

**Oakland A's stumble late, lose in 10th**

By Carl Steward, Oakland Tribune

The A's first day as a first-place team in 2011 didn't go so well Wednesday night. If that wasn't troubling enough, they flopped against the Minnesota Twins, the team with the worst record in baseball.

Oh yes, they also fell out of a tie for the top spot in the A.L. West, as the Texas Rangers won in extra innings in Kansas City.

Oakland squandered a prime opportunity to win the game in the bottom of the ninth against the Twins -- who came to town sporting a 13-27 record -- then handed them a 4-3 victory in the top of the 10th largely as a result of an ugly Daric Barton throwing error.

The loss was a big comedown from the 14-0 victory Tuesday night that had pulled them even with the Rangers atop the division.

"It's difficult to lose any game, but the way we swung the bats last night, it would have been nice to come out and swing them good again," second baseman Mark Ellis said.

The night turned sour, starting with Ellis' at-bat in the bottom of ninth and the score tied 3-3. After a one-out double by Kurt Suzuki and an intentional walk to Ryan Sweeney, Ellis worked Twins reliever Joe Nathan to a 3-1 count.

On successive pitches, he dropped his bat and started toward first thinking he'd drawn ball four to load the bases. But home plate ump Ted Barrett called strikes on both pitches, Ellis wound up walking angrily back to dugout and what looked to be a winning rally subsequently fizzled.

But the worst was yet to come. Twins pinch hitter Delmon Young opened the decisive top of the 10th with a single to right field against the A's fourth pitcher and closer, left-hander Brian Fuentes.

No. 9 hitter Alexi Casilla followed with a poor bunt, popping the ball up toward Barton at first base. Barton played the ball on one hop and appeared to have a play on Young at second but wheeled and sailed a ball into center field.

Manager Bob Geren thought that Barton might have been affected by Fuentes being so close to him on the play, but Barton said that wasn't the case.

"I was just trying to figure out if I was going to catch it in the air or let it drop," Barton said. "I let it drop, and I had him at second, but I just threw it away -- bad throw."

It was the sixth error of the young season for Barton, a player Geren regards as one of the best fielding first basemen in the American League. This one, to be sure, turned out to be costly.

With the infield in, Fuentes managed to get one out without a run scoring, but Trevor Plouffe lofted a sacrifice fly to right to score Young.

Matt Capps retired the A's in order in the bottom of the 10th to end the game and make Joe Nathan (1-1) an unlikely winner. Adding insult to injury, Barton hit a bomb to right field for the final out that was caught at the warning track by Michael Cuddyer.

"I hit that ball probably as good as I could," Barton said. "It's just a tough place to hit. The ball doesn't carry very well, particularly at night."

As for Ellis, who had snapped out of a horrible slump this week by going 7 for 13 on the homestand, his disputed ninth-inning strikeout against Nathan was a bitter pill.

"We just had a disagreement," Ellis said. "(Barrett) thought they were strikes, and I thought they were balls, and I felt pretty strongly about both of them.

"But he's a great guy, he's one of the better umpires we have out there. We just disagreed, and sometimes that happens. It's not why we won or lost the game. We had chances, and we just didn't do it."

Starter Brandon McCarthy pitched seven innings for Oakland and finished strongly, retiring the last six men he faced. But McCarthy wasn't happy with his performance after surrendering nine hits and three runs.

"It's just one of those periods of the season where I just can't seem to lock in mechanically," McCarthy said.

Grant Balfour pitched a 1-2-3 eighth for Oakland, striking out two, and Michael Wuertz followed with a perfect ninth before the Twins broke through against Fuentes (1-4) in the 10th.

### **A's update: Andrew Bailey, Adam Rosales cleared to begin rehab appearances**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

The A's received two significant health clearances Wednesday on closer Andrew Bailey and utility infielder Adam Rosales.

Bailey, working his way back from a right forearm strain suffered in spring training, will make his first rehab appearance for Triple-A Sacramento on Friday night. Bailey likely will make a handful of minor league appearances before returning to Oakland.

Rosales, meanwhile, has been cleared to play in extended spring training games after a long, slow recovery from a stress fracture in the navicular bone of his right foot. Rosales hasn't played in a game since Aug. 11 of last season.

Bailey almost certainly will be back sooner than Rosales as long as there are no physical setbacks.

"He'll go one inning Friday, we'll see how he feels and go from there," said manager Bob Geren of Bailey. "We don't have any exact timeline. We'll plan it out kind of like we've done all along."

Rosales will be brought along more slowly and carefully. He'll start with a three-inning stint in the field, then spend a game as a designated hitter, then take a day off. Initially, if he reaches base after an at-bat, other players will run for him.

"It's the same thing (as Bailey)," Geren said of Rosales. "We're just going to see how he does. He hasn't played in awhile, so we just have to get him out in a game and go from there. But he's excited, and we are for him, too. He's starting his spring training, so to speak."

Center fielder and leadoff hitter Coco Crisp was not in the lineup or at the ballpark after being excused to tend to a personal family matter. Geren said he was unsure if Crisp would be back in time for Thursday's afternoon game but was "hopeful."

General manager Billy Beane had partial replacement surgery on his left shoulder in an attempt to alleviate a long-standing arthritic condition. Assistant David Forst is handling the front-office daily operation for the remainder of the week.

A's pitchers have been tuning up for their batting appearances in road interleague games, starting Friday night in San Francisco.

"We start that process early to avoid injuries," Geren said.

### **Chin Music: A's in first place for the moment, but how long will it last?**

By Carl Steward, Oakland Tribune 5/18/2011 6:07pm

In for Joe Stiglich tonight, and thankfully, there isn't a cloud in the sky ...

The A's added to a key total today — days in first place since the last time they actually finished first in 2006. Their grand total is now 66 after being stuck on 65 for nearly a year. The question is how long they can stay there, because since 2006, they haven't spent a single day in first place after June 3.

