

Wednesday, June 16, 2010

**Oakland A's update: Starter Trevor Cahill sits through another rain delay**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Cahill sits through another rain delay

CHICAGO — Trevor Cahill has drawn the short straw this season when it comes to rain delays.

The right-hander pitched well two weeks ago in Detroit after the A's endured a nearly three-hour rain delay in a victory over the Tigers.

Cahill played the waiting game again Tuesday but won his career-high fifth straight decision as the A's beat the Chicago Cubs 9-5 before a crowd of 34,390 at Wrigley Field.

The start of the game was delayed 1 hour, 41 minutes.

"It's not something you really like, but you deal with it," Cahill said. "It's two hours extra of waiting around and being bored."

Cahill (6-2) wasn't as sharp as he's been in recent outings. He allowed four runs and six hits in 52/3 innings.

The A's lashed out 13 hits but also benefited from four Cubs errors — two by first baseman Derrek Lee (on consecutive batters) and two by right fielder Tyler Colvin.

Rajai Davis went 3-for-5 with two RBIs and Kevin Kouzmanoff went 3-for-4 to extend his hitting streak to 15 straight games.

Summing up the night, Cliff Pennington tripled to right field in the seventh inning and scored when Colvin's throw got by the cutoff man for an error.

There's much anticipation for when the A's might call up their top prospects, first baseman Chris Carter and outfielder Michael Taylor. The A's, though, swung a trade Tuesday for outfielder Conor Jackson to bolster their offense. Carter hit his 15th homer in Triple-A Sacramento's 3-0 win over Reno on Tuesday and is among the Pacific Coast League leaders in homers and RBIs (47). But he's hitting just .249. Taylor, who recently returned from a calf injury, is hitting .224 with three homers and 28 RBIs. Assistant general manager David Forst said the A's won't rush either prospect, considering neither had substantial Triple-A experience before this season. "As soon as they force our hand and they're ready to go, we'll make room for them," Forst said.

Outfielder Matt Carson was optioned to Sacramento to make room for Jackson. ... Coco Crisp (strained rib cage) went 2-for-3 with a triple and two runs for Sacramento. The A's hope Crisp can be activated from the disabled list during this road trip.

**Oakland A's add some pop to lineup, get Conor Jackson from Arizona Diamondbacks**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

If only most days were like Tuesday for the A's offense.

The hits and runs were plentiful, and with the help of four Chicago Cubs errors, Oakland notched a 9-5 victory in the opener of a three-game series at Wrigley Field.

But the A's made a move earlier in the day to address their Jekyll-and-Hyde hitting tendencies, acquiring outfielder Conor Jackson from the Arizona Diamondbacks for minor league reliever Sam Demel.

Jackson arrived at Wrigley Field about 15 minutes before the rain-delayed first pitch. He took over left field in the bottom of the seventh inning and grounded out in his only at-bat.

Manager Bob Geren said he plans on using the former Cal star as his regular left fielder.

The A's, four games out in the American League West, entered Tuesday tied for the second-fewest home runs in the league (44) and the third-fewest runs (261).

"I think he'll do a lot for our offense," Geren said of Jackson. "He's a high average hitter who can hit some homers. He's not a big home run threat, but 12 to 15 on this team would be one of the (leaders)."

Jackson, 28, provides the right-handed bat the A's were looking for. But his season numbers aren't indicative of the impact the A's believe he can make. He was hitting just .238 with one homer and 11 RBIs in 42 games with Arizona.

Jackson averaged 14 homers and 71 RBIs per season from 2006-08, but he missed most of last season after he came down with valley fever, a fungal infection.

He's a career .277 hitter with 46 homers over five-plus big league seasons.

"We've gone through series where we've swung the bat really well and periods where we've had trouble scoring runs," A's assistant general manager David Forst said. "It's always going to be this way until we get all our guys healthy. This hopefully is a boost for our offense to get us over the hump in some games."

Demel, a third-round draft choice in 2007, was 2-0 with six saves and a 1.26 ERA this season with Triple-A Sacramento.

Forst noted Jackson's patient hitting approach — he has more walks (20) than strikeouts (18) this season.

Jackson is on a one-year, \$3.1 million deal, but the Diamondbacks kicked in \$400,000 as part of the trade to help offset Jackson's salary.

He won't be eligible for free agency until after the 2011 season.

With no DH available as the A's continue a nine-game swing through National League parks, Jackson is likely to platoon in left field with Jack Cust for the short term.

Considering Arizona is buried in last place in the NL West, Jackson said he welcomed the trade. He knows Billy Beane well from when the A's general manager scouted Jackson at Cal.

"A change of scenery is probably the best thing for me," said Jackson, a 2003 first-round draft pick by Arizona.

How well the A's play over the next six-plus weeks could determine whether they try to acquire more help before the July 31 nonwaiver trade deadline.

"We'll see how things go over the next month-and-a half," Forst said. "If the right fit is available, we'll certainly stay open-minded."

Jackson's father, John M. Jackson, is an actor best known for his role on the TV series "JAG."

Conor, a theater major at Cal, has made a cameo appearance on "General Hospital."

TODAY:

A's (Gio Gonzalez 6-4) at Cubs (Ryan Dempster 4-5), 5:05 p.m. TV: CSNCA. Radio: 860-AM; 1640-AM

### **San Jose city council approves environmental impact report for proposed downtown baseball stadium**

By Tracy Seipel tseipel@mercurynews.com

Despite challenges by opponents, the San Jose City Council on Tuesday night unanimously voted to approve a revised environmental impact report related to the proposed Major League Baseball stadium in downtown San Jose.

The San Jose Sharks, Stand for San Jose — a coalition backed by the San Francisco Giants — and a resident who lives near the stadium site said the report, which the city's planning commission approved last month, does not adequately analyze or disclose potential impacts from traffic and parking, among other issues.

Earlier Tuesday, however, the Sharks agreed to drop their appeal after the council voted to amend an agreement with the Sharks. The amendment addresses the team's concerns about traffic and parking around the Diridon Station area and allows the Sharks to build a parking lot just north of HP Pavilion.

