

Oakland A's score win after manager Bob Geren is ejected

By Carl Steward, Oakland Tribune

Manager Bob Geren was ejected for the first time this season Friday night, and based on how the A's bats came alive after he departed, Geren may have to consider getting tossed more often.

Geren was thumbed by home plate umpire Angel Campos while making a pitching change in the top of the sixth inning and the score tied 2-2. But after Geren left, Oakland promptly scored three runs in the bottom half en route to a 6-2 victory over the Baltimore Orioles.

"He can get thrown out tomorrow night, if we get three runs the next inning," said outfielder Josh Willingham. "It's fine with me."

Willingham doubled, homered and walked twice as part of the A's 12-hit attack, the second straight game in which the A's had double-digit hits. They've also scored four or more runs in three of their last four games and won all three. Oakland is 18-4 this season when it has scored four or more runs.

"If we can put up four or five runs a game, that's great, because I like our chances any given night with our pitching staff," Willingham said. "We haven't helped them as much as we should have this year, but hopefully, we can start coming around and putting some consistent games together."

The A's batted around in the sixth, breaking the 2-2 tie on a two-out RBI single to center by Ryan Sweeney off reliever Alfredo Simon (1-1). They proceeded to add on. Willingham doubled into the left corner to score their fourth run, and after an intentional walk to Hideki Matsui to load the bases, Kurt Suzuki lined a single over second base.

In the eighth Willingham added his team-leading eighth home run, a solo shot off Baltimore's third pitcher, lefty Mike Gonzalez.

"The two-out hits -- stringing them together -- that's something that's eluded us a lot this season," Geren said. "Guys are feeling a little more confident about themselves offensively."

So what happened on the ejection, Bob? "Just arguing balls and strikes," he said. "I made a comment about the strike zone, that's totally against the rules, and I paid the price, see you later."

Geren had had a running dialogue with Campos much of the game, and when he came out in the sixth to replace starter Gio Gonzalez, one last word as Campos approached the mound got Geren run.

Gonzalez endured a wild night. He struck out the side in the first inning. Then he escaped a bases-loaded, no-out situation in the second after walking in a run. He allowed a walk and hit a batter in the third but struck out the side again and had seven strikeouts through three innings, but on 64 pitches.

"His stuff was electric," Geren said. "But he had command issues."

Gonzalez also had a scary moment in the fifth. After Jake Fox had opened with a walk and Robert Andino singled, Adam Jones hit a ground ball to first baseman Daric Barton, who threw to shortstop Cliff Pennington for one out. Pennington threw errantly back to first, and Gonzalez stumbled awkwardly over the bag leaning back to try to catch the throw.

Fox scored, and Gonzalez limped to the mound, looking as if he'd injured an ankle. But he took a few warm-up tosses, stayed in the game and, after walking Nick Markakis, got out of the inning when Pennington made a diving stop of a Vlad Guerrero grounder to start a double play.

"It was a little scared for all of us, but it'll be fine," Gonzalez said of his ankle. "It felt nasty, too, and then all of a sudden I got out there and said, 'You know what? I'm not going to get myself out of this game. I'm going to finish strong.'"

Oakland A's update: Infielder Scott Sizemore acquired in trade with Detroit Tigers

By Carl Steward, Oakland Tribune

The A's solved a roster dilemma and acquired a player they have coveted for some time in one transaction Friday, acquiring infielder Scott Sizemore from Detroit in exchange for left-hander David Purcey.

General manager Billy Beane said closer Andrew Bailey would be activated this weekend as long as there were no setbacks after Bailey's Friday night rehab outing with Triple-A Sacramento. Bailey pitched an inning and gave up no runs on two hits and struck out one, throwing 10 strikes in 13 pitches.

With a surplus of relievers, the A's were going to have to make a decision on Purcey, who is out of options. Hence, they effectively acquired Sizemore for a player they likely would have designated for assignment.

Sizemore will report to Sacramento, where Beane said he will play third base. He was primarily a second baseman with the Tigers.

"He's hit well enough in his career where he could be an everyday guy there," Beane said. "He's a guy we've always liked. We've asked about him for two years and finally (the Tigers) acquiesced."

Sizemore, 26, began the season at Triple-A Toledo and hit .408 in 23 games with two home runs and 15 RBIs. The Tigers recalled him on May 3. He hit .222 in 17 starts at second base with Detroit.

Purcey, 29, pitched well in the brief time he was here (he was acquired from Toronto on April 18), posting a 2.13 ERA in 122/3 innings over nine appearances. But with Craig Breslow, Brian Fuentes and Bobby Cramer (who was recalled Friday), the A's are well-stocked with left-handed relievers.

Pitcher Dallas Braden made his first appearance at the ballpark since he departed an April 16 game with a left shoulder problem that subsequently required season-ending surgery May 17.

Braden, who serves as a national spokesman for melanoma cancer awareness (his mother died of the disease), took part in a pregame ceremony for his cause. He admitted it would be too difficult for him to stick around to watch the game, however.

"I haven't watched a baseball game since the day I came out," he said. "It's tough, very tough."

Braden said there is little he can do now and that he has no timetable to begin his rehabilitation.

"Just R&R and let the body do its thing," he said.

Center fielder Coco Crisp wasn't in the lineup Friday against Baltimore but was just getting a day's rest after playing in eight straight games.

Pooler: Evidence is mounting against Oakland A's manager Bob Geren

By Monte Pooler, Bay Area News Group

The Raiders have their best season since 2002, the coach gets axed, and we know why.

Because the boss wants more from the Raiders.

The Warriors have their most encouraging season in three years, the head coach gets fired, and we all know why.

Because the boss, the new boss, wants more from the Warriors.

That brings us to the third and final East Bay professional team, the voluntary stepchildren who on Friday returned home to a typically tepid reception at the Coliseum.

The A's season thus far has been less than anticipated and, suddenly, its manager is working up a sweat. Bob Geren is dodging darts and arrows and rocks. These projectiles are being thrown not only by fans -- many of whom never embraced him -- but also by his own players.

Fans are questioning strategy, as they should be; Geren sometimes seems a beat behind the game, especially in interleague play. Fans, unable to understand why Daric Barton, batting .206, has more plate appearances than anyone else on a club that supposedly tuned up its offense over the winter, are turning on the manager.

When former closer Brian Fuentes gripes about poor communication from Geren -- and is demoted -- new closer Grant Balfour validates the allegation by conceding he hadn't been told he's the new closer.

Put simply, the A's these days are a mediocre stew on simmer, neither looking nor smelling particularly good, lumbering along under a fifth-year manager who has yet to experience a winning season.

