

A's News Clips, Monday, August 2, 2010

Fifth-inning troubles spoil effort by Gio Gonzalez as Oakland A's lose to Chicago White Sox

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Gio Gonzalez was close to enjoying one special Sunday afternoon at U.S. Cellular Field.

He threw his first major league complete game and dominated by and large against the team that dealt him away — twice — as a minor leaguer.

But his fortune turned on one brief but disastrous sequence in the bottom of the fifth inning, when the Chicago White Sox did all their damage in a 4-1 victory that ended the A's six-game road trip on a sour note.

Gonzalez's line doesn't do his work justice — eight innings, four earned runs, six hits, a career-high 11 strikeouts and no walks.

Entering the bottom of the fifth, neither he nor Chicago starter Gavin Floyd had allowed a base runner.

But with the bases loaded and two outs in the bottom of the fifth, Chicago's Brent Lillibridge lined a ball to right that Matt Carson made a diving attempt on. The ball skipped past Carson and rolled to the fence for a three-run triple, giving the White Sox a 3-0 lead.

Juan Pierre followed with a bunt single that scored Lillibridge for a 4-0 advantage. That was more than enough for Floyd (7-8), who retired his first 15 batters and allowed four hits over seven innings.

"It was either hold up and play it off the long hop and two runs were going to score, or try to catch it. And I didn't quite get there," Carson said of his diving effort. "I felt bad for Gio. It was an aggressive play. If I would have caught it, it would have been great, but it didn't happen."

Chicago managed just two hits off Gonzalez outside of the fifth.

The loss concluded the A's 12-game stretch against three of the American League's toughest teams in the White Sox, Texas Rangers and Boston Red Sox.

The A's went a respectable 6-6. But they finished 2-4 on their just-completed road trip and dropped two of three to the Rangers, the team they're chasing in the American League West.

They began their trip two games above .500 and 7 1/2 games out, but they're now 52-52 and 8 1/2 games out.

Catching the Rangers appeared a tough task even before the A's left Oakland, but second baseman Mark Ellis viewed the trip as a missed opportunity.

"You've got to play better baseball if you want to beat the better teams," Ellis said. "I'm disappointed by this trip because I think we were playing well before it."

The A's host the Rangers in a three-game series next weekend after Kansas City visits for a three-game set beginning tonight.

After Dallas Braden went the distance in Saturday's victory, Gonzalez's effort gave the A's their first back-to-back complete games since Barry Zito and Mark Mulder did it against the Tigers and White Sox, respectively, on Aug. 7-8, 2003.

Gonzalez (9-7) steadied himself after Chicago's fifth-inning rally, mixing his fastball, curve and changeup effectively all afternoon.

"You try to keep your team in the game as much as possible," Gonzalez said. "Gavin Floyd pitched a great game."

Gonzalez was drafted by the White Sox in 2004 but traded to Philadelphia after the 2005 season. Chicago got him back from the Phillies, obtaining Floyd as well, in exchange for pitcher Freddy Garcia before the 2007 season.

Then the Sox dealt Gonzalez to the A's in January 2008 along with outfielder Ryan Sweeney and pitcher Fautino De Los Santos in exchange for Nick Swisher.

Gonzalez had made two previous starts against Chicago.

Oakland A's update: Road trip not kind to Jack Cust

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

CHICAGO — Nobody is happier to put the A's six-game road trip in the rearview mirror than designated hitter Jack Cust.

After hitting six homers over a nine-game stretch, Cust struggled mightily on the road against the Texas Rangers and Chicago White Sox. He was pinch-hit for in the eighth inning Sunday after striking out swinging in his first three at-bats in a 4-1 loss to Chicago.

For the trip, Cust hit .188 (3 for 16) with 11 strikeouts and no RBIs in five games.

Cust got off to a rocky start when he went down looking three times in the series opener against Texas, getting ejected for arguing with home plate umpire Kerwin Danley (Cust had a legitimate beef on the called third strike that preceded his ejection).

"I just haven't felt good," said Cust, who is still hitting .290. "I'm not getting pitches to hit. I just haven't felt anything. I'm thinking too much."

With Kurt Suzuki getting the day off, manager Bob Geren batted Cust third in one of the A's more unique lineups of the season.

Coco Crisp also sat, so Rajai Davis played center and led off, which wasn't that unusual. But Cliff Pennington hit seventh and Matt Watson and Matt Carson each drew starts in the outfield.

The A's didn't get their first base runner against White Sox starter Gavin Floyd until Pennington led off the sixth with a walk. Davis delivered a run-scoring single later in the inning to cut Oakland's deficit to 4-1.

But with the bases loaded and one out, Cust struck out and Kevin Kouzmanoff grounded out to first to end the rally.

"They definitely made some pretty good pitches on (Cust)," Geren said.

