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**SMOLTZ BREAKS ALL-TIME POINTS RECORD AND SAVES 55 GAMES
 TO TOP GAGNE IN N.L. RACE WHILE KOCH CLAIMS A.L. ROLAIDS TITLE**

Braves Romp to Third Team Bullpen Crown

Atlanta's John Smoltz and **Billy Koch** of **Oakland**, who likely will be key figures if their teams advance very far in baseball's postseason, already have walked off with impressive individual honors by winning their respective league titles in the 27th annual **Roloids Relief Man** competition. It was the first such award for both closers.

Smoltz, who turned from a **Cy Young**-winning career as a starter to a closer late last season when elbow problems threatened his longevity, rang up the second best saves season (55) in major league history and edged **Los Angeles** flamethrower **Eric Gagne** for **National League Roloids** honors, 164 points to 159. Gagne's 52 saves are the fifth highest total on record. Smoltz was successful in his last 16 save opportunities to post the highest point total in the competition's history, topping **Trevor Hoffman's** 161 points for **San Diego** in 1998. His 55 saves broke the N.L. record and came within two of the major league mark of 57 established by **Bobby Thigpen** of the **Chicago White Sox** in 1990. (See Page 4 for all-time saves and points leaders.)

Koch's first season in Oakland after being obtained in a trade with **Toronto** was a workhorse-like campaign for the **American League West**-winning Athletics. He combined 44 saves with a major league reliever-leading 11 victories to hold off **Troy Percival** of **Anaheim** and a third A.L. postseason-bound closer, **Eddie Guardado** of **Minnesota**. Koch compiled 136 points to 120 for Percival and 119 for the lefthanded Guardado.

Smoltz also led **Atlanta** to its third **Roloids Team Bullpen** award in the 25 years it has been given. With help from 'pen mates such as seven-game winners **Mike Remlinger** and **Chris Hammond**, the Braves finished with 181 points, narrowly missing the record of 186 shared by **Oakland** in 1988 and the **Chicago White Sox** two years later. Atlanta topped **Los Angeles**, 181-159.

The season records for the individual champions, who succeed two-time A.L. winner **Mariano Rivera** of the perennial postseason powerhouse **New York Yankees** and N.L. king **Armando Benitez** of the **New York Mets**:

<u>Pitcher</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>Tot. SV</u>	<u>Tgh. SV</u>	<u>Bln. SV</u>	<u>Roloids Points</u>
Smoltz	3	2	55	5	4	164
Koch	11	4	44	2	6	136

Roloids, which started honoring relief pitching prowess in 1976, awards three points for each save, a bonus point if the pitcher enters the game with the tying run(s) already on base (tough save), two for relief victories and deducts two each for losses and blown saves.

Smoltz was unable to corral what would have been a fourth consecutive monthly N.L. award, ending up four points behind Gagne (details on Page 3), but that was one of the few feats the 35-year-old didn't accomplish. Gagne was the dominant pitcher early in the season, leading the race through May with Smoltz in 10th place. Then the Atlanta closer sizzled in June, July and August and he erased the records for fastest trips to 40 and 50 saves. He is the first Atlanta hurler ever to win the Roloids award.



Rivera was the A.L. pacesetter after the first two months but had to endure three stints on the disabled list, opening the door first to Guardado, then to Koch, who lost his lead to Percival for a very short run in mid-September before claiming the top spot for good September 18. Koch became Oakland's only champion outside of **Dennis Eckersley** in 1988 and 1992.

The final individual and team Roloids Relief Man standings:

AMERICAN LEAGUE

<u>Pitcher, Team</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>TOTAL SAVES</u>	<u>TOUGH SAVES</u>	<u>BLOWN SAVES</u>	<u>ROLAIDS POINTS</u>
1. Billy Koch, Oakland	11	4	44	2	6	136
2. Troy Percival, Anaheim	4	1	40	2	4	120
3. Eddie Guardado, Minnesota	1	3	45	0	6	119
4. Ugueth Urbina, Boston	1	6	40	1	6	99
5. Kelvim Escobar, Toronto	5	7	38	2	8	96
6. Kazuhiro Sasaki, Seattle	4	5	37	1	8	94
7. Mariano Rivera, New York	1	4	28	2	4	72
8. Juan Acevedo, Detroit	1	5	28	4	7	66
9. Jorge Julio, Baltimore	5	6	25	3	6	64
10. Roberto Hernandez, Kansas City	1	3	26	0	7	60