If Tom Cable wasn't good enough for the Raiders, and Keith Smart wasn't good enough for the Warriors, how much longer can the A's continue to say Geren is good enough for them?

That's the word for now. Managing partner Lew Wolff, speaking in Anaheim this week, not only defended the manager but also jumped over Jupiter to shower Geren with general abundant praise -- practically kissing Geren on the forehead.

Then there is general manager Billy Beane, whose promotion of Geren -- his longtime good friend -- in November 2006 was, on the surface, an example of brazen cronyism.

"You have to keep it in context," Beane said of the zings directed at his manager. "It's been an emotional week."

Beane cited recent events that have chipped away at the team's physical structure and, perhaps, its emotional fiber. There was the May 19 injury that sidelined starter Tyson Ross, who was replacing Dallas Braden, who underwent surgery May 17. And starter Brandon McCarthy was placed on the disabled list May 20.

The A's have been shaken up, as has their roster. There are plenty of reasons, some legitimate, for Oakland's sub-.500 record.

But how long can the bosses continue to buy into those reasons, citing them to validate their unwavering support of Geren?

"Bob knows we've got a better club this year," Beane said. "Certainly, with the free agents we brought in, we have some expectations. But the team we envisioned has not been there. We haven't had our closer (Andrew Bailey), and we've lost three starters.

"That said, this game is about results. Bob is aware of that. And Bob is in the last year of his deal."

Geren's lame-duck status provides hope for those fans whose groaning has advanced to wailing. They've seen Geren, they're not impressed, and they want him gone.

They applaud when former closer Huston Street wallops Geren with derogatory insinuations, implying he can't be trusted. They wince when former A's starter Dan Haren, who played one year under Geren, speaks well of the manager, as did Eric Byrnes, the retired player who credits Geren for much of his development in the minor leagues. It's evident, though, that Geren has lost the fan base, and it's apparent his relationship with the clubhouse is lacking. Team shot-callers may not give a hump about the former, but they ought to respect the latter.

That takes me back to the day Wolff unveiled his own personal heaven, a prospective ballpark village in Fremont, subsidized by Cisco Systems. Another unresolved issue, a baseball matter, also was hanging in the air.

Beane had dismissed manager Ken Macha not because the team had failed but because their relationship was colder than a Wisconsin winter. Beane sought someone with whom he would have, for lack of a better word, chemistry. Geren, a baseball lifer, was a finalist.

While others were fawning over the artists' rendering of Cisco Field, a respected member of the organization approached to offer a simple but unforgettable comment.

"If Billy hires Bob Geren," the employee whispered, "he's putting himself in risky territory. Eventually, he's going to have to fire his friend."

He almost certainly will, if he wants more out of the A's. And at this rate, we'll all know why.

Chin Music: Bailey return near, A's get a player they've coveted, Braden makes park appearance, etc.

By Carl Steward, Oakland Tribune, 5/27/2011 7:14pm
In for Joe Stiglich tonight ...

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General manager Billy Beane said closer Andrew Bailey would be activated this weekend as long as there were no setbacks with Bailey's Friday night rehab outing with Triple-A Sacramento, and we'll update when his numbers are available.

With a surplus of relievers, they were going to have to make a decision on Purcey, who is out of options. Hence, they effectively acquired Sizemore for a player they quite likely would have designated for assignment.

Sizemore will report to Sacramento, where Beane said he will play third base. He was primarily a second baseman with Detroit.

"He's hit well enough in his career where he could be an every day guy there," Beane said. "He's a guy we've always liked. We've asked about him for two years and finally (the Tigers) acquiesced.

Sizemore began the season at Triple-A Toledo and hit .408 in 23 games with two home runs and 15 RBIs. He was leading the International League in batting and on-base percentage (.495) when the Tigers recalled him on May 3. He hit .222 in 17 starts at second base with Detroit.

Purcey pitched well for Oakland in the brief time he was here (he was acquired from Toronto on April 18), posting a 2.13 ERA in 12 2/3 innings over nine appearances. But Craig Breslow, Brian Fuentes and Bobby Cramer (who was recalled to take Purcey's place), the A's are well-stocked with left-handed relievers.

Pitcher Dallas Braden made his first appearance the ballpark since he departed an April 16 game with a shoulder problem that subsequently required season-ending surgery on May 17.

Braden, who serves as a national spokesman for melanoma cancer awareness (his mother died of the disease), took part in a pre-game ceremony for his cause. He admitted it would be too difficult for him to stick around to watch the game, however.

"I haven't watched a baseball game since the day I came out," he said. "It's tough very tough."

Braden said there is little he can do now and has no timetable to begin his rehabilitation.

"Just R&R and let the body do its thing," he said. "I don't worry about the things I can't control. I'll cross that bridge when I get there."

Asked about his long-term expectations, Braden added, "Come back and throw baseballs and help the team win. That's the expectation. It doesn't matter where."

Coco Crisp was not in the lineup but was just getting a day's rest after playing in eight straight games along with the expectation that he'll play the rest of the homestand.

Ryan Sweeney ignites A's in 6-2 win over Orioles

Rusty Simmons, Chronicle Staff Writer

Maybe all the A's offense needed was the staging of even more pressure.

They were tied for first place in the AL West on May 17. Since then, they've dropped to fourth, having scored four or fewer runs in eight of nine games as they headed into Friday night's game against Baltimore.

With the pressure heating up, however, the A's bats caught a little fire. They pounded out 12 hits, including five two-out, run-scoring pokes, to beat the Orioles 6-2 in front of 12,110 fans at the Coliseum.

Center fielder Ryan Sweeney scored the A's first run on a first-inning, two-out single by Hideki Matsui, and Sweeney broke a 2-2 tie with a two-out RBI single of his own in the sixth inning.

"It was nice to come up with some of those big hits," Sweeney said. "We haven't been doing it all year, so it was huge to do it tonight. This was a confidence builder that we need to keep building on."

Josh Willingham, who had a two-out RBI double, even mixed in a home run - something the A's had done only three times in the past 11 games. They're still on pace to break the Oakland record for fewest homers, which was set with 94 in 1968.

But they also seem to be streaking toward something pretty positive. The A's have won three of their past four games, after a season-high six-game skid, and are finally getting some offense that matches their sterling pitching.

Starter Gio Gonzalez struggled to command his off-speed pitches throughout, but his three-quarter-armed 94-mph fastball was good enough to get him out of most jams. He struck out seven batters, including the first three he faced, but walked five and yielded five hits in five-plus innings.

