

Detroit Tigers' Max Scherzer gives A's whiff of history

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

The A's wound up chasing the wrong kind of history Sunday.

Detroit Tigers right-hander Max Scherzer struck out 14 in just 52/3 innings to snap the A's four-game winning streak 10-2 at Comerica Park. According to [baseball-reference.com](http://baseball-reference.com), Scherzer's 14 strikeouts were the most in major league history by a pitcher who threw less than six innings.

The A's struck out 17 times total against three Detroit pitchers, their highest total since whiffing 18 times against the New York Yankees on July 19, 2008. They fell just two short of the franchise-record 19 strikeouts they suffered against the Seattle Mariners on June 24, 1997.

Scherzer, freshly promoted from Triple-A Toledo, relied on a dominant fastball and changeup to rack up the most strikeouts in the majors this season. Of the 17 outs he recorded, only three didn't come via the whiff.

To think what Scherzer may have done had he not run his pitch count up with four walks? He was pulled in the sixth, having thrown 113 pitches.

A's first baseman Daric Barton, who struck out all three times he faced Scherzer before hitting a two-run homer off reliever Phil Coke in the seventh inning, was asked what made the starter so tough.

"I really didn't see anything, nor did I hit anything," Barton said. "He dealt. He spotted up with his fastball. He really threw two pitches all day and he dominated."

Miguel Cabrera continued his assault on A's pitching, going 4 for 5 with four RBIs. He hit a three-run shot off Vin Mazzaro in a five-run eighth, when the Tigers extended a 5-2 lead. Cabrera, who hit three homers in Friday's series opener, finished the three-game series with eight RBIs and leads the majors in that category with 48.

But the story was Scherzer. A first-round pick by Arizona in 2006, Detroit obtained him from the Diamondbacks in December as part of the three-team trade in which the Tigers shipped Curtis Granderson to the New York Yankees.

Scherzer was demoted after struggling through his first eight starts this season. He was called up Sunday only because scheduled starter Armando Galarraga was used in relief Friday.

Scherzer got the A's to chase fastballs up in the zone. When the A's geared up for the high heat, he froze them with his changeup.

"The way he threw today, he was tough," A's manager Bob Geren said. "We'd been swinging the bats pretty well."

A's catcher Landon Powell faced Scherzer in a Triple-A game in 2008 and saw his dominance back then too.

"He's just one of those guys with that kind of arm," Powell said.

The A's managed just four hits. They trailed 5-0 in the seventh when Barton went deep off Coke. Detroit had a much easier time getting to A's starter Dallas Braden (4-5), who allowed 11 hits and gave up a run in five of his six innings.

"Somebody woke up Cy Young and brought him to the park today," Braden said of Scherzer. "He didn't give us a chance, and I didn't give us any hope on our end."

Braden is 0-3 in four starts since throwing his perfect game on Mother's Day. But this was the first time he'd been knocked around in that span. He was pulled from his previous start in Baltimore after four innings because of a sprained ankle.

He said his ankle wasn't the reason for Sunday's struggles.

"I think it was a matter of the center field wall opening up," he said, "and them allowing the hit parade to come through."

## **Athletics report: Dallas Braden uncertain if should call perfect game author Roy Halladay**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

### **Perfect dilemma: Should Braden call Halladay?**

DETROIT — Dallas Braden is part of an elite fraternity. The author of a Mother's Day perfecto, Braden is one of 20 pitchers to have thrown a perfect game in the majors.

He's undecided on whether he'll reach out and contact Philadelphia Phillies ace Roy Halladay, the newest member of that club.

Halladay threw his perfect game Saturday against the Florida Marlins, accomplishing the feat just 20 days after Braden tossed his against the Tampa Bay Rays.

Braden received a congratulatory phone call from Chicago White Sox lefty Mark Buehrle, owner of the 18th perfect game in history. Buehrle's perfect game, against the Rays on July 23, 2009, preceded Braden's.

"I don't know that a phone call to Halladay would (do) any good," Braden said after taking the loss in the A's 10-2 defeat to Detroit. "The guy's thrown more complete games than I've got innings in the big leagues. With that guy's stuff, you expect him to go out there and do that almost every time."

Braden left Comerica Park early Saturday night to rest up for his start. He wasn't watching Halladay's gem on TV. But teammate Brett Anderson was giving him text updates.

After Braden threw his perfecto, he was surprised — and greatly appreciative — to receive Buehrle's call. "If that is the etiquette — because Buehrle did extend congratulations to myself —

I would without a doubt not want to pass up that opportunity just to speak with (Halladay)," Braden said.

Vin Mazzaro appeared in his first game in 10 days and struggled, giving up five runs and three walks in two innings.

Mazzaro seemed to be a forgotten man in the A's bullpen. He pitched five innings May 20, the day he was called up from Triple-A Sacramento, but hadn't pitched since.

Manager Bob Geren said before the game that Mazzaro was in a long relief role, and the nature of the A's recent games didn't call for a long man to be used.

All of the runs charged to Mazzaro in Detroit's five-run eighth were unearned because of two errors. But one of those was Mazzaro's own fielding error on Gerald Laird's bunt.

The A's received good news when outfielder Michael Taylor returned to action for Triple-A Sacramento on Saturday. Taylor, ranked as Oakland's No. 2 prospect by Baseball America, missed three weeks with a calf injury.

### **Day off for Kurt Suzuki: thoughts on Vin Mazzaro**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 5/30/2010 9:39AM

You can tell the A's are playing well just by the general mood around the team. It's lighter, guys are joking ... This is a pretty easy-going bunch of players in general, so it's not like they get real salty with the media during a losing streak. But it's obvious things are going good ...

