longoria and Pena hit back-to-back doubles off Tommy Hunter in the fourth, then B.J. Upton added a two-bagger of his own to make it 3-0 Rays. Hunter struck out seven hitters, but he lasted just four frames. Derek Holland added four Ks of his own in four innings of relief, but Longoria punched a two-run home run to left in the fifth to stretch Tampa's lead to five runs.

Texas got two back in the sixth, with Cruz taking Davis deep for his third homer of the series and Grant Balfour allowing an inherited runner to score on a Moreland double. But the Tampa 'pen clamped down after that, with Balfour handing off to Joaquin Benoit and Soriano to even the series at two games apiece.

Game 5 was a rematch of Game 1, with Lee squaring off against Price at the Trop. And with the right to advance

to the ALCS on the line, it was a big one (Champ LI 41.7). Andrus sparked the Rangers in the top of the first, hitting a single and then swiping second base later in the inning. With one out, Josh Hamilton slapped a ground ball to Pena, who underhanded to Price to get the second out. But Andrus, who was running on the play, rounded third and dashed home to make it 1-0 Rangers.

The third inning proved eventful. While the Rangers didn't get a run in the top half, Molina, he of a 1.2 Speed Score in 2010 (the average is about five), stole a base. Tampa tied the game in the bottom half. Sean Rodriguez singled to right, and Bartlett hit a weak roller on a curveball to the third base side of the infield that allowed him to reach base. Zobrist followed by knocking a pitch into center. Hamilton tried to gun down Rodriguez at the plate, but his throw was well off target and got by Molina, allowing Bartlett to go to third and Zobrist to mosey into second (.041 Champ WPA). Lee then got Crawford to poke a weak grounder back to the mound, and Bartlett got caught in a rundown for the second out of the inning. Longoria then grounded out to end the threat.

In the fourth, Cruz thumped a Price fastball to deep center field and stopped to admire his home... ah, crap, it didn't leave the park! Cruz turned on the jets to reach second. He then took off for third and scored when Rays catcher Kelly Shopach's throw flew into left field, making it 2-1 Texas. The play added 2.5 percent of a championship.

That's all the Rangers would need with Lee eviscerating Tampa hitters, but they added three more runs in the game. In the sixth inning, Guerrero and Cruz singled with one out. Kinsler hit a sharp grounder to Pena, who tossed to Bartlett to start a double play. Bartlett fired to Price at first, but Kinsler beat out the throw. Initially staring at the umpire, Price didn't notice a rumbling Vlad rounding third until it was too late. The Impaler and his 2.5 Speed Score bolstered Texas' lead to 3-1. Kinsler added a two-run dinger off Soriano in the ninth.

But let's turn back to Lee, the gum-chomping strike zone assassin. In a complete game victory, Lee fanned 11 Rays batters, walked none and allowed six hits. He threw 89 of his 120 pitches for strikes. Lee mixed his pitch selection more than in Game 1, throwing a fastball about 45 percent of the time while going to his cutter and curve often. The deuce was especially nasty; Clifford got five of his 11 Ks with the pitch. Led by Lee, the Rangers won their first-ever postseason series.

**Series MVP:** Lee, and it wasn't even close—he was worth a whopping 14.4 percent of a championship. His closest competitor was Kinsler, with a comparatively paltry six percent of a championship won.

**Series Goat:** Crawford will be remembered fondly by Rays fans if he departs via free agency. But he came up empty in this series, losing 6.5 percent of a championship for Tampa.

**Big Play:** Zobrist's single off Lee in the third inning of Game Five was worth 4.1 percent of a championship for the Rays.

### NLDS: Atlanta Braves vs. San Francisco Giants

Tim Lincecum didn't throw a no-no to start his playoff career, but the mop-topped ace was phenomenal in his own right. Lincecum fanned 14 Braves in a complete-game shut-out, getting 31 swinging strikes in 119 pitches. Timmy's much-discussed fastball might not reach the mid-90s anymore, but it was deadly at an average of 91 mph against Atlanta. Lincecum effectively climbed the ladder with the pitch, busting out the breaking ball to get swings out of the zone to the glove side and burying changeups in the dirt to the arm side. Derek Lowe (5.1 IP, 1 ER, 4 BB, 6 K) was decent, but nowhere near Lincecum's level. Rookie backstop Buster Posey went 2-for-4 and knocked in a run as the Giants won 1-0.

In Game Two, San Francisco looked poised to head to Atlanta with a commanding series lead. A three-run bomb by the Lazarus-like Pat Burrell and a single by Matt Cain had the Giants up 4-0 on Tommy Hanson by the second inning. A seething Bobby Cox got the boot in the second, arguing that Giants first baseman Aubrey Huff took his foot off the bag snagging a throw from shortstop Juan Uribe.

Cain (6.2 IP, 0 ER, 2 BB, 6 K) was excellent, and even after a Burrell error and Brian McCann plating a run in the sixth, the Giants were in control 4-1. But things got hairy for the Giants' bullpen in the eighth inning. Sergio Romo allowed a pair of singles to start the frame, and bearded wonder Brian Wilson came in. Third baseman Pablo Sandoval then made a costly mistake, throwing wide of first base and tightening the score to 4-2. After a Brooks Conrad sacrifice, Alex Gonzalez smacked a game-tying double to the left field wall. Wilson got out of the inning and tossed a scoreless ninth, but he showed his frustration in the dugout by ripping a towel in half like it was a piece of tissue paper.

The Atlanta and San Fran 'pens traded zeroes until the 11th, when persona non grata Rick Ankiel hit a home run off Ramon Ramirez that proved to be the difference in the game. Ankiel's shot, worth 3.6 percent of a championship, allowed the Braves to leave the Bay having tied the series 1-1.

Back at Turner Field in Game Three, the Braves sent Tim Hudson to the mound against Jonathan Sanchez. Mirroring his regular season performance, when he posted an ERA over a run lower than his fielding independent ERA, Hudson danced in and out of trouble. He allowed just one unearned

run in seven innings despite issuing four walks, compensating with 5 Ks and 10 grounders.

The Giants got on the board in the second, as Mike Fontenot whacked a triple to right center that shook up Jayson Heyward. The next batter, Cody Ross, hit a fly ball to shallow right that second baseman Conrad tried to haul in. His back to the infield, Conrad bobbled the ball and it dropped, allowing Fontenot to score. It was Conrad's second error of the day, as he mishandled a Freddy Sanchez grounder in the first. Unfortunately for the Braves, it wouldn't be the last E-4 of the day.

Jonathan Sanchez was phenomenal for San Fran, striking out 11 hitters in 7.1 innings while allowing just two hits and one walk. With a runner on first in the eighth, Bruce Bochy went to his bullpen and brought in Romo. Pinch-hitter and postseason good luck charm Eric Hinske came up huge for Cox, taking a hanging slider and depositing it just over the right field fence to give the Braves a 2-1 lead (.072 Champ WPA). Atlanta's win probability soared from 29 percent to 87 percent on the bomb.

With Billy Wagner out of commission with an oblique injury suffered in Game Two, the Braves handed the ball to rookie Craig Kimbrel in the ninth. Armed with upper-90s gas and a biting slider, Kimbrel struck out nearly two batters per inning during his first foray in the majors. But this appearance didn't go as swimmingly. Travis Ishikawa walked with one out, and Freddy Sanchez singled to center with two outs in the frame. Mike Dunn relieved Kimbrel, but a Huff single then tied the game at 2-2 (.044 Champ WPA). Atlanta's win probability declined to 52 percent.

And then, Conrad added a third blunder. Cox brought in Peter Moylan to induce a grounder, and the side-arming Aussie did get Posey to hit the ball to second. But the ball went right through Conrad's legs and into the outfield, allowing Sanchez to trot home for a 3-2 Giants lead (.046 Championship WPA for the Giants). Kyle Farnsworth got Nate Schierholtz swinging to end the inning, but the Braves now had just a 15 percent chance of winning Game Three. McCann hit a two out single off Wilson in the bottom of the ninth, but San Francisco's cave man closer then got Nate McLouth to ground out and seal the victory.

In Game Four, San Francisco trotted out 21-year-old Madison Bumgarner to combat Lowe, who was pitching on short rest. Both starters turned in admirable performances, with Bumgarner going six strong while allowing six hits and a walk while striking out five. Lowe doesn't typically rack up the Ks, but he punched out eight Giants while surrendering two hits and two walks in 6.1 innings. The game would be decided after the starters left, though.



