

## A's News Clips, Saturday, July 31, 2010

### Brett Anderson's elbow is OK, but pitching line is hurting

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Considering it was his first major league start in nearly two months, Brett Anderson wasn't dwelling too much on his final pitching line.

About the best thing the A's left-hander could take away from Friday's 6-1 loss to the Chicago White Sox was that his troublesome left elbow felt OK after the long hiatus away from the major leagues.

The numbers weren't pretty. Anderson tied a career high with 10 hits allowed and surrendered five earned runs in 51/3 innings as the A's dropped the opener of a three-game series before 29,431 fans at U.S. Cellular Field.

His teammates didn't give him much help. The A's mustered just four hits against White Sox right-hander Lucas Harrell, who was making his big league debut and navigated through control issues to throw six innings and notch the victory.

But the A's focus was on Anderson (2-2), the headliner of a promising group of young A's starters. He has spent two stints on the disabled list this year because of elbow

problems and hadn't taken a big league mound since June 3 in Boston.

"I never really got into a rhythm," Anderson said. "I'm a guy that when I get (in a rhythm) I'm going strike one, strike two. My stuff was all right, but it's easy to hit when it's 2-0 and down the middle."

A's manager Bob Geren pointed to the fact Anderson had only one strikeout in his 91-pitch outing as proof that there's rust to shake off.

"His stuff wasn't quite as sharp as it normally is," Geren said. "Everything was there, it just was not as crisp. He was not as sharp as he will be."

Anderson made two short rehab appearances in the Arizona Rookie League, then pitched twice with Triple-A Sacramento. But he said it was an adjustment facing big league hitters again.

Breaking in against the American League Central-leading White Sox, who have won 19 of their past 20 at home, made it tougher.

They broke a 1-1 tie with a three-run rally in the fourth, which began with Paul Konerko's double off the wall in right-center.

"It's a different animal than facing the Tacoma Rainiers or whoever I was facing," Anderson said. "But it was good to get my feet wet."

Harrell was supposed to start Friday for Triple-A Charlotte in Louisville. But when the Sox traded scheduled starter Daniel Hudson to Arizona earlier in the afternoon as part of a deal that landed right-hander Edwin Jackson, Harrell was called up.

Harrell put in a hurried call to his parents, who were driving from their home in Springfield, Mo., to Louisville to watch him. Harrell caught them in St. Louis.

"I'm like, 'You guys need to drive north on (Interstate) 55,'" Harrell said.

Harrell, who was returned to Triple-A after the game, walked five, but the A's couldn't make him pay.

The A's best opportunity came in the second when they loaded the bases with two outs. Daric Barton drove a ball deep to center, but Alex Rios made a catch against the wall.

"I thought Barton hit a grand slam to be honest," Geren said.

The A's were 81/2 games out in the AL West after Texas lost to the Los Angeles Angels on Friday night. But with today's non-waiver trade deadline looming at 1 p.m., A's general manager Billy Beane said chances are slim of Oakland swinging a deal.

"I think what we'd like to do is get some of our guys (healthy) and push the last two months of the year with what we have," Beane said. "Some of the teams have interest in guys that we don't have interest in moving."

## **A's update: Andrew Bailey is put on DL, but he doesn't think rib-cage muscle injury is too serious**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

CHICAGO — Closer Andrew Bailey's strained rib cage muscle landed him on the disabled list Friday, marking the A's 20th DL transaction this season.

That puts them within striking distance of the Oakland record of 25 that was established in 2008, a piece of history the team would obviously prefer not to chase.

But the A's are hopeful Bailey's absence will be brief. His stint is backdated to July 21, meaning he's eligible to come off the DL for the start of a three-game series with Texas on Aug. 6.

Bailey believes that's a realistic return date. But when he returns depends on how soon he's able to throw off the mound without pain.

Rib-cage strains sidelined outfielders Travis Buck and Coco Crisp for significant periods, and catcher Kurt Suzuki missed 19 games with a similar injury.

"From what I feel and from what I think, I don't see myself being out as long as (Buck and Crisp) were," Bailey said before the A's lost 6-1 to the White Sox.

In Bailey's absence, Michael Wuertz has recorded two saves and lefty Craig Breslow one, and manager Bob Geren said he'll consider both for save situations.

But Wuertz, who gave up a walk-off homer to Texas' Nelson Cruz on Tuesday, said fatigue affected him during the Rangers series after he made three appearances in a four-day span.

Geren said he'll rely on Wuertz to keep him notified on how his arm is feeling.

Left-hander Brett Anderson was reinstated from the DL to take Bailey's roster spot. The A's also activated Buck from the DL and optioned him to Triple-A Sacramento, and transferred outfielder Ryan Sweeney to the 60-day DL.

The A's formally announced the signing of outfielder Michael Choice, their first-round draft pick in June. Choice, 20, was taken 10th overall and will get a \$2 million signing bonus. The sides agreed to terms Wednesday, but the deal was pending a physical.

Choice will work out at the team's minor league facility before joining short-season Single-A Vancouver.

Touted Dominican pitching prospect Michael Ynoa, who made his pro debut in rookie ball this season, has been shut down temporarily with elbow tendinitis. The same condition also plagued him last season. According to general manager Billy Beane, recent MRIs have shown no major cause for worry with Ynoa, 18. "It's just a nasty case of tendinitis," Beane said.

