Daily Herald, **Chicago Cubs working quickly, quietly to find Bosio's replacement**

Cubs.com, **No repeat in 2017, but Cubs sitting pretty**

Cubs.com, **Cubs interview Hickey for pitching-coach job**

NBC Sports Chicago, **Why Cubs should make Jim Hickey an offer he can't refuse**

NBC Sports Chicago, **In latest twist to Cubs-Nationals, Dave Martinez will interview for Dusty Baker's old job**

Chicago Tribune, **The Theo Factor: Epstein turns his vision into reality with Cubs**

Chicago Tribune, **Cubs assistant Eric Hinske takes hitting coach job with Angels**

Chicago Tribune, **Cubs bench coach Dave Martinez to interview for Nationals job**

Chicago Tribune, **Which Cubs are on the track to Cooperstown?**

Chicago Sun-Times, **Eric Hinske takes new job; Nats eyeing Dave Martinez as manager**

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**Daily Herald**
Chicago Cubs working quickly, quietly to find Bosio’s replacement
By Bruce Miles

The Chicago Cubs are moving quickly -- and quietly -- on replacing pitching coach Chris Bosio, whom they fired over the weekend.

The team acknowledged the firing Monday, two days after word of the dismissal broke.
There was no formal news release, as the Cubs say they are trying to respect Major League Baseball's edict against making big announcements during the World Series, which begins Tuesday night.

On Monday, the Cubs interviewed Chicago native Jim Hickey for the pitching-coach job. Hickey was the pitching coach for the Tampa Bay Rays from 2006 until the two sides parted ways early this month. Hickey worked under current Cubs manager Joe Maddon from November 2006 until Maddon left to take the Cubs managerial job in the fall of 2014.

Maddon has been away on a personal matter and also has not commented on the Bosio firing or on Hickey's chances.

If Maddon pushes hard enough for Hickey, it's possible this process could be over soon even with other intriguing names out there, such as Mike Maddux, who recently was let go as part of the purge that cost Dusty Baker his job as manager of the Washington Nationals.

The Nats, by the way are interviewing current Cubs bench coach Dave Martinez for the manager job. The Cubs will have one more vacancy. The Los Angeles Angels on Monday hired Eric Hinske, the Cubs' assistant hitting coach, to be their hitting coach.

It has been an awkward few days for the Cubs, and it might have behooved them to bend MLB's gag order for the sake of clarity.

Before last week's Game 4 of the National League championship series, Maddon said his coaches would be welcome back.

"Of course, yes," he said. "The staff's done a great job. Our staff's been awesome. And they're tight. It's a tightly knit group. There's a lot of synergy involved.

"Nobody knows everything. Everybody helps everybody. There's a lot of cross pollination. Nobody's on their own little island. I like that.

"The thing I like is that I don't think any of them ever withholds saying something from me that they have on their mind, which I really appreciate."

The next day. Maddon was asked about Hickey.

"We have not discussed," Maddon said. "I have talked to him. I just wanted to know how he was doing, purely, because it kind of surprised me. It surprised a lot of us.

"I did talk to him. But we talk all the time. He sends me texts when he's driving over the causeways down there because he knows how much I love looking for dolphins driving over the Howard Franklin (Bridge) or the Gandy Bridge.

"He's funny. He's a funny guy. We had a great relationship, and he's going to turn out just fine. He's going to be well sought after."

Maddon was then asked if Hickey would be part of the Cubs' staff next year.

"No, that's not ... I called him to console a friend," he said.

Cubs president Theo Epstein added some intrigue last Friday during his end-of-year news conference. When I asked him about the coaching staff, he said that any coach Maddon wanted back, he could have back.

Epstein then may have telegraphed the team's intentions when he said the walk rate among relievers had to be better, even throwing a "come on," in for emphasis.
Perhaps now Maddon wishes he wasn't so emphatic in denying interest in Hickey.

On the other side of the coin, Maddon came to Chicago as a high-profile, highly paid manager, and he inherited virtually his entire coaching staff. He did get to hire Martinez, his bench coach in Tampa Bay.

That pushed Brandon Hyde from the bench to first base. It also forced the Cubs to reassign Doug Dascenzo from his role as first-base coach to outfield and baserunning coordinator in the minor leagues.

Until the Bosio firing, Maddon's coaching staff had been intact for three full seasons. Bosio worked under three managers since the 2012 season: Dale Sveum, Rick Renteria and Maddon. That's a rarity these days.

Maybe the Cubs felt their pitchers needed a new voice.

Soon the Cubs will have that new voice. But it may be awhile before we hear from that voice and from those who installed it.

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Cubs.com
No repeat in 2017, but Cubs sitting pretty
By Carrie Muskat

CHICAGO -- The World Series will begin on Tuesday, and a new champion will be crowned as the Cubs fell short in their bid to repeat. On the plus side, they were the first defending champs to win 90 games and their division the following season since the 2009 Phillies. But the Dodgers ousted the Cubs in the National League Championship Series presented by Camping World in five games.