Bumgarner wiggled out of a bases-loaded jam in the second, but the Braves kicked off the scoring in the third. Omar Infante and Matt Diaz singled to start the inning, then Infante advanced to third on a Derek Lee fly ball to deep right field. McCann followed with a sac fly to right that brought Infante in for a 1-0 lead.

San Francisco evened the score on a Ross solo shot off Lowe in the sixth, and McCann answered in the bottom half with a solo homer of his own to put the Braves back on top.

That lead wouldn't last. Lowe walked Huff with one out, then Posey hit a 45-foot single to third baseman Troy Glaus that put runners on the corners. The sinkerballer then issued another free pass to Burrell, and Cox called on Moylan to bail the Braves out of a bases-loaded jam.

As in Game Three, Moylan got the grounder Cox sought. Juan Uribe hit a sharp ground ball that shortstop Alex Gonzalez had to dive to his right for. On his knees, Gonzalez turned and flipped to Infante at second to try to force out Burrell, but the throw took Infante off the bag. The error scored Huff to make the score 2-2.

Jonny Venters was then brought into the game, and he got pinch-hitter Aaron Rowand swinging to get the second out. However, Ross hit a seeing-eye single that plated Posey. Burrell tried to beat the throw from Diaz, but McCann blocked the plate. Still, the big hit put the Giants on top 3-2, and the Giants' win probability jumped from 25 percent at the beginning of the seventh to 66 percent at the end.

Santiago Casilla pitched 1.2 innings of scoreless relief for the Giants, and Javier Lopez got Heyward swinging to end the eighth. Venters and Kimbrel kept Atlanta in the game, setting the stage for one final stand against Wilson in the bottom of the ninth.

Poor Conrad popped out as a pinch-hitter to begin the inning, but things got interesting after Wilson walked both Ankiel and Hinske. Wilson recovered, though, striking out Infante and getting Melky Cabrera to ground out. With that, the Giants advanced to the NLCS, and Cox called it a career with one of the strongest managerial resumes of all time. In a classy gesture, the Giants stopped their celebration to give an ovation to Cox.

**Series MVP:** Hinske, whose pinch-hit slam gave the Braves a (temporary) lead late in Game Three. Overall, Hinske won 8.4 percent of a championship, despite not starting a single game.

**Series Goat:** Romo. The Giants reliever lost 8.4 percent of a championship while giving up three runs in 0.2 innings, including Hinske's homer.

**Big Play:** You guessed it—Hinske's dinger off Romo in Game Three was worth 7.2 percent of a championship.

## NLDS: Cincinnati Reds vs. Philadelphia Phillies

The Doctor will no-hit you now: In his first ever post-season start, Roy Halladay became just the second pitcher in playoff history to throw a no-hitter. Don Larsen was the first, achieving perfection for the New York Yankees against the Brooklyn Dodgers in the 1956 World Series. Doc struck out eight, allowing a single walk while throwing 79 of his 104 pitches for strikes. As if that weren't enough, Halladay helped chase Reds starter Edinson Volquez by knocking in a run in the second inning, and the Phillies went on to win 4-0.

Masterfully mixing two-seamers, cutters, curveballs and changeups, Halladay generated 12 ground ball outs. The hardest-hit ball of the night for the Reds probably came off the bat of pitcher Travis Wood, who relieved a wild Volquez (1.2 IP, 4 ER, 2 BB) and lined a pitch to right field in the third inning. Luckily for the history books, Jayson Werth made a slick sliding grab. Halladay's no-hit bid nearly ended on what ended up being the final pitch of the game. Brandon Phillips hit a weak grounder that dribbled up the first base line, coming to a stop right in front of his bat. Catcher Carlos Ruiz picked it up, dropped to his knees and fired to first baseman Ryan Howard, and the celebration started.

The Reds very easily could have evened the series in Game Two, but the game will instead go down in infamy due to a flurry of defensive 'Doh!'s

Cincy built a 4-0 lead off Roy Oswalt by the fifth inning, with Phillips and Jay Bruce homering and Chase Utley uncharacteristically making a pair of throwing errors. Philly chipped away at that lead, with Phillips and Scott Rolen booting balls and Utley knocking in two runs in the bottom of the fifth. Taking over for Bronson Arroyo in the sixth, Arthur Rhodes and Logan Ondrusek plunked a batter each. Ondrusek walked Shane Victorino with the bases loaded to make the game 4-3 Reds.

The radar gun's worst enemy, Aroldis Chapman, hit Utley with a 101 mph fastball in the seventh. Chapman then whiffed Howard on three heaters—100, 99 and 101 mph respectively. Werth chopped a ball to Rolen, who threw late to second base trying to get a force play on Utley.

And then, disaster struck. Jimmy Rollins sent a 100 mph pitch to right field that Bruce short-armed. The ball bounced past Bruce and rolled toward the wall, with center fielder Drew Stubbs tracking it down and Phillips bobbling the subsequent cutoff throw. Utley and Werth scampered home, and just like that, the Phillies took a 5-4 lead. Cincinnati's win expectancy prior to the blunder was 55 percent. After? 19.8 percent. The Phillies eventually padded their lead to 7-4, and the Phillies 'pen quelled the Reds' offensive attack. Oh, what might have been.

With their backs against the wall in Game Three, the Reds sent Johnny Cueto to the mound to face Philadelphia's Cole Hamels. Cueto was good. But Hamels was better.

Philly picked up a run in the first inning, with the Reds' defensive nightmare picking up where it left off. Placido Polanco singled to center, and Howard took a pitch the opposite way later in the frame to put runners on first and third. With two outs, Werth hit a 3-2 slider to shortstop Orlando Cabrera, but the throw drew Joey Votto off the first base bag to give the Phillies a 1-0 lead.

In the fifth, Utley cranked a Cueto pitch to right center. Cincy center fielder Stubbs leaped in hopes of making a homer-saving catch, but he came up empty—a fan snagged it first. The play was reviewed, and it was determined that the ball crossed the wall before the fan got his souvenir. 2-0 Phillies.

Cueto went five innings, allowing just those two runs (one earned). Homer Bailey, Bill Bray, Nick Masset and Chapman combined to keep Philly from doing further damage, but it didn't matter with Hamels crafting a gem of a game. The lefty threw a complete game shutout, whiffing nine Reds without issuing a walk. Hamels threw a first pitch strike less than half of the time (15 of 31 batters faced), but he induced 20 swinging strikes and tortured Cincinnati with his low-to-mid-90s fastball, plus change and newly added cutter.

**Series MVP:** Hamels, who won 3.8 percent of a championship for the Phillies. Halladay ranks right behind him. It might seem crazy that a no-no gets second place here, but the difference is that Hamels' pitching came in a closer contest, meaning that he got his outs in higher leverage situations.

**Series Goat:** Chapman, though this one isn't really fair. The electric lefty technically lost 4.5 percent of a championship for the Reds overall, but 3.3 percent of that came on Bruce's shoulda-had-it blunder and Phillips' bobble.

**Big Play:** The aforementioned Bruce and Phillips double error, costing Cincinnati 3.3 percent of a championship.

### ALCS: New York Yankees vs. Texas Rangers

In Game One (Champ LI 26.0), the Rangers opened up an early lead against an uncharacteristically sloppy CC Sabathia. Following an Elvis Andrus walk and a Michael Young single that advanced Andrus to third, Josh Hamilton pulled an 0-2 slider just over the right field fence to put the Bombers down 3-0. Sabathia pitched himself into further trouble later in the inning, allowing a Nelson Cruz single and walking Ian Kinsler and Matt Treanor. CC then air-mailed a first-pitch fastball to Jorge Cantu that got by Jorge Posada. Luckily, the ball bounced off the backstop and into Posada's glove, and the catcher flipped the ball to a charging Sabathia. The big

man dove and managed to tag Cruz before he crossed the plate, ending a disastrous inning.

By contrast, C.J. Wilson was stellar. He kept the Yankees off the scoreboard through the first four frames, and the game looked well in hand when Young doubled off Sabathia to score two in the bottom of the fourth. With a 5-0 lead, Texas' win probability crept up to nearly 94 percent.

