

A's News Clips, Friday, June 11, 2010

A's ace Trevor Cahill stops Angels

By Curtis Pashelka, Oakland Tribune

Bob Geren on Thursday was named a coach for next month's All-Star Game in Anaheim. A few players on the A's have become candidates to join their manager for the Midsummer Classic in Orange County.

Is it totally unreasonable or premature to suggest that Trevor Cahill might be one of those players? Right now, probably. But if he keeps pitching like this, he might just be in the discussion.

Cahill had his best start of the season Thursday, allowing just one run in a career-high eight innings to lead the A's to a 6-1 win over the Los Angeles Angels at the Oakland Coliseum.

"I have no idea what goes into that decision or what they look at, but the last (few) outings, he's been unbelievable," said A's outfielder Ryan Sweeney, who was 1 for 2 Thursday with three runs and two walks. "Just talking to some guys on other teams, they all say his stuff moves unbelievably. Some of the pitches he throws are unlike anything they've seen."

Kurt Suzuki, Kevin Kouzmanoff and Cliff Pennington each had two hits, as Oakland went 3-4 on its seven-game homestand. The A's are in third place in the American League West as they begin a 15-game stretch against National League opponents — starting with tonight's contest against the Giants.

In his past five starts, Cahill is 4-0 with a 1.91 ERA in 33 innings. Since an adventurous season debut against Toronto on April 30 when he allowed six earned runs in five innings, Cahill (5-2) has allowed three or fewer runs in eight straight starts to become the A's leader among healthy starters in ERA (2.91).

Other players such as closer Andrew Bailey (12 saves, 1.80 ERA), Sweeney (.320 batting average) or even Gio Gonzalez (6-3, 3.58 ERA) are candidates to represent the A's at the All-Star Game.

Going into Thursday, there were only eight other pitchers in the AL with at least eight starts who had an ERA under 3.00. Cahill probably has three starts left before online voting concludes July 1, and All-Star managers Joe Girardi of the New York Yankees and Charlie Manuel of Philadelphia will fill out their respective rosters shortly after.

"Why not? (Cahill) and Gio, we've got a couple candidates," said four-time NL All-Star Ben Sheets. "They've pitched well all year."

With three effective pitches, Cahill had four strikeouts Thursday and induced 14 Angels to ground out. With one out in the eighth, Cahill walked catcher Bobby Wilson.

Geren came out of the dugout to check on Cahill and left him in the game to retire Erick Aybar and Howie Kendrick. Cahill walked off the field to a loud ovation from the announced crowd of 12,328.

"I like to see myself go later in games, have the ability to get ground balls and double plays," Cahill said. "Hopefully, this isn't the last time."

Oakland got all the offense it would need off Angels starter and noted A's-killer Ervin Santana with two runs in the fourth inning. Sweeney doubled to score Daric Barton from first and scored on an infield hit from Gabe Gross that rolled along the third-base line.

Sweeney came into Thursday with a .533 lifetime average (8 for 15) against Santana.

"I see the ball well off (Santana)," Sweeney said. "He pretty much just throws me fastballs and sliders. I pretty much set my sights over the middle of the plate and try not to do too much."

A's update: Kurt Suzuki to miss Giants series

By Curtis Pashelka, Oakland Tribune

Suzuki will miss weekend series against Giants

A's catcher Kurt Suzuki will fly home to Hawaii and miss this weekend's series against the Giants because of a death in his family, manager Bob Geren said after Thursday's game. Suzuki will be back with the A's in time for Tuesday's game against the Cubs at Wrigley Field.

The A's will announce today which catcher they will bring up from the minor leagues to replace Suzuki. Since Suzuki is on bereavement, Oakland can call up Landon Powell, who was sent down to Triple-A Sacramento last Friday. Under normal circumstances, a player has to spend a minimum of 10 days in the minors before he can be recalled.

Since coming off the disabled list May 16, Suzuki is batting .286 (28 for 98) with four home runs and 18 RBIs in 24 games. He went 2 for 4 Thursday with an RBI single in the fifth and stole his first base of the season.

Geren will not manage tonight. His son, Bobby, is graduating from San Ramon Valley High. Bench coach Tye Waller will be the acting manager.

Geren said Eric Chavez (neck spasms) will start a weeklong rehab assignment Monday in Sacramento. If things go well, it's possible Chavez will rejoin the team June 21 against Cincinnati.

Gio Gonzalez, who will record his first major league at-bat today at AT&T Park against the Giants' Tim Lincecum, said there's really no way to prepare for facing 92-95 mph fastballs.

"You act like you're on it, but then when you really see a ball, it's really on you," said Gonzalez, whose last at-bat as a professional came in 2006 when he was with Double-A Reading of the Phillies farm system. "Most of the time, we act like we want to hit home runs and stuff like that, but we're just trying to produce."

Rajai Davis (strained left hamstring) increased the intensity of his workouts Thursday, and Geren is optimistic Davis will be available this weekend. ... Geren said Jack Cust will see time in the outfield against the Giants. "... Coco Crisp (strained rib cage muscle) is on schedule to play in an intrasquad game in Arizona on Monday. "... Kevin Kouzmanoff singled in the fifth inning to extend his hitting streak to a career-best 11 games.

Chin Music: Chavez to start rehab assignment Monday

By Curtis Pashelka, Oakland Tribune, 6/10/2010 11:44AM

Eric Chavez has been feeling well enough over the past few days to start a rehab assignment on Monday in Sacramento, and manager Bob Geren said Chavez will be there for a week. If things go well, it's possible Chavez will rejoin the team when they return home on June 21 against Cincinnati.

Coco Crisp is still on schedule to play in an intrasquad game on Monday. Rajai Davis won't play today but Geren is optimistic that he'll be ready to go by tomorrow against the Giants. He ran yesterday in the outfield at about 70 percent and was supposed to increase the intensity today. Geren said Matt Carson is feeling OK.

Jack Cust will play some outfield during the series at AT&T Park, Geren said, depending on the matchup. If he's not in the lineup, he'll be a pinch hitter.

Brett Anderson is extremely bored these days. He's not throwing yet and has no timetable yet to begin throwing.

The lineups:

A's — Patterson LF, Barton 1B, Sweeney RF, Suzuki C, Cust DH, Kouzmanoff 3B, Gross CF, Ellis 2B, Pennington SS, Cahill P.

