

Support your pro athletes!

Well, folks, I have a confession to make.

A few weeks ago I made a prediction. "The Red Sox will win the World Series!" I made that prediction knowing full well there's probably going to be a strike, and there's probably going to be a situation similar to 1994, when baseball canceled the World Series.

So my prediction was really a load of hooley, and I apologize.

Anyway, I hate the Red Sox.



Darrel
Pattillo
On
The
Ball

—dp—

So, let's say there's a strike. Baseball shuts down and cancels the Series again. Will the country rise up and make its displeasure known by telling baseball to take a flying leap? It's not likely. America seems to enjoy being fleeced by its celebrities/athletes, who somehow can't make ends meet on five million dollars a year. No matter where you turn, you're being asked to pay more for less, just for the privilege of watching millionaires go through the motions of playing a game. I know I'm being alarmingly cynical, but man, I've had enough! Wake up, America! You've sold your grandchildren into slavery so Shaq can live in a 75,000 square foot mansion!

I say let them strike. Let them all strike. Do you know how many billions of dollars could go to worthy projects instead of into a handful of pockets? Stop spending \$200 for a pair of sneakers and go out to the Rec Complex and watch your Little Leaguers and your Legion players and your rookie league softballers. They deserve your attention more than Derek Jeter does.

—dp—

And what is it about the Williams sisters that makes me root so hard against them? They're gorgeous, graceful athletes who deserve every victory they achieve. Maybe it's the fact that they're professional athletes, and that is a species not very high on my list at the moment.

Maybe I don't like their attitude.

—dp—

And now it's time for my semi-regular plea for help from you folks. My e-mail address is colbysports@nwkansas.com. If you know of anything going on in the county, sports wise, let me know. I miss more than I cover, and I definitely appreciate getting a heads-up from you. If you don't have a computer, call me at 462-3963.

Darrel Pattillo is the sports editor for the Colby Free Press. His column appears on Mondays.

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CAROL KENNEDY/Colby Free Press

Haileigh Shull of the Colby Swim Club concentrates on the meet at Burlington, Colo. Shull swims in the 8&under division.

Brazil defeats Germany 2-0, wins World Cup

By RONALD BLUM

AP Sports Writer

YOKOHAMA, Japan (AP) — Ronaldo spread his arms about as wide as his grin and gave Pele a big bear hug. The new champion then got a kiss on the forehead from the greatest player ever, as if he were being anointed.

The new king of the soccer world celebrated with Pele in the center of the field, capping another night of triumph for Brazil, the sport's greatest nation.

Samba was the dance of the day Sunday, from the shores of Yokohama harbor to Copacabana beach back in Rio de Janeiro.

Ronaldo redeemed himself, and so did Brazil, winning an unprecedented fifth World Cup championship with a 2-0 victory over Germany.

"People said Brazilian soccer was decadent and in crisis. But this will prove that Brazil's soccer is alive," Ronaldo said through tears shortly after scoring both goals to tie Pele's national record in the tournament.

What a contrast. Fifty-six days earlier, Ronaldo was sobbing like a child as his club team, Internazionale of Milan, wasted a lead on the final day of the season and lost the Italian League title.

Four years earlier, Ronaldo fell ill before the World Cup final and played poorly as Brazil lost 3-0 to host France. Then he missed two years while recovering from a pair of knee operations.

All that seemed forgotten as the 25-year-old forward stood amid the multicolored streamers and silver confetti, celebrating with his teammates and the golden World Cup trophy.

"Today we lived a beautiful dream," Ronaldo said.

"We did not have a debt, but we are free now of the weight on our consciences."

Ronaldo's two goals gave him a tournament-high eight, the most since 1970. With 12 in World Cup play, he matched Pele and trails only Germany's Gerd Mueller (14) and France's Just Fountaine (13).

Brazil, which struggled just to qualify for the World Cup, made it to the final for the third straight tournament and finished 7-0.

Three-time champion Germany, like Brazil in the final for the seventh time, was undone by a blunder by Oliver

Kahn, the world's best goalkeeper who was otherwise spectacular in the game. He allowed a rebound that Ronaldo pounced on for the first goal in the 67th minute.

Ronaldo created the goal by stealing the ball from Dietmar Hamann close to the top of the penalty box and feeding Rivaldo for a shot.

The dipping left-footed strike bounced off the hands and chest of Kahn, who had allowed just one goal in his previous six games, and Ronaldo took advantage of the error.

"I think it was the only mistake in the tournament, and it was bitterly punished — it's 10 times as bitter," Kahn said.

Ronaldo got his second goal 12 minutes later with some Brazilian soccer magic.

Rivaldo cleverly allowed Kleberson's pass to roll through his legs to Ronaldo, who was just inside the penalty area. He hit the ball low and hard with his right foot and into the

Rockies come back to beat Mariners

By JANIE McCAULEY

AP Sports Writer

SEATTLE (AP) — The Colorado Rockies missed chance after chance, then had to face All-Star Seattle closer Kazuhiro Sasaki.

They didn't like their odds.

Yet, on a day when Larry Walker was left off the NL All-Star team, he had a season-high four hits and a double that ignited the Rockies' 4-3 comeback win over the Mariners on Sunday.

"I saw his ERA was like zero-point-three or something ridiculous," said Walker, who's hitting .343 with 17 home runs and 58 RBIs. "I wasn't expecting to get anybody on base with what looked like impossible numbers to hit against."

Sasaki (2-2) allowed just his second and third earned runs all season and blew his fourth save opportunity in 22 attempts as Seattle's five-game winning streak was snapped. His ERA went from 0.32 to 0.93.

Sasaki and teammates Ichiro Suzuki and Freddy Garcia were picked for the AL All-Star team.

"This should have been a happy day because I was picked for the All-Star game," Sasaki said. "I'm just thinking about the loss today and I'm feeling

really bad."

Todd Hollandsworth hit a game-tying double off Sasaki in the ninth and Todd Zeile scored the winning run on a sacrifice fly.

Colorado snapped a five-game losing streak and avoided being swept by Seattle for the first time ever. The Rockies left the bases loaded three times.

"Getting swept here would not have been good," said first baseman Todd Helton, who went 2-for-5 in his first game back after missing two games with a strained back.

Walker led off the ninth with a double, went to third on Helton's groundout, then scored on Hollandsworth's double. Zeile walked, went to third on Hollandsworth's double and scored on a sacrifice fly to left by Bobby Estalella.

Justin Speier (3-0) pitched the eighth, giving up a walk. He was also called for a balk. Jose Jimenez worked the ninth for his 21st save in 23 opportunities.

Sasaki said he isn't sure what caused his pitches to stay up, especially the one to Walker, and planned to study tape of his outing.

"He's one of those type of guys who you can't fool," Seattle starter James Baldwin said. "You hope he hits the ball at someone."

The Mariners went ahead in the sixth on home runs by Ruben Sierra and John Olerud off John Thomson.

"We had the game, we just didn't hold onto it at the end," Mariners manager Lou Piniella said.

Colorado had runners on second and third with no outs in the seventh after a wild pitch by Arthur Rhodes.

Then Olerud, Seattle's first baseman, fell into the stands to catch a foul by Zeile, and Rhodes struck out Hollandsworth.

Shigetoshi Hasegawa relieved Rhodes, and intentionally walked Brent Butler before Estalella flied out to center.

"We thickened the plot as thick as we could make it," Rockies manager Clint Hurdle said.

Thomson, making his first career start against Seattle, gave up five hits with two strikeouts and a walk in six innings.

Baldwin escaped two bases-loaded jams and allowed two runs on 10 hits with three strikeouts and two walks in six innings.

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