Some of the land where the proposed lot would be built is owned by the Sharks, but other pieces of property are not. If property owners refuse to sell to the Sharks, the city and Redevelopment Agency have agreed to invoke eminent domain on the Sharks' behalf. Such action would require City Council approval.

Shasta Hanchett Neighborhood Association president Helen Chapman, one of a number of neighborhood activists who spoke, told the council that if the city could solve the Sharks' concerns, it should also address the concerns of residents who live near the proposed ballpark.

Even though the council approved the environmental report, opponents could still sue the city. Attorneys for Stand for San Jose have said the group is considering litigation.

Whether a stadium will be built depends largely on whether MLB team owners remove the Giants' territorial claim to Santa Clara County. If that happens, Oakland A's owner Lew Wolff has said he will pay to build the \$461 million ballpark, provided San Jose voters give the team permission to build on city land. The council must act no later than its Aug. 3 meeting to place such a measure on the November ballot.

### **Chin Music: A's-Cubs set for 8:45 p.m. (Chicago time) start**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/15/2010 6:18PM

Update from Wrigley Field:

First pitch is tentatively set for 8:45 p.m. local time (6:45 p.m. on the West Coast).

Trevor Cahill also was the starting pitcher during the A's long rain delay in Detroit two weeks ago. Lucky guy ... At least he's been through this drill before.

### **Chin Music: Conor Jackson will play left field, could hit second; other A's notes**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/15/2010 4:48PM

We have a rain delay here at Wrigley Field. It's not coming down hard right now, but there's no announced start time yet.

.....

You're probably well aware that the A's swung a trade today, acquiring outfielder Conor Jackson from the Arizona Diamondbacks for minor league reliever Sam Demel. Here's a story on the trade itself. ...

—Jackson is expected to arrive at Wrigley Field around game time, and manager Bob Geren said the newest Athletic will be available off the bench. "I plan on him being my left fielder," Geren said, when asked how Jackson fits into the plans. But with no DH available for the next six games, Geren said Jack Cust will see time in left field too. Ryan Sweeney might need a day off in right at some point, so Cust could play out there also.

Interestingly, Geren compares Jackson to Daric Barton — a patient hitter who will draw walks and drive balls to the gaps. And we could see those two batting next to each other. Geren said he's considering hitting Jackson second, moving Barton to the third spot and batting Sweeney fifth. But he noted that Jackson could hit lower depending on pitching matchups.

And what happens to Rajai Davis once center fielder Coco Crisp returns? Geren dusted off the trusty "That Will Be a Good Problem to Have" philosophy. The A's have had so many injuries, he isn't fretting about having too many healthy players for too few spots.

—I'd been to Wrigley Field for one game previously, but this is my first time working a game here, and I'm pretty excited for it. The press box is very high (great view of the Chicago skyline). The visitors' clubhouse is extremely tiny and cramped, even more so than Fenway Park's, which I didn't think was possible. And the route that leads you from the clubhouse to the field is an absolute maze. There are a couple of hand-written signs posted along the hallways — one reads "Almost There" and another one says "You're Finally Here."

—Before the first game of a series on the road, A's outfielders usually make sure to field balls off the outfield wall, just to get used to the caroms. I'd say that was especially important today with Wrigley's ivy-covered fences ...

Here's the lineups:

A's: Davis CF, Barton 1B, Sweeney RF, Suzuki C, Kouzmanoff 3B, Cust LF, Ellis 2B, Pennington SS, Cahill RHP.

Cubs: Theriot 2B, Castro SS, Byrd CF, Lee 1B, Colvin RF, Soriano LF, Tracy 3B, Hill C, Zambrano RHP

## **Conor Jackson in A's fold, to start soon**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

Conor Jackson loves Wrigley Field, and why not? It's where he made his big-league debut in 2005 and two days later hit an eighth-inning double that broke a tie and won it for the Diamondbacks.

It's also where he made his A's debut.

Acquired in a trade Tuesday, Jackson - Oakland's new left fielder - arrived at Wrigley too late to start the A's 9-5 win in the opener of a three-game series against the Cubs, but he'll be in tonight's starting lineup, manager Bob Geren said.

Jackson played the final three innings and had one at-bat, a groundout to third base in the ninth. By then, the A's had it wrapped up, thanks to a 13-hit outburst and a sloppy Cubs defense that committed a season-high four errors.

"It's been a hectic 12 hours, but I'm definitely pumped to be over here," said Jackson, noting the struggling Diamondbacks will be unloading talent. "I think a change of scenery will be good. It's exciting. It feels like it's going to be a good fit for me."

Jackson, a needed right-handed bat, had a brief chat with his new manager during Oakland's four-run fourth-inning rally. "I told him to sit next to me, and we'll get some runs," Geren said. "He got us four. He listens well."

"I might be a good-luck charm over here," Jackson said. "We're 1-0."

Jack Cust started in left, but he was keeping the position warm for Jackson, who flew in from Boston before the game. His flight arrived at 5:30 p.m. CDT, but he sat on the plane until 7:15, as the pilot waited for an open gate during a rainstorm.

"A nightmare," Jackson said.

No worries. The first pitch was delayed 1 hour and 41 minutes by rain. Jackson's cab finally pulled up to Wrigley at 8:25, 21 minutes before the game began.

The new outfield is Jackson-Rajai Davis-Ryan Sweeney, left to right, and the A's won't worry about an overload until center fielder Coco Crisp returns. The A's see Crisp's latest rehab assignment with Triple-A Fresno, which began Tuesday, lasting at least 10 days.

Jackson, who broke Ubaldo Jimenez's scoreless innings streak at 33 with a June 6 homer, also was sought by division-foe Texas. He played at Cal and was Arizona's first-round pick (19th overall) in 2003. His three best years (2006-2008), he hit .292 with a .371 on-base percentage while averaging 14 homers and 71 RBIs. But a case of valley fever weakened him in 2009 - sometimes it was a chore to get out of bed and comb his hair - forcing him to miss most of the season.