NATIONAL LEAGUE

<u>Pitcher, Team</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>TOTAL SAVES</u>	<u>TOUGH SAVES</u>	<u>BLOWN SAVES</u>	<u>ROLAIDS POINTS</u>
1. John Smoltz, Atlanta	3	2	55	5	4	#164
2. Eric Gagne, Los Angeles	4	1	52	5	4	159
3. Robb Nen, San Francisco	6	2	43	4	8	125
4. Mike Williams, Pittsburgh	2	6	46	0	4	122
5. Jose Mesa, Philadelphia	4	6	45	0	9	113
6. Byung-Hyun Kim, Arizona	8	3	36	6	6	112
7. Trevor Hoffman, San Diego	2	5	38	0	3	102
8. Billy Wagner, Houston	4	2	35	2	6	99
T9. Armando Benitez, New York	1	0	33	3	4	96
T9. Jose Jimenez, Colorado	2	10	41	1	6	96

ROLAIDS TEAM BULLPEN

<u>Team</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>TOTAL SAVES</u>	<u>TOUGH SAVES</u>	<u>BLOWN SAVES</u>	<u>ROLAIDS POINTS</u>
1. Atlanta	30	14	57	6	14	181
2. Los Angeles	26	18	56	5	15	159
3. Anaheim	27	16	54	2	17	152
4. New York-AL	24	17	53	3	16	144
5. Minnesota	30	16	47	0	18	133

#Major league record

Roloids Scoring: Tough save 4 points, save 3 points, relief win 2, relief loss -2, blown save -2



GAGNE, ESCOBAR TAKE SEPTEMBER HONORS

It may be a small reward in comparison to winning season honors, but **Los Angeles' Eric Gagne** earned his first monthly **National League Roloids Relief Man** award in September, finishing three points ahead of **Robb Nen** of **San Francisco** and also edging season champion **John Smoltz** of **Atlanta**. Smoltz had won the three previous months.

Kelvim Escobar of **Toronto** had a major league-leading 11 saves to edge season runnerup **Troy Percival** of **Anaheim** for **American League** honors. Escobar also became a first time monthly winner.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

<u>Pitcher, Team</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>TOTAL SAVES</u>	<u>TOUGH SAVES</u>	<u>BLOWN SAVES</u>	<u>ROLAIDS POINTS</u>
1. Kelvim Escobar, Toronto	0	0	11	0	1	31
2. Troy Percival, Anaheim	0	0	9	2	0	29
3. Ugueth Urbina, Boston	0	0	10	0	1	28
4. Billy Koch, Oakland	5	2	7	0	1	25
5. Eddie Guardado, Minnesota	0	1	7	0	1	17

NATIONAL LEAGUE

<u>Pitcher, Team</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>TOTAL SAVES</u>	<u>TOUGH SAVES</u>	<u>BLOWN SAVES</u>	<u>ROLAIDS POINTS</u>
1. Eric Gagne, Los Angeles	2	0	7	1	0	26
2. Robb Nen, San Francisco	0	1	9	0	1	23
3. John Smoltz, Atlanta	0	0	7	1	0	22
T4. Jose Mesa, Philadelphia	1	0	6	0	0	20
T4. Mike Williams, Pittsburgh	0	1	8	0	1	20

ROBERTO HERNANDEZ HAS MOST TEAM-LEADING SEASONS

Kansas City Royals closer **Roberto Hernandez** earned his major league-leading 10th consecutive **Roloids Relief Man** team-leading plaque. The soon-to-be 38-year-old started his streak with the **Chicago White Sox** in 1993, moved on to **Tampa Bay** from 1998-2000 and joined Kansas City in 2001.

Trevor Hoffman of **San Diego** and **Robb Nen** of **San Francisco** have won nine in a row. Hoffman's streak has all been with the Padres, while Nen has five wins for the Giants after four earlier titles with **Florida**.