Angels — Aybar SS, Kendrick 2B, Izturis 3B, Hunter CF, Matsui DH, Napoli 1B, Rivera RF, Ryan LF, Wilson C, Santana P.

Cahill quietly emerges as Mr. Dependable

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

For the past three weeks, one Oakland starter has outshone the rest of the rotation.

In typical fashion, though, Trevor Cahill has done so without a lot of glitz or flash. The second-year right-hander, who opened the season on the disabled list and then was assigned briefly to Triple-A Sacramento, is quietly recording outs and wins, and he did so again Thursday in the A's 6-1 victory over the Angels at the Coliseum.

Cahill went a career-high eight innings and allowed six hits, one walk and one run, giving him four wins since May 21 (and a 1.91 ERA in that span) and five victories overall. Since giving up six runs in his season debut April 30, Cahill hasn't given up more than three runs in any start.

"His sinker today was almost moving too much for his own good," A's catcher Kurt Suzuki said. "When he needed to make a pitch, he did.

"Trevor is confident now. He knows he can do it. His whole mental makeup has changed - he's starting to actually get angry sometimes."

Cahill is usually fairly placid, but when A's manager Bob Geren went to the mound with one out and one on in the eighth, Cahill made a strong enough case for himself that Geren left him in, and Cahill retired the next two batters, getting Erick Aybar to line out and Howie Kendrick to ground back toward the mound.

The crowd of 12,328 applauded Geren for leaving Cahill in and stood for Cahill at the end of the inning.

"That was pretty cool," Cahill said. "We don't get the biggest crowds, and when they're into the game like that, it shows they're paying attention. That's pretty special."

Suzuki had two hits and an RBI and he's batting .364 in June. Ryan Sweeney scored three runs, and Kevin Kouzmanoff extended his hitting streak to a career-high 11 games with two hits, including an RBI single. He's batting .405 in that span.

Andrew Bailey made his first appearance in six days and recorded a 1-2-3 inning.

For the second game in a row, an A's center fielder hit the wall face-first. Matt Carson said his jaw was better Thursday after he plowed into the wall at top speed the night before. Thursday, it was Gabe Gross with a second-inning collision while chasing Hideki Matsui's double.

"I was lucky; I didn't hit in mid-air," Gross said. "I got about half of what Cars got."

Suzuki going on bereavement leave

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Kurt Suzuki, the A's top player, will miss the three-game series at San Francisco this weekend while on bereavement leave.

Suzuki is returning to Hawaii after the death of his paternal grandfather, he said.

Because Suzuki is on the bereavement list, the A's can recall a player sent down fewer than 10 days ago, making it likely that **Landon Powell** will come back up.

Oakland also will be without manager **Bob Geren** for the opener against the Giants tonight. Geren will be attending his son **Bobby's** high school graduation in San Ramon. Bench coach **Tye Waller** will manage the team.

Braden checked: Dallas Braden got an MRI exam on his left forearm Thursday morning, The Chronicle has learned.

Results were not available after the game, and there is no indication yet that Braden will not be able to make his scheduled start Tuesday at Chicago. The A's are off Monday, which would give Braden an extra day of rest before the assignment, or it could allow the team to skip his turn. Braden said after his start Wednesday that he'd had forearm tightness all week and felt as if he couldn't finish his pitches properly.

Briefly: Eric Chavez will spend next week on a rehab assignment with Triple-A Sacramento. ... Geren said **Rajai Davis** (hamstring) is looking good for the Giants series.

A's leading off

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle

Wardrobe change: Ben Sheets usually wears billowy, pajama-style uniform pants, but for a laugh Thursday, he borrowed Justin Duchscherer's and went for the form-fitting look. They took so long to wriggle into, he nearly was late getting onto the field, Sheets said.

Drumbeat: Notes from the final game of the homestand

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at the Coliseum 6/10/2010 12:31PM

Here's the lineup today in the last of a four-game set against the Angels: Patterson LF, Barton 1B, Sweeney RF, Suzuki C, Cust DH, Kouzmanoff 3B, Gross CF, Ellis 2B, Pennington SS.

Manager Bob Geren said Rajai Davis looks good for this weekend at San Francisco, and after running in the outfield, Davis said his left hamstring feels "fabulous."

If you missed it this morning, I had Travis Buck and Brett Tomko updates in the Chronicle A's beat.

Eric Chavez, as expected, will head to Triple-A Sacramento for a rehab assignment all next week.

Matt Carson said his jaw is feeling better today; he couldn't close it all the way after slamming face-first into the wall last night. He hit on the right side of his face, but the left side of his jaw hurt, which I thought sounded alarming; the jolt apparently pulled something in there, though, and nothing seems to be broken. Thank goodness.

It looked so crazy with Carson running at top speed, that it provided everyone a good laugh - A's players, too - but he could have been seriously injured hitting the wall that hard. I ran into Torii Hunter in the hallway this morning and he asked how Carson was, because Hunter has collided with a few walls in his time. "He's *really* fast," Hunter said, marveling that Carson came out of it OK.

Angels manager Mike Scioscia last night said it appeared to him as if Carson was accelerating when he hit the wall, and it turns out that he was, because he was preparing to take a step up the wall and jump. As Carson said last night, he thought he had one more step. He's only played here a handful of times, so that's understandable. Ouch.

UPDATE: Gabe Gross just ran headlong into the wall in center chasing a double by Hideki Matsui. Not as hard as Carson, and he looks fine, but it was also face-first. Are they not paying attention to the warning track out there? Watch out for the wall!

Today's funny moment was provided by Ben Sheets. Sheets usually wears his pants CC Sabathia-style, big, baggy pajamas. For a laugh, though, he put on Justin Duchscherer's uniform pants this morning, and they're painted on, ala Lenny DiNardo or Rick Peterson. Sheets didn't look very comfortable in them, but it was definitely amusing.

UPDATE TWO: Both of today's managers, Geren and Scioscia, have been named coaches for the All-Star Game in Anaheim. Comment away.

A's ready for taste of Senior Circuit ball

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Earlier in the week, the A's took part in an unusual full-squad pregame workout, one that fittingly had Interleague preparation written all over it.

The A's open a nine-game Interleague swing through three National League ballparks on Friday, when the club travels across the Bay Bridge to face the Giants.