No big shockers w/today's lineup (why mess with a good thing?) ... Kurt Suzuki gets a day off, no surprise in a day game after a night game. With the A's playing a 20-game stretch with no off-days, manager Bob Geren is looking for spots to give his regulars some rest.

I mentioned Vin Mazzaro's long stretch of inactivity in yesterday's blog. Geren said today that Mazzaro is in a long relief role, and that there haven't been many scenarios lately where a long man has been needed. Plus, Geren pointed out that Mazzaro threw five innings of relief in his last outing May 20, so he wasn't available for a few days after that. True, but it's been eight games since Mazzaro was used. If a pitcher (particularly a young guy) goes that long without throwing, it's tough to have confidence calling on him in any situation.

The lineups ...

A's: Davis CF, Barton 1B, Sweeney RF, Kouzmanoff 3B, Cust DH, Ellis 2B, Gross LF, Powell C, Pennington SS; Braden LHP.

Tigers: Jackson CF, Damon DH, Ordonez RF, Cabrera 1B, Raburn LF, Guillen 2B, Inge 3B, Laird C, Santiago SS; Scherzer RHP.

### **Scherzer fans 14 A's in return to bigs**

Scott Ostler, Chronicle Staff Writer

Call this one the Mowdown in Motown.

Tigers starter Max Scherzer, who was a minor-league Mud Hen on Saturday, struck out 14 Oakland A's in 5 2/3 innings Sunday. Holy Toledo!

That's an all-time major-league record for most strikeouts by a pitcher pitching fewer than six innings. Old record: Kevin Appier, 13, in 1994. It was also two strikeouts short of the Tigers' record for a game; Mickey Lolich struck out 16 twice in 1969.

The Tigers won, by the way, 10-2, snapping Oakland's four-game win streak.

After Scherzer left the game, three more A's whiffed - 17 strikeouts.

A loss is a loss, but the A's will have to perform some emotional gymnastics to put this one behind them. They got jammed up. Every A's starter whiffed, as did both pinch-hitters.

Daric Barton struck out three times, before hitting a two-run homer off reliever Phil Coke.

Scherzer recorded 17 outs and 14 were by strikeout, 11 of them swinging.

"Someone woke up Cy Young and brought him to the park today," said A's starter Dallas Braden, respectfully, not sarcastically. "He didn't give us much chance."

Braden would have had to pitch close to perfection to keep the A's in this one, and he wasn't close. In each of the first six innings, he allowed the leadoff batter to reach base - double, double, single, homer, walk, homer. See ya.

But Braden, still struggling to find some luck and/or form since his perfect game - one win in his last seven starts - was a minor character in Scherzer's bat-missing Sunday drama.

Essentially, the A's were killed by the domino effect. They won Friday when they cuffed Tigers starter Dontrelle Willis, who was subsequently cut. Armando Galarraga relieved Willis that game, only because the Tigers had a short bullpen. Galarraga was supposed to start Sunday, but Friday's brief stint knocked him out of his regular slot. So the Tigers went to the minor leagues for Scherzer.

Scherzer is a hard-throwing 6-foot-3, 220-pound, 25-year-old right-hander. He was 9-11 with Arizona last season, averaging a strikeout per inning, and was traded in December to Detroit.

He came into Sunday's game with a lifetime 10-19 major-league record. He started this season with the Tigers but went 1-4 with a 7.29 ERA and was demoted to Toledo.

Short story: The night before he was sent down to Toledo in mid-May, Scherzer finally figured out his mechanical problem.

"My arm was wrapping too much around my body," he said Sunday. "It's very complex, but my arm was too long. ... All of a sudden, my fastball had zip again."

What did Barton see from Scherzer on Sunday?

"I really didn't see anything, nor did I hit anything," Barton said. "He dealt. Basically, he threw two pitches today and just dominated us."

Scherzer was asked what it's like to whiff 14 big-league hitters.

"It's fun," Scherzer said. "Strikeouts are fun. But at the same time, it also ran my pitch count up (113) and got me out of the game earlier. As much fun as they are, I would like to pitch longer."

To which the A's would probably say, "Oh, shut up."

## **A'S BEAT**

### **Willis' decline is a sad tale**

Scott Ostler, Chronicle Staff Writer

Some might be tempted to draw a comparison between **JaMarcus Russell** and **Dontrelle Willis**, who was designated for assignment Saturday by the Tigers. Two big guys with huge arms, huge hype and huge contracts, both cut by their teams mid-contract, both with an East Bay connection (Willis went to Encinal High in Alameda).

Don't go there. Willis is a far, far different story. He went 2-8 in two-plus seasons with the Tigers, total salary of \$29 million. But when Tigers manager **Jim Leyland** talked to reporters, Leyland's eyes were moist. "I feel terrible, because I know how hard he worked," Leyland said.

It's a mystery what went wrong with Willis, although he sat out much of last season with an anxiety disorder. Nobody disrespected his effort or desire. Willis simply lost his feel, became prone to moments of wildness. Leyland explained it poetically, saying, "It was the consistency of the uncertainty that brought us to do this."

Willis, 28, is a talented hitter, and could be a position player, a la **Rick Ankiel**.

**Manning up: Dallas Braden** offered no excuses.

"I had no idea I would wake up and pitch in a college fall-ball game today," Braden said, referring to the 11 hits and a walk he gave up in six innings.

