

- BRANDT WILLIAMS:** Santana was the unanimous choice as the best pitcher in the American League in 2004. Only six other American League pitchers have earned that distinction. Here's how he did it.
- In his last 15 starts. Santana had 13 wins, no losses. His earned run average was 1.21, meaning he gave up an average of about 1 earned run per 9 innings. At one point, he had a streak of more than 30 innings without giving up a single run. But the season didn't begin like a trophy year for Santana. After off season surgery to remove bone chips from his elbow, he had a record of 2 wins, 4 losses in 12 starts.
- JOHAN SANTANA:** It was really tough during the first half of the season trying to put everything together.
- BRANDT WILLIAMS:** Santana spoke to reporters from Caracas, Venezuela, not far from his hometown, Tovar Mérida. He says his season began to turn around in June when he faced the New York Mets. Santana ended a losing streak with a 5-3 win. He struck out 10 batters.
- JOHAN SANTANA:** But in the second half, I [? told ?] myself, you just be consistent and prove that you can do it. But just make sure that you get better and better and better as the season goes and just start by star. And then just like that, everything happens.
- RON GARDENHIRE:** I think people started taking notice when you started seeing 8 innings, 1 hit, 13 strikeouts. And it wasn't just one week.
- BRANDT WILLIAMS:** Twins manager Ron Gardenhire says Santana's numbers in the second half of the season reminded him of Hall of Fame pitcher Bob Gibson. He says Santana was flat out the most dominant pitcher he'd seen this season. Gardenhire also credits the Twins coaching staff with helping Santana get over his first half slump.
- RON GARDENHIRE:** I think it was a matter of him trusting, coming off the elbow surgery, trusting that he could let the ball go and some mechanical things to get him to where he needed to get to as far as being able to locate the ball. And I think through some hard work by Johan and Rick Anderson, the pitching coach, I think, he got there.
- BRANDT WILLIAMS:** Sportswriters have been predicting the award for Santana several weeks before the season ended. The runner up in the voting was Boston Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling. *Star Tribune* editor and former baseball writer Howard Sinker says, despite Schilling's World Series win and victory total, there was no question who was the better pitcher this year.
- HOWARD SINKER:** It's really not the most victories. Schilling had 21 this year, and Santana had 20. But Santana was undefeated the second half of the season. And he was absolutely dominant. I mean, it was really one of those situations where every fifth game the Twins literally this season knew that Santana wasn't going to lose.
- BRANDT WILLIAMS:** Santana is the first Venezuelan to collect a Cy Young Award. Venezuela has been plagued by political violence and kidnappings in recent years, but Santana says right now, his award is helping people forget about their troubles.
- JOHAN SANTANA:** There's a lot of people going-- it's going crazy. And it's a great feeling. I feel real happy, and a lot of people feel happy. And there's a lot of things going on right now. And it's a big thing going on in my country.

BRANDT

Santana is the third Minnesota Twin to win the award. Frank Viola and Jim Perry are the other two. Brandt

WILLIAMS:

Williams, Minnesota Public Radio.