



MEDIA CLIPS –May 13, 2018

Story time: Shortstop powers Rox past Crew

Freeland fires 6 1/3 scoreless innings; Arenado flashes leather, scores two runs

Thomas Harding / MLB.com | May 13, 2018

DENVER -- Coors Field has yet to turn friendly for the Rockies, but Trevor Story certainly feels at home there.

Story launched two home runs and an RBI double and had all of the Rockies' RBIs as the Rockies beat the Brewers, 4-0, and ended a three-game losing streak Saturday night.

Not only does Story have eight of his 10 homers at Coors, but he has a .339 batting average and 1.397 OPS at home.

"I love it," said Story, who had his first multi-homer game since Aug. 16 against the Braves, and the sixth of his career.

"It's a great place to hit, for sure. I feel like I can see the ball good here, good hitter's eye.

"And there's just something about being at home. You get to sleep in your own bed, get in your own little routine. It's just comfortable."

Rockies hitters can sleep a little better based on the last two games -- an 11-10, 10-inning loss to the Brewers, in which Story drove in four runs, and Saturday's nine-hit attack. The winning effort, which improved the Rockies' mark at home to 7-10 -- they have a 22-18 overall mark -- represented what could be the beginning of an offensive awakening. After hitting .227 through their first 40 games, the Rockies have gone 25-for-77 (.325) in their past two games.

The Rockies' No. 3 hitter, Nolan Arenado, helped set up Story's run production, all of which came with two outs.

Story followed Arenado's first-inning triple by driving the first pitch he saw from Brewers starter Brent Suter, a 73.4 mph curveball, a projected 410 feet to left field for a 2-0 lead. The play was reviewed by umpiring crew chief Ted Barrett, but because the ball had cleared the wall before bouncing off a fan's glove and back onto the field, the call stood.

In the third, Story doubled following an Arenado double to give the Rockies a 3-0 lead. Story's second homer in the fifth, also off Suter, traveled an estimated 413 feet into the left-field stands

"I showed some more frustration today than I have in the past," Suter said. "When one guy beats you three times, it's a little bit frustrating."

Arenado also shook off his third error of the season -- he misplayed Orlando Arcia's second-inning bouncer -- by displaying his five-time Gold Glove Award-winning form on two occasions, a sliding grab and a break dance-style spin in the fourth, and a barehanded play on Lorenzo Cain in the seventh to make reliever Bryan Shaw's one-batter outing a successful one.

It all helped Rockies lefty starter Kyle Freeland (3-4), who pitched 6 1/3 scoreless innings, giving up four hits and striking out six. The starters have generally pitched well, but Freeland's work came after Tyler Anderson, German Marquez and Chad Bettis were roughed up during the homestand, which can finish at .500 if the Rockies defeat the Brewers on Sunday.

"You want to be the guy who steps up and gets a team win, gets a new trend, starts a new streak," Freeland said.

Freeland fell short of pitching seven full innings for the fourth straight start, in part because of four walks, including two with one out in the seventh to lead manager Bud Black to pull him. But Freeland battled the traffic to Black's liking with his pitch mix.

"Two things have made Kyle turn the corner from his first few starts: fastball in, and a better-breaking slider," Black said.

"And a few more changeups. They've been functional. He got a strikeout with a changeup tonight, so a more accomplished three-pitch mix."

The Rockies completed their fifth shutout of the season. Black used closer Wade Davis, who suffered his second blown save in 16 chances Friday night when he gave up a Manny Pina ninth-inning two-run homer to force extra innings, in the ninth inning Saturday even though it wasn't a save situation.

"Especially after the game yesterday, it was just as close a game -- 4-0 felt like it was 1-0," Davis said. "I wanted to get out there. Freeland has been pitching great. He did such a good job, and for us to keep it at zero, that was good."

HE SAID IT

"I think it's been an interesting start. I think guys are feeling like they're not doing what they're capable of doing, and yet we're still playing pretty good. It shows what this team is about." -- Arenado, on the Rockies after 40 games

UP NEXT

Righty Jon Gray (4-4, 4.24 ERA) is on a roll, having allowed just one earned run in his last 20 innings (three starts), with 25 strikeouts and three walks. He will start Sunday's finale against the Brewers at 1:10 p.m. MT. Brewers prospect Freddy Peralta has been called up and will make his first Major League start opposite Gray.

Arenado's all-around skills on display vs. Crew

Thomas Harding / MLB.com | May 12, 2018

DENVER -- Nolan Arenado's first-inning triple and third-inning double during a 4-0 victory over the Brewers on Saturday sparked thoughts of a cycle.

But a night that saw Arenado display an array of fundamental and special talents turned out special enough.

Arenado's early hits came with two outs -- just ahead of cleanup man Trevor Story, who drove in Arenado with a first-inning homer and a third-inning double.

"I feel like I got the hardest thing out of the way with the triple, but, honestly, I was just trying to have a good at-bat," Arenado said. "Those pitchers made good pitches the last two at-bats against me, so I was happy I was able to hit the ball hard and get on base for Story to drive me in."

And even though Arenado committed his third error of the season, he made two highlight-reel fielding plays behind lefty starting pitcher Kyle Freeland, whose plan of attacking right-handed hitters inside meant Arenado would have to be alert.

The triple highlighted an underrated aspect of Arenado's game: baserunning, which has shown up twice this homestand. And Arenado accomplishes this fundamental without a key tool: speed.

"When outfielders see me on base, they probably don't think I'm going to do anything," he said. "I'm slow enough to where I can just watch what's going to happen. ... Fast guys are trying to just go."

In Tuesday night's homestand opener against the Angels, he scored from first on a key Story double in a 4-2 victory. The throw to home nearly beat him, but replay confirmed that his hand hit the plate before the tag. And Rockies third-base coach Stu Cole noted the next day that "the turns that he makes -- and sometimes he may seem to be slow, but when he needs to get going, he gets going."

For Saturday's triple, Arenado kept his eye on Domingo Santana in the right-field corner and saw him in no position to make a strong throw as long as he rounded second tightly. He did it slowly, but efficiently, and slid headfirst.

"Even though you don't want to make the third out at third base, I like aggressive baserunning," Rockies manager Bud Black said. "Nolan's instincts are very good on the bases. That's something I've talked to him a lot about."

Reliever Rusin still working to find 2017 form
Senzatela building up pitch count as starter at Triple-A

Thomas Harding / MLB.com | May 12, 2018

DENVER -- Rockies lefty reliever Chris Rusin knows he must correct his delivery and correct his aggressive mindset to emulate the success he had last season, when he was one of the Majors' most versatile bullpen options.

On Friday night, Rusin's inability to quell a Brewers surge -- an inherited runner scored, and he gave up a run himself on a hit and a walk -- was part of the Rockies' collapse in their 11-10, 10-inning loss. Since returning from the disabled list (left intercostal injury), he has yielded four runs on three hits and three walks in four innings.