The A's lost their first game played during the day since June 23, having won seven straight leading into Sunday. Their 24-11 record in day games is best in the majors in terms of winning percentage (.686). ... Davis extended his hitting streak to seven games and is hitting .382 (21 for 55) with 12 RBIs over his last 15 games. "... Geren said he doesn't plan to alter his rotation with a day off coming Thursday. "... The White Sox are a major league-best 35-12 since June 9 and have won 20 of their past 22 home games.

Chin Music: Sunday pregame news and lineups for A's-White Sox finale

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 8/1/2010 10:13AM

The A's lineup has a unique look to say the least. Must be a Sunday afternoon game. Coco Crisp and Kurt Suzuki have the day off with a day game after a night game, so Rajai Davis assumes the leadoff role and Landon Powell draws a start. Jack Cust is hitting third and Cliff Pennington is in the seventh spot.

Manager Bob Geren said Crisp is just getting a normal day of rest and that he's fine physically. But in watching Crisp throw from the outfield lately, I'm not so sure. He's barely putting anything behind his throws back to the infield, which makes me wonder if his surgically repaired right shoulder is doing OK. He took a hard crash into the wall (leading with his right shoulder) during the Rangers series and seemed to be a bit shaken up after, though he stayed in the game. Even before then, he wasn't throwing the ball well. This is all speculation based on my own observation. I didn't get a chance to chat w/him this morning.

—Just a nutty side note: The chef who runs the show in the White Sox's press dining room is one tough hombre. He stands behind the food with a stern look on his face as he waits to serve you and does not allow you to come through for seconds. He very much reminds me of the "Soup Nazi" character from that one "Seinfeld" episode. Sure enough, when I walked in for

the first time this series, there was a big sign hanging on the wall behind him, with a picture of a mean-looking chef and the words "No soup for you!" right next to him.

Obviously, I'm not the only one this man has made an impression with. ... I enjoy his food though, I'll say that ...

Today's lineups:

A's — Davis CF, Barton 1B, Cust DH, Kouzmanoff 3B, Ellis 2B, Powell C, Pennington SS, Watson LF, Carson RF; Gonzalez LHP.

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

Gonzalez's happy return dashed in a second

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Through four innings on Sunday, Gio Gonzalez and Gavin Floyd matched up out-for-out, neither allowing a hit or a walk.

In the fifth, Floyd stayed on that path, while Gonzalez veered. The White Sox, the left-hander's two-time former organization, collected four hits and four runs against Gonzalez in the fifth, and that was enough to give the White Sox the game, 4-1, and the series.

Gonzalez - who was drafted by the White Sox in 2004, traded to Philadelphia, re-obtained in a trade that also brought Floyd to Chicago, and dealt to Oakland in 2008 - was making his first career start against the Sox in Chicago. He struck out a career high 11, and he went the distance for the first time in his career, giving the A's their first back-to-back complete games since Barry Zito and Mark Mulder in August 2003, both losses. Dallas Braden got the win in a complete-game effort Saturday.

"Right from the start, Gio was throwing strikes and getting them to chase his curveball," A's outfielder Matt Carson said. "He looked sharp, really good - it was just that one inning."

Carlos Quentin recorded the first hit off Gonzalez, a one-out single to center, and Ramon Castro followed by knocking a base hit off the third-base bag. Dayan Vicedo hit a drive to deep right, but Carson caught it at the base of the wall.

Gonzalez hit Andruw Jones to load the bases, and No. 9 hitter Brent Lillibridge hit a liner toward right. Carson, running in and to his left, dove for it at the last moment, but the ball bounced under his glove and rolled to the wall. All three runners scored, and Lillibridge wound up at third with a triple.

"I either have to hold up and play the long hop and two runs score, or try to catch it, and I didn't quite get there," Carson said. "I felt bad for Gio. He pitched a great game, only one hiccup, and I was a part of it. That doesn't feel good."

"If the ball carries another foot or so, Matt makes the play," said A's manager Bob Geren, who thought Carson had a good enough shot at the ball to risk the dive.

Juan Pierre placed a bunt a few yards down the third-base line, and Lillibridge scored while Pierre easily beat Gonzalez's throw to first.

Oakland's first hit came in the sixth when Carson singled with one out and one on. It appeared briefly as if the A's might mount the same kind of rally Chicago had the previous inning when Rajai Davis and Daric Barton added singles, but Floyd

stifled things, holding Oakland to just one run. The A's left the bases loaded when Jack Cust struck out for the third time and Kevin Kouzmanoff grounded to first.

"The bases were loaded for them and us, and they took advantage of it and we didn't," Geren said.

Geren gave days off to his leadoff hitter, Coco Crisp, and his top home-run hitter and second-leading RBI man, catcher Kurt Suzuki, but he said both will be back tonight.

A's latest injury trend: obliques and elbows

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Last year, it was Tommy John surgeries; this year it's elbow tendinitis and oblique injuries.

