

## A's News Clips, Monday, June 28, 2010

### A's polish off sweep of pathetic Pirates

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

What a treat for the A's that the Pittsburgh Pirates arrived in town just when they did.

Having taken their lumps throughout June, the A's aren't above accepting a little charity. The bumbling Bucs did all they could to gift-wrap a 3-2 victory that gave the A's a three-game sweep and a much needed pick-me-up as they begin a six-game road trip Tuesday in Baltimore.

The A's collected just three hits, but the Pirates, who have lost 24 of their past 29 and 17 straight on the road, committed four errors that led to all of Oakland's scoring.

The final error came in the bottom of the eighth, when catcher Jason Jaramillo let Kurt Suzuki's pop-up clank off his mitt in foul territory. Two pitches later, Suzuki drilled a homer off Evan Meek (3-2) that broke a 2-2 tie.

In a most fitting insult-to-injury ending, Pittsburgh's Jose Tabata lashed a grounder off Andrew Bailey that was headed to right field with two outs in the top of the ninth. But the ball struck base runner Pedro Alvarez, who was trying to advance from first to second.

Automatic out. Game over.

"There have been numerous times I've said we swung the bats well and pitched well (and lost)," A's manager Bob Geren said. "Today, all the components to win a game weren't there. Some mistakes by the other team helped us a lot."

After getting swept by the Cincinnati Reds, the A's salvaged a 3-3 homestand and finished interleague play 8-10.

They're 9-16 in June.

Next up: Six games against the Orioles and Cleveland Indians, both last-place clubs. The A's must continue making hay against weaker competition to keep their hopes alive in the American League West.

They trail first-place Texas by 10 games.

"We got swept by Cincinnati, and we wanted to get the ball rolling before we got back out on the road," Suzuki said.

The Pirates committed two errors on one play to provide the A's first run in the third. Ross Ohlendorf's wild pickoff throw to first sent the A's Cliff Pennington scampering all the way to third. Pennington scored when Garrett Jones' throw across the diamond skipped past third baseman Andy LaRoche.

In the fifth, Pirates center fielder Andrew McCutchen dropped Mark Ellis' deep fly ball for a two-base error. Ohlendorf would issue a bases-loaded walk to Coco Crisp to make it 2-0.

Pittsburgh tied it in the seventh. Lastings Milledge led off with a solo homer that chased A's left-hander Gio Gonzalez from the game. Brad Ziegler entered and surrendered a single to LaRoche and a two-out RBI double to Tabata.

That set the stage in the eighth for Suzuki, who went deep for the second straight game.

He skied a pop-up near the first-base dugout. Jaramillo and Jones both gave chase, but Jaramillo couldn't make the catch.

Suzuki, no stranger to fielding pop-ups from behind the plate, said he felt Jaramillo's pain, but added:

"When they drop a pop-up, you want to make them pay for it."

Bailey, who collected his 14th save, could only smile at how the game ended in the ninth. Alvarez was on first with two outs after a pinch-hit walk, but he couldn't get out of the way of Tabata's hard grounder.

Any batted ball that hits a runner in fair territory is ruled a single, but the runner is out.

"The way that game was going, it was definitely going to end on a play like that," Bailey said.

NEXT GAME: Tuesday, at Orioles, 4:05 p.m.

## **A's update: Gio Gonzalez has no complaints after early exit**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Gio Gonzalez pitched well enough to earn a victory Sunday.

In the end, he settled for his team bagging a "W" as the A's beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 3-2 to complete a weekend sweep at the Oakland Coliseum.

It was just the A's fifth victory in their past 15 games.

"It's not an individual sport," Gonzalez said. "We play as a team and we win as one."

Gonzalez walked four but allowed just four hits over six-plus innings. He held the Pirates off the scoreboard until Lastings Milledge homered to lead off the seventh to bring Pittsburgh to within 2-1.

Gonzalez was at just 87 pitches at that point, but manager Bob Geren went to the bullpen, bringing in Brad Ziegler.

"I thought he was kind of battling his command for the majority of the day," Geren said of Gonzalez.

Ziegler allowed two hits and a run in the seventh that tied the game before Kurt Suzuki's homer in the eighth made the difference for the A's.

Gonzalez admitted he was surprised to leave the game when he did. But he hardly appeared upset, spreading credit as he typically does to his defense and bullpen.

The A's relief corps has endured some hard times in June, but they've allowed just two runs in 12 1/3 innings over the past five games.

Craig Breslow (3-1) pitched a scoreless eighth, and opposing hitters are 1 for 35 against him over his past 13 appearances.

With the A's off today, Geren confirmed that Vin Mazzaro will be pushed back in the rotation. The next time he'll be needed to start is Saturday against Cleveland, and Geren said Mazzaro could be used in relief before then.

Outfielder Travis Buck has been cleared to resume baseball activity. Buck underwent an MRI on his lower back and other tests to try to explain the severe leg fatigue that has delayed his return from the disabled list. There's no timetable for Buck to begin a rehab assignment.

Game time for the Aug. 7 home game against Texas has been switched from 6:05 p.m. to 1:10 p.m. because Fox Sports has picked it up. A postgame fireworks show set for that day will now take place Aug. 6, after a 7:05 game against the Rangers.

## **Chin Music: A's go for sweep of Pirates; good news for Travis Buck**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/27/2010 1:24PM

The A's trot out the same lineup as last night as they go for a sweep of the Pirates, and with the way they've looked the past two nights, why not? I'm not sure this team can make the kind of run they'll need to get back in the thick of the AL West race, but regardless, a three-game sweep would provide some good vibes after the rough stretch they've endured ...

-Travis Buck, who underwent tests in hopes of explaining the severe leg fatigue he's experienced, has been cleared to return to baseball activity, which is a good sign for the outfielder. But I'd expect it will be a while before Buck can begin a rehab assignment.

We're pretty light on news so far today, so here's the lineups (yes, I realize the game is underway!!)

A's — Crisp CF, Barton 1B, Jackson LF, Suzuki C, Sweeney RF, Kouzmanoff 3B, Cust DH, Ellis 2B, Pennington SS; Gonzalez LHP.

Pirates — Tabata LF, Crosby 2B, McCutchen CF, Jones 1B, Doumit DH, Milledge RF, LaRoche 3B, Jaramillo C, Cedeno SS; Ohlendorf RHP.

## **Poole: Is Major League Baseball stacking the deck against the A's?**

By Monte Poole, Oakland Tribune columnist

With the A's going for the sweep and the Giants rolling out The Freak Sunday, it was a fabulous conclusion to a fine weekend of baseball in the Bay Area.

