

**Trevor Cahill pitches Oakland A's to 4-1 win over Philadelphia Phillies**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

PHILADELPHIA -- Trevor Cahill proved up to the challenge against the Philadelphia Phillies on Saturday night.

It wasn't long ago he had a tough enough time battling himself. But the right-hander provided more evidence he's left his troubles behind, out-dueling Phillies lefty Cole Hamels in a 4-1 win that snapped Oakland's three-game losing streak.

In short, Cahill resembled the All-Star who won 18 games last season, not the wayward pitcher who went more than a month without visiting the win column.

Cahill (8-5) allowed just three hits over 72/3 innings. And though it's tough to tell from his poker-faced exterior, he had extra adrenaline going before a crowd of 45,785 at Citizens Bank Park.

"They've got a great team, a great record," Cahill said. "Hamels is one of the best pitchers in the league. Sellout crowd. It's a good environment."

Cahill spotted his fastball on corners. He used his change-up and curveball effectively, and he got a huge assist from his defense, which turned in several standout plays.

Cahill had a 5.67 ERA and .302 opponents' batting average over his seven-start winless streak, which stretched from May 15 to June 14. Over his past two starts, he's allowed just two earned runs in 152/3 innings. Cahill surrendered his only run Saturday in the second after walking the first two hitters.

"He threw a good curveball, a lot of change-ups, sinkers to both sides," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "When he's got two (pitches working), it can be difficult. But three like he had tonight, it's a very difficult task."

Victory didn't come easy, however.

Andrew Bailey relieved Cahill to protect a 2-1 lead in the eighth with two outs and runners on the corners. He retired No. 3 hitter Chase Utley on a grounder to first to end the threat.

After the A's added two insurance runs in the top of the ninth, Bailey put two runners on with one out in the bottom half. But second baseman Jemile Weeks started a slick game-ending double play, backhanding Domonic Brown's grounder and making a glove flip to shortstop Cliff Pennington to get the play started.

"I have to say the glove flip gets my heart fluttering a little bit," Melvin said. "But he is a confident kid."

There were other defensive gems.

Right fielder Conor Jackson made a running catch in the gap to rob Utley in the third. Shortstop Adam Rosales went deep in the hole and made an off-balance throw to first to nab Carlos Ruiz in the fifth.

And Mark Ellis, making just his second start at first base, stopped every ball that went his way and scooped third baseman Scott Sizemore's throw in the dirt in the seventh.

"Any time you've got a pitcher throwing strikes, working as quick as Trevor does, you usually play good defense," Ellis said.

The Phillies, still a major league-best 48-30, came in having won eight straight at home, and Hamels entered the night tied for the big league lead with nine wins, and his 2.51 ERA was tied for third among N.L. starters.

**Oakland A's update: Rookie Jemile Weeks a pet project of infield coach Mike Gallego**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

PHILADELPHIA -- Second baseman Jemile Weeks iced the A's 4-1 win over the Philadelphia Phillies on Saturday in electrifying fashion.

He made a backhanded glove flip to shortstop Cliff Pennington to start a game-ending 4-6-3 double play.

That's the flashy aspect of Weeks' game. Infield coach Mike Gallego is most concerned with how the rookie handles the basics of his position.

"He's making adjustments," said Gallego, a middle infielder during his 13-year major league career. "There are signs of him feeling more comfortable out there. Letting instincts take over, that's what I'm looking for."

When the A's made Weeks their first-round draft pick in 2008, there was thought that perhaps a shift to the outfield was in his future. But the A's have worked hard to groom Weeks as a second baseman, where he played for the University of Miami.

Gallego, also the third base coach, wants Weeks to be quicker with his first step in fielding a grounder. He also wants Weeks to unload the ball faster when turning a double play.

Weeks battled hip injuries over parts of his first three minor league seasons that set him back.

"Using my feet and legs was something I had to regain, realizing it's not all about your hands," Weeks said. "It's all about getting a good hop, and you're not going to be there unless you position yourself to get there."

As for that "SportsCenter" worthy glove flip?

Mark Ellis, the A's longtime second baseman who is now playing a utility role, said it's hardly the textbook way to make that play.

"It's probably something he's been doing a long time," Ellis said. "Most people in this clubhouse probably prefer you using your hand. But he's doing great."

A's manager Bob Melvin said it's possible pitchers Brandon McCarthy and Rich Harden will be activated from the disabled list on the next homestand. McCarthy is scheduled for another rehab start Tuesday for Triple-A Sacramento. Harden allowed three runs in 42/3 innings for Sacramento on Saturday against Reno.