So it's a key time for Oakland right now. They've had these kinds of optimistic starts before, notably in 2008 when they spent 23 days in first place and last year (34 days), but faded once the weather started to warm up. Of course, 22-20 isn't exactly storming the standings. The A's have benefitted from Texas' various maladies and pitching issues, and the Angels have fallen back to Earth after a big April.

A good place to start would be against the 13-27 Twins, who are looking pretty much like a Triple-A team right now. I mean, who are these guys? I recognize Justin Morneau and Michael Cuddyer. But the rest of the cast is pretty faceless. Ben Revere? Drew Butera? Trevor Plouffe? Danny Valencia? Goodness. And no Joe Mauer. The Twins' starting lineup Wednesday night has a grand total of 14 home runs as a group. Not often an opponent has fewer than the A's, who have 22 bombs in

their starting nine. But that tells you a lot about where Minnesota is right now. And perhaps even more alarming, the pitching staff has a 4.96 ERA while their opponents are checking in at 2.72. The A's should blow through these guys and have a little momentum going into the Giants series at AT&T Park this weekend.

Maybe, just maybe, they can add to their first place total in the process.

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You probably get as tired reading Andrew Bailey/Adam Rosales/Rich Harden updates as I do writing them. But at least for two of those guys, there's real news today. Bailey will make an official mound appearance this Friday for Triple-A Sacramento, his first stint in a bona fide game since spring training (sorry, I don't count those extended spring things). He'll go an inning. He'll probably have a handful of outings there and be evaluated after each one, but if all goes well, he could be back with Oakland sometime in mid-June, perhaps sooner.

Rosales, meanwhile, has been cleared to play extended spring games after missing the past eight months with a bizarre foot fracture. His return will probably take longer, and after not playing since midseason last year, he'll be eased into it — a few innings at a time, DH-ing part of the time, then slowly working his way to full effectiveness. The A's have been pretty fortunate they haven't needed Rosales — Mark Ellis has been healthy all year even if his bat hasn't been. He's played in 41 of the team's 42 games, and Adam LaRoche has been an adequate fill-in. But Rosales would probably provide a little more protection for Cliff Pennington at short, where the A's are precariously thin. LaRoche can play there, but it's not something you'd want to see every day. Steve Tolleson is available at Triple-A, but that's it. Grant Green isn't ready at Double-A, and beyond that, you're moving in someone from another position.

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Coco Crisp is out of the lineup tonight and not at the ballpark. He's attending to a personal family matter. Manager Bob Geren said he was unsure if Crisp would be back for Thursday's afternoon game against the Twins, but added that he's hopeful.

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General manager Billy Beane underwent partial shoulder replacement surgery Wednesday in an effort to relieve a long-standing issue with arthritis in the joint. No, he didn't have the same surgeon as Dallas Braden, according to A's PR man Bob Rose.

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Tonight's lineups

A's: RF DeJesus, 1B Barton, LF Willingham, DH Matsui, C Suzuki, CF Sweeney, 2B Ellis, 3B Kouzmanoff, SS Pennington. P McCarthy

Minny: CF Span, SS Plouffe, DH Kubel, 1B Morneau, RF Cuddyer, 3B Valencia, LF Revere, C Butera, 2B Casilla. P Pavano

**A's lose to Twins in the 10th, 4-3**  
Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Oakland fared well in the drizzle the previous two evenings, but clear weather Wednesday at the Coliseum did not find the A's at their best.

An error by first baseman Daric Barton led to an unearned run in the 10th inning, all the Twins needed in a 4-3 victory that ended Oakland's time atop the AL West after just one day.

"We know if you play so close, so late, you've got to do everything right to win," said A's manager Bob Geren, whose club is 5-5 in extra-inning games and 5-8 in games decided in the final at-bat.

Pinch hitter Delmon Young singled to open the 10th against Brian Fuentes, and Alexi Casilla popped up a bunt attempt. Barton let the ball drop in front of him and threw wildly past second, putting Young at third and Casilla at second.

Fuentes also had initially gone after the popup and Geren thought Fuentes' proximity might have thrown off Barton's throw, but Barton said that was not the case.

"I had him at second," Barton said of Young. "I just threw it away. It was a bad throw."

With one out, Trevor Plouffe hit a flyball to medium right field, and David DeJesus threw toward the plate, but Barton cut the ball off in an effort to get Casilla at third.

"I would rather see that throw go through," Geren said. "I don't think it would have gotten him, but there's no value to cutting that off."

"I probably shouldn't have cut that ball," Barton said. "I thought I might have had him at third, but I didn't get a grip on it."

Barton's error on Casilla's bunt was his sixth of the season, most among big-league first basemen, but it was his first in 25 games.

In the bottom of the inning, Barton flied out deep to right fielder Michael Cuddyer to end the game, with the Twins playing a no-double defense.

"They were playing me onto the warning track," Barton said. "It went right to him."

Oakland had a chance to end it in the ninth after Kurt Suzuki whacked a double to left off Joe Nathan with one out, Ryan Sweeney was walked intentionally, and Nathan started Mark Ellis off 3-0.

With a 3-1 count, Ellis thought he'd walked on the fifth pitch of the at-bat, and he put his bat down and started heading to first, but was called back. With a 3-2 count, Ellis took a close pitch that started high and dived down, and he was called out on strikes. Pinch hitter Conor Jackson then grounded out to end the inning.

Ellis said afterward that he believes home-plate umpire Ted Barrett is one of the better umpires around.

"We just had a disagreement," Ellis said. "I felt pretty strongly about both calls, but that's just the way it goes. That's not why we won or lost the game. We had our chances, and we did not get it done."

The A's were without center fielder Coco Crisp, who was away tending to a family matter, according to Geren, who said he was unsure if Crisp will be able to rejoin the team in time for today's game.

### **A's infielder Adam Rosales nearing return**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

**Adam Rosales** hasn't played in a game since August, so he couldn't hide his joy Wednesday after Dr. **Kenneth Jung** cleared him to go to extended spring training in Arizona.