He described his stuff: "The change-up didn't change up, the only thing the change-up did was change up the score from 3 to 4 (a home run by **Brandon Inge**). The slider didn't slide, it slid right over the wall and went from 4 (runs) to 5 (a home run by **Miguel Cabrera**)."

Other than his Mother's Day perfect game, Braden hasn't had a win since April 22.

**Whiff notes:** The A's 17 strikeouts was their high (low?) mark since they fanned 18 times against the Yankees on July 19, 2008 - facing **Joba Chamberlain** and relievers.

The A's all-time whiff record: 19, **Randy Johnson**, Mariners, 1997.

Tigers starter **Max Scherzer** already owned one major-league record: most consecutive batters (13) retired by a relief pitcher in a rookie debut, 2008 with Arizona.

**Grrrrreat: Brett Anderson** impressed several of the Tigers with his performance Saturday night - 5 2/3 scoreless innings, three hits, zero walks.

Said Inge, "I was watching (**Carlos**) **Guillen** before me, and (Anderson) threw him some incredible sliders that went down on his back foot. ... The way he was pitching other guys was unbelievable. He's going to be very, very good. I like the way he holds himself; you can kind of tell he's got a very good makeup."

## **A's leading off**

**Scott Ostler**, San Francisco Chronicle

"**Ca-boom, Ca-boom, Ca-boom**": So reads the Comerica Park message board when Miguel Cabrera goes deep. In this series so far, he is 8-for-13 with four homers and eight RBIs. ¡Ay, caramba!

## **A last trip to The House That Built Ruth**

**Scott Ostler**, San Francisco Chronicle

Babe Ruth's genial ghost still roams his old school.

"The kids tell me they see him in the hall sometimes," said Linda Ruth Tosetti, the Babe's granddaughter.

If so, the Babe must be wondering why they took down all his photos from the walls last week, and carted off the other Ruthian memorabilia, and the school furniture, and padlocked the doors.

One thing Ruth never was during his 12 years at St. Mary's Industrial School for Boys was lonely. Now he must be lonely.

The school, which opened in 1866 as a reformatory/orphanage for Baltimore boys, closed in 1950. It reopened a decade later as a Catholic school, Cardinal Gibbons High, which shut down last Thursday, a victim of the economy.

Barring a miracle, that day marked the end of the line for The House That Built Ruth (a phrase coined by Mike Loose, Gibbons' director of admissions). The property most likely will be sold and developed.

Karma-wise, woe unto the bulldozer driver who is directed to tear up the baseball field, Big Yard, where George Ruth learned to play baseball and changed American sports and pop culture forever.

"I can't believe we're losing another Babe Ruth treasure," Ruth Tosetti said in a phone interview, noting that old Yankee Stadium - The House That Ruth Built - was demolished recently.

Gone soon will be any trace of the school that was Ruth's entire world from age 7 to 19. It's here he grew from a wild street urchin into a ... well, some say he never outgrew that phase.

But Ruth always credited St. Mary's and its Xaverian brothers with saving, and changing, his life. When the school burned down in 1919, Ruth spearheaded the fundraising efforts that rebuilt St. Mary's. So this mighty stone fortress on a hilltop on the outskirts of the city is the House That Ruth Rebuilt.

"Babe always said he was as proud of his alma mater as anyone could be of theirs, even Harvard," Ruth Tosetti said. "He said he would be part of St. Mary's 'til the day he died. The school was tough for him at first, but, once they put a bat in his hands, he really was quite happy there."

George - he didn't become Babe until after leaving the school - was admitted to St. Mary's in June of 1902 because his parents couldn't control him or make him attend public school.

"But he wasn't abandoned (by his parents)," Ruth Tosetti said. "His father never went to visit him, but his mother and sister visited on weekends."

Despite its prison-like look, St. Mary's was hardly a Dickensian world. Discipline was strict but not cruel. The toughest punishment Ruth received for misbehavior was a timeout from baseball.

His mentor was Brother Matthias - "The greatest man I've ever known." The Babe, when he became rich, bought Brother Matthias a new Cadillac. When he wrecked the car, Babe bought him another.

Ruth's middle name, Herman, was a confirmation name he took in honor of Brother Herman, director of the school's athletics.

Other than about five quick trips back home - each one ending when George reverted to his wayward ways - Ruth spent his entire boyhood at St. Mary's.

He was supposed to remain at the school until he turned 21, but got out two years early when he signed a baseball contract with the Baltimore Orioles of the International League.

Ruth was long-remembered at his old school for two things: his baseball prowess, and his kindness.

"The younger students, the little kids, were called 'minims,' " Ruth Tosetti said. "My grandfather would go to the school bakery, get buns and muffins, drip molasses on them and hand them out to the minims.

"When his shirts disappeared, you could look out on the field and see the minims flying kites, with tails he made out of his shirts."

Years after he left, a hymn book was found, upon which was scribbled a note in Ruth's handwriting: "George H. Ruth, Worlds Worse singer, worlds Best Pitcher."

One of the few original school structures still standing is the block-like Trades Building (now the Fine Arts Building), where Ruth learned to make shirts, the trade he chose to learn.

The Trades Building sits beyond the baseball field's center-field fence, well more than 400 feet from home plate. When young George began busting windows in the building with his home runs - this was the dead-ball era, remember - the field was turned around 180 degrees. Years later it was turned back to its original configuration and renamed Babe Ruth Field.

Ruth and his pals played quality baseball. Shortly after he left St. Mary's for his pro career, he naively wrote back to one of the brothers, asking that six of his St. Mary's teammates be sent to his pro team, because they were better than Ruth's new teammates.

