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## MEDIA CLIPS – Sept. 11, 2018

### **Rox roar atop West, push back D-backs in rout**

*Marquez K's 11 over 7 strong innings as Colorado piles on late*

**Owen Perkins | MLB.com | Sept. 10, 2018**

DENVER -- When your offense carries a big stick en route to scoring 13 runs, it's not a bad thing to have your starting pitcher speak softly as he goes about the business of making history.

Rockies starter **German Marquez** quietly put together an 11-strikeout night, allowing just one earned run in the shadow of the Rockies' biggest offensive output in two months, with **Trevor Story**'s sixth home run in the last seven games and **David Dahl**'s first career grand slam leading the way to a 13-2 defeat of the D-backs.

The win made a huge statement as the Rockies reversed the momentum after losing the series rubber match to the Dodgers on Sunday, and it lengthened Colorado's lead in the **National League West** to 1 1/2 games over Los Angeles and 3 1/2 games over Arizona.

Marquez scrawled his name all over the Rockies' record book with his surging presence on the mound. It marked his third consecutive game with double-digit strikeouts, one shy of Pedro Astacio's franchise-best four games in 2000, and it broke Astacio's record for strikeouts in a four-game span with 44.

"I know Pedro really well," Marquez said. "He's given me really good advice. It means a lot to me. But at the end of the day, it's already in the past and you've got to continue to move forward and turn the page."

The 23-year-old right-hander has made himself a core part of a rotation that is on pace to be the most successful one in team history. The Rockies are now 10-3 over his last 13 starts, and he boasts 83 strikeouts and a 2.13 ERA over his last nine starts.

"There's no doubt he's pitched with a lot of confidence," manager Bud Black said. "When it's his day, especially the way he's throwing, we feel good. Here in the second half, he's been outstanding, and he's kept it going. Good for him. He's done a great job and he's come a long way in a short period of time when you're talking about a guy who hopefully has a long, long career."

Marquez's dominant Coors Field pitching performance came just when the Rockies needed it, following a start when **Tyler Anderson** couldn't get out of the third inning in a tough loss to the Dodgers on Sunday.

"Awesome," Story said of the dominant win. "Awesome job by German. He's nasty, man. It seems like when we need a win, he comes up there and gives his best effort. One or two runs, a lot of strikeouts, giving us a good chance to win. He's been huge for us, along with a lot of our other guys too. Happy we could put some runs up for him, too."

The offense had been somewhat silent over the first four innings, scattering four hits and doing no damage as D-backs starter **Zack Godley** flirted with danger before finally finding it in the fifth. The Rockies exploded for six runs, driving Godley from the game after he couldn't retire any of the first five batters he faced. Story broke it open with a three-run towering shot into the D-backs' center-field bullpen.

Two innings later, the Rockies topped their six-run outburst with a seven-run seventh, piling on as they hit around the order with at least one run scored by all nine starters in the lineup.

"It's fun, it's contagious," Story said. "Hitting's really hard. When you have a night like tonight, it's fun. You just try to ride it out as long as possible. Having good at-bats can carry over to the next guy, too."

If the game wasn't already out of reach, Dahl's seventh-inning slam into the second deck in right was the exclamation point at the end of the Rockies' statement.

"It was way inside," Dahl said of the fastball he hit off reliever **Matt Andriese**. "I think it would have hit me in the knee. Somehow I hit it."

It was the most runs the Rockies scored since they plated 19 in a July 11 game at home against the D-backs -- with Marquez on the mound for the win.

#### **NO CARGO?**

**Carlos Gonzalez** was out of the lineup for a second straight day, but the right fielder had a simple explanation.

"I think maybe it's just the numbers I have," Gonzalez said, emphasizing that's he's perfectly healthy.

Gonzalez, who was 0-for-10 against Godley, is tied for the club lead for the most home runs against Tuesday's starter, **Zack Greinke**, with five (tied with Story and former Rockie Jason Giambi), so look for him in to be back in the lineup.

#### **HE SAID IT**

"All we're focusing on is winning each pitch, each inning, each game. We're not thinking of the past. We're not thinking of the future. We're just trying to win each pitch, each inning. Each pitch is so important. You only get so many pitches each game, and we're just trying to be in the moment and do our job, and that's to get wins every game. That's all we need." -

- **Tony Wolters**, *on the impact of the all-encompassing team win*

#### **UP NEXT**

**Antonio Senzatela** gets the call Tuesday for the second game of a four-game home set with the D-backs, and he'll face off with Greinke at 6:40 p.m. MT. Senzatela kept Colorado in it against the Giants for five solid innings Wednesday, allowing three runs on nine hits and two walks while striking out six in a Rockies win. He has given up three runs or fewer in five of his last six starts.

## Anderson remains confident amid rough stretch

Owen Perkins | MLB.com | Sept. 10, 2018

DENVER -- After being knocked out by the Dodgers in the third inning of Sunday's **9-6 loss**, **Tyler Anderson** said his confidence remains high.

"If I were to face those guys tomorrow, I'd get them out," Anderson said after the game. "It's just one of those things. You always believe you can do it."

Rockies manager Bud Black says he shares Anderson's confidence, despite seeing him get knocked out in the first and third innings of two of his last three starts, allowing a combined 12 hits and 10 runs (nine earned) in 3 1/3 innings.

"That's part of what makes players successful, is their self-confidence," Black said before Monday's opener of a key four-game home set with the D-backs. "With Tyler, who's healthy, his stuff is fine, he's just not locating it. I think probably most of it is mechanics. You get on those rolls, the 1-2-3 innings, the double plays, that sort of builds momentum. He hasn't been able to do that through August. Is he capable of doing that the next time he starts? Absolutely. Because the talent is there, his stuff is there, his self-confidence is there. Now he just has to be right physically."

Black has spoken to Anderson about some mechanics that the left-hander can work on between starts, and the biggest issue is cementing his delivery so he's repeating it on every pitch.