Since the 2015 season, the Cubs lead the Majors in combined regular-season and postseason wins (311). The '17 season marked the first time the franchise has reached the playoffs three years in a row since 1906-08. Yes, it's been that long.

"We're on our way. Mission not accomplished," Cubs president of baseball operations Theo Epstein said. "We've done a lot of tremendous things, and thus far, it's been a success. But the whole goal is to try to get there as many times as you can over a long stretch and a long period of time. We're really well positioned for the future. In no way do we see this window ending now or lessening in any way."

Here are five things to remember from the 2017 season:

1. September surge

The Cubs trailed the Brewers by 5 1/2 games at the All-Star break, and their strong second half helped them repeat as NL Central champs. That included a 15-4 regular-season finish featuring back-to-back tough road series against the Brewers and Cardinals in which the Cubs won three of four both times. The rally revived the Cubs' 2016 motto, "We never quit," but it also was tough mentally on the players, and several of them called this year a "trying" season. The Cubs went 49-25 in the second half, batting .273 and posting a 3.78 ERA. By comparison, they hit .239 in the first half and had a 4.10 team ERA.

2. Offense good, but not good enough

The Cubs scored 822 runs, topping 800 runs for the second season in a row, and belted 223 home runs, second-highest single total in franchise history. For the first time, six players reached the 20-homer mark: Kris Bryant, Willson Contreras, Ian Happ, Anthony Rizzo, Kyle Schwarber and Javier Baez. The Cubs also set a Major League record with five 20-homer seasons by players age 25 or younger (Bryant, Contreras, Happ, Schwarber and Baez). Rizzo drove in 109 runs, the most by any left-handed batter in the Majors. But the Cubs struggled with situational hitting.
3. Look to the future

The Cubs made a rare crosstown trade in July for Jose Quintana, and even though he took the loss in Game 5 of the NLCS, Epstein noted the team would not have reached the postseason without the left-hander. Quintana went 7-3 with a 3.74 ERA in 14 starts for the Cubs, including a shutout against the Brewers on Sept. 24. Said Epstein: "The biggest factor in that deal was not even 2017 -- it was 2018, '19 and '20, and solidifying a pitching staff and putting us in a position to be able to make a couple more moves and have an outstanding starting rotation." The Cubs will be looking for starting pitching with both Jake Arrieta and John Lackey headed to free agency.

4. Closing time

Davis converted a franchise-record 32 straight save opportunities through Sept. 19, and his streak came to an end on Sept. 23 against the Brewers. The Cubs' lone All-Star representative, Davis went above and beyond in his last two postseason outings, throwing 44 pitches in 2 1/3 innings in Game 5 of the NL Division Series presented by T-Mobile, and then 48 pitches over two innings in Game 4 of the NLCS. The Cubs would like Davis, a free agent, to return. If not, they'll be looking for their fourth closer in the last four years.

5. The kid can play

On May 13, Happ recorded his first Major League hit, a two-run homer off the Cardinals' Carlos Martinez. Happ finished with 24 home runs, and he was one of 11 players to lead off for the Cubs this season. Said Epstein: "We didn't expect him to hit 24 home runs in the big leagues this year, and we didn't expect him -- maybe most important of all -- to make some of the adjustments back to the league that will be so important to him that are important to all young hitters." Happ still has work to do, but the Cubs were definitely encouraged by what he did his rookie season. He also exemplifies the versatility they're looking for in players. Happ played all three outfield positions, second base and even some third.

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Cubs.com
Cubs interview Hickey for pitching-coach job
By Carrie Muskat

CHICAGO -- The Cubs began the process of replacing pitching coach Chris Bosio on Monday by interviewing Jim Hickey, who was on manager Joe Maddon's staff in Tampa Bay.

On Saturday, the Cubs decided not to exercise the 2018 club option on Bosio, who had held the job for six seasons. Hickey, 56, was Maddon's pitching coach in Tampa Bay from 2006 until Maddon left to become the Cubs manager prior to the 2015 season. Hickey stayed with the Rays, but he and the team mutually agreed to part ways after this season. Hickey has reportedly drawn interest from other teams as well, including the Cardinals, the Giants and the Red Sox.

The Cubs also are looking for an assistant hitting coach after Eric Hinske left to become the Angels' hitting coach. Hinske, 40, just completed his fourth season on the Cubs coaching staff and third as the assistant hitting coach. The 2002 American League Rookie of the Year and two-time World Series champion as a player with the Red Sox and Yankees, Hinske played 12 seasons with the Blue Jays, Red Sox, Rays, Pirates, Yankees and D-backs. This past offseason, Hinske worked closely with Jason Heyward at the Cubs' Mesa, Ariz., complex.