Ruth was released in 1914, and spent the rest of his life indulging in worldly pleasures - a reaction, some say, to 12 years of austere confinement.

"You bet he went nuts when he came out of St. Mary's," Ruth Tosetti said. "The world was his oyster. But one thing the Babe was always conscious of was being a role model. He later told the kids at the school, 'I was put on this earth to do good for you, because if I do good, you'll know you can do good.' "

Ruth never turned down a kid's autograph request. And, said Ruth Tosetti, contrary to some accounts, her grandfather was well-behaved in public.

"He'd go in a bar and have one beer, because he knew there'd be kids waiting outside and he never wanted to be sloppy," she said. "Bill Werber, a teammate, told me, 'Linda, I never saw him loaded. We'd play bridge, he had a little flask with Seagram's, he'd just sip it. He'd get a little happy, sure, but never out of control.' "

Ruth made frequent visits back to his old school, often bringing a Cadillac-load of shoes and baseball equipment to hand out to the boys.

"There is a goodness born in some people, and there was in my grandfather," Ruth Tosetti said, "and the brothers developed that."

Baseball fans still visit the school regularly, to walk on Big Yard, to see where the mighty Bambino grew up.

If you drop by, don't worry if you hear the sound of breaking glass from the Trades Building. That will be George, hitting one for the road.

### **A's bats silenced by Scherzer in loss**

#### **Oakland struck out 17 times by Tigers pitching**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

DETROIT -- An ailing starting pitcher took to the bump against an ailing offense on Sunday afternoon.

One was destined to prevail in some way or another. The other, maybe not so much.

Unfortunately for the A's, that ailing pitcher happened to be their own. And that pitcher, Dallas Braden -- who has been nursing a sprained left ankle -- happened to be "the other," the one who continued to, well, ail.

The lefty quickly surrendered three hits to the host Tigers in the first frame en route to offering up 11 total, including two homers, in a five-run outing. Subsequently, Detroit's struggling offense -- which had scored a combined 11 runs in four straight losses -- pounded out an eventual 10-2 win over the A's in the third of a four-game set at Comerica Park, where Tigers starter Max Scherzer tossed a dominating 14-strikeout performance.

As for Braden, his ankle's fine. Well, more like numb, but still fine.

"It's attached," he said. "That's the last thing that affected me. It's the 2.000 on-base percentage that didn't help."

In each of his six innings pitched, Braden allowed Detroit's leadoff hitter to reach base. Two doubled, one homered and five scored.

"It gets kind of frustrating," the A's southpaw said. "I was trying to get somebody out and just didn't have an answer for the first guy today, no matter who it was."

Despite the results, manager Bob Geren insists Braden's shaky outing was more about the Tigers finding holes than it was about any struggles.

"It's probably a frustrating outing for him," Geren said, "because he didn't make bad pitches. The results just weren't what he'd like to see."



Braden, his own toughest critic, was frustrated. But he didn't buy into anything said about a decent outing.

"That's a negative," he said matter-of-factly. "We lost.

"It was more of a matter of the center-field wall opening up and a hit parade coming through."

Braden was pulled after six having tossed 96 pitches, plenty of which helped remove a tired Tigers offensive slump to the delight of Detroit manager Jim Leyland.

"We needed to get out of that little funk," the Tigers' skipper said. "But I want to remind everybody the last two days we saw two outstanding pitchers. [Ben] Sheets and [Brett] Anderson were tremendous. That's not that easy. And then today is the kid who pitched the perfect game. We just nickel and dined him early.

If the A's were to be rewarded with a nickel and dime for every time they struck out against Scherzer today, it may have taken away from a rather painful loss. Or, maybe not.

Each of Oakland's starting nine struck out at least once against Scherzer, who used 113 pitches through just 5 2/3 innings to become the first pitcher recorded in the history of the game to tally 14 strikeouts in less than six innings of work. The right-handed starter, recalled from Triple-A on Sunday, allowed just two hits while walking four in the scoreless effort.

"He was hitting 96 [mph], 97 [mph] on a regular basis and consistently hitting his spots," Geren said. "He definitely gave our guys a hard AB. There were a lot of swings and misses. We had been swinging the bats well, and he shut us down."

Entering Sunday's affair, the A's had plated 24 runs in four consecutive wins. Their only two runs of the day came against Tigers reliever Phil Coke, who surrendered a two-run homer to Daric Barton. The A's first baseman, who struck out three times against Scherzer before garnering his third long ball of the season, was relieved to face another pitcher by that point.

"I really didn't see anything or hit anything," Barton said of facing Scherzer. "He dealt. He basically threw two pitches to us today and dominated. He showed us, and them, that he belongs here. You have to tip your cap.

"I never want to face him again. He's nasty."

Teammate Landon Powell, who faced the Detroit righty in the Minors, essentially agreed. The A's catcher went to the plate against him twice in the game, striking out once before managing a bloop single in the fifth.

"He has an electric fastball with an above-average changeup," Powell said, "so I was just trying to get something down the middle. When he's on, he's going to get a lot of strikeouts."

Added Braden: "Someone woke up Cy Young and brought him to the park today."

As if the 14 strikeouts weren't enough, the A's rung up three more in the contest by day's end for a grand total of 17 -- a mark last reached by the club on July 19, 2008 while facing the Yankees, against whom they combined for 18 K's.

Meanwhile, Vin Mazzaro -- who hadn't appeared in a game since offering five innings of relief work May 20 -- followed Braden with two frames of his own. The A's righty allowed four hits and three walks en route to giving up five runs, all of them unearned thanks to a one-out misplayed bunt and resulting error issued by Mazzaro himself.