Wilson took a shutout into the top of the seventh, but Robinson Cano ended the Yankees' scoring drought with a solo homer. Even so, Wilson got out of the inning without further damage. When he took the bump in the top of the eighth, the Rangers' win probability stood at 96 percent.

And that's when it all came unraveled. Brett Gardner chopped a grounder to first baseman Cantu, who flipped to Wilson at first. But a diving Gardner beat the throw. Derek Jeter then ripped a pitch just inside the third base chalk for a double, bringing Gardner around to score from first. Rangers manager Ron Washington called on Darren Oliver to douse the flames, but the lefty brought his gas can instead. Oliver walked Nick Swisher and Mark Teixeira to load the bases, taking Texas' win probability from 87 percent to 69 percent. Darren O'Day then allowed an A-Rod base hit that plated Jeter and Teixeira, making the score 5-4 and lowering the home team's chances of winning to 53 percent.

With his club desperately needing outs in a high-leverage situation, Washington then turned to ... Clay Rapada, he of a career 5.63 FIP in the majors. Granted, Rapada had been much more successful at the Triple-A level, but why Washington chose Rapada instead of Neftali Feliz is puzzling. If his hope was to get the platoon advantage against Cano (to the extent of ignoring the relative quality of the pitcher overall), it backfired: Cano sliced a pitch up the middle to score Teixeira and tie the game at five apiece. Hamilton couldn't play the hop cleanly, allowing Rodriguez to advance to third base.

Cano's hit was worth 4.1 percent of a championship. Texas' win probability dropped to 26 percent. Derek Holland entered the game, and Marcus Thames singled to score A-Rod and give New York a 6-5 lead. Holland managed to escape the inning after that, but the Rangers came to bat in the bottom of the eighth with a 33 percent chance of winning the game.

Kerry Wood walked Ian Kinsler to start the inning, but hopes of a rally were quickly quashed when Kinsler got picked off first. Wood retired the next two batters, and Holland kept the Yankees scoreless in the top of the ninth. Mariano Rivera allowed a leadoff single to pinch-hitter Mitch Moreland, and Andrus sacrificed him to second. But the postseason demi-god whiffed Young and got Hamilton to ground out, handing the Rangers a bitterly disappointing Game One loss.

Texas wasted little time leaving that implosion behind, hopping on Phil Hughes in the early innings of Game Two.

Andrus led off the game with an infield single, then advanced to second on a wild pitch. With Hamilton at the plate, Andrus took off for third and beat Posada's throw. After Hamilton walked (one of four on the day), the Rangers executed a double steal: Posada chucked the ball to second, Cano cut it off and threw home in an attempt to get Andrus, but it was off line. Andrus stole home to give the Rangers a 1-0 lead.

In the second, David Murphy smacked a solo home run to make it 2-0 Texas. Moreland and Andrus followed with singles, and Young doubled to right field to bring around Moreland. 3-0 Rangers. The scoring continued in the third. Cruz doubled, and Kinsler sacrificed him to third even though there were no outs. Murphy then rapped a Hughes curveball to right field, scoring Cruz. A Bengie Molina double in the next at-bat brought Murphy home and increased Texas' advantage to five runs. Texas' win probability soared to 93 percent.

The Yankees, meanwhile, had trouble putting up crooked numbers against Colby Lewis. New York made solid contact against Lewis in the second inning, with Swisher doubling and Cano and Lance Berkman driving balls deep to right field. But both Cano's and Berkman's shots were caught and Lewis escaped the inning unscathed.

Cano got the Bombers on the board in the fourth. He doubled to deep center, then advanced to third on a wild pitch. Lewis whiffed Swisher and Posada, but Berkman scorched a grounder to first base that Moreland couldn't quite snag. The ball rolled into foul territory, allowing Cano to score, but Berkman got caught in no-man's land between first and second and was tagged out.

Texas chased Hughes from the game in the fifth: Joe Girardi gave him the hook after Cruz crushed a cutter off the center field wall for a double and Kinsler followed with a triple that evaded a diving, tumbling Swisher to make it 6-1 Rangers. Joba Chamberlain got the next two batters to whiff, but Moreland dinked a single to the left side of the infield to score Kinsler. That closed the book on Hughes' outing: four-plus frames, 10 hits, seven runs, and three Ks and walks apiece.

New York got one more run on an upper-deck moon shot off the bat of Cano (estimated distance: 448 feet), but that was it for the club. Lewis (5.2 IP, 6 H, 2 R, 3 BB, 6 K) handed off to the bullpen, and this time, the late innings were happily uneventful. With a 7-2 win, the Rangers evened the ALCS.

In Game Three (Champ LI 31.2), Cliff Lee continued his postseason reign of terror by making a mockery of the game's most potent offense. Lee shredded the Yankees for 13 strikeouts over eight spotless innings, showing exquisite control by throwing 82 of his 122 pitches for strikes and walking only one batter. Kudos to Posada and Gardner, the only New

York hitters to collect a base hit against a hurler showing off four plus pitches.

Lee threw 73 percent of his cutters for strikes, and 69 percent of his fastballs. He got whiffs with all of his pitches, particularly his changeup and curveball, which Lee used more through his first three postseason starts (about 12 percent, compared to six percent during the regular season).

Despite Lee's dominance, this game remained close late into the Bronx night. Andy Pettitte turned in a strong start, going seven innings while striking out five, issuing zero walks and surrendering five hits. The Rangers struck early—Josh Hamilton pulled a Pettitte cutter over the shallow right field corner for a two-run homer, adding 2.9 percent of a championship—but the lefty settled down and kept Texas silent after that. Wood worked a clean eighth inning, but the Rangers opened up a can on the Yankees' pen in the ninth.

Hamilton led off by taking a Boone Logan fastball the other way. Left fielder Gardner couldn't cut the ball off before it rolled to the wall, allowing Hamilton to trot into second. Girardi brang in David Robertson, and all heck broke loose.

Vladimir Guerrero moved Hamilton to third on a single hit to left field, yanking a curveball just barely above ankle-level. Cruz then whacked another curve into left, scoring Hamilton and advancing pinch-runner Julio Borbon to third. Following a wild pitch that moved Cruz to second, Girardi called for an intentional walk of pinch-hitter Murphy to load the bases, hoping to get Molina to bounce into an inning-ending double play.

Bengie did hit a grounder, but he popped a curve through the hole between A-Rod and Jeter to plate Borbon and make it 4-0 Texas. The next batter, Moreland, lined one inside the first base line that scored Cruz and Murphy. An Andrus fly ball sailed over Swisher's head in right in the next at-bat, bringing home Molina and moving Moreland to the hot corner. 7-0 Rangers. Sergio Mitre entered the now hopeless game and uncorked a wild pitch. Posada flipped to home plate before Moreland slid in, but Mitre couldn't get a handle on the ball and it bounced away.

The Yankees received a hardy mock cheer once they finally recorded the third out of the inning, and Feliz set the club down 1-2-3 in the bottom of the ninth to put Texas up 2-1 in the ALCS.

Game Four pitted Texas' and New York's weak links in the starting rotation, with Tommy Hunter looking to put the Rangers one game away from the AL pennant and A.J. Burnett trying to even up the series. This one was close in the early innings. But by the time the seventh inning stretch rolled around, the Yankees had lost a star and sent some of the fans to the exits.



Burnett's curve, so often lost during the regular season, was on in the first two innings as he struck out three Rangers on the pitch. And New York struck in the bottom of the second, as Hunter served up a controversial solo homer hit to right field off the bat of Cano. Rangers right fielder Cruz jumped at the wall, attempting to rob Cano, but he couldn't snag the ball.

Cruz claimed fan interference, pointing to the purported perpetrators, but a review determined that the ball crossed the wall before the fans got grabby. Another replay was needed later in the frame—Berkman crushed a pitch that straddled the right field foul pole. While it was originally called a homer, Berkman's would-be blast was ultimately nullified.

Texas answered in the top of the third. Murphy walked (one of three passes he'd draw in the game), then advanced to second on a wild pitch. Molina, squaring to bunt, got hit by a Burnett curve, then Moreland curiously bunted to third to move the runners over. Andrus roped a grounder toward first baseman Teixeira in the next at-bat. While Teixeira made a fantastic snag and flipped to Burnett to get Andrus, Murphy scored to make the score 1-1. The Yankees could have gotten out of the inning without further damage, but Rodriguez couldn't get a handle on a weakly hit grounder by Young, allowing Texas to take a 2-1 lead.