"The consistent arm slot is imperative," Black said. "I've spoken to Tyler about sometimes when he tries to go to the outside corner vs. a righty you can see his arm drop a little bit. And then you'll see his arm slot go up a little higher when he's trying to create a little better angle with his fastball and slider. For me, that's a little inconsistent, but Tyler feels at times he needs to do that."

As the Rockies get deeper into September, having an available arm capable of long relief -- or of taking Anderson's spot in the rotation if he doesn't get right -- becomes increasingly challenging. They have two pitchers on the roster who would be stretched out enough to make a spot start or eat significant innings of long relief -- **Chad Bettis**, who last started for the Rockies on Aug. 12, and **Sam Howard**, who started for Triple-A Albuquerque on Sept. 1.

"I think Chad is still capable of 45 to 50 pitches if he's rested," Black said of the length available out of the 'pen. "Sammy Howard, he's very capable of throwing 75-90 pitches, which could be five or six innings. Sammy's still coming off a start in Triple-A not too long ago, so he's capable of a great deal of length."

### **New from Nolan**

**Nolan Arenado** has been increasingly forthcoming about how his Aug. 10 shoulder injury is affecting his play following the decision to bench him for Saturday's game against the Dodgers. He came back Sunday and snapped an 0-for-15 streak with a two-run homer, while also making a pair of characteristically impossible fielding plays at third base.

"I'm in the training room all the time trying to do some things," Arenado said Monday. "There's only so much they can do. They can only make it feel so good. It's just a matter of dealing with it. We've done enough treatment so it kind of just feels the same. It feels better than it has. It's kind of like dead arm. I feel like it's not very strong right now. I think that just comes with rest and it'll come back. But there's no time to rest right now."

Arenado has said he doesn't think it will feel completely right until next season.

"One day it feels decent, and the next day it's sore, but it's fine," Arenado said. "I'm going to play through it. It's no big deal. It doesn't hurt me hitting. I feel like sometimes when I throw the ball, it's not as hard as I'd like it. It just comes with having an injury. It is what it is."

## **Rockies batter Diamondbacks while German Marquez continues to rack up K's in 13-2 blowout**

*Colorado right-hander strikes out 11 — including six straight between 4th and 6th innings — in resounding Rockies victory*

**Patrick Saunders | Denver Post | Sept. 10, 2018**

A warm September night, nary a cloud in the sky and pennant fever in the atmosphere. It added up to a perfect storm for the Rockies on Monday at Coors Field.

They combined another dominant performance from strikeout machine German Marquez, a three-run blast by Trevor Story, a grand slam by David Dahl and 17 total hits to overwhelm Arizona 13-2.

The Rockies also got some help in their hunt for their first National League West title. The Reds, the NL Central cellar-dwellers, beat the Dodgers 10-6 at Cincinnati. Colorado leads the Dodgers by 1½ games and extended its lead to 3½ games over the Diamondbacks.

Marquez, like left-hander Kyle Freeland, is setting a winning tone for the Rockies.

"We kind of expect that these days," Dahl said. "(Marquez) has been really good. It feels like he strikes everyone out. If he keeps doing that, we'll be really, really good."

Manager Bud Black sees Marquez's self-assurance growing every time he steps on the mound.

"There is no doubt he's pitching with a lot of confidence," Black said. "When it's his day, especially the way he is throwing, we feel good. With German, there is no doubt that here in the second half, he's been outstanding. And he's kept it going, which is fabulous."

Arizona lost its third consecutive game and is 3-8 in its last 11. The 13 runs they allowed Monday were the second-most this season, behind the 19 runs they gave up to the Rockies at Coors Field on July 11.

After a rocky first inning, Marquez rebounded, striking out 11 and notching his ninth consecutive quality start, the longest streak by a Rockies pitcher since Ubaldo Jimenez strung together 14 in his magical 2010 season. Marquez, just 23, gave up two runs (one earned) on six hits over seven innings.

Marquez is blowing batters away with his combination of a lively fastball, sharp slider and knee-bending curveball. He also mixed in an effective changeup Monday night. He struck out six consecutive batters between the fourth and sixth innings,

tying Jon Gray's franchise record for consecutive strikeouts in a single game. Gray has done it twice — Sept. 17, 2016, vs. San Diego and June 17 of this season at Texas.

"I agree with Buddy (Black)," Marquez said. "I'm just trying to be myself. Obviously, with my aggressive mentality I try to attack hitters and get ahead. When you throw strike one and then strike two, you can throw all of your pitches and that leads to a strikeout."

Marquez has already whiffed 195 this season and has a chance at surpassing the franchise record of 214 set by Jimenez in 2010. Marquez's 43 K's over four consecutive games is a franchise record, topping Pedro Astacio's 42 in 2000.

The Rockies erupted for six runs in the fifth, chasing starter Zack Godley from the game. The rally began at the bottom of the order, with a leadoff double by Ian Desmond, an RBI single by Tony Wolters (a career-high tying three hits), and a bunt single to the left side of the mound by Marquez.

Then Godley lost control, walking Charlie Blackmon to load the base and forcing in a run by issuing a four-pitch walk to the ever-patient DJ LeMahieu. That was the end for Godley and the beginning of a nightmare for reliever Silvino Bracho. He got two outs — an RBI infield chopper by Nolan Arenado and a hard lineout to second by Dahl — but met his match with Story.

The NL MVP candidate rifled Bracho's 93.7 mph fastball over the fence in right-center for a three-run backbreaker. It was Story's team-leading 32nd homer and gave him a team-high 99 RBIs. Story went 1-for-12 with six strikeouts in the weekend series vs. the Dodgers, but he came up with another huge hit Monday night. His 305 total bases lead the National League. Story's 32 home runs are tied for the most ever by a Rockies shortstop, matching the 32 Troy Tulowitzki hammered out in 2009.

"Everybody came through tonight," Dahl said. "A lot of good at-bats. A lot of hard hits. That's what you want from top to bottom. If we continue that, we're in good shape."

Dahl's slam, the first of his career, left the yard in Colorado's seven-run seventh inning. He ripped reliever Matt Andriese's 3-2 fastball 415 feet, nearly making the second deck above right field.