## **Chin Music: Andrew Bailey joins DL with rib cage strain; A's sign Michael Choice**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune 7/30/2010 4:47PM

\*\*\*\*\*NEWS UPDATE: The A's announced that they've signed outfielder Michael Choice, their first-round draft pick. We're hoping to talk with Choice on a conference call sometime soon. He's set to receive a \$2 million signing bonus. A deal has been in place for a couple days, but Choice needed to pass a physical.

—It shouldn't come as a shock that closer Andrew Bailey was placed on the disabled list today with a rib cage strain in his right side. His comments yesterday made it seem possible. It's pretty fitting that as one key A's pitcher — Brett Anderson — comes off the DL to start tonight against the White Sox, another is lost to the injured list. But there's a general feeling that this won't be a long-term problem for Bailey. His DL stint is retroactive to July 21, meaning he's eligible to be activated Aug. 6, when the Texas Rangers begin a three-game series at the Coliseum. Bailey believes there's a chance he'll be ready by then but isn't certain. Asked about the rib-cage injuries that sidelined teammates Travis Buck and Coco Crisp for long periods, Bailey said: "From what I feel and from what I think, I don't see myself being out as long as they were."

In the meantime, manager Bob Geren said he'll consider both Michael Wuertz and Craig Breslow in the closer's role. It could depend on matchups or who's most rested. I'd have to think Wuertz would be the first choice, all things being equal. It just seems he's got more traditional shut-down stuff, and he's had a little more experience in the ninth inning. Bottom line, the A's need this to be a temporary situation. A healthy return from Bailey is crucial regardless of whether the team is still in AL West contention.

—In other news, Travis Buck was reinstated from the DL and optioned to Triple-A Sacramento and Ryan Sweeney (who's out for the season) was transferred to the 60-day DL. Surprised that Buck didn't get called up now that he's healthy? Remember, this guy has missed a lot of time. I think the A's just want Buck to collect more at-bats in the minors before they consider bringing him up.

Tonight's lineups:

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

White Sox — Pierre LF, Ramirez SS, Rios CF, Konerko 1B, Quentin DH, Pierzynski C, Vicedo 3B, Jones RF, Beckham 2B; Harrell RHP.

## **Brett Anderson rusty, but healthy, in loss**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Brett Anderson's return from the disabled list wasn't a start he'll savor much, but Anderson appears healthy, if rusty, and that's the main consideration for the A's when it comes to their young ace-in-the-making.

Anderson was making just his seventh appearance of the season because of two stints on the DL. He had missed nearly two months with his most recent issue, elbow tendinitis, and he allowed five runs and a career-high-tying 10 hits in the A's 6-1 loss to the White Sox on Friday.

"I never got into a rhythm," Anderson said. "Games when I go out there and I'm good, it's strike one, strike two. ... The only good thing is it gets me to my next start, but overall it wasn't a very good day."

"He felt fine, which is a positive thing," A's manager Bob Geren said of Anderson. "His stuff wasn't quite as sharp as it usually is. Everything was there, it just wasn't as crisp. He'll be ready next time."

Anderson didn't walk a man, and he did a smooth job of sidestepping major trouble in the first, when he gave up three hits and hit a batter but allowed only one run, thanks to an inning-ending double play he coaxed from A.J. Pierzynski. In the fourth, though, he gave up a leadoff double to Paul Konerko and the White Sox went on to score three that inning.

To make room for Anderson, closer Andrew Bailey went on the DL, as expected. Bailey had missed nine days with back spasms, then was diagnosed with a right ribcage strain Thursday.

The two-time All-Star said he believes he'll be ready to come off as soon as he is eligible, Friday against Texas at the Coliseum.

Bailey said he thinks he pulled the side muscle first while throwing a pitch in his second inning in a game against Boston on July 20. That caused his back to spasm "aggressively," according to Bailey, the issue he noticed first. Once the back calmed down, Bailey was left with an ache in his side that makes him feel as if he can't quite deliver pitches with his usual authority.

With Bailey out, Geren said he'll stick with Michael Wuertz closing, with Craig Breslow also a possibility depending on matchups and workloads. As in Texas the night before, neither was needed on Friday.

The A's never had seen White Sox starter Lucas Harrell, making his big-league debut, and they had only five hours to prepare for him after scheduled starter Daniel Hudson was traded to Arizona. Harrell also had little time to get ready - he arrived at the ballpark after 5 p.m.

Harrell walked five and gave up four hits but only one run, and he earned the victory.

In the second, the A's left the bases loaded when Daric Barton's drive to deep center landed in Alex Rios' glove at the warning track.

"I thought Barton hit a grand slam," Geren said. "It is, most nights in this ballpark."

## **Choice ready to 'get going'**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Oakland's highest draft pick since **Barry Zito** was officially announced to be a member of the organization Friday, two days after agreeing to a \$2 million signing bonus.

Texas-Arlington outfielder **Michael Choice**, 20, taken with the 10th pick last month, said on a conference call with reporters that he's happy to be heading onto the field after a lengthy wait through negotiations. He'd been working out in Arlington, hitting and throwing indoors and also doing some running.

"The wait is a pretty crazy deal, because you want to get out and get going," Choice said by phone from Phoenix, where he is working out with the A's Arizona League team.

Choice said he will report to short-season Class-A Vancouver once all his paperwork is processed. He'll be in action earlier than many other first-rounders; only 11 of 32 have signed.

"I think it's huge to get out and get firsthand experience," he said.

Choice hit a league-leading .383 with 16 homers and 59 RBIs in 60 games last season and led the nation with 76 walks. He had a streak of reaching base in 72 games, dating to 2009.