This year, he was slowed by a hamstring injury and hitting only .238, but A's scouts reported they saw the old Conor Jackson in recent weeks. Jackson, who's eligible for arbitration after the season, makes \$3.1 million this year, and the A's owe a prorated \$1.9 million - \$400,000 of which they'll receive from Arizona.

In the trade, the A's sent Sam Demel (six saves, 1.26 ERA at Sacramento) to the Diamondbacks, who immediately promoted the reliever to the big leagues. To create roster space, the A's optioned Matt Carson.

### **Beat: A's romp over sloppy Chicago**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

The A's offense broke out, and the Cubs' defense broke down.

The result was a 9-5 win for Oakland on Chicago's North Side on Tuesday, which gleefully was welcomed after three straight losses in San Francisco.

"It's always nice to get extra outs," said catcher **Kurt Suzuki**, who missed the weekend series while on bereavement leave. "It's baseball. You're never going to be perfect."

Four A's runs were unearned, and Cubs starter **Carlos Zambrano** took the loss despite surrendering two earned runs in six innings. First baseman **Derrek Lee**, after 59 straight errorless games, made errors on consecutive plays to help the A's score four times in the fourth, botching a grounder and flat-out missing a throw from shortstop **Starlin Castro**.

The A's scored three more iffy runs in the seventh on reliever **Jeff Stevens'** wild pitch and an RBI triple by **Cliff Pennington**, who also scored on the play on right fielder **Tyler Colvin's** terrible throw from the outfield, his second error of the inning.

**Cahill wins:** **Trevor Cahill**, who won his fifth straight decision, started much better than he finished on a muggy night. He surrendered one hit through four innings but was pulled in the sixth and charged with four runs.

"I couldn't stop sweating out there," Cahill said. "It was kind of hard to get a grip on the ball. I went to the resin bag almost every pitch. By the end, it was a wet rag. I'll learn from this."

Cahill's next start is in St. Louis.

"I'm sure it'll be the same," he said.

**Briefly:** **Kevin Kouzmanoff** had three hits and extended his hitting streak to 15 games. ... **Daric Barton** has a 14-game road hitting streak. ... **Ryan Sweeney** was Zambrano's 1,368th strikeout victim, putting the pitcher in fourth place on the all-time Cubs list, just ahead of **Rick Reuschel**.

### **A's leading off**

John Shea, San Francisco Chronicle

**Scheduling quirk:** The A's are at Wrigley Field for the second time in interleague history. For a reason that no one in the A's organization can explain, the Cubs have not visited the Coliseum - the only National League club the A's haven't hosted. The only NL city the A's haven't visited is Milwaukee.

### **A's acquire right guy in wrong year**

Ray Ratto, San Francisco Chronicle

Three years ago, Conor Jackson being traded to the A's would have been a very big deal indeed. Three years ago, the A's couldn't have gotten Conor Jackson in a thousand years.

But then is then, now is now, and the A's got Jackson, the promising/oft-injured Arizona outfielder, for the seeming pittance of Triple-A closer Sam Demel. The wire story described the deal as "the first of what could be a series of moves by the sputtering team."

It took a minute to think that the "sputtering team" in question was in fact the Diamondbacks.

For the A's, this is another of those what-the-hell deals that have marked the Beane administration for the past several seasons. Jackson, if right, could give them some actual and measurable outfield pop above and beyond the noted soccer aficionado Jack Cust, and perhaps even position them to have some staying power through the trading deadline.

Or it could just be Beane remembering how much he always liked Jackson when Jackson was part of the fascinating Arizona lineup that included Mark Reynolds, Justin Upton, Chris Young, Stephen Drew, Orlando Hudson and Carlos Quentin. The Diamondbacks won the NL West and a divisional series with that lineup in 2007, and then discombobulated before our eyes. Reynolds, Upton, Young and Drew are still there, and the team still scores runs, but Jackson missed most of last year, started poorly this year, and in general falls in that netherland between reclamation project and blind flyer the A's do so well.

I mean acquire them, not necessarily thrive with them.

Jackson may be the stealth deal of the year if he comes to Oakland as he appeared in 2007, but, put a different way, he is at his top end the A's version of Aubrey Huff. In short, someone who could give the Oakland outfield some desperately needed offensive credibility.

Or he could be just another guy, which is the other fate for traded A's, and they already have enough "just another guys" on the payroll. Either way, this is a development worth waiting for.

Unless, of course, he ends up being the one traded at the deadline. In Oakland, that is always the third alternative to what seems like a straightforward yes-or-no question.

### **Drumbeat: Conor Jackson's role with A's**

John Shea on the A's from the Windy City . . . 6/15/2010 10:38AM

Conor Jackson, acquired today from the Diamondbacks, is expected to be at tonight's game at Wrigley Field, though perhaps not in time to be in the lineup. At the very least, he'll be available off the bench tonight and the left fielder tomorrow night.

Jackson, 28, who played at Cal and was a first-round pick in 2003, has bad numbers this year (.238, one homer, 11 RBIs, 42 games) but hit better recently -- .303 over his past 10 games -- and is a proven right-handed bat.

A's scouts likened his play in the past three weeks with his three solid years in Arizona (2006-2008), and assistant GM David Forst called him "a high-walk, high-contact guy with doubles power, and he'll hit you 12 to 15 home runs."

Oakland's gain is Texas' loss. The Rangers, current leaders in the AL West, also were in pursuit of Jackson.

Jackson was shelved with a strained right hamstring in late April and early May and hit poorly after being reinstated -- at least until his recent upswing.

Last year was a wasted year. He was diagnosed with Valley Fever and shut it down after May. The A's reviewed his medical records and confirmed among other things Valley Fever no longer is in his system.

Based on basic and advanced statistics, Jackson is a better left fielder than first baseman. For now, the A's envision an outfield alignment of Jackson-Rajai Davis-Ryan Sweeney, left to right.

Coco Crisp will play for Triple-A Sacramento tonight and is expected to remain on a rehab assignment for at least 10 days, Forst said. But Crisp has played just two games for the A's, so nothing is guaranteed with his health when he's back in the majors.