New York's fortunes improved over the next few innings, though, as Jeter tripled off the center field wall and came in to score on a Curtis Granderson single in the third. Hunter got pulled in the fourth with one out, but not before he loaded the bases for Derek Holland. The next batter, Gardner, slapped a grounder deep in the hole to Andrus, who sprawled and fired to third to get an out. A run scored, however, giving the Yankees a 3-2 advantage. While Holland got out of the jam without further damage, things were looking up for New York—its win probability stood at 63 percent.

But then it all fell apart for the home team. First, Teixeira strained his hamstring trying to beat out a grounder in the fifth, knocking him out of the game and ultimately out of the postseason altogether. Holland and Darren Oliver shut down those pinstripe batters in relief, and the Rangers' offense exploded.

Texas scored seven unanswered runs. In the sixth, Molina slammed a three-run homer off Burnett (.075 Champ WPA) to put Texas up 5-3. The catcher's big fly took the Rangers' win probability from 34 percent all the way up to 73 percent. A.J. was pulled later in the inning, but the Yankees bullpen provided little relief. Hamilton hit two homers, one off Logan and the other off Mitre, and Cruz took Mitre deep as well. Guerrero finished 4-for-5, and Molina had three hits in four at-bats. By the end of the massacre, the Rangers had 10 runs and a commanding 3-1 series lead.

Facing elimination in Game Five (20.8 Champ LI), the Yankees handed the ball to Sabathia. While Carsten Charles coughed up 11 hits in six innings pitched, he largely avoided danger by pitching out of tough spots, avoiding walks and getting swings and misses. With the Yankees' bats coming to life, that was more than enough to ensure this series headed back to Arlington.

New York jumped out to a huge lead in the early innings. Rangers starter Wilson struggled badly with his control in the second, walking both Rodriguez and Berkman on four straight pitches. Singles by Posada and Granderson brought A-Rod and Big Puma around to score. Posada also scored on the Granderson base knock after right fielder Jeff Francoeur's throw to third skipped past Young. Wilson picked the ball up and tried to nail Posada at home, but he air-mailed the throw to catcher Treanor.

The Yankees didn't rest on that three-run advantage, either, as Swisher and Cano banded back-to-back homers in the third inning. With a 5-0 lead at home, the Yankees' win probability sat at 91 percent.

The Rangers got a bunch of bloopers and bleeders to fall in against Sabathia, but couldn't string those hits together. Treanor, he of a career .310 slugging percentage, smoked a Sabathia fastball into the left field bleachers in the fifth to get rid of Texas' goose egg. Moreland and Young singled later in the inning, setting up Hamilton with a prime chance to draw the Rangers closer, but Hamilton grounded into a double play to end the threat.

The Yankees added a run in the fifth on a Berkman sac fly, but Texas looked poised to break through against CC in the sixth by loading the bases with one out. While Murphy, Kinsler and Francoeur singles loaded 'em up, Sabathia got Treanor to ground out (scoring Murphy) and then got Moreland looking on a front door slider. Sabathia finished the night with seven strikeouts and no walks issued, quite the contrast to his Texas counterpart (two Ks, four walks in five innings). Lacking fine touch for his cutter, slider and curveball, Wilson threw just 52 percent of his pitches for strikes, while Sabathia got a strike 66 percent of the time while spotting his heater and slide piece adeptly.

Michael Kirkman and Wood threw two scoreless innings apiece, but the Yankees tacked on another run in the eighth when Granderson whacked a 96-mph fastball from Alexi Ogando just over the right field wall. Rivera made his first appearance since Game One in the ninth, and the Yankees picked up their second win of the series.

When the Rangers inked Lewis last winter to a two-year, \$5 million contract with a dirt cheap option for 2012, they hoped his success in Japan would translate back to the States. While Lewis' scouting reports were intriguing and the vari-



ous projection systems expected good things, it was hard to tell for sure what a guy with all of half a win above replacement in his major league career would do. Well, after racking up over four WAR during the 2010 season, Lewis answered any questions about his ability to succeed in the bigs. And in Game Six, a game about 42 times as important as an average regular season ball game, he pitched the Rangers to their first ever World Series berth.

Lewis was masterful, giving up just three hits and one run in eight innings pitched. He struck out seven while walking three, rarely getting behind the batter at the get-go. Lewis threw a first pitch strike 64 percent of the time. He worked New York's lefty-laden lineup with fastballs on the outside corner, and pounded the lower half of the zone with sliders against righties. Lewis threw his fastball for a strike 70 percent of the time, and his slider 77 percent. His heat got just one whiff in 57 pitches, but his slider was whiffed at six times in 26 pitches. The only Yankee to score was Rodriguez, who doubled in the fifth, advanced to third on a fly out and came home on a wild pitch.

Hughes, by contrast, turned in a stinker. Despite putting lots of runners on, Hughes entered the fifth having surrendered just one run. Things got out of hand in that inning, though, with two outs and a runner on third base. Girardi called for an intentional walk of Hamilton (one of three on the night) to put runners on the corners for Guerrero. Vlad roped a hanging curveball into deep center field, bringing home both Moreland and Hamilton to put Texas on top 3-1. Vlad's dagger was worth 5.6 percent of a championship.

Girardi turned to Robertson to stop the bleeding, but it didn't work. Cruz left Game Five with a hamstring injury, but he then proved the hammy's just fine, thanks, by walloping a fastball over the center field wall to make it 5-1 Rangers. That sequence was absolutely devastating for the Yankees, taking the team's win probability from 43 percent to a paltry nine percent. Hughes' final line? 4.2 innings, four hits, runs and walks apiece, and three strikeouts.

Texas added a run off Wood in the seventh, and Feliz shut down the Yankees in the ninth after Lewis exited. With two outs and a 1-2 count on Rodriguez, Feliz perfectly spotted a slider on the outside corner. A Rod's knees buckled as he took the called third strike, and the fireworks and dog piling commenced.

**Series MVP:** Lee. The lefty won 10.8 percent of a World Series title for Texas. His rotation mate Lewis came in second with a .088 Champ WPA, and Molina was third with a .079 Champ WPA.

**Series Goat:** Hughes gets the sordid honor here, costing New York 7.7 percent of a championship. Swisher and Burnett don't have much to be proud about here, either.

**Big Play:** Molina's three-run shot off Burnett in Game Four was worth 7.5 percent of a World Series title.

### NLCS: San Francisco Giants vs. Philadelphia Phillies

In what was billed as the greatest pitching matchup in the history of Western civilization, Tim Lincecum, coming off his 14 K masterpiece against Atlanta, toed the rubber against Roy Halladay, who no-hit the Reds his last time out. Given that backdrop, who'da thunk that Cody Ross would steal the show?

Halladay and Lincecum traded zeroes during the first two innings. But Ross, acquired in August from the Florida Marlins, roped one of Doc's two-seamers into the left-center bleachers to give San Francisco a 1-0 lead. Carlos Ruiz answered with a solo dinger of his own in the bottom of the third, taking a Lincecum fastball the other way.

Ross rocked Halladay again in the fifth, launching another fastball into the cheap seats to put the Giants back on top. That San Fran lead increased to 3-1 in the sixth. Buster Posey singled, and Pat Burrell tortured his long-time employers by driving one to the left field wall that a leaping Raul Ibanez couldn't haul in. Posey scored, with Burrell coasting into second base. Juan Uribe then singled up the middle to bring around pinch-runner Nate Schierholtz, Uribe advancing to second on Shane Victorino's throw home.

The Phillies wouldn't go down silently, however. Chase Utley hit a grounder back toward the mound that caromed off Lincecum's glove and continued rolling, slowing enough that Utley beat out Uribe's throw to first base. Lincecum whiffed Ryan Howard, but Jayson Werth popped an opposite field homer to slice the Giants' lead to 4-3.

Halladay (8 H, 4 R, 0 BB, 7 K) and Lincecum (6 H, 3 R, 3 BB, 8 K) both exited after seven innings, leaving the bullpens to battle it out. Ryan Madson and Brad Lidge both tossed a scoreless inning for the Phillies, though Lights Out made things interesting by loading the bases first. But the Phightin's couldn't get to Javier Lopez or Brian Wilson.