Asked when he believes he might be big-league ready, Choice said, "I'm not too sure. My main focus is on getting acclimated to the organization, and I'll let the organization judge from there."

**Briefly: Travis Buck**, who has been on the disabled list for three months with an oblique strain and then mysterious leg soreness, was activated on Friday and optioned to Triple-A Sacramento. ... Buck hit .167 during his rehab assignment with Sacramento and .188 in six games with the team's rookie-ball Arizona League team. ... **Ryan Sweeney**, who is out for the

year after knee surgery, was placed on the 60-day DL. Buck had been on the 60-day DL but is now back on the 40-man roster.

## **A's Leading Off**

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle

**Hollywood glamour:** The Coliseum got its biggest dose of movie star power ... well, ever on Thursday night, when "Moneyball" actor Brad Pitt, who is playing general manager Billy Beane in the film, brought his real-life partner, actress Angelina Jolie, to the stadium for the shoot.

## **Drumbeat: Bailey on DL, thinks he'll be OK for Texas series**

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser in Chicago 7/30/2010 3:49PM

Andrew Bailey went on the DL today, as we'd expected; he thinks he'll be ready to come back as soon as eligible, so on Aug. 6 against Texas. He said that he believes his right intercostal (ribcage) strain is connected to the back spasms that kept him out the previous nine days - he thinks he pulled the side muscle throwing a pitch, and the back spasmed as a result, "aggressively," he said. So that was the problem he first noticed, but when the spasms subsided, he realized the side was, as he said last night, "just achy."

Bailey won't throw for a day or two, he said, and manager Bob Geren said that Michael Wuertz will continue to be the primary closer, with Craig Breslow an option based on matchups - both in the eighth inning and in the ninth. Also, of course, which reliever might be able to throw more pitches on a given night. Geren also mention Brad Ziegler as a possibility based on the fact that he has closed in the past; I don't imagine we will see that much if at all.

Brett Anderson came off the DL to start tonight, and Travis Buck also came off the DL - and was assigned to Triple-A Sacramento. He hasn't gotten it going there yet during his rehab assignment, but still...he's a once very promising talent the A's are going to have to make a call on next spring. The sooner he's back here, the sooner they can evaluate Buck's future with the A's or lack thereof. His upside potentially still seems more than some of the other options. Am I just still dazzled by the talent he showed that first year or so? Maybe. Subconscious bias because he's such a good guy with the media? Maybe. Whatever the case, it'd be nice to see Buck get back to that point again, but if he ever does, it might not be in Oakland.

Old news finally made official after, apparently, all paperwork and details were finalized: First-round pick Michael Choice, an outfielder from UT Arlington who was the 10th selection overall, is now a member of the Oakland franchise. As reported widely two days ago, first by Baseball America, he received a \$2 million signing bonus. I still think it's a shame the announcement couldn't have been hustled up a day so the kid could address the local media in his hometown of Arlington and see the A's on the field there, which probably would have been a really fun, memorable day for someone who grew up right nearby and who has just realized one of his dreams.

Here's the lineup, with Barton and Cust back in: Crisp cf, Barton 1b, Suzuki c, Cust dh, Kouzmanoff 3b, Ellis 2b, Gross rf, Davis lf, Pennington ss

Rain is in the forecast. and the tarp was on for a while earlier. Tomorrow is supposed to be the day for real rain, potentially much of the day.

## **Anderson, A's dropped by White Sox**

### **Starter struggles in return from DL but next step is key**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

CHICAGO -- Given Brett Anderson's recent injury history, just one small peek at Friday's box score from Chicago's U.S. Cellular Field would probably result in concern.

The A's lefty, activated from the disabled list Friday to make his first start since June 3, didn't exactly post numbers screaming post-injury success.

But despite an eventual 6-1 loss to the White Sox -- five of the runs, along with a career-high-tying 10 hits, credited to Anderson -- the Oakland southpaw didn't exactly scream any warning signs, either.

At this point, 20 total club DL stints into the season, that likely ranks as slightly bigger news than a loss for a depleted A's team, one that put closer Andrew Bailey on the DL on Friday, which just happened to mark the same day Ryan Sweeney underwent season-ending knee surgery.

"[Anderson] felt fine," manager Bob Geren said, "which is a positive thing."

"Overall," the lefty said, "I feel good and ready to go for my next start."

That one will potentially be an even bigger test, as it was Anderson's second start off his first DL stint on June 3, against Boston, that proved his tendinitis-plagued elbow hadn't fully recovered. He gave up two runs and five hits in just two innings that day before exiting in pain.

This time, Anderson's boasting a good dose of confidence in not just getting past his upcoming start, but every start thereafter.

"The only good thing about this start is that it will get me to the next one," he said. "If I can get to the next one, I can get to the next and then the next."

Another positive out of Anderson's outing was that he didn't walk anybody. At the same time, he struck out just one.

"I had control," he said. "I could throw strikes, but I couldn't command it within the strike zone. If I can get back to the way I was, throw strike one and strike two, I'll be fine. I can tweak some things and get things back to the way I had last year."

The 22-year-old Anderson, whom the A's recently signed to a four-year contract, threw 91 pitches in 5 1/3 innings of work, two of which gave the southpaw plenty of trouble. In the first, he gave up three hits, including an RBI single to Alex Rios. The Oakland lefty followed with back-to-back 1-2-3 frames before enduring a long fourth inning that resulted in run-scoring singles to A.J. Pierzynski and Gordon Beckham and an RBI groundout off the bat of Andruw Jones.

