

**Oakland A's starter Gio Gonzalez pays for mistakes -- pair of two-run homers**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

The odds of the A's lighting up the scoreboard this weekend don't appear great, which means their pitchers don't have much margin for error.

Left-hander Gio Gonzalez paid dearly Friday night for two mistakes that doomed the A's in a 6-2 defeat to the Giants in the opener of a three-game series at AT&T Park.

Gonzalez has battled control problems at times this season, and those struggles surfaced again.

One thing he generally hadn't done was fall victim to the long ball. But he surrendered a pair of two-run home runs, his first multihomer game this season, and lost for the first time in six starts.

Pat Burrell hit a two-run shot in the third and Bengie Molina went deep in the sixth, which chased Gonzalez from the game.

"Two mistake pitches make it a different game," Gonzalez said.

The A's have their work cut out this weekend from an offensive standpoint.

Catcher Kurt Suzuki, their leading home run hitter, will miss all three games because he's on bereavement leave after the death of his grandfather in Hawaii.

Speedy leadoff hitter Rajai Davis missed his fourth straight game with a sore left hamstring, and it's unknown if he'll be available today.

And the A's are without the designated hitter as they begin this stretch of nine games in National League ballparks.

Today they face Barry Zito (6-2, 3.15 ERA), and Sunday they step in against Matt Cain (5-4, 2.11).

"This team, we haven't changed (all season)," A's outfielder Gabe Gross said. "We go into games and battle. We're going to scratch and claw and get what we can get."

The A's struck in the first inning with a run off two-time NL Cy Young Award winner Tim Lincecum (6-2, 3.12). Kevin Kouzmanoff extended his hitting streak to 12 games with a two-out RBI single. The A's would get just three more runners as far as second base.

Gonzalez (6-4, 3.79) was looking forward to his first chance to swing the bat in a major league game. His challenge on the mound was big enough.

He walked four in 51/3 innings, the sixth time in his 13 starts that he's issued at least four free passes. But his wildness Friday didn't hurt him early.

Back-to-back walks helped the Giants load the bases with no outs in the second. But Gonzalez struck out Lincecum and got Andres Torres to hit into a 6-4-3 double play to escape the jam.

"It boosted a little confidence in myself," Gonzalez said. "If I could have taken back a pitch in the following inning, would have loved to."

After walking Juan Uribe with two outs in the third, Gonzalez hung a 1-0 changeup to Burrell, who lined a two-run homer into the left field seats to give the Giants the lead for good, 2-1.

In the sixth, Molina launched another two-run shot to left to make it 4-1. Gonzalez was trying to bust a fastball inside but caught too much of the plate.

"We were hoping he could get a ground ball with Molina up," A's manager-for-a-day Tye Waller said. "But (Molina's) a tough hitter, and he got him."

Waller was subbing for manager Bob Geren, who attended his son's high school graduation.

Catcher Landon Powell was called up from Triple-A Sacramento to take Suzuki's roster spot and went 1-for-4 with three strikeouts.

The Giants added two insurance runs in the seventh off Tyson Ross, who now has a 6.09 ERA in 19 relief appearances.

bay bridge series

A's lead series 3-1

Today: A's (Ben Sheets 2-5) at Giants (Barry Zito 6-2), 6:05 p.m. TV: CSNBA, CSNCA.

Radio: 680-AM, 860-AM, 990-AM, 1010-AM, 1640-AM, 1190-AM

### **Oakland A's update: Elbow pain could delay Dallas Braden's next start**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Elbow pain could delay Braden's next start

Dallas Braden said an MRI taken Friday morning showed he has tendinitis in the flexor tendon of his left elbow, which could push back his next start a few days.

Braden gave up 11 hits in Wednesday's loss to the Los Angeles Angels, saying afterward that he felt tightness in his forearm during the game and in the days leading up to it.

His next scheduled turn would come in Tuesday's road trip opener against the Chicago Cubs. But Braden said he'd likely pitch Thursday to give his elbow a few more days of rest, a plan that has yet to be confirmed by the A's.

Manager Bob Geren was away from the team Friday to attend his son Bobby's graduation from San Ramon Valley High. Bench coach Tye Waller, who served as manager against the Giants at AT&T Park, said if Braden needs more time, that decision would be made in the coming days.

Monday's day off gives the A's flexibility to juggle their rotation. Trevor Cahill could pitch Tuesday, still throwing on his regular four days' rest, and Gio Gonzalez would follow Wednesday.

Braden's injury appears rather mild. But the A's rotation already is without Justin Duchscherer, who had hip surgery that's expected to sideline him all season, and Brett Anderson, who is out indefinitely with an elbow injury.

Braden sprained his left ankle in mid-May and has collected an assortment of injuries over his career.

But he said he's never had any trouble in his elbow area until now.

"It's the big leagues," he said. "Ask any pitcher the last time his arm felt good, and it was probably when he was 12. You take these things as they come."

The World Cup began Friday in South Africa, and nobody on the A's was happier about that than designated hitter/avid soccer fan Jack Cust. He said he played soccer until he was 13, giving up the sport after being slide-tackled by a goalkeeper and breaking his leg. He tuned in to World Cup action Friday morning but said he doesn't have any loyalties other than pulling for the U.S. squad. "I just like to watch good soccer," Cust said.

The A's came to terms with 17 draft picks, the highest being sixth-round pick Tony Thompson, a third baseman out of the University of Kansas.

### **Another poll, another strong show of support for A's ballpark in San Jose**

By Tracy Seipel, San Jose Mercury News

The group Pro Baseball for San Jose on Friday released results of a poll in which 79 percent of participants agreed luring the Oakland A's would be a good investment for the city.