All the more fabulous if you own the A's and you saw the numbers.

Oakland won on the field, taking all three games from Pittsburgh but was crushed at the gate by the Giants, who lost two of three to Boston despite sending Tim Lincecum to the mound in the finale. A's owners Lew Wolff and John Fisher couldn't have rigged it any better. And they didn't have to do a thing.

The schedule-makers at Major League Baseball did it for them.

It was one of those rare weekends during which both teams were at home, fighting for the fan dollar, but the A's played host to the perennially sub-mediocre Pirates while the Giants got the nationally popular Red Sox.

Not really a fair fight, eh?

High-profile Boston comes to town and the abrasive Red Sox Nation follows, marching directly to 10-year-old AT&T Park, perhaps Major League Baseball's most captivating cathedral. Despite tickets ranging from \$38 (for standing room) to \$225 (Premium Club), virtual sellouts were guaranteed.

Meanwhile, the anonymous Pirates trudged to the 44-year-old Coliseum, a detested yard long ago described as "unsuitable" by MLB commissioner Bud Selig. Though plenty of tickets were available for as little as \$9, thousands of empty seats were assured.

Selig, of course, is well known in these parts for his association with Wolff. The two men met at the University of Wisconsin in the 1950s, were members of the same fraternity, and it was Selig who nearly a decade ago began recruiting into baseball ownership the man he refers to as "Lewie."

This San Francisco-Boston, Oakland-Pittsburgh thing is, at the least, a curious bit of scheduling. More to the point, it activates the brain cells within the mind of any conspiracy theorist.

The Blue Ribbon committee formed and assembled by Selig to determine viable sites for the A's is toiling — or stalling — toward its 16th month. Not a public word has been uttered by the four men — ex-Giants executive Corey Busch, attorney Irwin Raji, MLB executive Bob DuPuy and committee chairman Bob Stanley — given the task of recommending to Major League Baseball and the A's a course of action for Wolff and Fisher.

But a weekend like that which concluded Sunday, fair or not, will try to be sold as evidence the A's can't compete in Oakland. The Giants drew 124,888 (41,620 average), the A's 51,460 (17,153 average).

Consider, too, the weekend of April 23-25. Both teams were in town. The Giants drew the Cardinals, who have a national fan base and this season rank fourth in overall (home and road) attendance, while the A's drew dormant Cleveland, which ranks 23rd.

Maybe there is nothing sinister here. There is, I suppose, the possibility that these are unlucky coincidences for Oakland.

But what if this is a case of dots connecting themselves?

We all know MLB's preferred team in the area and it's not the one in the East Bay that once was considered for contraction. Never mind the four World Series titles won in Oakland, to zero for San Francisco. Or that the A's routinely outdrew the Giants in the 1980s and much of the '90s before the move to AT&T. Or that the Giants have drawn 2 million or more fans in 13 of 52 seasons — only three of 40 years at Candlestick Park, while the A's have done so in 11 of 42.

Even conceding the A's would benefit from a new ballpark, there are reasons to believe both teams can succeed in their current cities. The two teams combined to draw 5.83 million fans in 2003 and pulled in 5.29 as recently as 2005 — the first year under the Wolff-Fisher ownership.

Not that any of these numbers greatly matter, for the agenda in Oakland was set the minute Wolff joined the A's nearly a decade ago under the guise of scouting out potential ballpark sites. A little more than three years later, Wolff and Fisher bought the club and have consistently and effectively made clear their preferred site is Fremont or San Jose.

The Giants have aggressively defended their rights to the San Jose market. Still, Wolff and Fisher have not backed off. They believe, justifiably, that the two sides can come to some kind of agreement, no doubt involving a couple briefcases full of cash.

Sometime between today and 2014, the committee will reveal its findings. We will hear about the great disparity in attendance between the Giants, in general and when the teams go head-to-head.

And we will know, looking back on weekends such as this one, how hard MLB worked to prove its point.

## **Suzuki makes most of his second chance**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

It could have been one of those "wanna get away?" commercials.

For one embarrassing moment Sunday, the Coliseum was the least desirable place for Pittsburgh catcher Jason Jaramillo. But there he was, crouched behind the plate with his head sunk between his shoulders as Kurt Suzuki trotted around the bases. Suzuki's eighth-inning home run decided a 3-2 A's victory and completed a three-game sweep of the Pirates.

Two pitches earlier, Suzuki hit a foul popup that Jaramillo dropped.

"You take 'em any way you get 'em," A's closer Andrew Bailey said.

The Pirates made four errors. The A's had three hits and scored zero earned runs. The game ended when a Pirates batter (Jose Tabata) hit a ball that hit a Pirates runner (Pedro Alvarez).

Ruling: single for Tabata; rookie mistake by Alvarez; save for Bailey.

"I was telling Bailey, 'I've never seen that,' " Suzuki said. "That was the weirdest last inning I've ever seen. It's a weird game. Anything can happen. Guys showed that today."

Suzuki was thrilled to contribute to the weirdness. When he hit that popup, he was convinced he was the third out of the inning. But as Jaramillo and first baseman Garrett Jones converged, Jaramillo stuck his mitt out and flat-out dropped it.

Suzuki, like any catcher, knows the feeling of dropping a popup in foul territory. But he wasn't about to show remorse for Jaramillo.

"Obviously, after a dropped popup, you want to make them pay for it," he said. "For sure, I thought I was out. I gave a quick glance back and saw it drop and said, 'Oh.' Now it's our turn to make 'em pay."

Jaramillo had a chance to redeem himself in the ninth but bounced into a double play. Bailey then walked Alvarez, and Tabata hit a grounder destined for right field - until Alvarez got hit by the ball.

Game over.

Before the Suzuki homer gave the A's an unearned run, they scored two other unearned runs. On one play, Cliff Pennington advanced from first to third on Ross Ohlendorf's wild pickoff throw and scored when Jones recovered the ball and fired it past third.

A's starter Gio Gonzalez tossed six scoreless innings before surrendering Lastings Milledge's homer to open the seventh. He immediately got the hook (one run, four hits, 87 pitches) with the A's leading 2-1. Manager Bob Geren noted Gonzalez was falling behind in counts and walked a batter in three straight innings.

Brad Ziegler relieved Gonzalez and gave up a quick run on Tabata's RBI double.

Surprised about the timing of the exit?

"You could say that," said Gonzalez, who praised the bullpen before adding, "We got a win. That's all that matters. Emotions aside, we got the win. This is not an individual sport. We play as one, and we win as one."