"It felt great, but I was just trying to help the team win," said Dahl, who mashed his 10th home run of the season, went 2-for-5 and boosted his average to .268.

The Diamondbacks ambushed Marquez with some early, aggressive swings in the first inning, and that paid off. A.J. Pollock led off the game with a triple off the manual scoreboard in right on a ball that Dahl didn't handle very well, letting the ball rebound past him. Pollock scored on Eduardo Escobar's followup single. Arizona seemed locked in on Marquez, but he got David Peralta to ground into a sharp double play, and after a Paul Goldschmidt single, Daniel Descalso lined out to Dahl.

"They came out swinging, and we're very aggressive, so I started to mixing my pitches more effectively, and that was the key," Marquez said.

He ran into a smidgen of trouble in the sixth, giving up an unearned run on two singles and a throwing error by left fielder Gerardo Parra. When Marquez walked Daniel Descalso, Black made a visit to the mound to settle Marquez down. The quick chat did the trick, as Marquez whiffed Steven Souza Jr. to end the inning.

"He got me to focus and stay in the moment," Marquez said. "No doubt it helps a lot. It gets you back to the moment, it relaxes you and it takes you back to what you're here to do, and that's executing one pitch at a time."

## Looking ahead

**Diamondbacks RHP Zack Greinke** (13-9, 3.08) at **Rockies RHP Antonio Senzatela** (4-5, 4.92), 6:40 p.m. Tuesday; ATTRM, 850 AM

Senzatela did not get a decision last Wednesday in Colorado's 5-3 victory over San Francisco, but he did provide the Rockies with five workmanlike innings, allowing three runs over five innings while striking out six. In two games (one start) vs. Arizona this season, he is 0-2 with a 6.75 ERA. He pitched 5 ⅓ innings in his lone start against the D-backs on July 22 at Chase Field, allowing four runs on five hits with two walks and six strikeouts. Greinke has had a mostly solid season, but he's coming off a rough outing against Atlanta in which he allowed five runs (four earned) on six hits. He walked two and struck out four over 5 ⅓ innings. and did not factor into the D-backs' 7-6, 10-inning loss. Greinke threw wild pitches in the first inning, and then served up a two-run homer in the fourth, followed by a solo shot in the sixth. Two Rockies, in particular, have had success against Greinke. Trevor Story is batting 10-for-32 (.313) with five home runs and 11 RBIs, while Carlos Gonzalez is 16-for-51 (.314) with five home runs and seven RBIs. — *Patrick Saunders, The Denver Post*

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## **Tyler Anderson, Rockies' struggling starter, gets Bud Black's support**

*Over his last five starts, Anderson is 0-4 with an 11.64 ERA*

**Patrick Saunders | Denver Post | Sept. 10, 2018**

For good or bad, left-hander Tyler Anderson remains a part of the Rockies' playoff-chase equation.

Manager Bud Black reiterated Monday that he believes Anderson can rebound from a very rough stretch. Anderson lines up to start Friday night at San Francisco.

"It's a matter of location for Tyler, because the velocity is there," Black said before the Rockies hosted Arizona in a key National League West showdown. "It's a matter of arm slot, and I've talked to Tyler about that. For me, that's a little bit inconsistent. He needs a consistent release point."

Anderson lasted only 2⅔ innings Sunday in the Rockies' 9-6 loss to the Dodgers at Coors Field. Anderson needed 35 pitches to get through the Dodgers' two-run first inning and ended up throwing 72 pitches, allowing four runs (three earned) in his short stint.

Over his last 11 starts, Anderson is 0-5 with a 6.75 ERA and Colorado is 2-9 in those 11 games. Over his last five starts, he's 0-4 with an 11.64 ERA.

Still, Anderson insisted he has not lost his confidence.

"I think if I was to pitch to (the Dodgers) tomorrow, I could get them out," he said Sunday.

Black backed up Anderson.

"Tyler is one of the most confident, convicted players we have," Black said. "I feel the same. I know that, being in those shoes, there is a belief that you can really throw a good game every time you take the mound. I think that's part of what makes a player successful, is their confidence in their ability.

"With Tyler, he's healthy, his stuff is fine. He's just not locating the ball. I think probably most of it is mechanics."

Black believes a few good innings could help Anderson rebound.

“When you get on a roll — one-two-three (inning) — or you give up a hit and then get a double play, and you have another good inning .... that sort of builds (momentum),” Black said. “Tyler hasn’t been able to quite do that through August. There were a couple of good starts.

“But is he capable in his next start to do that? Absolutely. I think the talent’s there, the stuff is there, the self-confidence is there. Now he just has to be right physically.”

At this point in the season, the Rockies don’t have any real alternatives. Former starter Chad Bettis, now working out of the bullpen, would only be able to provide a maximum of three innings. The Rockies chose not make right-hander Jeff Hoffman, who had a roller-coaster season at Triple-A, a September call-up.

Another option would be to use a “piggyback” system in which two or three pitchers are lined up to pitch the first five or six innings. It is doubtful the Rockies would employ that tactic.

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## **An automated strike zone's looming, and the Rockies — like all of baseball — are split on the prospect of a robot calling pitches**

*As even old-school pitching traditionalist Bud Black admits: "Eventually, I think we're going to see (the automated zone)."*

**Kyle Newman | Denver Post | Sept. 10, 2018**

There's an evolving opinion in baseball that has come to the forefront once again this month, as it has so often in recent every-pitch-matters, Statcast-tracked Septembers.

The strike zone, many in the game and the Twittersphere say, is not safe in the hands of man.

Such was the uproar after the Rockies' 4-2 loss to open the series against the Los Angeles Dodgers this past weekend, where Colorado fans ripped the lackluster performance of home-plate umpire Andy Fletcher. The ump ended up face to face with Charlie Blackmon in the ninth inning after ringing up the center fielder on three called strikes that, according to Statcast, were all out of the zone.

So, with commissioner Rob Manfred acknowledging at the beginning of the season that Major League Baseball is "much closer than we were a year ago" to having implementable technology, why aren't Statcast-powered robots calling balls and strikes instead of Fletcher and his peers with, at times, amorphous zones?