The left-hander entered the game amid one of the best months of his career, having gone 3-0 with a 1.65 ERA and a .186 batting-average-against in his first four May starts.

"Gio had a little battle tonight," said manager Bob Geren, who was ejected for arguing balls and strikes in the sixth inning. "His stuff was electric, and you thought it could be a special night. But he had some command issues and kind of fought himself a little bit."

The A's took a 1-0 lead in the first inning when Matsui lined one through the left side to score Sweeney. The Orioles tied it in the second when four straight hitters reached base safely, including Mark Reynolds, who worked an RBI walk. Mark Ellis singled to lead off the second inning, stole second base and scored on David DeJesus' liner off Reynolds' glove to give the A's a 2-1 lead.

Gonzalez rolled his left ankle while trying to cover first base on an attempted double play in the fifth inning. Cliff Pennington's throw sailed behind a falling Gonzalez, and Jake Fox, who had drawn a leadoff walk, scored from second base to tie it 2-2. Pennington made amends, making a diving stab that started an inning-ending double play.

After leaving the bases loaded in the fifth inning, the A's didn't miss their opportunity in the sixth. Sweeney and Willingham had consecutive two-out RBI hits, and after a Matsui walk loaded the bases, Kurt Suzuki gave the A's a 5-2 lead with an run-scoring looping liner over second baseman Robert Andino.

Brad Ziegler picked up the win with two innings of scoreless relief, and Joey Devine and Michael Wuertz each threw a shutout inning out of the bullpen.

A's swap David Purcey for infielder Scott Sizemore

Rusty Simmons, Chronicle Staff Writer

The A's displayed some nice foresight Friday, trading left-hander **David Purcey** to Detroit for infielder **Scott Sizemore** and calling up **Bobby Cramer** from Triple-A Sacramento.

If all goes well with the final rehabilitation outings of closer **Andrew Bailey**, the A's will have to clear a spot in the bullpen in the next few days. Since Purcey was out of options, the team decided to trade him instead of risking losing him for nothing through the waiver process.

Cramer does have options remaining and most likely will be shipped back to Sacramento when Bailey returns.

"We knew we were going to have to make a move in the bullpen at some point, and we've got a lot of guys who are pitching well and not all of them have options," assistant general manager **David Forst** said. "We were looking ahead a little bit and hoping to get something since we were going to have to move a guy. Particularly since we'd just given up a player for Purcey a month ago, we didn't want to lose him for nothing."

The A's traded minor-league pitcher **Danny Farquhar** for Purcey on April 18. Purcey posted a 2.13 earned run average in nine relief appearances for the A's.

In return for Purcey, the A's got a guy they've coveted for several years. Sizemore, who was leading Triple-A's International League with a .408 batting average and a .495 on-base percentage, will report to Sacramento and play third base.

Originally chosen by Detroit in the fifth round of the 2006 draft, Sizemore has hit .223 in 65 career major-league games. He has gotten mixed reviews as a defensive player at both second and third base, but he was Detroit's Minor League Player of the Year in 2009.

"He's a guy we've asked Detroit about a number of times over the past couple of years," Forst said. "He's a guy who has always really hit at every level and particularly in Triple-A the past couple of years. He hits for average, gets on base and is a solid all-around player who we've liked for a few years."

Leading off

Good cause: A's left-hander Dallas Braden will be the spokesman for "Play Sun Smart," a program that provides information on sun safety and raises awareness for skin cancer prevention. Braden's mother died of melanoma during his senior year of high school.

Drumbeat: Explaining the David Purcey for Scott Sizemore deal

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser , 5/27/2011, 3:04pm

It's actually Rusty Simmons handling the daily coverage today at the Coliseum, but I - Susan, not Rusty, sorry for any confusion - figured I'd do a quick Drumbeat post to provide a take on the David Purcey trade after getting some emails and tweets wondering what impact the deal would have on some A's infielders, both in Oakland and at Sacramento.

Scott Sizemore, obtained in the deal, is a nice player, but I think this trade is as much about Andrew Bailey and the A's packed bullpen as it is about Sizemore. The A's were going to need a roster spot for Bailey in the next week or so, and Purcey is out of options. The guys with options: Joey Devine and Brad Ziegler. So Purcey was the odd man out, and it appears to me as if the A's, knowing they probably wouldn't be able to sneak him through waivers, got a good return for him rather than just getting nothing if he were claimed next week.

Bobby Cramer was recalled to take Purcey's spot in the bullpen, presumably until Bailey comes off the DL.

I've heard mixed on Sizemore, with some scouts (and an agent, not even his own) telling me today that they've always liked him and others knocking his defense a bit. He'll go to Sacramento, but he'd not going to supplant Jemile Weeks as the A's second baseman of the future or anything. My guess is that he plays third - because where have the A's needed the most help this season?

The River Cats have had a hodgepodge of third basemen this season, including catcher Josh Donaldson and shortstop Josh Horton, so even though Sizemore, 26, primarily has been a second baseman, I can't imagine that Sacramento will balk at playing him at third, especially with Weeks playing so well at second.

Sizemore has played 65 games in the big leagues, with the Tigers, including six at third base.

Purcey's time in Oakland was brief, but I think it will benefit his career for a while. Pitching coach Ron Romanick worked a lot with him to sharpen things up, and moving him on the rubber increased his strike percentage and also his comfort level. And he's likely to retain that record for biggest feet in Oakland A's history - size 18 spikes - forever.

Sizemore, by the way, is not related to Grady Sizemore. Apparently that's the first question he gets everywhere he goes.

Rusty will update this later with information from A's officials about the deal if need be.

A's bats come to life in opener vs. Birds

By Tom Green / MLB.com | 5/28/2011 3:00 AM ET

OAKLAND -- Before Friday's game, A's manager Bob Geren spoke about how hits throughout the lineup could build the team's confidence. Fittingly, the A's confidence is on the rise after the team's 6-2 win against the Orioles. It's just too bad Geren wasn't around the whole time to see it.

All nine A's starters recorded at least one hit in a game in which Geren was ejected for arguing balls and strikes in the sixth inning. The ejection apparently lit a fire under the A's offense, which to that point had mustered five hits and two runs, as the team followed it up with a three-run inning to break a 2-2 deadlock.

"I hope he gets ejected tomorrow night if it gets us three more runs," left fielder Josh Willingham said.

Thanks in large part to consecutive games with double-digit hits, the A's (25-27) have now won three of their last four after dropping six straight.

"You can't expect double-digit hits every night, but back-to-back games are a good start," Geren said. "Guys are feeling a little bit more confident with themselves offensively and just roll with it. I like what I'm seeing."