Rosales will play in a game Friday - his 28th birthday. He has been out with a fracture in his right foot that required surgery in December.

"It's finally over," Rosales said of the long process of letting the navicular bone heal. "I've been trying to keep a positive attitude, but I'm so glad to get back into it."

Rosales said he believes he'll need two or three weeks to be ready to play. Manager **Bob Geren** said that this will be, in essence, like spring training for Rosales, who initially will not be allowed to run the bases.

When Rosales comes off the disabled list, backup infielder **Andy LaRoche** is the most likely candidate to come off the A's roster.

**Bailey plans:** Geren said that closer **Andrew Bailey**, out since mid-March with a right forearm strain, will pitch an inning at Triple-A Sacramento on Friday.

Bailey said he believes he will pitch again for the River Cats on Monday and probably make four or five rehab appearances in all. Geren said the team has not decided if Bailey will need to pitch in back-to-back games before he comes off the DL.

**Going to the Hall:** **Trystan Magnuson** made his big-league debut Tuesday and he already has an item in the Hall of Fame - the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame.

The Vancouver, British Columbia-born reliever got a call from the St. Mary's, Ontario, museum asking for the first ball he used in Tuesday's game, and, he said, "That seemed pretty cool."

Magnuson kept the ball from his first major-league strikeout, which ended his inning of work against the Angels.

His family, however, was not on hand for his debut. His parents and brother were in town all weekend and sat through Monday's rain delay and extra innings, but they left Tuesday morning.

**Briefly:** Starter **Brandon McCarthy** went seven innings and gave up three runs and nine hits while striking out one. He has not earned a win since April 10 at Minnesota. ... **Grant Balfour** pitched a one-two-three eighth, striking out two, and he has not allowed a run in his past 13 outings. He has 18 strikeouts in that stretch.

### **A's GM Billy Beane has shoulder surgery**

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle

**Another patient:** A day after starter Dallas Braden had season-ending shoulder surgery, general manager Billy Beane also had left shoulder surgery; team orthopedist Dr. Will Workman performed the shoulder replacement Wednesday. Beane will be out the rest of the week.

### **Drumbeat: Adam Rosales cleared to play in Arizona; Andrew Bailey heads to Sacramento**

From Susan Slusser at the Coliseum 5/18/2011, 5:19pm

Adam Rosales got the OK today to go play in extended spring training; the navicular bone in his right foot has fully healed. After months of waiting, he's enormously excited, as you might imagine, and he's hoping that he can be back with the A's in two or three weeks.

The A's inclination this year has been to go slowly with players coming off major injuries, so my guess is that it might be a bit longer than that, especially because, as manager Bob Geren pointed out today, "This is Adam's spring training." I asked if it's simply a matter of Rosales getting back to full health or if the results will matter - does he need to be swinging the bat well to be recalled? And Geren said that the team will need to see both things, health and an indication that Rosales is ready to help the team. At that point, the logical candidate to come off the roster would be Andy LaRoche.

Andrew Bailey is also heading out - he'll pitch an inning at Triple-A Sacramento on Friday, and Geren said that the rest of his rehab assignment will be decided one step at a time. Bailey is thinking he'll make four appearances, maybe five. I asked Geren if Bailey will need back-to-back outings before returning, and Geren said that will be determined along the way.

Tonight's lineup: DeJesus rf, Barton 1b, Willingham lf, Matsui dh, Suzuki c, Sweeney cf, Ellis 2b, Kouzmanoff 3b, Pennington ss.

As I tweeted earlier, Coco Crisp is away attending to a family matter. The A's did not elaborate on that. Geren isn't sure if he'll be back for tomorrow's day game.

General Billy Beane had left shoulder surgery today and he's expected to be out of action the rest of the week, with David Forst taking over the day-to-day operations.

### **Errant throw dooms A's in extras**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- The A's are waiting for the day when they no longer have to spend postgame minutes dissecting costly defensive plays, the day they no longer lead the Majors in unearned runs allowed.

Wednesday wasn't that day. Rather, Daric Barton drew a large crowd around his locker after making an errant throw to second base in the top of the 10th inning that ultimately led to a 4-3 A's loss, and dialed up that unearned run total to 28.

Twins pinch-hitter Delmon Young led off the fateful frame against Brian Fuentes with a base hit to left field, bringing Alexi Casilla to the plate. Casilla laid down a sacrifice bunt that saw both Fuentes and Barton charge for the ball.

"They both went for it," manager Bob Geren said. "It kinda landed close to where either one could catch it."

Barton snagged it, but only to watch his throw to second sail over Cliff Pennington's head to put runners on first and third with nobody out, paving the way for a go-ahead sacrifice fly off the bat of Trevor Plouffe.

"[Fuentes] was there," Barton said. "I just made a bad throw. I had the ball the whole way and threw it away."

"I thought Barton had a shot to catch it and I thought he had the better opportunity to make the throw to second than I did," Fuentes explained. "I would've had to spin around. It all happened really fast."

"I thought we were going to get that runner at second. It went to Daric. He just sailed it and that's the way it goes."

Barton was also questioned for his decision to cut off Conor Jackson's throw from right field on Plouffe's sac fly. And, again, he made no excuses.

"I probably shouldn't have caught that ball, either, but it was one those things where I thought that if I cut it, I would've had him at third," he said. "But I couldn't get a good grip on it. I haven't looked at the tape, to see if we had a shot at home with it or not."

"I would have rather seen that go through," Geren admitted. "I honestly don't think he would have got him, but I would have liked to have seen it go through. There was really no value in cutting it."

Nevertheless, the A's were left staring down their fifth extra-inning loss of the season just one night after grabbing hold of a newfound first-place standing thanks to a 14-0 victory over the Angels.

"That's a tough play to fall behind on, but I never believe one play here or there necessarily wins a game when we play 27 outs, or even 30, as we did tonight," Geren said.