For Rockies' manager Bud Black, a self-proclaimed pitching and baseball traditionalist, the implementation of a automated strike zone isn't an if but a when.

"When we talked about replay review, I was a little bit skeptical years ago, but I turned on that," Black said. "Eventually, I think we're going to see (the automated zone)."

Adam Ottavino, one of the more out-of-the-box baseball minds in the Rockies' clubhouse, has often stated his support for an automated strike zone. He is of the popular position that the MLB should utilize the Statcast technology similar to how the league has incorporated replay review technology in order to make each and every call as correct as possible.

"Even if you are the best ump in the world and you are getting 92 percent of the calls right, that means if you have 200 pitches, there are 16 wrong," Ottavino told The Denver Post last September after an umpire's critical missed strike call.

"Those could be hugely impactful on the outcome of the game."

But still, the traditionalist mind-sets of other Colorado players will take the umpires at their best, and yes, even at their Fletcher-esque worst.

"Keep the umpires, even when they're horse (stuff)," right fielder Carlos Gonzalez said.

Catcher Chris Iannetta added: “The game is based on subjectivity — it’s part of the game, and it provides an entertainment factor, even though it can be frustrating if it doesn’t go your way. It’s a different layer and element to the game.”

Plus, there are still looming big-picture questions about the technology, even if its implementation appears imminent.

The measurement error of PITCHf/x, the tracking system used by the MLB prior to Statcast, was found to be below half an inch in each dimension, according to a 2011 report by analyst Mike Fast. No such reporting yet exists on the Statcast data, although it’s interesting to note that the automated Zone Evaluation system used by the MLB to evaluate umpires has about a 2-inch margin for error.

“You can’t rule out the emotional human factor of umpiring games, like when you make a borderline pitch a little off of the black that the robotic strike zone wouldn’t call a strike but the umpire could give you,” reliever Chad Bettis explained. “Or, if you pitch to the glove, pitches spotted up just on the edge of the plate. That’s where it gets questionable, because that’s generally considered a strike, even by hitters.”

Even those with reservations, however, Rockies veterans such as Iannetta have seen how this script plays out in an ever-evolving game that those in charge insist on continuing to tweak, with the primary motivations being renewing fan interest as well as money.

“The trend has been if the fans speak loud enough for it, and if it’s going to sell more tickets, then that’s usually the direction they tend to go,” Iannetta said. “The capitalistic approach tends to win out most of the time.”

### ***Rockies’ coordinated jerseys***

Colorado clubhouse manager Mike Pontarelli coordinated a theme for the Rockies’ upcoming flight to San Francisco for this weekend’s three-game set at AT&T Park.

The Rockies will each wear the jersey of a favorite NFL player on the plane — “in the spirit of football season,” Pontarelli said — and this is the second year the team will coordinate traveling outfits in some way.

Last September, all the rookies dressed up in Broncos uniforms for their trip to San Francisco.

Some notable jersey choices: Chad Bettis (Jerome Bettis), Wade Davis (Terrell Davis), DJ Johnson (Pat Tillman), Charlie Blackmon (Demaryius Thomas), Noel Cuevas (Marshawn Lynch), Nolan Arenado (Sam Darnold), Kyle Freeland (Von Miller), Trevor Story (Tom Brady) and video coordinator Brian Jones (Barry Sanders).

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**The first inning has been a disaster for the Rockies' rotation. Using a young reliever as an "opener" couldn't hurt.**  
*September's expanded rosters means manager Bud Black has a wealth of arms to choose from out in the bullpen*

**Kyle Newman | Denver Post | Sept. 10, 2018**

If insanity is doing the same thing over and over while expecting different results, then the Rockies might want to come up with an alternate plan for pitching the first inning.

It's become routine for Colorado to get shelled to start games this season, as following German Marquez getting tagged for a run in the series opener against Arizona on Monday, Colorado's ERA in the frame rose to 7.68 — still by far the worst mark in all of baseball.

That's a whopping 122 runs in 143 innings pitched; opponents have plated runs in 67 of those opening innings, also an MLB high. Meanwhile, in every other inning? A collective 4.09 ERA, which ranks in the middle of baseball.

So here's the quick (albeit gutsy and untraditional) fix for Rockies manager Bud Black: Adopt "the opener," a.k.a. a reliever who begins the game, to pitch ahead of every starter except southpaw ace Kyle Freeland.

September's expanded rosters mean Black has a wealth of arms to choose from in the bullpen, and he can stand to use one of those guys four out of every five days to try and alleviate an issue that, at this point, can't get any worse.

Obviously the most called-upon guns of Adam Ottavino, Seunghwan Oh, Scott Oberg and closer Wade Davis need to mostly stay available for the back-end of ballgames, but Colorado has several potential "opener" options in four particular rookies.

Right-hander Yency Almonte is a gas-thrower who started 102 games in the minors and has a respectable 2.13 ERA in a dozen-plus innings this year. Plus, lefty Harrison Musgrave could be an option, as could a less-experienced southpaw in Sam Howard or an imposing right-hander in DJ Johnson, who impressed as the closer in Triple-A this year.

What's the worst that could happen if one of those four relievers trots out there in a brazen, mid-pennant race, September pitching experiment? They give up a run? From where the club currently stands, that doesn't sound like much of a risk.

**Rotation's first-inning woes**

<b>Pitcher</b>	<b>First inning ERA</b>	<b>Avg.</b>	<b>Rest of innings ERA</b>	<b>Avg.</b>
Kyle Freeland	3.10	.222	2.87	.235
German Marquez	9.00	.339	3.04	.215
Jon Gray	5.67	.279	4.49	.249
Antonio Senzatela	6.00	.375	4.76	.254
Tyler Anderson	11.62	.348	3.38	.221

## **Rockies 13, Diamondbacks 2: Story, Dahl deliver big homers in blowout win**

*The offense broke out in a big way to beat down the Diamondbacks.*

**Hayden Kane | Purple Row | Sept. 10, 2018**

At one point on Monday night, it looked like the **Colorado Rockies** were going to squander an outstanding start from Germán Márquez in the first of four games against the **Arizona Diamondbacks**. Thankfully the offense got a couple key hits and then poured it on, riding two big offensive innings and 11 strikeouts from Márquez to an easy win.