Reliever Grant Balfour (sore oblique) was unavailable Friday and Saturday.

Closer Andrew Bailey hadn't pitched since June 18 but recorded the final four outs for his fifth save.

### **Chin Music: Chris Carter's potential playing time, and a Grant Balfour injury update**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/25/2011 3:43pm

Trevor Cahill takes the hill tonight looking to help the A's snap a three-game losing streak. He matches up against Cole Hamels, one of the tougher left-handers in the game. Hideki Matsui is the only natural lefty hitter in the lineup against Hamels.

The starting nine(s):

A's – Weeks 2B, Ellis 1B, Crisp CF, Matsui LF, Jackson RF, Sizemore 3B, Suzuki C, Rosales SS, Cahill RHP.

Phillies – Rollins SS, Polanco 3B, Uteley 2B, Howard 1B, Victorino CF, Ibanez LF, Brown RF, Ruiz C, Hamels LHP.

–Cliff Pennington gets a regularly scheduled day off, with Mark Ellis getting his second start at first base and batting second for a day.

–A's manager Bob Melvin said he'll try to get Chris Carter a DH start on the next homestand, preferably against a left-hander. With these final two games in a National League park, Melvin prefers Carter as a pinch-hit option. Why hasn't Carter drawn a start yet if the A's are struggling so much offensively? Remember that he's still an unknown quantity to Melvin, who hasn't had time to get familiar with the farm system. So far, in his only look at Carter, Melvin has seen him butcher a catchable pop-up, and that's probably fresh in Melvin's mind. Still, Carter has to get a couple starts – somewhere in the lineup – before he gets sent down. Otherwise it was pointless to promote him.

–Reliever Grant Balfour is dealing with a sore oblique. That left him unavailable last night, according to Melvin, and he might be sidelined tonight as well. One pitcher that Melvin says he will definitely try to work in is Andrew Bailey, who has gone a full week since his last appearance. "I have to get him in the game today," Melvin said.

–Brandon McCarthy will next pitch Tuesday for Triple-A Sacramento and Rich Harden is pitching tonight for Sacramento and he'll go again Thursday. Melvin said it's possible that each pitcher is activated from the DL following those starts. So projecting it out, McCarthy could rejoin the A's rotation July 3 against Arizona (in that scenario, he would take Graham Godfrey's place). Harden's potential return would fall on Cahill's turn, so if the A's see Harden joining the rotation, they'll have to shuffle things somehow.

–Josh Outman takes the ball tomorrow in the series finale against the Phillies, the team that traded him to Oakland in July 2008 in a deal that sent Joe Blanton to Philadelphia. Outman was pitching for Double-A Reading (Pa.) at the time and said he hardly knows anybody in the current Phillies lineup. But he has some unique memories about pitching in Reading, an industrial town that supports their minor league club very well. Occasionally, the team played 9 a.m. games that were tailored for factory workers who were just finishing the graveyard shift.

Only in the minors ...

### **A's offense snaps scoreless string, tops Phillies**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Oakland's strong pitching and super defense remained in place, and on Saturday, the A's tried mixing in a little offense, too.

Oakland managed only two runs off Phillies starter Cole Hamels, but considering the zero the team put up the night before - and that Hamels was tied for the major-league lead in wins - it was an improvement. With their own starter, Trevor Cahill, looking much more like his old All-Star self than he did last month, plus some late insurance runs, the A's beat the majors' top team 4-1.

Cahill, who'd snapped a five-game losing streak his last time out, went 7 2/3 innings Saturday at Citizens Bank Park and he allowed three hits, three walks and one run while striking out six.

"After my last outing, I got a lot more confident," said Cahill, who said he is throwing more strikes and letting his sinker's natural movement do the work. He credited catcher Kurt Suzuki for calling his curveball and changeup to keep the Phillies from guessing sinker too much.

Good work on the mound isn't all that unusual for the A's, who have the lowest ERA in the American League. But Oakland came into Saturday's game having scored three runs, total, in the previous three games, all losses.

The A's ended a 12-inning scoreless string in the third inning, when Adam Rosales knocked a homer into the first row in right. In the fourth, Coco Crisp walked with one out, went to second on a single by Hideki Matsui and to third on a flyball by Conor Jackson. Scott Sizemore drove Crisp in with a base hit to right. Sizemore, acquired from Detroit in May and called up June 6, is batting .417 against left-handers, and .400 with runners in scoring position. Mark Ellis and Crisp drove in runs in the ninth.

