



MEDIA CLIPS – Aug. 5, 2018

Anderson rocked on rare off night for rotation

Rockies can't solve rookie Peralta for second time this season

By Curt Hogg Special to MLB.com

Aug. 4th, 2018

MILWAUKEE -- Back in May, when the Rockies were the first big league team to face **Freddy Peralta**, they couldn't figure out the Brewers' rookie right-hander. The second time around didn't go much better for Colorado.

Left-hander **Tyler Anderson** gave up six runs in the first inning and seven on the night as the Rockies couldn't get going until it was too late against the Brewers in an 8-4 loss on Saturday at Miller Park.

"He's been throwing great the last couple of months," Rockies manager Bud Black said of Anderson. "Today, in the first inning, he just couldn't establish anything. All four of his pitches weren't working. Pretty simple."

All of the offense for Colorado came courtesy of the red-hot **Trevor Story**, who hit a pair of two-run homers to up his total to 23 on the year and three through the first two games of the weekend series

Aside from Story, however, the Rockies weren't able to get much going at the plate against Peralta. After **DJ LeMahieu** and **Nolan Arenado** were stranded in the first, the Rockies did not put a runner in scoring position until the eighth.

After striking out 13 batters over 5 2/3 scoreless innings while almost exclusively using his fastball in his Major League debut on May 13 at Coors Field, Peralta once again perplexed Colorado with his heater. He struck out eight Rockies over six frames, with Story's first homer and LeMahieu's sixth-inning single his only hits allowed.

"Even though it's not overpowering velocity, I think it has some life in the hitting area with the fastball," Black said of Peralta. "I think it gets on you, his fastball, and it has some carry to it. We just haven't seemed to solve this fella in two starts."

Anderson, meanwhile, couldn't keep his impressive string of success going. He had been magnificent dating back to June 7, logging a 2.43 ERA over his last 10 starts as part of an overall renaissance by the Colorado rotation that had the second-lowest ERA in the National League since June 19.

Anderson lasted just four innings, surrendering seven hits and three walks while striking out four. The seven earned runs allowed tied his season high, which came on March 30 in his first start of the year.

Ryan Braun's bases-loaded RBI single got the Brewers on the board with one away in the first. **Travis Shaw**, who entered the night slugging .238 with a .521 OPS against southpaws, then delivered the game's big blow with a towering grand slam to the right-field bleachers.

"We were trying to go fastball in, looking for a double play for him to roll over," Anderson said. "It was just on the edge inside, more off the plate than on, and he just put a good swing on it."

Exacerbating matters was **Hernan Perez**, who became the sixth straight Milwaukee batter to reach base by launching a 1-1 cutter over the fence in center to put the Rockies in a 6-0 hole. Braun added a solo homer of his own in the third to make it 7-0.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

When Story lined his second two-run shot of the game just over the left-field fence with one out against reliever **Matt Albers**, it sparked some late life for Colorado after trailing 8-2 entering the final frame. **Gerardo Parra** followed with a bunt single, leading the Brewers to summon reliever **Joakim Soria**. **Ian Desmond** doubled and **Chris Iannetta** walked to bring the tying run to the plate, but Soria struck out pinch-hitter **Tom Murphy** and lefty **Josh Hader** came on to face **Charlie Blackmon**.

A night after the Brewers struck with a two-out, three-run homer by **Eric Thames** for a walk-off win, there was no magic in store for the Rockies as Hader notched the one-out save on Blackmon's popup to second.

"This team fights. You saw it all night," Black said. "You saw us playing hard all night. It's no surprise to me, it shouldn't be a surprise to anyone who watches us play every night."

SOUND SMART

When Sunday's series finale wraps up, Story may be disappointed to not see the Brewers on the schedule the rest of the way. With six homers in six games against Milwaukee this season, he is only the second player in history to go yard six times in seven or fewer games in a season against the Brewers. **More >**

UP NEXT

The Rockies will look to avoid the sweep at the hands of the Brewers when right-hander **Jon Gray** takes the mound against Milwaukee left-hander **Wade Miley** at 12:10 p.m. MT. Blackmon, who went 0-for-5 Saturday, needs one hit for 1,000 for his career.

Story homers twice to make it 6 vs. Crew in '18

By Curt Hogg Special to MLB.com

Aug. 4th, 2018

MILWAUKEE -- The Brewers may have had the Rockies' number through all but one game so far in the season series, but at least one player in purple has been immune to Milwaukee's dominance.

Shortstop **Trevor Story** launched two more homers in accounting for all the Colorado offense in **Saturday night's 8-4 loss to the Brewers** at Miller Park, running his total against the Crew to six on the year in six games. Through the first two games of the series in Milwaukee, Story has connected on three long balls.

No, the Brewers aren't pitching him any differently than other teams, and no, there hasn't been one big adjustment that has led to the hot streak, Story asserted after the game.

"Baseball's tough," Story said. "You feel good one day and you feel terrible the next. It's all about little adjustments for me. I'm feeling good right now."

That he is. Story is batting .338 since June 1 and is coming off a July in which he posted a 1.026 OPS. In June, that figure was .950.