The last-place Pirates have lost 17 straight road games, and their manager, John Russell, said his team "stunk" and made "stupid mistakes." Jaramillo's only statement was, "It was a popup. I missed it. It's a tough play. I should've had it. That's all I'm going to say."

## **Eckersley compliments Bailey's composure**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

**Andrew Bailey** had an unusual save. Sunday's game ended when Pirates baserunner **Pedro Alvarez** was plunked by a batted ball as he ran from first to second. A fluke play. But there's nothing flukey about Bailey.

A Hall of Fame closer has noticed.

"I like him," said **Dennis Eckersley**, who attended Sunday's game. "He gets it and throws it. It looks like he's unaffected. I don't know the kid, but he's a good pitcher. Got good stuff and throws 95 (mph)."

Eckersley is a TV analyst for 60 Boston games (pregame and postgame), but he wasn't in the Bay Area because the Red Sox were in San Francisco. He was in Fremont visiting his mother, **Bernice**, who recently turned 80.

Bailey said he'd like a chance to speak with Eckersley. It didn't come Sunday.

"He kind of started it all," Bailey said of Eckersley and the game's shift to one-inning saves. "One day I'd like to pick his brain about it. Kind of gather information. I take every bit of information I can get, and he's one guy I'd love to talk to, one of the greatest of all time."

**Briefly:** The A's swept a series for the first time since beating the Giants three straight May 21-23. ... **Craig Breslow's** streak of batters retired ended at 19, and it was his fault. He mishandled **Garrett Jones'** two-hopper for an error, but he retired his next two batters and got the win. ... **Travis Buck**, who has been shelved with leg issues and had an MRI exam

for his lower back, was approved to begin baseball activities. The A's gave no timetable for a rehab assignment. ... Manager **Bob Geren** reaffirmed that No. 5 starter **Vin Mazzaro** will be pushed back in the rotation with today's off day.

## **A'S LEADING OFF**

John Shea, San Francisco Chronicle

**Likes daytime:** Gio Gonzalez remains hot in day games (4-0, 1.30 ERA in five starts), a far cry from how cold he is at night (2-5, 5.11 in 11 starts). His final batter Sunday, Lastings Milledge, hit a home run, the first Gonzalez has surrendered in a day game. He has given up seven night homers.

## **Drum Music: Beautiful day for baseball ; just ask Gio**

John Shea from the Coliseum, where the A's are wrapping up a weeklong homestand before heading to Baltimore and Cleveland . . . 6/27/2010 1:05PM

It's Turn Up the Clock to Now Day, and the A's are wearing their 2010 uniforms. Black tops, as starting pitcher Gio Gonzalez requested. Last night's '70s unis were cool, and the A's should wear them more often.

Gio is coming off a solid, seven-inning start against Cincinnati in which he gave up one run and four hits.

Good thing for the A's it's a day game. He's 4-0 with a 1.26 ERA in four starts during the day -- lowest day ERA in the majors -- and 2-5 with a 5.11 ERA in 11 night starts. He hasn't given up a home run during the day.

The lineup: CF Crisp, 1B Barton, LF Jackson, C Suzuki, RF Sweeney, 3B Kouzmanoff, DH Cust, 2B Ellis, SS Pennington.

For in-game updates, see Twitter @JohnSheaHey

## **A's take advantage of Bucs' mistakes in win**

### **Suzuki's eighth-inning blast is third unearned run of game**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- The Pirates lent the A's a handful of generous contributions in the form of four costly errors on Sunday afternoon.

In return, the charitable Kurt Suzuki lent a little something of his own to Pittsburgh.

Some might call it salt on the wound. Suzuki simply likes to call it "payback."

With Suzuki standing in at the plate with two outs in the bottom of the eighth inning in a tie game, the A's catcher watched Pittsburgh backstop Jason Jaramillo drop a foul pop. Given a second chance at life in the batter's box, Suzuki took a ball from Evan Meek before launching a fastball into deep left field to give Oakland a lead and, ultimately, a 3-2 victory and three-game series sweep over the Pirates.

"It was a tough play," Jaramillo said. "I should have had it. I missed it, and that's all."

"I wanted to make [Jaramillo] pay," Suzuki said. "I for sure thought it was an out. When I looked back, I thought, OK. ... I wanted to put the barrel on the ball. Meek's a good pitcher. He was throwing me fastballs, so I was just looking for something up."

And that's what he got -- even though Meek was channeling his opponent's mind the entire time.

"I just happened to miss my spot and threw it right to where he was looking to hit it," the Pirates reliever said. "He put a nice, smooth swing on it. Right when I threw it, I was like, 'Oh, God.' I mean, it's frustrating, but what are you going to do?"

Pittsburgh starter Ross Ohlendorf was essentially singing the same tune, as he was forced to watch two unearned runs score during his six innings of work. At the same time, he knows he was just as much a part of the mess as his teammates.

In the third, Cliff Pennington drew a walk and proceeded to advance all the way to home following two consecutive throwing errors -- one by Ohlendorf on a pickoff attempt and the other by first baseman Garrett Jones on a subsequent throw to third base.

Then, in the fifth, Jack Cust was awarded a free pass and moved to third on a two-base error by center fielder Andrew McCutchen, who watched a fly ball from Mark Ellis go in -- and out -- of his glove. With runners on second and third, Pennington beat out Ohlendorf by no more than a foot on a ground ball initially fielded by Jones. Still with no outs, the Pirates pitcher proceeded to walk in Oakland's second unearned run with four balls to Coco Crisp.

The A's let Ohlendorf off the hook when they couldn't add on to the two-run lead by leaving the bases loaded. Oakland starter Gio Gonzalez, meanwhile, went six-plus innings, his only mistake coming with no outs in the seventh in the form of a solo shot by Lastings Milledge. Ohlendorf was pulled after the long ball following just 87 pitches, at which point Brad Ziegler was brought in to finish the frame. He did, but not before giving up the tying run on a two-out RBI single by Andy LaRoche.

Gonzalez, who settled for a no-decision, left with four hits, four walks and two strikeouts attached to his name. It was the walks -- and command, in general -- that led to manager Bob Geren's decision to take out his lefty with such a low pitch count.

"He was battling with command all day," the A's skipper said. "At that point, we had the bullpen set up nicely. He just wasn't as crisp as we've seen him. He pitched good enough to win. The team got it, and that's the important part."

Ziegler's one-run outing was followed up with another exceptional one from Craig Breslow, who kept the Pirates off the board in the eighth and eventually walked away with the win -- not before buddy Andrew Bailey got a unique save, though.