Cubs bench coach Dave Martinez also was interviewing with the Nationals for their managerial opening.

Martinez, 53, interviewed with the Nationals in 2013, but the team chose Matt Williams as their manager at that time.

During the National League Division Series, Maddon said Martinez should be considered for one of the manager openings.
"He belongs in the group," Maddon said of Martinez. "I know all the people who are being considered and I promise, our guy matches up with every one of them. It's baffling to me a bit why [he's not mentioned].

"[Martinez] has been on a lot of winning teams and just look at him as a player," Maddon said. "That's what drew me to him in the beginning with the Rays. I'd never been with him as a teammate, but I'd watched him play. He was such a heady, aggressive, gritty kind of player. He's bilingual -- all that matters. And he's not afraid to have tough conversations. I think a lot of times people in that position might shy away from that. ... I see all the [candidates'] names, and I like all of these dudes but to not put his name in there baffles me."

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**NBC Sports Chicago**

Why Cubs should make Jim Hickey an offer he can't refuse
By Patrick Mooney

Monday's interview with Jim Hickey in Chicago — roughly 72 hours after the Cubs fired pitching coach Chris Bosio and within a week of manager Joe Maddon saying "of course" he wanted his entire staff back — is a first step in the reboot at Wrigley Field.

Maddon probably would like to have that answer back, knowing he could have softened the language with corporate speak and created some wiggle room in the middle of a National League Championship Series where the Los Angeles Dodgers dominated the Cubs in every phase of the game.

But Hickey, the former Tampa Bay Rays pitching coach, is a familiar face and an expert voice at a time when Maddon’s honeymoon period appears to be over, repeatedly first- and second-guessed about his decisions, from the World Series Game 7 the Cubs won last year through a frustrating 43-45 start to this season and deep into another playoff run.

That staff is already in flux, with bench coach Dave Martinez scheduled to interview with the Washington Nationals for Dusty Baker’s old job and assistant hitting coach Eric Hinske now leaving to take a lead role with the Los Angeles Angels hitters.

Here’s why the Cubs will probably have to make Hickey an offer he can’t refuse:

— A rival scout noticed how often Maddon looked like a solitary figure in the dugout, standing there looking down at his lineup card. Whatever friction Maddon felt with Bosio — a big presence who pitched 11 seasons in the big leagues and isn’t afraid to tell you exactly what he thinks — Hickey is someone the manager trusts after their eight seasons together with the Rays.

Maddon insisted he wasn’t maneuvering behind the scenes when he reached out after Hickey surprisingly parted ways with Tampa Bay in October, but it still showed the depth of their relationship: “I called him to console a friend.”

— While working for the Boston Red Sox, Cubs president Theo Epstein and general manager Jed Hoyer got an up-close look at what Hickey did in the American League East, helping build the small-market contender that advanced to the 2008 World Series, the beginning of five seasons with at least 90 wins in six years.

Between his time with the Rays and Houston Astros, look at the All-Star pitchers Hickey has worked with: Chris Archer, David Price, Alex Colome, Brad Boxberger, Matt Moore, Fernando Rodney, James Shields, Rafael Soriano, Scott Kazmir, Roy Oswalt, Brad Lidge and Roger Clemens.

— Hickey can also offer unique insight into Alex Cobb, a free agent the Cubs will have to do more background work on as they try to replace 40 percent of their rotation. Cobb — who went 48-35 with a 3.50 ERA in 115 career starts for the Rays — just turned 30 and has only 700 innings on his major-league odometer after undergoing Tommy John surgery on his right elbow in the middle of the 2015 season.
“He has a talent that most organizations search for relentlessly,” Cobb told the Tampa Bay Times after Hickey left the Rays with a year remaining on his contract. “He will have a great time being a free agent.

“I’m not going to try to explain how great Jim Hickey is. There’s really nothing I can say that would speak louder than his track record. All I can say is how fortunate I was to have him when I got to the big leagues. No one could have prepared me better.”

— Beyond the connection to Maddon, Hickey is someone who knows Chicago after growing up on the South Side, and that hometown draw will probably matter at a time when the San Francisco Giants and St. Louis Cardinals are among several marquee teams in the market for a new pitching coach that now might be thinking: "Better Call Boz."

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**NBC Sports Chicago**

**In latest twist to Cubs-Nationals, Dave Martinez will interview for Dusty Baker’s old job**

By Patrick Mooney

Dave Martinez – Joe Maddon’s bench coach during unprecedented runs of success with the Cubs and Tampa Bay Rays – is ready to step outside of the star manager’s shadow and run his own big-league team.

A Washington Nationals franchise coming off back-to-back division titles – while having some big personalities in the clubhouse and obvious internal issues – could still be that ideal opportunity.

The Nationals have reached out to set up an interview with Martinez, a source said Monday, confirming a Washington Post report in the wake of Dusty Baker’s messy exit, eight days after a massively disappointing playoff loss to the Cubs.