Closer **Andrew Bailey** even joked - mildly - about having the trendy injury of the A's season when diagnosed with a right rib cage strain last week; **Coco Crisp, Kurt Suzuki** and **Travis Buck** also spent time on the disabled list this year with similar injuries, while two starting pitchers, **Dallas Braden** and **Brett Anderson**, were both out with elbow tendinitis at one point.

Pitchers are prone to injuries because of the unusual stress throwing places on an arm, but pulled muscles are sometimes viewed askance, as if they could be better prevented, and **Bob Alejo**, the team director of strength and conditioning, looks for a solution to each injury.

In this case, Alejo said, he cannot see a common thread with the oblique problems. Alejo is convinced the A's players are prepared; they follow Alejo's programs to a T, including all required daily stretching.

"We are working feverishly to stop the bleeding," Alejo said of getting to the root of the A's continuous procession to the DL. "The injury situation is horrible, it makes it difficult for **Billy Beane** and **Bob Geren** to make decisions, I feel that."

Beane always says that past injury history is the top predictor of future health, and Crisp and Buck have extensive injury histories. Bailey's problem arose during the second inning of work in a game against Boston on July 20. Suzuki's is the only one that can't be explained by injury history or possible fatigue.

Briefly: Buck hit his first homer at Triple-A Sacramento on Saturday. ... Top prospects **Chris Carter** and **Michael Taylor** have both eclipsed the .250 mark; Carter was at .256 and Taylor .272 going into Sunday night's game.

A'S LEADING OFF

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle

Hometown nerves: Adam Rosales missed a grounder between his legs Saturday and popped up a bunt - extra embarrassing with friends and family in attendance. "I get so excited in Chicago," he said. "I speed the game up. I never do that in Kansas City."

Drumbeat: Crisp, Suzuki not in lineup for finale at Chicago

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser in Chicago 8/1/2010 9:57AM

Manager Bob Geren is giving center fielder Coco Crisp and catcher Kurt Suzuki the day off - well, the start off, really, because both are available off the bench today. They'll be back in the lineup tomorrow night against Kansas City.

I asked if Geren is planning to give Suzuki more day games off after night games because it seems as if he's had maybe one or two more recently - especially in hot-weather spots: Texas, Kansas City, and here in Chicago, where it's a little muggy today, though nothing like Texas or KC. Geren essentially said Suzuki will still be among the leaders in games played at catcher, but he's got good communication with Suzuki about when to give him breaks, depending on the upcoming schedule, the weather, etc. So: no. Not really. It mostly will be Suzuki unless it's a hot day game on the road after a night game, I guess.

Here's the lineup, featuring Matts at the corners: Davis cf, Barton 1b, Cust dh, Kouzmanoff 3b, Ellis 2b, Powell c, Pennington ss, Watson lf, Carson rf

AT&T site sits in middle of proposed A's site

Phillip Matier, Andrew Ross, San Francisco Chronicle

Before the A's move to San Jose, the city is going to have to move a \$12 million-plus AT&T field operations center that sits smack in the middle of the proposed 14-acre ballpark site.

From what we're told, AT&T is playing hardball. Some in San Jose suggest it's because the City Council blocked the company from developing housing on property it owns a couple of miles to the west.

City Councilman **Sam Liccardo**, whose downtown district includes the ballpark site near Diridon Station, says it's troubling that a company "that depends so heavily on public good will" would attempt to "rake taxpayers over the coals."

Nonsense, says AT&T California spokesman **Ryan Rauzon**. He says the center - which employs more than 100 people and serves as a maintenance and storage yard for a fleet of vehicles - is vital "to making sure we take care of our customers."

"The land obviously is not for sale," he said.

Besides, nobody has authorized the A's to move to the South Bay, Rauzon noted, and "we have zero intention of meddling in the affairs of Major League Baseball."

Commuter fee: The San Francisco County Transportation Authority is shopping the idea of a toll for motorists coming into downtown - or even the city itself.

In a series of community meetings, the authority has presented three ideas for cutting down rush-hour traffic while raking in \$80 million a year:

-- Plan 1: A \$3 weekday toll for those entering and leaving the city via the Peninsula during morning and evening rush hours.

-- Plan 2: A \$3 toll for anyone going into or leaving downtown during the morning and evening rush hours - with a \$1 discount for bridge crossers, and half-price for residents who live within the area bounded roughly by the bay, Laguna Street and 15th Street.

-- Plan 3: A \$6 toll for drivers leaving downtown during weekday evening rush hour - again, with a buck off for bridge commuters and half off for residents within the bounded area.

The toll could bring the daily commute fare for drivers coming over bridges into downtown to \$10 or \$11.

"Why don't they just hand out a 'Don't come to San Francisco' sign?" North Beach Merchants Association VP **Kathleen Dooley** said after attending a community meeting on the plan.

The idea is even giving pause to ever-green Mayor **Gavin Newsom**.

"I'm not sure we are solving a huge problem - and I'm not sure this is the right time to be promoting the idea," Newsom said.