Andrew Bailey, who hadn't worked in a week, earned a four-out save to chants of "Let's go, Bailey!" from a section of the crowd. Bailey, who is from the Philadelphia suburbs, got Domonic Brown to ground into a double play to end the game, with Jemile Weeks making a glove flip to the bag.

"That's one of the smoothest double plays you'll ever see," Bailey said.

Ellis said he felt "1,000 times better" at first base than he did in his first start there, and he made several good scoops. Jackson, in right, made the game's top play, a terrific outstretched running catch in the gap to take an extra-base hit away from Chase Utley in the third.

Right-handed hitting Chris Carter, called up Thursday, might get a start at DH at home this week against a left-handed starter, according to manager Bob Melvin. Matsui will get his third start in a row in left today, Melvin said.

Set-up man Grant Balfour was not available for the second day in a row because of a right oblique strain.

### **Josh Outman not intimidated by Roy Halladay**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

**Josh Outman** is not at all intimidated by starting against Phillies ace **Roy Halladay** today.

"I'm going to try to get my first career hit off a future Hall of Famer," Outman said with a grin. "It's also always exciting to be in a pitchers' duel, and I hope I can hold up my end of the bargain."

The Phillies were Outman's first organization; he came to Oakland in the **Joe Blanton** deal in 2008. That was certainly on his mind the first two nights at Citizens Bank Park.

"Whenever you're drafted by a team, you envision yourself making that club, especially when you go through their minor-league system," said Outman, who was a 10th-round pick in 2005. "But I've had a good opportunity here, it's worked out well."

Like Friday night starter **Guillermo Moscoso**, Outman is trying to prove he deserves to stay in the rotation when **Brandon McCarthy** and **Rich Harden** come off the disabled list in one week (McCarthy) or nine or 10 days (Harden). Rookie **Graham Godfrey** is expected to be the first starter sent out, to clear a spot for McCarthy, but then it's between Moscoso, who has a 2.68 ERA, and Outman, who in his past two starts is 2-0 with an 0.68 ERA.

"I don't even want to think about who is coming off the DL," Outman said. "Minus injuries, I would never have been up here right now. Whatever happens, I just want to give the team a chance to win while I'm here."

**Fuentes' L's:** Manager **Bob Melvin** and pitching coach **Ron Romanick** don't place any significance on **Brian Fuentes'** record, which sank to 1-8 on Friday. Here's the primary reason: Entering Saturday, the A's had played 27 one-run games.

"He's always going to be in the fire," Romanick said of Fuentes' late-innings work.

Melvin pointed out that Friday's loss came on a chopper over third. "It's not like it's walk-off home runs," Melvin said. "I can't fault him for how he pitched there. It's unfortunate he has to go through it."

**Briefly:** Harden was scheduled to start for Triple-A Sacramento on Saturday night. ... **Daric Barton**, optioned out Thursday, reported to Sacramento.

### **Leading off**

**Getting involved:** Infielders Adam Rosales and Jemile Weeks will join the A's training staff and a group of Little Leaguers for a fitness event at the Coliseum on Wednesday as part of PLAY, a campaign by the Professional Baseball Athletic Trainers Society to combat childhood obesity.

## **Drumbeat: Day Two in Philly: Trevor Cahill vs. Cole Hamels**

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at Citizens Bank Ballpark, 6/25/2011 2:43pm

Manager Bob Melvin was just asked about the difficulty of facing Cole Hamels and Roy Halladay back-to-back, as the A's are tonight and tomorrow, and he pointed out that, against the Phillies, you're assured of facing two top starters in pretty much any series because their rotation is so strong.

The Phillies have the most wins in baseball. The A's have the third-fewest wins in the American League.

Melvin has a right-handed heavy lineup tonight against lefty Hamels: Weeks 2b, Ellis 1b, Crisp cf, Matsui lf, Jackson rf, Sizemore 3b, Suzuki c, Rosales ss, Cahill p

Grant Balfour was unavailable last night with some oblique discomfort and he might be unavailable again tonight. He's considered day-to-day.

Melvin had said yesterday that Cliff Pennington might get a start off soon, so Adam Rosales is there. And with left-handed hitting David DeJesus out of the lineup, Conor Jackson moves to the outfield and Mark Ellis is at first base.