Martinez had been an X-factor in Washington’s search two years ago, when negotiations broke down with Bud Black and the Nationals eventually circled back to Baker, the former Cubs manager.

Martinez has the built-in credibility that comes from playing 16 seasons in the big leagues, which would be an asset for a team that has Bryce Harper entering his final season before free agency and Max Scherzer and Stephen Strasburg at the top of the rotation.

Martinez, who is fluent in Spanish and analytics, spent the last 10 years working as the bench coach for two data-driven organizations, putting him at the cutting edge of defensive shifts, bullpen management and game-planning systems.

While Maddon thrives in the front-facing aspects of the job, dealing with the media before and after every game and selling a vision to the public, Martinez handles a lot of the behind-the-scenes issues, putting out clubhouse fires and interacting with the players in one-on-one settings.

The partnership worked to the point where the Rays captured the 2008 American League pennant and the Cubs won last year’s World Series. While the Cubs have advanced to the National League Championship Series for three straight seasons, the Nationals have been knocked out of the first round of the playoffs four times since 2012.

In the middle of the grueling five-game playoff series where the Cubs outlasted the Nationals – which may have been a tipping point against Baker for Washington executives – Maddon lobbied for Martinez to be in the manager mix during baseball’s hiring-and-firing season.

“He belongs in the group,” Maddon said. “I know all these people being considered, and I promise you our guy matches up with every one of them.

“He was such a heady, aggressive, gritty kind of player. Bilingual. All that matters. He’s not afraid to have the tough conversations (that) people in that position may shy away from.
“Believe me, I see all the names. There are a lot of good names, and I like a lot of these dudes. But I’m just telling you: To not include his name with those other people baffles me.”

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**Chicago Tribune**
The Theo Factor: Epstein turns his vision into reality with Cubs
By David Haugh

Name the best sports executives in Chicago history.

George Halas tops many lists, but the founder and owner of the Bears fits more comfortably in our institutional memory as a coach, the job he did for 40 years.

Bill Veeck, the late White Sox owner, deserves consideration for his innovative ways, but the Sox never won a championship on his watch.

Jim Finks ran the Cubs and Bears, and he drafted many of the players who won Super Bowl XX after he resigned in 1982 when Halas hired coach Mike Ditka without consulting him.

Jerry Krause celebrated six championships as general manager of the Bulls, a distinction that finally earned him induction into the Basketball Hall of Fame last September, posthumously.

John McDonough spent 24 years in the Cubs front office, including two as team president, before leaving to become CEO of the Blackhawks, where he changed the culture and presided over three Stanley Cup titles.

Stan Bowman has been the Blackhawks general manager since 2009, but perception often unfairly minimizes his impact because he inherited a roster that already had Patrick Kane, Jonathan Toews and other core players on a team that would win three Cups in five years.

Then there is Theo Epstein, on loan from Boston, who has done enough in six years in Chicago to belong among our city's permanent collection. With a shot at being the best ever, Epstein is only 43, with four years remaining on a contract extension he signed after the 2016 season.

Already in the Age of Epstein, the Cubs have rid themselves of silly billy goat curses and Steve Bartman jinxes and other peripheral nonsense that no longer fits the franchise narrative. Under Epstein, the Cubs have gone from lovable losers to perennial winners after he systematically reprogrammed a front office and a fan base so that gradually the recognizable red “C” has come to symbolize excellence, not futility.

Some baseball historians will point to the Cubs hiring Joe Maddon in October 2014 as the moment credibility arrived at Clark and Addison. Others cite the free-agent signing of pitcher Jon Lester two months later as the key move.

But the origin of real change — the dawn of Theocracy — started when Epstein opened his mind to the idea of leaving Boston, where he won two World Series, for the Cubs. The day was one of several that stand out in a tenure that has included unprecedented failure followed by unparalleled success.

October 2011: Tom Ricketts knew Epstein only from reputation. The two had never met, despite running in similar baseball circles since the Ricketts family bought the team in 2009. On that day, Ricketts promised to do something he had dreamed about since the day he started cheering from the bleachers as a University of Chicago student: lead the Cubs to a World Series. Ricketts knew hiring Epstein, one of baseball's brightest executives who had just completed a messy divorce with the Red Sox, would bring that dream closer to reality.

They arranged to meet at Ricketts' apartment in New York to avoid the sports paparazzi in Chicago and Boston, where Epstein's every Starbucks visit might be chronicled. A lifetime Cubs fan, Ricketts feared the worst.
"I didn't know him and was just worried," Ricketts recalled. "I didn't want to bring someone in with a big ego or someone who didn't treat people well."

Those fears dissipated soon after they sat down. Epstein exuded humility and humor, intelligence and insight, basically everything Ricketts had hoped. Everything Epstein has delivered.