But transportation authority Executive Director **José Luis Moscovich** tells us, "We are going to have upwards of 50,000 more cars in the downtown and South of Market over the next 20 years. We need to start talking about how to handle it."

Well, this will definitely get people talking.

Political piñata: Public employee unions and their friends at City Hall are coming down hard and heavy on Public Defender **Jeff Adachi** for his public pension reform measure.

In a complaint filed Thursday, **Robert Muscat**, head of the city's Professional and Technical Engineers union, called on Tax Collector **José Cisneros** to investigate Adachi for allegedly failing to pay city taxes from a private publishing company that has made him at least \$130,000 in the past three years.

Adachi, who has written and published five books since 1996 on how to pass the state bar exam, tells us he started "outsourcing" the sales to a Los Angeles distributor in 2006 and now simply collects a royalty check.

"We don't pay or owe any (city) business taxes," he said.

Anyway, he said, "these personal attacks are meant to divert attention from pension reform."

Since mounting his drive to require all city and county employees to contribute 9 percent of their pay toward their pensions, and to pick up half the cost of their family medical coverage, Adachi has drawn the scorn of many of his former liberal allies from labor and elsewhere.

Supervisor **Chris Daly**, who once said he cared more for people in jail than police, even moved to cut the public defender's budget.

The move was soundly defeated, but it underscores how determined labor is to kill Adachi's initiative.

And with good reason: Labor's own polling shows the measure leading, 58 percent to 32 percent.

News flash: News Corp. baron **Rupert Murdoch**, the featured speaker the other day at the Bohemian Club's retreat up at the Grove in Monte Rio, revealed plans for a "high-quality" consumer publication designed to be read on iPads and similar devices that he believes will revolutionize the news business - all for just 99 cents a week.

Gio, A's fall in South Side duel

Starter tosses complete game but saddled with loss

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

CHICAGO -- Gio Gonzalez tossed a career high-tying eight innings as part of his first complete game Sunday.

Six of those frames were perfect.

One, a four-run escapade, was far from it.

Unfortunately, though, said escapade told the story in a 4-1 A's defeat and subsequent three-game series loss to the host White Sox at U.S. Cellular Field.

The loss was surprisingly the result of what began as a perfect duel between Gonzalez and White Sox righty Gavin Floyd, who combined to retire the first 28 batters.

Gonzalez was responsible for 13 of those initial quick outs, but a clean single to Carlos Quentin with one out in the fifth ended his run at perfection.

And so began an adventurous inning for the A's lefty, who then watched Ramon Castro reach base on an infield hit that bounced off the third-base bag. Following a fly out to right field by Dayan Viciedo, Gonzalez hit Andruw Jones with a pitch to load the bases for Brent Lillibridge.

The White Sox second baseman lined what appeared to be a single to right field, but the ball went past a diving Matt Carson for a three-run triple instead, and a Juan Pierre RBI bunt single then made it 4-0.

"When it went off the bat," Carson said, "I kind of shaded over to the right-field line. I either have to hold up and play the long hop and two runs score or try to catch it, and I didn't get there.

"I felt bad for Gio. He was pitching so well, and that was his only hiccup and I was a part of it."

"That was the difference in the game," A's manager Bob Geren said. "Bases loaded, one big hit. From my angle, it looked like he had the chance to catch it."

Gonzalez thought so, too.

"You know what?" he said. "I was crossing my fingers for it. That's just a tough break. He did his best."

Gonzalez also did his best to keep the damage from spreading thereafter. Following the four-run fifth, he retired seven straight -- including five strikeouts -- before putting runners at first and third with one out in the eighth, at which point he struck out Alex Rios and forced Paul Konerko into a groundout to end the inning.

"That's the best I've seen him," Geren said. "He was attacking the strike zone and throwing his curveball for strikes. Solid performance, really. He did a good job."

"I never thought Gio Gonzalez would become a big league pitcher that quick," White Sox skipper Ozzie Guillen said. "This guy, he's maybe one of the best lefties we've faced all year. He threw the ball very well."

Guillen would know. After all, he watched Gonzalez roam around Chicago's Minor League system for a handful of years before the White Sox shipped him off to Oakland with Ryan Sweeney and hurler Fautino De Los Santos for Nick Swisher at the beginning of 2008.

Since, Gonzalez has transformed from an inconsistent and often wild pitcher into one of Oakland's most dependable starters. Command is sometimes still an issue, but on Sunday, he walked none while posting a career-high 11 strikeouts.

"I just kept pounding the strike zone out there," he said.

"Right from the get-go, he was throwing strikes," Carson said. "He's a guy that throws a lot of pitches in a game, so for him to throw a complete game like that is huge."

Floyd, meanwhile, tossed five perfect frames before offering up a free pass to Cliff Pennington to lead off the sixth. He got Matt Watson to fly out to right for the first out of the inning, but he then allowed three consecutive base hits -- the first by Carson and another which resulted in an RBI single to Rajai Davis -- to end his no-hit bid and put the A's on the board.

