

## A's News Clips, Wednesday, May 19, 2010

### Kurt Suzuki singles in winning run in 10th as Oakland A's beat Seattle Mariners

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

For a team that lashed out a season-high 16 hits, the runs didn't come easily for the A's on Tuesday night.

But they cashed in during the bottom of the 10th, as Kurt Suzuki grounded a single to center to score Cliff Pennington to give the A's a 6-5 victory and complete a two-game sweep of the Seattle Mariners before an announced crowd of 10,512 at the Oakland Coliseum.

Pennington drew a one-out walk off Brandon League (3-4). He alertly tagged up on Daric Barton's medium-deep fly to left-center and advanced to third on a wild pitch. After Ryan Sweeney walked and went to second on defensive indifference, Suzuki delivered his eighth career walkoff hit.

He also beat Seattle with a walkoff double April 7.

"He's been one of the premier clutch hitters since he arrived (in the big leagues)," A's manager Bob Geren said. "I felt good in that situation with him being up right there."

But Pennington's heads-up baserunning sparked the winning rally, after the A's hurt themselves with baserunning blunders earlier in the game. They also stranded 14 runners.

Pennington broke hard off the bag on Barton's fly in the 10th but didn't decide to go for second until Mariners center fielder Franklin Gutierrez paused and threw late after catching the ball.

"When he made the throw, I felt like I could beat it, so I kept going," Pennington said.

The A's have collected 31 hits over the past two games.

They peppered Seattle starter Felix Hernandez for 11 hits in six innings but only had three runs to show for it.

The A's led 1-0 and could have done more damage in the second. But Adam Rosales was picked off third base to help snuff a rally.

They went ahead 3-1 in the third on Jack Cust's two-run single.

Cust struck out twice to strand three runners in scoring position, as did Pennington.

But Cust also made a nice throw from left field to nail Rob Johnson, who tried to go first-to-third on Ichiro Suzuki's single with two outs in the fifth. The out was recorded before Casey Kotchman crossed home plate, so the A's maintained a 3-1 lead.

Seattle tied the game in the sixth on Kotchman's two-run single off Ben Sheets, but the rally ended thanks to a terrific play by Sweeney in right field. He caught Kotchman's drive off the wall and fired to second to retire Kotchman trying to stretch out a double.

Sweeney tied a career-high with four hits and Suzuki, in his third game back from the disabled list, had three hits.

Sheets pitched into the seventh inning for the third straight outing but allowed four runs and walked four in a season-high 111 pitches.

Chone Figgins' run-scoring single with two outs in the top of the seventh gave Seattle a 4-3 lead and ended Sheets' night.

The A's took the lead back with two runs in the bottom half of the inning.

Seattle evened things in the eighth when A's closer Andrew Bailey entered and allowed a sacrifice fly to pinch-hitter Mike Sweeney.

Barton was doubled off first in the bottom of the eighth, but the A's bullpen kept Seattle at bay. Brad Ziegler, Jerry Blevins, Bailey and Craig Breslow (1-1) allowed just one run on two hits over the final 3 1/3 innings.

### **A's notebook: Tyson Ross' role is still to be determined**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Role still uncertain, but Ross will start Thursday

It's tough finding a label for Tyson Ross.

Short reliever? Long man? Starter-in-training?

He'll be a starter Thursday, as the A's announced the rookie right-hander will take the ball against the Detroit Tigers in place of the injured Justin Duchscherer.

"He's been throwing the ball great all season," manager Bob Geren said following a 6-5 victory over Seattle.

Ross, a former Bishop O'Dowd High and Cal standout, made the team as a reliever, but he started Saturday when Duchscherer was a late scratch. He allowed three runs in 3 2/3 innings and earned praise from Geren for his work on short notice.

Geren said then that he preferred Ross in the bullpen and that Triple-A right-hander Vin Mazzaro was a strong candidate for Thursday. But by starting Ross, the A's don't have to make a roster move, and they'll still have a seven-man bullpen.

Ross was a starter throughout his career until this season, and pitching in that role allows him to use his full repertoire.

"I've used fewer pitches as a reliever," he said. "I've mainly thrown my four-seamer, sinker and slider. There's not as much use for my changeup. I don't have to worry about keeping them off-balance (out of the bullpen)."

Rajai Davis was able to smile about his odd play from Monday's win over Seattle, when he made a leaping attempt at Matt Tuiasosopo's deep fly to center, only to have the ball bounce off his mitt and over the fence for a homer.

It brought back memories. Davis said he was once on the opposite end of such a play — as a 12-year-old in Willimantic, Conn.

"In Little League, somebody dropped a ball that I hit over the fence for a home run," he said.

He could also smile after Tuesday's victory, in which he went 3 for 5. Davis has fought through a prolonged slump but is 5 for 9 over the past two games.

Dallas Braden was sent home with flu-like symptoms, but Geren said he expected Braden to be ready for tonight's start against Detroit, Braden's first at the Coliseum since his May 9 perfect game. "... Geren said Duchscherer is playing catch to keep his arm in shape until he gets his left hip examined to determine whether he needs surgery.

### **Chin Music: Tyson Ross looking like the guy for Thursday; other A's tidbits**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 5/18/2010 5:52PM

Quick update for you before Ben Sheets and Felix Hernandez square off here at the Coliseum. We've got some clouds overhead, but it's much better weather than last night.

Here's the lineups:

A's: Pennington SS, Barton 1B, Sweeney RF, Suzuki C, Kouzmanoff 3B, Cust LF, Chavez DH, Rosales 2B, Davis CF; Sheets RHP.

Mariners: Ichiro RF, Figgins 2B, Gutierrez CF, Lopez 3B, Griffey Jr. DH, Kotchman 1B, Wilson SS, Johnson C, Saunders LF; Hernandez RHP.

—Bob Geren said he'd announce Thursday's starter after the game, but I'll be very surprised if Tyson Ross isn't the guy. Ross said before batting practice that he hadn't been told anything, but he threw a short side session as the A's were hitting,

much as a starter would do two days before he pitches. Unless Ross is needed tonight — and the A's have an eight-man bullpen, so they could probably avoid that — I expect him to take the ball Thursday against the Tigers.

This is a change in direction from Saturday, when Geren said he liked Ross in the bullpen and all but ruled out Ross making more starts. But starting Ross would save the A's from having to make a roster move to promote a guy such as Vin Mazzaro.

—Dallas Braden was sent home sick but Geren expects him to make tomorrow night's start, which will be his first outing at the Coliseum since his perfect game.

—Justin Duchscherer still doesn't have a doctor's appointment scheduled, but he's expected to have his left hip examined sometime this week. He'll play catch to keep his arm in shape until that happens.

That's all for now ...