The poll asked 402 likely voters to rate components of the stadium plan on a 1 to 10 scale, with 1 being strongly opposed and 10 strongly in favor. Among the highlights:

77 percent rated the statement, "The A's will pay the entire cost to build the stadium" an 8 or higher.

72 percent rated the statement, "The plan will not require any tax increase, bond issue, or any money from the city's general fund" an 8 or higher.

70 percent rated the statement, "The ballpark will be highly connected to transit, with current stations for Caltrain and light rail and future stations for BART and high speed rail all located next to the stadium" an 8 or higher.

Businessman Michael Mulcahy, co-chair of the pro-stadium group with former Mayor Susan Hammer, said the results prove voters "recognize the value of this opportunity."

The telephone survey was conducted between April 19 and 21 by EMC Research and had a margin of error of plus or minus 4.9 percent.

A poll commissioned in March by the Mercury News found that 62 percent of San Jose voters favored a plan that would hold the A's responsible for the costs of building and operating a downtown ballpark on city-purchased property, with a guarantee that no taxes would be increased to fund the project.

That question was posed to 532 registered voters by San Jose State University's Survey and Policy Research Institute on behalf of the newspaper. The margin of error for the poll was 4.25 percent.

Contact Tracy Seipel at 408 275-0140.

### **Chin Music: Braden has tendinitis in elbow, might have his next start pushed back**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/11/2010 6:49PM

We're about 30 minutes until game time here at AT&T Park. It's shaping up to be a great night weather-wise, which sets the stage for an entertaining pitching battle between Gio Gonzalez and Tim Lincecum ...

I'm not sure how much Gonzalez will get to swing away, but he was taking some big cuts in batting practice and hit at least one homer that I saw to left field.

—Pregame A's news of the day: Dallas Braden had an MRI this morning that showed some tendinitis in his left elbow. With Monday's day off, the A's have some wiggle room with their rotation, and Braden said he would likely be pushed back two days and throw Thursday against the Cubs. That would indicate that Trevor Cahill would start Tuesday (still on his regular four days' rest) and Gonzalez would pitch Wednesday. That hasn't been confirmed yet by the team, so write this plan in pencil.

—With Bob Geren away from the team tonight to attend his son's high school graduation, bench coach Tye Waller is the interim skipper. That meant he also got to conduct his first pregame media session. Waller is a perpetually upbeat guy who always has a smile on his face, and he was no different talking to reporters.

Among the newsy bits he shared:

—He expected Rajai Davis (left hamstring) might be available to play defense tonight if the situation arose in the late innings. Davis said he was going to hit, run and do all the standard pregame activity to see how his leg felt.

—Waller said he and Geren each presented a potential starting lineup for tonight, and then put their heads together to hash out the actual starting nine. Mark Ellis gets another crack in the leadoff spot.

—As expected, Kurt Suzuki was placed on the bereavement list and catcher Landon Powell was called up from Triple-A Sacramento. Suzuki is expected back for Tuesday's road trip opener against the Cubs.

The full lineups:

A's: Ellis 2B, Barton 1B, Sweeney RF, Kouzmanoff 3B, Gross CF, Powell C, Patterson LF, Pennington SS, Gonzalez P.

Giants: Torres RF, Sanchez 2B, Posey 1B, Uribe SS, Burrell LF, Molina C, Sandoval 3B, Rowand CF, Lincecum P.

### **Role reversal for staff in bay series**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

When the A's played the Giants on the other side of the bay last month, they held San Francisco to one run in three games.

On Friday night, Gio Gonzalez gave up four times that, surrendering two two-run homers in Oakland's 6-2 loss at AT&T Park. The A's have dropped four in a row at San Francisco.

"Two mistake pitches make a difference," said Gonzalez, who recorded his first loss since May 12; the left-hander had won his past three decisions.

Rookie Tyson Ross also did not fare well, allowing two runs in an inning, including one that scored on a wild pitch. If he continues to have mediocre to poor results while working in middle relief, there's always the chance that the team will consider sending the former Cal pitcher back to Triple-A to become a starter again.

Ross, 23, was an unexpected addition to the Opening Day roster, particularly because he had not thrown in relief before, and he was solid for the first month or so. Recently, he has had a tougher time of it.

"It's a little frustrating," Ross said. "There are some minimal adjustments I need to make. I need to keep pounding the zone, work the middle of the plate, let the pitches' movement work for me. It's hard in a pressure situation to be extra fine, and throw a wild pitch - I have to be confident in my stuff."

Over Ross' past eight outings, he has an ERA of 17.34, and he has allowed six hits and seven walks in 4 2/3 innings. In 19 relief appearances overall, he is 1-2 with a 6.08 ERA.

"Tyson was outstanding early," said bench coach Tye Waller, who is serving as manager in Bob Geren's absence. "We've got to give him a chance to get it back."

Gonzalez knows all about youthful struggles; his were well-publicized, and he spent some time bouncing between Triple-A and the big leagues. He knows exactly what Ross is going through.

"A pitcher like Tyson, he has everything, he's exciting to watch - he just needs to take a deep breath and trust his stuff. I had to hit a couple of walls before I learned to make an adjustment, and he'll make one, too. He's going to get the opportunity; Oakland knows what they're doing with the young guys, and he's going to be a great pitcher. We just have to be patient."

On Friday, Gonzalez had a tiny flashback to his former emotional self, the result of a tight strike zone, but he snapped back from a bases-loaded, nobody-out situation in the second inning with a strikeout and a double play.