Some leftover offense from Tuesday's 15-hit parade would have helped. But the top third of Oakland's lineup, playing without leadoff hitter Coco Crisp because of a family matter, struggled, going 1-for-14 on the night. Among that bunch was David DeJesus, who led off in Crisp's stead but went 0-for-5, while watching his 25-game hitting streak against the Twins come to an end.

Twins starter Carl Pavano limited the A's to six hits over seven innings and gave up three runs, only one earned. The first two runs, both of which were unearned, came in the second when the A's benefitted from a throwing error by Plouffe at shortstop.

"That's how baseball is at this level," the Twins infielder said. "Most teams are gonna capitalize on mistakes, and they were able to do that on mine, and we were able to do that with Barton's."

Ryan Sweeney led off the inning with a single, before Mark Ellis reached on Plouffe's error. That put runners on second and third for Kevin Kouzmanoff, who laced a line-drive single to left, plating both runs and giving the A's a lead that was short-lived.

A's starter Brandon McCarthy, meanwhile, handed the Twins an early 1-0 lead in the first on Justin Morneau's RBI single. The righty was then tagged for two more in the third on a two-run base hit from Plouffe.

Even though that's all the Twins would get off of McCarthy, who pitched seven innings and gave up nine hits with no walks and one strikeout, the A's hurler wasn't necessarily pleased with his time on the mound.

"Stuff-wise, it just wasn't one of my better days," he said. "I just didn't feel in sync mechanically, didn't really feel like I got into a groove, was kinda just searching a little bit.

"It's one of those periods of the season I just can't lock in mechanically. I just don't feel as sharp as I'd like."

Oakland let McCarthy off the hook in the sixth on Hideki Matsui's game-tying RBI single. The right-hander, who is riding a four-game losing streak, is still searching for his first win since April 10.

"Tough loss," Geren said. "Extra-inning game, we played so many of them that we know that when you play that close and that late you have to do everything right to win.

"Any loss is disappointing, if we're off a win or two or a loss or two. You just look for tomorrow after a tough one like that."

### **Bailey set to join River Cats on Friday**

By Tom Green / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Barring any setbacks, A's two-time All-Star reliever Andrew Bailey will begin his Minor League rehab assignment Friday in Sacramento.

The right-handed pitcher has yet to play this season due to a strain in his right forearm, but said Wednesday his arm felt fine a day removed from his second extended spring training outing. On Tuesday, Bailey pitched one inning in Arizona. He used every pitch in his arsenal, en route to a 19-pitch outing in which he gave up no hits, struck out one and walked two hitters.

"Right now it feels good, and I'm looking forward to starting my rehab assignment," Bailey said Wednesday.

After his arm responded well to a session of long toss on Wednesday, the former American League Rookie of the Year is scheduled to pitch Friday for the Sacramento River Cats, the A's Triple-A affiliate.

A's manager Bob Geren was pleased with the news, and said Bailey will pitch one inning Friday while being held to a not-too-strict pitch count. He added that, although he hasn't discussed it yet, Bailey would likely start the game Friday and as he

got closer to his return to the team, would pitch in his normal role as closer. However, Geren wouldn't reveal much about Bailey's rehab stint beyond Friday's schedule.

"We don't have any exact timeline," Geren said. "We're just going to go one outing at a time, and see how he bounces back, how he responds and plan it out."

Without its All-Star closer, the A's bullpen is sporting an American League-best 2.67 ERA on the season and has allowed one earned run or fewer in 23 of the team's past 26 games, a streak that has spanned 67 2/3 innings.

Crisp attending to family matter

OAKLAND -- A's center fielder Coco Crisp was a surprising omission from the A's lineup Wednesday against the Twins.

Oakland manager Bob Geren said prior to Wednesday's contest that Crisp -- who is hitting .421 during the team's current home stand -- was attending to a family matter, and it wasn't clear if he would be back in the lineup Thursday, either.

"[I'm] not positive if he'll be back tomorrow, but hopeful," Geren said.

Crisp, the A's leadoff hitter, is hitting .279 in 35 games this season and leads the team with 22 runs scored. He also holds a share of the American League lead in stolen bases with 13, including three in his last three games.

With Crisp out Wednesday, David DeJesus will hit leadoff for the A's and Ryan Sweeney will fill the void in center field.

Rosales getting closer to return

OAKLAND -- A's infielder Adam Rosales is one step closer to returning from a right ankle injury that has sidelined him since August. After a CT scan Wednesday, Rosales was cleared by doctors to return to the playing field.

A's manager Bob Geren said Rosales, who underwent surgery to remove debris around the navicular bone and insert two screws in his ankle on Dec. 8, will fly to Arizona to play in some extended spring training games beginning Friday.

"He hasn't played in a while, so we're just happy to get him out in a game and go from there," Geren said. "He's excited and we are, too."

Rosales will play in a series of games to ready him for an eventual return to the A's lineup. His first outing will likely be a three-inning stint in the field, followed by a game as designated hitter and then an off day. Geren said Rosales has not yet cut corners when running the bases, and won't immediately do so in Arizona. If Rosales reaches base, someone will run for him until he is healthy enough to run the bases himself.

While Geren is happy Rosales has been cleared to play, the A's skipper said his infielder's health won't be the only thing to factor into his return to the club.

"Everything has to be ready," Geren said. "When you come back, you have to be healthy and you have to be ready to help the team and be ready to go."

With Rosales missing the first quarter of the season, Andy LaRoche has hit .235 in the utility role, including a 2-for-27 stretch over his last 10 games. LaRoche, who signed with the A's in the offseason, has started 21 games at four different positions for the club.

Perseverance pays off for Magnuson

OAKLAND -- Trystan Magnuson has come a long way since high school and college.

The towering right-handed pitcher was cut from the junior varsity team at duPont Manual High School in Louisville, Ky., and was a walk-on as a freshman at the University of Louisville in 2003. Now, he's in the Majors, and he made his Major League debut Tuesday night in the A's 14-0 thrashing of the Angels.

"I never thought I'd get here, let alone actually record an out in the big leagues," Magnuson said. "It's pretty awesome."