### **San Jose Planning Commission to vote on ballpark plan**

By Tracy Seipel, San Jose Mercury News, 5/18/2010

Inching closer to finalizing plans for a proposed Major League Baseball park in downtown San Jose, the city's planning commission will make a key vote Wednesday on whether to certify a revised environmental impact report related to the project site.

City redevelopment officials have said land for the ballpark and at least one phase of an improved roadway would cost taxpayers \$72 million, while a second \$11 million phase could be paid by federal funds. But the latest report lays out a few other scenarios.

Building giant parking structures — which critics insist are necessary to accommodate baseball fans — and acquiring additional properties that might be needed for parking or for widening more of the main roadway to the stadium site would cost millions more, downtown real estate experts say.

And that doesn't even include a string of properties along the east side of Autumn Street, from Park Avenue to Santa Clara Street, that city officials say may ultimately be acquired for further widening of that roadway or for parkland along the Los Gatos Creek Trail. Both options have been planned for years as elements of separate downtown planning projects.

That's why city officials won't include that last set of parcels in their projections, saying those pieces of the puzzle aren't needed in the short term to build the ballpark.

"Part of the original downtown strategy that sought to build out the full downtown included improvements to Autumn Street," said city councilman Pierluigi Oliverio, whose district includes the ballpark. Residents "may make the assumption that this is some type of subsidy for a future baseball stadium, when it is not."

In fact, in the report, city planners include options not to build any parking or do any significant road work, and for good reason: the redevelopment agency has no money beyond what it has already budgeted through 2015.

And the bulk of that money, some \$35.6 million, will be needed to secure three more parcels of land just to complete the ballpark footprint, demolish buildings and relocate utilities on the site.

John Weis, the agency's assistant executive director, said the city and state's current strapped budgets make it hard to predict when more money might be freed up. If the planning commission approves the report, the agency could someday move ahead to obtain more land along the east side of Autumn Street to widen the roadway. But none of the parcels are required for the ballpark, said Weis.

San Jose began buying land for a major league park back in 2006, when A's owner Lew Wolff said he was considering moving the team. The city completed the environmental review required under state law, but it was put on the shelf when Wolff began looking at a Fremont site.

After residents there protested, Wolff returned to San Jose early last year, and plans for a stadium were revived. Although the environmental report had been signed off in 2007, changes in state law and a mistake in the original traffic analysis forced revisions.

Perhaps the biggest change is that the current plan calls for a ballpark that is smaller and lower in height. The new stadium would seat 32,000 to 36,000, instead of 45,000, and reach a maximum height of 155 feet instead of 235 feet, in order not to disrupt flight paths at nearby Mineta San Jose International Airport.

The report does not estimate costs to the city should it need to buy additional properties for parking or roadwork.

According to the report, three properties near the corner of San Carlos Street and S. Montgomery St. could be acquired and demolished for road-widening. Two local real estate experts estimated the land's value at about \$50 per square foot, which comes to about \$1.4 million just for the land. The value of any buildings on the land or the cost to relocate any businesses there would add more to the pricetag, they said.

Also potentially in play are six parcels between Montgomery and Autumn Streets, where the report says an eight story parking garage could be built. The real estate experts said that property is worth about \$90 per square foot, which would total \$6.2 million for the site.

That location could also serve as a garage for the proposed BART extension to downtown San Jose, and costs to build a garage there would likely be shared by the city and Valley Transportation Authority, said Weis.

But if parking must be built, Weis favors an alternative plan to put a garage on the existing HP Pavilion parking lot. Funding for that structure, he said, could come from the Sharks or a collaboration between the hockey team and the agency; the agency could issue bonds that would be repaid by parking fees, not taxpayers.

Greg Jamison, chief executive of Silicon Valley Sports & Entertainment, which owns the Sharks and manages the arena where the team plays, said the team is discussing with the city how a parking garage built on the Sharks lot would be paid for. But he insists additional parking must be built in the area to accommodate a possible ballpark, high-speed rail and BART.

The Sharks are critical of the ballpark environmental report, saying it doesn't address significant traffic and parking problems — especially on days when simultaneous events occur at the Pavilion and the baseball stadium. The report currently recommends no new parking structures be built, citing 13,847 parking spaces that would be available in downtown lots and garages on evenings and weekends.

That scenario, however, is unacceptable to Jamison and other critics.

Without any new parking, the report assumes fans will walk up to ¾ of a mile from downtown parking lots to an A's game, something local neighborhood activist Helen Chapman finds absurd.

"Children are not going to walk that far," she said, nor will older people. Redevelopment officials counter that Sharks fans already make that kind of trek to HP Pavilion.

The report raises other significant issues. Highway 87 and Interstates 280, 680 and 880, for example, all would see major traffic increases from the project. Among proposed steps to lessen those impacts are preferential parking for carpoolers, increased parking fees and other measures to encourage public transit use.

None of this will become a reality, however, unless Major League owners remove the San Francisco Giants' territorial claim to Santa Clara County. City leaders hope a decision by Commissioner Bud Selig will happen in the next few months. While Wolff would pay to build the \$461 million ballpark, taxpayers must give the team permission to build on city land, and the council must act by late July to place such a measure on the November ballot.

### **Oakland A's scoreboard guru ready to rock!**

By Jim Harrington, Oakland Tribune, 5/19/2010

Chester Farrow has stories to tell, most of which have to do with the Oakland A's and the Bay Area music scene. No wonder I love to hang out with this guy, who has run the scoreboard for baseball games at the Oakland Coliseum since 1969 and has a long history as a local concert promoter.

Farrow spent 32 years working as an instructor at Monte Vista High School in Danville, teaching a variety of multi-media subjects. It was there that Farrow got involved with promoting concerts for the students, and he ended up booking several noteworthy acts, including Journey, Y&T and Huey Lewis and the News.

Although he retired from Monte Vista in 1999, Farrow has stayed involved with both students and music through his annual "Rock 'n' Roll Recital." The event, now in its 12th year, is a showcase for guitar students of renowned local musician Bruce Hock. More than 50 students will perform at this year's concert, set for 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Danville's Village Theatre, 233 Front St.

Tickets are \$25-\$30 and are available by calling 925-314-3400 or visiting [www.villagetheatreshows.com](http://www.villagetheatreshows.com). For those that can't actually make it out to the event, the performance will be Webcast live at [www.rockandrollrecital.com](http://www.rockandrollrecital.com).

### **Suzuki right at home with 8th walk-off**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

The A's might not draw a bunch of fans to the Coliseum, but they certainly succeed when they play there.

Kurt Suzuki's single in the bottom of the 10th inning lifted the A's past the Mariners 6-5 on Tuesday night and completed a two-game sweep. It was another example of one of the most lopsided splits in the majors - the A's are 15-7 at home and 5-13 on the road. They've won six of seven series at home, just one of six elsewhere.