Pitchers and infielders gathered for a Spring Training-esque workout that included plenty of bunt drills, among other activities, on Wednesday afternoon. Afterward, a handful of pitchers took part in batting practice.

Among the hurlers in the cage was Gio Gonzalez, whom manager Bob Geren has deemed -- along with Dallas Braden -- as the team's best hitting pitchers, or, at the very least, the most athletic. Gonzalez is starting Friday against two-time defending National League Cy Young winner Tim Lincecum.

"The guy I'm facing is not going to be throwing 40 mph for me to hit it over the fence," Gonzalez said. "Hopefully, I get my bunting down pat."

Last month, the A's managed a three-game sweep against their cross-bay rivals, outscoring the Giants, 10-1, in Oakland. Sunday's series finale in San Francisco will mark the end of a stretch that had the A's playing 20 consecutive games.

Following Monday's travel day, though, the A's will head to Chicago to face the Cubs at Wrigley Field from June 15-17 before rounding out Interleague travel by visiting St. Louis from June 18-20.

The Reds then come to Oakland from June 21-23 before former A's shortstop Bobby Crosby and the Pirates make a visit June 25-27 to complete the green and gold's Interleague Play schedule -- which, in the past 13 seasons, has resulted in a 128-102 A's record.

"I think we all look forward to this time of year," Geren said last month. "I know our pitchers enjoy it every year and try to get some good swings in."

A's back Cahill's gem in win over Angels

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- With Trevor Cahill's pitch count at 102, A's manager Bob Geren trotted out to the mound in the eighth inning on Thursday.

Fans stood, ready to applaud Cahill for his 7 1/3-inning performance, knowing that Geren was likely there to pull his starter -- a move seen quite often from this A's skipper in an effort to preserve his young arms.

But Cahill stayed. Geren walked away. And the young righty gathered two quick outs before exiting to a standing ovation, a scene repeated less than 30 minutes later when Oakland completed a 6-1 victory over the division-rival Angels to split the four-game set.

"That was pretty cool," the 22-year-old Cahill said of the standing ovation. "We don't really get big crowds here, but when you see the fans get that into it like that, you know they're paying attention. It's kind of special."

"I just wanted to make sure he was OK," Geren said. "He said all the right things and wanted to stay in. I wasn't worried about his pitch count so much. With that type of pitch count, he could throw a complete game on any given day."

The eight innings marked a career high for Cahill, who has compiled a 4-0 record and 1.91 ERA over his past five starts. He shut down a power-heavy Angels lineup on Thursday, allowing just one run on six hits while walking one and striking out four en route to throwing 107 pitches.

"He's a good pitcher, first of all," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "There's no doubt that he has a good feel for pitching, and he changed speeds well. He threw his changeup a lot of times to right-handed hitters and kept us off balance. He kept the ball down and let his defense help him and come into play and got a lot of ground balls."

"He just kept throwing strikes and his sinker was working real well," the Angels' Howard Kendrick added. "Anytime you can get his sinker going the way he did today, it's going to be tough. And he also had a nice changeup going -- he switched up speeds well."

The sinker, Cahill's bread-and-butter pitch, led to four 1-2-3 innings. It was its location, not the movement, that had it making magic, the pitcher insisted.

"If I get it up, that's when it flattens," Cahill said. "So that's why I've been working on keeping it down."

"He had incredible movement on his fastball," Geren said. "A lot of guys were swinging over the top. That tells you his sinker is working really well. And he also contained the left-handed bats. We've seen him mature a lot this year."

His counterpart, Ervin Santana, didn't fare quite as well. While Cahill garnered his fourth straight victory, the Angels right-hander witnessed his five-game winning streak come to an end against a team which, in the past, he's utterly dominated.

He entered the game with a career 11-2 mark and 1.50 ERA against Oakland and had never surrendered more than three runs to the A's. But on Thursday, they tagged him for five runs (four earned) through just five innings, during which he racked up 107 pitches.

"It seemed like guys were getting good pitches to hit up in the zone," said Ryan Sweeney, who compiled a double and a walk and scored two runs against Santana. "We were just hitting singles and seemed to always have guys in scoring position."

After three no-luck innings, the A's finally posted two runs in the fourth, the first of which came courtesy of Sweeney's two-base hit and the other that came on a bloop single off the bat of Gabe Gross.

The A's then sent eight men to the plate in the fifth, plating three more against Santana in the form of run-scoring singles from Daric Barton, Kurt Suzuki and Kevin Kouzmanoff, who in the process extended his hitting streak to a career-high 11 games.

"Santana throws pretty good against us," Sweeney said, "but we were lucky to get to those guys early and not have to face the tail end of their bullpen, which is huge."

Los Angeles' Trevor Bell pitched a perfect sixth before Scot Shields entered in the seventh and allowed a run on a sacrifice fly off the bat of Jack Cust. Meanwhile, Andrew Bailey -- working for the first time in five days -- tossed a shutout ninth inning for the A's to secure the victory.

By splitting the series at two apiece, the A's managed to remain just a half-game back of the second-place Angels in the American League West, where Texas barely holds the lead.

"They did a good job," Scioscia said. "They ran the bases well, they did some things, and Cahill was able to pitch well and hold the lead."

"We didn't lose any ground," said Sweeney, who is now batting .500 over his past six games. "It's good to win games against a team like that. We put together some nice hits today and had some great pitching, so with that combination we feel confident we can compete any day."

Geren named to AL All-Star staff

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- On the same day managers Bob Geren and Mike Scioscia watched their teams share a four-game set, it was announced that they'll both be sharing a dugout in July.

Geren, along with Scioscia, was appointed to this year's All-Star coaching staff on Thursday by skipper Joe Girardi, who earned managerial rights to the Midsummer Classic after leading the Yankees to an American League pennant and World Series win last year.

This marks Geren's first visit to the All-Star Game, to be played in Anaheim on July 13. The trio of coaches will be up against Philadelphia's Charlie Manuel and a National League crew that also boasts fellow California managers Bud Black (San Diego) and Bruce Bochy (San Francisco).

"It means a lot," Geren said. "It's nice to be around Mike. It's special that Joe picked me because I don't really know him that well."