The next inning, he walked Juan Uribe with two outs, and Pat Burrell lined a 1-0 changeup over the wall in the left-field corner; Gonzalez said he should have stuck to the fastball away to Burrell. In the sixth, Bengie Molina banded a two-run shot to left, too, a 1-2 fastball that Gonzalez said he left over the plate.

Friday night was the first time Gonzalez had allowed two homers in a game this season. In six May starts, he gave up two combined.

## Ailing starter Braden will have start delayed

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Oakland already has two members of the starting rotation on the disabled list, **Justin Duchscherer** and **Brett Anderson**, and now **Dallas Braden's** number of nagging issues includes flexor-tendon tendinitis and epicondylitis, better known as tennis elbow.

That's enough of a concern so that Mr. Perfect will get his next start pushed back from Tuesday to probably Thursday, Braden said. The day could change depending on how he feels. Because the A's have a day off Monday, they could move him to Saturday if need be.

Braden's left ankle sprain has healed, but he has a chronic nerve problem in his left foot - and the rash that initially led to that nerve damage has returned, Braden said, as he rolled up his pants leg to show a red patch above his foot. Braden said that it was probably the result of humidity on the last road trip.

**Davis tonight? Tye Waller**, serving as A's manager while **Bob Geren** attended his son **Bobby's** high school graduation in San Ramon, said outfielder **Rajai Davis** was available to play defense Friday evening, and Waller was optimistic that Davis would start tonight against the Giants.

Davis said after the game he believes he'll be in the lineup tonight.

**Briefly: Kevin Kouzmanoff** went 3-for-4 to extend his career-high hitting streak to 12 games and drove in a run. ... **Jack Cust** provided a pinch-hit infield single to drive in a run in the eighth, beating **Tim Lincecum**, who was late covering, to the bag. ... With catcher **Kurt Suzuki** on bereavement leave, **Landon Powell** was recalled. He went 1-for-4. ... The A's agreed to terms with 17 of the players they drafted this week, including sixth-rounder **Tony Thompson**, a third baseman from the University of Kansas; San Diego right-hander **Matt Thomson**, a 12th-rounder from Santa Rosa; and USF catcher **Ryan Lipkin**, a 24th-rounder.

## A'S LEADING OFF

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle

**Setting the standard:** Ben Sheets, the A's starter tonight, was named the worst hitter of the last decade by Baseball America. His career .076 average is the second lowest of all time among players with a minimum of 300 plate appearances. "I'm terrible," he said.

## Giants are just one big bat away

Bruce Jenkins, Chronicle Staff Writer

Short takes from the 3-Dot Lounge, where we've passed out earplugs to fend off the sound of those angry World Cup hornets:

This might come as a shock to the talk-show callers who rail at **Brian Sabean**, **Bruce Bochy** and the lineup, but the Giants are one man away from World Series contention. I have no idea how they score a legitimate power hitter, someone who could crank out 35-40 a year, but that's the missing piece.

The rotation is fine. The bullpen, glitches aside, is solid. If you start the lineup with **Andres Torres, Freddy Sanchez, Pablo Sandoval, Aubrey Huff, Juan Uribe and Buster Posey**, that's six good hitters - period. Make it seven if **Pat Burrell** doesn't lapse into one of his strikeout funks. **Mark DeRosa** will be invaluable if he ever gets healthy (think next year). Add a power hitter to the mix, and you can easily carry a slumping **Bengie Molina**. If you find this doesn't make sense, then you're not watching the games. You're merely yelling a lot.

### **Temper criticism**

So **Madison Bumgarner** had a bit of a temper tantrum in the minors. Good. Nothing at all wrong with that. There was a disturbing bit of monotone to his act, and it's fine to release some pent-up emotion (just don't make it a habit - very doubtful in his case). ... You wonder if it occurs to the Giants that Posey easily could play first base, third base or a corner outfield in the long run, adding years to his career. Again, if you get that cleanup hitter, you can afford (post-Molina) to sign a light-hitting catcher who handles the pitching staff well. ... We get tired of belittling the madness of a pitch-count world, and fortunately, we're not alone. The most relevant baseball statement of the year came from **John Smoltz**, a great athlete who knows pitching as well as anyone, on the MLB Network on Tuesday night. Right about the time **Stephen Strasburg** threw a 98-mph fastball in the seventh inning, Smoltz said, "I just think it's a defeated mind-set to think you know how many innings a pitcher *should* have, or how many innings he's going to need, before his arm injury or this or that. You let the pitcher - *his* mechanics, *his* body - tell *you* where he's at, instead of dictating what it should be." That's the gospel, friends, and Bochy gets it when **Matt Cain** steams into the late innings with a gem.

### **Trumpeting trouble**

Oh, you bet the vuvuzelas were out in force during Friday's World Cup openers. The buzzing noise from those plastic trumpets was even worse than expected - as loud for France-Uruguay as for the host South Africans against Mexico. It's soccer's kindergarten, without a teacher in sight, and believe this, ESPN: You're going to lose thousands of viewers as the tournament progresses. Got a number of e-mails Friday from fans saying they simply couldn't stand it. ... Loved that scene before the opener when FIFA President **Sepp Blatter**, who could have issued a ban on the contraptions, prepared to address the crowd. Behind him, a gigantic "Quiet, Please" appeared on the scoreboard - as the noise got louder. It's all on you, Sepp, you preposterous old fool. ... We were Dead Wrong in Public on USC, figuring such severe sanctions would not come down, but not because the NCAA was afraid to crush a powerhouse. It's just such a dumb, hopelessly naive notion. One guy gets a little extra cash (happens everywhere, every school, don't kid yourself) and you remove a national title? Torment the lives of players who worked so hard to get it? Strip the guy of the Heisman Trophy? That's simply a joke. Fire the athletic director, if you're that upset. Come down on the coach. But that title stands, and **Reggie Bush**, don't let 'em take that Heisman Trophy. Hide it at a relative's house; get a really vicious guard dog. You earned that thing, and it's yours forever.

