 [Click to Print](#)

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Posted on Fri, Oct. 1, 2010

## The best Phillies of all time

By Rich Westcott

There was a time when the period from 1975 to 1983 was considered the greatest in Phillies history. It was called the golden era, and with good reason. In the long and largely unspectacular life of the team, nothing came close to matching it.

The Phillies of those nine years won the team's first World Series and two National League pennants. They reached the League Championship Series five times, including three in a row. They won 101 games during the regular season twice. Led by future Hall of Famers Mike Schmidt and Steve Carlton, the Phillies of that epoch had more talent from top to bottom than any team that preceded them.

The lofty position of those Phillies went unchallenged for a long time. But now that time has ended: The Phillies are in the midst of a new golden era, and it surpasses the previous one.

Since 2007, the Phillies have won two National League pennants in a row and appeared in two consecutive World Series - both feats achieved by no other Phils teams. And when the club clinched its fourth consecutive East Division title in Washington this week, it was another first for the longest-running one-city, one-name team in professional sports.

This dramatic four-year run - from 2007 through 2010 - is bolstered by the fact that before it began, the Phils had finished in second place three times in a row. In the previous golden era, the Phillies dropped to fourth place once (1979) and had the third-best record in the league in another season (strike-marred 1981, when they won the first-half title but lost in a special postseason playoff).

The Phils of that era compiled a 791-612 record, for a slightly better winning percentage - .564 - than the current group's .555 (628-504 through Wednesday). But let's not look at wins and losses alone.

The current Phillies play in a stunning venue called Citizens Bank Park - a genuine baseball facility that ranks far above Veterans

Stadium, the multipurpose, much-maligned home of former Phils teams. And in five of the team's seven years at the current ballpark, which has played host to 123 straight sellouts, more than three million fans have flocked to see them each year. From 1975 to 1983, the Vet never drew close to three million fans in any season.

While spirited crowds have jammed the ballpark, an enormously talented and hardworking group of players has filled the roster. No assemblage of athletes wearing the Phillies uniform has been more likable, popular, or exciting to watch.

Moreover, Ryan Howard at first base, Chase Utley at second, and Jimmy Rollins at shortstop give the Phils the best players at their positions in the team's 127-year history. The club has never had three better starting pitchers at the same time than Roy Halladay, Cole Hamels, and Roy Oswalt. And many other players - including Shane Victorino, Jayson Werth, Carlos Ruiz, Placido Polanco, Raul Ibanez, and Brad Lidge - bolster the case that the current team is as good as, if not better than, any of its predecessors.

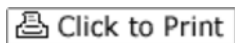
Add to that the leadership of manager Charlie Manuel, general manager Ruben Amaro Jr., and president David Montgomery, and the Phillies are clearly enjoying a new golden era that ranks as the finest in their history. And the best thing about it is that it's not over yet.

---

Rich Westcott is a baseball writer and historian. His most recent books are "Back Again - The Story of the 2009 Phillies" and "The Philadelphia Phillies - Past and Present." He can be reached at [rnwestcott@juno.com](mailto:rnwestcott@juno.com).

**Find this article at:**

[http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20101001\\_The\\_best\\_Phillies\\_of\\_all\\_time.html](http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20101001_The_best_Phillies_of_all_time.html)



[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.