As of Thursday, when Oakland split a four-game series thanks to a 6-1 victory over the Angels, Geren has guided the A's to a respectable 32-30 start that has his club in close contention with division foes Texas and Los Angeles. He is in the midst of his fourth season with the A's, a time span during which he's compiled a 258-289 record.

The All-Star Game will be televised nationally by FOX and around the world by Major League Baseball International. ESPN Radio will provide exclusive national radio play-by-play, while MLB.com will offer extensive online coverage.

"It's a great honor," Geren said, "one of those once-in-a-lifetime experiences that I'll probably never forget, so you look at it that way."

A's wrap up in-stadium All-Star voting

OAKLAND -- In-stadium voting for the 2010 All-Star Game ended on Thursday at the Oakland Coliseum, but fans can still **vote online** for starters up to 25 times at MLB.com and all 30 club sites using the 2010 All-Star Game MLB.com ballot sponsored by Sprint until July 1 at 8:59 p.m. PT.

Sprint subscribers can now vote on the go with select Sprint devices. They can learn more about how to vote on their smart phones at MLB.com/Sprint.

The All-Star Game will be played Tuesday, July 13, at Angel Stadium in Anaheim. Starting rosters will be announced during the 2010 All-Star Game Selection Show on TBS on July 4. Baseball fans around the world will then be able to select the final player on each team via the 2010 All-Star Game Final Vote sponsored by Sprint.

And the voting doesn't end there. Fans will have the opportunity to participate in the official voting for the Ted Williams Most Valuable Player Award presented by Chevrolet at the Midsummer Classic via the 2010 All-Star Game MVP Vote sponsored by Sprint.

The All-Star Game will be televised nationally by FOX and around the world by Major League Baseball International. ESPN Radio will provide exclusive national radio play-by-play, while MLB.com will offer extensive online coverage.

Chavez set to begin rehab with River Cats

OAKLAND -- As expected, A's designated hitter Eric Chavez will begin a rehab assignment next week in hopes of being available for the club's next homestand.

The A's veteran, who has been working out with the team all week nursing his neck back to health, is slated to play a string of games with Triple-A Sacramento starting Monday. The plan, according to manager Bob Geren, is to have him stay with the River Cats all week.

If deemed healthy by the end of his stay, Chavez could be activated off the disabled list -- where he was placed May 22 after appearing in 33 games -- as early as Tuesday, when the A's begin a six-game, seven-day Interleague homestand.

Chavez was rumored to be nearing retirement at the onset of his injury, but the 32-year-old franchise player quickly put said talk to rest and assured all that he'll be back on the field "if and when healthy."

Geren hopes to get Davis back this weekend

OAKLAND -- Rajai Davis, per usual, was all smiles Thursday morning, and he had every reason to be.

The A's outfielder, sidelined for the past two games due to left hamstring tightness, "looks promising for the weekend," manager Bob Geren said Thursday.

Davis left Monday's game against the visiting Angels after a fifth-inning triple that left his hamstring sore. He ran in the outfield and took batting practice Thursday, all signs that he could be back in the starting lineup as early as Friday for the club's first of a three-game set in San Francisco.

Meanwhile, Gabe Gross started in center field Thursday for the eighth time this season. He was joined by Eric Patterson in left and Ryan Sweeney in right.

Along with Davis' return to the outfield this weekend, Geren said Jack Cust could also be getting some time there, as well as in pinch-hit slots, depending on pitching matchups and the sort.

Worth noting

Coco Crisp, as learned earlier in the week, is still scheduled to play in an intrasquad game in Phoenix on Monday. The A's outfielder has been stationed on the disabled list with a strained right intercostal (rib) muscle since May 26, retroactive to May 23. ... Manager Bob Geren said Matt Carson, who ran into the center-field wall on Wednesday while chasing a fly ball, "felt like he will be fine." The A's outfielder, recalled Tuesday from Triple-A Sacramento, was still experiencing a sore jaw on Thursday.

A's defeat Angels, 6-1

ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND — Manager Bob Geren walked to the mound after Trevor Cahill issued his first walk of the game with one out in the eighth inning, making sure his starter still had enough left in the tank.

Cahill persuaded Geren to keep him in the game to the delight of the Oakland crowd and capped another strong start by retiring the final two batters of the inning.

Cahill allowed one run in a career-high eight innings to win his fourth straight start and the Athletics beat nemesis Ervin Santana and the Los Angeles Angels 6-1 Thursday.

"I just wanted to make sure he was OK," Geren said. "I wanted to see the look on his face and the reaction to the questions I asked him. I knew pitch count wise he was fine. The weather was just right. I felt like he was OK."

Cahill (5-2) was more than that, allowing only an RBI single from Bobby Wilson in the fifth while extending his run of strong starts. Cahill gave up six hits and one walk, lowering his ERA to 1.33 in his past four starts.

He got a standing ovation from the crowd of 12,328 when he finished, topping the 7½ innings he pitched last year against Arizona.

"It was pretty cool," he said. "We don't have the biggest crowds so when they're into the games like that it shows they're paying attention. It was pretty special."

Ryan Sweeney scored three times and Daric Barton drove in one run and scored two for the A's, who earned a split of the four-game series against their AL West rivals.

Andrew Bailey finished with a perfect ninth, sending the A's into an interleague series in San Francisco against the cross-bay rival Giants on a high note.

The A's struck for two runs in the fourth and three in the fifth against Santana (6-4), who came into the game with an 11-2 record and a 1.50 ERA in 19 career appearances against Oakland. His ERA was the lowest any pitcher with at least 10 starts had against the A's and he had never given up more than three runs in a single start.

"I made a couple mistakes but that doesn't really matter because I have to refocus and just pitch," Santana said. "That's going to happen a lot. Nobody's perfect."

The Angels finish their 14-game road trip with a three-game series in Los Angeles against the Dodgers. They are 8-3 so far on the trip.

Santana, who had won five straight starts, retired the first eight batters he faced and appeared to be in control once again until issuing a leadoff walk to Barton to open the fourth inning.

Sweeney followed with an RBI double that right fielder Juan Rivera appeared to misplay and Gabe Gross drove in another run with a swinging bunt single with two outs.

"Guys were just getting good pitches to hit up in the zone and taking advantage of it," Sweeney said. "We didn't try to do too much. We scored quite a few runs off him today which was good."