That's all Oakland could muster off the righty, though, as the club dropped the three-game set and finished its six-game road swing through Texas and Chicago 2-4. Floyd surrendered one run through seven-plus innings for the win before the White Sox bullpen combined for two shutout frames.

Gonzalez was left with a loss -- his seventh of the season -- despite throwing the club's second consecutive complete game, the first of which came from Dallas Braden in a 6-2 A's victory on Saturday. It marked the first time a pair of Oakland pitchers had posted back-to-back complete games since Barry Zito (at Detroit) and Mark Mulder (at Chicago) did so Aug. 7 and Aug. 8 in 2003.

"You take one of those hits in the fifth inning away, and it's probably a complete-game shutout," Carson said. "He threw a heckuva game."

Suzuki, Crisp get Sunday off

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

CHICAGO -- A's manager Bob Geren went for a new look with his starting lineup for Sunday's rubber match with the White Sox, opting to hand Kurt Suzuki and Coco Crisp days off while also mixing around his batting order.

Rajai Davis was back in center field, where he started 58 games in the first half while Crisp endured two separate stints on the disabled list. He was also slotted in the leadoff spot, with Matt Watson, playing left, and Matt Carson, in right field, at the bottom of the lineup.

Cliff Pennington, meanwhile, received a boost in the order and was found in the seventh hole. The A's shortstop put together a nice July, batting .293, and entered Sunday's affair hitting .353 (42-for-119) over his past 37 games.

"He's been swinging the bat pretty good," Geren said, "and I like what I saw from Rajai yesterday."

Suzuki has started 34 of the A's 38 games at catcher since missing three games from June 18-20 while on the bereavement list, and he led all American League catchers in games started for the second consecutive season last year with 132. In his place Sunday was Landon Powell, batting sixth behind Mark Ellis.

"Suzuki's a guy that plays a lot of games," Geren said. "He'll continue to play a lot of games. I have good communication with him. We talk often. He's very intelligent. He's in tune with how he feels."

Both Suzuki and Crisp were available off the bench, and both will return to the lineup Monday for the club's three-game series opener against the visiting Royals.

Worth noting

A's manager Bob Geren said, despite Thursday's upcoming off-day, there will be no tweaks to his starting rotation. "Everyone's throwing the ball well," he said. ... Travis Buck, who on Friday was activated from the 60-day DL and optioned to Triple-A Sacramento, went 2-for-3 with a home run and two RBIs for the River Cats on Saturday. In 10 games for Sacramento, the outfielder is 7-for-36 (.194).

A's, Royals collide at the Coliseum

By Jordan Schelling / MLB.com

Only one other pitcher in A's franchise history, Tim Hudson, has done what Trevor Cahill accomplished in his previous start.

Cahill won his 10th game of the season last time out, joining Hudson as the only A's pitchers to post at least 10 wins in each of their first two seasons.

He'll be making his 19th start of the season on Monday, and Cahill has put together a string of 17 consecutive starts with six hits or fewer and five innings pitched or more. As for that feat, Cahill's streak is the longest in Oakland history.

With expected staff ace Ben Sheets gone for the rest of the 2010 season, Cahill has pitched his way into the leading role.

"He's really kind of turned into our ace," manager Bob Geren said after Cahill tossed eight scoreless in his last outing. "I know everybody in this room knows that when Trevor goes out there, we feel really good about our chances. That's kind of the mental side of being an ace, knowing that if you have a streak, he'll extend it and if you have a slide, he'll end it."

"That's kind of what that term, or that role, means to me."

Cahill will face off against Brian Bannister for the Royals, who has not had much success against Oakland in his career.

Bannister, a Bay Area resident, is 1-5 with a 5.29 ERA in nine career starts against the A's. He last faced the A's in Kansas City two weeks ago, allowing five runs on six hits and a season-high six walks over 6 1/3 innings, taking the loss in a 9-6 A's win.

The only win for Bannister against the A's was his first complete game in the Majors, a 9-2 victory on Aug. 17, 2007, at Oakland, in which he allowed two runs on four hits. He last pitched in Oakland on Sept. 2, 2009, leaving after 1 1/3 innings with a tired shoulder in what would be his final outing of the year.

Royals: New faces in Kansas City

Three new players took the field at Kauffman Stadium for the Royals on Sunday with the Saturday additions of right-handed pitcher Jesse Chavez and outfielder Gregor Blanco in exchange for outfielder Rick Ankiel, right-handed pitcher Kyle Farnsworth and cash considerations.

Also joining the big league club Sunday was first baseman/designated hitter Kila Ka'aihue from Triple-A Omaha. Ka'aihue took the roster spot of Robinson Tejeda, who has been placed on the 15-day disabled list with a right biceps tendon strain. Ka'aihue has impressed at Omaha this year, hitting .319 in 94 games with 67 runs, 16 doubles, 24 home runs, 78 RBIs and a 1.060 OPS.