*They finally hit **Zack Godley***

The Rockies finally got to the Arizona starter who has seemed to torture them all season. **Ian Desmond** doubled and then **Tony Wolters** singled him home to start the bottom of the fifth inning. Just like that the game was tied and just like that the wheels entirely came off for **Godley**, who had been baffling the Rockies and working out of trouble up to that point.

With the bases loaded for **Nolan Arenado** and nobody out, it looked like the Rockies might blow this game open. Then it looked like they might only scratch a couple runs out of it. Then Trevor Story delivered a big blow.

*Story's three-run home run **The MVP campaign continues.***

***David Dahl** finally gets rewarded*

**Dahl** hit the ball hard for a couple tough-luck outs with guys on base in this game. With the bases loaded in the seventh inning and the chance to put this game out of reach, **Dahl** took things out of the hands of the BABIP gods and went deep for a grand slam.

*NL West update*

The **Dodgers** lost to the **Reds** (lol), so that puts the Rockies 1.5 games ahead of them and 3.5 clear of the Diamondbacks at the top of the division.

*Looking ahead*

The Rockies continues this series with the Diamondbacks on Tuesday with **Antonio Senzatela** on the mound against **Zack Greinke**.



## Colorado Rockies: Jeff Bridich joins Mad Dog on High Heat

Ryan Ladika | Rox Pile | Sept. 10, 2018

Ahead of the first game of arguably the biggest series of the season so far, a four-game set against the Arizona Diamondbacks at Coors Field, Colorado Rockies general manager Jeff Bridich joined Christopher 'Mad Dog' Russo on MLB Network's High Heat on Monday afternoon. The two discussed a wide variety of topics relevant around 20th and Blake as the Rockies are making their push for the playoffs.

After the Colorado Rockies made a surprise 2017 NL Wild Card appearance, Bridich made it clear that the standards had risen for 2018 from the moment pitchers and catchers reported to Salt River Fields at Talking Stick.

"Other than being 10 or 15 games up in the division, this is exactly where we wanted to be and expected to be," he said. Anyone who has followed the Rockies throughout this season knows that the young starting corps has been one of the main reasons Colorado sits in first place this late in the season. **Kyle Freeland** is having one of the greatest seasons in club history.

German Márquez taken a large step forward as well, and **Jon Gray** has looked like his normal self since returning from his short stint with Triple-A Albuquerque (with the exception of his last start against the Dodgers).

This is not lost on the national media, as Russo commented on the strength of the rotation throughout the year for Colorado.

"The youth in our rotation, the young guys who have gelled over years here, it's paid dividends for this group, for this team this year" Bridich responded. "We've really been able to see some of the growth and been able to match up with some of the better rotations and better starting pitchers in the game."

Twitter Ads info and privacy

**Kyle Freeland** is 25 years old. **German Márquez** is 23. **Tyler Anderson**, **Jon Gray**, and **Antonio Senzatela** are 28, 26 and 23, respectively. **Chad Bettis**, who started the season in the rotation but has since been moved to the bullpen, is the old man of the group, at 29 years old.

Teams don't get to where the Rockies are with such young starters without knowing how to take care of them.

“The beauty of last year... for this rotation it was a combination of a growth year and a performance year,” Bridich said.

“They didn’t get overextended, and we were able to manage some of it last year so that the hope was that this year, they would be in good position to do exactly what they’re doing.

“I think that they’re prepared mentally and physically to go to the wire.”

The presence and atmosphere the fans have provided all season long was not lost on Bridich either. Russo noted that the Rockies’ series finale against the Dodgers Sunday afternoon was competing with the Denver Broncos’ season and home opener against the Seattle Seahawks no more than five minutes away. The official attendance at Coors? 40,157.

“It’s massive. Props to our fans,” he said. “They’ve just done a great job for us all year. They’re showing up and they’re getting loud, and they’re behind the guys in the most critical points of the game.”

You can check out the entire interview [\*\*here\*\*](#).

Rockies fans, these next few weeks will be exciting, frustrating, and nerve-wracking all at the same time. Get to Coors Field and make a lot of noise. This is a huge series, and we’re coming down the home stretch.

## Colorado Rockies morning after: So much for run differential

Kevin Henry | Rox Pile | Sept. 10, 2018

You know all of that talk around the country about the Colorado Rockies leading the National League West and having a negative run differential? Well, you can officially throw that out the window ... at least for a day.

The **Colorado Rockies** scored in just two innings on Monday night. But when they scored, the floodgates opened ... and swamped the visitors from the desert, **drowning the Arizona Diamondbacks 13-2** to open a key four-game series at Coors Field.

Colorado came into the game with a -11 run differential in 142 games this season. They erased it in one night and the number now sits at zero. It's just part of what has been a **weird statistical season** for these Rockies.

In just the latest of "the biggest series of the season" series to come to 20<sup>th</sup> and Blake, the Rockies have a golden opportunity to enhance their chances of making the postseason for the second straight year.

With the Diamondbacks dropping three of four to the Atlanta Braves at home before coming to Denver, the Rockies can not only help themselves this week ... but also do it at the expense of the team that ended their 2017 season in a painful one-game Wild Card loss.

With the Los Angeles Dodgers dropping a 10-6 decision in Cincinnati, the Rockies have regained a 1.5-game lead over the Dodgers in the National League West. The Diamondbacks fell to 3.5 games back.

**German Marquez** made sure the Rockies got the series off on the right foot, striking out six batters in a row at one point, and **Trevor Story** added a towering three-run homer as part of a six-run fifth inning. That would be enough to spell Arizona's doom ... but the Rockies just kept stepping on the throats of the snakes.

After a first inning where Marquez gave up a leadoff triple to **A.J. Pollock** and an RBI single to **Eduardo Escobar** to open the game, the 23-year-old right-hander settled in from there. After getting **Daniel Descalso** to end the first, Marquez would allow just one hit (a third-inning single from Escobar) over the next four frames.