When Rusin started slowly this season, he found his rhythm for four solid appearances before the injury, then has slumped upon his return. Rusin entered Saturday's game vs. the Brewers with a 5.94 ERA, 13 strikeouts and an eyebrow-raising nine walks in 16 2/3 innings. Last season, he posted a 2.65 ERA in 60 appearances covering a National League-high 85 innings, with 71 strikeouts against just 19 walks.

Rusin said missing the time messed up his rhythm a little.

"I was working on the delivery at the beginning of the season and moving toward it before I got hurt," said Rusin.

"Obviously that's not an excuse, just trying to work hard to get back at it."

The Rockies usually use Rusin as a bridge to the late innings, but they've also used him as a lefty-vs.-lefty fireman.

Neither role is conducive to walks.

"I've just got to start pounding the zone instead of walking guys and falling behind, because I'm at my best when I'm attacking," said Rusin, who said he feels no lingering pain or tentativeness from the injury.

After Friday's game, Rockies manager Bud Black said he planned to "get to the bottom" of Rusin's struggles. In a meeting Saturday, Black said he focused mostly on Rusin's mindset.

"His arm feels good, I don't see any difference in his fastball, the action to his secondary pitches," Black said. "Whether he's just off a little bit delivery-wise, which is keeping him from throwing good, quality strikes we're accustomed to, our conversation today was really of the mindset of strike one. If it's not strike one, strike two. He's self-admitted a little bit too many 2-0, 3-1, 2-1 counts. We've got to flip those counts.

"We need him to be the Chris Rusin that I saw last year, that I've seen in flashes this year. His expectation is that, too."

Senzatela continues to build his pitch count

Since being optioned out of the Rockies' bullpen and into Triple-A Albuquerque's rotation, righty Antonio Senzatela has given up one run on six hits, with 12 strikeouts and three walks, in nine innings over two starts. On Thursday at Reno, Senzatela pitched five scoreless innings, struck out four and gave up four hits and two walks while reaching 73 pitches.

Wanting to make sure Senzatela is an option in case the Rockies need a starter, the Rockies will have him make another Triple-A start rather than look to insert him back into the bullpen.

"I don't have a crystal ball as to what's going to happen," Black said. "Let's get him closer to that 90-100 [pitch] barrier, so if something happened, we'd feel good about it."

Gonzalez on comeback trail

Right-hander Rayan Gonzalez, who was added to the Rockies' 40-man roster before last season but suffered a right elbow injury that required Tommy John surgery, threw a scoreless inning Friday night for Class A Lancaster in his first rehab assignment appearance. Gonzalez, a hard thrower who was working on developing secondary stuff before the injury, is on the 60-day disabled list.

The Morning After: Kyle Freeland's continued success requires balance of emotion, mechanics

The more he fist pumps, the better his line tends to be; but the southpaw noted he's been more conscious of his delivery

Kyle Newman / DenverPost.com | May 13, 2018

Kyle Freeland's fist pumping to end contentious innings is starting to become somewhat of a signature for him.

And the more Rockies' fans see the celebratory move — as they did following a couple crucial outs in a 4-0 win over the Brewers on Saturday — the better the performance tends to be for the sophomore southpaw.

But as both Freeland and manager Bud Black emphasized, balancing the pitcher's emotion with an awareness of his mechanics has been a focus point since getting shelled by the Pirates for five runs in four innings on April 18.

"He's an aggressive, emotional pitcher, and you can see emotion when he gets the big out in certain situations, which I love," Black said postgame. "But there's also a component where I think he needs to stay within his delivery, stay within his mechanics — he did a pretty good job overall of that tonight, but that's something that doesn't just turn in one start. You have to feel that... keeping the proper delivery with the right intensity."

Freeland, 3-0 with a 1.65 ERA over his last three starts, is feeling all the feels on the hill at the moment.

He also believes his recent momentum is a result of deciding to more heavily leverage his dynamic combination of inside fastballs and sliders down and away.

"After that game (in Pittsburgh), we sat down, gathered all the information and realized we're going to pitch to my strengths pretty much no matter what," Freeland said. "From then on, that's what we've been doing and we've been sticking with it."

Five takeaways from the Rockies' win on Saturday:

No. 1 — Trevor Story recorded his first multi-home run game of the season and the sixth of his career, with the most recent such performance coming on August 16 of last year against Atlanta.

No. 2 — Adam Ottavino continued his all-star season, needing just 11 pitches — only one was a ball — to set down the Brewers in order in the eighth. He struck out two in the frame, increasing his K/9 rate to 15.54, second-best among National League relievers.

No. 3 — Nolan Arenado continued his offensive tear, going 2-for-4 with a double and a triple. He's now reached base in 22 straight games and is hitting .317 during that span, and .315 overall.

No. 4 — Following Friday's marathon loss, Freeland's sharp pitching combined with the bullpen's efforts resulted in the team's fifth shutout of the season and a speedy game time of two hours and 47 minutes, about 13 minutes quicker than the average major league game this season.

No. 5 — Arenado's second-inning error — in which the third baseman fielded a grounder but then dropped the ball during the transfer from glove to hand — ended the Rockies' streak of six straight games without an error. It was Arenado's third error of the season, tied for the most on the team with Story and Chris Iannetta.

Quotable — Bud Black on what the win showed about the clubhouse's mentality following Friday's extra-innings loss in which the team blew a six run lead: "Even last year, after some tough losses, this team's shown a lot of resiliency the next day. This team has a great ability to turn the page, to come ready to play the next day fresh and to get after it with a clear mind. That has a lot to do with the makeup of the veteran players, it has a lot to do with some things we talk about internally. I'm proud of these guys with the way they bounced back, and Kyle set the tone, obviously."

Kyle Freeland dazzles, Trevor Story hits two homers and accounts for all RBIs as Rockies beat Brewers

Freeland worked around traffic and broke a handful of bats in six and a third innings of scoreless work, and the bullpen did the rest

Kyle Newman / DenverPost.com | May 13, 2018

During pregame at Coors Field, Rockies' manager Bud Black made note of the continued maturation of Kyle Freeland, who had a strong first half of his rookie season in 2017 before sputtering and eventually being sent to the bullpen in September.

"The last couple outings, as the game has gone on, his delivery has gotten better, his pitch-making has gotten better," Black said. "For whatever reason, it seems like his calmness, poise and his overall presence increased the last couple starts."

Freeland's upward trend continued on Saturday, when Denver's native southpaw dazzled through 6 ½ innings of shutout baseball — and shortstop Trevor Story homered twice, in addition to an RBI double — in Colorado's 4-0 win over the Brewers.