Athletics: Suzuki riding hot streak

He got a day off Sunday, but catcher Kurt Suzuki, who signed a four-year extension on July 23, has been swinging a hot bat of late. Suzuki is batting .370 (20-for-54) with 10 RBIs and nine runs scored in his last 14 games. He also ranks second among American League catchers in home runs (12) and is third in RBIs (44), despite missing 19 games this season due to stints on the DL and the bereavement list.

Worth noting

Royals general manager Dayton Moore announced over the weekend that manager Ned Yost received a contract extension through the 2012 season. Yost was named manager on May 14 and has gone 32-37 since taking over the role. He has a lifetime managerial record of 489-539. ... The A's finished the month of July with a 14-10 record, which was the fourth best in the AL. It was their best July record since 2005, when they went 20-6, and their first winning July since going 14-13 in July during the 2006 season. Oakland went 29-49 in July during the three seasons between winning months of July.

Floyd outstanding again as White Sox beat A's, 4-1

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Gavin Floyd carried a perfect game into the sixth inning before settling for another outstanding outing, leading the Chicago White Sox to a 4-1 victory over the A's on Sunday.

Brent Lillibridge hit a three-run triple for Chicago, which has won six of seven. The White Sox also improved to 20-2 in their last 22 games at U.S. Cellular Field.

Floyd (7-8) allowed one run and four hits in seven-plus innings, improving to 5-2 with a 1.06 ERA in his last 11 starts. The 6-foot-6 right-hander hasn't allowed more than two earned runs in a game since a loss to Texas on June 2.

Floyd walked Cliff Pennington with none out in the sixth for Oakland's first baserunner. He then surrendered a one-out single to Matt Carson. Two more singles for Rajai Davis and Daric Barton cut Chicago's lead to 4-1 and left the bases loaded with one out.

But Floyd struck out Jack Cust and got Kevin Kouzmanoff to ground out, limiting the damage.

Oakland starter Gio Gonzalez (9-7), who was drafted by the White Sox in the first round of the 2004 draft, pitched eight innings for his first career complete game. He had a career-high 11 strikeouts without a walk, and yielded six hits.

Carlos Quentin hit a one-out single in the fifth for Chicago's first baserunner against Gonzalez. Ramon Castro then reached on an infield hit and Gonzalez hit Andruw Jones with two out to load the bases.

Lillibridge, playing second in place of Gordon Beckham, followed with a hard liner to right field that got by a diving Carson before rolling to the fence. Juan Pierre added a bunt single to make it 4-0.

Floyd was backed by Chicago's strong bullpen. Matt Thornton induced a double-play ball by Barton in the eighth and J.J. Putz struck out Kouzmanoff to end the inning. Bobby Jenks struck out two in a perfect ninth for his 22nd save in 24 opportunities.

NOTES: Beckham rested. ... Oakland C Kurt Suzuki had the day off after only missing two games in July. He finished the month hitting .191.

MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

Wimberly sets stolen-base record in defeat

By Robbie Enos / Sacramento River Cats

Despite a record-setting performance, the River Cats fell 5-2 to the Las Vegas 51s on Sunday night at Raley Field. The 51s got the best of Sacramento in the later innings, scoring two runs in both the sixth and seventh to take the lead.

Corey Wimberly ran himself into the River Cats' record books in the third inning when he stole his 43rd and 44th base, tying and then breaking Eric Patterson's single-season record for stolen bases. Wimberly singled to get on board, and then got a great jump against Ray, sliding into second without a throw to tie the mark.

"It's just something that happens from coming out here and playing every day," Wimberly said of the record. "Good things will happen if you come out here and perform every day."

But Wimberly wasn't done, swiping third to take the top spot. His 44th bag came off another excellent jump, as Wimberly took off running seconds before Ray even began to pitch.

"I was just looking for a good pitch to steal on," Wimberly said. "I was getting good counts to steal on. That's what I was just doing."

Eric Patterson was an infielder-outfielder for the River Cats in 2009, winning team MVP and Most Exciting Player awards. He also holds the franchise record for triples with 11 three-baggers in a season.

"It's a pretty good accomplishment," said River Cats manager Tony DeFrancesco. "Eric was a great baserunner and Corey has been very aggressive on the bases. You have to tip your hat to him. He comes out to play hard every day."

Not only are the 44 steals a postmark in the River Cats' books, but they also lead the entire Pacific Coast League. Earlier in the season Wimberly reached base in 31 consecutive games, the highest River Cats streak of the season.

"Once he got comfortable he felt he could steal off anybody," DeFrancesco said. "He makes good reads now and he's a lot smarter on the bases. I'm very proud of him."

River Cats starter John Halama had a solid showing on the mound, throwing 5.0 innings of three-hit baseball, allowing only one run on a homer in the second inning. Overall, he threw 71 pitches, 40 strikes.