The 6-foot-7 hurler made his first appearance for the A's when he entered the game in the top of the ninth with the game well in hand. The Vancouver, British Columbia native said it was nice to get his first shot at a Major League lineup in a low-pressure situation with a big lead, but the former college closer added that it was a position he wasn't used to.



"As a closer, I enjoyed playing in those tight games (in college)," he said. "Sometimes when you get a game that's 14-0, everything's different, like the feel and everything. But it was great for me to get in there and just focus on throwing strikes."

Magnuson didn't seem to be affected by the unfamiliar situation. The righty faced the bottom of the Angels' order and surrendered a single to the first batter he faced, but didn't panic. He got the next two batters to ground into fielder's choices before striking out Hank Conger to seal the win -- one that gave the A's a share of the American League West lead for the first time since June 3 of last year.

Magnuson's final line? One inning, 12 pitches (nine of which went for strikes), one hit, one strikeout and a zero on the scoreboard.

"I'm happy to see Trystan get his first strikeout and get through the inning," A's manager Bob Geren said.

"I was just really glad to finally make a contribution, even in a 14-0 game," Magnuson said. "Just to actually somewhat feel like a part of the team, that was a blast. I've been up here for a little while, and just kind of felt like I was floating around instead of actually contributing."

The A's acquired Magnuson, along with right-handed pitcher Danny Farquhar, from the Blue Jays on Nov. 17 for outfielder Rajai Davis. While Farquhar was traded back to Toronto last month, Magnuson has found a home in the A's clubhouse and finally had a chance to prove himself.

After being cut from the JV team in high school, Magnuson used the incident as motivation, but more importantly, it taught him to appreciate the game of baseball even more. Now, with his Major League debut under his belt, the 25-year old righty's perseverance has finally paid off.

Worth noting

A's general manager Billy Beane underwent partial shoulder replacement surgery on Wednesday, a team official confirmed. While he's recovering, assistant GM David Forst is expected to handle his responsibilities.

### **Hot starters get nod in afternoon series finale**

By Nick Kosmider / MLB.com

When the A's confirmed they would lose starter Dallas Braden -- as expected -- for the season after surgery to repair a torn anterior capsule in his pitching shoulder, a magnifying glass hovered its way above Tyson Ross.

Oakland's 24-year-old right-hander, who is 3-2 with a 2.50 ERA in eight games -- five starts -- this season, has been tasked with taking over the rotation spot of the staff's elder statesman. But if others are upping their expectations for the young pitcher, Ross said it hasn't affected him.

"I haven't thought about it very much," Ross said. "I just want to come away from every start a little better and just learn something to build off of. I've done a pretty good job of that so far. As long as I continue to learn and keep growing as a pitcher, I think I'll be all right."

Ross answered the bell in a big way his last time out against the White Sox, when he gave up two runs on six hits in 7 1/3 innings, while striking out a career-high eight and walking one.

The righty will aim to take the next step in his progression on Thursday, when the A's wrap up a two-game series against the Twins and starter Nick Blackburn.

A's catcher Kurt Suzuki has been impressed with the way Ross has taken his duties in stride.

"We all knew he had great stuff, and now he's not trying to go too fast," Suzuki said. "He's slowing himself down. Quality location, making quality pitches and good things happen."

Blackburn, too, has been performing well of late. He struck out a career-high eight, while surrendering two runs over 7 2/3 innings against the Blue Jays in his last start. The right-hander, who didn't factor into the decision in that outing, retired 17 in row at one point.

"I think we're getting a pretty good grip on my mechanics right now, said Blackburn, who has a 1.74 ERA with 14 strikeouts over his last three starts. "Everything is coming out of my hand pretty good right now. I'm throwing all my pitches for strikes and, obviously, you can build on that."

### **Twins: Reinforcements coming**

The Twins much-maligned offense has help on the way.

Minnesota manager Rod Gardenhire said designated hitter Jim Thome and outfielder Jason Repko are expected to be activated from the disabled list in time for Monday's game against the Mariners.

Thome, plagued by a strained oblique, hasn't played since April 30, and Repko has been on the disabled list since May 2 with a strained right quad.

### **A's: Bailey to rehab in Triple-A**

The A's strong bullpen may not be far from receiving even more firepower.

Two-time All-Star reliever Andrew Bailey, who has not pitched for Oakland this season due to a right forearm strain, will begin a Minor League rehab assignment on Friday with Triple-A Sacramento.

Bailey threw 19 pitches in a scoreless inning of an extended spring training outing in Arizona on Tuesday and said his arm feels good, but A's manager Bob Geren isn't putting an exact timeline on the reliever's return to the big club.

"We're just going to go one outing at a time, and see how he bounces back, how he responds and plan it out," Geren said.

### **Worth noting**

- With a spotless inning of work on Wednesday, A's reliever Grant Balfour extended his scoreless innings streak to 13 1/3 innings. His longest scoreless streak is 14 2/3 innings from June 8-July 9, 2008.
- David DeJesus went 0-for-5 on Wednesday, breaking a streak of 25 straight games with a hit against Minnesota.
- Twins late Hall of Famer Harmon Killebrew, who passed away on Tuesday, will be remembered at a funeral service at Christ's Church of the Valley in Peoria, Ariz., in a ceremony open to the public on Friday at 10 a.m. There will be a private burial service on Monday in Payette, Idaho, the 11-time All-Star's hometown.

### **Pitchers duels on tap for A's Interleague Play D-backs, Giants, Marlins, Mets and Phillies on slate**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- The A's will soon break away from American League action and engage in a favorite fan novelty, otherwise known as Interleague Play.

"I think it's great for the fans," manager Bob Geren said. "It's good for baseball. I think we all look forward to it this time of year."

The A's will visit National League parks beginning Friday, when they visit San Francisco for a three-game set against the Giants, as Trevor Cahill, Brett Anderson and Gio Gonzalez are slated to not only take to the mound but the plate as well.