"This guy is an All-Star player," Rockies manager Bud Black said. "You saw that recognition through the first half of the year. With Trev, we're seeing great strides, especially the last few months, in the approach. He's going to continue to be a really good player in this league."

Brewers starter **Freddy Peralta** baffled the Rockies for the second time this year with his fastball, but Story squared one up in the fourth for a two-run homer. It traveled 435 feet out to center field, according to **Statcast™**, and accounted for the only two runs against Peralta over six innings.

"He started me off with a curveball," Story said. "I felt like I went in not looking for that. Then he threw a fastball that was over the middle of the plate. That's where I was looking and just put a good swing on it."

Story then came to the plate in the ninth with one out and his team down, 8-2, and sent a screamer just over the top of the left-center-field fence for another two-run blast. Reliever **Matt Albers** left a slider over the middle of the plate down in the zone, and Story lined it out at a launch angle of 19 degrees.

A crew chief review confirmed the home run, as the ball bounced just over the top of the fence.

"I knew I hit it really well, it was just a matter of if it was high enough or not," Story said. "I knew I hit it hard enough, that's for sure."

While Milwaukee improved to 5-1 against Colorado in advance of Sunday's season-series finale, Story became just the second player in history to hit at least six homers in seven or fewer games against the Brewers in a single season.

Bettis could be odd man out upon DL return

Rotation has excelled during right-hander's absence

By Curt Hogg Special to MLB.com

Aug. 4th, 2018

MILWAUKEE-- **Chad Bettis** is back in the Rockies' clubhouse after his rehab assignment for a right middle finger blister went smoothly.

The right-hander is also aware that, thanks to the performance of Colorado's rotation in his absence since early July, there may not be an obvious spot for him to return to it upon activation from the 10-day disabled list in the near future.

The recent success of the Rockies' starters has been well-documented. In July, the Rockies' rotation posted a 1.71 home ERA that was the best single-month split for any group of starters in franchise history. Since June 19, its 3.39 ERA is the second best in the NL.

"It's been lights-out," Bettis said. "They've been on their game. It's been great to watch them help the team win."

Rockies manager Bud Black offered no update on when Bettis would be activated, but the timeframe likely still remains at some point next week. Colorado has already released its probable starters through Wednesday and, given the rotation's success, Bettis may be the odd man out with a 5.10 ERA.

"It's a good problem to have," Bettis said. "It's a bad problem for me, but a good problem for us, so it's nice to see everybody step up and do really well and succeed." Bettis, who threw on the side before the Rockies played on Saturday at Miller Park, had positive reports to relay from his rehab assignment, which spanned three outings and concluded with four earned runs over six innings at Triple-A Albuquerque.

"I think from a numbers standpoint, it was probably not what I wanted," Bettis said. "But from an execution standpoint, from a process standpoint, it couldn't have gone any better. In my second outing, there was one pitch I was really not happy with, but in the big scheme of things, that's 160-plus pitches. One poorly executed pitch that got hit is pretty small. I felt good."

Dunn eyeing September return

Rockies reliever **Mike Dunn** threw from 90 feet and is hoping to make a September return to Colorado, which Black later confirmed.

"That's realistic, yes," Black said of the left-hander's goal.

The Rockies initially placed Dunn on the 10-day DL on July 7 before transferring him to the 60-day on July 27 with left shoulder A/C joint inflammation. Before sustaining the injury, he had struggled in his second year with the Rockies, posting a 9.00 ERA and 2.353 WHIP in 17 innings.

Rockies lose fourth in a row following Tyler Anderson's poor outing
By PATRICK SAUNDERS | psaunders@denverpost.com | The Denver Post
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MILWAUKEE — The dog days of summer have pounced on the Rockies like a fat St. Bernard.

The Brewers beat the Rockies 8-4 Saturday night at Miller Park, teeing off on starter Tyler Anderson for six runs in the first inning, highlighted by Travis Shaw's grand slam on Anderson's elevated, 1-0 fastball.

"It's just frustrating in general. Other than the (first inning) I thought I had a pretty good game," said Anderson, who lost for the first time on the road this season and is now 1-2 with an 8.59 ERA in three career starts at Miller Park.

It was Colorado's fourth consecutive loss and it fell to 1-5 on its early-August road trip to the Midwest. Prior to the trip, the Rockies had just five losses in their previous 24 games.

Colorado never quit. In fact, it forced the Brewers to bring in closer Josh Hader in the ninth inning with two outs and the bases loaded. The all-star left-hander got Charlie Blackmon to pop out to second to end the game.

"This team fights, you saw it all night," manager Bud Black said. "It's no surprise to me and it shouldn't be a surprise to everybody who watches us play every night. We had a tough first inning and we couldn't climb all the way back."

Trevor Story pounded out two home runs — his second long ball coming in the ninth — and he drove in all four runs for Colorado. Story has 23 home runs, one shy of the 24 he hit last season and four short of the 27 he launched as a rookie in 2016.

"With Trev, we are seeing great strides over the last few months in the approach," Black said. "He's going to continue to be a really good player in this league and Rockies fans will be really excited about the future for Trev."