The A's righty, walking out to the mound after Suzuki's game-changing long ball, quickly gave up a single to Delwyn Young before getting Jaramillo to ground into a double play. Bailey, though, put another runner -- Ronny Cedeno -- on first base thanks to a walk. Pittsburgh's next batter, Jose Tabata, was credited with a single, one that just happened to hit Cedeno for the third out, thus, Bailey's 14th save.

"In a game like that, you knew it was going to end that way," Bailey said with smile. "You take them any way you can."

"Ultimately, our bullpen is what makes or breaks us. We hadn't been doing our jobs recently, so it's good to come in and contribute while getting the sweep."

It marked the A's third sweep of the season and first since May 21-23 against the Giants. The club has now won three in a row after dropping 10 of its previous 12. And although Sunday's finale, which resulted in just three Oakland hits, may have come with a dose of luck for the club, Geren and Co. will gladly take it heading into a six-game road swing through Baltimore and Cleveland.

"Things tend to even out over the long haul," Geren said. "You're going to win a few games you should lose and vice versa. We had three hits today. It's very unusual to win with three hits, but we'll take it."

## **Buck begins baseball activities**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- The mysterious leg soreness that has kept Travis Buck off the field for a handful of weeks has decreased -- at least enough for him to resume baseball activity.

The A's outfielder recently underwent several tests, including an MRI on his lower back last week, that all came back negative. Thus, he was cleared to return to the field immediately, manager Bob Geren said Sunday morning.

Buck, who was placed on the 15-day disabled list April 22 with a strained right oblique muscle before being set back with the leg issue, will return to Arizona and work on making strides toward a Minor League rehab assignment.

"We'll go from there," Geren said. "Right now, there's no timetable for any rehab games."

Buck is in the midst of his fifth career DL stint in the past four seasons. He was on his fourth consecutive Opening Day roster in April, but has played in just 156 games over the previous three years.

### **Taylor's numbers improving at Triple-A**

OAKLAND -- A's general manager Billy Beane has insisted all season that high-profile prospect Michael Taylor, along with fellow up-and-comer Chris Carter, won't be making their way to Oakland until they're absolutely ready.

The bad news is that Taylor entered Sunday with a .252 mark. The good news, though, is that he was hitting under .240 just a week ago.

The 24-year-old outfielder, acquired by the A's via a Minor League swap with the Blue Jays in December, has hit safely in nine of his past 10 games and is batting .400 (14-for-35) for Triple-A Sacramento over that stretch.

Taylor was sidelined with a calf injury for nearly three weeks earlier in the season, but he's since been struggling to find his way in the batter's box -- until now, that is. The A's prospect, like Carter, was expected to be in Oakland by June or July, but a slow start has changed those plans.

Carter is currently tied for second in the Pacific Coast League in extra-base hits (37) and sits in third place for RBIs (54) and runs scored (52). Furthermore, the first baseman has tallied 15 home runs, along with a favorable 42 walks. At the same time, he's batting .237 and has compiled 88 strikeouts in 74 games.

Thus, the club doesn't anticipate their big league arrival anytime soon, especially with an abundant number of outfielders currently in Oakland's fold.

### **Worth noting**

Geren confirmed after Sunday's game that, as first mentioned Saturday, he'll skip righty Vin Mazzaro's turn in the rotation due to the team's off-day Monday. He did not say whether he'll also skip Mazzaro's next scheduled start but, if he does, All-Star candidate Trevor Cahill would be slated to start Sunday, July 11. Pitchers who start that day are not eligible to be on the All-Star Game's active roster. ... Craig Breslow committed a fielding error in the eighth inning of Sunday's game that allowed Pittsburgh's Garrett Jones to reach base, snapping the lefty's streak of 19 consecutive batters retired. Opponents remain hitless against him in his past eight games and six innings pitched.

## **Matusz, Braden eyeing return to win column**

By Matt Fortuna / MLB.com

The Orioles are certainly hoping the momentum from their past two series rubs off on Brian Matusz on Tuesday when they host the Athletics at Oriole Park at Camden Yards.

Baltimore won its fourth straight game on Sunday. Matusz, meanwhile, has lost a career-high eight straight decisions after starting the season 2-0.

The left-hander was chased in the sixth inning Wednesday against the Marlins, allowing six runs on seven hits in an 8-2 loss. It came after he tossed three quality starts in his previous four outings, and it is also the last time the Orioles lost.

Matusz's last win actually came against the A's back on April 18. He struck out eight over 6 1/3 innings, giving up three runs on eight hits in an 8-3 Orioles win at Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum.

The 23-year-old faced the A's again on May 26 at home, lasting just five innings while giving up six runs on eight hits and striking out four in a 6-1 defeat. He is 1-1 with a 7.15 ERA against the A's.

Baltimore may be just what Matusz's counterpart on the other end, Dallas Braden, needs to get back on track.

Braden made his Major League debut in Baltimore in 2007, and he is 5-1 with a 1.41 career ERA against the Orioles. In two starts against them this season, he is 1-0 with a 1.64 ERA

Braden has been anything but perfect since tossing a perfect game on Mother's Day. In eight starts since, Braden is 0-5 with 4.31 ERA. The eight-start winless streak since throwing a perfect game marks the second-longest in Major League history.



### **A's: Buck tests all negative**

Manager Bob Geren said Sunday morning that outfielder Travis Buck was cleared to return to the field after undergoing several tests, all of which came back negative. Buck was placed on the 15-day disabled list on April 22 with a strained right oblique muscle and was then plagued by mysterious leg soreness. He will return to Arizona and work toward making a Minor League rehab assignment. ... Geren said he will likely skip Vin Mazzaro's turn in the rotation due to the team's off-day Monday.

### **Orioles: Wigginton back**

Ty Wigginton started at first base Sunday and went 0-for-4. Wigginton received Saturday off to rest his sore back before pinch-hitting in the seventh inning. It marked just the third game this season in which he didn't start. ... The Orioles activated Koji Uehara off the 15-day disabled list and designated Garrett Atkins for assignment. Atkins hit just .214 with one homer and nine RBIs in 140 at-bats this season.

### **Worth noting**

The A's lead the season series between the two clubs, 5-2. This three-game set marks the last time they will face each other this year. ... The A's finished a sweep of the Pirates on Sunday after coming into the set having lost seven of their previous eight games. It marked Oakland's first series win since taking three of four from the Tigers May 28-31. It was Oakland's first sweep since taking all three home games against San Francisco May 21-23.

## **A's Sweep Pirates**

Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post

Oakland, CA – The Oakland A's swept the Pittsburgh Pirates today, winning game three of the series 3-2. The A's have regained their momentum behind the "hot" streak of both Coco Crisp and Kurt Suzuki. Since his return Crisp has scored three runs in back-to-back games and Suzuki hit two home runs in back-to-back games.