The game started with some umpiring controversy. Wimberly drew a six-pitch walk to lead off the first. With Steve Tolleson battling on a 2-2 count, Wimberly took off for second. Tolleson hit a lazy fly ball to left-center that was snagged by Adam Calderone.

Wimberly slid head-first into second, then sprang to his feet and got back to first safely. However, third base umpire Will Robinson ruled that Wimberly had passed second base and did not re-touch on his way back to first base, and therefore was out. DeFrancesco came out to argue, but the ruling stood.

Third baseman Brad Emaus of Las Vegas turned a 2-1, belt high fastball from Halama into a solo shot to dead center. The two-out blast was Emaus' sixth of the season and gave the 51s the early lead.

The Cats answered immediately in the bottom half of the inning. Las Vegas starter Robert Ray fell behind to Travis Buck 3-1, and paid the price when Buck sent his high and outside fastball to the center field wall.

The ball bounced off the wall and rolled out toward the infield, allowing Buck to arrive at third with a stand-up triple. Dallas McPherson took care of the rest, hitting a ground ball up to the second baseman Manny Mayerson to score Buck.

Halama bounced out of trouble in the fourth, when mega man J.P. Arencibia, who has hit 30 home runs on the year, belted a double into the left-field corner. Arencibia moved to third on a Mike Jacobs grounder to first. Halama buckled down to get two clutch strikeouts, first getting Jason Lane and then sitting down Emaus. Both strikeouts came on full counts.

The 51s wasted another good scoring opportunity in the fifth when Aaron Mathews lead off with a double to left-center. With one down, Jeff Baisley made a nice play at third, picking a sharp hopper off the bat of Raul Chavez and firing to first for the second out. Mike McCoy, batting .330 on the year, struck out to finish the inning empty handed.

Las Vegas took back the lead in the sixth against reliever Edwar Ramirez The 51s took advantage when Mayorson and Arencibia stroked back-to-back hits. Mayorson led off with a bloop single to left field, followed by another Arencibia double down the left-field line.

The rally didn't stop there when Jason Lane smacked an RBI single to send Arencibia home. The inning continued when Lane advanced to third after a stolen base and wild pitch. Mathews drew a walk, but Ramirez worked out of the inning without further damage.

Las Vegas added to their lead in the seventh against reliever Jared Lansford, starting with a Mike McCoy one-out walk. With an 0-1 count, Mayorson executed a hit-and-run play, hitting a ball down the right-field line. McCoy scored from first and Mayorson ended up at second with a double. Mike Jacobs brought Mayorson in with a single to right field.

Coming into the game, the 51s were second in the PCL in batting average and runs scored. They lead the league in doubles and home runs, led by Arencibia in both categories.

The Cats tried to claw back. Josh Donaldson hit his 18th homer of the year in the seventh, blasting a Steven Register pitch right over the seats of the Jackson Rancheria Home Run Terrace in left field.

Sacramento threatened to bring in even more runs in the eighth, starting with Michael Taylor and Travis Buck back-to-back singles. Anthony Recker pinch-hit for Dallas McPherson and drew a full-count walk, loading the bases. But Jeff Baisley batted into a 6-4-3 double play, ending the threat.

Chris Carter came up in the ninth representing the tying run, but grounded out to second to end the game.

With the Fresno Grizzlies' 5-1 loss against the visiting Colorado Springs Sky Sox, the River Cats remain one game behind Fresno in the standings. On Monday, Sacramento faces Las Vegas at 7:05 p.m.

"I just think we need to keep playing solid baseball," Wimberly said. "We've been really good defensively lately. If we can get more two-out hits, I think that we will be all right."

Hooks hold 'Hounds to 2 hits in win

Midland Reporter-Telegram

CORPUS CHRISTI -- The Midland RockHounds' series with the Corpus Christi Hooks went from disappointing to humbling on Sunday.

The RockHounds were held to two hits in a 1-0 loss at Whataburger Field to the last place team in the Texas League South. With the series set to conclude today at 7:05 p.m., the RockHounds have lost the first three games of the series all by one run while the Hooks have won the last two nights in their last at bats.

On Saturday, they won in walk-off fashion in extra innings. On Sunday, they simply broke a scoreless tie in the eighth inning to waste a brilliant effort by RockHounds starter Carlos Hernandez.

Hernandez threw seven shutout innings, limiting the Hooks to five hits and a walk while striking out 10. Once he was out of the game, though, the Hooks mustered just enough offense to pull out the victory.

With Justin Friend in from the bullpen to take over for Hernandez, Albert Cartwright got things going with a one-out single in the eighth. Geoff Blum, on injury rehab for the Houston Astros, followed with his second double of the game to drive

Cartwright in. Blum was thrown out trying to advance to third on the play and Friend (2-2) struck out the next batter for his second strikeout of the inning, but the damage had been done.