"I just never really got into a rhythm out there," Anderson said. "Once the first batter got on, they kept getting to me, and I just never really found a rhythm. I felt decent enough, but they're a good team and they've been playing well at home. But it makes it pretty easy to hit when you're throwing 90 [mph], and the count is 2-0 and it's down the middle. But overall, it just wasn't a very good day."

Anderson was able to notch a perfect fifth frame, but after recording one out in the sixth, he allowed consecutive base hits to Pierzynski and Dayan Viciedo, ending his night. Righty Brad Ziegler immediately walked Jones and allowed Anderson's fifth and final run to score when Beckham brought home Pierzynski with a base hit.

"I felt a little rusty," he said. "Obviously there's a little bit different ammo up here facing these guys than in [Triple-A]. I'm a little tired because it was strenuous. That was probably the most pitches I've thrown in two months, so you're going to be a little tired and little fatigued. But, overall, I feel good."

Anderson's counterpart, White Sox starter Lucas Harrell, enjoyed a rather impressive Major League debut. The White Sox righty gave up one run -- courtesy of an RBI single from Cliff Pennington in the fourth -- on four hits with five walks and one strikeout in six innings.

Harrell was called up from Triple-A on Friday to replace Daniel Hudson, dealt in a trade earlier in the day to the D-backs. And, by night's end, he helped the White Sox move a season-high 14 games over .500. Chicago is now a Major League-best 34-11 since June 9 and also owns a 12-game winning streak at home.

"Right now, we're clicking and everybody's doing little things to help," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said. "Yesterday, we hit four home runs [against Seattle]. Today, we just played the game. We win in different ways, and that's good. We don't have to win just one way. Pitching and defense have continued to play very well, and our offense is [as well]. I don't see any surprises. The guys are out there playing, and they're pretty good hitters."

The A's, meanwhile, left nine on base, including three in the second when Daric Barton fell just short of a grand slam to end the inning, which witnessed Harrell load the bases on walks.

"Most nights, that ball is out," said Geren, whose team fell to 1-3 on its current six-game road trip. "It missed by about five feet. That could have made a huge difference in the game right there."

## **A's not likely to deal Breslow**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

CHICAGO -- Craig Breslow's already pitched for five teams in as many seasons in the Majors, so hearing his name involved in trade rumors doesn't really shake him.

At the same time, being sought after as an entrée -- rather than as a side dish -- has the A's lefty realizing just how far he's come.

"I've heard rumblings just because a lot of contending teams are close to my home, and so a lot of publications tend to pick up some of those, so I have friends telling me I might go here, I might go there," said Breslow, a Connecticut native. "I've never been on this side of trade rumors. I've always been the guy getting designated or released. I guess just being the coveted piece is a nice change."

Despite the heated rumor mill, set to keep spinning until Saturday's non-waiver Trade Deadline at 1 p.m. PT, the A's have no plans of moving Breslow, or any bullpen member.

"The fact of the matter is that Craig has pitched well all season," assistant general manager David Forst said Friday. "It wasn't surprising to us the amount of interest we've received in him. But as we've said before, with the team we have now, we really like where we are considering the injury situation. The guys that have been out there have earned the right to keep that momentum going.

"There's been an interest in a number of our guys, but at this point, yes, we would like to keep going with the guys we have."

That's just fine by Breslow, who has been targeted by a handful of teams, among them the Red Sox -- whom he played for in 2006, going 0-2 with a 3.75 ERA in 13 games.

"It's weird in the sense that I've already been there, but I have a lot of respect for those guys," he said. "They're very well managed and very well run. It's a really difficult place to establish your career. It's one of those places where, if you maybe make a name for yourself elsewhere, it might be a great place to go to.

"I like it here, though. I like the guys, I like the team. I think it's a good time to be in this organization."

It's one that gave him quite the opportunity after being claimed off waivers in May of last year, at which time he had posted a 6.28 ERA in 17 appearances for the Twins. With Oakland, he garnered a 7-5 record with a 2.60 ERA in 60 games and, this season, has held opponents to a .186 average while offering the A's a dependable lefty in the 'pen.

"I feel like I've done a lot to prove my value, but only because of the opportunity to prove my value," Breslow said. "I don't feel like I'm any different as a pitcher here. The difference is that I was given the ball over and over again. They gave me the chance to pitch here, and after that, it was up to me."

### **A's announce agreement with Choice**

CHICAGO -- The A's on Friday officially announced they have reached a Minor League contract agreement with first-round Draft pick Michael Choice.

Choice's agent, Jeff Frye, initially confirmed the deal -- which includes a \$2 million signing bonus -- on Wednesday. And on Friday, via a conference call, the 20-year-old outfielder was able to speak with reporters about the agreement.

"It's a great feeling," Choice said from Arizona, where he recently reported to the A's training facility.

Choice, taken out of the University of Texas at Arlington as the 10th-overall selection, represents just the second player out of this year's top 10 picks to reach a deal -- the other being Christian Colon, drafted fourth overall by the Royals. The new A's player is expected to soon join the club's short-season Class A affiliate in Vancouver.

"I think it's huge to get out there and get firsthand experience and get exposed for the first time," Choice said. "It's one of the hardest parts, and then you kind of go from there."

Choice currently has no timetable on when he'd like to make his big league debut, only saying that his "main focus is to get acclimated to the organization and let the organization judge when that will be."