Most of what Geren saw on Friday night came from the A's clubhouse. The team tallied seven hits and four runs in three innings after Geren was ejected by home-plate umpire Angel Campos in the top of the sixth inning.

The A's sent nine batters to the plate against Orioles reliever Alfredo Simon (1-1, 9.00 ERA) in that frame, which culminated with catcher Kurt Suzuki's RBI single with the bases loaded. To that point, Suzuki was the only starter who hadn't recorded a hit. But his knock, along with RBI base hits from Ryan Sweeney and Willingham, all came with two outs in the inning and were among the team's six two-out hits on the night.

"That's something we've been lacking this year," said Willingham, who also belted his eighth home run in the eighth. "That's what you have to do as an offense -- get that big hit in a crucial time of the game. And we were able to do that tonight."

The hitting couldn't have been timelier for the A's, who got an up-and-down start from Gio Gonzalez. Gonzalez struck out the side in the first, but struggled with his location at times throughout the rest of his outing -- which lasted five innings.

The southpaw allowed two runs, one earned, and fanned seven. But he also walked five and threw 46 of his 99 pitches out of the strike zone.

"I burned all my energy out in the first inning, and after that, I was just trying to scare everybody and put them on the edge of their seat," Gonzalez said. "Definitely put myself through a roller-coaster ride today."

Gonzalez went on to credit his defense, which turned four inning-ending double plays that prevented the Orioles (24-25) from breaking the game open themselves and spoiling his otherwise stellar month on the mound. In May, Gonzalez went 3-0 in five starts, and struck out 35 batters in 32 1/3 innings of work.

Among the web gems from the A's infield was a double play up the middle to end the second inning, when Gonzalez truly struggled with his control and found himself in a bases-loaded jam before recording an out. Gonzalez gave up back-to-back singles to lead off the inning before surrendering consecutive walks, the second of which pushed Baltimore's first run across the plate. Despite having the bases loaded with no outs, the A's held the Orioles to the lone run, thanks to their defense.

"That second inning, bases loaded no outs, was a big inning for [Gio]," said Orioles shortstop J.J. Hardy, who struck out before Jake Fox grounded into the double play. "That's what it comes down to. You could win a game in the second inning, you could win a game in the 9th. But we just didn't get that big hit."

"It was just a constant battle," said Geren. "But you have to give credit, obviously, to Mark Ellis and [Cliff] Pennington getting [Gio] some double plays. The defense picked him up."

Suzuki doesn't favor rules changes

By Tom Green / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- In the wake of Wednesday night's collision across the bay that left Giants catcher Buster Posey with a broken lower left leg and torn ligaments in his left ankle, much has been made of whether MLB should pass new rules to better protect catchers from brutal collisions at the plate.

Leading the charge to adopt policies to protect catchers in vulnerable situations are Giants manager Bruce Bochy and Posey's agent, Jeff Berry. But don't count A's catcher Kurt Suzuki among the proponents for a change in the rulebook.

"It'd be hard to make a rule like that, it'd be tough," Suzuki said on Friday. "It is a dangerous position, but as a catcher, you understand everything that can happen. You just need to find ways to protect yourself."

Suzuki, in his fifth year behind the plate for the A's, understands collisions at home are a part of baseball and was almost at a loss for words when asked about Posey's injury, before finally calling what happened to the Giants' backstop a "freak accident."

"It's a scary thought," Suzuki said. "You're in such a vulnerable position, especially with the throw coming in from right field, so he had no idea where the runner was. It was a bang-bang play. Once the ball touched his glove, he got run over. It [stinks]."

That doesn't mean Suzuki thought Cousins' hit on Posey, which will likely sideline Posey for the rest of the year, was dirty. Suzuki said Cousins was just trying to score, and referred to what happened as "playing the game the right way," and the result was just unfortunate.

Suzuki hasn't reached out to Posey since the incident, but said on Friday he hopes the second-year catcher has a healthy recovery.

"He's a tough kid, and it [stinks] because he's so talented and young," Suzuki said. "He's got a bright future in front of him, so for him to have this type of injury is horrible."

Braden mum on recovery timetable

OAKLAND -- A's lefty Dallas Braden met with the media on Friday for the first time since undergoing season-ending surgery on May 17 to repair a torn anterior capsule in his pitching shoulder.

Braden was in attendance on Friday with a sling over his left shoulder after being named the 2011 spokesperson for the Play Sun Smart program, a joint initiative between MLB, the Players Association and the American Academy of Dermatology. Braden was there to help spread the word about melanoma, the deadliest kind of skin cancer.

"It's a battle we can win on our front -- we can prevent and we can treat if we are educated," said Braden, whose mother, Jodie Atwood, died of the disease while Braden was in high school.

While Braden spoke about the disease and what can be done to help prevent it, mum was the word when it came to his recovery following shoulder surgery earlier this month, as he offered only brief responses when asked about it. Braden said it was "very tough" to be away from the team, but that he's "hanging in there" and just biding his time with plenty of rest and relaxation.

Braden was 1-1 with a 3.00 ERA in three starts this season before injuring his shoulder. The southpaw, who threw the 19th perfect game in Major League history last season on Mother's Day, offered no timetable for a return, either.

"That's like me walking into the manager's office and saying what the starting lineup is going to be," Braden said about setting a return date. "There's nothing I can do at this point."

"I don't worry about things I can't control," Braden added.

Bailey getting close to returning

OAKLAND -- A's closer Andrew Bailey is almost set for his return from a right forearm injury that has sidelined him the entire season.

The two-time All-Star made another rehab outing for Triple-A Sacramento on Friday, but A's manager Bob Geren suggested Bailey could return to the team during its six-game homestand against the Orioles and Yankees.

"He's obviously getting closer and closer each time out, and the good thing about him is we've spoken after every outing to see how he feels," Geren said. "He definitely wanted to go again, so he'll go [on Friday]."

Bailey has already made three outings for Sacramento, pitching an inning each time. He has allowed just one hit and no runs during his rehab stint, but is still working on his command, as he has hit two batters and walked another.

Bailey hasn't yet pitched in a closer's role, twice throwing in the seventh inning and then tossing in the fourth during his last outing. But Geren said it doesn't matter when Bailey pitches, as long as he stays with his routine.

"The problem with telling him he has to throw in the ninth or that he has to close is that when you have somebody on a rehab assignment, you don't always know what the score is going to be or what the situation is going to dictate," Geren said. "You just pencil him [for] an inning, then you use him late in the game and go."

"All my reports on him have been velocity, command, hits, innings pitched, walks, how he felt. What actual inning he has thrown wasn't something I've paid attention to, either. It isn't really relevant."