The victory snapped the Rockies' three-game losing streak, and by the time Freeland got the hook in the seventh, he exited to a standing ovation that punctuated another night in which he showed all the signs of becoming a dominant big-league starter.

"He's been very effective inside with the fastball, and the slider's been better — it had better break to it, more depth and more consistent spin," Black said. "Those two things have made Kyle turn the corner from the first few starts — a fastball in, and a better breaking slider, and a few more changeups have been functional."

Freeland worked around traffic via four hits and four walks. He broke a handful of Brewers' bats with hard-to-barrel offspeed pitches and high inside heat. He ignored the distraction of a woman with colored hair who rushed left-center in the top of the fourth, causing a brief delay, and then smoked a seeing-eye single to right in the bottom of the frame.

Colorado's bullpen then did its part to put a bow on Freeland's grinding, focused effort.

Bryan Shaw and Mike Dunn each recorded one out to end the seventh with two runners on and Freeland's gem wholly intact, while Adam Ottavino sent Milwaukee down in order in the eighth before Wade Davis closed the door in the ninth.

Looking ahead

Starting pitcher Jon Gray #55 of the Colorado Rockies confers with catcher Tony Wolters #14 and pitching coach Steve Foster in the first inning against the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim at Coors Field on May 8, 2018 in Denver, Colorado. (Photo by Matthew Stockman/Getty Images) Starting pitcher Jon Gray #55 of the Colorado Rockies confers with catcher Tony Wolters #14 and pitching coach Steve Foster in the first inning against the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim at Coors Field on May 8, 2018 in Denver, Colorado.

Brewers RHP Freddy Peralta (0-0, 0.00 ERA) vs. Rockies RHP Jon Gray (4-4, 4.24), 1:10 p.m. ATTRM

After the Brewers placed righty Chase Anderson on the 10-day disabled list due to illness — he was scratched from Saturday's start — they called up Peralta from Triple-A Colorado Springs and he'll make his major league debut on Sunday. With the Sky Sox, Peralta was 5-1 with a 3.63 ERA this season. For Gray, who has allowed just one earned run over this last 20 innings pitched — earning three victories in that span — the matinee is an opportunity to continue his groove, although he'll want to avoid further damage in the clutch by Christian Yelich. The Brewers' outfielder has hit .333 (4-for-12) with two doubles and four RBIs against Gray.

Monday: Rockies LHP Tyler Anderson (2-1, 4.23) at Padres LHP Joey Lucchesi (3-2, 2.98), 8:10 p.m. ATTRM

Tuesday: Rockies RHP German Marquez (2-4, 5.35) at Padres RHP Jordan Lyles (0-1, 3.28), 1:40 p.m., ATTRM

Wednesday: Off

Thursday: Rockies RHP Chad Bettis (4-1, 3.12) at Giants RHP Jeff Samardzija (1-2, 6.62), 8:15 p.m. ATTRM

In debut season with the Rockies, closer Wade Davis' excellence has become an uninteresting expectation

The right-hander leads all of baseball with 14 saves entering the weekend and holds a 3.12 ERA, 0.98 WHIP

Kyle Newman / DeverPost.com | May 13, 2018

Nolan Arenado knew the Rockies had signed a special breed of closer early in spring training when he sat with Wade Davis in the video room at Salt River Fields and the right-hander caused the third baseman to suffer a partial identity crisis.

"I asked him how he approached me when I faced him last year, and he told me some things that I never would've thought of," Arenado said. "It made me realize I need to understand who I am a little bit more, because he understands exactly who he is."

Who Davis has been this season is everything Colorado thought he would be when the club inked him to a three-year, \$52 million deal in December that made the former Ray, Royal and Cub the most expensive reliever in major league history by annual value.

The 32-year-old leads baseball with 14 saves, and yet the stoic 'thinking man's closer' somehow isn't gobbling up headlines. Maybe that's because of the team's distracting problems on offense, or maybe it's because the rest of the bullpen has also, for the most part, been nails.

Or, as pointed out by reliever Adam Ottavino — the gem of the Rockies' bullpen so far with a 1.23 ERA and 0.68 WHIP in 22.0 innings of work — maybe the lack of attention Davis receives on a day-to-day basis in Denver is simply because his excellence has become an uninteresting expectation.

"When you're the best, people start to get used to that," Ottavino theorized. "With him — he had around a 1.00 ERA for three years (in Kansas City), and then was one of the best last year in Chicago — people just expect it. So when he does good, it's not a story."

Davis only needed seven pitches to sprint through his spring training debut, and since that day he's continued to perform with boring efficiency, surpassing 20 pitches in just three of his 18 regular-season appearances.

And for his part, Davis is content with playing the role of anonymous all-star — “attention can sometimes be counterproductive,” he pointed out — with a repertoire of plus-pitches (fastball, curve, slider, cutter) that keeps everyone in the ballpark but him guessing.

“With some guys, when they get on the mound, you know they’re going to throw this pitch or that pitch in a situation,” Rockies reliever Mike Dunn said. “When Wade’s up there, you have no idea what pitch he’s going to throw — we’re always trying to guess out in the bullpen — and he’s got 100-percent conviction behind all his pitches.”

It seems the only interesting Davis storyline left to be discussed is whether he can maintain his torrid pace.

Manager Bud Black doesn’t believe there’s any “overall concerns about the long-range consistency of Wade” throughout the grind of a 162-game season that ending up wearing down the Rockies’ 2017 closer, Greg Holland.

Holland was dominant in the first half of last year, converting 28 of 29 save opportunities, but lost his magic after the all-star break to the tune of a 6.38 ERA and three blown saves in August alone.

“I think Holland was a little bit different from the standpoint he was coming off Tommy John (surgery), and he hadn’t pitched the year before — that had a lot to do with (his second-half struggles),” bullpen coach Darren Holmes said. “With Wade, we’ve been good at monitoring his usage — he hasn’t pitched more than two days in a row so far, and we’ve been keeping the communication open every day on how he’s feeling.”

Meanwhile, as Colorado’s offense continues to search for its collective identity, Davis remains a virtual ninth-inning rock. Even two blown saves so far this year, against Atlanta on April 7 and the Brewers on Friday, has done nothing to deter the widespread feeling in the clubhouse that the Rockies possess one of the best, if not the best, closer in the majors.

“Even if he does give up a save,” Arenado said, “there’s nobody I would rather go down with than Wade Davis.”

Do the Rockies have a catching conundrum? Chris Iannetta and Tony Wolters still searching for offensive groove
Team ranks in bottom third in National League team catcher average (.190), on-base percentage (.291) and strikeouts (38)

Kyle Newman / DenverPost.com | May 12, 2018

The Rockies' struggles at first base this season are well documented. Between the home crowd booing Ian Desmond and the demotions of Ryan McMahon and Pat Valaika to Triple-A Albuquerque, Colorado's first basemen were hitting a collective .175 with a .267 on-base percentage entering Saturday, both of which ranked last in the National League.