"It's a W, a weird game overall," Andrew Bailey said. "We took advantage of some miscues and it's good we took the series." "The addition of Coco has been huge for this team, his leadership and presence is very positive."

Oakland has won their last three games and records their third sweep of the season, their first since May 21-23 against San Francisco. They remain in third place of the American League West and nine games behind first place Texas.

With two outs in the eighth frame Suzuki watched Pirates catcher Jason Jaramillo drop a foul popup ball for an error. Reliever Evan Meek struck out the first two batters before Jaramillo's error and kept throwing fastballs for the final out. But two pitches later, Suzuki got his second chance and hit a home run to secure Oakland's win over the Pirates.

"I thought, not again, another foul popup," said Suzuki. "I saw him drop it out and thought, it's our turn to make them pay." "I tried to put the barrel on the ball, Meek's a good pitcher and he kept throwing me fastballs."

Too many costly errors prevented Pittsburgh from getting back into the game. In the ninth inning Pedro Alvarez walked with two outs and no one on base. When Jose Tabata hit a single right, Alvarez began running to second base and got hit by the ball for the final out.

During the third frame pitcher Ross Ohlendorf walked Cliff Pennington and tried to pick him off at first by throwing the ball away. Then first baseman Garrett Jones over threw the ball on the same play past third trying to get Pennington out, who scored the A's first run.

"I didn't do a good job defensively," said Ohlendorf. "I threw the ball away for their first run and I didn't cover first the inning they scored their second run." "If I did a better job defensively, they wouldn't have scored either run."

Oakland did a phenomenal job on defense behind Gio Gonzalez. He pitched six innings, struck out two, gave up four hits, one run and walked one. Gonzalez was pulled after giving up a home run to Lastings Milledge top of the seventh frame that brought the Pirates within one run.

"I did alright," Gonzalez said. "I did the best I could... The defense was outstanding and we got the win, that's all that matters."

Notes – In honor of "Scouts Day" 2500 girl scouts, parents and leaders from around the Bay Area participated in a parade before the game on the field. Each child walked donning their uniform and holding their number above for recognition of duty and to receive their "fun" patch.

## **Shooty Babitt, Oakland's Face for the A's**

By Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post

He dons an off-white brim hat, dark sunglasses and a contagious smile. You'll find him sitting among the crowd, shaking hands on the field or in the press box. Mack Neal, "Shooty" Babitt, is a MLB scout for the New York Mets and a television analyst for the Oakland A's "Wrap Up" on Fox Sports.

A former player for the A's, Babitt is reminded he is living a dream. As a young kid he dreamed about playing in the majors. He later played professionally in the same stadium he used to sneak into during his youth.

Picked in the 25th round of the 1977 draft, Babitt was a second baseman that played with likes of Rickey Henderson, Dwayne Murphy and Dave Stewart.

"My size made me the person I am today," he said. "I was small but very physical – so I had to be three times better in order to succeed. This is the major league, and there is no league bigger than this."

After his playing career ended, he began working with his dad in the automobile industry. "I worked a real job like everyone else," he said.

Playing in the MLB been too short, and he decided to return to baseball as a scout. "I've been scouting for a long time, (16 years) and it's something that I enjoy," Babitt said. "Someone gave me an opportunity, and I would like to do the same with others."

"College is the where we look for talent. Kids who have passion need to work hard in the classroom. Playing in the majors takes a lot of patience, but it's worth it."

The percentage of African Americans in the majors dropped from 10.2 to 9 percent last season. Twenty-seven percent are Latino, and 2.3 percent are Asian. In an effort to curb the decline, the MLB has established Reviving Baseball in inner cities and at youth academies.

Babitt sees changes to come in the future, but in the meantime he continues to seek out talent that he knows will change the game.

During the off-season he enjoys spending time with his family. He has been married for the past 25 years to Yvonne Babitt. They have three children.

"Baseball gave me a chance to get educated in life," he said. "I want to give my kids an opportunity to be the best and continue let the Lord guide me in the right direction."

## **A's hold off Pirates**

Nick Zambrano, Tri City Voice, 6/28/2010

Going into Sunday's final interleague game, the A's have not been to close their opponents out. Their opponents on the other hand, have been successful in doing so. In the 2010 interleague season, Oakland has been swept twice. Ironically, Oakland's last sweep came at the beginning of interleague play when they swept the Giants in mid-May.

It only made sense that the A's would end this year's interleague stint the same way they started it as they finished a sweep the Pittsburgh Pirates on Sunday afternoon.

The 3-2 victory lacked the punch that the first two games of the series had. In game one on Friday, the A's opened the floodgates with their 14-4 smashing. CoCo Crisp was 3-5 in that game with a double and a triple. Saturday's game had a sprinkle of dominant pitching mixed in with the 5-0 win. Trevor Cahill struck out 10 and dropped his ERA to 2.88.

"It wasn't our best game but we won," Oakland skipper Bob Geren said of today's contest.

In certainly a manner that would remind all baseball fans of their days in the little league, Cliff Pennington scored the game's first run off of a pick-off attempt at first. The low throw from Pirates' pitcher Ross Ohlendorf got past first baseman Garrett Jones allowing Pennington to advance all the way to third. In an attempt to cover up the error by trying to throw out the light-footed Pennington at third. In spite of his attempt, Jones' throw was wide and Pennington slid into home with ease.

The official scoring of the play consisted of two errors, the first going to Ohlendorf with his erratic throw that allow the runner to advance. The other went to Jones, who allowed Pennington to score with his bad toss. The run did not go against Ohlendorf, as it was unearned. The Pirates finished the game with four errors against them.

The A's found themselves in good terms with more of the Pirates' misfortunes again in the fifth.

Ohlendorf started an uneasy frame with a walk on a full count to Jack Cust. Cust would eventually go from first to third on Andrew McCutchen's error on Mark Ellis' fly ball. Pennington made Ohlendorf and Jones look silly again when he beat out routine grounder to first. Luckily, both Cust and Ellis stood at their respective bases.

The righty Ohlendorf followed that embarrassment with a bases loaded walk to Coco Crisp to make the game 2-0 in favor of the A's.

Pittsburgh's bat would not remain silent for the entirety of the game.

Lastings Milledge finally got the Bucs a run with his solo rocket in the seventh. It was the fifth home run allowed by Gio Gonzalez in his last six appearances and also Milledge's first of the season. After surrendering the homer, Geren decided to call it a game for his southpaw. Gonzalez didn't come away with the win, but he finished the game with six innings pitched and one run allowed. The win was accredited to Craig Breslow who had a solid eighth inning performance.