After losing two consecutive games in walk-off fashion — at St. Louis Thursday afternoon and here in Milwaukee on Friday night — the Rockies were in need of a strong start from Anderson. But the left-hander, who has had a mostly solid season, couldn't deliver. He departed the mound after just four innings. Anderson's line: seven runs allowed on seven hits — including three home runs — with three walks and four strikeouts.

Milwaukee starter Freddy Peralta, who dominated the Rockies in his major-league debut on Mother's Day at Coors Field when he struck out 13, was excellent again. He allowed two runs on two hits and struck out eight over six innings, improving to 5-2.

"This fella's fastball has, even if it's not overpowering velocity, some life to it in the strike zone," Black said. "It gets on you and it has some carry to hit. We just haven't seemed to be able to solve this fella in two starts."

Peralta's only rough inning was the fourth. Carlos Gonzalez drew a one-out walk, setting up Trevor Story's monster two-run home run to right-center field. Story's rocket traveled 435 feet and came off his bat at 107.5 mph. His second home run was a two-run shot off Matt Albers, again driving in Gonzalez. Story has batted .381 (8-for-21) with six home runs and 14 RBIs in six games vs. the Brewers this season.

Anderson's first inning was a nightmare: one-out single by Christian Yelich; walk to Jesus Aguilar; single by Jonathan Schoop; RBI single by Ryan Braun; Shaw's grand slam; and a solo home run by Hernan Perez. Game, set and match.

Regarding the grand slam, Anderson said he just missed his spot.

"We were trying to go fastball in and we were looking for a double play ground ball — just roll it over," Anderson said. "It was just on the inside edge, more off the plate than on, and he just put a good swing on it."

Saturday marked Anderson's shortest start of the season, not counting his game in Miami on April 27 when he left the game with one out in the second inning due to light-headedness.

The Rockies will look to avoid a three-game sweep Sunday afternoon at Miller Park. The Brewers have won seven of their last eight games vs. the Rockies.

Saunders: Nolan Arenado's MVP chase, the Tooth Trot and other topics
By PATRICK SAUNDERS | psaunders@denverpost.com | The Denver Post
August 4, 2018 at 10:00 am

MILWAUKEE — With a third of the season remaining, it's looking like a two-way race between Braves first baseman Freddie Freeman and Rockies third baseman [Nolan Arenado](#) for National League MVP.

There are a few things to consider here. First off all, neither all-star has ever finished in the top three in voting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America. Second, the race could very well come down to which team plays better down the stretch. If the Braves beat out the Phillies for the NL East title, Freeman will garner some momentum, but if the Rockies find a way to beat out the Dodgers and Diamondbacks for Colorado's first division title, Arenado will win the award.

Freeman is a terrific first baseman, but he doesn't change a game on the diamond the way Arenado does.

Entering the weekend, here's a basic statistical comparison:

- Freeman: .315 batting average, 18 home runs, 69 RBIs, .926 OPS and 4.6 WAR
- Arenado: .308 batting average, 28 home runs, 80 RBIs, .983 OPS and 4.3 WAR

Some hit-and-run notes from the road:

— Every time I go to St. Louis, I'm struck by the same three thoughts. First, the Cardinals mean as much, or more, to their city, state and region as the all-mighty Broncos mean to Colorado. Second, the Cardinals' classic, colorful and traditional uniforms are the best in baseball.

Third, the Rockies usually play terrible baseball at Busch Stadium. The Cardinals have won every home series against the Rockies since 2010 and are 34-13 at Busch Stadium III all-time vs. the Rockies, the highest winning percentage (.723) against any National League team at the ballpark.

— When I was walking the through tunnel at Miller Park before Friday night's game between the Rockies and Brewers, I spotted one of Milwaukee's "Famous Racing Sausages." Even from a distance, I could tell it was "Chorizo," because of the sombrero.

The Sausage Race is cool because the costumes are great and it embodies the various ethnic cultures of Milwaukee.

The Presidents Race at Nationals Park, featuring George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson and Teddy Roosevelt is also terrific. The big-headed caricatures are a hoot, and the theme is perfect for the nation's capital.

As for what goes on at [Coors Field](#), with the racing toothbrush, molar and toothpaste, let me just say — “I still can't handle the tooth!”

— There has been no official word yet on when “Players Weekend” will be held, but Rockies shortstop [Trevor Story](#) is ready for it.

Last season, players from across the majors were able to wear their nicknames on the back of their uniforms during the fun weekend. Last year's uniforms were distinct, featuring colorful, non-traditional jerseys featuring alternate designs inspired by youth-league uniforms.

So what will Story's nickname be this year? True, as in True Story.

“That's the nickname the Vinny (Castilla) gave me my first big-league spring training,” the Rockies' all-star explained. “So this year, I'm putting it on the back of my jersey. I've also got it stitched on my glove right now.

“I think it's pretty cool. That's my favorite nickname, and I like it a lot better than ‘Joe.’ [Mark Reynolds](#) kind of made me put that on the back of my jersey last year, and he's not here anymore to make me do it. I'd much rather be called True than Joe.”