The A's play interleague games in NL parks for the next week, meaning no DH. It'll be interesting to see how manager Bob Geren gets Jack Cust playing time in Chicago and St. Louis now that Jackson's aboard.

Jackson makes \$3.1 million this year, and the A's owe a prorated \$1.9 million, but they needn't pay it all. As part of the trade agreement, the Diamondbacks are sending the A's roughly \$400,000. Jackson will be arbitration-eligible after this season.

The A's sent Triple-A closer San Demel (2-0, six saves, 1.26, 22 outings) to the Diamondbacks, who plan to put him in a big-league uniform right away. Demel was a third-round pick in 2007.

### **A's capitalize on Cubs' E's for win**

#### **Club scores four unearned runs on four Chicago miscues**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

CHICAGO -- On Sunday, Bob Geren wasn't a happy camper following a four-error weekend series that resulted in a three-game sweep across the Bay Bridge.

On Tuesday, the A's manager relished the opportunity to witness four errors.

- **53 wins**

That's because three of them led to four unearned runs for his ballclub. In turn, the A's walked away winners of a 9-5 opening victory over the Cubs at Wrigley Field.

Enter happy-camper mode -- even following a one hour and 41 minute rain delay.

"When the other team makes mistakes," Geren said, "it's a nice break, especially against a team like this in a ballpark like this. Every run is important. You can't get enough runs here."

The runs didn't come until the fourth inning for the A's, a time during which starter Trevor Cahill had yet to surrender a hit. It was also at that same time that Geren was sitting in the dugout alongside newcomer Conor Jackson -- acquired earlier in the day via a trade with Arizona.

"I told him to sit next to me and get us some runs," Geren recalled. "He got us four. He listened well."

"I guess I'm the lucky charm," Jackson said with a smile after the game. "We're 1-0 with me here."

"Lucky" is right. Three of the four runs in the fourth were unearned thanks to a pair of back-to-back errors committed by Chicago first baseman Derrek Lee -- who, upon entering the game, hadn't tallied a single error in 59 games, his last coming Opening Day on April 7.

The A's began the inning against the Cubs' Carlos Zambrano by loading the bases on two walks and a single, which was followed by a run-scoring hit off the bat of Mark Ellis. After Cliff Pennington reached on a fielder's choice when Lee threw home for the forceout, Cahill hit a grounder that Lee booted for an error, allowing a run to score. Then Cubs shortstop Starlin Castro fielded a ball hit by Rajai Davis and threw to Lee, who botched the catch -- an error that led to two more runs to make it 4-0.

"It's embarrassing," Lee said. "It's tough to let the team down like that. Z's probably out of that inning. I booted two balls, two easy plays, and it cost us the game."

"It's rare to see [Lee] make one error," Zambrano said. "Can you imagine two? He's human, too."

Across the way, Lee's opponents shared the same sentiments, though there was no denying how grateful they were for the gifts.

"You definitely try to take advantage of every mistake," Kurt Suzuki said. "It's always nice to get extra outs, and you have to look to capitalize on those. They're a great defensive team. It's baseball, and you're never going to be perfect. That's the reason we play 162 games. There's no denying their defensive skills over there."

"He's a good infielder, one of the best infielders in baseball," Geren said.

Meanwhile, Cahill gave up his first hit with two outs in the fourth and allowed two runs in the fifth, but the A's cushioned his 4-2 lead in the sixth courtesy of a run-scoring double off the bat of Davis. The Cubs made it a 5-4 game in the bottom half of the inning, and Cahill was removed with two outs, having surrendered a total of four runs on six hits while walking two and fanning five.

"He's been throwing the ball real well," said Geren. "He was at the end of the rope there in the sixth, but he gave us a good effort. I've said this before, but you look at where he was a year ago and where he is now, that's what you want to see from a young pitcher -- improvement."

"I got on a roll during those first four innings and then hit some bumps in the fifth and sixth, but luckily we caught a few breaks," said Cahill, battling a large dose of Midwest humidity. "More than fatigue, I couldn't stop sweating toward the end. I couldn't get a grip on the ball, and there were some pitches that just got away from me."

Still, his teammates preserved his fifth straight victory following a sloppy three-run seventh by the Cubs. Right fielder Tyler Colvin misplayed a single by Kevin Kouzmanoff -- who went 3-for-4 en route to extending his career-high hitting streak to 15 games -- and was charged with another error on a relay throw on Pennington's triple, which allowed the A's shortstop to score and make it an 8-4 game.

"It wasn't very pretty," Cubs manager Lou Piniella said. "Too many errors, walks, wild pitches -- a little bit of everything. ... Not a good game."

Maybe not for Chicago, but the A's were singing a different tune following the affair. Colvin hit a solo homer off Brad Ziegler in the bottom of the eighth, and Oakland answered by pushing across another run in the top of the ninth.

In the ninth, Jackson -- who entered the game as a defensive replacement for Jack Cust in the seventh -- enjoyed his first at-bat in green and gold. The new A's outfielder endured an anti-climatic broken-bat groundout to third, but admitted a sense of relief in not only putting that first at-bat behind him but also being in a new environment.

"From where I'm coming from," he said, "the panic button got pushed a lot. I'm excited to be here and feel like it's a good fit. I'm definitely pumped to be over here. I think a change of scenery is probably the best thing for me."

### **A's get Jackson from D-backs for Demel**

#### **New acquisition expected to see regular playing time in left**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

CHICAGO -- Fewer than 48 hours after letting go of a right-handed bat, the A's on Tuesday gained one by acquiring outfielder Conor Jackson from Arizona in exchange for Minor League pitcher Sam Demel and cash considerations.

It was just Sunday that the A's designated utility player Jake Fox for assignment, a move that opened the door for the club to look elsewhere for a dependable right-handed option -- something Oakland assistant general manager David Forst says the organization has considered Jackson for much longer than two days.

"He's a player we liked in the Draft," Forst said, "a player we liked in the Minor Leagues. He's always been the type of offensive player we've liked -- high contact guy, high walks, has doubles power, can hit 12-15 homers."