The A's enter Monday's afternoon series finale looking to improve on a 4-2 road trip that will next take them through Boston for three games and another round of East Coast action.

### **Hot pitching meets strong offense in finale**

By Spencer Fordin/MLB.com

Two unabashed team strengths will meet each other on Monday, when Oakland's starting pitching gets tested against the core of Detroit's batting order. The A's have seen their rotation take a tremendous leap in recent weeks, while the Tigers have been relying on the tried and true power-hitting tandem of Magglio Ordonez and Miguel Cabrera in the middle of their lineup.

Oakland's rotation stumbled on Sunday, but the A's have pitched three shutouts in their past eight games. Their starting rotation has allowed one run or less in six of their past eight games, and the staff has allowed 26 runs over its past nine games. The A's are 5-2 in a stretch of 20 games in 20 days, and they're also playing through a streak of 19 road games in a 26-game span.

And while that may not be a big deal for most teams, it could be a potential backbreaker for Oakland. Going into Sunday's game, the A's had seen their rotation pitch to a 13-7 record and a 2.74 ERA at home while struggling to a 5-9 record and a 4.94 mark on the road. Oakland is in a neck-and-neck battle with Texas for first place, making every game all the more important.

The Tigers, meanwhile, have gone 33-24 against American League West teams since the start of last season, and Cabrera's performance has been a huge factor. Detroit's cleanup hitter has batted .358 (143-for-400) against West clubs over the life of his career, and he's also contributed 36 doubles, 25 home runs, 76 runs and 101 RBIs in what amounts to two-thirds of a season.

Ordonez, meanwhile, is on a more modest streak. The outfielder batted safely against Oakland on Sunday, and he's hitting .440 (22-for-50) with three home runs, 11 RBIs and 13 runs scored over his last 13 games. Detroit will also have the luxury of starting ace Justin Verlander -- who has won four of his five decisions in May -- against Oakland's Trevor Cahill on Sunday.

#### **A's: Cahill to start more regularly**

Cahill, who has completed at least six innings in three of his starts, will see his role clarified by the injury to Justin Duchscherer. Cahill is 3-1 with a 2.08 ERA in May, and Oakland manager Bob Geren said he'll start more regularly for the rest of the year.

"It's unfortunate because Duke was throwing the ball real well," said Geren. "But we came into Spring Training with five slots for six guys, and Trevor's been throwing the ball exceptionally well. We're fortunate to have that kind of depth."

#### **Tigers: Bullpen pitching at its best**

The Tigers have been getting incredible work from their bullpen, which went into Sunday's game leading the league in ERA (2.81) and ranking second in victories (11) and third in innings pitched (154). All of that success culminates in the performance of closer Jose Valverde, who has pitched 20 straight scoreless outings and ranks second in the league among relievers in ERA (0.44).

Detroit has also gotten surprising production from rookie outfielder Brennan Boesch, a former third-round draftee. Boesch didn't start Sunday's game but has batted .340 (32-for-94) with a 10 doubles, four home runs and 21 RBIs in his past 25 games.

#### **Worth noting**

Oakland is 9-1 in one-run games, the best record in the Major Leagues. Last year, Oakland went 15-23 under those circumstances, the second-worst record in the league. ... The A's have allowed the fewest home runs at home of any AL team and have also allowed the most on the road. Oakland catcher Kurt Suzuki was given the day off on Sunday but is expected back behind the plate on Monday. ... Cabrera provided another typically huge day against the West on Sunday, going 4-for-5 with two extra-base hits and four RBIs. ... Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram threw out the first pitch at Sunday's game.

#### **Braden not surprised by Halladay's perfecto**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

DETROIT -- Dallas Braden was soaking up a dose of college softball Super Regionals in his Detroit hotel room Saturday night as he was receiving text messages from teammate Brett Anderson.

Braden, who had been sent home from Comerica Park early to get ready for his Sunday start against the Tigers, was getting word that he was about to gain another buddy named Roy Halladay in the perfect club. The A's lefty, who just 20 days prior had pitched his way into baseball history with a perfect game, wasn't all that surprised.

"You don't ever take a Halladay outing as a joke," Braden said. "Any time you hear eight innings, no hits, no runs, you think, OK, typical."

When Halladay's feat was made official around 9:30 p.m. ET, a time when he became the 20th Major League pitcher to throw a perfect game, Braden was still watching softball.

"The hotel doesn't get the MLB Network," he said.

Braden didn't need to watch it, though, to appreciate the majesty that is Halladay, who represents one of baseball's best as a consistent perfectionist on the mound.

"The guy's thrown more complete games than I have innings in the big leagues," the A's southpaw said with a smile. "With that guy's stuff, you expect him to go out there and do that every time. The guy's a workhorse. He's the epitome of an ace, what a stable pony does for you."

When Braden showcased his own version of perfection in the form of a special 4-0 victory over the Rays on May 9, not more than a few hours went by before White Sox starter Mark Buehrle -- who last year garnered perfect game No. 18 -- gave him a call of congratulations to welcome him into a unique group of greatness.

The 26-year-old Braden was making the 53rd start of his career that day, the same number of complete games Halladay had entering Saturday's memorable affair. Thus, the A's youngster isn't so sure about his place in making a similar type of call to a seasoned veteran such as Halladay.

"If that is the etiquette," Braden said, "I would, without a doubt, not want to pass up that opportunity just to speak with the man. His body of work speaks for itself, and I'm still trying to cut my teeth, so there's pretty much nothing I could say to the guy that he could take away from."