"I went as deep as I could into the game and that was in thanks to my defense," Gonzalez said.

The Oakland infield provided plenty of insurance for their pitchers. Through the full nine, the Oakland defense racked up three double plays. Shortstop Cliff Pennington alone had seven putouts.

"The guy (Pennington) is hands down a great shortstop," Gonzalez said of his shortstop.

Pittsburgh tagged on another run in the seventh to even the game out at 2-2.

More hilarity ensued in the home half of the eighth when Kurt Suzuki stepped to the dish. Coming into his bat, Suzuki was an abysmal 0-3 with two ground outs and a fly out. Now with a 2-2 against him, Oakland's beloved catcher was looking at an 0-4 day when he popped up behind home plate. He had already to turn toward the dugout before he heard the crowd cheer.

To his surprise, Pirates' catcher Jason Jaramillo had dropped the routine pop-up. It was as if he was given a mulligan for his day. Suzuki then turned back to the box and let out a big sigh. What followed the big sigh was a big blast that found its way behind the fence in left field.

"I for sure thought I was out, but then I looked back and I was like now it's our turn to make them pay," Suzuki said of the Evan Meek delivery.

The A's regained the lead for closer Andrew Bailey, who closed out the game for his 14th save of the season.

After completing the sweep, the A's will have more opportunities to get back over the hump that is the .500 mark. After an off day tomorrow, Oakland (37-40) will pack their bags and make way their for Baltimore to face the Orioles for a three-game affair. The A's are 5-2 on the year against the AL East's last place team.

After a hopefully successful stay out in Maryland, the team will fly on over to Cleveland. The Indians are also hiding out in the AL Central's basement with their dismal 27-47 record. The A's are 2-1 against the Tribe this season.

A successful road trip is pivotal for the green and gold because upon their return to the Coliseum, they'll start a three-game stand with the 2009 World Series Champions, the New York Yankees. Following the Pinstripers, the A's will have a more crucial set with the rival Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. If all goes according to plan, Oakland could very well be sitting at the top of the AL West by the time the All-Star Break rolls around.

## **Suzuki gets reprieve, then homers in A's victory**

## **Oakland finishes sweep of lowly Pirates with 3-2 win**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND — Given a second chance, Kurt Suzuki gave the Oakland Athletics the lead.

Suzuki homered with two outs in the eighth inning after a dropped foul popup and the Athletics beat Pittsburgh 3-2 Sunday, the Pirates' 17th straight road loss.

With the score 2-all, Pirates reliever Evan Meek (3-2) struck out the first two batters in the eighth. Suzuki followed with a pop that catcher Jason Jaramillo dropped for an error.

"I thought, 'Not again, not another foul popup,'" Suzuki said. "I saw him drop it out and it gave me renewed life. I thought, 'OK, this is the break I needed. Let's do something about it.'"

Two pitches later, Suzuki hit his 10th home run. The A's won with only three hits.

"I missed it," Jaramillo said. "That's it. I should have had it."

Pirates manager John Russell was a little more explicit.

"We stunk in every aspect," he said. "Two stupid mistakes spoiled a very nice start by our pitcher. You can't play like that and expect to win."

The game ended strangely. Pedro Alvarez walked with two outs and nobody on, but was hit by Jose Tabata's single near first base for the final out.

The road losing streak is the second-longest in Pirates' history, trailing only a 19-game slide in 1985.

"That's not our best game but we still won," A's manager Bob Geren said. "Sometimes you play well and come up short. Mistakes by the other team certainly helped us out a lot. It could have been an 'F-2' and Kurt turned it into a home run."

The A's won their third straight after losing seven of their previous eight. Pittsburgh lost its sixth in a row. Oakland is 9-0 all-time against the Pirates.

"Things even out over the long haul," Geren said. "It's very unusual to win with three hits but we'll take it."

Craig Breslow (3-1) pitched the eighth to pick up the win.

Andrew Bailey pitched the ninth for his 14th save.

Lastings Milledge hit a home run and Jose Tabata also drove in a run for the Pirates, who finished 2-13 in interleague play.

Both starters pitched well. Gio Gonzalez took a three-hit shutout into the seventh and Ross Ohlendorf pitched two-hit ball for six innings and did not allow an earned run.

"I didn't do a good job defensively," Ohlendorf said. "I threw the ball away for their first run and I didn't cover first the inning they scored their second run. If I do a better job defensively, they don't score either run."

Ohlendorf is winless in his past 16 starts dating to last Aug. 18 against the Milwaukee Brewers.

Milledge led off the seventh with a home that pulled the Pirates within 2-1, a hit that finished Gonzalez.

"I did all right," Gonzalez said. "The infield showed we've got a bunch of gold gloves out there. They turned a few double plays that really helped me. We got the win, that's the main thing."

Reliever Brad Ziegler was summoned to face Adam LaRoche, who singled up the middle and advanced a base on the next two groundouts. Tabata's double tied the game.

Ohlendorf walked Cliff Pennington to open the third and then threw the ball away at first trying to pick him off. First baseman Garrett Jones threw the ball down the left field line on the same play trying to get Pennington advancing to third.

Ohlendorf walked Jack Cust leading off the fifth. Center fielder Andrew McCutchen dropped Mark Ellis' fly ball and Pennington's infield single loaded the bases. Ohlendorfer walked Coco Crisp to force home a run before retiring the next three hitters to avoid further damage.

## MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

### **Halama helps Sacramento collect fourth win in row**

By Robbie Enos / Sacramento River Cats

On a scorching day with a 93 degree first pitch temperature, the Sacramento River Cats ignored the heat and put a spectacular offensive performance, defeating the Tacoma Rainiers 8-3.

"Today was a good win," said River Cats catcher Josh Donaldson, who was 1-for-4. "Got a good outing, good pitching, and put some runs up on the board. We got a lot of runs in the fourth and fifth innings (three in the fourth and four in the fifth), and that pretty much put the game away."

The River Cats collected 12 hits and four walks. Starting pitcher John Halama allowed three runs over 6.0 innings pitched. Having a great offensive performance was center fielder Matt Carson, who went 3-for-4 with a double and three runs scored.

"We got back from Vegas, and I don't know if it was the hotels there or what, but everyone was dragging a little bit today," Carson said. "So today I just wanted to get a good pitch to hit and not do too much."

Coming through big was outfielder Michael Taylor, who drove in three runs. His big hit came in the fifth inning when he drove in two runs on a single with the bases loaded. He drove in his third run in the fourth inning by scoring Carson on a ground ball to third.