Worth noting

- Center fielder Coco Crisp was given the day off on Friday after playing in eight straight games, but Geren said he plans on playing Crisp for the rest of the homestand.

"It works out perfect," Geren said. "He had a day game yesterday, tonight's a night game, tomorrow's a night game. So hopefully, it gives him about a day and a half off on his body and it'll do him some good. He's been doing a fine job."

Bergesen. Outman toe the rubber in Game 2

By Cash Kruth / MLB.com | 5/28/2011 2:30 AM ET

Being placed in a vaunted rotation with Trevor Cahill, Brett Anderson and Gio Gonzalez can be a tough assignment for an inexperienced pitcher coming off an injury. In his first start, Josh Outman proved he belonged. Now, the 26-year-old left-hander looks to produce another quality start.

Outman makes his second start of the season on Saturday at 7:05 p.m. PT at Oakland Coliseum as the A's host the Orioles and Brad Bergesen.

Outman is coming off an impressive season debut against the Angels, holding them to one run on five hits in seven innings. It was his first Major League start since returning from Tommy John surgery in 2009, a season in which he impressed -- going 4-1 with a 3.48 ERA in 14 games (12 starts). Outman is in the rotation replacing Brandon McCarthy, while Guillermo Moscoso is also replacing Tyler Ross. A's manager Bob Geren said he was impressed with both pitchers' first starts.

"If both their first outings are any indication, you couldn't really ask for a better performance out of either of them," Geren said. "Both threw over 100 pitches and went fairly deep into the game and gave us a chance to win."

Opposing Outman is Bergesen, who needs to work deep into Saturday's game to save a bullpen that has been worked hard the past two days. In Thursday's 12-inning game, the 'pen threw four innings and then another 3 2/3 on Friday after Chris Tillman exited in the fifth.

After throwing a complete-game, four-hit shutout two starts ago, Bergesen got rocked in his last outing by the Yankees, turning in his worst start of the season. The 25-year-old right-hander gave up eight runs on five hits and three walks, lasting only 3 1/3 innings. New York tagged Bergesen right away, scoring five first-inning runs.

"My whole thought process was that we really needed me to go deep, and I let us down," Bergesen said afterward. "I wasn't able to do it, and it killed me."

Bergesen has faced the A's only once in his career, on May 27 of last season, allowing four runs on four hits in seven-plus innings.

Orioles: Markakis extends streaks

- Nick Markakis' one hit on Friday not only extended his hitting streak to 12 games but also another streak. Markakis has recorded a hit in 157 consecutive series, the longest such stretch in the Majors since Ichiro knocked out a hit in 160 straight series from June 2000-June 2004.
- Although Tillman lasted only 4 1/3 innings on Friday, he didn't allow a homer for the seventh consecutive start. The last Baltimore starter to go seven or more straight starts without allowing a homer was Daniel Cabrera, who went eight starts without allowing a home run from Sept. 12, 2006-April 20, 2007.

Athletics: Crisp will be back

- Coco Crisp received the day off on Friday, but Geren said it was just to keep the outfielder fresh. Crisp had played eight straight games during Oakland's current stretch of 20 games in 20 days. Geren said Crisp will be back in the lineup on Saturday and for the rest of the homestand.

"It works out perfect. He had a day game yesterday, tonight's a night game, tomorrow's a night game. So hopefully, it gives him about a day and a half off on his body and it'll do him some good," Geren said. "He's been doing a fine job ... and he'll play many games for us this year."

Crisp is batting .269 with 12 doubles and 14 stolen bases.

- Andrew Bailey made his fourth rehab appearance for Triple-A Sacramento on Friday, allowing two hits and striking out one. Geren said he thinks Bailey could return to the club during its current homestand.

Worth noting

- Along with Markakis, Baltimore's Vladimir Guerrero also extended his hitting streak to 12 games.
- Friday's game was the first of 12 straight contests against American League East teams for Oakland.

Geren tossed from opener vs. Orioles

By Tom Green / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- A's manager Bob Geren was ejected in the top of the sixth inning of Friday night's game against the Orioles.

Geren came to the mound after Orioles catcher Matt Wieters singled off A's starter Gio Gonzalez. After a discussion, Geren pulled Gonzalez, who tossed five innings and allowed two runs -- one earned -- but struggled locating the strike zone at times.

Geren then got into a conversation with home-plate umpire Angel Campos and was ejected moments later. It was unclear at the time what exactly triggered Geren's ejection. Gonzalez struck out seven batters, but he also walked five and was seemingly squeezed when it came to the strike zone with a few borderline calls.

"Just arguing balls and strikes," said Geren. "I made a comment about the strike zone -- and that's totally against the rules and I paid the price, see you later."

It was the first time Geren had been ejected this season, and the 10th time in his career. The game was tied, 2-2, at the time of his ejection.

A's offense heats up after Geren gets tossed

By ASSOCIATED PRESS.

OAKLAND — Ryan Sweeney hit a tiebreaking single as part of a three-run sixth inning and the A's held on to beat the Baltimore Orioles, 6-2, on Friday night.

Josh Willingham homered and drove in two runs for the A's, who won despite manager Bob Geren's first ejection of the season.

Sweeney also doubled and scored twice while Oakland matched its season high with four double plays.

Vladimir Guerrero singled to extend his hitting streak to 12 games for Baltimore, which had its five-game winning streak snapped.

Brad Ziegler (1-0) pitched two scoreless innings for the win while Joey Devine and Michael Wuertz pitched an inning apiece to complete the six-hitter.

The A's had lost seven of nine since moving into a tie for first in the AL West on May 17, primarily due to an offense that is last in the American League in runs scored.

That wasn't an issue against Baltimore. Oakland put runners on base in every inning, batted around during the sixth and reached double digits in hits for a second consecutive game. Every starter had at least one hit and five different players drove in runs.

It was the perfect start to the A's six-game homestand against the Orioles and Yankees following a tumultuous four-game series in Los Angeles when reliever Brian Fuentes publicly criticized Geren for a lack of communication. Former Oakland reliever Huston Street also was critical of Geren in published reports this week.

Geren wasn't around to see the end of this one.

The Oakland manager was ejected by home plate umpire Angel Campos after removing starter Gio Gonzalez in the top of the sixth. It's the 10th time he's been ejected in his career.

That seemed to spark the A's, who scored three runs in the bottom of the sixth — all with two outs. Sweeney's RBI single snapped a 2-2 tie, while Willingham and Kurt Suzuki also drove in runs to help Oakland take a 5-2 lead. All the runs came off Baltimore reliever Alfredo Simon (1-1).