"We've been searching for a right-handed bat for a while, and hopefully he comes in and is able to fill all those roles."

The 28-year-old Jackson, a first-round pick by the D-backs in 2003, following an impressive tenure at the University of California, was hitting .238 with 11 doubles, one homer and 11 RBIs for Arizona after missing most of last season due to Valley Fever, a fungal infection that weakens the body.



He is scheduled to arrive in Chicago, where the club is slated to begin a three-game Interleague set against the Cubs, just before game time Tuesday. He likely won't arrive in time to be in the starting lineup, but he'll probably be available, Forst said.

Jackson joins an outfield mix that already includes everyday starters Rajai Davis and Ryan Sweeney, along with Gabe Gross, Eric Patterson, Jack Cust and Adam Rosales -- all of whom have been handed playing time in left field due to the absence of Coco Crisp, who is injured.

"Obviously it will be up to [manager] Bob [Geren] to determine where Conor plays every day," Forst said. "I'm assuming left field will be his primary spot with us. If he can play one corner, he can probably go play right. He came up as a third baseman, can play first and can give us a designated hitter. There will be plenty of ways to work him in.

"Time will tell. He's obviously right-handed, so he's a little different from some of the other guys that have been filling in at this point. There's definitely a role for a guy like Conor, especially considering what we think he's capable of offensively."

An outfielder in the Minors, Jackson made his big league debut in 2005 and primarily played first base for the D-backs until 2008, when he was shifted back to left field. From 2006-08, he hit .292 with an impressive .822 OPS (on-base plus slugging percentage) as one of Arizona's most consistent hitters. Jackson has widely been considered a gap-to-gap hitter, but he also posted 15 homers in each of his first two full seasons and added 12 in 2008.

"We obviously designated Jake on Sunday, and we knew we'd have to fill a right-handed hole if things didn't work out," Forst said, "so we're still looking for guys to increase the depth of the lineup. Conor was finally at a level we were able to acquire."

A native of Austin, Texas, Jackson was earning \$3.1 million with Arizona -- a number that will be offset by cash considerations included in the deal. The earnings follow a year in which he did not play after May 11, but he went to extended spring training and enjoyed a successful stint in the Dominican Republic over the winter -- all signs that he's experienced no lingering effects from Valley Fever.

Jackson's current health immediately gives the A's an everyday option in the stead of a player who has experienced some rather bad luck this season. Crisp, who began the season on the disabled list with a fractured finger, played in just two games for the A's before returning to the DL on May 26 with a strained intercostal muscle.

According to Forst, Crisp is expected to play five innings for Triple-A Sacramento on Tuesday night and will "progress from there."

"Since he's only played two games since April 1, we'll make sure we give him enough time down there so there's no doubt he's ready to go," Forst said. "I would imagine he'll need 10 days of rehab time down in Sacramento."

Sacramento is where Demel, 24, was 2-0 with a 1.26 ERA and six saves in 22 games this year. The right-handed pitcher -- drafted by the A's in the third round in 2007 -- is expected to join the D-backs in Boston on Wednesday and immediately join a struggling Arizona bullpen.

"Sam Demel gives us another quality arm in our attempt to improve the bullpen," Arizona general manager Josh Byrnes said. "Conor Jackson has been a class act during his time in the organization. We wish him well in Oakland."

### **A's get Jackson from D-backs for Demel**

### **New acquisition expected to see regular playing time in left**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

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He is scheduled to arrive in Chicago, where the club is slated to begin a three-game Interleague set against the Cubs, just before game time Tuesday. He likely won't arrive in time to be in the starting lineup, but he'll probably be available, Forst said.

Jackson joins an outfield mix that already includes everyday starters Rajai Davis and Ryan Sweeney, along with Gabe Gross, Eric Patterson, Jack Cust and Adam Rosales -- all of whom have been handed playing time in left field due to the absence of Coco Crisp, who is injured.

"Obviously it will be up to [manager] Bob [Geren] to determine where Conor plays every day," Forst said. "I'm assuming left field will be his primary spot with us. If he can play one corner, he can probably go play right. He came up as a third baseman, can play first and can give us a designated hitter. There will be plenty of ways to work him in.

"Time will tell. He's obviously right-handed, so he's a little different from some of the other guys that have been filling in at this point. There's definitely a role for a guy like Conor, especially considering what we think he's capable of offensively."

An outfielder in the Minors, Jackson made his big league debut in 2005 and primarily played first base for the D-backs until 2008, when he was shifted back to left field. From 2006-08, he hit .292 with an impressive .822 OPS (on-base plus slugging percentage) as one of Arizona's most consistent hitters. Jackson has widely been considered a gap-to-gap hitter, but he also posted 15 homers in each of his first two full seasons and added 12 in 2008.

"We obviously designated Jake on Sunday, and we knew we'd have to fill a right-handed hole if things didn't work out," Forst said, "so we're still looking for guys to increase the depth of the lineup. Conor was finally at a level we were able to acquire."

A native of Austin, Texas, Jackson was earning \$3.1 million with Arizona -- a number that will be offset by cash considerations included in the deal. The earnings follow a year in which he did not play after May 11, but he went to extended spring training and enjoyed a successful stint in the Dominican Republic over the winter -- all signs that he's experienced no lingering effects from Valley Fever.

Jackson's current health immediately gives the A's an everyday option in the stead of a player who has experienced some rather bad luck this season. Crisp, who began the season on the disabled list with a fractured finger, played in just two games for the A's before returning to the DL on May 26 with a strained intercostal muscle.

According to Forst, Crisp is expected to play five innings for Triple-A Sacramento on Tuesday night and will "progress from there."

"Since he's only played two games since April 1, we'll make sure we give him enough time down there so there's no doubt he's ready to go," Forst said. "I would imagine he'll need 10 days of rehab time down in Sacramento."

Sacramento is where Demel, 24, was 2-0 with a 1.26 ERA and six saves in 22 games this year. The right-handed pitcher -- drafted by the A's in the third round in 2007 -- is expected to join the D-backs in Boston on Wednesday and immediately join a struggling Arizona bullpen.