But what of the team's lack of offensive consistency at catcher, where limited production is also becoming an early season theme? The combination of Chris Iannetta and Tony Wolters have combined to rank in the bottom third in National League team catching average (.190), on-base percentage (.291) and strikeouts (38).

"I don't think we've seen the best of them, collectively," manager Bud Black admitted. "Tony's catching great, but the offense is a little down. And I think Chris is getting to know the staff — it takes a little bit of time to truly understand all 13 guys, and what they do in different situations, as each game goes on."

The veteran Iannetta — who signed a two-year, \$8.5 million deal with Colorado in the offseason — started off 2018 on a tear, hitting .333 through the first ten games. But his average has since fallen to .216 over 23 total starts, a decline he attributed to falling behind in the count too much lately.

"I went through a stretch where I wasn't seeing it very good, and then the last about two and a half weeks, I've been seeing it really good," Iannetta said. "I haven't really swung and missed at pitches that have been good pitches to hit, but I haven't really gotten a ton of those — I feel like I've been 0-1, 0-2 in almost every count."

Meanwhile Wolters, who showed promise in the box in 2016 and 2017, has struggled to find his rhythm from the get-go. He's batting .137 with 16 starts, and noted he's still adjusting to the speed and movement of big league pitching while also attempting to become a catalyst for the bottom half of the lineup in any way he can.

“I feel like I’m making strides — it’s a process — but I’m not trying to speed up the process,” Wolters said. “I’m shrinking the strike zone and finding my pitch, but also being unselfish and doing my job — I’m going to get my hit-and-runs, bunt guys over, get on base, and my main goal is to flip that lineup over.”

Surely, the glove and locker room contributions of both players can’t be overlooked. Black noted Wolters “brings a great element on defense — the game-calling, the receiving, the blocking,” while journeyman Iannetta has been a vital resource for Colorado’s young rotation.

But what if, as the official start of summer approaches, neither catcher breaks out?

In Triple-A, Tom Murphy is certainly putting up good enough stats to warrant at least being part of the catching conversation, as the 27-year-old is batting .296 with eight homers and 23 RBIs through 28 games.

Rockies farm director Zach Wilson noted Murphy “is in a great place and ready to help us if/when his name is called,” but Murphy himself is staying grounded about the potential off a call-up at some point this season.

“That’s the irony of the situation to me — everyone’s goal here is to make it to the big leagues, but you don’t make it to the big leagues by thinking about the big leagues,” Murphy said. “You do it with a daily conscious effort, and making sure you are where your feet are.”

Murphy said he’s placing an increased emphasis on cutting down on his 27.7 percent strikeout rate, in addition to focusing on improving on “all defensive aspects — game-calling, handling pitchers, receiving, catch-and-throw, blocking and never giving away a pitch.”

Whether Murphy’s continued progression with Albuquerque will result in roster move for the Rockies sometime this summer remains to be seen — as does whether he’d be actually ready to increase the team’s offensive production if and when he did get the promotion to Coors Field.

“A lot of times, you don’t see guys come up and succeed right off the bat — it’s rare to have those players who do that, because there’s usually a learning curve,” Black said. “There’s a difference between a major league starter and a minor league starter, and it takes time for most players to go through that learning curve.”

Footnotes. Black liked what he saw in Trevor Story’s offensive approach during the Rockies’ extra-innings loss to Milwaukee on Friday, in which the shortstop was 1-for-4 with a triple, a sacrifice fly and four RBIs: “I liked the look of his swing to foul off some of those pitches, like he did in the sacrifice fly at-bat. His swing was shorter, it was more compact and it looked like he was really staying on the ball away and he fought off the ball in.”... Carlos Gonzalez sat again Saturday, the fifth time in the ten games since his return from the disabled list that the all-star hasn’t started. He was originally in the starting lineup, but then the Brewers’ changing their starting pitcher from a righty to a lefty led to the insertion of Noel Cuevas in right field instead.

Freeland, Story lead Rockies to 4-0 win over Brewers

Associated Press / ESPN.com | May 12, 2018

DENVER -- Kyle Freeland and Trevor Story helped the Colorado Rockies bounce back nicely from one of their toughest losses of the season.

Freeland pitched effectively into the seventh inning, Story homered twice and doubled to drive in Colorado's runs, and the Rockies beat the Milwaukee Brewers 4-0 Saturday night.

Freeland (3-4) kept the Brewers in check the night after they had battered Rockies' pitchers in an 11-10 win in 10 innings. He gave up four hits in 6 1/3 innings, striking out six and walking four while helping Colorado snap a three-game losing streak.

"When you kind of hit a little skid, you want to be the guy to step up and shut that down and get a team win and start a new trend, start a new streak," Freeland said. "That was kind of the thing tonight, where I wanted to step up, be that guy that stops this losing streak and gets a team win."

Rockies manager Bud Black said he noted a collective effort by the team to put Friday night's defeat behind them and move forward.

"I think this team has a great ability to turn the page, to come ready to play the next day fresh and to get after it with a clear mind," Black said. "I'm proud of the way these guys bounced back and Kyle set the tone, obviously."

Story did his part, too, putting together his first multihomer game of the season, hitting both off Brent Suter (2-3), who pitched a day ahead of his scheduled start after Chase Anderson was scratched hours before he was to take the mound because of a stomach illness.

"My command was OK," Suter said. "With off-speed, it wasn't great today. Fastball command was probably below average. He (Story) got a hold of some mistakes and took care of them. That was the difference in the game."

Nolan Arenado tripled ahead of Story's first-inning homer and doubled ahead of his run-scoring double in the third. Story added a solo home run in the fifth for his first multihomer game since last Aug. 16 against Atlanta. He has six in his career.

Suter, whose fifth inning double stood out as the Brewers' only extra-base hit, went five innings and allowed four runs and seven hits. He struck out two and walked one.

Freeland was relieved by Bryan Shaw after issuing successive one-out walks in the seventh but Shaw and Mike Dunn retired the next two batters to end the threat.

Adam Ottavino and Wade Davis each pitched scoreless innings to close out the win for the Rockies.

HOT CORNER

Jesus Aguilar made his first career start at third base, part of a strategy by Brewers manager Craig Counsell to keep his bat in the lineup against a left-handed starter. Aguilar, a first baseman, had only three previous stints at third base during his career, spending 3 1/3 innings there. He deftly handled a pair of grounders and snared a liner before he moved to first in the bottom of the sixth when Ryan Braun moved to left field.