Willingham hit his eighth home in the eighth.

Hideki Matsui's two-out RBI-single in the first gave the A's a 1-0 lead after third baseman Mark Reynolds' fielding error prolonged the inning.

Baltimore got the run back against Gonzalez, who struggled with his control all night.

Gonzalez gave up consecutive singles to open the second then issued back-to-back walks, the second to Reynolds that forced in Guerrero. Gonzalez then struck out J.J. Hardy and got Jake Fox to ground into an inning-ending double play.

The A's got another big two-out hit in the second when David DeJesus lined a shot that glanced off Reynolds' glove and landed in left field. That slowed the ball enough to allow Mark Ellis to score from second.

Gonzalez got a scare in the fifth while trying to cover first base on an attempted double play. The throw from shortstop Cliff Pennington sailed behind Gonzalez, who rolled his left ankle while reaching back for the ball.

Fox scored easily from second on the error while Gonzalez limped noticeably around the infield. The Oakland lefty stayed in the game and gave up a walk to Nick Markakis before Guerrero hit into a double play.

Gonzalez, who finished with seven strikeouts and five walks, left after giving up a leadoff single to Wieters in the sixth.

Oakland loaded the bases in the fifth to chase Baltimore starter Chris Tillman but failed to score when Simon struck out Suzuki and Ellis.

Tillman gave up two runs and six hits with two strikeouts. The right-hander, who has three straight no-decisions, also walked three and hit a batter.

NOTES

The A's made a few roster moves in anticipation of the expected return of two-time All-Star reliever Andrew Bailey. Oakland traded LHP to the Detroit Tigers in exchange for IF Scott Sizemore, who is expected to report to the team's Triple-A club in Sacramento. LHP Bobby Cramer was called up from Sacramento to take Purcey's place on the 25-man roster. ... Tillman has not allowed a home run in seven consecutive starts. ... Markakis singled in the third to extend his hitting streak to 12 games.

A's return home for win against Orioles

Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post

Oakland, CA – There's no place like home! After a seven game road trip across the Bay bridge and down south. The Oakland A's return home where they play their best baseball. Splitting the series in Anaheim, the A's continue to find their offense against the Baltimore Orioles.

All nine starters got at least one hit in the game and this is the second day in a row that the offense has come alive. The A's dominated the Orioles 6-2 on night where their manager Bob Geren got ejected top of the sixth by home plate umpire Angel Campos. He watched his team from the clubhouse take control of the game at a confident level.

"You can't expect double-digit hits every night, but back-to-back games are a good start," Geren said. "Guys are feeling a little bit more confident with themselves offensively and just rolling with it, I like what I'm seeing."

Ryan Sweeney got things off to a good start in the first with a double and Hideki Matsui hit a RBI single giving Oakland an early 1-0 lead. But Baltimore responded in the second when both Vladimir Guerrero and Nolan Reimold singled, followed by two walks from Gio Gonzalez which tied the game 1-1. With the bases still loaded Gonzalez got himself out of a jam by striking out the next batter and it helped that Jake Fox grounded into a double play to end the inning.

"It's big for us to come up with the hits, this was a big win," said Sweeney. "To come out and swing the bat the way we did is a huge confidence builder for us to fall on."

The hits continued in the second when Mark Ellis singled on a line drive to right field and stole second. David DeJesus singled bringing in Ellis for the 2-1 lead. But the southpaw gave the crowd a scare when he ran to first base for the out but the ball was overthrown by shortstop Cliff Pennington. He came up limping but he finished the inning with the game tied 2-2.

Gonzalez had a hot start striking out the side in the first but struggled through the rest of his five innings. He allowed two runs (one earned), walked five and fanned seven. Oakland's defense backed him from preventing four inning double plays into additional runs for the birds. One of those moments was when Gio found himself with the bases loaded on back-to-back singles but a double up the middle was quickly thrown into an out.

"I burned all my energy out in the first inning," Gonzalez said. "After that I was just trying to scare everybody and put them on the edge of their seat." "I definitely put myself through a roller-coaster ride!"

For the remaining of the game the A's sailed along with the offense who looks to get back to .500. Bottom of the sixth Sweeney comes up big again with a single RBI to give the A's the lead, his fifth RBI of the season. Then Josh Willingham gets his 29th RBI of the year when he doubled on a line drive to field bringing in another run for a 4-2 lead.

Baltimore struggled at the mound and on defense. Chris Tillman walked two batters back-to-back loading the bases which brought a pitching change bottom of the fifth. Alfredo Simon replaced him doing a good job by striking out two leaving scores in position but that didn't last long.

Willingham lead of the eighth with a solo home run off the Orioles third pitcher Mike Gonzalez. This is the second night Oakland has produced double digit hits in a game. Scoring four or more runs in three of their last four games winning all three. Which gives them an 18-4 record this season when they've hit more than four runs.

"Gio had a little battle with his command but his stuff was electric and you really thought this could be a special night," explained Geren. "He kinda fought his self tonight but you have to give credit to the defense." "They picked him up, a good night night for us, three out of the last four is pretty good for us."

Oakland offense delivers another win for A's Friday night

Sam McPherson, examiner.com

Two games in a row now, the Oakland Athletics offense has shown up nicely.

Not only with double-digit hit totals, but in equal distribution of contribution throughout the other.

In both the A's 4-3 win over the Los Angeles Angels on Thursday and their 6-2 win over the Baltimore Orioles Friday night, every Oakland hitter in the lineup has had at least one base hit.

Not bad for a team that has hit only .240 overall this season.

Of course, both games, the A's received its usual, solid starting pitching -- eight shutout innings from Brett Anderson on Thursday and five tough innings from Gio Gonzalez on Friday -- so that's nothing unusual.

But if Oakland could average five runs a game, they'd be in a lot better shape for the playoffs. That was the case in the four-game Los Angeles road series earlier this week, too, of course: the challenge is avoiding those games where they score zero or one run.

Through the first 52 games of the year, the A's are only averaging 3.6 runs per game -- while giving up 3.44 per game (albeit only 2.84 earned, of course, due to defensive deficiencies).

Hence, their 25-27 record -- merely "good" enough for a fourth-place standing in the American League West division, albeit only 1.5 games out of first place.

Thus, the A's have been lucky: to be so bad on offense and defense yet still have a chance at their division title is truly stunning.

And complete offensive contributions like the last two games go a long way towards removing the "luck" element from the equation.

Friday night, outfielder Josh Willingham led the way with two hits and two RBI, while outfielder Ryan Sweeney and catcher Kurt Suzuki also each added two hits and one RBI.