"Sam Demel gives us another quality arm in our attempt to improve the bullpen," Arizona general manager Josh Byrnes said. "Conor Jackson has been a class act during his time in the organization. We wish him well in Oakland."

### **A's, Cubs sensing urgency to win**

By Didier Morais / MLB.com

On Sunday, Ryan Dempster was lifting up the Stanley Cup at Wrigley Field. Celebrating the Blackhawks' recent championship, the Canadian-born Cubs pitcher savored the rare experience in front of the crowd.

"It'd be nice to have that every night," Dempster said. "That was a lot of fun, and the energy was intense."

Now, instead of hoisting the Cup, Dempster will be in charge of lifting the Cubs over the Athletics with his pitching. As of late, though, that's been a feat Chicago's right-hander has struggled to accomplish.

In his last outing against the Brewers, Dempster encountered issues with his command, missing the strike zone with 52 of his 104 pitches and walking five batters in the process. During his past three starts, he's also allowed 12 runs in 18 1/3 innings.

And now Dempster, who is 4-5 this season and owns a 3.74 ERA, is starting to realize the importance of each start.

"We have to win no matter who we're playing against," Dempster said. "The more this season keeps getting later and later, the more losses pile up. We have to win more games, that's the bottom line. Do whatever you can do to win more games."

Sensing similar urgency after being swept by the Giants, the Athletics responded to the losing streak with a 9-5 victory against the Cubs on Tuesday. But in the next two games, the club will have some additional firepower to combat Chicago's pitching.

Oakland traded for Arizona outfielder Conor Jackson on Tuesday in exchange for Minor League pitcher Sam Demel. Jackson, who is expected to start in left field Wednesday, has punished the Cubs throughout his career, going 25-for-74 with two home runs and 13 RBIs in 23 games.

And A's manager Bob Geren is expecting Jackson to make an immediate contribution for the club on and off the field.

"He's an outstanding person from what I hear from everyone who knows him, including [D-backs] manager A.J. Hinch, who I spoke to [Tuesday]," Geren said. "We're all very excited that he's joining our club, and we're hoping he can help our club in a lot of ways."

Gio Gonzalez, who will get the call for the A's in the second game of the series, is looking to rebound after suffering just his fourth loss of the season his last time out against the Giants. Gonzalez has struggled on the road this season, going 2-2 with a 4.74 ERA over seven starts.

#### **Athletics: Suzuki returns to lineup**

Kurt Suzuki, who has been on the bereavement list since Friday, returned Tuesday and went 1-for-4. Prior to his bereavement stint, the A's catcher was batting .274 with 29 RBIs and a team-leading eight home runs.

Earlier this year, Suzuki spent three weeks on the disabled list. Despite missing significant time, he still ranks third among American League catchers in RBIs and home runs.

To make room for Suzuki, the Athletics optioned outfielder Matt Carson, who was hitting .111, to Triple-A Sacramento.

#### **Cubs: Grabow activated from DL**

The Cubs activated relief pitcher John Grabow from the 15-day disabled list in time for Tuesday's opener against the A's. In his first appearance since May 30, Grabow allowed one hit in an inning of work.

"I'm happy to be back, and it's time to move forward now and help this team win," Grabow said before the game.

Prior to the activation, Grabow played in four rehab games with Iowa, blanking opponents in three of his relief outings.

#### **Worth noting**

In the top of the fourth inning Tuesday, Oakland third basemen Kevin Kouzmanoff extended his career-high hitting streak to 15 games with a single and finished 3-for-4 for the night. The streak is currently the longest active streak in the AL.

#### **Successful career ends quietly for Mulder**

#### **Two-time All-Star says he's retired after nine seasons**

By Bailey Stephens / MLB.com

It wasn't big or flashy, but on Monday, Mark Mulder stated his retirement from baseball for the first time.

"I guess I am [retired]," Mulder told AOL FanHouse on Monday. "I haven't touched a baseball since February."

The former A's and Cardinals hurler, who at one time was part of Oakland's young "Big Three," along with Tim Hudson and Barry Zito, is now spending his days on the golf course instead of the baseball diamond.

In another life, Mulder was a bright 23-year-old left-hander for the A's, who won 21 games in 2001. He, Hudson and Zito carried the Athletics into the playoffs several times in the early part of the decade. But after a 2005 trade to St. Louis, Mulder soon began experiencing shoulder injuries that would plague him for the rest of his career.

Mulder spent the next three years fighting his way back from rotator cuff surgery. He only pitched in 23 games over those three seasons, but he thought he might have one more big league stint in him.

The 32-year-old's baseball career ended quietly in February after an attempt to come back with the Brewers this spring never materialized. Milwaukee was thought to be a likely fit because Mulder's former pitching coach Rick Peterson was there.

Peterson told MLB.com this spring that it appeared Mulder was headed for retirement, but Mulder's agent, Gregg Clifton, denied that was the case.

"Mark has not decided to retire," Clifton wrote in an e-mail to MLB.com. "He is reassessing his options in his efforts to come back."

Those efforts, it seems, are now being directed toward the golf course. And Mulder is OK with that, as he told FanHouse:

"When you play baseball for as long as I did, I needed to fill that competitive void, to go out and compete in some sort of way," Mulder said. "I had never played competitive golf until this year. ... I'm doing that now. It's fun."

If indeed he is finished, Mulder walks away with a 103-60 career record, to go with a 4.18 ERA. The No. 2 overall pick in the 1998 First-Year Player Draft won 15 games or more in five consecutive seasons from 2001-05.

### **A's beat Cubs, 9-5**

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Rajai Davis and Kevin Kouzmanoff had three hits apiece, and the Oakland Athletics took advantage of four errors in a 9-5 victory over the Chicago Cubs on a rainy Tuesday night.

Davis drove in two runs. Kouzmanoff extended his career-high hitting streak to 15. And the Athletics rebounded from a three-game sweep at San Francisco, taking this one after a 1-hour, 41-minute delay at the start.

They had plenty of help from the Cubs.