Lefty Lopez retired Utley and Howard in the eighth, then Bruce Bochy brought in his closer for the four-out save. Werth singled, but Wilson got Jimmy Rollins swinging to end the inning. In the bottom of the ninth, Wilson struck out Ibanez then plunked Ruiz. He recovered, though, whiffing pinch-hitter Ross Gload and Victorino to give the Giants a Game 1 win.

In Game Two, "Little Roy" came up huge for the Phillies. Midseason trade pickup Roy Oswalt shut down the Giants lineup for eight innings, allowing just three hits and a run while striking out nine and walking three. The only San Francisco batter to touch up Oswalt was sudden slugger

Ross, who punched his third home run of the series into the stands in the fifth inning.

Roy's biggest swing-and-miss offering was his fastball, which got a whiff 11 of the 72 times that he threw it. Overall, Oswalt threw his fastball for a strike 69 percent of the time. His performance was especially impressive considering that the strike zone appeared to be awfully small in this game. According to PITCHf/x data from TexasLeaguers, 10 pitches that Oswalt threw within the strike zone were called balls, and several more right on the border went in the batter's favor. Only three out-of-zone pitches were called strikes.

Giants starter Jonathan Sanchez also got squeezed at times, with six in-zone pitches being called balls and no out-of-zone pitches being called strikes. The Phillies struck in the bottom of the first, with Utley drawing a walk with one out and then swiping second base. Placido Polanco then hit a grounder to third baseman Mike Fontenot, but Fontenot's throw to first was wide and pulled Aubrey Huff off the bag. With runners on first and third, Howard walked to load 'em up. Sanchez K'd Werth, but Rollins then drew a free pass to force in a run on one of those aforementioned questionable calls. Sanchez escaped the inning by striking out Ibanez.

The game remained tied at 1-1 until the fifth when Victorino doubled, advanced to third on an Utley fly ball and scored on a Polanco sac-fly. But the game got away from San Francisco in the seventh. Oswalt led off the inning with a single to center field that a sliding Andre Torres couldn't quite snag. Bruce Bochy took Sanchez (6 IP, 5 H 3 R, 2 ER, 3 BB, 7 K) out of the game and brought in Ramon Ramirez to face Victorino. He sacrificed Oswalt to second, and the Giants then intentionally walked Utley to put runners on first and second with one out (according to win probability, the intentional walk cost the Giants 1.2 percent).

Polanco followed with a single up the middle to score a run. Torres' throw was cut off by Huff, who turned and fired home, but Oswalt slid in ahead of Posey's tag at the plate. Jeremy Affeldt was brought in to face Howard. During Howard's AB, Philly executed a double steal to move Utley to third and Polanco to second. Howard eventually punched out, and Werth was then intentionally walked to load the bases. Bochy called on Santiago Casilla, who got behind Rollins 2-0 and then surrendered a double deep off the right field fence that plated Utley, Polanco and Werth. With a 6-1 lead, the Phillies' win probability skyrocketed to 98 percent. Oswalt tossed a scoreless eighth and Madson followed suit in the ninth, evening the NLCS at one game apiece.

Back in the Bay for Game Three, the Giants enjoyed a gem of a start from Matt Cain. Cain went seven scoreless innings, striking out five Phillies, walking three and surrendering two hits. The big righty didn't get a lot of swings and misses—just

10 in 119 pitches—but he spotted his fastball and curveball well.

Philly's Cole Hamels was on his game, too, punching out eight batters, walking one and allowing five hits in six innings. Hamels' curveball has basically gone the way of the dodo bird over the years, but he used the pitch 22 times in 101 pitches in this game and got a strike 68 percent of the time. However, San Francisco broke through against the lefty in the middle innings.

Edgar Renteria led off the fourth with a single, and Freddy Sanchez sacrificed him to second (costing the Giants 1.8 percent in win probability in the process). Posey whiffed, but Burrell walked. Postseason hero Ross then brought the fans to their feet again by singing a low fastball into left field to score Renteria and move Burrell to third. Huff followed with a single just out of the reach of second baseman Utley, putting the Giants up 2-0 and boosting the club's win probability to 80 percent. A Sanchez base hit on a ball Utley booted scored Aaron Rowand in the fifth, increasing San Fran's chance of victory to 89 percent.

While Hamels held the Giants scoreless in the sixth and Jose Contreras threw two clean innings in relief, it didn't matter with Cain dealing and then both Lopez and Wilson working a scoreless frame. San Francisco took Game Three and a 2-1 lead in the series in the process.

Welcome to Game Four (Champ LI 31.2), otherwise known as the Buster Posey Show. The rookie backstop put together a monstrous 4-for-5 showing at the plate. Despite that outburst, this one would be a nail-biter.

Posey wasted little time putting the Giants in the lead. Freddy Sanchez knocked a Joe Blanton slider to left field in the first inning, then advanced to second on a wild pitch. Kentucky Joe skipped another one by Carlos Ruiz with Posey at the plate, advancing Sanchez to third, and Posey hit one up the middle to plate Sanchez. Posey was at it again in the third, doubling over left fielder Ben Francisco's head and scoring Huff to give San Francisco a 2-0 lead.

However, Philly answered in the top of the fifth. Francisco and Ruiz led off with singles, and Blanton moved the runners over with a sacrifice bunt. A Shane Victorino single scored Francisco, but center fielder Rowand's throw home nailed "Chooch."

The damage was far from over, though. Utley singled, and Bochy replaced starter Madison Bumgarner with Casilla. The reliever left a slider over the fat part of the plate to Polanco, who doubled to bring in both Victorino and Utley to make it 3-2 Phillies. Bochy called for an intentional walk of Howard to put runners on first and second. Casilla lost control, hitting Werth and then tossing a wild pitch with Rollins at the plate that allowed Polanco to score. Talk about a lousy inning—the

Giants' win probability entering the top of the fifth was 72 percent. Exiting, it was 27 percent.

But San Francisco battled back over the next two innings, retaking the lead. Huff drove in Torres in the bottom of the fifth, and Pablo Sandoval, relegated to the bench earlier in the series, came up huge in the sixth. Chad Durbin came in to pitch the sixth, and he couldn't have started his night much worse. Burrell drew a walk, and Ross doubled to left field (.036 Champ WPA) to move Burrell to third. Sandoval then scorched a fastball into the left-center gap to score Burrell and Ross, putting the Giants on top 5-4 and boosting the club's win probability all the way up to 81 percent. Panda's pop was worth 3.3 percent of a championship. The Giants loaded the bases in the seventh, but this time Madson got Sandoval to ground into a double play to end the inning.

The seesaw game continued, though, as the Phillies pulled even in the eighth. Lefty Lopez, who pitched a scoreless seventh, was kept in to challenge Howard. But Howard laced a double into the left-center gap. Sergio Romo gave up a double to Werth in the next at-bat, Werth's knock just hitting the chalk down the left field line, to tie things up at 5-5. The pending free agent's timely knock was worth 4.6 percent of a championship.

After Wilson kept Philadelphia scoreless in the top of the ninth, Charlie Manuel turned to his scheduled Game Six starter, Oswalt, to pitch on two days rest. Oswalt got Sanchez to fly out for the first out. But Huff and Posey singled on a pair of changeups, with Posey's deep drive (.036 Champ WPA) moving Huff to third. Roy tossed Uribe another changeup and got him to hit a fly ball, but the shot was too deep and Huff slid home to put the Phillies on the brink of elimination.

Game Five (Champ LI 20.8) again was a battle of the aces, with Halladay and Lincecum going toe-to-toe. Both starters pitched well, but some shoddy Giants D and stellar relief pitching from the Phillies prevented the Giants from clinching a World Series berth at home.

Halladay looked mortal early on, walking (gasp!) Torres and allowing a single to Sanchez that moved Torres to third. Posey reached on a fielder's choice to second, scoring Torres. Doc settled down, however, despite pulling his groin during Ross' second-inning at-bat.

Philadelphia put up a three score in the third. Ibanez led off the inning with a single, then Lincecum came a little too far inside with a changeup and hit Ruiz. Halladay followed with a bizarre sac bunt. The bunt barely rolled past the plate, causing Posey to try to get Ibanez at third. While Ibanez slid in safe, and Sandoval wiped out, Sandoval got back up and threw across the diamond to get a gimpy Halladay at first.