The late-game drama was nothing new for Suzuki, who has eight career game-ending hits. He beat the Mariners in similar fashion April 7. On Tuesday, he came to the plate after Brandon League intentionally walked Ryan Sweeney, who was 4-for-5 on the night, to put runners at the corners.

"To walk a team off is awesome," Suzuki said. "You want to be put in as many situations to help the team win. It kind of makes it better to know they walked Sweeney to get to me. It makes it more exciting, but you've got to stay under control."

The rally began when Cliff Pennington drew a one-out walk, alertly took second on a fly to center - catching a slow-reacting Franklin Gutierrez off guard - and advanced to third on a wild pitch.

That's when Seattle manager Don Wakamatsu decided to have League walk Sweeney, midway through his at-bat, and face Suzuki, who got Oakland's 16th hit, a season high. The A's improved to 7-2 in one-run games, tops in the majors.

Asked why the A's play so much better at home, Suzuki said, "We've run into great pitching on the road. If we continue to win here and change things on the road, we'll be in great shape."

The A's led 5-4 in the eighth until Andrew Bailey blew a save opportunity for the second time this year. This was a toughie. He entered with one out and runners at the corners, and Mike Sweeney immediately hit a game-tying sacrifice fly.

The other Sweeney, Ryan, would have gone 5-for-5 if left fielder Michael Saunders hadn't made a nice running catch in Sweeney's final at-bat. As it was, Sweeney was in the heart of three Oakland rallies and ignited a two-run seventh inning that made it 5-4.

Sweeney isn't a heavy hitter on the road, as his .246 average attests. But at the Coliseum, where he might just dress in a telephone booth, he's a different man - a .365 hitter with 18 of his 19 RBIs, ranking fourth in the league in home RBIs.

A's starter Ben Sheets was one batter shy of completing seven innings for the first time with the A's, but Chone Figgins' RBI single with two outs put the Mariners up 4-3 and ended Sheets' night.

Sheets got an assist from left fielder Jack Cust, who made one of the game's best defensive plays. No misprint. His perfect throw to third base caught Rob Johnson trying to advance from first to third on Ichiro Suzuki's single in the fifth inning.

Kevin Kouzmanoff applied the tag for the final out - before Casey Kotchman crossed the plate, so Cust's play prevented a run and kept the A's ahead 3-1.

## **Ross' bright, vague future**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

**Tyson Ross'** long-term role as a big-league pitcher? Not exactly known.

"His future is still to be determined as we go," A's manager **Bob Geren** said. "I see him as a very good short reliever to closer all the way to being a starter. Really undefined. I'll just say his future is bright either way."

The A's announced that Ross will start Thursday for injured **Justin Duchscherer**. Ross' only big-league start came Saturday in Anaheim after Duchscherer was a last-minute scratch. He retired the first 11 batters but was pulled after permitting three straight hits, including a **Kendry Morales** homer.

"He threw 62 pitches - 61 of them pretty good," Geren said.

Ross, who pitched for Cal and Oakland's Bishop O'Dowd High, started 31 of his 33 minor-league games. He'd rather be a starter, right?

"I really don't have a preference," he said. "I'm up here pitching as a reliever. I would like to stay up. So it's whatever they need me to do. It's been cool and exciting. I like to come in and help the team late. It's been an adventure."

Does he have the makeup to be a closer? Ross noted that the role's not available, but he did say, "If they need me to come in and close, I'd try to find a way to get the final three outs."

Ross has a 3.32 ERA in 11 relief outings.

**Briefly: Dallas Braden**, who was ill Tuesday and sent home, will make his first start in Oakland tonight since his perfect game. He's coming off a complete-game loss in Anaheim and became the second pitcher since 1922 to follow a perfect game with a complete game. The last A's pitcher with three straight complete games? **Mark Mulder** in 2004. ... In this weekend's Bay Area showdown, neither Braden nor **Tim Lincecum** will pitch. It's **Trevor Cahill** vs. **Barry Zito** on Friday, **Gio Gonzalez** vs. **Matt Cain** on Saturday and **Ben Sheets** vs. **Jonathan Sanchez** on Sunday.

## **A's leading off**

John Shea, San Francisco Chronicle

**The go-go A's:** Say this for the A's - they play fast. According to Major League Baseball's latest trackings, the A's play the quickest games in either league: 2 hours and 38 minutes on average. Their pitchers work the fastest, too, averaging 24.9 seconds per pitch. MLB's fastest single-game performance was Dallas Braden's 21.9 seconds per pitch in his perfect game.

## **Drumbeat: A win tonight gets A's to .500**

John Shea checking in from the Coliseum, where the A's are wrapping up their two-game series against the Mariners . . .  
5/18/2010 6:38PM

Same lineup as yesterday except Eric Chavez is the DH (instead of Jake Fox) because right-handed Felix Hernandez is starting for Seattle.

Here's the lineup: SS Pennington, 1B Barton, RF Sweeney, C Suzuki, 3B Kouzmanoff, LF Cust, DH Chavez, 2B Rosales, CF Davis. The pitcher is Sheets.

Manager Bob Geren said he'll say after the game who'll start Thursday, and Tyson Ross had a bullpen session before the game (under the watch of pitching coach Curt Young), a sign that he could be the guy instead of Vin Mazzaro, who would need to be promoted from the minors.

Tomorrow's starter is Dallas Braden, though he was sent home today feeling ill.

### **Giants, Sharks experiment with ticket pricing**

Benny Evangelista, Chronicle Staff Writer

Buying a ticket to a game is becoming more like watching the stock market.

For example, San Jose Sharks fans can buy "options" on future Stanley Cup playoff tickets.

Meanwhile, the price of a San Francisco Giants ticket might rise 25 cents on any given day based on market variables like supply and demand - or whether Tim Lincecum is pitching.

Technology is transforming the way tickets are sold, and these two Bay Area sports franchises are on the cutting edge.

"Within five years, I think everyone will be doing something like this," said Russ Stanley, vice president for ticket sales and services for the Giants.

Years ago, tickets to sporting events and other forms of live entertainment were simply priced by location - the closer to the field, ice or ring, the higher the price. But in the past decade, the Giants and other teams helped usher in an era of "variable pricing," which valued tickets using other factors such as the drawing power of the opposing team and whether the game was on a weekend or weekday.

Now, the Giants and Sharks are experimenting with pricing methods that other teams and event promoters are watching closely.

For this season, the Sharks teamed up with OptionIt, a Portland, Ore., startup, that sells options to buy tickets for future games at face value. The buyer can later exercise that option or sell it to another buyer.

The Sharks, which receive a cut of the option price, offered 20 tickets per game during the regular season and playoffs, a sliver of the HP Pavilion's seating capacity of 17,562 for hockey.

