Atlanta made the East leaders earn it

Atlanta Kings beat | 1981-08-31 | Games through 1981-08-30

Before Charlotte ever got to Miami, Atlanta had a vote. The Kings took three of four from the Hurricanes and split two with Charlotte, opening the latter set with a 9–3 win. Miami entered its showdown five and a half back. Atlanta mattered to that margin even though it finished August 30 ten games out.

The Kings swept the closing set with Tampa Bay, including a 14-inning 8–6 win. Eric Gray had five hits in the 10–0 opener, and Jordan Santistevan drove in three runs in each of the first two. Across the ten games Atlanta outscored the opposition 61–28. It took a good stretch against the leaders and turned it into an 8–2 challenge.

Dallas gets the Kings next. The Rustlers have a one-game lead over idle Chicago on August 31. Atlanta’s first outside assignment gives it another chance to leave its mark on somebody else’s race.