The next batter, Victorino, hit a sharp liner to Huff at first. The ball caromed off Huff and into shallow center field, allowing Ibanez and Ruiz to come home and putting Victorino on second. A Polanco single scored Victorino to put Philly up 3-1. It looked like the game might get out of hand after Utley singled to center to put runners on first and third, but Lincecum wiggled out of the inning by retiring Howard and Werth.

San Francisco got one back in the fourth, as Burrell and Ross hit back-to-back doubles. That's all Halladay would give up, though. In six innings, he struck out five, walked two and threw strikes nearly 69 percent of the time. Lincecum also didn't allow any more runners to cross on his watch, either. He went seven innings, whiffing seven and walking one while throwing strikes 66 percent of the time.

Lincecum's strong start was in vain, however, as the Phillies' bullpen was lights-out and Werth added a solo homer off Ramon Ramirez in the ninth. Contreras and J.C. Romero combined to toss a clean seventh inning, Madson struck out the side in the eighth and Lidge managed not to give Manuel heartburn for a night by throwing a perfect ninth. This series would continue on the East Coast.

In Game Six, 42 times as important as an average regular season game, it was all hands on deck for San Francisco's pitching staff. And that was a good thing, because starter Jonathan Sanchez, after pitching quite well during his first two playoff starts, did his best Oliver Perez impression in this one.

With one out in the first, Sanchez walked Polanco on four straight balls. He then buried a fastball in the dirt to the glove side that got by Posey, allowing Polanco to trot into second base. Utley then doubled on an inside heater into the right field corner to plate Polanco. Howard went oppo to put runners on first and third, and Werth hit a sac-fly to bring in Utley for a 2-0 lead. Sanchez got out of that inning and sat the Phillies down in order in the second.

Oswalt, meanwhile, showed no ill effects from his Game Four 'pen appearance while throwing two scoreless innings to begin the game. The third frame was just plain wacky, though. Jonathan Sanchez led off the inning with a single that got by a sliding Utley. Then, Torres blasted a ball to deep center field. Victorino dashed toward the wall, his back to the diamond, and nearly made a Willie Mays-esque basket catch. But the ball sloshed around in his glove and dribbled out. Victorino threw back to the infield trying to get Torres caught between first and second, but he scrambled back to the first base bag in time.

Freddy Sanchez then sacrificed the runners over with no outs (lowering San Fran's win probability by 1.1 percent). Huff followed with a single to center to score Jonathan



Sanchez, but Torres was meat at the plate. Victorino's throw home skipped off the pitcher's mound and right into Ruiz's glove, and Ruiz held on to the ball as Torres tried to bowl him over.

With two out, Oswalt jammed Posey with an inside fast-ball, and the rookie backstop hit a weak grounder toward third base. Polanco charged, bare-handed the ball and fired to first, but the throw was wide and Howard couldn't quite snag it, bringing home Huff to tie the game at 2-2.

Over the next few innings, both clubs threatened to break open the game, but neither could get that big hit in a high-leverage situation. Jonathan Sanchez walked Polanco again to begin the bottom of the third, then beamed Utley. On the way to first base, Philly's second baseman picked up the ball that hit him and flipped it back to the mound. Sanchez and Utley exchanged some words, and the benches cleared. After some light pushing and lots of standing around, both teams went back to their dugouts. Bochy had seen enough of Sanchez, though, giving his starter the hook. Sanchez threw 50 pitches in two-plus innings, just 24 of them for strikes.

Luckily for the Giants, their 'pen rose to the occasion. Jeremy Affeldt whiffed Howard, got Werth to fly out and induced a grounder against Shane Victorino.

Oswalt made the hometown fans sweat in the fifth inning. Pinch-hitter Fontenot began the frame with a single, and after Torres struck out on a mid-60s curveball, Freddy Sanchez lined a single to center to put runners on first and second for Huff. But Oswalt then got Huff to foul out to the third base side, and blew a 94-mph fastball by Posey to end the inning.

Affeldt worked an easy fourth inning for the Giants, but Bumgarner got into a world of trouble in the fifth.

Rollins led off the inning with a single, and Bumgarner then got Polanco and Utley to fly out. However, Howard doubled to left center to put runners on second and third, and Bochy called for an intentional walk of Werth (boosting Philly's win probability by 1.6 percent—why walk him with two out?) to bring up Victorino with the bases loaded. Bumgarner got Victorino to hit a grounder right back to the mound, tossing to first baseman Huff to keep the game tied. Whew.

Oswalt threw a scoreless sixth, getting Renteria to hit into an inning-ending double play after he gave up a Ross double and hit Uribe with a pitch. Bumgarner again made things interesting by allowing a leadoff double to Ibanez. Ruiz sacrificed Ibanez to third, but Bumgarner then got pinch-hitter Francisco to strike out looking on a sweeping curve and got Rollins to fly out to center.

With Oswalt out of the game, the Phillies turned to Madson, who got pinch-hitter Ishikawa and Torres to strike

out to begin the seventh. But Freddy Sanchez doubled down the left field line. Huff was intentionally walked to bring up Posey. Posey hit a sharp grounder to second, but Utley got in front of it and flipped to Rollins at second to end the Giants' latest threat.

Philadelphia wouldn't be as fortunate in the eighth, however. After Lopez sat the Phillies down in order in the bottom of the seventh, Madson came back out for his second inning of work. Things started off well, with Madson retiring the first two batters, but Uribe then ruined the hometown fans' night. To begin the at-bat, Madson threw a cutter that caught a lot of the plate. Uribe punched it to the opposite field, and the ball landed in the first row of the stands to give San Francisco a 3-2 lead. Uribe's clout, worth seven percent of a championship, took the Giants' win probability from 41 percent to nearly 70 percent.

In the bottom half of the eighth, Lincecum entered. He got Werth to whiff on a slider. But Victorino and Ibanez followed with singles on changeups, and Bochy turned to his closer for a five-out save. Wilson cleaned up the mess—Ruiz lined one right to Huff at first, and Huff tossed to second base to get Victorino as well.

Lidge made everyone queasy in the top of the ninth, allowing a pair of singles to Torres and Freddy Sanchez. With two out, Manuel called for an intentional walk of Posey to bring up Wilson with the bases loaded. Wilson chopped one down the first base line, with Howard snagging it and stepping on the bag to begin the Phillies' last stand.

Wilson induced a ground ball to retire pinch-hitter Ross Gload to begin the bottom of the ninth. But he then walked Rollins on a 3-2 pitch. Polanco hit a grounder to Uribe at third, and the Giants got a force out at second. Sanchez gunned the ball to first, but Polanco beat the throw to keep the Phillies alive. Utley followed with a walk to put runners on first and second, setting the stage for Howard.

Wilson started the at-bat by smoking a high 96-mph fastball right by the big first baseman. His next two pitches missed the mark, with a 97-mph heater slightly high and outside and 96-mph gas coming too far inside. Wilson placed a cutter right on the outside corner for strike two. A 95-mph fastball missed high and outside again to make the count 3-2. With the runners on the move, Howard fouled off a 96-mph fastball thrown inside. Wilson then spotted a low cutter perfectly on the outside corner, and the ump rung up Howard. Wilson made his trademark X sign, his teammates jumped him, and the party was on for the Giants.

**Series MVP:** Wilson, who quashed the Phillies' hopes in high-leverage situations. Wilson added 18.3 percent of a championship for San Francisco. No word on whether his beard earns him extra credit.

**Series Goat:** Casilla. He cost the Giants 7.7 percent of a championship, with the biggest blow being Polanco's two-run double in Game Four.

**Big Play:** Uribe's eighth-inning shot off Madson in Game Six added seven percent of a World Series championship for San Francisco.

### World Series: Texas Rangers vs. San Francisco Giants

The scoreboard operator figured to get a reprieve in Game One of the World Series (Champ LI 52.1), with Cliff Lee and his 34-to-1 postseason strikeout-to-walk ratio trading zeroes with Tim Lincecum and his illegal-in-some-states changeup. The first team to strike could claim victory.

Well, that was the pre-game narrative, anyway. As is so often the case in the playoffs, this game defied prediction by becoming a high-scoring affair featuring 18 runs, 25 hits and six errors.