The bullpen also showed up nicely against the Orioles -- Gonzalez struck out seven Baltimore hitters in his five innings, but he struggled with his control. He walked five and allowed two runs -- one unearned, of course -- before exiting in the top of the sixth.

But Brad Ziegler, Joey Devine and Michael Wuertz shut down the Orioles the rest of the way on one hit while the offense scored three runs in the bottom of the sixth to take the lead.

For now, however, the offense can enjoy the spoils of victory with their new rallying cry: "Come see the A's! Everyone who plays gets a hit!"

A's trade Purcey to ready bullpen for Bailey

Paul Gutierrez, CSNCalifornia.com

As he packed his bag late Thursday afternoon in the Angel Stadium visitors clubhouse, there seemed to be a sense of finality to David Purcey that went beyond the A's finishing up a four-game series with the SoCal rivals.

There was a sense the the left-handed reliever was soon to be gone from the A's plans, that he would be the one headed to the chopping block when two-time All-Star closer Andrew Bailey was ready to join the big club.

Friday, the notion of Purcey leaving Oakland became reality as he was sent to Detroit for infielder Scott Sizemore in a move that is more about clearing space in the bullpen for Bailey's eventual return than it is for adding infield depth at triple-A Sacramento, which is where Sizemore is headed, or giving right-hander Bobby Cramer another shot at the big leagues, since he was the one called up to take Purcey's place on the A's 25-man roster.

Plus, it's just as easy to send Cramer, who has been stretched out as a starter with the River Cats but just came off the disabled list with a stained oblique, back to Sacramento when Bailey is ready. And the A's received some value for Purcey in a trade, rather than losing him in waivers with nothing to show for it, which they most likely would have.

The A's already have a second baseman of the future in Jemile Weeks (.322, eight stolen bases) and while Adrian Cardenas (.351, 78 total bases) would seemingly be a fit at third base, he's been playing in left field and as the Cats' DH.

So yes, the Purcey-for-Sizemore deal is about getting the bullpen ready for Bailey.

MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

Walk-Off Grand Slam Lifts Reno Over Cats

By Mark Ling, Sacramento Rivercats

After coming alive in recent weeks, the Sacramento offense appeared to take the night off on Friday. The team had just three hits and trailed 5-1 entering the ninth inning.

Then everything changed.

The game began quietly as neither team scored in the first inning. However, the Reno Aces wasted no time taking the lead with a Konrad Schmidt home run in the second inning.

Not to be outdone, Jai Miller cut the lead in half with a long ball of his own, his eighth of the year, in the top of the third.

After that, both pitchers cruised as neither team scored until the bottom of the seventh inning.

In that frame, River Cat starter Carlos Hernandez gave up one run and put two more men on base before being pulled for Fernando Cabrera. Cabrera allowed both runners to score, so Hernandez was charged with five earned runs on 6.1 innings pitched with eight hits, three walks and six strikeouts.

Despite pitching well, Reno starter Barry Enright was lifted after six innings of his own. He finished having given up just two hits, one of which was Miller's home run, with no walks and one strikeout.

After extending their lead to four in the bottom of the seventh, the Aces locked down the Cats until the ninth inning when the Sacramento offense woke up.

The Cats loaded the bases with just one out in the top of the ninth inning then watched as first baseman Anthony Recker launched a grand slam over the wall in right-center field to tie the game at five.

Sacramento relief ace Trystan Magnuson came in to try and send the game to extra innings. He promptly loaded the bases and gave up a walk-off grand slam to shortstop Cody Ransom to end the game and the River Cats momentum as abruptly as it began.

Despite their late heroics, the Cats offense struggled. Eric Sogard entered the game with a 13-game hitting streak and Adrian Cardenas entered it with a 32-game on-base streak. Neither player was able to extend their respective streaks.

The Cats will look to bounce back tomorrow night in Reno. Lenny DiNardo (0-1, 40.50) will face Armando Galaraga (--, --). First pitch is set for 7:05 p.m.

Cesario hits 5 RBI, Drillers beat 'Hounds

By Oscar LeRoy , Midland Reporter-Telegram

Tulsa designated hitter James Cesario has seen enough of Midland RockHound players at the Single-A level that no lead is safe.

Thanks in part to Cesario's day at the plate and a solid start from Rob Scahill, the Drillers withstood a late RockHounds rally for a 9-5 victory on Friday night in front of 4,389 fans at Citibank Ballpark. With the victory, the Drillers took two of three from the RockHounds in the series.

Cesario's five RBI proved to be the difference on Friday as he went 3 for 5 with a home run and a double.

"I was not trying to do too much, just trying to take good swings and try to put the ball in play," said Cesario, who had six RBI for the season coming into the game. "I was fortunate the guys in front of me got on base. I was just trying to hit the ball hard and get those guys in."

The RockHounds were down by as many as eight runs before they scored a run in the seventh and three more in the eighth against the Drillers bullpen behind four consecutive two-out hits. However, that deficit proved to be too much to overcome against a Drillers team that had three three-run innings and pounded out 16 hits on the night.

"We battled, we continued to swing the bats and hopefully that gives us a little bit of a momentum going into tomorrow," Midland manager Steve Scarsone said. "It just got too much too soon,"

Cesario actually hit into a double play in his first at-bat that actually scored a run in the second inning. Despite the double play, the Drillers added two more runs in the inning against Midland starter Gary Daley behind a two-run single by No. 9 hitter Warren Schaeffer for a 3-0 lead.

Daley's struggles continued into the third inning when Cesario sent one of his pitches over the right field wall for a commanding 6-0 lead.

"It felt good," Cesario said. "It was a 2-2 count and I battled a little bit. He had some good stuff but he threw a curveball that I kind of stayed back on and put a good swing on it. It was a good result."

Scarsone said that home run really hurt his team.

"That was a situation with the base open (at first base), he should have been more selective with his pitches," Scarsone said. "He gives up a single, yeah that hurts as well, but it's not so demoralizing."

Daley (0-1), who was making his second start since joining the RockHounds from Single-A Stockton, lasted just 3 2/3 innings and gave up six runs on seven hits.

"I'm sure (Daley) would say he wasn't as sharp as he liked to be, but (the Drillers) also got some balls that fell right in," Scarsone said. "We made the move (to the bullpen) just to get a different look, not so much because Gary was on the ropes."

In contrast, Tulsa right-handed starter Scahill (4-3) was effective in his start as he allowed two runs and scattered eight hits over seven innings. He also struck out four and did not walk a batter.