The **Roloids Relief Man** team champions (numbers in parenthesis indicate consecutive years leading a team):

American League	Roloids Champion	W	L	SV-TSV-BSV	Roloids Points
Anaheim	Troy Percival (7)	4	1	40 - 2 - 4	120
Baltimore	Jorge Julio	5	6	25 - 3 - 6	64
Boston	Ugueth Urbina (2)	1	6	40 - 1 - 6	99
Chicago	Antonio Osuna	8	2	11 - 1 - 3	40
Cleveland	Bob Wickman (2)	1	3	20 - 0 - 2	52
Detroit	Juan Acevedo	1	5	28 - 4 - 7	66
Kansas City	Roberto Hernandez (10)	1	3	26 - 0 - 7	60
Minnesota	*Eddie Guardado	1	3	45 - 0 - 6	119
New York	Mariano Rivera (6)	1	4	28 - 2 - 4	72
Oakland	Billy Koch (4)	11	4	44 - 2 - 6	136
Seattle	Kazuhiro Sasaki (3)	4	5	37 - 1 - 8	94
Tampa Bay	Esteban Yan (2)	7	8	19 - 0 - 8	39
Texas	Hideki Irabu	3	6	16 - 0 - 4	34
Toronto	Kelvim Escobar	5	7	38 - 2 - 8	96



National League	Roloids Champion	W	L	SV-TSV-BS	Points
Arizona	*Byung-Hyun Kim (2)	8	3	36 – 6 – 6	112
Atlanta	*John Smoltz	3	2	55 – 5 – 4	164
Chicago	Antonio Alfonseca (4)	2	5	19 – 1 – 9	34
Cincinnati	Danny Graves (4)	6	3	32 – 3 – 7	91
Colorado	*Jose Jimenez (3)	2	10	41 – 1 – 6	96
Florida	Vladimir Nunez	6	5	20 – 1 – 8	47
Houston	Billy Wagner (2)	4	2	35 – 2 – 6	99
Los Angeles	*Eric Gagne	4	1	52 – 5 – 4	159
Milwaukee	Mike DeJean	1	5	27 – 2 – 3	69
Montreal	Scott Stewart	4	2	17 – 4 – 2	55
New York	Armando Benitez (4)	1	0	33 – 3 – 4	96
Philadelphia	*Jose Mesa (2)	4	6	45 – 0 – 9	113
Pittsburgh	*Mike Williams (4)	2	6	46 – 0 – 4	122
San Diego	Trevor Hoffman (9)	2	5	38 – 0 – 3	102
San Francisco	Robb Nen (9)	6	2	43 – 4 – 8	125
St. Louis	Jason Isringhausen (3)	3	2	32 – 2 – 5	90

*Established new team record for saves in a season

Relief Man Notes

All-Time Single Season Save Leaders

Saves	Reliever, Team	Year
57	Bobby Thigpen, Chicago-AL	1990
55	John Smoltz, Atlanta	2002
53	Trevor Hoffman, San Diego	1998
53	Randy Myers, Chicago-NL	1993
52	Eric Gagne, Los Angeles	2002

All-Time Single Season Roloids Points Leaders

Points	Reliever, Team	Year
164	John Smoltz, Atlanta	2002
161	Trevor Hoffman, San Diego	1998
159	Eric Gagne, Los Angeles	2002
159	Dennis Eckersley, Oakland	1992
151	Bobby Thigpen, Chicago-AL	1990

Note: Bonus points for tough saves were not awarded prior to 2000

Record 10 Closers Post 40 Saves: While **San Diego** record holder **Trevor Hoffman** came up short for the fifth time in four years and only the second time in the last seven, a record 10 closers recorded 40 or more saves.

Boston's Ugueth Urbina got to the milestone the last day of the season to break the record of nine which was set in 1993. The leaders in 40-save seasons:

Pitcher, Team	Seasons	Years
Trevor Hoffman, San Diego	5	1996, 1998-2001
Dennis Eckersley, Oakland	4	1988, 1990-92
John Wetteland, Montreal, NY-AL, Texas	4	1993, 1996, 1998-99
Robb Nen, San Francisco	4	1998, 2000-02