"Like always, I was just trying to get the job done," Taylor said. "I just wanted to get a good pitch to swing at. You have to make sure that you're ready, especially with a guy on third and less than two outs. With the bases loaded, I got to two strikes and just shortened up a bit. The guy hung me a slider and I was able to put it into center field."

Taylor has been hot of late, going 7-for-14 in the previous series against Las Vegas. He has scored 15 runs in the month of June and driven in 13.

"Trying to see the ball and be real short," said Taylor, who has been working on in his approach and swing. "It sounds really easy, but you can lose a little bit of that in mechanics, especially in the game. Really everything I've been doing is just trying to be in a position where I am seeing the ball well and I can make my movement to the ball short."

The starting pitcher for Tacoma was right-hander Ian Snell, who has 38 wins at the big league level. Manager Tony DeFrancesco knew his offense needed a plan to beat Snell in the game.

"No doubt (Snell) is a good pitcher," DeFrancesco said before the game. "He was a big league starter for Seattle this year. He was winless up there (0-5), so he's got something to prove. He's got a good fastball, so we're going to have to be more selective at the plate, work the count deep, and get a good pitch to hit."

The approach that the Cats showed worked, as they scored four earned runs against Snell in 4.0 innings of work. They were patient and drew four walks, while also collecting five hits.

"Snell threw too many pitches (96 pitches in four innings)," Tacoma manager Daren Brown said after the game. "That won't work for a starter. I thought he had good stuff, he just got too deep in the count on a lot of guys."

The Cats got to Snell early in the second inning, starting with back-to-back singles from Carson and Donaldson. Taylor wore one to load the bases, setting up a sacrifice fly to center from Adam Heether. Carson scored on the play.

Tacoma immediately answered in the third. Jack Hannahan singled to right field, and then Josh Bard hit a towering home run over the left-field wall, giving the Rainiers a 2-1 lead.

The River Cats snagged the lead back in the fourth, clawing away at Snell. Carson led off the inning with a double to the right-field corner, and then he advanced to third on a Donaldson flyout to right-center.

Taylor brought in Carson with a grounder to the shortstop, tying the game and igniting a two-out rally. Adam Heether walked, and then Corey Wimberly smacked a single through the right side. Steve Tolleson walked to load the bases, and Matt Watson hit a clutch, two-run double into the right field corner. On the play Tolleson was thrown out at home plate, ending the rally.

Sacramento struck again in the fifth against reliever Lavale Speigner, getting a spark from a controversial call. McPherson singled to center, followed by a Carson base knock. Donaldson came up to the plate next, and hit a fly ball to left. Left fielder Mike Wilson appeared to catch the ball, and then drop it on the transfer.

"I saw him go up for it," Donaldson said. "And then I saw the ball come out. I don't know if he had squeezed it in his transfer or not, but obviously I'm not the right guy to ask because I'm running toward first base. I was looking at it, but it's the umpire's call."

The play loaded the bases, but manager Daren Brown of Tacoma came out to argue the call. The umpires got together and decided to not change the call, leaving Donaldson safe at third. Brown was furious with the decision, and was ejected from the game.

"Obviously I thought he caught the ball and obviously they thought he didn't," was all Brown had to say about the play after the game.

The error set up a Taylor single to center field, scoring two more runs. The inning continued to get stranger, when Heether hit a ground ball to third baseman Hannahan. Donaldson was on third, and he dashed for home. Hannahan threw to home plate, and Donaldson reversed back to third.

Catcher Josh Bard fired back to third, and Donaldson collided with Hannahan on the way back. He was originally called safe, but third base umpire Angel Campos changed the call, feeling that Donaldson came off the base and was tagged out.

DeFrancesco expressed his dismay for the call, but it would stand and Donaldson was called out. He appeared to be hurt on the collision, but got up under his own power and continued to catch.

"It was just one of those things," Donaldson said. "I have a previous injury to my left shoulder anyhow and he kind of came down and drove my shoulder into the ground. It was one of those things where it was a sharp pain at the beginning. But I want to go out there and compete with my guys. I don't want to come out of the game. I want to be out there and let everyone know that I'm reliable and play every day if I need to."

Wimberly singled to right, bringing in Taylor. Tolleson hit a grounder down the left-field line that was stopped by Hannahan, but he lost the ball on the transfer and allowed Heether to score. When it was all said and done, the River Cats took an 8-2 lead.

In the sixth Tacoma tacked on a run, stringing together a series of hits. Brad Nelson singled to center, Adam Moore singled, and then Wilson collected a base hit to score Nelson and put the deficit at five.

Sacramento started the season 10-17 at home. But as of late they have been red-hot at Raley Field, winning nine of their last 10 home games.

"In the history of Sacramento, we've always played well at home," DeFrancesco said. "It was just one of those freak things early in the year. We just couldn't get anything going, but the crowd has been good and the fans have been supporting us. It's good to see back-to-back sellouts last weekend, and there was a great crowd last night. So I think the players are more motivated now, we're back over .500, and we're going to try to keep this thing going."

Added Donaldson: "I just think we're playing better baseball. I think we're hitting in clutch situations and playing better defense. At the beginning of the season it was just the opposite, we weren't winning at home and now we're starting to get things rolling a little bit. If we continue to work hard, it will work out."

Sacramento will play Tacoma in the third game of the series Monday at 7:05 p.m. A win in that game and one more Tuesday will ensure the River Cats second home sweep of the year.

"At this point you don't really think about the sweep," Carson said. "You think about just winning the series. We're thinking that if we win one more game, we win the series, and at home that's what you try and do. You try and win the series at home and do well on the road. We just take it one game at a time."

## **'Hounds Pull Out Marathon Win**

By Bob Hards / Midland RockHounds

In the RockHounds' 11-10, 15-inning win over the San Antonio Missions Sunday night:

- The winning pitcher was the RockHounds' reserve infielder J.C.Holt
- The losing pitcher was San Antonio's reserve infielder Christian Colonel
- The save went to the RockHounds' reserve outfielder Val Majewski.

The teams battled for five hours, 21 minutes, with the RockHounds building early leads of 5-0, 8-1 and 10-6.

- Through four innings, the RockHounds had 10 runs on 10 hits.

- The 'Hounds still had 10 runs on 10 hits entering the 13th inning and were no-hit for eight innings.

Each teams sent 69 batters to the plate, and both clubs used every available arm in the bullpen.

The RockHounds ran out of available pitchers first, and turned to infielder J.C. Holt in the 13th inning. After being victimized by an error on a routine ground ball to second to open the 13th, he escaped, sending the game to the 14th, and then retired the side 1-2-3 in the last of the 14th inning.