### **Drumbeat: Braden's next start will be pushed back**

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at AT&T Park 6/11/2010 5:54pm

Dallas Braden said an MRI showed he has inflammation in his left forearm, with tendinitis the primary culprit, and he also has epicondylitis - tennis elbow. That's what Andrew Bailey had earlier this year. Braden got the MRI today after a doctor's appointment yesterday determined the need for one. I'd been told he'd already had one yesterday but that the results weren't back yet; guess that's why there were no results.

Braden said that he'll be pushed back from Tuesday to Thursday next week; the A's offday Monday will allow them to do so because they can have Trevor Cahill (sorry, said Ben Sheets initially, brain cramp) and tonight's starter, Gio Gonzalez, go on a normal five days' rest.

That decision isn't entirely firm, Braden said. If he feels much better, he might start earlier, or, if he needed a few more days, the A's could push him all the way back to Saturday if need be (though at that point, they'd probably be considering the DL as a possibility).

Braden left without speaking to reporters the other night, though I later caught him by phone to get a pool report. That's unusual for a media-friendly fellow such as Braden, and it's frowned upon for starting pitchers not to speak, anyway, because it leaves teammates to answer the questions, which isn't cool.

As it turns out, Braden left us a note, which we never saw. He said it said:

Forearm tightened up.

Ankle is fine.

Foot still numb.

Couldn't get the big out when I needed one.

That's pretty funny. So I won't chastise him more for ducking out any more than I already have, but you hate to see the best quote on the team flying out the door without stopping.

Rajai Davis is available to play defense tonight, according to acting manager Tye Waller. It's unlikely he'd be used as a pinch runner; the team wants to make sure that left hamstring strain is all healed, and Davis said he doesn't think he can keep from going all out. Really, that's probably a good reason to keep him out of the outfield, too, you'd think.

As expected, Landon Powell was called up with Kurt Suzuki on the bereavement list following the death of his paternal grandfather.

This is the lineup, which Waller said he and Geren came up with together, which isn't unusual, he said. There's a lot of collaboration with the staff, according to Waller: Ellis 2b, Barton 1b, Sweeney rf, Kouzmanoff 3b, Gross cf, Powell c, Patterson lf, Pennington ss, Gonzalez p

### **A's greeted with loss in San Francisco**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

SAN FRANCISCO -- There's no place like home.

And oh how the A's wished they were home, rather than in the confines of China Basin, witnessing a 6-2 loss to the Giants, as they did Friday night.

- **29 wins**
- **28 wins**

For it was at home, just three weeks ago, where Oakland showcased its brooms in a three-game series sweep of San Francisco.

It was at home where the A's outscored the Giants, 10-1, in said trio of contests. And it was at home where starter Gio Gonzalez, pitching in the series finale, retired each of the 20 final batters he faced in a two-hit, eight-inning shutout.

But a windy China Basin it was Friday night, when Gonzalez took to the bump yet again against the club's cross-Bay rivals at AT&T Park in San Francisco -- where the Giants felt a little *too* comfy at home.

"We remember what happened over there," San Francisco catcher Bengie Molina. "We wanted to come out and score some runs. We were all pumped to face those guys."

It showed, as they decided not to play the shy card this time around, instead choosing to pounce early on Gonzalez from the get-go, tallying two hits and three walks in the first two frames. The A's lefty, showing a case of command struggles, wiggled his way out of trouble before watching it all catch up to him in the third, when he walked Juan Uribe and offered up a two-run homer to Pat Burrell.

"Changeup to Burrell with a long bat," Gonzalez said. "I beat him all day with fastballs away ... I beat myself out of the game."

Not before another two-run long ball, though -- this time to Bengie Molina with one out in the fifth, at which point Gonzalez exited with four runs, six hits, four walks and four strikeouts attached to his name.

"That was just a fastball in," he said. "Two missed pitches ... without those, it would have been a different game."

It was a noticeably different Gonzalez, who has been working all season on command -- both of the strike zone and his emotions, as evidenced by the fact he entered the matchup having walked just two batters or fewer in six outings.

But on Friday, his four free passes quickly led to a 104 pitch count, and he appeared noticeably frustrated. Nevertheless, it was not the same scene witnessed May 22, when he two-hit the Giants through eight on just 95 pitches.

"Gio's that type of pitcher," said bench coach Tye Waller, acting as manager Friday in Bob Geren's absence. "He was just missing all night by that much. He was close."

However, close just doesn't do it when Tim Lincecum is also on the mound. The Giants rightly, per usual against the A's, limited his opponents to two runs on seven hits while walking just one and fanning seven through eight solid innings of work. In the process, he improved to 4-0 with a 1.45 ERA in five career starts against Oakland.

The A's notched a run in the first frame thanks to an RBI single off the bat of Kevin Kouzmanoff, who extended his career-high hitting streak to 12 games and now owns a .382 (13-for-34) lifetime mark against Lincecum.

The A's third baseman couldn't quite save the contest all by his lonesome, though. Following the run-scoring hit, the A's watched Lincecum retire 15 of his next 16 batters.

"He's got one of the best changeups in the game," said Daric Barton. "He can throw it any time. He also threw a lot of curveballs early in the count, keeping guys off his fastball and changeup, and that just opened the door for his changeup late in the count.

"Lincecum tonight showed why he's a two-time Cy Young winner. You got to tip your hat. He pitched a great game."

