

# Sports

## Astros win another from Braves

United Press International  
HOUSTON — The Houston Astros play the Los Angeles Dodgers tonight for the first time in more than five months and they hope among other things they show more stamina than Bob Knepper did in picking up his ninth pitching victory of the season.

Knepper, a .122 hitter, gets on base so infrequently that when he overdid it with a home run and a single Thursday night in a 5-3 win over the Atlanta Braves, he robbed himself of pitching effectiveness.

"I was sharp in the first few innings. Then things fell apart and I had to struggle," Knepper said. "I don't know if it was the excitement of the home run or not. I was kinda out of breath from being on base and when I tried to pitch I couldn't concentrate."

Knepper, 9-4, made it through 7 1/3 innings only because the Astros racked three Braves pitchers for 14 hits, and with the win Houston increased its lead to 2 1/2 games over the second-place Cincinnati Reds, who did not play Thursday.

If the Astros win the second half — and Manager Bill Virdon said in his estimation his team has to win only five of its 10 remaining games to do that — they would meet first half winner Los Angeles in a best-of-five Western Division playoff beginning Oct. 6 in the Astro-dome.

The final 10 days of the regular season are a pretty fair warmup for the playoffs since the Astros play six of those dates against the Dodgers, a team they haven't played since April 22.

"I really don't know what to expect from the Dodgers," Virdon said. "It's been so long since I've seen them that I don't know what they'll be like."

It will be easy for the Astros, who beat the Dodgers in 1980 for the West title in a one-game playoff, to approach this Dodgers' series with a possible playoff rematch in mind.

"We better not be thinking of that," Virdon said. "We can't worry about that. We've got to win games to get in the playoffs."

Winning five of the remaining 10 games, he said, would make Cincinnati win eight of their 10. He likes the chances.

### Major League Baseball

National League					American League				
East					East				
Montreal	24	19	.558	—	Detroit	26	17	.605	—
St. Louis	22	20	.524	1 1/2	Boston	25	18	.581	1
Chicago	20	21	.488	3	Milwaukee	25	19	.568	1 1/2
New York	20	23	.465	4	Baltimore	23	19	.548	2 1/2
Philadelphia	19	23	.452	4 1/2	New York	22	21	.512	4
Pittsburgh	17	26	.395	7	Toronto	19	21	.477	5 1/2
					Cleveland	21	23	.475	5 1/2
West					West				
Houston	28	15	.651	—	Oakland	22	18	.550	— 1/2
Cincinnati	25	17	.595	2 1/2	Kansas City	24	19	.477	3 1/2
San Francisco	23	19	.548	4 1/2	Minnesota	21	23	.442	5
Los Angeles	23	20	.535	5	Texas	18	21	.439	5
Atlanta	21	21	.500	6 1/2	Seattle	19	24	.395	7
San Diego	13	31	.295	15 1/2	Chicago	17	26	.366	8
					California	15	26		

  

Thursday's Results		Friday's Games		Thursday's Results		Friday's Games	
Houston 5, Atlanta 3	Chicago 10, New York 9	Philadelphia 14, St. Louis 6	Montreal 7, Pittsburgh 1	Los Angeles 7, San Francisco 3	Los Angeles at Houston	Philadelphia at Chicago	New York at Montreal
					Cincinnati at Atlanta	Pittsburgh at St. Louis	San Francisco at San Diego
					Seattle 2, Texas 1	Baltimore 5, New York 1	Cleveland 5, Boston 2
					Kansas City 9, Minnesota 2	Chicago 4, California 1	
					Cleveland at Boston	Baltimore at New York	Milwaukee at Detroit
					Texas at Minnesota	Seattle at Kansas City	Toronto at California
					Chicago at Oakland		

## Rangers lose third straight

Sports Editor  
ARLINGTON — Most teams don't like going to the bullpen — it usually means they are in trouble. But the way Seattle relievers have performed of late, manager Rene Lachemann doesn't hesitate calling for help.

Relievers Shane Rawley and Dick Drago got the call Thursday night and preserved a 2-1 Seattle victory in 11 innings.

The win was Seattle's third straight over the Rangers, enabling the Mariners to climb into fourth place in the American League West.

Rawley improved his record to 3-6 while Drago picked up his fifth save. Rawley had earned the previous three saves for the Mariners.

"We've been pitching well since the second half began," said starter Jim Beattie, who had a perfect game going until giving up a walk to Tom Poquette with two outs in the fifth.

"We've only been giving up two or three runs a game, but our hitters weren't scoring," he said.

Bump Wills broke up the no-hitter with a two-out single in the sixth. Beattie left the game in the seventh, complaining of a stiff shoulder.

"Yes, I was thinking about it (the perfect game). I was kinda mad when I walked that guy. I figured when you're going for a no-hitter, it may as well be a perfect game," Beattie said.

Dan Meyer gave Seattle a 1-0 lead in the first when he whacked a line drive to right field for his second homer of the year off starter Doc Medich, 9-6.

Medich went 10 2-3 innings, scattering eight hits before Seattle's Tom Paciorek's one-out single scored Meyer with the winning run.

Texas tied it in the seventh when reliever Larry Andersen

walked in Buddy Bell with the bases loaded. Rawley then came on and pitched four innings before Drago got the final two outs.

The faltering Rangers scored a meager eight runs in the four-game series with the Mariners.

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