Texas roughed up "The Freak" in the first few innings, though Lincecum avoided complete disaster. With runners on first and second in the top of the first inning, Vladimir Guerrero swatted a changeup back to the mound that bounced off Lincecum and rolled to the hole between first base and second base, bringing home Elvis Andrus.

The next batter, Nelson Cruz, chopped a pitch in front of the mound that Lincecum pounced on. He looked toward third and tried to catch Michael Young in no-man's land, but Young scampered back to the base in time. Texas had the bases loaded with one out and Ian Kinsler coming to the plate. The bases-juiced situation, according to leverage index, was 2.3 times more important than your standard AB. Lincecum dodged the threat, however, getting Kinsler to hit a grounder to third baseman Juan Uribe. Uribe picked the ball, stepped on third and tossed across the diamond to Aubrey Huff to end the inning.

Texas made it 2-0 in the top of the second. With one out and Bengie Molina on first following a single, Lee squared to bunt, pulled back and then added to his postseason legend by cracking a double to left-center on a belt-high slider, advancing Molina to third. Andrus hit a sac fly to bring in Bengie. A two-run lead and Lee on the mound? Rangers manager Ron Washington had to feel pretty good about his team's chances.

Unfortunately for Washington and the Rangers, the team's first-ever World Series game turned sour. San Francisco tied things up in the bottom of the third. Edgar Renteria reached on an error by third baseman Young and Lee hit Andres Torres with a pitch, putting runners on first and second with one out. In a sign of things to come, Freddy Sanchez reached for a low cutter and doubled to left field (just inches away

from Young's glove) to score Renteria. A Buster Posey single then scored Torres. Lee then clamped down by getting both Pat Burrell and Cody Ross looking.

Lee kept the Giants scoreless in the fourth, but the game got out of hand in the fifth. With one out, Torres and Sanchez hit back-to-back doubles to give San Francisco its first lead of the contest. Posey then got caught looking for the second out, but Burrell worked a walk on a 3-2 pitch to put runners on first and second. And, for the first time all October, Lee looked mortal.

Ross singled straight up the middle to score Sanchez. Huff followed suit with another pitch smacked into center field to plate Burrell and stretch San Francisco's lead to 5-2. Washington pulled his ace in favor of side-armed Darren O'Day, who quickly got behind Uribe 2-0. Uribe then deposited an O'Day fastball a dozen rows into the left field bleachers, blowing open the game by putting the Rangers six runs down. The inning was a complete disaster for the visitors, who entered the fifth with a 46 percent chance of victory and exited it with a two percent shot. Cue Lloyd Christmas: "So you're telling me there's a chance."

Texas fought back admirably over the next few innings, as Alexi Ogando fired two scoreless frames and the offense managed to get two runs off Lincecum in the sixth. Kinsler drew a two-out walk, Molina hit a double to bring in Kinsler and Mitch Moreland lined a fastball off Lincecum (somebody get this guy a helmet) that caromed between third base and shortstop to put runners on the corners. Pinch-hitter David Murphy singled to make it 8-4, prompting Giants manager Bruce Bochy to go to the 'pen.

Santiago Casilla whiffed Andrus to close the book on Lincecum's evening: 5.2 innings, eight hits, four runs, two walks and three whiffs. Not Cy Young-caliber, but good enough with the Giants providing plenty of support.

The Giants tacked on three more in the eighth inning. Mark Lowe, otherwise known as "that other guy Texas got in the Lee deal," came on to pitch. Renteria laced an opposite-field hit that Guerrero tried to play on a hop, but Vlad showed why he rarely gets a glove anymore by letting it scoot by him and roll to the fence, letting Renteria advance to third. Pinch-hitter Travis Ishikawa lined a pitch down the left field line for a double, scoring Renteria. Lowe then got Torres to foul out, but Sanchez added to his gargantuan game (4-for-5) by taking a slider down the right field line to score Ishikawa. Guerrero looked like he was trying to scoop up a frog greased in butter, bobbling the ball twice and allowing Sanchez to scamper into second. After Lowe got Posey and Michael Kirkman came in to pitch, Nate Schierholtz made it 11-4 by singling to center.

Texas added three runs of its own in the top of the ninth as Ramon Ramirez, Jeremy Affeldt and Brian Wilson sloppily

ended the game, but it hardly mattered. Keyed by that six-run fifth inning, the Giants jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the World Series.

Game Two (Champ LI 52.1) was a pitcher's duel ... until it wasn't. When Washington trotted to the mound with the trainer in the bottom of the seventh and removed starter C.J. Wilson, who developed a blister, his club trailed just 1-0. In contrast to Wilson's last sloppy start against the Yankees in the ALCS, the lefty showed fine control in getting a first pitch strike against 83 percent of Giants batters faced. The only Giants batter to touch him up was Renteria, who hit a round-tripper in the fifth inning.

With Ross having drawn a leadoff walk for the home team, Texas' chances of evening the series weren't great—about 17 percent according to win probability—but the situation was hardly hopeless. However, the Giants made sure they'd leave the Bay area up 2-0 by battering the Rangers' bullpen.

Darren Oliver allowed the inherited runner to score on a Uribe base knock, but the Giants' offense removed all doubt about the outcome of this game in the eighth. O'Day got Torres and Sanchez swinging to begin the frame, then gave up a single to Posey. Washington called on Derek Holland, who channeled his inner LaLoosh by walking Schierholtz and Ross on four straight pitches each. Holland backed himself into a 3-1 count against Huff, who took a high fastball for ball four, bringing in a run to make it 3-0.

Holland got yanked, but Lowe proved allergic to the strike zone, too, by walking Uribe on a 3-2 count. Renteria then worked a 3-2 count of his own and slapped a single past third baseman Young to score Schierholtz and Ross and move Uribe to third. Kirkman came on for the Rangers and compounded matters by giving up a two-run triple to pinch-hitter Aaron Rowand, then a run-scoring double to Torres to put San Francisco up 9-0.

Giants starter Matt Cain was hardly dominant—he struck out two batters in 7.2 innings pitched—but fine control and a little luck helped him limit Texas to just four hits. Spotting his fastball, changeup and slider adeptly, getting some awkward swings on high heaters and low changeups, Cain threw 65 percent of his pitches for strikes while walking two batters. Cain escaped jams in the fifth and the sixth. Kinsler drove a pitch to deep center in the fifth that hit the top of the fence and bounced back into the field, giving him a double instead of a dinger. In the sixth, Texas had runners on second and third with one out, the result of Young and Hamilton singles and a wild pitch. But then Cruz fouled out to Huff at first base and Kinsler lofted a harmless fly ball to Ross in right field. Lopez and Guillermo Mota recorded the last four outs of the ballgame without incident, and the Giants packed up for Arlington with a commanding lead.

Back at home in Game Three (Champ LI 41.7), the Rangers got a boost from a rookie blast and a pitching gem from a Far East find. First baseman Mitch Moreland and starter Colby Lewis lifted Texas to its first ever win in a World Series game, keeping the Giants from opening up a three-game lead in the Fall Classic.

Moreland was never supposed to be the Rangers' solution at first base. But the 17th-round pick in the 2007 draft climbed to the top of the depth chart through his quality hitting in the minors, Justin Smoak's departure in the Cliff Lee deal, Chris Davis' failure to launch and Jorge Cantu's slack bat after coming over from Florida in July trade. Stepping to the plate in the second inning with runners on the corners, Moreland mashed a low and inside fastball for a three-run homer (.060 Champ WPA). Though it was early, Moreland's shot took Texas' win probability from 55 percent to 79 percent.

Jonathan Sanchez kept Texas scoreless in the third and the fourth, but he served up a solo shot to Hamilton, who wrapped a slow curveball into the right field bleachers to put his team up 4-0. Sanchez was pulled after 4.2 innings, having given up six hits while walking and striking out three batters apiece. Sanchez appeared fatigued, and he didn't have his best fastball. According to TexasLeaguers, Sanchez progressively lost fastball velocity during the playoffs. He averaged 90.7 mph against the Braves during his 11-strikeout masterpiece in the NLDS, sat at 89.7 mph during his first start against Philadelphia in the NLCS, 89.5 mph in his aborted second start and averaged just 89.2 mph against the Rangers.

Mota, Affeldt and Ramon Ramirez combined for 3.1 innings of clean relief, but it was too little, too late with Lewis dealing.

