

Re: This Week In Baseball
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TWB #904

This week TWIB took a look back at one of the most remarkable baseball stories of the 2007 season. Some even call it “the mile high miracle.” A young Colorado team, on their way to winning a franchise best 90 games, needed to win 21 of their last 22 to reach the World Series. And somehow they did. Now they face the pressure of reprising a pennant winning season.

The Rockies rely on their potent offense that features superstar Todd Helton, shortstop Troy Tulowitzki – who was runner-up for the 2007 Rookie of the Year, and MVP candidate Matt Holliday.

The Rockies Ryan Spilborghs graciously wore the wire to allow viewers to hear what players actually talk about during game preparation. When Ryan spoke about Helton, he noted that Todd doesn’t have to say much because he leads by example.

Educational theme: Historic performances are part of the excitement of sport for both fans and players alike. It is an account of athletic history that is collected, written and preserved.

Educational theme: Leadership is often shown by one’s strength of commitment to a cause or goal. Leaders often lead by example. Premier athletes are often selected by children to be role models.

Act Two- Pitching and the Humidor: TWIB showed the spectacular Rockies Mountain style gardens that accentuate the beauty of Coors Field.

Historically, because of its mile high altitude, Coors Field has been known as a “hitters’ ballpark.” A local engineer pointed out that high altitude would cause the baseballs to dry out and become smaller, lighter and harder. Knowing the effects of high altitude on the baseballs, the Rockies implemented their now famous Baseball Humidor at Coors Field. The humidor is designed to maintain the specifications of the MLB baseball. And ever since the installation of the humidor, scoring at Coors Field is down more than two runs a game. TWIB also pointed out that the Rockies pitchers have gotten better too.

TWIB Notes cited the fact that baseball does not have a clock, which became more than evident when the Rockies and Padres played a 22 inning classic. The San Diego fans honored the traditional seventh inning stretch for a second time in the 14th inning. The Rockies ended up winning the six hour – 16 minute marathon and catchers Yorvit Torrealba of Colorado and San Diego’s Josh Bard both caught the entire game.

Educational theme: The use of local horticulture is used to enhance the beauty and delightful harmony of the ball park. Fans develop an intense loyalty to teams for various reasons, including the uniqueness of the venue. There is a devotion to the local culture and “home team.”

Educational theme: Science and technology are constantly utilized to enhance performance and equalize competition.

Educational theme: The uniqueness of baseball is a major factor as to why baseball is known as the “National Pastime.” The timelessness of baseball is a particular component of the American culture.

Educational theme: Trivia is insignificant or superfluous matters, but is a source of fun for fans of all ages. This is much of the lore that makes baseball interesting to players and fans.

Act Three: The Twibia Question was answered. The St. Louis Cardinals’ Albert Pujols and Colorado’s Todd Helton are the only two active players ever to hit 50 or more doubles in two consecutive seasons.

The inspirational story of the Rockies run to the playoffs was retold. With 14 games to play, the Rockies had a mathematical chance, but three teams were ahead of them in their quest for the wild card berth. The Rockies’ approach was simply “to win tonight,” which they did by winning 13 out of 14. The surge brought them to a one game playoff with the San Diego Padres, which they came from behind to win in the 13th inning. The dramatic victory showed the tremendous character and resiliency of the team.

In *Call of the Week*, the career 3000th strikeout by the Atlanta Braves pitcher John Smoltz was reported.

Educational theme: Insignificant and inessential trivia are sometimes the focus of the public’s desire for information.

Educational theme: Character is one of the distinctive qualities that describe how a team thinks, feels and plays. Performance reflects the standards and confidence necessary to accomplish the mission.

Educational theme: Documentation of landmark performances is part of sports history, and a way to measure performance activity and achievement. These are moments to be remembered.

Act Four—Baseball Is: Legendary actor Jackie Chan was elated when he got the chance to throw out the first pitch at a recent Dodgers’ game. Chan is also happy about the success of baseball in his homeland of China where Jackie is a true ambassador of the game. He sponsors a Hong Kong youth team and does his best to spread the word of baseball. With the MLB exhibition series in Beijing this past spring and Olympic baseball scheduled for the summer, Chan’s dream is beginning to come true.

Educational theme: One method used by baseball to honor excellence and celebrity is to have the person throw out the first pitch of a game. This is a genuine gesture of respect. It is important to teach children the importance of character.

Educational theme: Growth of baseball internationally has been dramatic and dynamic. “Who ever wants to know the heart and soul of America had better learn baseball.” *Jacques Barzum, educator.*

Act Five – “How ‘bout that!”: The hallmark segment of TWIB featured spectacular defensive plays – leaping, diving and “basket” catches – strong and accurate throws from the outfield – creative double plays – bloopers and errors – home runs – and an unusual breaking of the bat on a swing.

Educational theme: Children equate effort with success. These are particularly good examples of maximum effort.

Educational theme: The artistic value of sport can be found in the grace, beauty and rhythmic movements of premier athletes. The aesthetic quality of a well-executed play enhances the appreciation of baseball.

Educational theme: Once the bio-mechanical actions have been watched, they can be mimicked and performed by the learner. Then the student is on the way to be physically educated.