Three-time Gold Glove first baseman Derrek Lee committed back-to-back errors in a four-run fourth and right fielder Tyler Colvin added two more in a three-run seventh that broke open the game, making it 8-4.

Trevor Cahill (6-2) got the win despite allowing four runs and six hits over 5 2-3 innings, improving to 5-0 in his last six starts. He left after an RBI double to Chad Tracy that made it 5-3, and Jerry Blevins then gave up a run-scoring single to Koyie Hill that pulled the Cubs within one.

The Athletics regained control against Jeff Stevens in the seventh, although Colvin didn't help matters.

He let a single by Kevin Kouzmanoff get past him, putting runners on second and third with none out before Jack Cust walked to load the bases. Mark Ellis grounded into a double play, forcing the runner at the plate, but the Athletics got some more big breaks to pad their lead.

Stevens threw a wild pitch, allowing Kouzmanoff to score. Then, Pennington drove in Cust on a triple to deep right and scored when Colvin overthrew the cutoff man to make it 8-4.

Lee's errors in the fourth didn't help a shaky Carlos Zambrano (2-5), who gave up five runs — two earned — in six innings.

The Athletics already had a run in on Mark Ellis' bases-loaded single in the fourth when Lee had his lapses. With one out, Lee came in on Trevor Cahill's roller and booted the ball, allowing Cust to score from third, and things were about to get worse. Lee dropped the throw after shortstop Starlin Castro fielded Davis' chopper toward the middle, as Ellis and Pennington scored to make it 4-0.

Fans showered Lee with boos, then cheered sarcastically when he caught the throw from Ryan Theriot on Suzuki's inning-ending grounder to second.

The Cubs got run-scoring singles by Zambrano and Castro to cut it to 4-2 in the fifth, but Theriot got caught off second trying to steal third before Byrd grounded into a force to end it.

The sloppy game came on the heels of one of the most memorable at Wrigley Field.

On Sunday, the Cubs' Ted Lilly took a no-hitter into the ninth and the White Sox's Gavin Floyd matched him for 6 2-3 innings.

NOTES: The Athletics acquired OF Conor Jackson from Arizona for minor league closer Sam Demel. The also reinstated Suzuki from the bereavement list and optioned OF Matt Carson to Triple-A Sacramento. ... The Cubs activated LHP John Grabow from the 15-day disabled list and optioned RHP Mitch Atkins to Triple-A Iowa.

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Coco's triple kick-starts Sacramento victory**

By Nick Hunte / Sacramento River Cats

Chris Carter's mammoth home run and savvy base-running from Oakland A's center fielder Coco Crisp led the River Cats to a 4-1 victory Tuesday night over the Reno Aces.

Crisp, who made a rehab start with the River Cats, opened the first inning with a triple to left field. Then, in the bottom of the fifth, Crisp hit a single to center field. He was able to advance to second on a bunt single by second baseman Eric Sogard. Then Crisp's base running came into play when he advanced to third base on a Josh Donaldson fly ball to left field. Crisp then scored on a sacrifice fly by Carter.

Travis Blackley, the River Cats left-hander from Melbourne Australia, pitched 4.1 innings, allowing five hits, no runs and throwing seven strikeouts.

Carter blasted his 15th home run of the season, a shot that reached all the way to the roof of the clubhouse in left-center field and bounced twice on the rooftop.

"CC's towering home run, that was pretty impressive," Crisp said after the game.

Reliever Michael Benacka (2-2, 5.51 ERA) picked up the victory for Sacramento, pitching 1.2 innings with four strikeouts. Right-hander Matt Torra (3-5, 4.36 ERA) picked up the loss for Reno, allowing eight hits, three runs and throwing three strikeouts.

Crisp felt good about his first rehab start from his injury and is working toward returning with Oakland.

"(The A's) put a plan together for me and they've been around the game for a long time," Crisp said. "Every big league trainer knows what it takes for players to come back from certain injuries, so I'm just following their program."

River Cats manager Tony DeFrancesco said that it was a crazy win for Sacramento, with timely hitting making up for inconsistent pitching. Sacramento walked 10 batters and allowed eight hits, but Reno left 16 runners on base.

"We can't be walking 10 guys in a game like this," DeFrancesco said. "Our pitching needs to do a better job, but our guys battled and we got some big hits, a couple one-run hits here and there. Well-played game on the defensive side."

DeFrancesco thought Crisp looked good during his rehab start and was pleased with his performance.

"Coco looked good tonight, he batted well and ran the bases well, too," DeFrancesco said. "We're excited to have him here."

Before the game, there were some changes in the River Cats roster. Reliever Sam Demel was traded right over to the Arizona Diamondbacks organization earlier and DeFrancesco said the team will miss his presence.

"He's pitched well for us and we're going to miss him," the manager said, "but there are 29 other teams out there, so hopefully he'll have a good start to a career."

Right-hander Kyle Middleton (2-5, 3.38 ERA) will start for Sacramento on Wednesday after replacing left-hander Jesus Sanchez, who was released earlier Tuesday. Middleton will be facing off against Reno right-hander Wes Roemer (1-2, 4.75 ERA) .

### **Strikeouts Rule the Night As Hounds Fall**

By Bob Hards / Midland RockHounds

It doesn't look quite the same in print as Dan Patrick saying it in his days at ESPN, but "the whiff" was a huge factor in Frisco Monday night as the RoughRiders defeated the RockHounds, 4-1. The teams combined for 23 K's, 15 of those by Frisco pitchers.

RoughRiders starter Tanner Roark struck out 10 in his 6.0 innings of work, and reliever Ben Snyder added five more in just two perfect innings of work. Ironically, flame-throwing reliever Josh Leuke did not strike out a batter, despite hitting 96-97 mph, but did record his first Double-A save with a 1-2-3 ninth.

Frisco scored single runs in each of the first three innings before RockHounds starter Ryan Edell settled in, and would strike out seven batters (without a walk) in his 6.1 innings. Edell allowed more runs (three) in this start than he had in his first five combined (two), falling to 2-1 with an outstanding 1.42 ERA. In a little "baseball sidebar," six of Edell's seven whiffs came after a little "back-and-forth" discussion on the strike zone between the RockHounds' dugout and umpire Jeff Gosney in the fourth inning.

