NORTHERN COLORADO SUN

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Roosters go 20-36 since May peak, cling to race

BY **DALE KIRKPATRICK** · NORTHERN COLORADO SUN

On May 24 the Roosters beat Toronto 7-1 at home and stood at 31-18, second in the Jade Division. That was the morning my last report ran. It was also the best this club has been all year.

The next seven games were losses. Since that win the Roosters are 20-36. They are 51-54 this morning, fifth in the Jade, ninth in the Ice Conference and one game behind Denver for the eighth and last playoff spot.

The mechanism is not hard to find, because it is the same one I described in May, running in reverse.

In May this lineup had hit the fewest home runs in the league and stolen the fewest bases, and it was scoring anyway, because its on-base percentage of .325 was fourth in baseball. It reached base, it moved a base at a time, and it did enough. The home runs and the steals have stayed where they were: 92 home runs, 31st of 32, and 24 stolen bases, 32nd. The on-base percentage has not. It is .309, 20th. A lineup built to score by accumulation has stopped accumulating, and it is now 27th in runs.

The individual lines follow from that. Chris Goers, the $25 million one-year signing, is still the best hitter on the roster at .255 with a .371 on-base percentage and 13 home runs, and is day-to-day this week. Javier Camarillo has 14 home runs and 61 runs batted in. Andres Maldonado is at .270. Behind them, Tim Urbach is at .159, and Arnáo Gomez is at .237 with one home run in 417 plate appearances.

Tim was asked in July whether shortstop was a position the club was looking at. His answer was plain.

> *"Gomez will stay a fixture at short as we feel he's average and provides a decent all around game," he said.*

The pitching has not been the problem, and it is worth being exact about how little it has changed. The staff is 12th in earned run average and has allowed 97 home runs, second-fewest in the league. The bullpen's 3.24 is seventh-best. Brian Holder, who had a 1.12 in May, has a 1.23 now across 51 1/3 innings, with 11 holds. Elijah Best has a 0.78 WHIP. Bill Barker has 22 saves. Jesse Beck has 131 strikeouts and a 3.12. The four relievers I described in May are still doing what they were doing. The club has gone 6-10 in one-run games since then anyway, and 4-8 in extra innings on the season, because a bullpen can hold a tie and cannot score the run that breaks it.

Tim was also asked whether help would come from inside the system or from a trade.

> *"I was really hoping to make the playoffs this year but it doesn't look like it's going to happen," he said. "I plan to stay the course and keep building from within."*

That answer settles most of what can be said about this deadline. The club has made no trades this season and has posted nothing on the league's trade board in either direction. Staying the course means not buying for a playoff spot one game away. It also means not selling, and there is something to sell. Goers's $25 million deal ends this year. So does Beck's. So do the contracts of Camarillo, Gomez, Gustavo Lopez, Colby Sims, Joe Harris, Roger Lippincott and Jose Alvarado. A contender calling about a starter would call about Beck first. Whether Tim takes those calls is the one open question of the next two weeks, and nothing he has said suggests he wants to.

The case for his patience is below Colorado, and it is a stronger case than it was in May.

Seven of the league's top 100 prospects, by the league's own list, belong to this organization. Only Oahu has more. R.J. Blum is fourth on that list and fourth on DSA Reports' list dated July 19. He has made 20 starts at Salt Lake City with a 4.35 earned run average and 69 strikeouts in 99 1/3 innings, on a Triple-A club that is 34-59. The earned run average matters less than the innings.

Carlos Bueno, a 20-year-old second baseman, is 20th on the league's list and is at Grand Junction. Roger Lopez, a 20-year-old reliever at the same level, is 29th. Leo Gatica has struck out 113 in 103 1/3 innings at Albuquerque and is 42nd. Cory Pineda, the outfielder this organization has been developing as an everyday player, is hitting .315 with 10 home runs at Mission Viejo and is 47th. David Santiago has a 2.66 across 17 starts at the same level and is 66th. Jose Aguilar, 19, has 38 strikeouts in 28 1/3 innings at Wyoming and is 83rd. DSA Reports adds Chris Graham, the 10th overall pick in this spring's draft, 14th on its list and at Flagstaff.

Cody Boaz, who was hitting .444 at Mission Viejo when I last wrote about him, has come down to .343 with 15 home runs. He is not on the league's list.

Mission Viejo is 49-32 and Flagstaff 48-33. Taken as a whole, this organization's minor-league clubs have finished between 14th and 20th in the league in combined record every year since 2026. The records are ordinary. The list is not.

There are 57 games left. Thirty-six are inside the division, and six of those are against Denver, the club holding the spot the Roosters are one game behind. The last time Fort Collins played a postseason game was 2019. In thirteen trips it has never reached a final.

In May I wrote that the components of that record were the ones that hold up in October. The bullpen and the home runs allowed have held up. The on-base percentage did not, and it was the one the whole thing rested on.