Marquez would finish with 11 strikeouts, marking the sixth time in his career he had double-digit Ks. It was also the fourth time this season he hit that mark ... and the third consecutive game he had done it. Marquez is on a roll and keeping pace with **Kyle Freeland** and **Jon Gray** in the discussion about who is the Colorado ace.

Meanwhile, Colorado's offense threatened against Arizona starter **Zack Godley** early and often but couldn't break through on the scoreboard. That is, until the fifth inning when Godley and his Arizona teammates died by a thousand paper cuts.

The scorecard's fifth inning read like this: Double, single, single on a supposed sacrifice bunt by Marquez, walk, walk, fielder's choice (that **Nolan Arenado** barely beat out to avoid the double play) and lineout. That equated to a 3-1 Rockies lead.

But Story wasn't ready for the Rockies to be done.

Just 1-for-15 with nine strikeouts since blasting his third home run in three at-bats against the San Francisco Giants on September 5 (**yes, you can call it a mini-slump**), Story took an 0-1 pitch from Arizona reliever **Silvino Brach** way over the Bridich Barrier for his 32<sup>nd</sup> homer of the season. His three-run bomb pushed the Rockies to a 6-1 lead.

His 32<sup>nd</sup> homer matches **Troy Tulowitzki** for the most ever hit by a Rockies shortstop.

And let's not forget **David Dahl** coming through with a grand slam in the seventh inning to officially slam the door on the Diamondbacks. With one swing, Dahl, batting clean-up and smashing the homer after Arizona walked Arenado to load the bases, recorded his first-ever grand slam and career-high four RBI.

"I feel like, lately when we've won games lately they have been very close, so it's nice to get everything going and rolling," Dahl told me and other reporters after the game. "Enjoy tonight and get ready for tomorrow because we have a big test with (Zack) Greinke."

That's the beauty of baseball. Wins and losses don't last very long. You don't have much time to mourn or celebrate. You also don't have much time to look at the run differential numbers. No matter what they have been or currently are, the Rockies are much more interested in the number of games they're leading the division than the number of runs they outscore their opponents.

## **Rockies make statement in trouncing of Diamondbacks**

**Drew Creasman | BSN Denver | Sept. 10, 2018**

DENVER – The Colorado Rockies began a four-game set with their division rivals, the Arizona Diamondbacks, on Monday night after a frustrating series with the Los Angeles Dodgers left them just a half-game up in the race for the NL West crown.

With the Snakes looking for an opportunity to get right back into the thick of things, Colorado pounced with a statement win in the first game, doing damage to the bullpen and the scoreboard with a massive 13-2 win.

With the victory, Colorado sent a message that they are still the team to beat in this division, and that when they have the offense going, they can beat any team on any day.

There have been a lot of questions about who will step up in this all-important stretch. Will one of the stars of the team play like one? Will the veteran role players step up or will it be the young guys? But the one constant through it all has been the top three members of the starting pitching rotation.

German Marquez continued his sparkling season on Monday night, twirling seven innings of record-setting baseball. He allowed just one earned run while striking out 11 batters in yet another display of swing-and-miss dominance.

Marquez became just the second pitcher in franchise history with three straight double-digit strikeout games. Pedro Astacio had four in a row back in 2000. Marquez' 44 Ks in three games is a franchise record.

The Diamondbacks got their token first-inning run on the first two batters of the game. A.J. Pollock swung late but barreled a fastball and lined it off the wall in right for a triple. He was able to jog home with ease when Eduardo Escobar singled up the middle. Marquez got David Peralta to ground into a double play and Daniel Descalso to line out to left to prevent any further damage.

The Rockies missed opportunities in the first and third before finally breaking through with a huge six-run fifth inning.

It began with Ian Desmond ripping a double over Pollock's head in center field that was followed by a game-tying single back up the middle from Tony Wolters. Marquez went to lay down the bunt and found himself with a base hit when he pushed it into the space between third base and the pitcher's mound. Zach Godley lost his command at that point, walking

Charlie Blackmon and then DJ LeMahieu on four pitches to put the Rockies ahead and force the Diamondbacks to go to the bullpen early.

Nolan Arenado fell behind in the count before hitting a weak grounder to second, beating a relay throw to earn an RBI fielder's choice. David Dahl then came up with a hard line drive but it was right at the second baseman. Arizona was one out away from escaping the huge inning when Trevor Story unloaded on a low fastball, blasting it into the Rockies bullpen for a three-run home run, ballooning Colorado's lead out to 6-1.

Marquez had struck out six in a row before the Diamondbacks found their way into back-to-back one-out singles in the top of the sixth from Escobar and Peralta. Paul Goldschmidt hit a high chopper toward third that Arenado made a nice play on to get the second out at first, but a run scored, bringing Arizona to within four.

The Rockies blew it open in the bottom of the seventh. Blackmon led off with a single away from the shift and LeMahieu doubled into the gap in right field. That left first base open and despite his recent slump, the Diamondbacks opted to pass on Arenado, loading the bases for Dahl.

The youngster misfired at a pair of pitches, falling into a full count before he found the fastball he wanted and demolished it with a perfect swing, sending the ball into the bleachers in right for the first grand slam of his career. That gave the Rockies a sudden 10-2 lead.

And they weren't quite done.

Gerardo Parra and Desmond kept the pressure on with a few singled and Wolter followed with his third hit of the game to plate another. A pinch-hitting Ryan McMahon lucked into a swinging bunt to load the bases again for a Blackmon sac fly. LeMahieu threw out one more single before Arenado finally struck out to put an end to the madness. 13-2, Rockies.

Chris Rusin pitched in the eighth and allowed a single to Socrates Brito who was thrown out by Parra trying to stretch it into a double. Rusin got the next two in order. Sam Howard worked around a single in the ninth to end it.

Colorado improved to 79-64 and with a Dodgers' loss now hold a 1.5 games lead in the NL West race.