The A's added three more runs in the fifth on RBI singles by Barton, Kurt Suzuki and Kevin Kouzmanoff to make it 5-1. Cliff Pennington scored the first run after his second single in the game. Pennington had been mired in a 3-for-46 slump before coming through against Santana.

Santana allowed five runs — four earned — and seven hits in five innings — his shortest start of the season.

"Ervin wasn't that far off. Those guys did a good job when they got some guys in scoring position," manager Mike Scioscia said.

"I certainly don't think he pitched as poorly as maybe his linescore is going to show."

NOTES: The A's improved to a major league best 16-7 in day games. ... The Angels had been 7-0 when Wilson started at catcher.

... Suzuki will miss the three-game series against the Giants because of a death in the family. The A's will call up a catcher to replace him while he is on bereavement leave. ... Geren will miss the opener Friday to attend his son's high school graduation. ...

Oakland DH Eric Chavez (neck spasms) will begin a rehab assignment at Triple-A Sacramento on Monday. ... A's OF Rajai Davis (left hamstring) ran before the game and is expected to return this weekend in San Francisco, Geren said.

A's Split the Series

Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post, 6/11/2010

Oakland, CA – No one really looks at the standings in June. But when division rivals meet it's hard not to take a glance. The A's split the four game series when they beat the Angels 6-1. After yesterday's tough loss the team came together behind Trevor Cahill's superb pitching.

"He's a good pitcher," manager Mike Scioscia said. "He threw his change up a lot of times to right-handed hitters and kept us off balance." "He changed his speed well and his defense backed him well in getting ground balls."

Cahill is 4-0 in his past five starts with a 1.91 ERA. Allowing just one run on six hits, striking out four and walked one. He pitched eight outstanding innings which marked a career high for the young pitcher. Cahill had his best start of the season behind great defense provided from the team.

The Angels were scoreless for five innings until Juan Rivera scored the the only run of the game top of the fifth frame. The run came off catcher Bobby Wilson's single, they had six hits and only advanced four runners past first base. Los Angeles could not keep up with Cahill's switch up of strikes and sinkers.

Bottom of the fifth belonged to the A's and they dominated the remainder of the game. Oakland had six RBI's from six players, Ryan Sweeney continues to surge, he got things going by hitting a double in the fourth frame. Daric Barton, Kurt Suzuki and Kevin Kouzmanoff all followed with singles in the fifth inning.

"Santana threw pretty good against us," Sweeney said. "We were lucky to get to those guys early and not have to face the tail end of their bullpen, which is huge." "We didn't lose any ground and stayed in the zone." "With a combination of hits and good pitching we feel confident, we can compete with anybody."

Ervin Santana entered the game with a career 11-2 mark and never surrendered more than three runs to the A's. Tonight was a different story as he gave up five runs (four earned) in five innings. Santana's five game winning steak ended.

"I made a couple of mistakes," Santana said. "But that doesn't really matter anyways, because I have to refocus and just pitch." "That's going to happen a lot, nobody's perfect."

The A's will take the momentum from this game across the Bay when they face their rivals, the San Francisco Giants. The Bay Bridge three game series begins tomorrow. The Giants will look to redeem themselves after being swept back in May. Pitcher Gio Gonzalez will face one of San Francisco's best pitchers, Tim Lincecum for game one.

"It's another series that we must win," said Gonzalez. "In my book Lincecum is a great pitcher, so we have to minimize damage as much as possible." "Of course they're going to be ready to play us, especially after we swept them last series."

Farhan Zaidi Talks Oakland A's Draft

Melissa Lockard, OaklandClubhouse.com

Jun 11, 2010

On Thursday morning, we had a long conversation with Oakland A's Director of Baseball Operations Farhan Zaidi. In the first part of our conversation, we focused on the recently completed draft. We cover the first four picks, as well as the team's

drafting philosophy and the role Grady Fuson had in the front office during the draft process.

OaklandClubhouse: What were your overall impressions of the draft? Did things play out the way that you expected them to, especially in the first round, or were things a lot different?

Farhan Zaidi: Michael Choice was a guy who we had earmarked pretty early on in the process. We had a lot of our senior evaluators go in and see him and really be excited by the offensive potential that he presented. We just liked the fact that he was a really nice blend of performance and potential. He was a guy who was on Team USA and had a terrific freshman year and sophomore year and had a terrific year this year and was a Team USA performer – but at the same time, he was a guy who has a lot of upside and is actually incredibly young for his class. He is a guy who doesn't turn 21 until November. You have a guy like Zach Cox, who was a sophomore eligible for the draft – and Choice is actually several months younger than him.

We were really excited about him and at the time when we put him in our mix at [the 10th pick], I don't think he was quite as famous as he wound-up being in the last month or so, but I think partly because of a lack of college position players in the draft, he was really moving up boards and the last few days leading up to the draft, I think we had some concerns that he wasn't going to be there at 10.

We had some other guys in our mix who we liked quite a bit too. So it wasn't an "all-or-nothing" position for us, but the fact that he was there, we were very excited. He was really the guy that we thought was the best guy on the board [at that point in the draft]. I think it is easy to rationalize the pick by saying, 'they were trying to find power. They were trying to find right-handed power to meet their organizational needs,' but it was really not about need but just about taking the best player available. I think the fact that he does feel needs for us is a bonus.

OC: Do you think he is a guy who will sign earlier than Grant Green did last year, or is he someone we'll have to wait until mid-August to see?

FZ: I think we are optimistic. That process is being handled by Eric Kubota [A's Director of Scouting] and I think he is optimistic that we will get something done sooner rather than later. I think when you take a guy in the first round, a guy that you are excited about, the whole organization really wants to see the guy go out and be able to see how he does in the boxscores right away. So we are all looking forward to that and we are hopeful that something will be done soon.

OC: Your second pick was Yordy Cabrera. You mentioned age in relation to Choice and it is sort of the opposite situation with Cabrera, who is almost college junior age as a high school senior [he is turning 20 later this year]. Does his age affect how you evaluated Cabrera, or, because he is still only 19, does it not matter that much?

FZ: Yeah. You can't ignore it. Particularly for position players, we all know that there is a very steep aging profile between 18 and 23, 24. You did have to evaluate Yordy with a different level of standards than the average high school player. That said, we thought that even against the standards of a 19-year-old player, he matched up very well.