Closer Wade Davis gets full support from Rockies manager Bud Black
Colorado's overall 5.23 bullpen ERA is the second worst in the majors and its 1.45 WHIP is the sixth highest
By PATRICK SAUNDERS | psaunders@denverpost.com | The Denver Post
August 4, 2018 at 6:36 pm

MILWAUKEE — Rockies manager Bud Black is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with closer Wade Davis.

The day after Davis blew saves in consecutive games, Black backed up Davis with confident words, as well as some select statistics. Black reiterated that he has no plans to remove Davis as the team's closer.

"I'm going to defend Wade Davis," Black said Saturday afternoon before the Rockies played the Brewers at Miller Park. "This season is not going to depend on just the bullpen, or the lineup or the starting rotation. I can't remember which player said it best last night, in a quote. 'When we lose, we lose as a team. When we win, we win as a team.' That's how we look at it.' "

That player, by the way, was veteran outfielder Carlos Gonzalez.

"Now, are there certain segments we have to look at? Absolutely," Black added. "That's what we are going to do every day, as coaches and as players."

Davis blew a save against the Cardinals in the ninth inning on Thursday in a 3-2 loss. Friday night, Davis walked two batters, setting up Eric Thames to hit a three-run, walk-off homer as the Brewers beat Colorado 5-3.

Entering Saturday night's game, Davis had a 5.09 ERA and had blown six saves in 37 opportunities. At this point in the season last year, closing for Chicago, Davis did not have a blown save in 22 chances and a 2.43 ERA. But, as Black noted, relievers' ERAs are often skewed by a few bad performances.

In Davis' six blown saves this season, for example, he has a 27.00 ERA over 4 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings, with a .458 batting average against. Of the six home runs he's given up this season over a total of 46 innings pitched, three have come in his blown saves.

Subtract those six bad games from Davis' record, Black noted, and Davis' ERA dips to 2.81. However, the Rockies gave Davis a three-year, \$52 million contract precisely because they are relying on him to close out tight games such as Friday night's.

Davis has a 1.239 WHIP (walks plus hit per inning pitched) this season, a pale comparison to his remarkable 0.787 WHIP with Kansas City in his 2015 all-star season. Still, Davis is confident he'll get the job done for Colorado.

"I had good stuff the whole inning," he said Friday night. "When you are going through stretches like this, it's just tough for the whole team to swallow, more than (for) my selfish reasons."

Colorado's overall 5.23 bullpen ERA is the second worst in the majors and its 1.45 WHIP is the sixth highest. Black said he understands that the bullpen needs to improve, but expressed faith that it would.

"Our bullpen hasn't performed like we thought it would, all year, as group," Black said. "There has been some great individual efforts along the way. (Adam) Ottavino has had a great season. Wade Davis is leading the (National League) in saves. There have been some other bright spots, here and there. We still have two full months of baseball to continue to contend. We are right there in the thick of it."

Looking ahead

Rockies RHP Jon Gray (9-7, 4.99 ERA) at **Brewers LHP Wade Miley**(2-1, 1.53), 12:10 p.m. Sunday; ATTRM, 850 AM
After a difficult start to the season, Gray has rebounded, throwing three consecutive quality starts (1.66 ERA). He beat the Cardinals on Tuesday at St. Louis, allowing three runs (two earned) on four hits. He struck out five and walked two over 7 ½ innings. Gray allowed a leadoff home run to Matt Carpenter, but threw 64 of 92 pitches for strikes the rest of the way. Gray has not pitched well against the Brewers, going 0-1 with a 7.63 ERA in three starts against them. On May 13 at Coors Field, the Brew Crew bashed him for six runs in 5 ½ innings. Miley, who missed a big chunk of the season with a strained right oblique, has pitched well since his return. He beat the Dodgers Tuesday at Los Angeles, tossing seven shutout innings while striking out five and yielding only two hits and two walks. He's allowed two or fewer runs in all six starts this season. In 13 career games (12 starts) vs. Colorado, he's 7-2 with a 3.79 ERA, but hasn't faced the Rockies since 2014 when he pitched for Arizona. — *Patrick Saunders, The Denver Post*

Monday: Pirates RHP Joe Musgrove (4-5, 3.63) at Rockies LHP Kyle Freeland (9-7, 3.20), 6:40 p.m., ATTRM

Tuesday: Pirates RHP Jameson Taillon (8-8, 3.74) at Rockies RHP Antonio Senzatela (4-3, 4.56), 6:40 p.m., ATTRM

Wednesday: Pirates RHP Chris Archer (3-5, 4.49) at Rockies RHP German Marquez (9-8, 4.70), 1:10 p.m., ATTRM

Shaw, Peralta lift Brewers to 8-4 win over Rockies

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE -- One big inning was enough for Travis Shaw and the Milwaukee Brewers, and quite costly for Tyler Anderson and the Colorado Rockies.

Shaw hit a grand slam during Milwaukee's six-run first inning, and the Brewers beat the Rockies 8-4 on Saturday night.

Milwaukee won for the fourth time in six games and stayed one back of NL Central-leading Chicago, which held on for a 5-4 win over San Diego.

"We got off to an early lead and that kind of helped everything kind of settle in," Shaw said.

It sure did.

Staked to a 6-0 lead, rookie Freddy Peralta pitched six effective innings in his second win over Colorado this season.