"We sat down and the first thing Theo said was, 'I don't know what you expect, but it's not just me, it's a whole bunch of people, a group that works hard together, starting with scouting, training and building up to the GM, so you have to have a great organization,'" Ricketts said. "That was the first thing he wanted me to know at our interview, and I pretty much knew right then he was the right guy for us."

The move legitimized the Ricketts regime more than any other.

Oct. 25, 2011: Day one of the Epstein era in Chicago began with bold talk of a World Series and big words, with reference to The Cubs Way, whatever that was. After hearing Epstein outline his goals, I remember thinking if predecessor Jim Hendry was old school, Epstein was private school. Epstein's first official day at Wrigley Field, where he was approachable enough to pose with a picture of super fan Ronnie "Woo Woo" Wickers, was hailed as the beginning of Cubbie Camelot. Looking back, it also was prescient.

"When we build that foundation for sustained success and it ultimately results in a World Series, it's going to be more than just a World Series," Epstein said during his introductory news conference. "It's going to (affect) a lot of people, Cubs fans and Cubs families for generations who waited and waited for a World Series."

This was before enduring three of the longest seasons in Cubs history. Before firing managers Dale Sveum and Rick Renteria. Before hiring Maddon and signing Lester. Before everything that had to happen happened, Epstein foreshadowed it.

"To me, baseball is better with tradition," Epstein said that day. "Baseball is better with history. Baseball is better with fans who care. Baseball is better in ballparks like this. Baseball is better during the day. And baseball is best of all when you win. That, ultimately, is why I'm here today."

February 2013: The 197 losses the Cubs suffered in Epstein's first two seasons — the worst consecutive seasons in franchise history — were by design, a plan Epstein acknowledged one day at the team's spring training facility in Mesa, Ariz. Those were the days when pragmatism in the front office always mattered more than any punishment inflicted on the field.

"What I want to avoid is the middle ground," Epstein explained matter-of-factly. "It'd be nice to make the playoffs or get a protected draft pick (awarded the bottom nine teams). We're not hiding that. There's no glory in 78 wins instead of 73. Who cares?

"We're going to see where we are and take a real cold assessment in the middle of the season. If we have a legitimate chance to push for a playoff spot, then 2013 can become our primary focus. If we think a playoff spot's not in the cards, there will be no concern for appearances or cosmetics whatsoever. We'll continue to address our future and trade off some pieces that would keep us respectable."

Five months later, on July 2, 2013, executing the strategy Epstein described months earlier in Arizona, the Cubs flipped starting pitcher Scott Feldman and backup catcher Steve Clevenger to the Orioles for two struggling pitchers, reliever Pedro Strop and a 27-year-old right-hander whom they immediately assigned to Triple-A Iowa. His name was Jake Arrieta.

"I don't think this team improves by trading Scott Feldman," then-Cubs pitcher Jeff Samardzija said of the deal. Obviously, Epstein knew better.
November 2013: Imagine inviting Epstein to an event on the night of a World Series game. What now seems unthinkable after three straight NLCS appearances happened just four years ago when the esteemed Economic Club of Chicago put the Cubs president on the agenda. The presumption of availability was noted by Epstein, who dazzled the 800 local movers and shakers with his detailed outline of player development and better times.

Patience with Epstein's plan had begun to wear thin in some parts of town, creating an ongoing debate whether to believe in it or expect more of the same from the Cubs. "Stop telling people what your plan is, Theo. Start showing them," is what I wrote in the Chicago Tribune that winter.

In 2014, the Cubs surprised people by going 73-89 under Renteria as Anthony Rizzo, a favorite of Epstein's from their days in the Red Sox organization, hit 32 home runs and Arrieta went 10-5. The Cubs exceeded expectations that were as low as Epstein admitted they should be after a quiet winter in which the team made its biggest splash by introducing the mascot "Clark the Cub."

"If I was a fan of the Chicago Cubs following the offseason, I would have hoped for more this winter, honestly. I'm not going to hide the ball from you," Epstein said before spring training opened in 2014.

That June, Epstein raised eyebrows by trusting Cubs scouts and selecting a slugging catcher from Indiana with the fourth pick of the draft: Kyle Schwarber.

Oct. 13, 2015: This was the first landmark moment Epstein made possible, a home celebration of a postseason series victory. Never before had that happened at Wrigley Field, not until the Cubs closed out the rival Cardinals 6-4 in Game 4 of the NLDS. This was the series of the Schwarbomb that landed atop the video board in right field and the season of the Arrieta excellence, two players who symbolized the Epstein influence as much as any. This was a team bolstered by Kris Bryant, the talented No. 1 draft pick, and Jon Lester, the transformative free-agent signing. On the field, amid the giddiness, Epstein understood the significance of the step the Cubs had just taken toward becoming perennial champions.