The A's expect Choice's bat power to nicely complement his impressive abilities in center field, where he hopes to remain as his professional career begins. The 6-foot, 215-pound right-handed hitter owns the all-time home run record at Arlington, where he averaged a long ball every 17.8 at-bats and was subsequently named a junior All-American.

In 60 games for the Mavericks this year, he hit .383 to go along with a .568 on-base percentage and .704 slugging mark. He struck out just 54 times while managing 76 walks.

The A's have now signed or agreed to terms with 28 of their Draft picks. The organization's second, third and fourth selections remain unsigned, and the organization has until Aug. 16 to complete all deals.

### **Worth noting**

Travis Buck was reinstated from the 60-day disabled list Friday and optioned to Triple-A Sacramento, while Ryan Sweeney -- who underwent season-ending knee surgery Friday -- was transferred from the 15-day to the 60-day DL. ... There is still no timetable for a rehab stint for Conor Jackson, who has been out for nearly a month with a strained right hamstring. ... Musician Kid Rock drove around the diamond at U.S. Cellular Field before Friday's contest between the A's and White Sox. He served as the opening act for Bon Jovi at Soldier Field later in the evening.

## **Lefties Braden, Danks wage battle in Chicago**

By Alex Espinoza / MLB.com

Dallas Braden didn't exactly wow Chicago skipper Ozzie Guillen last Sunday. After limiting the White Sox to three runs over 6 1/3 innings, Braden earned his first win in 10 starts since throwing baseball's 19th perfect game on May 9.

Following his team's 6-4 defeat, Guillen had a less-than-ringing endorsement for the 26-year-old southpaw.

"He's a character," Guillen said. "Kooky son of a gun. That's all I can say. I don't see anything special -- he beat us. He beat us because he threw strikes, changed speeds and he gave his team a good chance to win.

"But he's only another guy on the mound. I don't see anything special. Congratulations about the perfect game. If Mark Buehrle can throw a perfect game, everybody can."

Guillen will get another look at Braden on Saturday, while sending John Danks to the mound. Over his last nine starts, Danks is 7-2 with a 2.83 ERA and .186 opponents' batting average, but he has had a couple of six-run performances in that span.

In his previous start, on Monday against the Mariners, Danks threw eight innings of one-run ball to move his record to 11-7. Danks allowed six hits and a walk, while striking out two, to outduel Felix Hernandez.

"I'm just trying to win every ballgame and give us a chance to win," Danks said. "Obviously it's nice to look at the numbers and realize I've had some good success, but this game will catch up to you trying to look ahead. Just going out there and try to make pitches."

Danks didn't face the A's in last week's three-game set in Oakland, but is 4-0 with a 1.62 ERA in five career starts against the green and gold.

### **Athletics: Injury carousel**

While Brett Anderson made his first start in two months on Friday, A's closer Andrew Bailey was placed on the 15-day disabled list with an intercostal strain after initially battling back spasms.

"I think the rib cage kind of pulled, which caused the back to spasm," Bailey said, "and I think at that point I felt more severe pain in my back. Once that went away, the rib cage thing came up, and I was more faint and achy."

### **White Sox: Rotation swap**

The White Sox sent former fifth starter Daniel Hudson to the D-backs on Friday in exchange for starter Edwin Jackson. Jackson, 26, threw a no-hitter against the Rays on June 25 and is 6-10 with a 5.16 ERA this season.

### **Worth noting**

White Sox rookie Lucas Harrell, called up earlier in the day to replace Hudson, earned the victory in his Major League debut on Friday, a 6-1 win over the A's to open the three-game set. Harrell allowed one run on four hits and five walks over six innings of work. He was then optioned back to Triple-A Charlotte after the game.



## **A's send Bailey to DL, reinstate Anderson**

### **Wuertz, Breslow to handle ninth-inning duties**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

CHICAGO -- As expected, the A's on Friday activated lefty Brett Anderson from the disabled list while simply adding another to the ever-growing injured file.

Andrew Bailey, who on Thursday night revealed a right intercostal (rib) strain, was officially placed on the 15-day DL to clear a space for Anderson, but the A's closer doesn't expect to miss as much time as his fellow pitcher, who was out for nearly two months with elbow tendinitis.

Bailey could be activated as early as Aug. 6, when the A's begin a three-game home set against the Rangers, and he hopes to either be ready then or shortly thereafter. In the meantime, A's manager Bob Geren said Friday he feels confident in handing both Michael Wuertz and Craig Breslow save duties.

"My main goal is being healthy and being out there, so I want to get completely better so I can be out there the rest of the year," Bailey said. "It's better to knock it all out now, and I think a few days should do the trick."

The right-handed reliever, entering his first career DL stint, has been sidelined since July 20, when he experienced back spasms during two innings of work against Boston. Those have eased, but rib pain is still nagging at the 26-year-old.

"I'm relieved to actually know what it is, because it was just a variety of things," Bailey said. "I think the rib cage kind of pulled, which caused the back to spasm, and I think at that point I felt more severe pain in my back. Once that went away, the rib cage thing came up, and I was more faint and achy.

"It's good to know I'll be 100 percent when I come back and won't be rushed or anything. It keeps me from rushing it myself. It's obviously disappointing, really disappointing, not being able to play, but it's nice that we have guys down there who can handle the workload for now. It's been an up-and-down year for the bullpen and, if any time is right, I guess the timing is right. Wuertz is back to his old form, and Breslow's been real good, and so have all the other guys as well. "

Wuertz, who experienced a roller-coaster first half, has not allowed an earned run in 13 of his past 15 appearances entering this weekend's series against the White Sox, after allowing six in his previous seven outings. His sudden progression, along with a boost of confidence, has him feeling quite at ease in the closer's role.