"They didn't square up many balls," Brewers manager Craig Counsell said. "Lot of balls in the air, a lot of easy outs."

Trevor Story hit two two-run homers for the Rockies, who have dropped five of six. Anderson (6-4) was tagged for seven runs and seven hits in four innings.

Story's 23rd homer off Matt Albers caromed off the yellow padding on top of the wall in the ninth. A 50-second replay review confirmed the call.

The Rockies then loaded the bases with one out, but Joakim Soria struck out pinch-hitter Tom Murphy swinging and Josh Hader got Charlie Blackmon to pop out for his eighth save.

"This team fights," Colorado manager Bud Black said. "You saw it all night. You saw us playing hard all night."

Anderson held the opposition to a .144 average in his previous six starts, but Milwaukee jumped all over him right from the start.

Ryan Braun hit an RBI single before the lefty-batting Shaw drove a 1-0 pitch from Anderson over the wall in right for his first homer off a lefty this season. It was his second career grand slam.

Hernan Perez followed with his ninth homer of the season. It was the sixth time this year that Milwaukee hit consecutive home runs.

"Today in the first inning, (Anderson) just couldn't establish anything," Black said. "All four of his pitches weren't working, pretty simple. The Brewers took advantage of it with one big swing, really that cost Tyler. One big swing, that was sort of the back breaker."

Braun led off the third with a drive that bounced on the top of the padded wall in left for his 12th homer. Manny Pina made it 8-2 with a sacrifice fly in the sixth.

Peralta (5-2) struck out eight while throwing a career-high 107 pitches. He allowed two hits and walked two.

Peralta made his major league debut in Colorado on May 13 and struck out 13 in 5 2/3 scoreless innings. "We just haven't been able to solve this young man," Black said.

STAT LINES

Peralta hasn't allowed more than five hits in his 10 starts. He has 21 strikeouts in 11 2/3 innings against the Rockies and has limited them to a .079 batting average. It was Anderson's shortest start since leaving after 1 1/3 innings at Miami on April 27 due to lightheadedness.

ON THE BOARD

Jonathan Schoop's base hit in the first inning snapped a 0-for-12 skid with eight strikeouts since joining the Brewers in a trade with the Baltimore Orioles on Tuesday.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Rockies: RHP Chad Bettis (blister on right middle finger) felt good after he threw a side session, according to Black.

Brewers: RHP Taylor Williams was placed on the 10-day disabled list with right elbow soreness. RHP Jacob Barnes is back for his third stint with the Brewers after being recalled from Triple-A Colorado Springs. He pitched the eighth and gave up a hit.

UP NEXT

Rockies: RHP Jon Gray (9-7, 4.99 ERA) makes his fourth career start against the Brewers and third at Miller Park on Sunday. He is 0-1 with a 7.63 ERA against Milwaukee. Brewers: LHP Wade Miley (2-1, 1.53 ERA) is 7-2 with a 3.79 ERA in 12 starts against Colorado. He is facing the Rockies for the first time since 2014.

362 Days Since Don Baylor Passed Away -- And It Is Still Hard to Accept **TRACY RINGOLSBY - AUGUST 4, 2018 | InsideTheSeams**

It was just weekend in Cooperstown, N.Y., that Chipper Jones, a member of the Hall of Fame Class of 2018, took time to remember the late Don Baylor.

Baylor was the hitting coach for Jones and the Braves back in 1999, and Jones has admitted often, it was Baylor who helped him make the step up in his career that led to him winning the NL MVP in 1999 and, in truth, to becoming the complete player who was voted into the Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility.

Baylor challenged Jones that spring, telling him that as an opposing manager and coach, it was Jones who was the reason the Braves so often faced left-handed pitchers because the opposition felt that would neutralize Jones.

"I miss you buddy," Jones said of Baylor. "Not a day goes by that I don't miss our rigorous cage sessions."

Most anyone who knew Baylor misses him. It was 362 days ago that Baylor lost a battle that he couldn't win. He passed away at the age of 68 after a 14-year battle with multiple myeloma.

It still hard to believe it really happened. It's still hard to believe that when the phone rings it won't be Baylor on the other end. Anyone who met Baylor was a better person for it.

This is a man who, as a junior high school student, was one of three kids who integrated public schools in Austin, Texas, in the 1960s. Baylor was the first African-American athlete at Stephen F. Austin High School, and to the day of his death, his high school baseball coach, Frank Seale, was an important part of Baylor's life.

Never did a key event in Baylor's life -- from All-Star Games to World Series to Spring Training -- occur without Frank and Anne Seale in attendance. Baylor never forgot the impact Seale had in helping him deal with the challenges he faced in integrating the Texas education system.

Baylor was even the first African-American who Darrell Royal offered a full ride to play football at the University of Texas. Baylor, however, was a baseball player at heart, which was fortunate for me, because it was through baseball that this writer from Cheyenne, Wyo., and Baylor became friends. We could not have had more different backgrounds, but I would doubt that many, if any, developed a stronger bond than Baylor and myself.

We became acquainted in the late 1970s, when Baylor played for the Angels and I covered them. We never lost contact while I moved on to Seattle and Kansas City and Dallas, and he went on to play for the Yankees, Red Sox, Twins and A's.