"We beat the Cardinals — I mean, these are like older brothers who've been kicking sand in our face for 100 years," Epstein said that night, comparing the Cubs' breakthrough moment with his Red Sox past. "There's a lot of similarities to when we knocked off the Yankees in '04. That one put us in the World Series. This one just gives us a nice date on Saturday."

The Cubs would get swept by the Mets in the NLCS, but the message was clear: Epstein had his team on the brink of a World Series title quicker than everyone expected — except perhaps him.

Nov. 2, 2016: Epstein had stood here before, on top of the baseball world, but this view was different. This was unique. This was the Cubs, the most futile organization in all of sports that he had resurrected in five years. Epstein had help bringing the organization its first World Series championship since 1908, which he took great pains to acknowledge, but the moment generations of Cubs fans doubted ever would happen started the day he met Ricketts.

"I want to thank everyone who has ever put on a Cubs uniform and anyone who has ever rooted for the Cubs," Epstein said as the champagne sprayed in the Cubs clubhouse after an epic Game 7.

Around Epstein, players he shrewdly brought to the Cubs to make it all possible — shut-down closer Aroldis Chapman, speechmaker outfielder Jason Heyward, Rizzo, Bryant, Schwarber, Lester, Arrieta, et al. — celebrated like Little Leaguers. This was the joy Epstein envisioned, his promise fulfilled.

"It has been 108 years of love and support and patience waiting for a team like this to make it happen on a night like this," Epstein said. "You guys are all world champions tonight. I couldn't be more happy for you."

Eventually, Epstein turned his attention to the people who don't wear jerseys, the hard-working, anonymous folks he valued so much; the scouts, the analysts, the secretaries, the young executives trying to emulate him. Finally, Epstein indulged in a selfish moment.
"I'm relinquishing my presidential duties," Epstein announced, voicing plans for a monthlong bender. "Wake me up for the winter meetings."

It only seemed like a dream.

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**Chicago Tribune**

Cubs assistant Eric Hinske takes hitting coach job with Angels
By Paul Skrbina

The Cubs coaching-staff carousel continued to circle Monday, but it stopped long enough for assistant hitting coach Eric Hinske to leave.

Three days after the Cubs decided not to renew the contract of pitching coach Chris Bosio — a move the team hasn't announced — Hinske accepted an offer to become hitting coach for the Angels.

According to multiple reports, the Cubs were scheduled to interview former Rays pitching coach Jim Hickey on Monday. He served as Cubs manager Joe Maddon's pitching coach for the Rays for eight seasons, including 2008, when the team — which included Hinske — reached the World Series.

The Rays hired Hickey after the 2006 season, a year after he helped the Astros reach the World Series in the same position.

Cubs President Theo Epstein hired Bosio before the 2012 season, and he served as pitching coach under three managers. He is credited with helping revive Jake Arrieta's career, among others, after the Cubs acquired Arrieta from the Orioles.

On Thursday, the day the Dodgers eliminated the Cubs from the postseason, Maddon said he expected his coaching staff to remain intact next season.

"Of course," Maddon said. "The staff's done a great job. ... It's a tightly knit group. There's a lot of synergy involved. Nobody knows everything. Everybody helps everybody. There's a lot of cross-pollination. Nobody's on their own little island. I like that."

Under Bosio, the Cubs were first in ERA (3.19) in 2016 and seventh this season at 3.95.

The bullpen's struggles (it was last in the majors with an 11.2 percent walk rate), especially during the playoffs, didn't go unnoticed by Epstein, who said relievers "didn't deliver in October."

The Cubs reportedly might pursue former Nationals pitching coach Mike Maddux, whose contract was not renewed after this season. He is the brother of former Cubs pitcher Greg Maddux.

Hinske joined the Cubs staff in 2014 as first-base coach and spent the last three seasons as assistant hitting coach.

The Cubs were 16th in the majors with a .255 batting average this season and sixth with a .775 OPS. They were 14th in average (.256) and third in OPS (.772) in 2016, when they won their first World Series since 1908.

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**Chicago Tribune**

Cubs bench coach Dave Martinez to interview for Nationals job
By Paul Skrbina

The sooner Dave Martinez leaves the Cubs dugout the better, as far as manager Joe Maddon is concerned.
Martinez will interview for the Nationals' managerial opening, the same job for which he interviewed before Dusty Baker was hired before the 2015 season.

Martinez has spent the last 10 years by Maddon’s side as his bench coach, first with the Rays and then with the Cubs. Maddon said he doesn’t understand why Martinez hasn't landed a managing job but is confident he should.

"It's baffling to me," Maddon said during the National League Division Series this month against the Nationals. "He's been around a lot of winning teams here."

Martinez, 53, played for nine teams in 16 years in the majors, including four with the Cubs and three with the White Sox. Maddon said he admired the way Martinez played, which drew him to hire Martinez as a coach.