However, chances are few A's pitchers will be given the green light to freely swing in an effort to avoid injury. That doesn't stop them from preparing, though, as all of the club's starters are eased into batting drills beginning three weeks in advance, Geren said.

This year marks the 15th season of Interleague Play across baseball, and features two segments -- the first coming this weekend and the latter from June 17 to July 3.

Following Sunday's series finale, the A's will face a month of American League play before diving into 15 contests of Interleague action, which picks up again June 17 when the Giants return the favor and travel across the Bay Bridge to Oakland.

Following an off day, the A's will then head to the east coast, first to New York to face the Mets at Citi Field before rounding out Interleague travel by visiting Philadelphia.

Awaiting them at home will be the Marlins and D-backs -- a welcome sight for designated hitter Hideki Matsui, who isn't expected to receive any starts in the outfield while the A's are guests in National League parks.

**Last year:** The A's went 8-10 in Interleague Play during the 2010 campaign, marking their second consecutive season with a losing record against the NL. The team struggled on the road, going 2-7 in NL parks -- a trend that continued throughout the season, as the A's finished with an overall record of 34-47 when playing away from home.

**All-time:** Despite being owners of just a 70-74 Interleague record since 2003, the A's actually boast the sixth-best all-time mark in the Majors, having gone 136-112 (.548) since 1997.

**@ Giants, May 20-22:** The rivalry will continue across the Bay, as two of the Majors' best pitching staffs engage in battle, and the A's look to improve upon a 42-38 mark against the Giants. The two teams will meet a second time in Oakland on July 17-19.

**@ Mets, June 21-23:** The A's are set to make their first trip to Citi Field, but are no strangers to the Mets, having played them twice before in Interleague Play. They claimed a 2-1 series victory over them in 2005 but were swept at Shea Stadium in New York two years later.

**@ Phillies, June 24-27:** One of the more intriguing Interleague series, the A's and Phillies will treat fans to what could surely be several key pitching matchups featuring Oakland's young hurlers and Philadelphia's veteran staff. The A's own a 5-4 record against the Phillies, but have never played at Citizens Bank Ballpark, which opened its doors in 2004.

**vs. Marlins, June 28-30:** Outfielder Josh Willingham will help the A's host his former Marlins team, with whom he spent eight professional seasons at the start of his career. The two teams have split the series, 3-3, but the A's have the edge in Oakland with a 2-1 record at the Coliseum.

**vs. D-backs, July 1-3:** Aside from the Giants, the A's have seen the D-backs more than any other National League team since Interleague's inception. Oakland is 11-10 against Arizona, but just 5-7 when playing the D-backs on home turf.

#### **Players to Watch:**

**David DeJesus, RF (.336, 9 HRs, 64 RBIs):** DeJesus has feasted on National League pitching over the years, evidenced by a batting average nearly 50 points higher than his overall career mark.

**Trevor Cahill, RHP (5-2, 3.10 ERA):** Cahill has historically fared well against the National League, including a perfect 3-0 record and 2.42 ERA last season.

**Brett Anderson, LHP (0-1, 9.00 ERA):** Anderson has struggled in Interleague Play but in a small sample size of just two starts, leaving him room to drastically improve upon his career numbers against the Senior Circuit.

#### **Athletics lose to Twins in 10**

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND — First baseman Daric Barton's first error in 25 games put Oakland in a bind in the 10th inning. His decision to cut off Conor Jackson's throw home two batters later hurt the Athletics even more.

Trevor Plouffe hit a sacrifice fly for his season-high third RBI, and Delmon Young scored easily when Jackson's throw was stopped by Barton near first base, helping the Minnesota Twins beat the A's, 4-3, on Wednesday night.

Young singled to open the inning and advanced to third when Barton threw Alexi Casilla's bunt into the outfield. After Denard Span grounded out, Plouffe hit a fly ball to right field off Brian Fuentes (1-4).

"I probably shouldn't have cut that ball," Barton said. "It was one of those things where I thought that if I cut it I might have (Casilla) at third and try to stop the inning. I couldn't get a grip on it."

Barton just missed a chance to redeem himself in the bottom of the inning, but his fly to deep right field was caught on the warning track by Minnesota's Michael Cuddyer.

Barton went into the game tied with St. Louis' Albert Pujols for most errors among first baseman in the majors, but had not made a defensive miscue in 24 games before his gaffe Wednesday.

It was a play compounded later by his decision not to let Jackson's throw go home.

"I would rather have seen that go through," Oakland manager Bob Geren said. "I honestly don't think he would have got him, but I would have liked to seen it go through. There's really no value in cutting that."

Joe Nathan (1-1) got two outs for the win, pitching out of trouble in the ninth. Matt Capps got three outs for his seventh save.

Justin Morneau also drove in a run for the Twins, who have won two straight following a nine-game losing streak.

Kevin Kouzmanoff drove in two runs and Hideki Matsui added an RBI single for the A's, who fell a game behind Texas at the top of the AL West.

Twins starter Carl Pavano, who was looking for his 100th career win, allowed three runs — one earned — on six hits. He struck out two and did not walk a batter. He made his first career start in Oakland and has now started in every AL stadium.

A's starter Brandon McCarthy also lasted seven innings, giving up three runs and nine hits. He struck out one and did not walk a batter.

McCarthy is winless in his last seven starts.

Morneau singled home a run in the first to give the Twins the early edge. Morneau, who has been struggling all season, went 2 for 4 and is hitting .485 (16 for 33) with 13 RBIs his last 10 games against the A's.

Kouzmanoff singled home two runs in the second to put the A's on top 2-1.

Plouffe, whose throwing error led to the A's first two runs, came back to drive in two runs in the third for a 3-2 Twins lead.

"This is his chance to go out and play," Minnesota manager Ron Gardenhire said. "He has to go out and take advantage of it."

Matsui's RBI single in the sixth tied it.