"Obviously, any time the game's on the line, the manager giving you the ball -- whether it's the seventh inning, the eighth inning or the ninth -- it's situations like those that bring your confidence level up," he said. "I'm feeling a lot more comfortable. I feel, when I go out there, good things are going to happen. Before, it was one of those things where I was asking myself, 'Well, what's going to happen today? Am I going to feel good?' For me, it's just having that mentality, going up there and getting strike one and getting ahead of guys."

Breslow, perhaps Oakland's most effective bullpen hurler next to Bailey, shares similar sentiments regarding the coveted closer's role.

"It's something that's relatively new to me," the southpaw said, "but if you look at the game as objectively as possible, your goal is always the same, and that's to get guys out. I think as long as I can take that mentality, there's no reason I can't be successful in the ninth."

## **Jack Cust heating up for Oakland Athletics**

By PAUL FRANKLIN, mycentraljersey.com, 7/30/2010

Jack Cust won't win baseball's Comeback Player of the Year award, but considering how this season began, he's sure come back a long way.

The nine-year major-leaguer, who just two years ago hit 33 home runs for the Oakland A's, was sent to the minors right before the start of the season. In only half the team's games since being recalled, Cust went into this weekend's series in Chicago with a batting average of .296. He has hit eight home runs, driven in 29, and scored 30.

However, while his power numbers are essentially the same as the last three seasons, so are his strikeouts. Cust has led the league in that category all three.

"I'm not really worried about it. It's just something I do," said Cust, who grew up in Flemington and played his high school ball at Immaculata. "I have productive at-bats, and that's all that really matters."

A lifetime .249 hitter, Cust, primarily a DH, has never approached anywhere near .300 in the bigs.

"The more you play in the league the better you understand pitchers and what they're trying to do to you, and the more adjustments you can make, the better off you'll be," he said. "I'm not trying to do too much. I'm just taking what they give me. You learn a lot."

Over the past three weeks, during which he has played 12 games, Cust is hitting .333 with six home runs and 14 RBI.

"I've been seeing the ball pretty well all year. My swing's been pretty consistent," he said. "When you're really seeing the ball it slows down a little more, the ball looks bigger. You can see the rotation better and pick it up a lot earlier when it comes out of his hands, so you have a better idea of where the ball's gonna be.

"When you're not seeing the ball as well, sometimes you're up there guessing a little more on the location and the type of pitch it is. It could be a combination of things. A lot of times it's just rhythm and timing being a little off, and you're a little jumpy up there and your head moves.

"On rare occasions you might not see the ball at all," he said with a laugh, "which isn't a good feeling."

That was somewhat the case during the week at Texas, where Cust played two of the three games and went hitless in seven at-bats. Facing Cliff Lee certainly didn't help.

That's why he couldn't wait to play in Chicago this weekend.

"The past 10 days before (the Texas) trip were probably the best I've felt," Cust said. "I'm trying to get that feeling back. Chicago has a nice hitter's background. It's just black. Texas is a beautiful ball park, but there's a lot of stuff going on there: a brick wall and some big windows out there."

He wasn't about to miss what some people thought might be his final window of opportunity when he was sent down to Triple-A Sacramento in the Pacific Coast League.

"I don't think (being demoted) helped in any way," he offered. "It made me, when I came back, stay mad. There was no complacency, not that there ever was. Moreso, it kept the fire in me."

Despite dealing with his own issues of being back on the farm, Cust nonetheless offered his advice and wisdom to struggling younger players who were trying to get where he had been.

"I was trying to keep their heads up, just like veterans helped me the same way coming up. I know a lot of guys (in similar situations) have put their heads down and never been heard from again," he said about veteran ballplayers who were returned to the minors. "But I know I'm a big-league player.

"I took it as a setback, to go down there and fight my way back up. Now that I'm back up," he added, "I'm going to do everything I can to stay here as long as I can."

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Donaldson three-run bomb lifts Sacramento**

By Robbie Enos / Sacramento River Cats

It was a very unfortunate night for the Sky Sox, who came crashing down to earth thanks to an explosive River Cats offense and production-stopping defense. The team from Sacramento defeated its Colorado Springs opponents 5-1 in a night that was all River Cats.

"Everyone's playing better," outfielder Michael Taylor said. "Honestly it's as simple as that. We're swinging the bats better, we're getting big hits and we have pitched real well. That's a good recipe for winning."

Four pitchers combined for a six-hit, one-run performance on the River Cats side. Not to be outdone was an errorless defense that accounted for 21 of the outs. Travis Banwart started, followed by a solid middle relief performance from Graham Godfrey, a good inning for Jared Lansford and nice closing job from Jon Hunton.

"It was a good performance today," said River Cats pitching coach Rick Rodriguez. "Everyone used their fastball effectively. They all impressed me tonight. Banwart had a little hiccup in the third inning, but he stuck with his fastball. Godfrey came in and pitched well with his fastball, Lansford got a double play with his sinker, and Hunton pitched well."

At the plate, Nos. 3 and 4 hitters Taylor and Chris Carter accounted for four walks, three hits and three runs. Josh Donaldson had three RBIs on a home run.

"I was just trying to get a good pitch and swing hard," Taylor said after the game. "I wanted to take some full swings. I've still been a little bit stuck, but I just got going, and I just let the swing and athletic ability take over."