And then we were together again in Colorado, where I was hired the year before the Rockies played their first game, and the next fall he was hired as the first manager in Rockies history.

What kind of person was Baylor? Well, he played in the World Series each of his final three big league seasons with different teams -- the Red Sox, Twins and A's. Why? He had that special karma in a clubhouse. He could keep everyone focused on what mattered and not the petty whining that can sidetrack a team.

And Baylor was willing to take the bullet to make sure nobody got lost along the way.

It was the final days of the 1979 season. The Angels were battling for the first postseason trip in the history of a franchise that was created out of expansion in 1961. They were playing the three-time defending American League West champion Royals in Kansas City, holding a three-game lead with 11 games to play.

Nolan Ryan was pitching for the Angels, and he retired the first two batters in the fourth. Then came a bunt single by Willie Wilson and another single by Hal McRae. George Brett hit a routine ground ball to short that went between Jimmy Anderson's legs, and the Royals wound up with three unearned runs in what became a 6-4 win.

After the game, the media was crowded around the 22-year-old Anderson's locker, reliving that critical play over and over again. All of a sudden, Baylor's voice was heard, and the table in the middle of the clubhouse with the postgame meal was turned over. The media forgot all about Anderson and raced to Baylor's locker.

After he answered questions the rest of the media members departed.

"OK," I said, knowing how out of character the actions were, "What's up?"

Baylor smiled.

"That kid is our shortstop, and we need him if we are going to win," said Baylor. "We don't need him having to relive that play. We need him to look ahead."

He paused.

"I got the attention off them, didn't I?" Baylor said.

He did. Oh, and the visiting clubhouse attendant was quick to mention to me as I left the clubhouse, "You know 'Groove.' He gave me more than double the cost of that meal."

Don Baylor wasn't afraid to take the heat. And he wasn't about to take advantage of anyone.

What kind of guy was Don Baylor? When he was first diagnosed with cancer, I wrote a piece for the Rocky Mountain News in which I mentioned that Baylor, the first manager in franchise history, was at a certain hospital. The phone rang the next morning. Baylor was calling.

Baylor was upset I wrote the article.

"You were the first manager in the history of the franchise, you took the Rockies to the playoffs in their third year of existence," I explained. "You mean a lot to the people here. I felt your situation was newsworthy."

Baylor paused before responding, "But you mentioned the hospital. People are sending all these flowers and things. These nurses have so much work to do. They don't need to be carrying flowers around."

That was Don Baylor.

It wasn't about him. Here he was, diagnosed with cancer, and he was concerned about any burden that the nurses might be facing.

Baylor was such a perfect manager for the expansion Rockies. The first-year roster was a group of basic castoffs from other organizations. And he quickly handed down rules, including coats and ties on every road trip, and everybody would be standing on the top step of the dugout, as a team, for the national anthem before every game.

"We are an expansion team," Baylor said. "People can think what they want, but we are going to be professional. We are going to respect the game, and we are going to respect ourselves. We'll surprise people."

And in the third year of the franchise's existence, it was in the postseason -- quicker than any team up until that time.

Baylor was dismissed by the Rockies after the 1998 season and hired to be the hitting coach for the Atlanta Braves. The Braves came to Colorado for a series with the Rockies in early April, and the topic of conversation at Coors Field among the ushers, the ticket takers, the receptionists and secretaries was, "Don and [his wife] Becky are going to be here tonight."

And Baylor arrived early so he would have time to see the ushers, the ticket takers, the receptionists and secretaries.

Longtime baseball executive Chris Rice was one of those people.

"I used to say, 'I would take a bullet for Don Baylor,'" said Rice, whose baseball career began with the expansion Royals in 1968, included being a part of the expansion Rockies and is now finishing her career reunited again with John Schuerholz in Atlanta. "A bullet would bounce off him, but I would take one for him anyway."

That was Baylor. In life or at the ballpark, everybody was part of the team. There was no class distinction. To him, all people were truly created equal, and all people deserved respect.

Ellis Burks came to the Rockies as a free agent after the franchise's first season, because he wanted to play for Baylor, who was his teammate with Boston in 1987.

Burks remembered being a rookie, and being hazed by veterans until Baylor, who came to the Red Sox from the Yankees the previous season, called out the veterans. He made it clear that Burks was a teammate and was just as important to the team's success as every other player.

"He made his point, and nobody was going to challenge him," said Burks.

Hit by a pitch 267 times in his career -- more than any modern player who didn't wear padding -- Baylor charged the mound only twice. Both times he was hit in the head. The other times?

"I'd send a message through the second baseman or shortstop, whoever was covering second when I stole the bases," Baylor said with a smile.

Every time?

"I remember when I was traded from the Orioles to the A's," Baylor explained. "Bobby Grich and I were the first- and second-round picks in the same Draft, and were roommates from rookie ball to the big leagues. He is my son's godfather.

"The Orioles come to town, and I get hit by a pitch. I looked across the infield and Bobby's staring at me, like 'You aren't going to, are you?' I just nodded yes. He was on the other team."

And Baylor was a team guy, at the ballpark, and in life in general.