"You let a guy like that go about his business and do his work, because I know he's already focused on his next one."

### **Tigers defeat A's, 10-2**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DETROIT — Max Scherzer responded quite nicely to his demotion.

Scherzer struck out 14 in 5 2-3 shutout innings hours after he was recalled from Triple-A Toledo, helping the Detroit Tigers beat the Oakland Athletics 10-2 on Sunday to end a four-game losing streak.

Scherzer allowed two hits, walked four and hit a batter in his first game since he was sent down following a rough opening stretch of the season. He was only called back up because Armando Galarraga, Sunday's scheduled starter, pitched in relief on Friday and wasn't available.

The right-hander fell just two strikeouts short of Mickey Lolich's team record despite being taken out in the sixth inning.

"I don't want to get crazy and carried away, because this was one outing, but obviously that was pretty impressive," Tigers manager Jim Leyland said. "I think he was hungry to get back here, and it shows. Sending a guy down isn't punishment, it is hopefully to get results like this."

Scherzer was acquired from Arizona over the winter and went 1-4 with a 7.29 ERA in his first eight starts with the Tigers. He fixed a mechanical flaw and gave up one run in 15 innings over two starts with the Mud Hens.

"My arm was wrapping too much around my body — it's very complex, but I needed to shorten my arm action," he said. "That's what I did, and all of a sudden, my fastball had that zip again."

Miguel Cabrera had four hits, including his 14th homer, and four RBIs for the Tigers, who finished with 15 hits. Carlos Guillen and Brandon Inge also connected, and Joel Zumaya pitched two scoreless innings for his first save.

Daric Barton hit a two-run homer for Oakland. Dallas Braden (4-5) allowed five runs and 11 hits in six innings.

"They got the leadoff hitter on in every inning and scored in all but one of them," Braden said. "I'm not a math major, but that doesn't seem good for me. Plus we were going against a team that had just woke up Cy Young and brought him to the park. He didn't give us a chance, and I didn't give us a chance."

Detroit scored single runs in the first four innings and five of the first six. Cabrera doubled in a run in the third and hit a three-run shot in the Tigers' five-run eighth.

Scherzer (2-4) struck out seven in the first three innings. Jack Cust got Oakland's first hit in the fourth — a one-out double that just eluded left fielder Ryan Raburn — but Scherzer threw a called third strike past Mark Ellis and got Gabe Gross swinging to end the threat.

"I could tell from the first inning from his velocity and the life on his fastball that he was going to have a good game," Tigers catcher Gerald Laird said. "He knew he had to go down there and get some things right, and he knew he was going to have a chance to come up here again and show what he can do. He got a lot of swings and misses, and that tells you what kind of stuff he had."

Scherzer struck out the first two batters of the sixth, then narrowly missed on a 3-2 pitch to Cust. He then hit Ellis with his 113th pitch and was removed by manager Jim Leyland. The crowd of 32,510 saluted Scherzer's effort with a standing ovation.

"That meant a lot," Scherzer said. "These are some of the best fans in baseball, so for them to give me that kind of support — it tickles me to death."

Phil Coke struck out Jake Fox to end the inning but gave up Barton's third homer in the seventh.

Detroit put the game away with five runs off Vin Mazzaro in the eighth, including Cabrera's fourth homer in three days.

"There's not a lot you can do with Cabrera," Oakland manager Bob Geren said. "Dallas had him swinging with one hand off the bat, and he still hit it for a double. Vin threw him a good pitch and Cabrera got under it, and he still hit it out. He's so good and so strong that even his mistakes are trouble."

**NOTES:** Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram threw out the first pitch with a professional-looking delivery off the pitching rubber.

His fastball, though, was high and outside. ... Scherzer struck out all nine Oakland starters at least once. ... Lolic struck out 16 batters twice in 1969. ... Braden, who pitched a perfect game on May 9, said he didn't feel he was a good enough pitcher to call Roy Halladay when he joined the club on Saturday night. "If there is a protocol that says I should call him, I'd love to, just to have a chance to talk to the man," he said. "But I don't think there's anything a guy like me can say to congratulate a star of his level."

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Carson homers as Sacramento stays hot in Reno**

By Robbie Enos / Sacramento River Cats

Rolling with more momentum than a freight train, the Sacramento River Cats defeated the Reno Aces 9-2 on Sunday for their fifth consecutive win. The victory puts second-place Sacramento two games ahead of Reno in the PCL South.

The game started as a pitcher's duel, as the River Cats took a 2-1 lead into the sixth. But the duel would end there, as Sacramento exploded for a seven-run inning.

The rally started with back-to-back doubles from Eric Sogard and Matt Watson. Center fielder Matt Carson then mashed a pitch over the left-field fence to bring two more runs home. Following the home run, Aces starter Matt Torra walked Michael Taylor before being removed from the game.

Luis Ayala took over on the mound but could not take over the River Cats lineup. Brett Harper doubled, putting runners on second and third. Adrian Cardenas smacked a hard grounder past Aces first baseman Brandon Allen, bringing home both

Harper and Taylor. After Cardenas reached second on the two-RBI play, which was scored an error, Corey Wimberly singled to center field to bring him home.

The smoking hot offense put the cherry on top when Sogard collected his second hit of the inning, a single to right field. Watson then roped his second hit of the inning, scoring Wimberly.

The game was filled with tremendous offensive performances. Sogard recorded four hits, including a double and run scored. Watson was 3-for-5 with two RBIs. Cardenas and Wimberly scored two runs each. Sacramento entered the game fourth in the PCL in runs scored and has now brought its season total up to 263.