It was one that was missing a dose of speed and pop, as Rajai Davis (hamstring) and Kurt Suzuki (bereavement list) were out of the mix, as was a designated hitter. At the same time, it was also one that included Uribe, Burrell and young phenom Buster Posey, all of whom were not around in Gonzalez's May start against San Francisco but combined for five hits and three RBIs Friday.

Still, Gonzalez offered no excuses for his mediocre performance, which also happened to involve his first Major League at-bat -- a four-pitch strikeout against Lincecum.

"He kind of made a funny comment -- 'Whoa, that was fast,'" Molina recalled.

Gonzalez hit a line-drive ball to first base in his final at-bat to secure a 0-for-2 night. But he'd much rather have his own pitches back than the ones he received.

"If I could take away those home run pitches," he said, "I'd love to."

### **Braden pushed back with inflamed elbow**

By Alex Espinoza / MLB.com

SAN FRANCISCO -- Oakland southpaw Dallas Braden underwent an MRI exam on Friday that revealed inflammation in the flexor tendon of the elbow in his throwing arm.

The team has pushed his scheduled Tuesday start back to Thursday, the finale of a three-game set at Wrigley Field against the Cubs.

The 26-year-old said he's never had any previous elbow issues and that he started feeling tightness in the area before his start on Wednesday. Braden said he felt the elbow really tighten up in the third or fourth inning and pinpointed a bullpen session that may have sparked the injury.



"I was just working on cutters and sliders and they were some of the best I've thrown," Braden said. "My arm's not used to throwing good pitches, I guess."

It was just the latest chapter in an eventful season for Braden. Sure, he had the perfect game, but he's also had to deal with plenty of obstacles along the way.

For one, his left foot is partly numb and probably will be for the rest of his life. Not to mention the week-long mystery illness that affected at least one of his starts and the rolled ankle he suffered while jogging up stairs at Arlington, both of which occurred in late May.

"It is what it is," Braden said. "It's baseball. You ask a pitcher the last time his arm felt good, it was probably when he was 12. You just take these things as they come. It's a long season."

Braden said he could have played catch on Friday if he wanted to, but that he was going to let the arm rest and see how it felt Saturday.

### **Suzuki placed on bereavement list**

The Athletics placed catcher Kurt Suzuki on the bereavement list on Friday and recalled catcher Landon Powell from Triple-A Sacramento to take his place on the active roster.

Suzuki's absence stems from a death in the family, but he is expected to miss only the upcoming three-game Interleague series against the Giants, which begins Friday night. A player has to be on the bereavement list a minimum of three days -- and a maximum of seven.

Powell is up with the A's for the fourth time this year, as he's batted .261 with one homer and five RBIs in 15 previous games in the Majors. He was batting .200 in 14 games in Sacramento.

"It wears you out a little bit, mentally and physically," Powell said. "It's a lot of plane rides and travel days. And I got a wife and a one-year-old, it's tough on them."

Suzuki is hitting .274 with a team-leading eight homers and 29 RBIs in 41 games.

### **Waller take A's reins with Geren away**

SAN FRANCISCO -- For the first time in his big league coaching career, A's bench coach Tye Waller served as manager on Friday in the opener of a three-game set with the Giants.

Waller filled in for Bob Geren, who attended the graduation of his son, Bobby, from nearby San Ramon Valley High School. It's been quite a week for Bobby Geren, as he was selected by the A's in the 36th round of the First-Year Player Draft on Wednesday, but he is expected to fulfill his commitment to play baseball at Princeton.

"Now I know I have to make the final decision," Waller said. "We bounce things off each other during the course of the game, but the game really dictates what you do. You follow the game and follow the trends and just try to put players in the right place to succeed."

Waller said his only previous big league managing experience occurred when Geren was tossed out of the game, the latest time coming on May 23.

Waller, who played 11 seasons professionally, spent almost all of his playing years within National League organizations. He also spent 19 years in the San Diego Padres' organization to start his coaching career.

Waller said he was looking forward to getting his managerial debut in Interleague Play.

"I came up a National League guy," Waller said. "I kind of like the action of the National League game, there's more strategy involved. ... But it's all baseball at the end of the day."

Waller said he and Bob Geren each made a lineup before Friday's contest and discussed them before coming up with the final order. Second baseman Mark Ellis hit leadoff on Friday for the second time in three days.

## **A's come to terms with 17 draftees**

SAN FRANCISCO -- The A's announced on Friday they have agreed to terms with 17 players they picked in the First-Year Player Draft earlier this week.

Headlining the signees were sixth-round pick Tony Thompson, a junior third baseman from the University of Kansas, and ninth-round pick A.J. Kirby-Jones, a slugging junior first baseman from Tennessee Tech.

After missing 19 games with a broken knee cap, Thompson batted .338 with six home runs and 38 RBIs in 40 games in 2010. He also drew 29 walks while striking out just 17 times.

Kirby-Jones proved to be one of the biggest power bats in NCAA Division I this season for Tennessee Tech. He hit 26 home runs, good for second in the nation, while drawing 58 walks, sixth-best in the country. Kirby-Jones totaled a .388 average and 71 RBIs.

Matt Thomson, a Santa Rosa, Calif., native from the University of San Diego, also signed. He was the highest-picked pitcher signed by Oakland. The 12th-rounder went 1-3 with a 3.38 ERA in 27 appearances (one start) in 2010. He recorded seven saves, striking out 56 while walking 13 in 42 2/3 innings of work.

Other signed pitchers include righties Drew Tyson (17th round), Jose Macias (18th), Zachary Thornton (23rd), James Frankoff (27th), Aaron Larsen (34th) and Andrew Bailey (35th). The A's have also inked a pair of southpaws, Jacob Brown (26th) and Jeff Urlaub (30th).