Sharks fan Jessica Welker of San Jose paid \$114 in November for the option on a pair of tickets to what would be the franchise's first-ever Stanley Cup Finals home game. She figured those tickets would be nearly impossible to find at face value if the Sharks made it to the NHL's championship round.

"All my friends were skeptical," said Welker, who exercised that option on Monday. "They thought it was crazy that I paid \$114 because they thought there was no way the Sharks would make it to the Stanley Cup Finals. To me, it was worth it. Obviously, it would be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

However, it's also a gamble. If the Sharks lose to the Chicago Blackhawks in the Western Conference Finals, she loses the \$114.

The alternative would be to pay more to brokers on secondary markets like eBay or StubHub. This week, tickets to G1 of the conference finals were offered on StubHub for \$1,212 each, according to SeatGeek.com, a new site that tracks and forecasts the prices of tickets on secondary markets.

### **Contingency plan**

OptionIt could be valuable, for example, for a fan planning in November to go to a regular season game in February, but not absolutely certain he or she can attend, said Mark Mastalir, chief executive officer.

OptionIt has similar deals with the NHL's Washington Capitals, the NBA's Boston Celtics and the NFL's Baltimore Ravens.

Some of the options come with extras, such as a ride on the Zamboni machine or the chance to meet a player.

Malcolm Bordelon, Sharks executive vice president of operations, said the team will evaluate OptionIt after the season, but is generally pleased with the results.

The team might consider option plans for other arena events, such as the SAP Open tennis tournament or mixed martial arts matches.

"We typically don't do things first, but this was actually easy to do," Bordelon said. "There's no cost to us and it's another avenue for people who want to purchase tickets."

Joris Drayer, a professor of sports management at the University of Memphis, said OptionIt could catch on only if fans "understand what they're getting and what they're not getting."

"The model isn't there to be a great benefit to fans, it's there to be a revenue generator for the team," Drayer said. "But I don't think it's a disservice to fans. It's got a chance, but the education process with that model is a little more difficult."

Drayer, a former marketing and promotions employee for the Oakland A's, said the "dynamic pricing" formula the Giants are using this season could spread quickly.

"Everyone's watching what the Giants are doing," Drayer said. "They're the guinea pigs not only for baseball, but for all sports."

The Giants and most major league teams already employ a variable pricing plan, setting prices months in advance to reflect factors such as the drawing power of the opponent and whether it's a weekend game.

In 2009, the Giants went a step further, becoming the first to use technology from Austin, Texas, startup Qcue Inc. to adjust prices on about 2,000 outfield seats at AT&T Park.

The system adds other factors, including whether the opposing team is on a hot or cold streak, whether a marquee player is closing in on a record or on the disabled list, or whether the forecast is for rain or sun.



## **Expanded experiment**

Stanley said the experiment generated about \$500,000 in incremental revenue, so the Giants expanded dynamic pricing this season to all 41,500 seats.

Stanley and his crew spend about an hour a day looking over Qcue's recommendations, which are based on algorithms that automatically crunch the data.

Sometimes the team is aggressive and tries to boost sales for a low-demand game by dropping prices to as low as \$5.

Other times, bumping prices up 25 or 50 cents per ticket also spurs sales.

"It's like the stock market," Stanley said.

Drayer said that extra 50 cents can really add up over the course of the long home season, in addition to the added income from parking and concessions that wouldn't come in if the seat remained empty.

But ticket prices vary widely. A lower box seat for a Tuesday night in June against the Colorado Rockies, not usually a big draw, was priced at \$30 (down \$1 from last week), while that same seat for a Sunday afternoon matchup with the popular Boston Red Sox was priced at \$89.50. In the middle was a Saturday match against the cross-bay rival A's costing \$65.75.

Still, Stanley said, the Giants aren't trying to match prices on the secondary market. Similar lower box tickets for that Sunday Giants-Red Sox game were going for \$355 each on StubHub.

"We're not gouging," Stanley said. "We're not sticking it to people. While we increase prices, we're not getting greedy."

Barry Kahn, Qcue's co-founder and chief executive officer, said the NHL's Dallas Stars also used dynamic pricing and the company could have 10 teams on board by September when the basketball and hockey seasons start again.

## **Suzuki's walk-off hit in 10th seals A's victory**

### **Catcher caps see-saw game with eighth career winner**

By Alex Espinoza / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Tie game. Two outs. Bottom of the 10th.

With runners on second and third, Kurt Suzuki was exactly where he wanted to be: in the batter's box. The fact the Mariners intentionally walked Ryan Sweeney to get to him made it extra special.

Perhaps it comes as little surprise that Suzuki, like he had done seven times before in his career, came through in the clutch with a walk-off RBI single to lift the A's to a 6-5 win over Seattle on Tuesday.

"To me, this is the reason you play the game -- to be in these situations and come up big for your team," Suzuki said. "You try to live up to the moment and I just try to have fun with it. I cherish these opportunities to come out here and help the team out."

Suzuki's hit capped off a topsy-turvy contest that featured bizarre plays throughout.

"I knew the offense was going to come around," said Oakland closer Andrew Bailey. "It was just one of those games."

If it weren't for a heads-up play by Cliff Pennington, who scored the winning run, the game easily could have gone at least 11 innings. After reaching base with a walk to lead off the 10th, Pennington tagged up to second on a fly ball to Seattle center fielder Franklin Gutierrez.

A's manager Bob Geren called it the biggest play of the game. Pennington said he didn't commit until he was nearly halfway to second.

"You kind of take a couple hard steps and see where you're at," Pennington said. "I felt like I could get there so I just decided to keep going."

Though it started as a duel between a pair of the American League West's marquee right-handers, Seattle's Felix Hernandez and Oakland's Ben Sheets, it ultimately turned into a battle of the bullpens.

The A's recorded 11 of their season-high 16 hits off Hernandez, as he allowed three earned runs over six innings. Sheets, meanwhile, tossed 6 2/3 innings, allowing four earned runs on eight hits and four walks while striking out five.

"The walks are just killing me," Sheets said. "I got to figure out a way to cut out the walks. I thought I did OK, I wouldn't say great. ... But it was good to be out there that late."

Sheets turned in his third straight quality start and it was his longest of the year. Sheets said physically he feels like he used to during his days in Milwaukee and that it was a huge confidence boost for Geren to let him try to finish out the seventh. Sheets was chased from the mound after giving up an RBI single to Chone Figgins that gave the Mariners a 4-3 lead.

"He looked great," Suzuki said of Sheets. "He's throwing the ball with a lot more conviction. You can see he's getting more comfortable as the year goes on.

"The first few starts you could tell with his emotion that he was so happy to be out on the mound again feeling great. Now he's settling in and he's pitching like he usually pitches."