"He was such a heady, aggressive, gritty kind of player — and bilingual," Maddon said of the Spanish-speaking Martinez. "All that matters. He's not afraid to have tough conversations a lot of times people in that position may shy away from."

Martinez is a candidate to replace Baker, whose contract was not renewed after the Cubs eliminated the Nationals in the division series. Baker managed the Cubs from 2003 to '06.

Martinez has been a candidate for several openings over the years — including Maddon's when he left the Rays for the Cubs, and the Cubs opening in 2014 before they hired Rick Renteria — but never has been a manager.

Maddon has seen up close how Martinez has handled the opportunity when it has presented itself, as it did twice during the NL Championship Series after Maddon was ejected.

"You give him a lot of latitude during the course of all games during the season for years," Maddon said before Game 2 of the NLCS. "He definitely feels comfortable and free telling me what he thinks, which is the way I want it."

Maddon said he doesn't serve as a back-seat driver when Martinez is in charge.

"Once I leave the dugout, I don't send little slips of paper down there," Maddon said. "Davey's very capable and Davey should be a major-league manager soon."

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Chicago Tribune

Which Cubs are on the track to Cooperstown?

By Dan McGrath

Ron Santo was in the middle of much that went wrong for the Cubs during the epic collapse of 1969. He berated rookie Don Young for an outfield misplay. He infuriated opponents with a schoolboy-like, heels-clicking victory leap. And the symbolism was hard to miss when he stood in the on-deck circle at Shea Stadium as a black cat ominously circled him while the Cubs were in free fall late that season.

It's not known whether any of those incidents affected Santo's Hall of Fame candidacy, but the fact is he was one of the leading performers in a glorious baseball era, and he never got a sniff of Cooperstown during his 15 years on the ballot, topping out at 43 percent in 1998, his final year.

Santo was inducted in 2011, a year after he died, selected by a "Golden Era" veterans committee formed to take another look at plausible candidates whom voting members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America — of which I am one — had passed over. Indirectly, the Cubs' 1969 failure was a factor in the voters denying Santo: With Ernie Banks, Billy Williams and Fergie Jenkins already enshrined, how could a team that never won anything boast four Hall of Famers?
There's no question postseason exposure enhances a candidate's chances — hello, John Smoltz — and though it might be 20 years before most of the current Cubs are fodder for Cooperstown debate, the "Santo Argument" will be hard to invoke in assessing them thanks to a World Series title, three straight NLCS appearances and the promise of more October activity.

Twenty years is an epoch in baseball, and so much can happen that it can seem silly to speculate on the Hall of Fame chances for these Cubs. But let's do it anyway.

Theo Epstein

A lock. If he never does another thing in baseball, the veterans committee voters responsible for executives, managers and umpires will recognize Epstein for bringing championship baseball to two historic franchises long known for being totally unfamiliar with the concept.

Kris Bryant

Twenty players have achieved the Rookie of the Year/MVP double Bryant completed in 2016. Ten of them are Hall of Famers. Albert Pujols and Ichiro Suzuki will be, Don Newcombe should be and Pete Rose ... it's a matter of how you interpret the rules. So Bryant is on the right path. His power numbers were down this season, but so were his strikeouts, and he drew 20 more walks to raise his on-base percentage and keep his OPS steady. Is he the best of his era at his position? Hard to say when he shares the spot with Nolan Arenado. In a so-called down year, Bryant was eighth in the National League in wins above replacement (WAR). A younger, more analytics-driven group of voters will be making the Hall calls as baseball moves forward. WAR is their holy grail, and Bryant’s WAR is 19.7 for his first three seasons. He’s in good shape.

Anthony Rizzo

His quiet NLCS aside, Rizzo has supplied the consistent power a corner infield position requires. His fielding and leadership will enhance his chances. An MVP award would help as well; of the 18 "modern-era" first basemen in the Hall of Fame, 12 have been MVP winners since the baseball writers began electing them in 1931. Eddie Murray is one of the six who is not, but he collected more MVP votes than any player who didn’t win. Rizzo poses another tough argument for best of his era at his position when he's competing with Paul Goldschmidt and Joey Votto. But he'll be hard to turn down if he keeps doing what he has done for another decade or so.

Jon Lester

He'll get a look because the criteria for starting pitchers will be changing substantially. Three hundred wins will no longer mean automatic inclusion because 300-game winners are going the way of Sunday doubleheaders, with bullpens and five-man rotations taking over the game. A pitcher's wins don't mean much to the analytics crowd, but Lester has 159 at age 33, and his .633 winning percentage means he's 67 games over .500 for his career. He's also 4-1 in three World Series. Lester's numbers are rather similar to those of former teammate Curt Schilling, who might be in the Hall already if his goofy politics didn't offend so many voters. If Andy Pettitte or CC Sabathia is elected, the "same guy" theory might be applied to Lester, but Mike Mussina (270-153, 3.68 ERA, 1.192 WHIP) should get in before any of them.