Shane Peterson hit a solo home run in the third, bringing the 'Hounds to within 2-1, but Matt Lawson opened the home half of the inning with a gorgeous bunt up the third base line and would later score on one of his two runs in the game, regaining the 'Riders 2-run advantage. The game's final run scored on a throwing error in the eighth.

### **Ports Set New Season-High, Tie League Records In 14-3 Win**

**BAKERSFIELD, Calif.** - On Tuesday night, the bats of the Stockton Ports were as hot as the Bakersfield sun. The Boys of Banner Island authored an offensive script that included a season-high 14 runs on 21 hits in a 14-3 win over the Bakersfield Blaze at Sam Lynn Ballpark. In the offensive outburst, the Ports tied a pair of Cal-League records. The Ports offense slugged 11 doubles in the game, matching a record set twice (High Desert vs. Bakersfield, May 23, 2000, Lake Elsinore vs. High Desert, June 28, 2009), and Stephen Parker hit four doubles in the contest, becoming the 14th player in league history to accomplish the feat.

The tone was set early on for Stockton's offense. Jermaine Mitchell started the game by doubling to center. After Grant Green grounded out, Parker and Mike Spina hit back-to-back RBI doubles to give the Ports an early 2-0 lead.

With one out in the third, Green singled to center and scored on Parker's second double of the night. Spina followed with a two-run blast to left, his 11th of the season to give the Ports a 5-0 advantage.

Stockton knocked out Blaze starter Carlos Pimentel (5-3) in the fourth. With one out, Pimentel walked Jermaine Mitchell and then yielded three straight singles to Green, Parker and Spina. Jake Brigham came in from the bullpen and was greeted by an RBI single from Todd Johnson to make it a 7-0 score. Pimentel would take the loss, going 3.1 innings and allowing seven runs on 10 hits while walking two and striking out five.

Bakersfield's offense crept back into the game beginning in the bottom of the fourth. David Paisano scored on an RBI groundout from John Whittleman to put the Blaze on the board. In the last of the fifth, after a leadoff walk drawn by Jose Felix and double from Jared Bolden, Tommy Mendonca singled to center to make it a 7-3 ballgame.

All three Blaze runs were charged to Ports starter Justin Murray (6-3), who earned the win after going six innings and allowing three hits while walking four and striking out four.

The Ports put the game in their back pocket with a five-run sixth inning, their largest of the night. With two on and nobody out, Parker hit his third double of the night to drive in another run and make it 8-3. Spina came up next and singled to left, driving in Green from third. Todd Johnson followed with a sac-fly to right to score Parker. Johnson's sac-fly was followed up by back-to-back doubles from Tyler Ladendorf and Ryan Ortiz, with Ortiz plating two runs for a 12-3 advantage. All five runs were charged to Brigham who pitched two innings in relief.

Stockton put an exclamation point in the night in the ninth inning with three more doubles to tie the league record and two more runs scored off Blaze reliever Yoon-Hee Nam. The ninth inning doubles came from Green, Parker and Ortiz.

Bakersfield's offense was silenced by the Ports bullpen. Trey Barham, Andrew Carignan and Fautino De Los Santos combined for three scoreless innings of relief without allowing a hit to close out the ballgame.

The top five hitters in Stockton's batting order went a combined 17-for-26 on the night and scored 13 of the 14 runs in the game.

Parker led the way with a 5-for-6 performance with four doubles, 5 RBI and four runs scored. Spina went 4-for-6 with 4 RBI, falling a triple shy of hitting for the cycle. Seven of the nine Ports hitters had at least one double on the night. Every Ports hitter reached base with the exception of ninth-place hitter Gernaldo Castillo who went 0-for-5.

Parker's five-hit game is the third such performance for a Ports hitter on the season. Green accomplished the feat twice (May 6 vs. San Jose, May 31 vs. Modesto). Stockton now has more five-hit performances than anyone in the league.

Stockton and Bakersfield will play the rubber match of their series on Wednesday at Sam Lynn Ballpark. Shawn Haviland (5-3, 3.91 ERA) will head to the bump for the Ports, opposed by Blaze right-hander Wilmer Font (0-2, 3.81 ERA). First pitch is set for approximately 7:35 p.m. PDT.

### **Cougars Drop Opener in Quad Cities**

#### **Kane County musters 1 run, strands 14 in defeat**

**DAVENPORT, Iowa** – After a day off Monday, the Kane County Cougars returned to action Tuesday night with the start of a three-game series in Quad Cities and suffered a 6-1 loss against the River Bandits at Modern Woodmen Park. The Cougars scored first in the game, had eight hits and drew eight walks but also stranded 14 runners on the base paths. Justin Marks suffered the loss on the mound.

The Cougars' only run came in the top of the third against Justin Smith. Myrio Richard walked and took third on a Conner Crumbliss single. Then Tyreace House poked a sacrifice fly to make it 1-0.

The advantage stood until the fourth when Marks (2-7) retired the first two batters before walking Robert Stock and giving up a two-run homer to Frederick Parejo. Then in the fifth, Marks again got the first two hitters before yielding a pair of singles. Josh Lansford entered and gave up an infield RBI single and a three-run homer for the 6-1 score. Marks was charged with four runs on six hits in 4 2/3 innings. He walked two and fanned five while snapping a consecutive scoreless innings streak at 15 2/3. Jose Pina struck out five in two perfect innings in relief of Lansford.

The Cougars established a new season-high by stranding 14 runners. They left the bases loaded in three straight frames – the fifth through seventh – and left two more in scoring position in the eighth. Crumbliss, House and Rashun Dixon all had two hits.

The Cougars (30-35) and River Bandits (39-25) continue the series Wednesday night at 7 CT. Ian Krol (4-2, 1.87) will face Scott Schneider (5-1, 2.76). The game will be broadcast on WBIG 1280-AM and online at [www.kccougars.com](http://www.kccougars.com) with pregame coverage starting at 6:45 p.m.