ARENADO'S STREAK

Arenado has reached base safely in 22 consecutive games since April 12, the second longest streak of his career. He reached in 30 straight in 2014.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Brewers: Following the game, manager Craig Counsell announced a series of moves, including the placement of Anderson on the 10-day DL with illness and the calling up of RHP Freddy Peralta from Class AAA Colorado Springs. Also, RHP Alec Asher was optioned to Colorado Springs and RHP Jorge Lopez was recalled. Peralta was scratched from his start at Colorado Springs so he can start Sunday's series finale.

UP NEXT

Brewers: RHP Freddy Peralta (0-0) will make his major league debut. He was 5-1 with a 3.63 ERA in seven starts at Colorado Springs. Peralta was scratched from his start for Colorado Springs on Saturday for his promotion to the Brewers. "His family was in Colorado Springs," Counsell said. "Never seen him pitch professionally. They were there to watch him pitch tonight, so they got a good gift."

Rockies: RHP Jon Gray (4-4, 4.24 ERA) has won three straight starts since losing a career-high three in a row.

Story time puts Brewers to bed

Drew Creasman / BSNDenver.com | May 13, 2018

DENVER – The Colorado Rockies kept a bit of the offensive momentum but cut out the chaos of their previous contest with the Milwaukee Brewers to emerge victorious by a score of 4-0 on a cool and damp evening at Coors Field.

Trevor Story played the role of offensive hero, driving in all four of the Rockies runs and reaching base in all four of his plate appearances. Nolan Arenado also contributed a bit with the bat and added some trademark brilliant defense at third base, turning in no fewer than three noteworthy putouts.

The bullpen was able to redeem themselves and Kyle Freeland was once again the man in Denver, combining for the shutout, giving the Rockies a chance to split the set on Sunday.

Story started the fireworks after a two-out triple from Arenado in the bottom of the first. He stayed back on a first-pitch breaking ball and smashed it over the wall in the deepest part of the park in left-center field.

A two-man, two-out rally from the same two men took place in inning number two with two consecutive two-baggers from Arenado and Story.

Standing again at the plate with two outs, this time with nobody on base in the fifth, Story took matters into his own hand, depositing a change-up deep over the left-field fence for his second home run of the game and 10th of the season. It also put him at a team-leading 32 RBI.

Kyle Freeland, knowing full well that Bud Black has had to use so many relievers the past few games that I swear I saw Rafael Betancourt warming up at one point, did his best to get through seven innings for the third straight game but fell just short.

He dominated the entire Brewers lineups except, oddly, his opposite number Brent Suter whose ground-rule double accounted for the only extra-base hit against Freeland who otherwise scattered three singles. He did walk four batters, including Suter once, which ultimately kept him from going deeper into the game.

Still, this was the kind of start the Rockies needed after a rough one for Bettis in Friday night's contest that spun out of control.

As Freeland began to lose command, surrendering a single and a walk, Bryan Shaw and Mike Dunn were able to put away the sixth inning without any further incident, picking up Freeland's start, stranding the pair of baserunners.

Adam Ottavino pitched another stellar inning, striking out two in the eighth.

Wade Davis came on less than 24 hours after blowing a two-run lead with two outs and his second save of the season and was greeted with a lead-off single from Hernan Perez. But he paid that little mind, retiring the next three in order with a pair of strikeouts to preserve the shutouts, secure the win, and put his 15th save of the season in the books.

Colorado improved to 22-18, 7-10 at home. It was their fifth shutout of the season and second at home.

FINAL STATS:

Kyle Freeland: 6.1 IP, 4 H, 0 ER 4 BB, 6 K

Bryan Shaw: 0.1 IP

Mike Dunn: 0.1 IP

Adam Ottavino: 1 IP, 2 K

Trevor Story: 3-for-3, 2 R, 4 RBI, 1 BB

Nolan Arenado: 2-for-4, 2 R

Chris Iannetta: 2-for-4

WHAT'S NEXT:

The Rockies aim for the series split on Sunday afternoon and will hand the ball to the top man in the rotation, Jon Gray.

The Brewers have yet to announce their starter. First pitch at 1:10 Mountain Time.

Trevor Story bashes the Brewers in Rockies shutout victory

Justin Michael / MileHighSports.com | May 12, 2018

After blowing a six run lead in Friday night's loss to the Milwaukee Brewers, the Rockies and a red-hot Trevor Story rebounded with a smooth 4-0 victory Saturday.

Story homered twice in the contest, finishing the night 2-of-3 with 4 RBI. After the monstrous performance at the plate, the Rockies young shortstop now currently leads all MLB shortstops with 32 RBI.

Story's first home run came in the first inning when he followed up a triple from Nolan Arenado with a 410 foot rocket to deep center field. The home run was Story's ninth of the season and gave the Rockies an early 2-0 lead.

Then In the fifth inning, Story followed up Arenado's double with another two-run dinger to put the Rockies up 4-0.

Along with Story's big night at the plate, Kyle Freeland delivered 6 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings of scoreless baseball and really set the tone for the victory with efficient and aggressive pitching.

In Freeland's first trip through the Milwaukee lineup, the Colorado native recorded six ground ball outs and three strikeouts. In total, the second-year starter threw first-pitch strikes against 18-of-27 hitters faced and struck out six in a game where it was obvious that the Brewers hitters were out of rhythm at the plate.

Freeland did create some traffic in the seventh inning, walking two of the first three batters before being pulled by manager Walt Weiss. A pair of relievers had the young pitcher's back though, as Bryan Shaw and Mike Dunn each recorded an out to help keep Freeland off the board. Over his last four starts, Freeland has only given up a total of five runs in 28 innings pitched.

Adam Ottavino took care of things in the eighth, shutting down the Brewers with a 1-2-3 inning, before Wade Davis put the final nail in the coffin in the ninth.

The shutout victory is Colorado's fifth of the season which is a club record through the first 40 games of a season.

The Rockies (22-18) and Brewers (23-17) will conclude the three-game series Sunday afternoon at Coors Field. (1:10 PM). Jon Gray is scheduled to be on the bump for Colorado and will go at least seven innings for a third consecutive start.

When It Was Time to Step Up Freeland Didn't Hesitate

Tracy Ringolsby / InsidetheSeams.com | May 13, 2018

The Rockies youthful starting pitchers like to talk about an inner competition, and how the success of each other is a driving force for the next guy up in the rotation.

And then there are nights like Saturday.

Kyle Freeland had his motivation to step up on Saturday night, but for a different reason. He wanted to be the guy to change the recent direction of the franchise. He wanted to provide that shutdown moment.

The Thomas Jefferson alum did that -- and then some.

Freeland added another chapter to his own string of strong starts, but this time it wasn't to build off previous success. His focus was to get the Rockies headed back in the right direction.

Freeland not only shutdown the Brewers for 6 1/3 innings in a 4-0 victory at Coors Field, but he put an end to a three-game losing streak in which the Rockies pitching staff gave up 24 runs in 28 innings.