Sweeney led the offensive charge for the A's, as he tied his career high with four hits to raise his average to a team-high .317.

The game easily could have been decided in regulation, though. Just ask Casey Kotchman.

In the top of the fifth, Ichiro Suzuki hit what appeared to be an RBI single to left, before it was fielded by Jack Cust, who threw a strike into the infield. Cust was able to nab Rob Johnson at third for the final out of the inning, just two steps before Kotchman could cross home plate.

Kotchman also missed a three-run homer by mere feet in the sixth inning, as it bounced off the out-of-town scoreboard in right, before he was tagged out at second trying to stretch his hit into a double.

"That's baseball," Sheets said.

With the win, the A's took the two-game set from their AL West rival and stayed two games back of Texas for first place.

"That was huge to take them both -- especially against a division opponent," Sheets said. "But they're all big, so we just need to keep pushing."

The back-and-forth game featured five lead changes and three ties, but the A's bullpen secured the win. Oakland's relievers combined to throw 3 1/3 innings, allowing an earned run on two hits and walk while striking out four.

Bailey was charged with a tough blown save after giving up a sacrifice fly to the first batter he faced in the eighth, but Craig Breslow came in and pitched a perfect 10th to earn the win.

### **Ross named Thursday starter for A's**

### **Geren tabs righty to fill spot left by injured Duchscherer**

By Alex Espinoza / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- After Tuesday night's 6-5 walk-off win over Seattle, A's manager Bob Geren announced Tyson Ross will make his second big league start on Thursday in place of injured righty Justin Duchscherer.

"I'm happy to get the start," Ross said. "I'm just going to go out there and try to put up some zeros to help this team out."

Ross said he plans to sit in the dugout on Wednesday to get an up-close look at the Detroit Tigers' lineup. He also said he'll pore over the plethora of scouting reports the team creates for every opponent.

"They have tons of valuable information," Ross said. "It would be ignorant if I weren't to look at those."

Ross, a 6-foot-6 right-handed rookie, said he's been a starter his whole life so he feels most comfortable in the role. On Saturday, when he made the emergency start for Duchscherer in Anaheim, Ross said he was only given about 15 or 20 minutes notice.

"I didn't really have time to have too many emotions," Ross said. "I was just trying to get my mind focused and try to get ready to go just in case they would need me. It probably benefited me."

Though Ross started off by retiring 11 straight batters, he then allowed three straight hits, the third of which was a three-run homer by Kendry Morales.

Still, Geren said he was encouraged by Ross' performance under such circumstances.

"He threw 62 pitches," Geren said. "Sixty-one of them were pretty good."

As for Ross' long-term outlook, Geren said he's yet to decide if Ross would be better served as a starter, a closer or something in between. Geren said Ross made the team out of necessity but that he's kept his spot by mixing up his low-to-mid-90s fastball, which has movement, and his late-breaking slider effectively.

"A lot of pitchers have been very successful breaking in as a reliever then either staying that way or being converted back to a starter," Geren said. "I'd just say his future's bright either way."

Ross, a Bay Area native who attended Cal, admitted it's pretty crazy to think he's already pitching for the team he grew up rooting for. He said the hardest part about coming out of the bullpen is getting loose quickly, but that he approaches it the same as he always has.

"I'm really fortunate," Ross said. "I got drafted in a good organization and they really developed me well to give me the opportunity to advance and succeed as I have."

### **Oakland is latest stop in Bowers' odyssey**

OAKLAND -- As a 32-year-old reliever with five games of big league experience, most would expect Cedrick Bowers to be near the end of his rope.

Just don't tell him that.

"Age is a number to me," Bowers said. "I don't look at it like, 'Oh, there's a certain timetable.' Right now, I feel 21, 22 years old. I don't want people to look at me and say, 'He's an older guy, he's been around for a long time.' I'm doing it just like everyone else is doing it."

Drafted in the fourth round of the 1996 First-Year Player Draft by Tampa Bay, Bowers has traveled all across the globe chasing his dream.

Stops in Japan, Korea, Latin America and the Minor Leagues have rarely been interrupted by a call up to the show. He got his first -- and only other -- sniff of the big leagues in 2008 with Colorado, when he made five relief appearances in the span of nine days before being sent back down to Triple-A.

"When I first got called up [in 2008] I let my emotions take over," Bowers said. "I just basically went out and pitched off adrenaline. I wasn't a pitcher; I was just out there throwing the ball."

During his four years in Asia, from 2004-07, Bowers said he learned the value of taking care of his body. If he can do that, he said, who knows how long he can throw? Citing examples like Jamie Moyer and Ken Griffey Jr., Bowers said he expects himself to be effective for quite some time.

Raised in Florida by a single mother, Bowers said he always had the strength to push through whatever obstacles presented themselves during his odyssey. He said he never considered walking away from the game and that he always believed in his ability to perform.

"It's an awesome feeling," Bowers said of being recalled to the Majors. "I can't even explain it to you. It's something, emotionally, that you yourself go through. You can tell people how happy you are, how excited you are, but at the same time it's just that feeling I can't explain. Baseball is my life."

The southpaw's repertoire consists of a fastball, forking changeup and the occasional sinker or curveball. In 17 2/3 innings at Triple-A Sacramento this season, Bowers struck out 26 batters and had an ERA of 2.55.

"He's a competitor," said Oakland manager Bob Geren. "He throws strikes."

### **Injured A's on track in their recoveries**

OAKLAND -- For now, all is quiet on the injury front for the A's, according to manager Bob Geren.

He said the team sent lefty Dallas Braden home on Tuesday because he was feeling ill, but that there's no doubt Braden will make his scheduled start on Wednesday against Detroit.

All others, Geren said, are on the right track in their respective recoveries.

Geren said lefty Brett Anderson is throwing all of his pitches in long toss off flat ground, while outfielder Coco Crisp had no setbacks to report with his game in Phoenix on Monday. Crisp went 4-for-4 with a home run and three RBIs for advanced Class A Stockton on Tuesday night, while Mark Ellis went 0-for-2 with a walk and an RBI.

Geren said injured right-hander Justin Duchscherer is yet to make an appointment with Nashville-based orthopedist Thomas Byrd to determine if his left hip will need surgery.

Duchscherer has a femoroacetabular impingement, which occurs when the ball and socket of the hip rub together abnormally, injuring the joint. If surgery is unavoidable, it will likely cost Duchscherer the remainder of his season.

### **Worth noting**

Ben Sheets set new season highs in innings pitched (6 2/3) and pitches thrown (111) on Tuesday. ... After Tuesday's extra-inning 6-5 walk-off win, the A's are now 7-2 in one-run games, the best such mark in the Majors. ... Ryan Sweeney tied his career high with four hits on Tuesday.