The point our scouts made – and I actually got a chance to see Yordy myself, along with a lot of the other guys who were picked in the first round – it's pretty apparent that even if he were at junior college or if he was a college sophomore, he would really stand out on the field. He is just a very physical guy. He's 6'3", 6'4" and I think he'll play at shortstop. I think the plan is to send him out at shortstop. He may grow off of the position, but he's definitely a guy that we see playing that position at least for now. He's got a terrific arm. He threw low- to even mid-90s as a pitcher. And he's got very projectable power, as well. He is a guy we project to have above-average power.

In some sense, you do have to consider the age, but things like the power, the arm, the intangibles and the bloodlines, a lot of the things that you like about Yordy, really are true of him whether he was a regular high school aged-kid or whether he was a little bit older like he is.

It was definitely a conversation for us. We had to decide if we were really evaluating him relative to other high school players or were we trying to keep in mind the age thing relative to other 19-year-olds that we see. I think that we really did the latter. All of the things that we liked about him would have been true if he were in junior college or in college, so that was what drove our fondness for the player.

OC: Aaron Shipman was your next pick. He is from that very talented Georgia high school class. Was he someone you got to know from watching some of those other guys in the Georgia talent pool or was he someone who you knew about on his own?

FZ: I think you make a good point that because it was such a great year in Georgia from a high school standpoint, it was a good run for our senior evaluators to get in there and get to see a bunch of guys who were going to go in the first few rounds of the draft. That might have helped raise the profile of some of these guys, but at the same time, even if it was a

weak class coming out of there, this guy would have stood out.

I think he was a guy who was rated very highly that we liked and we maybe rated higher internally than perhaps the public perception of him, which by itself was quite high. He's just a really good athlete. A well above-average runner. A guy who can fill out and maybe come into some power. A true centerfielder.

Our guys really like the swing. That's really the toughest thing to project with high school position players. You can have a guy who has all of the tools and may have the makings of a swing but you just really don't know if guys are going to hit or not when they get to pro ball. One of the phrases our scouting staff uses a lot is that they have a knack for the barrel and manage to square up the ball with high frequency. This guy does that. The fact that he was a guy we liked a lot and got a lot of looks at, it was the fact that everyone who saw him saw that same thing that I think really put this guy pretty high on our draft boards.

OC: Chad Lewis is from that same high school [Marina High School] that Daric Barton and Justin Sellers attended. Lewis also performed really well in those high school showcases. When guys come from a really good high school program like Marina's and have performed under-pressure in a showcase setting, is that something that plays well into his make-up?

FZ: Yeah, that matters a lot. I think that if you look at that run of three high school position players that we took [in this year's draft], our familiarity with those guys because of the showcases is much higher than it would have been for high school position players 10 or 15 years ago. A lot of our scouts have seen these guys against good competition. You feel a lot more confident in your evaluation of those players when you have had that many looks at the player and when you've seen these hitters against pretty good pitchers who you think are going to go high in the draft.

[Lewis] was a guy who was definitely a performer on that circuit. Being from Southern California and performing against that level of competition, you feel a lot more confident about your evaluation of him than maybe your typical high school draft. We had so much familiarity with him because of that and because of the area that he is from. I think whatever reservations you have about taking a high school players, especially position players, it is really mitigated when you get to see them in that environment.

OC: Is there some irony to the fact that the movie about "Moneyball" might finally be made and the team is now regularly drafting high school players pretty high in the draft?

FZ: [laughs] It's interesting. I think that a lot of people within the organization and even Michael Lewis have made this point – the book wasn't about being dogmatic about any one particular strategy. I think it was more about looking for where you may have seen an opportunity and trying to exploit it.

I think one of the under-told elements of the 2002 draft was the fact that the team had a ton of picks and were under very serious budget constraints. I think that drove a lot of the picks. The question became, 'alright, if we have to take the lower-than-slot guys, then what is the best way to identify those guys?' I think that is kind of what drove that. Now we are in an environment where we had a budget and we could afford slot. We have some flexibility and it's kind of a matter of taking the best players available.

Quite frankly, I think that a lot of college position players who were going in the fifth or sixth round in the draft a few years ago are now going in the second or third today. I think you kind of adjust accordingly. Also, like I said, I think the landscape has changed a little bit to where you can take high school players with more confidence because you have seen them in showcases and you have such a higher level of familiarity with them.

Ten years ago, we knew so much more about college players. Not just because we saw them more but because we could evaluate them from a statistical standpoint. Now in terms of how many looks you get at players between the high school and college players, it's almost a wash. On top of that, you do have the statistics on the college players but you do have showcase performance on the high school players. I think the gap has closed a little bit on the risks that goes into evaluating high school players.

OC: How is [former A's Director of Scouting] Grady Fuson fitting into the front office? Is he involved only in the draft? [Fuson returned to the team as a Special Advisor to Baseball Operations in February 2010]

FZ: I wasn't here during the last time he was with the team, so this is my first time experiencing interactions with him and I think that he is terrific. As far as the draft, it was an incredible resource to have Grady go in there and be able to cross-check a lot of the guys who were at the top of the draft. Grady was in the meetings and heard what our scouts were saying and what we were saying statistically about the players and added in his own opinions. It has been a seamless addition to what we do from a draft perspective. I loved having him there. Eric loved having him there. I think it was just a tremendous addition to bring him back.

I think from this point on, he is going to be a little more focused on the player-development side. It is something that he has

done in the past, helping out Keith [Lieppman, A's Director of Player Development], getting a chance to visit the different clubs and identifying organization-wide areas that we need to work on and a lot of the things that we, as an organization, like to preach to our players: pitchers throwing strikes, hitters having a good approach and develop plate discipline.

I think he is taking it upon himself to spread that message throughout the minors. I think that is going to be a lot of what he does for the second half of the year. And I think that will be great. Keith will happily take all of the help he can get with delivering that message and being another resource for the minor league coaching staffs and keep Keith abreast of what is going on with the different teams.

Stay tuned for the rest of this conversation, in which we cover whether the A's would make additions around the trade deadline, the roles of Landon Powell, Henry Rodriguez and Tyson Ross, the injuries on the farm, the performances of Michael Taylor, Adrian Cardenas, Corey Brown and Chris Carter, and more...