Rounding out the signed position players are shortstop Wade Kirkland (11th), catcher Ryan Lipkin (24th), outfielder John Whitaker (25th), outfielder Zachary Hurley (29th), catcher Daniel Petitti (37th) and second baseman Michael Fabiaschi (38th).

## **Worth noting**

A's outfielder Rajai Davis was held out of the starting lineup on Friday, but his return appears imminent. As of Friday evening, Davis said he was yet to test out his strained left hamstring at 100 percent. Bench coach Tye Waller said Davis was available as a defensive replacement Friday and that he could return to the starting lineup on Saturday. Davis has been out since straining his left hamstring trying to leg out a triple on Monday.

## **Zito looking for first win against A's**

By John Schlegel / MLB.com

Barry Zito has been on the other side of the bay from his Oakland beginnings since 2007, and he's still looking for his first 'W' vs. the A's.

He'll get another chance on Saturday as the Bay Bridge Series continues at AT&T Park, with Zito continuing his best National League season against A's right-hander Ben Sheets, still trying to find a groove in his first American League season.

In four career starts against the A's, Zito is 0-4 with an 8.85 ERA. The A's remain the only Major League franchise he has not defeated.

Zito's last attempt in May was one of his better efforts, though it wound up looking rough statistically, as he gave up six runs on nine hits in 6 2/3 innings. His first attempt at facing them in 2007, he lasted just four innings, allowing seven runs.

Zito said the May outing "was a lot different than it was three years ago. It was just like any other game, pretty much. I didn't know how it was going to be coming out, but it was like any other park. I didn't have a lot of the thoughts going on my head that I did back in '07, like 'It's weird on this side of the field' and all that stuff."

Sheets, meanwhile, is 0-2 in his last six starts despite a 3.58 ERA and .223 opponents' batting average. No, he's not necessarily looking forward to grabbing a bat again -- at .076 through 433 at-bats, second lowest among Major League pitchers with at least 200 at-bats.

### **Athletics: Suzuki on bereavement list**

The A's will be without starting catcher Kurt Suzuki for the duration of the Bay Bridge Series, as he was placed on the bereavement list on Friday to attend to a death in the family. Landon Powell was called up for the fourth time this year, making the start Friday night and going 1-for-4 with three strikeouts. Suzuki, hitting .274 with a team-leading eight homers and 29 RBIs in 41 games, has been one of the hottest hitters for the A's, going 16-for-44 with four homers in 10 June games.

### **Giants: Offense heating up?**

Coming off a road trip in which they averaged 4.7 runs per game and batted .303, the Giants put up six runs in the opener against the A's. The usual suspects of late contributed -- Freddy Sanchez with two hits, Buster Posey with one. And Pat Burrell and Bengie Molina hit two-run homers. "I think we've been swinging the bats better," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "We're putting more runs on the board -- although we know we were some hitter's parks there -- but the quality of our at-bats have been much better."

### **Worth noting**

Now 3-1 thus far in Interleague Play this season, the A's are heading into their 15-game stretch against the NL in fine shape to improve on a 5-13 mark last year, tied for the worst in the Majors

### **Lincecum gets back on track**

### **Burrell homers in Bay Area debut as Giants' ace snaps wins for first time in five starts**

By JANIE McCAULEY, ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO — Pat Burrell hit a go-ahead two-run homer in his Giants home debut back in his native Bay Area, helping Tim Lincecum end a four-start winless streak and lead San Francisco past the A's, 6-2, on Friday night in the Bay Bridge Series.

Bengie Molina added a two-run shot of his own in the sixth off Gio Gonzalez (6-4), ending a 98 at-bat homerless streak.

The two runs from Burrell's homer doubled the Giants' total from all three games of a sweep by the A's last month across the bay in Oakland. His first drive since joining San Francisco on June 4 also snapped a 22-inning scoreless streak against the A's.

Lincecum (6-2), the two-time reigning NL Cy Young Award winner, won for the first time since May 15 against Houston and ended a two-start skid at home.

Lincecum sure seems back on track. He allowed two runs on seven hits, struck out seven and walked one in eight innings.

Brian Wilson relieved Jeremy Affeldt in the ninth with two outs and runners on the corners, getting Cliff Pennington on a called third strike to end it for his 16th save in 18 chances.

Giants manager Bruce Bochy moved rookie Buster Posey up to the No.3 hole for the first time and dropped the struggling Pablo Sandoval to seventh. Posey delivered with an RBI triple in the seventh, when San Francisco scored another run on Tyson Ross' wild pitch.

The hit gave Posey a 10-game hitting streak, longest by an NL rookie in 2010.

Oakland's Kevin Kouzmanoff extended his career-best hitting streak to 12 games with an RBI single in the first that scored Ryan Sweeney after he advanced twice on wild pitches. It took Lincecum 17 pitches to get through the inning. After that, he cruised.

Gabe Gross grounded out to end the first, starting a stretch in which Lincecum retired 16 of 17 batters and allowed only a one-out walk to Mark Ellis in the third before Kouzmanoff singled leading off the seventh. Jack Cust had a pinch-hit RBI single in the eighth for the A's, who were managed by bench coach Tye Waller as Bob Geren was attending the high school graduation of his son, Bobby.

Gonzalez lost for the first time in six starts since a defeat May 12 at Texas. The lefty combined with closer Andrew Bailey on a three-hit shutout of San Francisco on May 22.

Gonzalez struck out on four pitches in his first career at-bat and first since 2006 while with Double-A Reading in the Phillies organization. He was 2 for 16 that season.