### **Tigers hope to ruin Braden's party**

By Tom Singer / MLB.com

The Athletics are holding a week-long celebration of Dallas Braden's perfect game, and Wednesday night, the man himself steps out from behind the curtain.

Much of the commemoration plays off the Stockton, Calif., area code Braden made famous -- 209. Some Coliseum tickets have even been priced at \$2.09, and the A's would've liked nothing better than to arrange for a team batting .209 to oppose the left-hander in his first home start since that perfect Mother's Day.

Alas, no such luck. The Tigers pack one of the American League's most sound lineups. As with any team, they aren't without holes or immune to quiet days -- witness being held to three runs or fewer in one-third of their games.

Paced by Triple Crown threat Miguel Cabrera and Magglio Ordonez, Detroit can put a damper on the Braden fest. Then again, he can hold his own against the best: His perfect game came against the Rays, the league's highest-scoring ensemble.

The Tigers' strong start is particularly impressive in view of how manager Jim Leyland has had to juggle the lineup to compensate for injuries to veterans. Major League novices -- five position players have already made their big league debuts this season -- have made major contributions.

Brennan Boesch, the latest sensation, was one of the few bright spots of Tuesday's loss to Chicago, going 2-for-4 for the 10th multi-hit game of his 20-game career.

After Danny Worth singled on his first Major League at-bat in Sunday's game, Leyland said of the newest kid brought up mainly for his good infield glove, "He's a very, very solid defensive player. Offensively, he's bigger and stronger. I don't look for him to pull a Boesch, but he'll be fine."

Austin Jackson? So *last* month. If you've got your choice of young hitters to cite as examples, you've got a pretty good thing going.

### **Tigers: Youth on the rise**

Scott Sizemore and Casper Wells have also debuted. The Tigers haven't had as many players debut within a season's first 38 games since 1922, when the newbies were Danny Clark, Bob Fothergill, Fred Haney, John Mohardt and Topper Rigneyall. ... Fourteen of Boesch's 29 hits have gone for extra bases -- nine doubles, two triples and three homers. ... Boesch didn't play his first game until April 23 but he is catching up to Jackson (16) in multi-hit games. ... Monday's rainout pushed Justin Verlander's start back a day, forcing him to prepare for a different opponent. It also means he will not get a chance to pitch (and bat) at Dodger Stadium. He's 0-for-12 at the plate and is desperately seeking his first big league hit. He has been known in Spring Training to swing away after manager Jim Leyland has called for him to take three strikes and sit down.

### **Athletics: Crisp gets off to hot start for Ports**

Coco Crisp (fractured finger) and Mark Ellis (left hamstring sprain) both began rehab assignments with advanced Class A Stockton on Tuesday, and both have a chance to be activated off the disabled list in time for the weekend Interleague Series against the Giants. Crisp had four hits, including a three-run home run, in four at-bats for the Ports.

### **Worth noting**

Eric Chavez is still waiting for his power and run production to catch up, but a hot spurt has raised his average (.240) to a respectable level. Tuesday's game was his 31st of the season, matching the combined total he played in 2008-09. ... Wednesday begins the Tigers' second and final West Coast trip of the season. They won't have to visit any team west of the central time zone the rest of the season. ... Boesch went to school nearby at the University of California, and expects to have some friends at the ballpark. ... Monday's rainout cost Dontrelle Willis a chance to pitch in Oakland. However, he still expects to have many friends and family members at the park.

### **A's beat Mariners, 6-5, in 10 innings**

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND — Kurt Suzuki's RBI single with two outs in the 10th inning lifted the Oakland Athletics to a 6-5 victory over the Seattle Mariners on Tuesday night.

Cliff Pennington drew a one-out walk from Seattle reliever Brandon League (3-4), advanced to second on Daric Barton's fly out and took third on a wild pitch. Suzuki then hit a 1-1 pitch from League up the middle, just past diving shortstop Matt Tuiasosopo.

Ryan Sweeney matched his career high with four hits, Rajai Davis had three hits, including two infield singles, and Jack Cust drove in his first two runs since being called up from the minors as the A's swept the two-game series from Seattle following a season-high five-game losing streak.

Seattle catcher Rob Johnson homered and threw out two baserunners in scoring position but the Mariners bullpen blew a late lead to keep ace Felix Hernandez winless over his last five starts.

Oakland reliever Craig Breslow (1-1) pitched one scoreless inning for the win.

The game began as a pitching duel between Hernandez and Oakland's Ben Sheets, but neither starter was around for the decision.

The teams used five pitchers each and the game featured three ties and three lead changes before Suzuki's eighth career walkoff hit.

Hernandez, who received a no-decision when he faced the A's on Opening Day, fell behind early and would have been in a bigger hole had it not been for Johnson throwing out two baserunners.

Johnson, who has been limited recently due to back stiffness, hit a one-out home run in the third.

Hernandez finished with six strikeouts and allowed a season-high 11 hits but hung around long enough for Seattle to get the lead before the bullpen let it slip away, preventing him from earning his first win since April 21.

Sheets, coming off two solid starts, lasted 6½ innings and gave up eight hits and four runs.

## NOTES

The A's hit four doubles off Hernandez, the most the righty has allowed since Sept. 31, 2008.

Seattle demoted winless left-hander Ryan Rowland-Smith to the bullpen and replaced him in the rotation with right-hander Ian Snell. The move comes one day after Rowland-Smith gave up a career-worst seven runs in 2½ innings in an 8-4 loss to Oakland. "I think mentally it will be a good opportunity for him to get a little bit of a break," Mariners manager Don Wakamatsu said. "Ian's been throwing the ball well out of the bullpen and it gives him a chance to get back in there and give Rowland-Smith a break."

LHP Dallas Braden (4-3) will start for Oakland against Detroit on Wednesday in his first appearance at home since pitching a perfect game against Tampa Bay on May 9.

Ken Griffey Jr. singled in the eighth to snap an 0-for-18 drought. He was replaced by pinch-runner Ryan Langerhans, who scored Seattle's fifth run.

### **Suzuki's Walk-Off Single Gives A's the Win**

Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post, 5/19/2010

Oakland, CA – The Oakland A's need a win to keep their winning streak alive and the Seattle Mariners want to end their losing streak. Both teams played well but only one team can take the victory. In front of a crowd of 10,512 many wondered which team will prevail after watching a game that went back and forth throughout nine innings.

Bottom of the tenth inning, Kurt Suzuki delivered a walk-off single to give the A's a 6-5 win over the Mariners. Oakland took the two game series which now brings them two games behind the first place Texas Rangers in the American League West.

"To me, this is the reason you play the game," Suzuki said. "Intentionally walking Sweeney was a great opportunity for me, I get excited to make big plays."