Baylor had so much respect from everyone whose life he touched, because he respected every person and the challenges they faced in life.

Rockies trounced by Brewers, remain winless in August
By Drew Creasman - Posted on August 4, 2018 | BSN Denver

This one was over almost as soon as it began.

After the Colorado Rockies missed out on a chance to score after a walk and a HBP in the top of the first, the Milwaukee Brewers... did not.

Starter Tyler Anderson, who is normally sharp early and often, was neither at any point during the second game of the set. He got Lorenzo Cain to ground out on a nice play Trevor Story but then things got crazy.

Christian Yelich kept his hot bat going with a double to left center and Anderson worked carefully around power-hitter Jesus Aguilar, issuing the walk but setting up a potential inning-ending double play. When Jonathan Schoop singled to right instead, Anderson even caught a bit of a break since no runs could score against Carlos Gonzalez' arm.

That would be of no consequence, though, when Ryan Braun singled to left to score the first run of the game and Travis Shaw connected on a low-and-inside fastball, driving it over the wall in left for a grand slam. And just like that, having recorded only one out, the Brewers took a 5-0 lead. And it wasn't even quite over yet as Hernan Perez followed with a home run of his own, deflating the Rockies even more.

Braun made it three homers against Anderson in the third. It's the first time this season he has given up three home runs in a game.

The Rockies did manage to get on the board in the top of the fourth on a Trevor Story two-run home run. A small moment in the game but potentially a great sign for Rockies fans that he may be coming out of his post-All-Star break malaise.

Harrison Musgrave had to come into the game in the fifth and worked a quick, clean inning but was ambushed by Perez to lead off the sixth. The Rockie-killer lined a triple over Charlie Blackmon's head in center and scored on a sac fly by catcher Manny Pina. That made it an 8-2 advantage for Milwaukee.

Bryan Shaw walked a man in the seventh but was otherwise clean and Jake McGee stuck out a pair in a perfect eighth.

Gonzalez secured a one-out single before Story hit another two-run jack in the top of the ninth to pull the Rockies to within four. Gerardo Parra followed with a single and moved to third on an Ian Desmond double. Chris Iannetta drew a walk to load the bases, bringing the tying run to the plate in the form of pinch-hitter Tom Murphy.

Murphy struck out on three pitches, leaving it up to Blackmon. He hit a looper into shallow right that was hauled in by the second baseman, ending the rally and the game.

This was easily Anderson's worst start of the season and a game the Rockies would like to forget as soon as possible.

They fall to 58-52 and are 2.5 games back of first place in the NL West.

WHAT'S NEXT:

Colorado will hope to salvage a game in the series with a win on Sunday afternoon. Those have been rare for the club.

Jon Gray gets the ball against Wade Miley. First pitch at 12:10 Mountain Time.

Colorado Rockies: Where has the offense gone?
by Aaron Hurt - 5 minutes ago | RoxPile

The sky seems to be falling for the Colorado Rockies. First, it was the lack of moves made at the trade deadline followed by back to back soul crushing walkoff losses given up by closer Wade Davis.

But lost in all of the disappointments that have plagued the Rockies this past week, there is one thing that has been severely overlooked. Where has the offense gone? The bats need to be held accountable for the team's recent struggles.

In the last 12 games, dating back to July 22, the Rockies have scored more than 4 runs in a game one time...ONE!!!

Luckily, the Rockies have managed to go 5-7 in those 12 games, largely due to excellent starting pitching (not including Saturday's debacle), but the offense needs to start holding up its end of the bargain if they plan on sticking in the playoff race.

To break down just how bad the Rockies' offense has been the last 12 games, here are just a few numbers:

The Rockies have averaged 3.2 runs per game with an ugly .229 batting average and 114 strikeouts. In those games, they have also hit a much worse 16 for 82 (.195) with runners in scoring position and have left a total of 78 runners on base.

What those numbers don't show is the lack of fundamental baseball that have cut down on the opportunities for the Rockies crossing the plate. From the failed bunt attempts (**which may have factored into the demotion of Raimel Tapia**) to baserunning errors and empty at-bats moving runners over, there has been a countless number of little mistakes costing the Rockies.

And let's not forget the Rockies have all of a sudden stopped being aggressive on the bases. For a team that was once in the top 5 in the NL in stolen bases, they have only successfully stolen one base in four attempts in these last 12 games.

The good news is that even though the Rockies have now lost four games in a row, they are still only a handful of games out in both the NL West and the Wild Card. Unfortunately, not only do they need to figure out the back end of the bullpen, they need to figure out how to score runs. Time is getting short. Find the offense.

The Colorado Rockies have a glaring problem
by Olivia Greene - 3 hours ago | RoxPile

Back in April, the Colorado Rockies were just getting their regular season started. The concern, all those months back, was the starting rotation but around June we saw them do a 180 at the start of June. Even the sending of Jon Gray down to Triple-A last month appeared to have help him get back to the basics. However that may be the Rockies rotation appears to still have a serious issue.

There are certain things that every baseball club struggles with. At the beginning of the season it was hard to say what the issue was with the Colorado Rockies. Many point fingers to the bullpen and they wouldn't be wrong, but it's time to take another look at the starting rotation. The issue isn't just with one starter, but the entirety of it. If they can't figure out a way to stop this, they'll falling out of contention very soon.