In his first start of the season, southpaw Travis Blackley pitched a solid outing for the River Cats, allowing three hits and one earned run through 4.0 innings of work. Blackley finished with 74 pitches thrown. Aces hitters were unable to get on top of his pitches, grounding out just once and flying out six times. Blackley struck out five batters and walked just one.

Corey Wimberly worked a walk to lead off the game, extending his consecutive games on base streak to 27. This led to a quick River Cats lead when Sogard singled to right, Chris Carter walked and Matt Carson hit a sacrifice fly to bring home Wimberly.

The Cats tacked one on again in the second, starting with an error committed by third baseman Ed Rogers. Rogers mishandled a groundball to put runners on second and third, which led to another Aces defensive mistake.

Wimberly hit a ground ball to the first baseman Allen, who threw to shortstop Pedro Ciriaco for the forceout at second. But on the transfer from glove to throwing hand, Ciriaco lost his handle on the ball, flinging it into center field, allowing Cardenas to score.

Reno shook off the bad inning to score in the bottom of the second, when Jeff Bailey led off the inning off with a single, advanced to third on a Yunesky Sanchez base hit and scored on a Chris Rahl sacrifice fly. Rahl could have caused more damage had it not been for a sensational defensive play from the center fielder Carson, who tracked the ball down in right-center field.

Mickey Storey relieved Blackley in the fifth. A different pitcher did not change Reno's fortune, as all three of their outs were through the air as well. Storey was aided by excellent defensive play, starting with a diving catch in left field by Watson and a leaping grab by first baseman Carter.

Storey allowed two hits in the sixth but struck out the remaining batters to close out the inning unharmed. He finished his outing with a 1-2-3 seventh, ending the outing with four strikeouts, no walks and no runs.

Reno showed some fight in the eighth when reliever Fernando Hernandez took the mound. Drew Macias slammed a triple and then scored on a ground out by Cole Gillespie to trim the lead to seven.

In his second game back from the disabled list, Michael Taylor was 0-for-4 with a walk and a run scored. Matt Watson is now 7-for-13 since returning to the River Cats with two runs scored, three doubles, and four RBIs. This game was the first road day game that the River Cats have won all season.

The River Cats will play the season finale against Reno on Monday at 1:05 p.m.

### **Carter breaks out of slump to lead 'Hounds past Naturals**

by Jonathan Hull, Midland Reporter-Telegram

It's been nothing short of a frustrating season for Midland RockHounds catcher Yusuf Carter. However, if a turnaround occurs, Carter might point to his performance Sunday as the defining moment of his season.

The 25-year-old catcher went 3 for 3 on Sunday, leading the RockHounds to a 5-3 win over the Northwest Arkansas Naturals at Citibank Ballpark.

"It's big. It's something to get the ball rolling and get my confidence up a little bit," Carter said. "No matter how bad I'm slumping, I have to stick with my approach. Everything will turn around sooner or later."

The RockHounds (23-26), who haven't had runs come easy this season, gathered nine hits against one of the Texas League's best pitchers. Edgar Osuna came into the game with a 1.21 ERA, but Midland tagged the Naturals' ace for five runs -- four earned.

Carter had a third of Midland's hits and was batting .191 coming into the game. He improved his average by 21 points with the 3-for-3 performance.

"I just wanted to come out, be aggressive and get something to hit in my zone," Carter said. "If he threw it there, then I attacked it. I wasn't going to worry about what he was trying to do, but take care of what I was focused on."

Carter scored Midland's first run of the game in the bottom of the third inning, answering a run the Naturals had put on the board in the top half of the frame. He hit a one-out double to left field and was plated two batters later when Josh Horton singled up the middle with two outs.

After a sacrifice fly by Matthew Whitney scored Jeff Baisley, who led off the fourth inning with a walk, and put the RockHounds up 2-1, Carter followed with a single to left, allowing Shane Peterson to score from first.

A one-out solo home run by Val Majewski placed in the RockHounds bullpen in right field put the RockHounds up 4-1 after five innings. However, the Naturals, who entered today's game with the Texas League's best record, mounted a response in the sixth inning.

After Daniel Satter relieved RockHounds starter Carlos Hernandez in the sixth inning and forced the first two batters he faced to fly out, the Naturals mounted a two-out rally. Right fielder Paul Orlando, who went 3 for 4 with two runs scored, started the flurry with a triple to left center.

Orlando scored when Tim Smith, formerly of Midland College, doubled down the right field line, making the score 4-2. Anthony Seratelli followed Smith with a single to right, pulling the Naturals within a run.

Satter got out of the inning, when leadoff hitter Derrick Robinson flied out to left, stranding the tying and go-ahead runs on base.

But once again, Carter had the answer for Midland. After Archie Gilbert laced a double to left to lead off the bottom of the sixth, Carter came through with his third hit of the day -- a triple that was lined over the head of Orlando in right, plating Gilbert and giving Midland the 5-3 advantage.

The Naturals (29-19) brought a little drama with their last at-bat. Robinson led off the inning with a single to right, but didn't make it to second when Johnny Giavotella grounded to shortstop for a double play.

Clint Robinson and Manuel Pina hit back-to-back two-out singles, but Jared Lansford picked up his fourth save of the season when Ernesto Mejia couldn't quite check his swing and softly hit a ball to first. Whitney gathered it on one hop and took it to the bag himself to end the game.