Ellis stole second against Lincecum in the third. Runners have gone 17 of 17 on steal attempts with Lincecum on the mound dating to last season, including 14 for 14 this year.

But Ellis also was called out in a close play at the plate in the first inning on a throw home from Posey at first.

The Giants improved to 5-0 while wearing their "Orange Friday" home jerseys, outscoring opponents 28-7.

## NOTES

-- Giants LF Mark DeRosa, sidelined while dealing with numbness and nerve irritation in his left wrist and hand, was undergoing further tests Friday. A decision on the next step for him could be made in the coming days, and surgery is a possibility.

-- Oakland CF Rajai Davis, whose left hamstring tightened up on a triple Monday, missed his fourth straight start but was expected to return to the lineup Saturday.

-- C Landon Powell was called up from Triple-A Sacramento to replace Kurt Suzuki, who is on the bereavement list for the weekend series.

-- The Giants sold out for the eighth time this season (41,817).

## MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

### **Portland's leadoff man dominated in River Cat loss**

By Robbie Enos / Sacramento River Cats

Faster than a speeding four-seamer and more productive than a good day from Pete Rose, Luis Durango of the Portland Beavers led his team to an 8-4 victory over the Sacramento River Cats on Friday. The super leadoff man was 2-for-3 with a double, three runs scored, two RBI, two walks, and three stolen bases.

Sacramento is now 28-34 on the season, and entered the game 11.5 games out of first place. They are now 3-7 against Portland on the year, a frustrating record against a team that has five less wins for the season.

One bright spot for the River Cats was catcher/third baseman Josh Donaldson, who had an outstanding outing. He has proven to be a productive backstop all season, slugging .514 on the year with seven home runs in 39 games played.

For the night Donaldson was 3-for-5 with two RBIs and two runs scored and just one triple shy for the cycle. Despite having a great day at the plate, Donaldson cost the Cats in the field, committing three errors, two behind the dish and one at third base.

It was all Portland in the first inning, as River Cats starting pitcher Jesus Sanchez could not fool the well prepared Beavers. Durango has been the table setter for Portland all year, leading the team with a .376 on-base percentage. He dropped down a bunt single to lead off the inning, and then took second on a balk by Sanchez.

Portland's offense shifted from small ball to long ball quickly, when Mike Baxter's walk led to a three run bomb over the left field fence, off the bat of Craig Cooper. Cooper's home run was his fourth of the season.

The River Cats answered in the second, starting off with Chris Carter's first triple of the season. After Dallas McPherson walked, Michael Taylor recorded his 26th RBI on a ground ball to score Carter.

With just three hits, the Beavers took a 6-1 lead in the second. Sanchez walked Dusty Ryan, and then surrendered a double to Brad Chalk down the right field line. Ryan and Chalk both scored when Durango proved he could not only score runs, but also bring them home with a 2-RBI double.

Durango wreaked havoc on the bases, stealing third and then scoring on an errant throw by Donaldson. The River Cats were not only getting outplayed, but out hustled. The next batter, Baxter, hit a routine groundball to second baseman Eric Sogard, and then beat it out for an infield single.

The third inning was defined by 2-out rallies. Donaldson hammered a 2-run dinger over the ivy wall in left to put Sacramento back in the game. Portland's Craig Stansbury started a 2-out rally with a single and then a stolen base. Following up with the RBI was another key triple, this time credited to Beaver Chris Stewart.

Sanchez, entered the game with 9.00 ERA in two starts, finished after only 3.0 innings. He gave up six hits, three walks, and struck out two. He recorded five outs through the air as opposed to one out on the ground.

Relieving Sanchez was Marcus McBeth, who allowed no hits in the fourth, but gave up one more run to Portland. McBeth walked Durango on four pitches, who advanced to third on another stolen base and Donaldson throwing error.

Sacramento decided to intentionally walk Mike Baxter, and then unintentionally walked Cooper to load the bases. Driving in Durango on a sacrifice fly was Josh Barfield, giving the Beavers a five run lead.

In the sixth Sacramento narrowed the deficit to four after Donaldson blasted a double and then scored on an RBI single from McPherson.

Donaldson struck again in the seventh, singling with Sogard at second. But it would be all for not as a great throw from left fielder Chalk nailed Sogard at the plate, keeping Portland's cozy lead at four.

A 5'9" spark plug, Durango has become a solid prospect for the Padres organization. Just 24 years of age, he has played six games thus far with the big club in 2010, and played nine games with San Diego last year. In his outings with San Diego this year he scored three runs and collected five hits.

Sacramento and Portland face off again tomorrow at 7:05 p.m. After two more games with the Beavers, the River Cats will begin a home series against Reno on Monday, June 14.

### **'Hounds Fight Against The Wind For A Win**

By Bob Hards / Midland RockHounds

According to the Weather Channel's web site, the West Texas wind was blowing at between 40 and 55 miles per hour in the early going of the ballgame. From there, the conditions went from calm and rainy to calm and a splash of sun and finished with the wind returning, albeit a little kinder and gentler. Oh, by the way ...

The RockHounds and Corpus Christi "played on through," with the 'Hounds defeating the Hooks, 4-2, behind a solid performance from starter Carlos Hernandez and the bat of center fielder Corey Brown.

"Browny" found the right field bullpen in the first inning, a home run much like that hit by Koby Clemens on Thursday night. True, both were "short porch" homers, but both had cut through some major league wind to get out of the yard. Brown's home run, his fourth in 18 games with the 'Hounds in 2010 (and his third in eight games) was the game's first run.