"You want to be the guy to step up and shut that down, get a team win and start a new streak," said Freeland.

"That was the thing about (Saturday night). I wanted to step and be the guy who got the team a win. ... Every guy in this clubhouse wants to be that stopper, the guy who steps up and says, 'This has to stop now.'"

THREE GAMES TO FORGET

Wednesday, Angels, 8-0	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	HR
Tyler Anderson	5	6	4	4	1	3	2
Bullpen	4	10	4	4	4	1	1

Total	9	16	8	8	5	4	3
Thursday, Brewers, 5-2							
German Márquez (L 2-4)	4.2	12	5	5	3	3	1
Bullpen	4.1	0	0	0	2	3	0
Total	9	12	5	5	5	6	1
Friday, Brewers, 11-10							
Chad Bettis	5	10	7	7	3	3	1
Bullpen	5	7	4	4	3	4	1
Team	10	17	11	11	6	7	2
3-Game Totals							
Rotation 9.82 ERA	14.2	28	16	16	7	9	4
Bullpen 5.40 ERA	13.1	17	8	8	9	8	2
Totals 7.71 ERA	28	45	24	24	16	17	6

Freeland responded to the challenge. He worked 6 1/3 shutout innings, and had allowed six baserunners (four hits, two walks) before back-to-back walks in the seventh prompted manager Bud Black to turn to the bullpen for the final eight outs of the game.

It was the Rockies 20th quality start, the team-high fifth for Freeland, who still does not have a complete game in 36 MLB starts, having come close when he had a no-hitter for 8 1/3 on July 9 last season against the White Sox before giving up a hit.

Freeland that's a goal, but it's not the focus.

"Right now I want to get as deep as possible to give the team a chance to win," he said.

QUALITY COUNTS

Player	Date	Opp	W	L	IP	Runs
Tyler Anderson	4/5/2018	SD	0	0	6	0
Tyler Anderson	4/10/2018	SD	0	0	6	2
Tyler Anderson	4/21/2018	ChC	1	0	6	2
Tyler Anderson	5/2/2018	ChC	1	0	7	2
Chad Bettis	4/12/2018	Was	1	0	7	1
Chad Bettis	4/17/2018	Pit	1	0	7.1	0
Chad Bettis	4/29/2018	Mia	0	1	7	2
Chad Bettis	5/5/2018	NYM	1	0	7	0
Kyle Freeland	4/8/2018	Atl	0	1	6	3
Kyle Freeland	4/24/2018	SD	1	0	7	0
Kyle Freeland	4/30/2018	ChC	0	1	7	3
Kyle Freeland	5/6/2018	NYM	1	0	7	2
Kyle Freeland	5/12/2018	Mil	1	0	6.1	0
Jon Gray	4/4/2018	SD	1	0	7	0
Jon Gray	4/25/2018	SD	1	0	6	0
Jon Gray	5/1/2018	ChC	1	0	7	1
Jon Gray	5/8/2018	LAA	1	0	7	1
German Marquez	4/16/2018	Pit	1	0	6	2
German Marquez	4/28/2018	Mia	0	1	6	1
German Marquez	5/4/2018	NYM	1	0	6	2

Freeland has definitely been giving the Rockies a chance to win in his recent starts. He leads the team with the five quality starts, but more importantly, after struggles earlier this season, he has had a quality start each of his last four times on the mound.

He admits he and catcher Chris Iannetta had a sitdown session after a struggle in Pittsburgh.

"After that game we sat down and realized I was going to have to pitch to my strength, no matter what," he said.

"I have been sticking to that and have had success."

Translation: Trust your stuff. Don't give the hitter too much credit.

Result: He is 3-1 in his last four starts, but has allowed only five runs in 27 1/3 innings. The lone loss was a 3-2 decision.

Black noticed.

"He's been very effective inside with the fastball, and the slider's been better — it had better break to it, more depth and more consistent spin," Black said Saturday. "Those two things have made Kyle turn the corner from the first few starts — a fastball in, and a better breaking slider, and a few more changeups have been functional."

THE DIFFERENCE SHOWS IN THE RESULTS

Date	Opponent		W	L	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	SO
4/3/2018	@SD	L 8-4	0	1	5.1	5	4	4	2	2	6
4/8/2018	Atl	L 4-0	0	1	6	7	3	3	2	2	5
4/13/2018	@Was	W 2-1	0	0	4.2	4	1	1	0	3	4
4/18/2018	@Pit	L 10-2	0	1	4	6	5	5	1	2	2
4/24/2018	SD	W 8-0	1	0	7	3	0	0	0	2	8
4/30/2018	@ChC	L 3-2	0	1	7	6	3	3	0	1	5
5/6/2018	@NYM	W 3-2	1	0	7	4	2	2	0	1	8

5/12/2018	Mil	W 4-0	1	0	6.1	4	0	0	0	4	6
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What sticks out about Freeland is he has embraced the challenge of Coors Field. The Denver native and Thomas Jefferson High School alum, who was born May 14, 1993, weeks after the Rockies first game ever, has better numbers at Coors Field than he does on the road.

HOME BODY

2018	W	L	Sv	SvOP	G	GS	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	SO	ERA
Home	2	1	0	0	3	3	19.1	14	3	3	2	8	19	1.4
Away	1	3	0	0	5	5	28	25	15	15	3	9	25	4.82
Career	W	L	Sv	SvOP	G	GS	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	SO	ERA
Home	8	9	0	0	22	19	106.1	103	44	39	9	43	85	3.3
Away	6	6	0	0	19	17	97	105	52	50	13	37	66	4.64

Freeland, in fact, has the lowest ERA in the history of Coors Field among the 82 pitchers who have worked at least 60 innings in the Rockies home ballpark.

COOL AT COORS

Player	W	L	Pct	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	SO	ERA
Kyle Freeland	8	9	0.471	106.1	103	44	39	9	43	85	3.3
Taylor Buchholz	10	4	0.714	86	79	33	32	9	23	64	3.35
Brian Fuentes	11	11	0.5	223.2	202	89	85	19	77	258	3.42
Tyler Anderson	9	6	0.6	136.1	139	57	53	15	36	125	3.5
Steve Reed	12	10	0.545	179.1	159	76	70	27	63	139	3.51
Adam Ottavino	10	6	0.625	180.2	161	73	71	18	63	188	3.54
LaTroy Hawkins	5	3	0.625	71	68	29	28	6	17	38	3.55

Player	W	L	Pct	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	SO	ERA
Ubaldo Jimenez	30	19	0.612	419.2	383	189	171	33	167	341	3.67
Chuck McElroy	9	0	1	67.2	79	28	28	6	23	52	3.72
Bruce Ruffin	6	3	0.667	64.2	63	31	27	3	33	70	3.76

Wade Davis: A Saving Grace With Amazing Resilience

Tracy Ringolsby / InsidetheSeams.com | May 13, 2018

Wade Davis blew a save for the Rockies in what became an 11-10, 10-inning loss to the Brewers at Coors Field on Friday night.