## NOTES

The Twins hung a No. 3 jersey in their dugout to honor the memory of slugger Harmon Killebrew. The team will continue the practice the rest of the season. Players are also wearing patches in his honor on their uniform sleeves. ... Morneau is a career .313 hitter, with 43 RBIs, against the A's. ... A's RHP Michael Wuertz has not allowed a run in 10 of his 11 appearances this year. ... Twins' LHP Glen Perkins has not allowed an earned run in 18 of his 21 appearances. ... Barton had gone 24 consecutive games without committing an error. He still leads the majors with six errors by a first baseman.

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Ruiz Homers To Push Frisco Over Hounds in Ninth**

By Bob Hards / Midland RockHounds

Dr Pepper Ballpark ... Frisco, TX - - - -

The combined margin of victory in the first five games between the RockHounds and Frisco in the 2011 season was seven runs, or an average of 1.4 runs per game. Tuesday afternoon's game was even closer.

In Monday night's series opener, the clubs were scoreless through seven innings, with the RockHounds taking a 2-0 lead in the eighth only to see Frisco score three times in the eighth, the winning runs coming on a 2-run home run from Tommy Mendonca.

Tuesday, the clubs were in a scoreless tie in the last of the ninth ... with two out ... no one on ... and an 0-2 count on Jose Ruiz.

The RoughRiders first baseman sent the next pitch high over the right field wall; a walk-off home run that gave Frisco a 1-0 win.

- The series between the RockHounds and RoughRiders has been remarkably tight. The first four games were played at Citibank Ballpark (May 7-10), with the third game of the set decided by three runs (Frisco, 8-5). Each of the five other games has been a one-run contest, including one going to extra innings and Tuesday's 1-0 walk-off.

- Jermaine Mitchell went 1-for-2 with a double, a hit by pitch and a walk. Mitchell has now hit in 24-of-his-last-26 games (41-98, .418). He is second in the league in batting (.352) and on-base percentage (.477) and leads the Texas League in hits (50), runs (41), walks (33) and triples (10). His 10 triples rank second in all of Minor League Baseball.

- The Oakland A's have made two personnel moves affecting the RockHounds: Pitcher Justin Murray has been released ... and pitcher Polin Trinidad has been signed as a free agent.

Polin, who was originally with the Houston Astros organization, joined the RockHounds Monday in Frisco. The lefty pitched for the Astros' Double-A club in Corpus Christi in parts of three seasons (2008-10) and spent time at the Triple-A level for the Astros in Round Rock in each of the last two seasons. He was a member of the Astros' 40-man roster as recently as 2010, before signing as a minor league free agent with the Chicago Cubs in December. He opened the year with the (AAA) Iowa Cubs, but was released May 5.

- The RockHounds continue their eight-game road trip with games against the RoughRiders Wednesday and Thursday evenings (7:00), then travel to Corpus Christi for a four-game set with the Hooks.

- American League MVP (2010) Josh Hamilton is likely to begin his re-hab assignment in Frisco Wednesday. He would join All-Star outfielder (and former RockHound) Nelson Cruz in the RoughRiders line-up. In addition, the Rangers' Scott Feldman is the probable starter for Frisco in Thursday's series finalé.

### **Ports Blank Blaze 7-0**

**BAKERSFIELD, Calif.** - In their matinee contest with the Bakersfield Blaze on Wednesday, the Stockton Ports finally looked like a team that had gotten a good night's sleep. After looking like a tired ballclub in their series opener on Tuesday night, the Ports scored seven runs on 10 hits and handed the Blaze their first shutout loss of the season by a count of 7-0. It was the second time the Ports had shut out an opponent this season.

Stockton got the scoring started in the bottom of the 1st. Michael Gilmartin walked to open the game and Dusty Coleman followed with a single to right. With runners at first and second, Blaze starter Lance Janke (3-2) threw a pitch in the dirt on which Gilmartin advanced to third. Coleman appeared to be caught between first and second on the play, but the throw back to first from Blaze second baseman Alex Buchholz went into foul territory, an error that allowed Gilmartin to score and give the Ports a 1-0 lead.

The Ports added a second run in the 3rd. With runners at the corners and one out, Mitch LeVier hit a sac-fly to left to make it a 2-0 game.

In the top of the 5th, Michael Choice put some distance between the two teams with a two-run homer to left-his 7th big fly of the season-to make it 4-0.

The home run knocked Janke from the game. He would go on to take the loss, going four-plus innings and allowing four runs (three earned) on four hits while striking out three and walking a season-high six.

Meanwhile, Ports starter Murphy Smith (2-3) scattered six hits over six innings of work, but kept the Blaze off the scoreboard. Smith allowed a hit in each of the first three frames, allowed two hits in the 5th, and a hit in the 6th, but Bakersfield would go 0-for-5 with runners in scoring position on the afternoon.

Smith earned the win, tossing six scoreless innings while allowing six hits and striking out three.

Stockton's bullpen-a combination of Brett Hunter and newcomer Chris Mederos-combined for the final three innings of scoreless relief. Hunter allowed one hit over two innings while Mederos, in his Cal-League debut after being promoted from Burlington, pitched a perfect 9th.

The Ports tagged each Blaze reliever for a run. Mace Thurman, who pitched the 5th and 6th, gave up a run on an RBI single to Ryan Lipkin in the 6th. The Ports got a two-out RBI single from Lipkin in the 7th off Drew Bowman, and a sac-fly from Rashun Dixon off Ruben Medina in the 9th to increase their lead to 7-0.

Bakersfield's pitchers combined to walk 11 batters in the contest, while Ports pitchers walked only one. Stockton earned the 7-0 victory despite going just 2-for-12 with runners in scoring position and stranding 13 total baserunners.

Choice and Lipkin each drove in a pair of runs for Stockton. Choice went 2-for-2 on the afternoon and drew three walks. Conner Crumbliss was also perfect at the plate, going 2-for-2 with two singles and two walks drawn.

### **LumberKings Crown Bees 4-3**

By Gavin Halpin

BURLINGTON, IA- The Clinton LumberKings (11-29) beat the Burlington Bees (28-10) by a score of 4-3 at Community Field on Wednesday night.