In the first inning, Corey Wimberly had an opportunity to tie Eric Patterson's franchise record for stolen bases in a season. Wimberly was sitting at 42 steals on the year, just one away. He led off the inning with a full-count walk, and then attempted to nab second with two down. He got a solid jump, but the catcher Paul Phillips made a good throw to nail him.

The River Cats offense failed to benefit from another lead-off baserunner in the second when Taylor boarded on an infield single. Two fly outs and a strikeout ended the threat. The stand was highlighted by a tremendous play from Eric Young Jr. in center field, who made a Willie Mays-style, over-the-shoulder catch at the warning track in deep center.

Banwart was on a roll to start the game, retiring eight of the first nine batters faced. In the third, he faced a bit of a scare, giving up a two-out single to Young and then walking the next to batters. But a clutch strikeout of clean-up hitter Brad Eldred left the runners stranded.

Colorado Springs starter Greg Smith kept the Cats off the board through three, but he failed to keep the goose egg up in the fourth. Carter and Taylor got things started with back-to-back one-out walks.

Travis Buck worked a 3-1 count against Smith, but fouled off a fastball down the pipe. Buck flied out on the next pitch, giving Smith a little more breathing room. But that bit of oxygen ran out quickly when Jeff Baisley smacked an 0-2, high fastball into left for an RBI single, scoring Carter.

Donaldson delivered a decisive blow, working a full count against Smith, and then drilling the next pitch over the left-field fence for a three-run homer. The shot was Donaldson's 17th home run of the year.

"I was just trying to hit a strike," Donaldson said. "He threw a changeup that set up nice for me, and I swung hard. At one point in the year I was swinging the bat real well and I was trying to get hits. But now I'm going to try to hit home runs the rest of the season."

Banwart was relieved by Godfrey in the fifth, ending a four-inning, two-hit performance. He relied heavily on the flyout during his outing, getting half of his outs through the air.

Kurt Birkins came in to relieve Smith in the fifth. Smith gave up three hits and four earned runs. He walked and struck out three. Birkins retired the side in the fifth after the Cats' monster fourth.

Birkins could not match his success in the fifth after committing a cardinal sin in the sixth: falling behind batters. Carter pummeled a 2-1 pitch down the left-field line for a double to lead off the inning. Taylor worked the count to 3-1 and drew a walk. Birkins managed to collect two outs, but was relieved by submariner Matt Wilhite afterward.

A fighting Donaldson worked the count full against Wilhite before getting beamed in the back to load the bases. Wilhite managed to work out of it though, forcing an Adam Heether flyout to end the threat.

Colorado finally got on the board with a pair of doubles in the seventh. Against Godfrey, Phillips smoked a ball into the left-center gap. With two down, Young inside-outed a pitch down the left-field line for the second double, bringing in Phillips.

In Godfrey's 3.0 innings of work, that would be the only run he allowed. He gave up three hits and walked just one batter. With three strikeouts, his ERA for the year moved to 5.05.

Lansford on the mound and a tight defense in the field kept the Sky Sox off the board again in the eighth. Lansford surrendered a single to Matt Miller to start the inning, but then induced a 6-4-3 double play to bounce out of trouble. Second

baseman Steve Tolleson made a sweet play to end the inning, rounding a ball up the middle and then throwing across his body to nail Eldred at first.

Four runs just weren't enough for the hungry Cats offense. They tacked on another run in the ninth against pitcher Juan Rincon, thanks to another Carter walk, a Taylor double to right-center, and a Buck sacrifice fly.

The River Cats, who were once 12.5 games back on June 15, have now crept back into the division hunt with a record of 59-48. They will face Las Vegas on Saturday to start a four-game series at 7:05 p.m. Manager Tony DeFrancesco talked about what the team needs to do to get into the playoff hunt.

"It's going to take a whole team effort, there's no doubt about it," he said. "We're going to need all nine guys to come through in clutch situations. I think the pitching has been solid, but we're still going to need guys to have a big year. The bottom line is that for the rest of the season, we need to stay at least one game ahead of them."

## **Hooks hold off 'Hounds in ninth**

Staff Reports, Midland Reporter Telegram

CORPUS CHRISTI -- A hot Midland RockHounds squad was cooled off at least for one night.

The Corpus Christi Hooks handed the RockHounds just their third loss in the last 13 games with a 4-3 win at Whataburger Field on Friday.

However, the RockHounds can't say they didn't have a chance to win the game after stranding the bases loaded in the top of the ninth inning.

Down 4-2 at the start of the ninth, Midland loaded the bases on back-to-back singles by Archie Gilbert and Matthew Sulentic along with a walk by catcher Gabriel Ortiz.

The RockHounds failed to capitalize on the no outs, bases loaded situation, scoring just one run when second baseman Jemile Weeks knocked a soft grounder down the first base line that he beat out for a hit. Gilbert came in to make the score 4-3 on the play.

Hooks closer Evan Englebrook finally gained control, though, striking out Josh Horton, forcing Adrian Cardenas to ground into a fielder's choice which saw Sulentic forced out at home and finally getting Val Majewski to fly out to left to end the game and pick up his third save of the season.

Jeremy Johnson (4-9) picked up the win for the Hooks, pitching six innings and allowing one run on three hits and four walks while striking out four.

Anthony Capra (5-9) took the loss for the RockHounds, giving up three runs on seven hits and two walks while striking out seven in six innings of work.

Weeks knocked in two of the RockHounds' three runs on a 1 for 3 night. Midland first baseman Shane Peterson saw his 16-game hitting streak come to an end after going 0 for 2 with two walks.