In the top of the 15th, San Antonio brought in reserve infielder Christian Colonel. Archie Gilbert and Adrian Cardenas singled against the former Texas Tech Red Raider, with Gilbert hustling to third base on "AC's" single to right. That turned out to be key, as Archie scored on Jeff Baisley's sacrifice fly.

As their "closer," the RockHounds brought in outfielder Val Majewski, who gave up a lead-off single to Logan Forsythe. Catcher Gabe Ortiz then made a tremendous catch at railing of the 'Hounds dugout on a pop foul off the bat of James Darnell for the first out of the inning. Majewski then got Matt Clark looking on a called third strike and Luis Martinez flew out to right fielder Shane Peterson for the game's final out.

Combined, Holt & Majewski went 3.0 innings, allowing no runs on one hit, one walk (one error) and one strikeout.

The two teams will likely both be relieved to see the all-star break after Monday's series finale, as the clubs combined to use fifteen pitchers (including the position players) in the contest, which ran five hours, 21 minutes.

The RockHounds won their second straight in the series, which concludes Monday evening. The 'Hounds will then return home to host the 2010 Texas League All-Star Game, followed by a six-game home stand which will include Thirsty Thursday, Cap Night (Friday, July 2) and the Fourth of July Weekend.

## **JetHawks Salvage Series Finale**

**LANCASTER, Calif.** - In a series that featured 57 total runs on 101 total hits, the Lancaster JetHawks were finally able to figure out the Stockton Ports on Sunday night at Clear Channel Stadium. Perhaps a more accurate statement is that Stockton's defense couldn't figure it out. The Ports committed four total errors resulting in seven unearned runs as they were stopped short of a series sweep, falling to Lancaster by a final of 10-6. The Ports head home having taken three of four in Lancaster to kick off the season's second half.

Early on, it looked as if the Ports would run away with another contest. Stockton put up two first inning runs on an RBI single from Stephen Parker and RBI groundout fro Mike Spina.

The Ports seemed primed to take a huge lead in the second. The Ports loaded the bases with only one out, but JetHawks starter Dallas Keuchel (4-5) induced an inning-ending double-play ball off the bat of Parker to escape the jam.

The escape seemed to inspire the JetHawks offense. Lancaster got on the board in the second when Freddy Parejo scored on a fielding error made by second baseman Tyler Ladendorf to make it a 2-1 score. Ladendorf atoned for his error in the third with a one-out RBI double to put Stockton's lead back up to two runs at 3-1.

Lancaster, though, would come through with their biggest inning of the series in the third-an inning where Ports starter Shawn Haviland (6-4) would be bedeviled by his defense. With two on and one out, Lee Cruz lined an RBI single to left to give the JetHawks their second run of the game. Parejo came up next and hit a ground ball towards short. Green got behind the ball but then had it go off his glove and to the outfield, resulting in the tying run coming across. The next batter, David Flores, hit a pop-up in third base foul ground that was dropped by Parker, resulting in the second consecutive error. Flores would go on to draw a walk, then Federico Hernandez singled to right to score two runs and give Lancaster their first lead of the series at 5-3. After Haviland struck out Brandon Wikoff, Andy Simunic and Jay Austin singled back-to-back to knock Haviland from the contest.

Scott Hodsdon was summoned from the bullpen and after walking Albert Cartwright, gave up a two-run single to Brandon Barnes to make it a 9-3 JetHawks lead.

Haviland would take the loss after allowing nine runs, a staggering seven being unearned. It marked Haviland's shortest outing of the season.

The Ports got a run back in the fourth on a sac-fly from Parker to pull within five at 9-4. It'd be the final run allowed by Keuchel, who for the third straight outing worked through the seventh inning. Keuchel earned the win, going seven full frames and allowing four runs on 10 hits while striking out four.

Lancaster scored their final run of the contest in the sixth on an RBI single from Cruz. The run was allowed by Hodsdon, his only run allowed in 3.1 innings in relief.

Andrew Carignan came on to pitch the seventh and yielded three walks, but got a double-play and didn't allow a run. Paul Smyth set the side down in order in the ninth, recording strikeout of Hernandez in the process.

Stockton's offense had one final breath of life in the ninth. Ryan Ortiz hit his second home run in as many games to lead off the ninth and make it a 10-5 ballgame. Two batters later with one down, Green singled to left. Two batters later with two out, Spina drove in his eighth run of the series with a double down the right field line to bring the score to 10-6. JetHawks reliever David Berner would get Jeremy Barfield to ground to short to end the ballgame.

After taking three of four in Lancaster to begin the second half, the Ports return home for a three-game set with the Bakersfield Blaze. Mike Madsen (1-2, 3.77 ERA) will toe the rubber for Stockton, opposed by right-hander Wilfredo Boscan (3-8, 5.13 ERA) for Bakersfield. First pitch is set for 7:05 p.m. PDT.

## **Cougars Lose 16-Inning Marathon**

### **Kane County loses late lead for 2<sup>nd</sup> night in a row, drops series**

**DAVENPORT, Iowa** – In a 5-hour, 22-minute marathon that lasted 16 innings, the Kane County Cougars suffered a 4-3 loss Sunday night against the Quad Cities River Bandits at Modern Woodmen Park. The Cougars lost a 3-2 lead in the eighth inning and eventually lost the game eight innings later.

The Cougars struck first in the second on a solo homer by Mike Gilmartin. The Bandits scored twice in the bottom of the frame off starter Ian Krol and held that 2-1 lead through six innings. Krol left after five and gave up two runs on six hits, walked one and fanned three in a no-decision. The Cougars tied the game in the seventh when Gilmartin tripled and scored on a Jason Christian single, and they took the lead in the eighth on a two-out solo homer by Anthony Aliotti.

The 3-2 advantage lasted until the bottom of the inning, as Josh Lansford gave up a solo homer to Niko Vasquez for a 3-3 score. Vasquez then walked with the bases loaded in the 16th as he faced position player Leonardo Gil (0-1), who had entered after the Cougars used six other relievers. Edgar Lara (1-0), also a position player, pitched the top of the inning and got the win after the Bandits used five other relievers. The two teams combined for 23 hits, 41 strikeouts and 109 at-bats in the contest.

The Cougars (1-2, 33-39) continue their six-game road trip Monday night at 7 CT when they open a three-game series in Clinton against the LumberKings (2-1, 39-33). Murphy Smith (2-0, 5.82) is set to face Jon Hesketh (3-4, 4.12). The game will be broadcast online at [www.kccougars.com](http://www.kccougars.com) with pregame coverage starting at 6:45 p.m.