The RockHounds went down in order in the ninth against Jared Wells, who picked up his first save of the season. Edwin Walker earned the win with three shutout innings of relief after Douglas Arguello held the RockHounds to one hit in five innings.

The RockHounds actually put two runners on base against Arguello to start the game with a pair of walks, but were never able to string any hits together. Only Archie Gilbert and Adrian Cardenas each went 1 for 3 to account for all of the club's hits.

Ports Power Past Nuts, 9-6

Three home runs lift Stockton to series victory

STOCKTON, Calif. – Seven of the 11 Stockton Ports (51-56) hits were for extra bases on Sunday night at Banner Island Ballpark, as the Ports won another series by defeating the Modesto Nuts (54-53), 9-6. Grant Green, Kent Walton and Tyler Ladendorf all homered in the contest to help propel the Ports to victory.

Stockton starter Brett Tomko had a solid outing, allowing just three runs in 5.0 innings. Scott Hodsdon picked up his second win, tossing 3.1 innings of relief with three strikeouts. Paul Smyth got the final two outs to end the game. Several Ports players had multi-hit games on Sunday. Green finished the game with three RBI, while Walton collected four RBI in the game.

The Ports jumped to an early 3-0 lead in the first inning. Jermaine Mitchell and Tyler Ladendorf hit back-to-back singles to start the frame. Grant Green then launched his 12th home run of the year to the Jackson Rancheria Back Porch in left field.

The Nuts returned the favor in the top of the second as shortstop Thomas Field collected a solo home run to left field off Tomko. Modesto cut the lead to one run in the third inning, as left fielder Scott Robinson hit his second home run of the year, a solo shot to left field.

The Nuts tied the game in the fourth inning, as an RBI single by third baseman Joe Sanders scored Field, who tripled to center field to start the inning.

But the tie didn't last very long. Stockton added three more runs to take a 6-3 lead in the sixth inning. Green walked to start the frame, and moved to second on a single by Stephen Parker. Modesto starter Juan Nicasio retired the next two batters, which brought Walton to the plate. Walton slammed a 3-2 pitch to left field for his first Stockton home run.

The home runs kept on coming for Modesto, as right fielder David Christensen collected a solo shot to left field to cut the Ports lead to 6-4 in the top of the seventh.

But the Ports padded their lead in their half of the seven. After Mitchell struck out, Ladendorf stepped up to the plate. He slammed the third Ports home run of the contest, and his third home run of the year. Green then doubled to center field to keep the offense rolling. Parker next tripled to center field to bring home Green and make it 8-4. Parker scored the ninth and final Ports run of the game as Walton hit an RBI single.

Modesto were held scoreless in the eighth by Hodsdon, but they added a pair of runs in the ninth. Hodsdon walked Michael Zuanich to start the ninth before retiring Christensen. The Ports then called on Smyth to pitch to Robinson. Smyth gave up an RBI double to Robinson to make it a 9-5 game. Second baseman Erik Wetzel then hit an RBI single to bring home Robinson. But then Tim Wheeler hit into a double play to Ladendorf, who tagged the advancing Wetzel on the back before throwing the ball to Parker to put out Wheeler at first.

The Ports will enjoy an off day on Monday before embarking on a three-game road trip at San Jose on Tuesday. LHP Fabian Williamson (2-0, 4.38) will start for Stockton Tuesday at 7:00 PM, while RHP Kyle Nicholson (6-8, 6.33) will take the hill for San Jose. Fans can listen to the game live on KWSX 1280 AM.

Cougars Pound Bees, Win 4th Straight

Kane County claims 9th consecutive home victory with another complete win

GENEVA, III. – Jason Christian had four hits and four RBIs, Jonathan Joseph delivered six solid innings for a victory and Bo Schultz and Kenny Smalley combined for scoreless relief Sunday afternoon as the Kane County Cougars rolled past the Burlington Bees, 13-3, in front of 6,640 fans at Elfstrom Stadium. The Cougars have won four straight games and nine straight at home. They also are 8-0 against the Bees this season.

Christian nailed a two-run double during the Cougars' four-run first inning and then homered in the third to make it 5-2. The Cougars also scored once in the fifth, three times in the sixth and four times in the seventh on the strength of a 16-hit attack. Mike Gilmartin, Conner Crumbliss, Rashun Dixon, Chris Affinito and Juan Nunez each had two hits.

Joseph (1-3) gave up three runs on seven hits over six innings with three walks and eight strikeouts for his first Cougars win. Schultz logged a run-free seventh and Smalley handled the final two innings to wrap it up, keeping the Cougars on a three-game cushion for the Western Division's top playoff spot in the 2nd half.

The Cougars (21-14, 53-51) and Bees (14-19, 36-66) continue the series Sunday afternoon at 1 CT when Jonathan Joseph (0-3, 4.67) starts for the Cougars against Sugar Ray Marimon (2-3, 7.31). The game will be broadcast on WBIG 1280-AM and online at www.kccougars.com with pre-game coverage starting at 12:45 p.m.