Billions of Dollars Ride on Teams' Maneuvers for New Stadiums

By ZUSHA ELINSON, New York Times, Bay Citizen Edition

Jed York, the 29-year-old president of the 49ers, made his way to the American Legion hall in Santa Clara on Tuesday night.

The lodge was draped in streamers, and filled with hundreds of fans enjoying beer and barbecued pork sandwiches while awaiting a different kind of final score.

The Niners, who have not made the playoffs since 2002, would win big on this election night, which may ultimately be remembered as the moment when 11,368 people — well shy of the turnout for an average pre-season game — reshaped the Bay Area sports scene.

"You know, I think I'm one of the luckiest people in the world," Mr. York told the raucous crowd after the votes were tallied.

Santa Clara's passage of Measure J, a \$937 million stadium proposal, by 11,368 to 7,713 (as of Thursday), was the first significant move in a stadium chess game that involves a number of major sports franchises in the area. Those involved include local sports legends and Internet entrepreneurs, and the outcome will affect not only the teams and their fans but also local economies.

In many respects, the Niners' proposed move to Santa Clara reflects the continuing shift in economic power from San Francisco to Silicon Valley. The A's are also pursuing a move to San Jose, alienating some fans in strapped Oakland.

Even before Tuesday's vote, the 49ers were informally shopping naming rights to the new South Bay stadium for \$200 million, according to an industry source familiar with the discussions who was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter.

"It's a natural migration," Jamie Matthews, an ebullient Santa Clara councilman, said Tuesday at the party after the vote. "It's the wealth, it's the infrastructure, and it can't hurt that we have 300 days of sunshine a year."

Roger G. Noll, a sports economist at Stanford, agreed. "Why San Jose? Follow the money," Dr. Noll said. "Silicon Valley is the place to be if you want rich companies throwing money at luxury boxes and corporate sponsorships."

The Santa Clara vote may have a direct impact on the fortunes of other Bay Area teams. The Raiders also want a new home badly, and few observers believe there is money for two football stadiums. Meanwhile, the Warriors are for sale, and the Giants are considering buying a piece of the team as part of a larger plan to build an arena near AT&T Park.

The wrangling has led to an inordinate amount of intrigue in the Bay Area sports world. The Niners spent \$4.1 million in support of the Santa Clara measure — more dollars per vote than Meg Whitman spent in the Republican primary for governor. And yet some officials, chief among them Mayor Gavin Newsom of San Francisco, remain unconvinced that the team will actually leave Candlestick Park, its home since 1971.

“When the Santa Clara plan falls apart, San Francisco stands ready to welcome its 49ers home,” Mr. Newsom said Wednesday.

San Francisco’s relationship with the 49ers broke down long ago with John York, Jed’s father and the team’s co-owner, at odds with Mr. Newsom over plans for a new stadium for the city.

Carmen Policy, 67, the renowned former 49ers president, whose teams won four Super Bowls in the 1980s and ’90s, is working with San Francisco to keep the team in the city.

“What happened was a personal breakdown between the City of San Francisco and John York,” Mr. Policy said in an interview. “Once Jed York, the son, took over, he decided to follow through with his father’s plans.”

The proposed 68,500-seat Santa Clara stadium, which would be built on the parking lot at Great America, would open for the 2014 season. With Measure J successfully out of the way, the team is turning to the difficult task of raising the nearly \$1 billion needed to build it.

The Niners are relying on a potentially risky financing scheme, according to local government officials and sports economists. Of the anticipated financing, \$493 million would come from the 49ers and the N.F.L., and \$114 million from the city and a new hotel tax. The team hopes to raise most of the remaining \$330 million by selling the naming rights as well as personal seat licenses, that is, paying for the right to buy a choice seat.

In an interview, Mr. York said that “one way or another” the 49ers would get the money. He denied that the team had tried to put a \$200 million price tag on the stadium naming rights.

Dr. Noll, the Stanford economist, predicted that financing hurdles still might sink the deal in Santa Clara, saying, “There’s only a 50 percent chance that it gets built.” With the economy still in recovery and the N.F.L.’s fund for new stadiums currently empty, the league has encouraged the 49ers and the Raiders to build a stadium together.

But that does not seem likely to happen soon. For their part, the Raiders say they will continue to pursue a new stadium on their own.

“We wish them well with their stadium-related efforts as we know they wish us well with ours,” Amy Trask, the Raiders’ chief executive, wrote in an e-mail message.

As for the 49ers, Mr. Policy said a joint project would be impossible as long as Al Davis, 80, owned the Raiders.

“Let me say this,” Mr. Policy said. “Al Davis is a Hall of Famer, but he’s not the kind of guy you want to be a partner. He’s just not capable of making the kind of deal that becomes palatable to the 49ers.”

Where that leaves the Raiders is anybody’s guess.

"You don't have to be Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke or Tim Geithner to figure out that there aren't going to be two billion-dollar stadiums built in the Bay Area in our lifetime," said Andy Dolich, who served as chief operating officer of the 49ers until earlier this year.

For many fans, the teams' search for new homes has become intensely personal.

On May 9, Lew Wolff, the 74-year-old A's owner who also owns the San Jose Earthquakes, invited Jorge Leon, a fan, and his friends to watch an A's game in a luxury box at the Coliseum. Mr. Wolff wanted to explain to them why he was trying to move the team to San Jose. Mr. Leon had been ejected from a game three weeks earlier for holding up a sign that read "Lew Wolff lied, he never tried," a dig at the owner's public statements that he had exhausted all efforts to get a stadium deal in Oakland.

That night, the owner told Mr. Leon, a San Leandro lab technician who had "Oakland A's" tattooed on the inside of his left forearm, that he had wanted to build a stadium in Oakland, but that the city could not come up with the land.

Mr. Leon and his friends talked with the A's owner from the third inning on, at first hardly noticing that Dallas Braden was on his way to pitching a perfect game. Mr. Wolff left in the seventh inning, pulling on an Earthquakes jacket as he walked out of the suite.

Mr. Leon said he came away from the evening unconvinced by Mr. Wolff.

"I want the A's to stay in Oakland," he said. "They bring so much pride to the city."

MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

Watson's ninth-inning blast knocks off Fresno

By Nick Hunte / Sacramento River Cats

Matt Watson's ninth-inning home run provided the winning margin for Sacramento in a 2-1 victory Tuesday night over the host Fresno Grizzlies.