"He was great," said Cesario of his starting pitcher. "He always goes in there and competes, he pounds the strike zone and we come to expect that out of him. He likes to go deep in the games, he's a workhorse."

Added Scarsons on Scahill, "He came right at us. We didn't have a chance to get anything off of him until towards the end. But he's a quality guy. You're going to see him pitch for a long time."

Scahill was able to relax and throw strikes as the Drillers added three more runs in the fifth inning against reliever Trey Barham. Cesario smacked a two-run double to right and Schaeffer added an RBI double to left for a commanding 9-1 lead.

Oscar LeRoy can be reached at oleroy@mrt.com

'HOUND BITES: The RockHounds are now 13-12 at Citibank Ballpark this season. ...RockHounds SS Grant Green was activated from the disabled list, while P Anthony Capra was placed on the DL with a finger blister. ...Tulsa SS Hector Gomez made a great play to preserve a run in the fifth inning. Gomez robbed Grant Green of a hit when he jumped up to grab the ball on a big hop and then threw off balance to get Green out at first base. ...The Drillers could have added runs in the ninth inning but had two runners thrown out at home plate.

TODAY'S PROBABLES: Northwest Arkansas comes to Citibank Ballpark at 7 p.m. today to begin a three-game series with the RockHounds, who will probably send RHP Shawn Haviland (2-3, 6.19 ERA) against Naturals LHP Edgar Osuna (4-1, 6.82).

Ports Get Power And Pitching In 10-2 Win

VISALIA, Calif. - After not receiving a single run of support while tossing seven scoreless innings in his Cal-League debut a week ago, Stockton Ports starter A. J. Griffin (1-0) got all the support he could ever need on Friday night in Visalia. As Griffin tossed seven tremendous frames, Stockton's offense went to work in a big way, launching four home runs and banging out a total of 15 hits in a 10-2 drubbing of the Visalia Rawhide.

Visalia opened the scoring in the bottom of the 1st. Chris Owings hit a one-out triple to left-center and scored two batters later on a sac-fly from Matt Davdson to give the Rawhide a 1-0 lead.

The Ports set the tone for the night by answering back in a big way in the 2nd. After Rawhide starter Mike Belfiore (1-2) got the first two batters of the inning, the Ports had six straight batters reach with two outs. Michael Gilmartin and Leonardo Gil reached on back-to-back singles, followed by an RBI single from Conner Crumbliss that tied the game at 1-1. Ryan Lipkin, who was moved up to the number two spot in the order, came up next and drove in two more runs with a double to left-center to make it a 3-1 Ports lead. Michael Choice followed with the first of two home runs on the night-a two-run blast to center to make it a 5-1 ballgame.

Stockton added to the lead in the 3rd on a solo home run hit by Dusty Coleman, his seventh of the season to make it a 6-1 advantage.

The Rawhide scored their final run of the game in the 3rd. With runners at the corners, Owings came up and hit a sac-fly to center to score Ryan LaPensee and put Visalia within four runs at 6-2.

The Ports, though, would pull away again in the 4th. With one out, Lipkin and Choice hit back-to-back home runs off Belfiore to chase him from the game. For Lipkin, it was his first home run of the season, and for Choice, his second multi-home run game of the series to extend the Ports lead to 8-2.

Belfiore took the loss after allowing eight runs on 11 hits in 3.1 innings of work.

Two more runs were added in the 5th on Visalia's only error of the night. With the bases loaded and two out, a pop-up was hit on the infield to Rawhide first baseman Bobby Borchering. Borchering got underneath the ball but lost sight of it on the way down, allowing two runs to score to make it a 10-2 game.

Both runs were unearned for Rawhide reliever Brian Budrow, who pitched 2.2 innings in relief.

Griffin, beginning with Owings' sac-fly in the 3rd, went on to retire 13 batters in a row and 15 of 17 to end his outing. Griffin came through with another strong effort, going seven innings and allowing two runs on five hits while striking out five and walking one en route to his first Cal-League win.

Visalia relievers Kevin Munson and Yonata Orgeta combined for three scoreless innings in relief down the stretch.

Connor Hoehn tossed two scoreless innings for the Ports to close out the ballgame. Hoehn struck out the side in the 9th and recorded four strikeouts over his two innings of work, allowing just one hit.

Thus far in the series, Choice is 7-for-14 with four home runs and 6 RBI. Lipkin is 5-for-9 with four of his five hits going for extra bases. The Ports have hit a total of nine home runs as a team thus far in the series.

The Ports and Rawhide will wrap up their four-game set on Saturday night at Recreation Park. Rob Gilliam (3-4, 4.55 ERA) will toe the slab for Stockton, opposed by right-hander Eric Smith (1-7, 10.31 ERA) for Visalia. First pitch is set for 7 p.m. PDT.

Bees Open up Series with 5-4 Win over Quad Cities

05/27/2011 11:25 PM ET

BURLINGTON, IA (May 27, 2011)-The River Bandits wasted no time in scoring in the first inning of the series opener. A leadoff single and a walk given up by Burlington's RHP Jonathan Joseph (0-1) set up Quad Cities C Cody Stanley (1-4) for a three run homer (2) to make it 3-0.

In the bottom of the second inning the Bees got into the scoring action after two hits and a walk. CF Tyreace House (1-4) racked up one of those hits ripping a two run double (4) to left field making it a 3-2 River Bandits lead.

A solo shot by RF Royce Consigli (1-5) in the bottom of the third tied up the score at 3-3. The River Bandits reclaimed the lead in the fourth inning after a RBI groundout by RF Michael Swinson (1-5) scoring 1B Victor Sanchez (1-3).

In the fifth inning a solo home run by 3B Tony Thompson (3-4) sailed to left field to even things up at 4-4.

SS Yordy Cabrera (1-4) singled and later scored on a groundout up the middle by House in the eighth inning to give the Bees their first lead of the game at 5-4.

The Bees continue their series against the Quad Cities River Bandits on Saturday with a doubleheader beginning at 5 p.m. Fans can enjoy "Friends and Family Night" at Community Field where they can get exciting baseball plus everyone gets to run the bases after the game. Another reason to come to the ballpark is to help celebrate Buzz's birthday. "Buzz's Birthday Bash" will allow fans to help celebrate their favorite mascot's birthday. The River Bandits will send RHP Zach Russell (1-4, 5.81) to the mound in game one, while the Bees will send RHP Tyler Vail (0-2, 6.23) to the mound. In game two, the River Bandits send RHP Trevor Rosenthal (2-4, 3.34) to the mound while the Bees answer with RHP Nate Long (2-0, 1.93).