The A's took an early 1-0 lead when Suzuki singled, scoring Daric Barton. Seattle responded in the third frame with a home run from Rob Johnson to tie the game 1-1. Bottom of the inning, Jack Cust's two-run single brought the A's back up to a 3-1 lead.

A battle at the mound left one man standing, A's pitcher Ben Sheets. Sheets got his third straight start and lasted 6 2/3 innings. He gave up four earned runs on eight hits, four walks and struck out five. Oakland recorded 11 of their season-high 16 hits off Felix Hernandez.

"The walks are killing me," Sheets said. "I got to figure out a way to cut out the walks." "I did OK, I wouldn't say great... But it was good to be out there late."

The Mariners found their groove in the sixth frame when Chone Figgins led off with a double and Franklin Gutierrez walked. Casey Kotchman singled and brought both Figgins and Gutierrez in to tie the game again 3-3. Chone gave life to the offense when he singled in the seventh frame and drove in a run to give the Mariners a 4-3 lead.

"One of those games we gave it a chance to win," said manager Don Wakamatsu. "I thought the guys battled back, gave us a chance going into the seventh." "I think early with Felix, just lack of command but a few little mistakes can come back and haunt us."

The back and forth game featured five lead changes and three ties but Oakland's bullpen secured the win. The pitching staff has done a phenomenal job with this young team. They have compiled a 5.40 ERA over the last 19 games after posting a 2.93 ERA over the last 20 contests.

"Our bullpen was great as well as our pitching staff," said Suzuki. "They really deserve a lot of credit for what they've done with these guys."

### **A's End Losing Streak**

Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post, 5/18/2010

Oakland, CA – The Oakland A's returned home from a grueling road trip where the taste of defeat was all but too familiar. For the first time this season, the A's were swept in a series and dropped two games under .500. Off to such a great start this season they can only hope for an opportunity to turn back time and return to their winning ways.

Oakland's offense dominated behind Daric Barton and Adam Rosales. The A's ended their losing streak by beating the Seattle Mariners 8-4. Despite the rain, this team's effort was astounding. Within the first two frames Barton doubled early followed by a triple late in the sixth inning.

Rosales who was like a "bolt of lightning" almost ran past his teammate Jack Cust after belting out a two run homer in the third inning. Cust looked surprised to find Adam right behind him. "I was sprinting almost all the way to third when he caught up with me," he explained.

A's pitcher Gio Gonzalez also had reason to smile, he picked up his first win since May 1st. He allowed three earned runs on four hits, had four walks and struck out four. More than pleased with the offense taking control when needed, Gonzalez hasn't forgotten the past struggles he faced on the mound.

"No one wants to be the one that continues the bleeding," said Gonzalez. "When you can be the pitcher and stop the bleeding, it's always nice."

On the other side of the stadium one pitcher's pain continued. Ryan Rowland-Smith met disaster at the mound. He gave up seven runs on 10 hits which led to the A's domination in the first and second frames. Rowland-Smith didn't have the offense nor defense to back him.

"Most of the damage was done early, Mariners manager Don Wakamatsu said."

Rowland-Smith's record fell 0-4 as his ERA soared to 7.62. For the third straight game he set a new season low for innings pitched. He lasted only 2 2/3 innings before being pulled and having the bullpen take over.

"I lost it," Ryan Rowland-Smith said. "More of the same no matter where I was in the zone." "Baseball for me right now is not happening!"

He gave up a total of seven runs bottom of the third frame. Cust singled and Rosales belted a home run that took the A's up 7-1. Rowland-Smith's time on the mound was done and Seattle's late rally was not enough in the end.

The Mariners are 40-24 against the A's since 2007, they have lost eleven of the last fifteen games, including an eight game losing streak. Matt Tuiasosopo hit his first home run of the season that bounced off Rajai Davis' glove and over the wall as he tried a leaping catch. It was one of the few moments when Seattle had an opportunity to get back into the ball game.

The A's take this win in stride as they continue to move forward winning ball games. They know the goals as a team and look to find more consistency daily. Rajai Davis explains that finding comfort in staying on base and getting hits leads to a fun game.

"Having fun is a better way of enjoying the game to get the wins," Davis said. "We're more relaxed, focused and then everything flows."

## Minor league News

### Sacramento ends road trip on losing note

Sacramento River Cats

Sacramento starter Clayton Mortensen allowed six runs (five earned) and River Cats relievers allowed six more runs in the eighth inning as host New Orleans won 12-2 on Tuesday morning.

Sacramento recorded a 2-2 series split with the Zephyrs and returns to Raley Field on Thursday after completing a 3-5 road trip.

All but one Sacramento starter recorded a hit, but the team could score only two runs. Lead-off man Corey Wimberly reached base for the 16th consecutive game for Sacramento and scored one of the team's two runs.

Sacramento, which has struggled defensively all season, committed two more errors that led to one unearned run. New Orleans starter Brian Lawrence allowed one run over 6.0 innings for the victory.

### Four Run First Propels Frisco

By Bob Hards / Midland RockHounds

Okay, perhaps Mr. Gammons has bigger baseball fish to fry, but we have a new bit of baseball arithmetic:

Total base-runners ... subtract runs scored ... equals MFF (Manager's Frustration Factor).

Tuesday night at Citibank Ballpark, each team had seven hits and each team had eight walks, equaling 15 base runners. The RockHounds also had one batter reach on a Frisco error. The math? The MFF? RoughRiders seven, RockHounds 12.

Frisco scored eight runs ( $15-8=7$ ) ... the RockHounds scored four ( $16-4=12$ ).

A 4-run first inning would be the eventual difference in the game, with Frisco scoring all four runs with two out. The RoughRiders added a 3-run fourth inning, building a 7-0 lead.

In the first, the 'Hounds had two on and one out before Jeff Baisley grounded into an inning-ending, around-the-horn double play. In the fourth, the 'Hounds loaded the bases on three walks, but scored only one run, that coming on a Jermaine Mitchell sacrifice fly. The run was followed by another, inning-ending double play. Those two missed chances proved to be critical.

Baisley drove in a run with fifth-inning double and Shane Peterson drove in a pair with a single in the seventh, but that would be as close as the RockHounds would get.

### **STAT OF THE DAY**

You can watch a lot of baseball and see very few plays on which there is no hit or error, only a fielder's choice. The 'Hounds have had two such plays in six games against Frisco in 2010. In each case, with two out, a throw to second base was too late, with the runner and batter both safe on the fielder's choice. In each case, the play extended an inning and, in each case, Frisco cashed in big. On May 9 at Frisco, Matt Lawson followed the fielder's choice with a grand slam home run, turning a 2-0 game into 6-0. Tuesday night, Taylor Teagarden followed the "FC" with a 2-run single, scoring the game's first runs, the first of the 4-run inning.