#### **FINAL STATS:**

German Marquez: 7 IP, 6 H, 2 R, 1 ER, BB, 11 K

Chris Rusin: 1 IP, 1 H, 0 ER, 0 BB, 1 K

Charlie Blackmon: 3-for-3, 2 R, 1 BB

DJ LeMahieu: 2-for-3, 1 R, 1 RBI, 1 BB

David Dahl: 2-for-4, 1 R, 4 RBI (HR: 10)

Trevor Story: 1-for-4, 1 R, 3 RBI (HR: 32)

**WHAT'S NEXT:**

The second game of the series sees seasoned veteran Zack Greinke take on second-year man Antonio Senzatela. First pitch at 6:40 Mountain Time on Tuesday night.

## **Arenado's Absence: A simple blueprint for busting a slump**

**Patrick Lyons | BSN Denver | Sept. 10, 2018**

DENVER – When Rockies manager Bud Black filled out his lineup card for game two of a pivotal NL West series against the Los Angeles Dodgers, one rather notable player was missing: Nolan Arenado.

Plagued by soreness in his right shoulder for the past month, Arenado has seen his production at the plate drop off drastically in the past two weeks, from his batting average dipping sixteen points to an OPS of just .508 during the span.

On August 10, Arenado left the game midway against the Dodgers, the first apparent signs of the injury that had been lingering for a days. Ryan McMahon took his place at the hot corner and his seventh inning homer propelled the Rockies to a 5-4 comeback victory.

For the next two games in the series, Arenado featured off the bench in a pinch-hitting role as Colorado would win their third straight game against Los Angeles at home without their leader in offense.

Bookended by off days, the team traveled to Houston where Arenado would get back into the lineup as the designated hitter, going 3-for-7 against the Astros' one-two punch of Justin Verlander and Gerrit Cole. He did hit a decisive homer against Verlander.

Since the Houston series, Arenado has just five extra base hits in his last seventy-seven at bats.

Not one to take an off day lightly, particularly one during one the most important stretches of games in franchise history, Arenado spoke with his manager about the decision.

"It's extremely disappointing. I don't make the lineup. I want to be out there. I voiced that. But, at the same time, I'm not performing."

Black confirmed the back-and-forth between the player and manager.

"We had a good conversation. I've never met a major league player that doesn't want to play. They want to play all the time. They want to play. That's what makes them major leaguers."

A month ago on August 9, Arenado entered the ballgame with a .308 batting average and a .979 on-base plus slugging percentage.

Since then, Arenado is batting .264 with a .725 OPS.

In the interim, teammate Trevor Story has passed him by for the team lead in runs batted and tied Arenado with 31 home runs. The third-year shortstop has also taken the reigns as a legitimate NL MVP candidate for the team as the third baseman goes through one of the least timely slumps of his stellar career.

Before Saturday's game, Arenado discussed his omission from the starting lineup.



“I don’t make those calls. I don’t want it. There’s no beating around it: I’m not playing well. That’s why I’m not playing today. It is what it is.”

Arenado’s lackluster production at the plate aside, Black discussed the notion that this decision was based around a timely day off.

“It’s hard. But these types of decisions are made at different times during the course of the season based on a lot of factors. In this case, we felt, given Nolan the start off might help him move forward.”

Black continued to defend his choice regarding the three-time winner of the Silver Slugger Award:

“Offensively, he just doesn’t feel right. The timing’s off, there’s some other things going on. These days, when players – good players, star players – aren’t in the lineup, you see it often. It’s a little bit magnified because it’s September. But it’s the right thing to do.”

The four-time Gold Glove winner detailed exactly how the injury has been impacting him at the plate and in the field.

“It doesn’t hurt hitting. Just throwing does. (The shoulder) is not 100% (when) throwing. It’s not going to be. It’s not going to be good throwing probably until the year’s over, until next season.”

Though always frank with the media, Arenado’s tone had improved somewhat from the night before.

It was a 4-2 loss on Friday night that moved the Dodgers to within 0.5 games and saw Rockies hitters go 1-for-9 with runners in scoring position and ten runners left on base. Arenado defended his teammates before shifting the focus back onto his own shortcomings.

“Obviously, guys are playing well. Guys are doing a good job. Individually, I’ve got to pick it up. I’ve got to try to help this team, somehow. It sucks not helping right now.”

Struggling to find his words after the tough loss, the star slugger sounded downright dejected about his current contributions.

“It happens. Sometimes (slumps) get you when you least expect it or want it. Obviously, I wish I wasn’t going through it right now. Especially with it being September. But, this game is hard. I’m doing the best I can.”

In a further effort to downplay the severity of the decision to keep Arenado off the field Saturday night, Black likened the situation to one that is common to this club and many others around the major leagues.

“This is nothing new. We’ve talked about this before. It’s been asked about Charlie, Desi, DJ, it’s been asked about the one or two times Trevor hasn’t played. So we talk about this all the time. This is nothing really new....Bellinger was not playing. Muncy, Kemp didn’t play last night. I saw some other guys across baseball. They didn’t play either.”

At the start of the season, it would have seemed unusual for the Rockies to have won a game with the leader of their lineup missing and superb starting pitching carrying the team to victories, but that's exactly what happened during Arenado's absence on Saturday and has happened throughout most of their winning ways since June.

On Sunday, Arenado was back in the lineup batting third. Contributing with two fantastic plays on defense and a two-run home run that got Colorado back into a game that was getting out of reach. The off-day by Black seemed to be the precise prescription for his banged up third baseman.

As he works through the nagging injury, it's unclear if Arenado will be able to put his organization on his back as he's done in the past. With the strongest starting pitching in franchise history and a bullpen capable of shutting down an offense on any given night, the three-run homer has become less a part of the Rockies handbook on how to win games. Though he's finished in the top ten in NL MVP voting for the past three seasons, it may no longer be a question whether Nolan Arenado can carry this team again, but whether or not it's needed for Colorado to reach the postseason.

## **Rockies move to 15 games above .500 with victory Diamondbacks**

**Aniello Piro | Mile High Sports | Sept. 10, 2018**

The Colorado Rockies defeated the Arizona Diamondbacks in convincing fashion Monday night at Coors Field, 13-2. The win bumped the Rockies record to 79-64 on the season.