Lewis went 7.2 innings for the Rangers, surrendering five hits, two runs and two walks and striking out six hitters. Lewis' game plan? Get strike one. He did so against 26 of the 30 batters he faced (87 percent), while throwing 72 percent of his pitches for strikes overall. Ross touched him up for a solo home run in the seventh, and Torres did the same in the eighth.

Washington removed Lewis after he recorded a loud out on a Freddy Sanchez line drive and hit Huff with a breaking ball, curiously calling on O'Day to take on Posey instead of going to Feliz for a four-out save. O'Day got Posey, however, and Feliz sat down the Giants in order in the ninth to cut San Francisco's series lead to two games to one.

What a difference a year made for San Francisco's Game Four starter, Madison Bumgarner. In late 2008 and into 2009, the lefty went from regularly dialing up his fastball to the mid-90s to having to really rear back just to see a "9" at the beginning of the radar gun reading. He remained a well-



regarded prospect while succeeding in Double-A and getting a big league cameo, but there was some question about his upside with a lower octane fastball and still-developing secondary stuff.

In 2010, Bumgarner answered those questions. He posted a 3.66 FIP for the Giants, picking up velocity as the year progressed, showing a pair of solid breaking pitches and improving his changeup. And on Halloween, in a game 63 times as important as your garden variety regular season contest, he tricked Rangers hitters all night long.

In eight scoreless innings, Bumgarner gave up just three hits while striking out six and walking two. Throwing his fastball a little more than half of the time, going to his slider and changeup liberally, Bumgarner threw 65 percent of his pitches for strikes. The closest Texas got to breaking through was in the seventh inning when the Rangers put runners on first and second base with two outs, but Bumgarner got Kinsler to fly out to put the kibosh on any rally.

Texas starter Tommy Hunter wasn't bad, but he couldn't match Bumgarner's brilliance. Hunter gave up a pair of runs in the third inning, as Torres doubled on a pitch that bounced off the first base bag and Huff blasted a cutter just inside the right field foul pole later in the frame. Huff's shot won 6.2 percent of a title for the Giants.

Hunter handed off to Ogando in the fifth. He tossed 1.2 scoreless innings, but the Giants got to the Rangers' bullpen in the seventh. Renteria, who went 3-for-4, started things with a one-out single off Oliver, who then got Schierholtz looking. But Torres (3-for-5) smoked a double on a fastball to right center, allowing Renteria, who was running on the pitch, to race around and expand San Francisco's lead to three runs. In the eighth, Posey tacked on another run by taking O'Day deep.

There would be no ninth-inning comeback in this one, as Wilson and his epic beard struck out Young and Hamilton while putting down the Rangers in order. The Giants expanded their series lead to three games to one, putting them just one victory away from their first World Series title since Mays made the catch for the *New York* Giants in 1954.

Back in 1997, a fresh-faced shortstop named Edgar Renteria achieved postseason immortality by knocking in the World Series-winning run for the Florida Marlins. In 2010, a 35-year-old Renteria, playing with a completely torn left biceps tendon, came through with another clutch hit to lift the Giants to their first World Series title since the club moved out West.

Through six innings, San Francisco's Lincecum and Texas' Lee quelled the opposition's bats—nobody got past first base, much less came around to score. The closest any hitter came to doing real damage came in the sixth inning, when Posey

drove a fastball to the right field warning track, but Cruz leapt and made a catch against the wall, just keeping the ball in the bottom of his glove's pocket, to end the inning.

San Francisco got back to work immediately in the seventh. Ross hit a single to the left of shortstop Andrus, and Uribe followed with a line drive single to center field. Huff bunted toward first base, causing Lee to barehand the ball and make an underhand flip to Moreland while sliding on the grass. The sacrifice moved the runners to second and third. Burrell was due up next, in an at-bat about two-and-a-half times as important as the average World Series batter-pitcher confrontation. Lee got Burrell to swing through a cutter on a 3-2 count, a huge out that took Texas' win probability from 36 to 49 percent.

Renteria would change that, though. Lee got behind Renteria 2-0, then left a cutter high in the strike zone that the Giants shortstop smacked to center field. The ball just cleared the fence, putting San Francisco up 3-0 and increasing the team's win probability to 87 percent.

Outside of that unfortunate series of events, Lee was phenomenal. He struck out six batters and walked none in seven innings, throwing 73 percent of his pitches for strikes. Lee had pinpoint control of his fastball, throwing it for a strike 84 percent of the time, and used his mid-70s curveball and mid-80s changeup to get swings and misses. But Lincecum was even better.

The Rangers managed only one run off Lincecum, a Cruz solo home run on a pulled changeup in the bottom of the seventh. Kinsler then walked, giving the home team some glimmer of hope, but Lincecum then squashed any thoughts of a rally by getting Murphy and Molina swinging to end the inning. The Freak was fantastic—eight innings pitched, 10 strikeouts, two walks and three hits. He also pounded the zone, with 70 percent of his pitches going for strikes while getting ample whiffs on his signature changeup.

Feliz whiffed two in two scoreless innings. And in the bottom of the ninth, Texas had one last chance to extend the series with Hamilton, Guerrero and Cruz coming to the plate. Unfazed, Wilson made quick work of the middle of the Rangers' order. Hamilton struck out looking on a 95-mph fastball, Guerrero grounded out on a first pitch cutter, and Cruz swung through a 90-mph cutter on a 3-2 count. And with that, the Giants won their first World Series since '54, Renteria was named series MVP, and the 2010 season came to an end.

**Series MVP:** Bumgarner. His clutch Game Four start won the Giants 17.7 percent of a championship—not bad for a guy barely old enough to celebrate with the bubbly. Kudos to Cain (.147 Champ WPA), Renteria (.123) and Lincecum (.110) as well.

## The 2010 Postseason

**Series Goat:** Burrell (-.011 Champ WPA) just “beat” Lee, who pitched very well but served up a crippling homer to Renteria in Game Five.

**Big Play:** It’s gotta be Renteria’s three-run shot off Lee in Game Five, which won 8.9 percent of a championship for the Giants.

### Overall Playoffs

With the postseason now complete, who were the most valuable postseason contributors overall? The charts below show the biggest heroes and goats of the playoffs, along with the most important individual plays.

#### Heroes

Player	Champ WPA
B. Wilson	0.257
M. Cain	0.234
M. Bumgarner	0.226
C. Ross	0.177
T. Lincecum	0.173

**Playoff MVP:** Wilson. Long live the beard! San Francisco’s closer came up huge time and time again in high-leverage situations, striking out 16 hitters and surrendering one unearned run in 11.2 postseason innings. He has been one of the best relievers on the planet over the past two seasons, and now everyone knows it.

Obviously, San Francisco’s home-grown starters led the team to a World Series title. Cain, Bumgarner and Lincecum crack the top five on postseason Champ WPA. Ross’ well-timed power outbursts earned the late-season pickup from the Marlins a spot on this list, too.

#### Goats

Player	Champ WPA
P. Burrell	-0.108
N. Swisher	-0.090
S. Romo	-0.080
P. Moylan	-0.067
C. Crawford	-0.065

**Playoff Goat:** Burrell provided a boost to the Giants after being cast off by the Rays, but he had a rough postseason. The Bat went 6-for-42 in the playoffs, including an 0-fer in 13 World Series at-bats. Swisher also had a rough go of it, costing the Yankees nine percent of a championship. Romo and Moylan (with plenty of “help” from Brooks Conrad) had some tough moments out of the bullpen, and Crawford’s Tampa tenure might have come to an end on a sour note.

#### Biggest Plays

Series/Gm	Batter	Pitcher	Hit	Champ WPA
WS Gm 5	E. Renteria	C. Lee	7th Inn. 3-Run HR	0.089
ALCS Gm 4	B. Molina	A.J. Burnett	6th Inn. 3-Run HR	0.075
NLDS Gm 3	E. Hinske	S. Romo	8th Inn. 2-Run HR	0.072
NLCS Gm 6	J. Uribe	R. Madson	8th Inn. Solo HR	0.070
WS Gm 4	A. Huff	T. Hunter	3rd Inn. 2-Run HR	0.062

**Big Play:** The 2010 postseason had power in white-knuckle situations, with no blast being bigger than Renteria’s Game Five shot off of Lee to seal a World Series title for the Giants. Molina, postseason talisman Hinske, Uribe and Huff also came through with vital round-trippers.