Starter Pedro Figueroa surrendered seven of Frisco's eight runs. Despite the early, 7-0, deficit, the bullpen did a terrific job of giving the RockHounds a chance to come back. Jason Ray, Derrick Gordon and Daniel Sattler combined to allow just one run on two hits over 5.2 innings.

J.C. Holt acquired as a minor league free agent from Atlanta late last week, was 2-for-5 with two runs in his RockHounds debut. The former LSU star, who reached Triple-A with the Braves, was brought in to help fill the gap left by the injury to second baseman Jemile Weeks (strained left hip).



## Ports Snap Storm Win Streak With 8-7 Victory

**LAKE ELSINORE, Calif.** - Following a tough series in which they dropped three of four to the High Desert Mavericks, the Stockton Ports found themselves up against the Lake Elsinore Storm, the hottest team in the league and winners of seven straight. On Tuesday night, however, the Ports used some big-league firepower to put an end to the Storm streak. Coco Crisp went 4-for-4 with a three-run homer and Mark Ellis drove in a run as the Ports beat the Storm by a final of 8-7.

A game that featured 15 total runs, 17 total hits and 5 total errors was surprisingly close the entire way through. It was the Ports who would break the ice first in a big way. Matt Whitney kicked off the top of the second with a solo homer to center to give the Ports a 1-0 lead. Two batters later, Jeremy Barfield struck out but reached base on a wild pitch, followed by a Shane Keough walk. Crisp came up next and after singling in his first at-bat, blasted a three-run homer off the video board in right-center field to give Stockton a 4-0 edge.

Lake Elsinore came back quickly in the bottom half of the inning. Daniel Robertson led off the frame with a triple, followed by an RBI single from Robert Lara to put the Storm on the board. Blake Tekotte then walked and Bo Davis got hit by a pitch to load the bases. Drew Cumberland came up and hit a bouncing ball to third that handcuffed Stephen Parker, resulting in an error and a run coming home. With the bases still loaded, Cole Figueroa singled to center to make it a 4-3 game.

Facing a near impossible situation with the bases loaded and still nobody out, Ports starter Anvioris Ramirez got Vince Belnome to line to short, resulting in a double-play at second. Ramirez, with two outs in the inning, would strike out Cody Decker to end the frame.

The Storm, however, would eventually tie it in the fourth. With Davis at second and two down, Belnome singled to center to knot the game at four and knock Ramirez from the contest. Ramirez would receive a no-decision, going 3.2 innings and allowing four runs on six hits while walking four and striking out four.

In the sixth, the Ports would grab the lead back. With runners at the corners, Ellis hit a sac-fly to left of Storm reliever John Berger to make it a 5-4 ballgame.

Lake Elsinore counterpunched in the bottom of the inning against Ports reliever Scott Hodsdon, though they did so without the benefit of a hit. Hodsdon yielded three walks in the inning and combined with two Ports errors (one on Hodsdon and one on catcher Petey Paramore), it led to a pair of runs for the Storm as they took their first lead of the night at 6-5. Hodsdon would allow two unearned runs on 1.1 innings of relief.

It was Lake Elsinore's dicey defense, though, that would ultimately decide the game. After recording two quick outs, Storm reliever Aaron Breit (2-2) gave up a single to Tyler Ladendorf (who replaced Crisp in the eighth) and walked Todd Johnson (who replaced Ellis in the eighth). Grant Green came up next and hit a bouncing ball to the backhand side of the third baseman Belnome that went underneath his glove, an error that allowed Ladendorf to come across with the tying run. Stephen Parker came up next and made the error much more costly with a two-run triple to left-center, scoring Johnson and Green and putting the Ports in front 8-6.

Breit would take the loss, though all three runs he allowed were unearned in his lone inning of relief.

Ports closer Paul Smyth (SV, 6) would hold steady through one final Storm surge. With one out in the eighth, Cumberland doubled to right. Two batters later with two down, Belnome walked and Decker followed with an RBI single to left to make it 8-7. Jeff Decker came up next and, with runners at first and second, knocked a base hit to right. Belnome was waved around to try and score, but was thrown out by the right fielder Barfield on an outstanding throw to preserve a one-run Ports lead.

Smyth set the side down in order in the ninth to record his sixth save of the season.

Andrew Carignan (1-0), who tossed 1.1 scoreless innings of relief, picked up the win for Stockton.

Crisp would end up 4-for-4 with three singles and a three-run homer in four at-bats. Ellis came to bat four times as well and went 0-for-2 with a walk and a sac-fly.

Stockton and Lake Elsinore will play Game 2 of their three-game set on Wednesday night at The Diamond. In a battle of right-handers, Justin Murray (2-2, 4.00 ERA) will head to the hill for the Ports, opposed by Jorge Reyes (4-2, 5.19 ERA) for the Storm. First pitch is set for 6:05 p.m. PDT.

### **Cougars Rally, Split Doubleheader**

#### **Leyja's single in 9<sup>th</sup> leads Kane County to crucial victory**

**BELOIT, Wisc.** – After losing, 7-0, in a makeup from a rainout last week, the Cougars rallied to a 3-2 Game 2 victory over the Beloit Snappers to earn a doubleheader split at Pohlman Field. Nino Leyja's RBI single in the ninth inning of Game 2 provided the go-ahead run, as the Cougars moved back to three games out of first place and one game over .500.

In Game 1, Justin Marks (1-5) suffered the loss. He gave up seven runs -- four earned -- on seven hits over five innings before Ryan Quigley worked a perfect sixth. The Cougars managed only three hits against Miguel Munoz (1-2), who tossed a complete-game victory.

The Cougars also fell behind in Game 2, as Kyle Christensen allowed a first-inning run before settling down to get through four frames. He yielded two hits, walked one and fanned two in a no-decision. The Cougars took advantage of some beneficial bounces to earn the victory. They tied the game in the third when Tyreace House walked, two second on a wild pitch and advanced to third and scored on a throwing error. After Connor Hoehn gave up a run in the fifth, the Cougars drew even in the seventh. Myrio Richard singled, took second on a bunt and advanced two bases and scored on a wild pitch. Then in the ninth Max Stassi walked, moved up two bases on another wild pitch and scored on Leyja's single. Guzman (2-1) picked up the victory with three innings of one-hit shutout relief and four strikeouts, and Kane Holbrooks (2-2) got saddled with the loss.

The Cougars (20-19) and Snappers (23-16) continue the series Wednesday night at 6:30 CT. Rob Gilliam (3-1, 2.89) is scheduled to face Brad Stillings (2-2, 5.04). The game will be broadcast on WBIG 1280-AM and online at [www.kccougars.com](http://www.kccougars.com), with pregame coverage starting at 6:15 p.m.