Looking back at the 1st inning of Colorado Rockies games, you can easily spot a trend. While looking at the box scores all the way back to the first regular season game, the Rockies have given up 1 or more run in just the 1st inning a lot.

How many games you ask? In total, they've given up 1 or more runs in the first innings in 52 games. Further breaking that down with home/away splits, the rotation does it more at home than away. In those 52 games, there were 28 instances of 1 or more runs given in the very first inning at home while the rest of the 24 games were on the road.

Last night's game was no different, but it was the most runs that they've given up in a single inning. Colorado Rockies starter **Tyler Anderson** gave up 6 runs in just the 1st inning alone in the 8-4 loss against the Milwaukee Brewers. In most instances, when this had occurred in those 52 games, the Rockies did suffer a loss. Usually, the starters have shown they can bounce back after the 1st and hold off any more runs from happening, but it's just too little too late after giving up a lot runs in the 1st, like they did on Saturday.

An opposing team's momentum is already being built up after scoring in the 1st inning and it appear the Colorado Rockies can't stop them from winning in most instances. This issue has gotten so bad that the Rockies now lead all the MLB in allowing earned runs in the 1st inning with 90 and, as our own Jake Shapiro noted on Twitter last night, a 7.77 ERA.

Jake Shapiro @Shapalicious

The Rockies now have an ERA of 7.77 in the first inning this season. That is more than a whole run worse than any other team in baseball.

5:46 PM - Aug 4, 2018

There doesn't appear to be any signs of this stopping judging by last night's game so how exactly do they solve the problem? It most likely depends on the morale of the starter and what confidence they have. At this moment, something like this will only be pointed out after games like yesterday's.

The Colorado Rockies have a serious problem on their hands and it will more than likely continue to cause them losses until the rotation and coaches can pinpoint the problem. Since that hasn't happened yet, the Rockies starters giving up runs in the 1st will continue to be an odd occurring conundrum.

Colorado Rockies: They are reeling and on the ropes ... but not dead yet

by Jake Shapiro - 11 hours ago | RoxPile

MILWAUKEE — After eight consecutive sets without losing a single series, the Colorado Rockies have dropped two straight. Suddenly, their blazing hot month of July has turned into an ugly beginning to August that may tank their chances at everything after.

The question is not if the Colorado Rockies are on the ropes. They certainly are and have gotten here quickly. Their playoff odds from Fangraphs fell from nearly 35 percent chance to 15 percent within the last week. The question is ... are we watching the club collapse?

After back-to-back walk-off losses, and three in five days, the Rockies got smoked 8-4 (they were down 7-0 but did bring the tying run to the plate in the top of the ninth) by the Brew Crew. It was their fifth loss in their last six games and they wrap up a nightmare road tour through the Midwest tomorrow in Milwaukee.

On Monday, the Denver Nine will return to the friendly confines of Coors Field for a three-gamer with the Pittsburgh Pirates, who remain alive in the Wild Card race and bolstered up with a few flashy trades. This is followed by a four-game set with the National League West juggernaut Los Angeles Dodgers, who remain in reach — as they have all year — but have yet to be caught by Colorado.

The Rockies have had their chances since Opening Day, particularly early on to get ahead of the eight ball, but this most recent display is the most discouraging. Combining both the lack of moves at the trade deadline and the recent losses with the way they've lost those games — tight, a known would-be issue for the club — and a scary picture comes into view.

On Saturday, their starter failed to pitch five innings for the first time since **Chad Bettis** went down with an injury on July 1. While that might be a one-off, their 7.77 first inning ERA and 96 runs allowed total in the first frame has not been. Nor has their rebuilt \$106-million bullpen being the culprit. That issue has been omnipresent in some of the team's most recent and gruesome losses.

While they all count the same, even **Bud Black** acknowledged pre-game that losing in that fashion is more hurtful.

“We need to play better collectively as a team,” the skipper said. “This season isn’t going to be lost by the bullpen, the starting rotation, lineup or defense. There are segments we need to work on and we will ... our bullpen all year hasn’t performed like we thought it would but we’re right there in the thick of it, as a team we need to play well.”

And the biggest weakness for the Rockies — as it has been all year — is the offense. Their offense, once park adjusted, is one that’s in the bottom third of baseball. In fact, their 86 wRC+ coming into the day on Saturday would go down as the fourth-worst offensive season in franchise history. This year is only bottomed by the 2002, 2000 and 2005 seasons which, needless to say, finished nowhere near contention.

Meanwhile, last season’s club did get into the postseason with a wRC+ of 87 so their poor offense hasn’t quite been so surprising. However, it’s still disappointing.

The Rockies aren’t dead and it would be foolish to write them off as they’ve shown resilience under Bud Black’s leadership. Plus they’re hot as can be as of late at home, winning 16 of their last 20 at a mile high. But only two of their last 17 series are against below .500 teams and they are behind two teams in their own division for the playoffs as well as several for the Wild Card.

It was always going to be tough considering where the club was when they finished June. They had the July they needed but the last week has only made it tough once again.