'HOUND BITES: Recently added OF Val Majewski made the most of his first start today, going 2 for 4, including a solo home run in the fifth inning. Majewski was playing for the York Revolutions -- an independent organization affiliated with the Atlantic League based out of York, Pa. He was batting .328 for the Revolutions before getting the call from the A's. It marked the third consecutive year Majewski has been picked up by a major league organization after beginning the season in the Atlantic League. ... Midland reliever Beau Vaughan issued a walk Sunday, which was only the fifth time he's allowed a base on balls this season. That's the second-lowest total in the Texas League for a pitcher with at least 25 innings pitched. Only San Antonio's Evan Scribner has issued a lesser amount (3). All of Vaughan's walks have been issued to left-handed batters.

TODAY'S PROBABLES: The RockHounds are sending Anthony Capra (3-6) to the mound to match up against the Naturals' Aaron Crow (2-4) to wrap up the three-game series.

### **Ports Split Series with Giants with 4-2 Loss**

**STOCKTON, Calif.** - After triumphing in a come-from-behind win on Friday, the Stockton Ports watched the San Jose Giants enjoy that same kind of triumph, as the Giants (31-19) scored three runs in the ninth inning, all off Andrew Carignan, to defeat the Ports (21-29), by a final of 4-2.

The Ports had several chances to score in the game, leaving 12 total runners on base. The Ports brought the winning run to the plate in the ninth inning, but were unable to mount a winning rally. Shortstop Grant Green and catcher Petey Paramore both collected two hits in the game. Center fielder Todd Johnson singled in the ninth to extend his hitting streak to 15 games.

Southpaw Ben Hornbeck had a great outing, striking out nine and allowed just one run on a solo home run in six innings. Brett Hunter walked two and fanned two for a scoreless seventh inning. Andrew Carignan allowed three runs on two hits and two walks in 1.1 innings, and Paul Smyth allowed two hits before picking up the final two outs of the game.

San Jose jumped to an early 1-0 lead in the third inning as center fielder Juan Perez hit a solo home run to right field, his fifth homer on the year. It was one of the two hits that Hornbeck allowed in the game.

The Ports responded in the third with a run of their own. Left fielder Shane Keough was hit by a pitch to lead off the inning. The next two batters flew out, and then first baseman Mike Spina hit a deep single to centerfield, allowing Keough to come racing home to tie the game.

Stockton took a 2-1 lead in the sixth inning. With one out, second baseman Tyler Ladendorf doubled down the right field line. He stole third base while right fielder Jeremy Barfield was at-bat. Barfield walked to put two runners on for Paramore. Paramore singled to score Ladendorf.

In the seventh inning, the Ports came close to extending their lead. Green doubled to right field to jump start the inning. While Johnson was at-bat, Quirarte threw a wild pitch that allowed Green to move to third. Johnson grounded out. Spina then hit into a fielder's choice that put out Green in a run down around third. The Ports went from having a runner on third with no out to a runner on first with two out for Parker, who walked. Ladendorf came up to bat, and flew out to right fielder James Simmons to end the inning.

The Ports held onto their slim 2-1 lead through the eighth inning, but San Jose wasn't finished. In the ninth with Carignan on the mound, designated hitter Johnny Monell singled up the middle. Monell replaced Charlie Culberson, who was ejected after arguing a third strike call in the sixth inning. First baseman Brandon Belt then ripped a triple off the centerfield wall to tie the game.

With Drew Biery batting, Carignan threw a wild pitch, and Belt scored the third Giants run of the game. Carignan then issued back-to-back walks to put two on with one out. The Ports then called upon Smyth to pitch. Simmons then singled to load the bases. Catcher Aaron Lowenstein followed suit with an RBI single to make it 4-2. The Ports collected the next two outs to get out of the jam.

The Ports rally in the bottom of the ninth fell short. Green walked, and Johnson followed him on base with a single. With two on and one out, Spina struck out looking. Then third baseman Stephen Parker grounded out to end the game and seal the series split.

The Ports hit the road for a three-game set with Modesto. The Ports will play the Nuts at 6:05 PM on Sunday at John Thurman Field. RHP Justin Murray (2-3, 4.53) will start for Stockton, while RHP Ethan Hollingsworth (5-2, 2.21) is scheduled to take the mound for Modesto.

**Cougars' Hard Times Continue**  
**Kane County loses 13<sup>th</sup> out of last 15**

**GENEVA, III.** – For the third game in a row, the Kane County Cougars lost to the Clinton LumberKings and never enjoyed a lead. Sunday night at Elfstrom Stadium, in front of 6,736 fans, the Cougars suffered a 6-1 defeat. They have not scored more than four runs in their last 16 games. They have lost 13 of their last 15 games, and in that span have led for only 4.5 innings out of 104.5.

Rob Gilliam (3-4) lasted seven innings but was plagued by the home run ball. He gave up a three-run shot in the first to Kalian Sams and a two-run blast in the fifth to James Jones. Gilliam yielded five runs on nine hits, walked two and fanned seven in the loss. Bo Schultz gave up one run in two relief innings.

The Cougars' offense totaled only five hits against starter John Housey (3-0) and reliever Brian Moran, though it went 1-2-3 only twice. Conner Crumbliss' RBI single in the eighth scored Juan Nunez for the team's only run.

The Cougars (21-30) and LumberKings (30-21) conclude the Memorial Day weekend series Monday afternoon at 1 CT. Ian Krol (2-2, 1.94) will oppose Jimmy Gillheaney (3-3, 2.22). The game will be broadcast on WBIG 1280-AM and online at [www.kccougars.com](http://www.kccougars.com) with pregame coverage starting at 12:45 p.m.