

Rockies chart new course under new manager

BY PAT GRAHAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DENVER — All the losing nearly reduced lefty Kyle Freeland to tears as he recently chatted about the woeful state of his hometown Colorado Rockies.

It's a gloomy situation with the Rockies off to a 7-33 start — one of the worst in major league history — leading to the dismissal of manager Bud Black on Sunday.

Freeland wears his feelings for his city — to the team he grew up rooting for — on his sleeve. More specifically, his right arm, where there are tattoos of the elevation (5,280), area code (303) and an outline of the mountains. The losses weigh heavily on him.

Change arrived in the Mile High air when Black, the franchise's winningest manager and the only voice that many of the Rockies players have ever known, was let go.

Now, it's Warren Schaeffer's turn to navigate the Rockies away from a season that's careening toward infamy. The Rockies have the worst start since the 1988 Baltimore Orioles began 6-34. Colorado is on pace for 134 losses a season after the Chicago White Sox went 41-121 — the worst since baseball adopted a 162-game schedule in 1961.

Promoted from third base coach to interim manager, Schaeffer inherits a team that's second-to-last in runs — despite playing home games at hitter-friendly Coors Field — and first in strikeouts. The pitching staff has surren-



Geneva Heffernan | Associated Press

Colorado Rockies manager Bud Black walks off the field prior to a baseball game against the San Diego Padres on Sunday in Denver. Black was fired as manager immediately following the game.

dered the most runs in the big leagues and fanned the fewest batters.

"It's on all of our shoulders," Freeland said of the turnaround. "We need to be better, and we need to continue to progress forward."

The firing of Black came a day after a 21-0 loss to the San Diego Padres. The news was announced late in a 92-87 loss by the NBA's Denver Nuggets in Game 4 against Oklahoma City at nearby Ball Arena.

Schaeffer brings energy and exuberance to the Rockies clubhouse. He has been Colorado's third base and infield coach since the 2023 season. Prior to joining the big league team, he spent 10 seasons as a manager and coach in the Rockies' minor league system.

"A positive atmosphere in the clubhouse, and we're

ready to move forward," Schaeffer said Monday before the series opener at Texas that marked his debut at interim manager. "I just want them to play loose. From my vantage point, it's a fresh start."

Relief pitcher Jake Bird, one of several Rockies who played for Schaeffer when he was a minor league manager, described him as a good communicator who is intelligent and passionate.

"Something just feels dif-

ferent. So I'm really feeling optimistic about the direction moving forward," Bird said. "I think our team's a lot more capable than what we've been playing."

General manager Bill Schmidt said after the move was made Sunday that the 40-year-old Schaeffer's connection to players was a big part of what he brings to his new role.

"I think just a different voice here — we're at that point where we needed to

do that," Schmidt said.

It's an uphill climb for the Rockies to avoid a third straight 100-loss season. They have to go 56-66 the rest of the way. They've won back-to-back games just once and have three separate eight-game losing streaks.

Freeland was emotional last week after a start on the mound in which he allowed nine runs (five earned).

"Keep believing in us," Freeland said of his message to Rockies faithful as he choked up.


For infielder Ryan McMahon, it's about trusting the process.

"I know how to show up and play baseball. That's the way I'm wired," McMahon said. "That's the way a lot of these guys are wired. The record is what

it is at this point. It doesn't affect the game tonight and doesn't affect the games after that."

The Rockies haven't been to the postseason since 2018. Their only World Series appearance was 2007, when they were swept by the Boston Red Sox. Their manager then was Clint Hurdle, who is now the interim bench coach under Schaeffer.

"I'm obviously in a unique situation, being from here. I grew up with the Rockies. It does mean a ton to me," said Freeland, who broke into the majors under Black in 2017. "I'm going to be probably more proud of us as a group getting this (turnaround) done than me being a Denver kid, being able to get this team to a postseason or to a World Series."



LEGAL NOTICE

Public Notice

The Hardin County Fiscal Court, in a Regular Meeting on 22 April 2025, had the First Reading of Ordinance No. 340, Series 2024 Budget Amendment #3 entitled:

AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 ANNUAL BUDGET AND AMENDMENT THEREOF. HARDIN COUNTY FISCAL COURT HAS REALIZED UNBUDGETED RECEIPTS FROM THE GENERAL, LGEA, AND SOLID WASTE FUNDS.

A Second Reading of the proposed Ordinance will be held on 27 May 2025 at a Regular Fiscal Court meeting at 5:30 P.M., at the Hardin County Government Building, 150 N. Provident Way, 3rd Floor, Fiscal Courtroom, Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

A copy of the full text of the ordinance is available in the office of the Hardin County Treasurer, Finance Department, Hardin County Government Building, 150 N. Provident Way, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Monday through Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

/s/Keith L. Taul
Hardin County Judge/Executive

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