It was headline material.

That type of thing, after all, has not happened to Davis very often since he earned his first save, with the Royals, on Sept. 5, 2014.

Early in his career, there was a hesitancy to take Davis out of a starting pitcher role because he had the four-pitch mix that makes scouts/coaches/teammates drool. The Royals, however, finally decided to look at him as a setup reliever, and then, when Greg Holland underwent Tommy John surgery, Holland emerged into the role on a full-time basis in the final months of 2015.

There's no debate, comparing the results, that Davis is a perfect fit in the bullpen.

Take Your Pick, Start or Relieve?

Total	W	L	S v	SvO P	G	G S	C G	IP	H	R	ER	ER A	AVG	OBP	SLG	OPS
Career	5 9	3 9	93	104	41 0	88	2	851. 2	75 8	34 8	32 6	3.45	0.23 7	0.30 9	0.37	0.67 8
Starter	3 1	3 2	0	0	88	88	2	513. 2	55 4	28 0	26 1	4.57	0.27 5	0.34 1	0.43 7	0.77 8
Reliever	2 8	7	93	104	32 2	0	0	338	20 4	68	65	1.73	0.17 1	0.25 5	0.25 5	0.51

Source: Stats, Inc.

The key is a short memory. If a closer has a bad game and it gets to him, he's in trouble. He has to be able to take the ball the next time the game is on the line and shut the door.

Davis gets it. Even a night like Friday has to be erased from the memory bank. This one seemed to be in the bank. Davis started off by striking out left-handed-hitting Travis Shaw. Then he got Jesus Aguilar to line to left. And then he had Hernan Perez 0-2.

But then Perez poked a single to left, and then Manny Pina floated an opposite-field home run over the scoreboard in right field and the Rockies 10-8 lead turned into a 10-10 tie. Davis got Orlando Arcia to ground out and end the inning, and then watched from the bench in the 10th when Shaw, facing Jake McGee, shot a two-out single into center field, scoring

Lorenzo Cain from second base, and Brewers closer Josh Hader shut the Rockies down 1-2-3.

"There's no room for mistakes," said Davis. "That's what is frustrating."

He, however, quickly made it clear there is no time for pity.

"I'll get over it," he said. "I feel more for the team, the way it played . The offense came out. Our defense played pretty good. That's the frustrating part. Not the fact I didn't make a pitch, but the fact we didn't get a win."

And Davis has shown the ability to forget the bad nights quickly. He has eight blown saves in his career, seven since he earned his first save on Sept. 5, 2014. The first six times he failed in a save situation as a closer, he closed out a save when he got the call the next time. The seventh? Time will tell. Rest assured manager Bud Black won't hesitate to get

Davis back on the mound was soon as the need arises.

SAVING GRACE: NO TIME FOR HANGOVERS

Date	Opponent		W	L	Sv	SvOP	IP	H	R
9/16/2014	CWS	L 7-5	0	0	0	1	0.2	1	1
4/10/2015	@LAA	W 4-2	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
7/12/2015	Tor	W 11-10	1	0	0	1	1	2	1
8/19/2015	@Cin	W 4-3	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
5/15/2016	Atl	W 4-2	0	0	0	1	1	3	2
5/18/2016	Bos	W 3-2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
6/29/2016	@StL	W 3-2	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
6/30/2016	@StL	W 4-2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
9/2/2016	Det	L 7-6	0	1	0	1	1	2	2
9/3/2016	Det	W 5-2	0	0	1	1	0.2	0	0
9/23/2017	@Mil	L 4-3	0	1	0	1	1.1	3	3
3/31/2018	@Ari	W 2-1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
4/7/2018	Atl	W 3-2	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
4/11/2018	SD	W 6-4	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
5/11/2018	Mil	L 11-10	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
TBD									

Source: Stats, Inc

What Davis knows is that the odds are in his favor.

He knows he made a mistake against Pina.

"I wanted to throw (the ball) down and away," he said. "I left it up and he put a good swing on it. ... I would say it's a bad pitch. ... I felt comfortable with everything. We should have won. I threw a bad pitch that cost us the game."

Davis has been down the road before, and he knows while it is impossible to be perfect, the odds are in his favor if he stays aggressive.

"You get away with 90 per cent of the mistakes or more, I'd say," he said. "Not this night, though."

No, but there will be more. He has learned that with the success he has had since that first save on Sept. 5, 2014.

Even though he wasn't actually named the closer until the following August, since that third save he ranks third among MLB pitchers in save percentage, fourth in ERA, sixth in batting average allowed and tied for 10th with 93 saves.

THE LATE-INNING ELITE IN THE DAVIS ERA

Player	Team	G	IP	Sv	SvOP	SV%	Hld	ERA	AVG
Zach Britton	Bal	179	178	102	109	93.6	0	1.52	0.207
Kenley Jansen	LAD	215	214	135	146	92.5	2	1.89	0.17
Wade Davis	KC/Cubs/Col	201	196	93	101	92.1	22	1.84	0.178
Mark Melancon	Pit/Wsh/SF	196	190	116	127	91.3	6	2.27	0.22
Craig Kimbrel	Atl/SD/Bos	209	204.1	120	132	90.9	2	2.33	0.158
Aroldis Chapman	Cin/Clev/NYY	203	201.1	107	118	90.7	1	1.92	0.172
AJ Ramos	Mia-NYM	230	214	99	111	89.2	15	3.07	0.204
Cody Allen	Cle	230	228	107	120	89.2	4	2.8	0.209
Raisel Iglesias	Cin	135	268.1	40	45	88.9	7	3.02	0.212
Greg Holland	KC/Col/StL	128	118.1	77	87	88.5	2	3.65	0.208

Colorado Rockies 4, Milwaukee Brewers 0: Kyle Freeland, Trevor Story steal the show

Trevor Story powered the offense as Kyle Freeland blanked the Brewers in a Rockies win

Jordan Freemyer / PurpleRow.com | May 12, 2018

The Colorado Rockies snapped a three-game losing streak with a 4-0 win over the Milwaukee Brewers on Saturday night at Coors Field. Rockies pitching, led by starter Kyle Freeland, limited the Brewers to just five hits, four of which were singles, in the contest after allowing 11 runs the previous night. The Rockies offense was led by Trevor Story, who hit a pair of home runs, with Nolan Arenado and Chris Iannetta also contributing multi-hit games.