The LumberKings scored three runs in the second inning against Burlington RHP Tyler Vail. SS Jake Schlander (1-4) hit a two-run home run. Clinton finished the inning with a 3-0 lead.

Burlington responded with a single run in the second inning against Clinton LHP Edlando Seco. LF Douglas Landaeta (3-4) singled to center field to score 1B Josh Whitaker (2-4), who led off the inning with a double.

The Bees add one more run in the bottom of the third inning sparked by a John Nester (0-0) walk that would eventually see Nester score after a groundout to the shortstop by RF Royce Consigli (0-3).

3B Wade Kirkland (1-4) doubled to right field in the bottom of the sixth and scored on a groundout by SS Yordy Cabrera (0-4) to even up the score at 3-3.

In the seventh inning Clinton DH Tim Morris (0-5) reached first base on a fielding error by Bees' SS Yordy Cabrera. A steal and a throwing error allowed Morris to move to third base. He scored on a Mickey Wiswall (1-4) sacrifice fly to give Clinton a 4-3 lead.

**San Jose Can't Quite Connect in A's Bid  
City Moves Ahead With Stadium Preparations as It Awaits Sign From League on Whether Oakland Team Can Relocate**

By JOHN LETZING, Wall Street Journal, 5/18/2011

SAN JOSE—The Oakland Athletics want to move to San Jose, and city officials are pulling out all the stops to bring the team to town. But it isn't clear whether Major League Baseball will allow the two parties to close the deal.

The A's for years have said they want to leave Oakland and a ballpark they say is outmoded. San Jose, California's third-biggest city by population, has long coveted a big league team.

San Jose already has laid the groundwork for the team's move. Environmental-impact planning for a new ballpark in San Jose concluded last summer. As state officials mull the elimination of local redevelopment agencies to cut costs, San Jose has transferred land bought for the proposed stadium from its redevelopment agency to the San Jose Diridon Development Authority, an entity created in March to protect the ballpark assets.

So far, city officials have spent nearly \$27 million to acquire land for the proposed Cisco Field, named for Cisco Systems Inc., and to help former tenants and property owners at the site relocate to new areas. A Cisco spokeswoman declined to comment on terms of the naming rights.

Meanwhile, officials have made some progress in haggling over a remaining parcel needed for the stadium site that is owned by AT&T Inc.

Yet it isn't clear whether baseball's commissioner, Bud Selig, will hold a vote by major league team owners on the move, which needs to be approved by three-quarters of owners. The San Francisco Giants have registered their opposition, saying a major league team in San Jose would unfairly intrude into the Giants' territory. Major League Baseball spokesman Pat Courtney declined to comment.

Last week, San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed wrote to Mr. Selig, noting that seven years had passed since the A's first considered moving to San Jose and added: "Despite your lengthy deliberative process, success is still achievable," according to a copy of the letter Mr. Reed released.

While waiting for the league to act, the city also needs to secure the rights to some five acres of land owned by AT&T within the roughly 13-acre Cisco Field site. San Jose City Council member Pierluigi Oliverio said AT&T indicated last year that it would be amenable to selling the ballpark land if the phone company won approval for rezoning a separate property it owns in San Jose. The city council approved the zoning change in December.

AT&T spokesman John Britton responded that "the land is not officially for sale." But he acknowledged that AT&T is discussing the matter with the city. "They've approached us, we've talked to them, and something could happen there."

Mayor Reed said land needed for Cisco Field, which is "mostly owned" by AT&T, would cost the city up to \$20 million, based on internal estimates.

In renderings commissioned by the Athletics, Cisco Field is a sleek park with a Silicon Valley feel; Adobe Systems Inc.'s San Jose headquarters looms over the outfield wall.

Not everyone in San Jose is in favor of the project. Marc Morris, a spokesman for Better Sense San Jose, a group formed to oppose the ballpark, said while the Athletics would pay for the new stadium, the city will have to spend a significant amount on the surrounding area such as to build new roads "at a time of really severe budget cuts" affecting city services. Mr. Morris suggested that San Jose focus on more diverse development for the site.

Mayor Reed argued that the ballpark could rejuvenate the area west of central San Jose by drawing thousands of fans, generating new sales and property tax revenue. (It hasn't been determined yet whether the Athletics would pay rent to the city.)

Athletics owner Lew Wolff has complained that the team's current home in Oakland, Overstock.com Coliseum—a bulky, 45-year-old concrete structure—is unsuitable.

Mr. Wolff, who declined through a spokesman to be interviewed, is willing to pay the estimated \$400 million to \$500 million needed to build the ballpark in San Jose, said Ken Pries, vice president of broadcasting and communications for the Athletics.

Oakland recently has sought to persuade the A's to stay. The city is preparing an environmental-impact report for its own proposed new ballpark that it hopes would keep the Athletics in town. Former city administrator Dan Lindheim, who is overseeing the ballpark efforts, said that "Oakland is committed to retaining the A's." He declined to comment further.

But the A's aren't biting. "I don't know if [team owner] Mr. Wolff would be willing to fund construction of a new park in Oakland," said the A's Mr. Pries.

Baseball San Jose, a nonprofit group formed to back the A's San Jose move, is preparing to support a ballot measure that ultimately will be needed to use public money to help get Cisco Field built, said co-chair Michael Mulcahy. Two partners of the San Jose law firm Rossi, Hamerslough, Reischl & Chuck help run the group; another partner, Dean Rossi, is Mr. Wolff's son-in-law. Mr. Rossi says he isn't involved with Baseball San Jose.

A move by the A's to San Jose could raise another competitive concern for the Giants. The San Francisco team has a minor league affiliate in the city, the San Jose Giants, in which it owns a 55% stake.

Minor league teams generally relocate when a big-league club comes to town. Mr. Pries said the Athletics could allow the San Jose Giants to remain, though "we haven't made a decision on that yet."

Giants spokeswoman Staci Slaughter declined to comment on a potential move by the A's or on what impact that could have on the San Jose Giants.