The RockHounds (20-14), who remained atop the Texas League South Division thanks for a Frisco loss to San Antonio on Friday, faces Corpus Christi (11-23) for the second of a four-game series at 7:05 p.m. today at Whataburger Field.

## **Ports Crush Nuts, 16-8**

### **Grant Green extends hitting streak to 14 games**

**STOCKTON, Calif.** – The Stockton Ports (50-55) collected a season-high 16 runs on Friday night en route to their fiftieth win on the year, defeating the Modesto Nuts (53-52), 16-8, at Banner Island Ballpark.

Southpaw Ben Hornbeck collected his fourth win on the year, and Justin Murray collected his first save this season in the contest. The Ports had 16 hits in the game—eight of which were doubles. Most Ports had multi-hit evenings. Yusuf Carter finished 3x3 with four RBI while Jeremy Barfield went 3x4 with three RBI in the contest. Grant Green extended his hitting streak to 14 games, going 2x5 with a pair of doubles and an RBI.

Modesto pulled ahead to their first lead in the first inning. Second baseman Erik Wetzels singled to start the game. He moved to second as center fielder Tim Wheeler walked. Wetzels scored on an RBI single by first baseman Ben Paulsen. Wheeler scored on a wild pitch by Hornbeck while shortstop Thomas Field was batting.

The Ports tied the game in the second inning. Carter singled to start the inning, and first baseman Mike Spina walked. An RBI single by Barfield made it 2-1, and later designated hitter Jermaine Mitchell hit an RBI single to tie the game.

Modesto collected two more runs off Hornbeck in the third inning. With one out, designated hitter Jordan Pacheco walked. Paulsen doubled to center field to put two on for Field. Field singled to short, which scored Pacheco. Right fielder Michael Zuanich followed that with an RBI single to give the Nuts a 4-2 lead.

That lead was short-lived, as the Ports pounded out five runs in the bottom of the inning. Green led off with a double to right field. Stephen Parker next walked. Carter collected his first RBI of the game with a double to left field. Spina was then hit by a pitch to load the bases with no out. Left fielder Todd Johnson then doubled down the right field line to bring home two more runs and make it 5-4. Barfield hit a long sacrifice fly to Wheeler to score Spina. Mitchell later hit an RBI single to put Stockton ahead, 7-4.

The Ports kept on rolling in the fourth and fifth innings. Spina hit a two-run home run, his twentieth home run of the season, in the fourth inning. Barfield scored the tenth Ports run as Thomas reached on an error by third baseman Ryan Peisel. In the fifth, an RBI double by Green scored Tyler Ladendorf, and Carter collected his second RBI on a sacrifice fly to give Stockton a 12-4 lead.

But Modesto wasn't finished. Peisel hit a solo shot to left-center field, dropping it just in the far corner near the Ports bullpen in left field to make it 12-5. The Nuts scored their sixth run in the seventh inning.

The Ports pulled ahead, 16-6, in the bottom of the seventh on RBI doubles by Parker and Carter, and an RBI single by Barfield.

The Nuts got their final two more runs off Murray in the top of the ninth. Paulsen reached on an error by Green. Murray then retired the next two batters before giving up a double to Peisel. Catcher Beau Seabury brought both runners home by singling to left field. Murray got left fielder Scott Robinson to fly out to end the game.

The Ports will take on the Nuts in Game 2 of the series on Saturday at 7:05 PM. LHP Justin Marks (0-0, 0.00) will make his Stockton debut, after joining the Ports from Single-A Kane County on July 30. RHP Rob Scahill (7-5, 5.25) will start for Modesto. Fans can follow the game live on Comcast Hometown Network (Channel 104) or on KWSX 1280 AM.

## **Cougars Take Series Over River Bandits** **Kane County Pitching and Offense Alive in 6-3 victory**

Davenport, Iowa. – The Kane County Cougars only scored early, but it was enough to secure the 6-3 victory over the Quad Cities River Bandits. With the win, the Cougars move back to the .500 mark on the season. Kane County picked up two runs in the first, three in the second, and one in the third, en route to the series win over Western-Division leading Quad Cities. While picking up the victory, the Cougars avoid dropping three straight sets before returning home on Saturday. The offense jumped up early, when Mike Gilmartin drove in Tyreece House and Max Stassi on a 2-out double in the first. The Cougars put three more tallies on the board in the second inning capped off by a two-out RBI double from Anthony Aliotti, to drive in House. Tyreece went 2-4 at the plate, scoring two runs and driving one in as well. Aliotti continued his success in July by adding a multi-hit game of his own.

On the mound, Ian Krol (8-4) picked up his eighth victory of the season in commanding fashion. He threw 5 innings, allowing one hit, and no runs. He retired 15 of the 18 batters he faced. AJ Huttenlocker (1-1) was one of four pitchers in relief for Kane County tonight, and threw 2 innings of scoreless baseball, while striking out one.

The Cougars (19-14, 51-51) will begin a seven game homestand on Saturday at 6 CT with the first of a three-game series against Burlington (14-17, 36-64). Murphy Smith (5-0, 4.63) gets the starting noad for the Cougars, while the Bees will send Elisaul Pimentel (9-3, 3.49) to the hill. The game will be broadcast on WBIG 1280-AM and online at [www.kccougars.com](http://www.kccougars.com) with pre-game coverage starting at 5:45 p.m.  
5:45 PM (CT) Pre-Game Show, 6:00 First Pitch on WBIG 1280-AM & kccougars.com