Never Ending Story

Rockies shortstop Trevor Story continued his hot hitting on the current homestand, going 3-for-4 with a double and a pair of home runs, his ninth and 10th of the season, driving in all four Rockies runs. Story is now 7-for-17 on the homestand with all seven hits going for extra bases, two of them doubles, two triples and three home runs. Story is now hitting .239/.333/.542 on the season, with his .875 OPS complemented by 32 RBIs, good for third in the National League.

Money for Nothing, Outs for Free

Kyle Freeland continued his strong 2018 season, pitching 6 $\frac{1}{3}$ scoreless innings, allowing four hits and four walks with six strikeouts. He lowered his season ERA to 3.42, which would be the fifth-best mark for a season in Rockies history. Freeland has been especially dominant in his last four starts, posting a 1.65 ERA in 27 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings, allowing 17 hits and eight walks with 27 strikeouts in that span.

Looking Ahead

With the win, the Rockies moved to 22-18 and within 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ games of Arizona for first place in the NL West, they will look to get to five games over .500 tomorrow with Jon Gray on the mound against a to be determined Brewers starter.

Colorado Rockies: What if they had offered Mark Reynolds a contract?

Kevin Henry / RoxPile.com | May 12, 2018

On Saturday, the Washington Nationals announced that they had selected the contract of Mark Reynolds from their Triple-A team in Syracuse. The former Colorado Rockies first baseman is expected to make his debut with the Nationals this weekend.

With Reynolds finally returning to the big leagues after an on-again, off-again rumor-filled offseason with the Rockies, it begs the “what if” question: What if the Rockies had chosen to bring Reynolds back on a one-year contract rather than spending the money on a one-year contract for Carlos Gonzalez?

As a reminder, it has been rumored that the Rockies never offered Reynolds any kind of contract this offseason, choosing to let him walk and take their chances with the players already locked into a Rockies uniform.

First base has been an offensive black hole this season for the Rockies, with Ian Desmond and Ryan McMahon unable to provide any sort of punch. In fact, Colorado recently ranked at the bottom of the statistics (by a long shot) for all Major League first basemen, showing just how much the Rockies have struggled to find someone who can produce at the plate and be an asset in the field ... and replace Reynolds and his production from last season.

And, in case you've forgotten, let this section of this MLB.com article remind you of what Reynolds meant to the Rockies in 2017...

In 148 games with the Colorado Rockies in 2017, Reynolds hit .267 with 22 doubles, one triple, 30 home runs, 97 RBI, 69 walks and 82 runs scored. The 30 home runs were his most since hitting 37 home runs in 2011 and his 97 RBI were tied for the second-most of his career, his most since posting a career-high 102 RBI in 2009 with the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Just how much are the Rockies struggling now at first base? Daniel Castro is reportedly trying to learn the position in order to serve as the backup to Desmond at the position. Despite Desmond's well-documented offensive struggles, there is seemingly no better option for the Rockies at this time.

Which brings us back to the “what if” question posed earlier. If the Rockies had offered Reynolds a one-year contract with a guaranteed roster spot, he certainly would not have fared worse than Desmond has there this season. Sure, Reynolds batted lower and was less productive in the second half of last season ... but at this point would Rockies fans roughly take half a season with a .243 average with 11 homers and 36 RBI? More than likely, yes.

With Reynolds, Desmond would likely have seen the majority of his time in the outfield ... and could be platooned with David Dahl and Gerardo Parra when the bat wasn't going. Additionally, without CarGo on the roster, it's possible that Raimel Tapia might have broken camp and made the Opening Day roster, giving the Rockies another option in the outfield.

Of course, there are no certainties in life and we'll never know how the Rockies offense might have fared with Reynolds as an option rather than CarGo. However, if Reynolds is able to contribute for the Nationals, you can count on plenty of Rockies fans asking this same “what if” question and wondering what might have been this season at 20th and Blake.

Colorado Rockies: The curious case of Mike Dunn

Colin Gaiser / RoxPile.com | May 13, 2018

The Rockies bullpen is wrapping up tight games with machine-like consistency.

After either Jake McGee or Bryan Shaw make an appearance, Adam Ottavino and Wade Davis (aka "Wade Savis") close games with a riveting one-two punch. They're the magic behind the Rockies' 7-3 record in one-run games, which is third-best in baseball.

And then there's Mike Dunn. He is languishing in a cleanup role, off to a horrendous start to the 2018 campaign. Over 11 appearances and 9.0 innings pitched, he sports an ERA of 10.00 — the highest on the Rockies' pitching staff. His ERA+ is an unsightly 47 and he is having serious control issues, giving up eight walks while striking out just six, contributing to a WHIP of 2.22.

There isn't much horizontal movement to Dunn's fastball or his high-velocity slider, so establishing control of these pitches is imperative. That control is missing so far this season. For example, if you check out at the spray charts of his eighth-inning appearance against the Pirates on April 18, batters took advantage of nearly every pitch he missed inside the zone.

But if you are searching for a glimmer of optimism, Dunn's field independent pitching (FIP) is 5.94, suggesting he is pitching better than his ERA would suggest. His batting average for balls in play (BABIP) is also an unnaturally high .367, and is bound to regress (his career average is .301).

While we revel in the success of the top end of the bullpen, Dunn has to rediscover his form while he has the chance. A baseball season is a long, grueling and chaotic slog, and there is no telling what could happen going forward. McGee has been shaky while Shaw has battled his own inconsistency. Chris Rusin looks eminently hittable. And there is always the risk of a catastrophic injury to Ottavino or Davis.

Dunn has the stuff. In 2017, he spent his first month with the Rockies pitching in high-leverage situations as an effective set-up man for Greg Holland. While pitching 7.2 innings and facing 29 batters, he struck out 10 and allowed just one run and two walks.

Of course, the honeymoon came to a grinding halt, as Dunn was disastrous in the months of May and June after a brief stint on the disabled list. He pitched 18.2 innings and was torched for seven home runs as he lost command of his fastball. Despite racking up 25 strikeouts, he gave up 13 walks, and his WHIP was 1.98. His ERA was 7.71 and his FIP was hardly better at 7.44, showing that Dunn truly dug his own grave. By the All-Star break, he was eating innings the bottom of the bullpen.

But Dunn recovered dramatically in 2017, acquiring an ERA of 3.00, a FIP of 3.49, and a WHIP of 1.13 in the period from July through September. And he only gave up one home run. The turnaround was more than welcome, but manager Bud Black still didn't seem to trust him as a back-end reliever, and he never regained his role as a set-up man.

Guys like Brooks Pounders and Harrison Musgrave have shown potential in their brief stints with the Rockies, but Mike Dunn is a veteran with the talent and experience to be a reliever for a playoff contender. He just needs to find that form again. As the Rockies hover precariously just over .500, we shouldn't be afraid to ask: could the real Mike Dunn please stand up?