

Atlanta Braves beat Colorado Rockies, 8-4

ATLANTA (AP) — The Colorado Rockies are streaking again in September. This time it's in the wrong direction.

Colorado's dismal playoff hopes took another blow Thursday night when Yunel Escobar's three-run homer capped a five-run sixth inning and the Atlanta Braves beat the Rockies 8-4 to complete a three-game sweep.

The Rockies won 20 of 28 games last September, including 11 in a row, to make the playoffs.

This year, the Rockies (67-80) have lost five straight, their longest skid since eight in a row from June 22-30.

A 3-6 record in September has left the Rockies 8½ games behind the Los Angeles Dodgers in the NL West.

"We come in here having some hope of catching those two teams out in front of us," said Glendon Rusch, who gave up four runs in the sixth. "To lose three in a row is pretty tough."

The Rockies lost a 4-2 lead. "That makes it tough to swallow," manager Clint Hurdle said. "We're just not able to do enough good things when we need to."

The Rockies, five games behind second-place Arizona with 15 games left in the regular season, have become also-rans in the playoff chase one year after playing in the World Series.

"We're making it real hard on ourselves," shortstop Troy Tulow-

“ We came in here having some hope of catching those two teams out in front of us.”
Glendon Rusch

itzki said. "We don't control our destiny anymore. We'll need help from others."

Escobar had three hits and a walk as the Braves capped their first home sweep since May 20-22 against the New York Mets.

"We're playing the spoiler, and I would say that's one we probably spoiled," said Atlanta's Kelly Johnson, who had a triple.

Braves rookie Jair Jurrjens (13-9) set a career high with 10 strikeouts, allowing eight hits and four runs in six innings. His 13 wins are a high for an Atlanta rookie since Craig McMurtry went 15-9 in 1983.

"Right now I'm just thinking about quality starts," Jurrjens said. "I just want to finish strong. I'm not going to stress, just have fun and throw strikes and try to give my team a chance to win."

Manager Bobby Cox noted that Jurrjens showed no sign of late-season rookie fatigue.

"I think it's the hardest he's thrown all year," Cox said. "He hit 95 (mph) three or four times."

Colorado starter Ubaldo Jime-

nez gave up five hits and three runs, two earned, in five innings. He struck out six but walked four.

Jimenez, who suffered cramps in both legs in his final inning, left with a 4-3 lead, but the Braves scored five runs in the sixth off Rusch (5-5) and Matt Herges.

Herges replaced Rusch and gave up Escobar's 10th homer, making it 8-4.

Jurrjens gave up three runs in the third. Willy Taveras walked and moved to third on Jeff Baker's single. Matt Holliday drove in both with a double to right and scored on Garrett Atkins' single for a 3-2 lead.

Hawpe's 25th homer in the fifth made it 4-2. Atlanta's Jeff Francoeur stranded eight runners in his first three at-bats.

Colorado has lost 15 of 18 at Turner Field since Aug. 19, 2002.

Elite rower is new dad and runner

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Steve Warner began rowing at the University of Michigan. In 2004, he competed on the U.S. Olympic rowing team in Athens. Running was a natural transition.

"The majority of power from each stroke comes from the legs, so the endurance and strength in rowing crosses over to distance running," he said.

After running several marathons, Warner set his sights on the 2008 Boston Marathon and beating his personal record of 2:45 as well as cyclist Lance Armstrong, who was also running it.

"One thing I worked on for Boston was more speed workouts during the week to get a little faster, and I pushed the pace on longer runs," he said. "I was worried

about Lance, who had dropped 11 minutes between his first and second marathons. Another significant drop would have put him beneath 2:40 which would have been hard to beat."

His hard work paid off. Warner passed the seven-time Tour de France winner early in the race and finished more than seven minutes ahead of him.

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Water Right Transition Assistance Pilot Project Notice of Public Meetings

The State Conservation Commission will conduct three public meetings regarding implementation of the Water Right Transition Assistance Pilot Project Program (WTAP) in the proposed NW KS GMD#4 target areas. The purpose of the meetings is to promote public interests and awareness, to inform the public of possible economic and hydrologic impacts of the program, and to facilitate participation by assisting potential applicants. The meeting locations are as follows:

1. September 24 at 1 p.m.- Colby Community College, Room #107.
2. September 24 at 7 p.m.- Goodland: NW Kansas Technical College, Lions Room.
3. September 25 at 9 a.m. - Hoxie: Midwest Energy, Inc. Community Room.

WTAP is a voluntary, incentive-based program that permanently retires privately held water rights in exchange for payment by the State of Kansas. A program passed by the 2006 Legislature, WTAP is intended to help restore aquifers and recover stream flows in critically depleted areas. The Fall enrollment period begins on October 1 and ends on November 15. The program rules and regulations, maps, and other details are posted on the SCC web site at www.scc.ks.gov

If you are physically unable to attend a public meeting or would like more information about WTAP, you may contact the program administrator electronically at steve.frost@scc.ks.gov or by phone at (785) 296-8964. Correspondence can be mailed to the State Conservation Commission, Mills Building, 109 SW 9th Street, Suite 500, Topeka, Kansas 66612-1215. For additional information about the public meetings or the proposed NW KS GMD#4 target areas, you may also contact Wayne Bossert, Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District #4, at (785) 462-3915.

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