Joe Maddon

He's on an intriguing trajectory. Joe Torre and Tony La Russa won multiple World Series, La Russa's coming in both leagues, as did Sparky Anderson's. Postseason perennial Bobby Cox won only one World Series, as did Whitey Herzog and Earl Weaver. Maddon has his 2016 World Series, and he has won pennants in both leagues. Another World Series might clinch it for him, especially if he can sustain his .602 winning percentage with the Cubs. And there's nothing shabby about the .517 mark he compiled with an underfunded Rays team playing in baseball's toughest division.

Willson Contreras
Mike Piazza, a 2016 inductee, is like most Hall of Fame catchers in that he slugged his way to Cooperstown. Ivan "Pudge" Rodriguez, who went in this year, was celebrated for negating the opponent's running game, but he also hit .296 for his career and drove in 1,334 runs. At 25, Contreras is vaguely Pudge-like in his defensive profile, his throwing arm a weapon he loves to show off (hello, Jose Lobaton). He'll have to get more offensive if he's to supplant 35-year-old Yadier Molina as the premier catcher of his era. Contreras' 2017 stat line — .276 average, 21 homers, 74 RBIs, .356/.499/.855 slash line in just 376 at-bats — suggests a mid-life Gary Carter, but Jason Varitek and Jorge Posada put up similar numbers for consistently good teams and both lasted just one year on the HOF ballot, failing to receive the 5 percent of total votes cast required to remain. Historically, catchers have been a tough sell to Cooperstown voters, with 18 enshrined. Third base (16) is the only position less represented.

Javier Baez

During this season's NLCS, after a typical sleight-of-hand Baez tag denied Yasiel Puig a base he appeared to have stolen, noted baseball scribe Joe Posnanski said Baez "is better at tagging people than anybody else is at anything," which sums up his undeniably flashy fielding. But recurring errors on routine plays suggest lapses in concentration. He's capable of majestic home runs — 23 this season — or flail-away strikeouts — 371 in 1,267 career plate appearances. Baez is only 24 but has nearly three full seasons in the books and still lacks plate discipline. He could be Robby Alomar, or he could be Jose Valentin.

Jake Arrieta

He started compiling a Hall of Fame resume in his four-plus seasons with the Cubs — 68-31 record, 2.73 ERA, 1.034 WHIP, two no-hitters and a Cy Young Award — but he's likely to continue building it elsewhere, so we'll withhold judgment.

Addison Russell

Russell, 23, deserves a do-over after a season in which he was undone by injury and off-field issues. If he plays as well as he did in 2016, he'll remind voters of Barry Larkin.

Kyle Hendricks

It's his variety of pitches and cerebral approach that evoke the Greg Maddux comparisons, which don't yet seem totally credible, but there's also this: Hendricks (.633, 2.94, 1.098) has a higher winning percentage, lower ERA and better WHIP than Maddux (.610, 3.16, 1.143) compiled during his Hall of Fame career. Durability is the most glaring discrepancy; Maddux averaged 226 innings a season and went to the disabled list once in 23 big-league seasons, when he was 36. Hendricks has never pitched more than 190 innings and lost eight starts to a mysterious hand injury in 2017. Maddon has to let him work deeper into games if Hendricks is to become all he can be. Then again, with bullpens becoming ever more important in team building, maybe he doesn't.

Kyle Schwarber

Those two magical postseasons created mythical expectations, but Schwarber is a career .222 hitter. Those 30 bombs in just 422 at-bats were impressive this season, but he also struck out once every 3.3 plate appearances. At 24, Schwarber might become the fearsome all-around hitter he appeared to be in his first two Cubs Octobers, but right now he is Adam Dunn.
After deciding not to renew pitching coach Chris Bosio’s contract Friday, the Cubs lost assistant hitting coach Eric Hinske to the Los Angeles Angels on Monday. Hinske, who had been with the Cubs since December 2013, will be the Angels’ new hitting coach.

Bench coach Dave Martinez also might be leaving the Cubs. Martinez was asked by the Nationals to interview for their managerial vacancy, a job he came close to landing after the 2015 season until ownership required previous big-league managing experience.

The Nationals, who were eliminated by the Cubs in a dramatic National League Division Series this month, were expected to get back to Martinez later in the week to schedule the interview.

“‘I’m excited about it,’” said Martinez, who has been manager Joe Maddon’s bench coach for the last 10 seasons, a stretch that included the Rays’ only World Series appearance in 2008 and the Cubs’ first World Series championship in more than a century last season.

Some industry insiders suggest Martinez might be a front-runner for the Nationals’ job.

Martinez, 53, interviewed with Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo for the job that eventually went to Dusty Baker, whose contract wasn’t renewed after two seasons despite back-to-back NL East titles.

Most of the Nationals’ key players return next season, including outfielder Bryce Harper and right-handers Max Scherzer and Stephen Strasburg.

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