After Corpus tied the game, 1-1, on an error-aided, unearned run in the third, the RockHounds scored in the fourth and fifth, each manufactured with three singles. Josh Horton and Brown drove in the runs, with Corey's second RBI of the night becoming the eventual game-winner.

Adrian Cardenas went 2-for-4 in his return to the RockHounds. "AC" was hitting just .228 at Triple-A Sacramento, so the A's #9 prospect will look to get his stroke back with the 'Hounds. His eighth inning double turned into an insurance run and a 4-2 lead when he scored on Gabe Ortiz' sacrifice fly (on an 0-2 pitch).

Jared Lansford earned a two-inning save, striking out David Cook and Clemens, back-to-back with the tying run at the plate in the last of the ninth. He caught Clemens looking at a high strike to end the game, "Lanny's" seventh save in as many opportunities, and the club's second win in three games in the home stand versus the Hooks.

## **Errors Cost Ports in 10-2 Loss**

**STOCKTON, Calif.** - A rough seventh inning which featured three consecutive Stockton errors cost the Ports (28-34) in a 10-2 loss to the Modesto Nuts (33-27) Friday night at Banner Island Ballpark.

The Nuts also outthit the Ports 13-5 in the contest. Grant Green collected two of the Stockton hits, including a solo home run off Stephen Dodson in the eighth inning. Ryan Ortiz finished the game 0x4 with three strikeouts to snap his hitting streak at six games. Ports starter Shawn Haviland picked up the loss, his third on the year, after allowing two runs on six hits in 5.2 innings. Scott Hodsdon, Trey Barham and Scott Deal all appeared in relief for the Ports.

Modesto made it 1-0 in the first inning. Center fielder Mike Mitchell walked to start the game. He stole second while right fielder Tim Wheeler was at-bat. Wheeler hit a bunt single to put two on for Jordan Pacheco. While Pacheco was at the plate, Ports catcher Petey Paramore had a passed ball which allowed Mitchell to score. Haviland hit a batter later in the inning before retiring a pair of Nuts.

Stockton tied the game in the fourth inning. Center fielder Jermaine Mitchell singled to start the frame. He advanced to second on a single by designated hitter Green. Third baseman Stephen Parker then hit an RBI single to center field to bring home Mitchell.

But the tie didn't last long as Modesto scored their second run in the top of the fifth. A sacrifice fly by Wheeler brought home left fielder Scott Robinson to put the Nuts ahead, 2-1.

The Nuts broke the game open in the seventh inning, scoring seven runs on four hits and three errors. With Hodsdon on the mound to start the inning, Robinson singled. Mitchell then grounded out to Hodsdon on a sacrifice bunt for the first out of the inning. Hodsdon then intentionally walked Wheeler to bring up Pacheco. Pacheco singled and Robinson came running home to make it 3-1. The Ports then called on lefty Trey Barham to pitch. First baseman Ben Paulsen then stepped up to the plate and hit into a fielder's choice for the second out of the inning.

But that's when things started to turn south for Stockton. Thomas Field hit the ball to shortstop Michael Richard, who made a fielding error in trying to get the force out at second. Wheeler scored on the play. Jimmy Cesario then reached on an error by second baseman Gernaldo Castillo which loaded the bases. Third baseman Radames Nazario reached on another Richard error, which allowed Field to score. The score was now 4-1. Beau Seabury singled to score to more runs. Robinson appeared for the second time in the inning, and doubled to left field to score another pair of runs and make it 9-1 in favor of Modesto. Mitchell then grounded out to Parker to end the inning. Of the seven runs scored, only one was earned.

Modesto added their tenth and final run on an RBI double by Paulsen in the eighth inning.

With two out in the bottom of the ninth, Green slammed his fourth home run of the year on a 2-1 pitch to right field to make it 10-2. Neither team would score in the ninth to make that score final.

The Ports will take on the Nuts for Game 2 of the series at 7:05 PM on Saturday. LHP Paul Oseguera (0-1, 6.75) will take the mound for Stockton while LHP Kenny Durst (7-2, 4.42) will start for Modesto.

## **Cougars' Rally in 9<sup>th</sup> Falls Short**

### **Kane County mounts charge but can't tie game**

**GENEVA, III.** – Down, 4-0, through eight innings Friday night at Elfstrom Stadium, the Kane County Cougars rallied for three runs in the bottom of the ninth before falling short by a run in a 4-3 loss to eh Lake County Captains. The Cougars had more hits in the ninth -- four -- than in the previuos eight frames combined, but Mike Gilmartin was thrown out at the plate on a potential game-tying play.

After managing just two hits in five innings against Captains starter Clayton Cook (2-4) and one in three innings against Jose Flores, the Cougars stormed back in the ninth against Preston Guilmet. Anthony Aliotti singled, Rashun Dixon walked and Kent Walton singled to load the bases. Then Gilmartin drilled a two-run single to cut it to 4-2. Myrio Richard roped an ensuing double to the corner in left to score Walton, but Gilmartin was thrown out at the plate on the same play as he was blocked by the catcher Chun Chen. Pinch-hitter Max Stassi followed with a popup to end the game.

Starter Rob Gilliam (3-5) suffered his fourth loss in five outings. He gave up four runs -- three earned -- on eight hits,

walked none and fanned six over six innings. Bo Schultz tossed two scoreless relief innings, and Josh Lansford posted one.

The Cougars (28-34) and Captains (40-21) battle in Game 2 of the series Saturday night at 6 CT. Dan Straily (4-3, 5.25) will face Brett Brach (0-2, 4.5). The game will be broadcast on WBIG 1280-AM and online at [www.kccougars.com](http://www.kccougars.com) with pregame coverage starting at 5:45 p.m.