The win was much-needed for Sacramento, which lost the first three games of the series and now sits 11.5 games out of first place.

Watson's home run, the left-hander's fifth of the season, came off of a 3-2 pitch by right-hander Waldis Joaquin (1-1, 2.51 ERA) and sailed over the right-field fence.

In addition to Watson's home run, Sacramento's pitchers had strong performances in this low-scoring game. Right-hander Clay Mortensen (8-2, 3.97 ERA) picked up the win and pitched eight solid innings for the River Cats. He gave up eight hits but only one earned run (a home run by left-fielder John Bowker in the bottom of the fourth) and threw four strikeouts.

Sacramento scored its first run in the top of the sixth inning from a line-drive single by Josh Donaldson, who played third base instead of his usual catcher position.

The River Cats will have a day off and then travel to Portland on Thursday for the fifth game of their current road series.

'Blown Away'

By Bob Hards / Midland RockHounds

In the classic (and classically goofy) movie "Caddyshack," Bill Murray portrays the assistant greens keeper Karl Spackler. While caddying for the priest, who is having the game of his life, Karl is standing in an absolute monsoon, flag stick bending

in the wind, his slicker soaked from the torrential storm. When the father asks his opinion on the weather, Karl replies ... "I don't think the really heavy stuff is going to come down for some time. I'd keep playing."

Unfortunately, the RockHounds and Corpus Christi Hooks followed Carl's advice Thursday night.

The Hooks jumped on 'Hounds starter Pedro Figueroa for four runs in the second, then denied a RockHounds threat in the fourth. Trailing by that 4-0 count, the 'Hounds got back-to-back singles from Archie Gilbert and Alex Valdez to lead off the inning. Hooks starter Jordan Lyles then struck out Jeff Baisley and his defense turned one of four double-plays on the night to end the inning.

David Cook led off the fifth with a solo home run, and the clubs then endured a 55-minute rain delay. Observing the "Spackler Theory," the clubs "kept on playing" after the delay, with the Hooks doubling their advantage, capped by Koby Clemens' 2-run home run, his 15th of the season.

The RockHounds got some help on the personnel front, with infielder Adrian Cardenas and relief pitcher Mickey Storey joining the club from (Triple-A) Sacramento. Neither played Thursday night, but both players will be in uniform Friday.

Ports Sweep Blaze with 7-3 Victory

STOCKTON, Calif. - With the first half winding down, the Stockton Ports (28-33) earned their first sweep of the season, as they conquered the Bakersfield Blaze (25-34) in a 7-3 victory. The Ports have now won four straight games, setting a new season-long winning streak.

The Ports took the lead in the second inning. With two outs, Ortiz walked. He was followed on base by Paramore, who singled. That brought designated hitter Keough to the plate. Pimentel balked during Keough's at-bat, which allowed both runners to advance. Keough then singled to center field to bring home both runners to make it 2-0, and advanced to second on the throw. Ports second baseman Michael Richard struck out to end the inning.

Stockton went ahead 4-0 in the third. Shortstop Tyler Ladendorf singled with one out to get things rolling for the Ports. Stephen Parker slammed a double to center field that brought home Ladendorf, who collided with catcher Doug Hogan in front of the plate. Ladendorf was easily safe. Parker advanced to third on the throw. Jeremy Barfield stepped up to the plate for his second appearance on the night. While he was batting, Pimentel threw a wild pitch, and Parker came running home. Stockton added another run in the fifth to make it 5-0 on an RBI double by left fielder Todd Johnson.

The Blaze were held scoreless until the eighth inning. Smalley was on the mound for the Ports, and second baseman Davis Stoneburner came up to bat. He singled to get things started for Bakersfield. Engel Beltre followed suit with a single. First baseman Johnny Whittleman hit into a fielder's choice to put runners on the corners with one out. Designated hitter Mike Bianucci then dropped his sixth home run of the year just over the mini monster wall in left field to make it 5-3. Smalley retired the next two batters to end the threat.

Petey Paramore responded in kind in the bottom of the eighth. He slammed a two-run homer over the Food 4 Less sign in left field and into the Ports bullpen to make it 7-3. It was his third homer of the year.

Stockton closer Paul Smyth retired the side in order in the top of the ninth to seal the victory.

The Ports will take on the Modesto Nuts and look to gain more ground in the standings in a three-game series starting on Friday at 7:05 PM at Banner Island Ballpark. RHP Shawn Haviland (5-2, 3.97) will start for Stockton while RHP Rob Scahill (2-4, 7.69) will be on the mound for Modesto.

Cougars Win Third Straight Series

Kane County wins another set thanks to Krol, Dixon

GENEVA, Ill. – Thanks to a 4-3 victory over the Fort Wayne TinCaps on Thursday night in front of 6,451 at Elfstrom Stadium, the Kane County Cougars have won three straight series for the first time this season. Ian Krol posted his second straight win, Rashun Dixon homered, scored three times and made two great defensive plays and the Cougars won for the seventh time in 10 times.

Krol (4-2) gave up two unearned runs on three hits, walked one and fanned two over five innings. He lowered his ERA to 1.87, leaving in line for a loss but getting the win thanks to the Cougars' two-run bottom of the fifth. After Dixon had homered in the third, the Cougars took the lead in the fifth on an RBI single from Myrio Richard and a base-loaded walk by Conner Crumbliss. They added one more in the seventh on Crumbliss' run-scoring grounder to make it 4-2.

Jose Pina worked two scoreless innings, and Connor Hoehn logged a run-free eighth thanks to Dixon's terrific glove work with a pair of diving catches. Jose Guzman yielded one run in the ninth before Jonathan Galvez was caught stealing to end the game. Guzman contributed his sixth save. The three Cougars relievers combined to give up one hit over four innings. Daniel Sarria (1-2) suffered the loss for the TinCaps (30-31).

The Cougars (28-33) continue the six-game homestand Friday night at 7 CT with the start of a three-game series with the Lake County Captains (39-21). Rob Gilliam (3-4, 4.33) will face Clayton Cook (1-4, 4.96). The game will be broadcast on WBIG 1280-AM and online at www.kccougars.com with pregame coverage starting at 6:45 p.m.