Arizona jumped out to a quick lead in the first inning which started with a triple off the bat of AJ Pollock. Eduardo Escobar then hit an RBI single to right field, putting the Diamondbacks on top 1-0.

Outside of the first inning, Rockies' starting pitcher German Marquez buckled down on the mound and was able to help pitch Colorado to victory.

The Rockies managed to tie the game and take a lead in the bottom of the fifth inning, which began with a double from Ian Desmond. Catcher Tony Wolters then drove Desmond home with an RBI single to center field to tie the game at a run apiece.

Marquez then reached base on a bunt which followed with a walk issued to Charlie Blackmon. DJ LeMahieu was then walked which forced home another Rockies' run to give Colorado a 2-0 lead. Nolan Arenado later grounded into a fielder's choice to score an additional run. The Rockies then were able to separate themselves from Arizona when Trevor Story hit a three-run home run, making the score 6-1.

The Diamondbacks scored a lone run in the sixth inning but were unable to muster up any offense past that point.

The Rockies added a few exclamation points in the eighth inning of their victory, which included scoring seven runs on eight hits. The inning started with back-to-back hits from Blackmon and LeMahieu which followed with an intentional walk being issued to Arenado. From there, David Dahl proceeded to blast a grand slam, making the score 10-2.

Colorado's offense did not stop there as Gerardo Parra and Desmond later hit singles to set the Rockies' up with another prime scoring opportunity. Wolters came up in the clutch again, hitting an RBI single to center field. The Rockies added an additional two run in the inning via a sacrifice fly from Blackmon and a RBI single off the bat of LeMahieu, extending Colorado's lead to 13-2.

The Rockies dominated the Diamondbacks in all facets of the game, tallying 17 hits while keeping Arizona's offense in check for a majority of the evening.

Marquez went on to hurl seven strong innings, allowing one run on six hits while striking out 11 batters.

The Los Angeles Dodgers fell to the Cincinnati Reds Monday. With the win by Colorado, the Rockies lead in the National League West was bumped back up to 1.5 games.

The Rockies and Diamondbacks will continue their series Tuesday night at Coors Field with first pitch set for 6:40 MST.

## **Offense erupts, Marquez dazzles as Rockies beat D-backs 13-2**

**Associated Press | ESPN.com | Sept. 10, 2018**

DENVER -- In a sixth-inning jam, German Marquez received a visit from his manager and a little advice: Don't do too much. Stay in the moment. Execute.

Bud Black might as well have been talking to his entire team as Colorado chases after its first division title.

Trevor Story hit a three-run homer during a six-run fifth inning, Marquez struck out 11 over seven masterful innings and the NL West-leading Rockies gained more separation with a 13-2 win over the Arizona Diamondbacks on Monday night.

The Rockies increased their lead to 1 1/2 games over the Los Angeles Dodgers, who lost 10-6 at Cincinnati. The Diamondbacks now trail by 3 1/2 games. This is the latest the Rockies have been alone atop the division since 1995.

"The magnitude of these games is maybe a little bit enlarged because of where we are in the season and the amount of focus on this part of the season. But our guys are responding," Black said. "They're focused. They know what's going on. They're aware of what's around them. It's a group that understands where they are."

David Dahl put the game out of reach with his first career grand slam in a seven-run seventh. Arizona has allowed 10 or more runs four times this season -- three of those to Colorado.

Story provided the big blow with his 32nd homer on a fastball from Silvino Bracho after the reliever took over when starter Zack Godley (14-9) struggled with his command.

Marquez (12-9) had his blazing fastball and breaking ball working in recording his third straight double-digit strikeout performance. The hard-throwing righty now has 44 strikeouts spanning his last four starts, breaking the team record of 42 set by Pedro Astacio in 2000.

"Kind of expect that these days," Dahl said. "Feels like he strikes everyone out."

Marquez's confidence level is at an all-time high. Still, Black had a little talk with him in the sixth -- just to settle him down. It worked as he struck out Steven Souza Jr. to end the threat.

"He's not doing anything special. He's being German Marquez," Black said. "He's repeating his delivery. He's hitting his spots. He's got good stuff. He's pitching with conviction."

Charlie Blackmon, Tony Wolters and DJ LeMahieu each had three hits for Colorado, which bounced back after dropping two of three to the Dodgers over the weekend.

Paul Goldschmidt celebrated his 31st birthday with a single and an RBI on a ground out. Goldschmidt has now reached base in 46 straight road games. His team has dropped three in a row.

"Frustration is high right now. It has been for several days," Diamondbacks Torey Lovullo said. "We are going to press on."

Godley was cruising along until the fifth when he kept trailing off to the side of the mound on his delivery maybe a little more than usual. With the bases loaded, he issued a four-pitch walk to LeMahieu that ended of his night.

"This was one of those games where somebody needed to step up," Godley said. "I did not do that."

#### TRAINER'S ROOM

Rockies: 3B Nolan Arenado has been getting treatment on his sore throwing shoulder. "There's only so much they can do and only make me feel so good," said Arenado, who went 0 for 4 with an RBI. "(Healing) comes with rest. There's no time to rest right now."

#### DESMOND MILESTONE

On Sept. 10, 2009, with Washington, Ian Desmond made his major league debut. On his nine-year anniversary, he hit a double to lead off the fifth and start the big rally.

"He was a young dynamic player with a skill set that you see present today," Black said.

#### GOOD BUDDIES

Arenado remembers competing against Goldschmidt in 2009 when he was at Casper of the rookie league and Goldschmidt with Missoula.

"I was playing third base with him hitting and I was terrified," Arenado said. "I was 18 and he was raking then, too. I was super scared."

#### FAMILIAR NAME

Marquez said he knows Astacio, who offers Marquez advice from time to time. "It means a lot to me," Marquez said.

## UP NEXT

Diamondbacks RHP Zack Greinke (13-9, 3.08 ERA) faces a Rockies team Tuesday night he's beaten twice this season.

The Rockies will throw RHP Antonio Senzatela (4-5, 4.92).