I know there are many people questioning why Chris Carter - who hits righty and has loads of power - isn't at first base instead of Ellis, but it was clear from the moment he came up that the team envisioned this call-up as a fill-in thing on the bench. I asked about Carter today, and Melvin said he might get a start at DH at home against a left-hander.

That tells me that, especially with a sinkerballer such as Cahill on the mound, the A's would rather have a good defensive player - even someone who barely has played first in his life - at first than Carter, who probably didn't help himself in New York by dropping the first ball he tried to field. Postgame, he said he was jostled by Jemile Weeks, and I'm not sure that helped his cause, either; replays indicated he'd already lost control of the ball, and even if Weeks had caused the drop, I'm betting Carter's teammates and the coaching staff would rather hear Carter say, "That's a play I have to make no matter what, no excuses," or something like that.

At any rate, he is a poor defensive player, he's the DH of the future, and that's where he might get a look at home.

To those who believe he'd get more from 10 days playing regularly at Sacramento, there's certainly something to be said for that, but there's also the opposite belief - Carter already has shown he can hit at the Triple-A level, and he might not have much left to really prove there. Big-league experience, even on the bench, is valuable, and he should be trying to soak up as much information as he can while here. If he gets a start or two before Josh Willingham comes back, all the better. But 10 days of being in the big leagues is more likely to help him than to derail his season in some way.

Those are the various lines of thought, anyway. Since he's here, it would be nice to see Carter a bit more, and I'd definitely think a pinch-hit appearance or two would be good this weekend. (I hear he was hitting massive bombs during batting practice, too.) I never thought Carter was going to get plugged in every day, that much was clear.

For those who have noted that Daric Barton has not reported to Sacramento, the official time allowed is 72 hours, so he would be fine if he arrived tomorrow, but I'm told that even if it's later than that, the A's don't mind: They told Barton to take extra time if he wanted it, because he had a cross-country flight Thursday, then things to get from his place in the Bay Area, lots of arrangements to change, etc. They don't feel as if Barton has to rush. Plus, Sacramento was in Tucson last night. Going from New York to the Bay Area to Tucson and then back to Sacramento today would be a little crazy. He might report tonight, in fact, but if he doesn't, he's got leeway to be late.

UPDATE: Barton reported, and he's in the second spot in the order for Sacramento.

## **McKeon's secret: He doesn't care**

John Shea, San Francisco Chronicle

Before the 1987 season, a few Padres officials and players went on a promotional junket and invited San Diego media to attend.

I was the only guy to RSVP.

We traveled in late owner Ray Kroc's old McDonald's bus that was souped up with huge leather seats, televisions and a full bar. For several days, I filed stories while hanging out with general manager Jack McKeon, new manager Larry Bowa, players Tony Gwynn and Mark Grant, broadcaster Jerry Coleman, and the driver and bartender.

McKeon gave speeches at every little town we visited and unknowingly dropped a “we care” about 20 times each speech, one of which I taped.

An amused Grant asked that I play it over the bus’ sound system, and everyone including McKeon howled over the repetitiveness.

Whenever I come across McKeon, he says, “Hey, John, I still care.” I tell him I care, too.

Well, all these years later, the fact is he doesn’t care — at least about what people think of his opinion. McKeon, the Marlins’ new manager, who will be in Oakland for an interleague series beginning Tuesday, doesn’t give a damn.

That’s why he has survived so long in this business. He’ll say what he feels and isn’t worried about the consequences, something higher-ups appreciate.

“No B.S. or sugarcoating or politicking,” McKeon told me the other day. “You ask a question, you get an answer. I don’t care what people think.

There’s no, ‘Well, maybe he’d be a good player if his arm didn’t hurt.’ It’s, ‘He can’t play.’ Most of the time, I’ve been right. It’s what I’ve done for five decades.”

Or more.

McKeon, 80, has been in pro ball 62 years. He became the Marlins’ manager on Monday — replacing Edwin Rodriguez, who resigned after 18 losses in 19 games — with one condition: that he does it his way. His first day, he let his players know it and benched All-Star shortstop Hanley Ramirez for arriving late, also warning his guys to “hide” their cell phones when in the clubhouse.

“We’re not running a country club here. Go to work,” said McKeon, relaying what he said on the first day. “We’re concentrating on baseball. I told them I don’t need this job.

I was special adviser to the owner. I had a pretty good job.

I didn’t solicit this. We’re going to do it my way. I’m not looking to manage in 10 years.”

Don’t be surprised if he does.

McKeon is Mr. Fix It. He took over the struggling Royals in their fifth year of operation and posted a winning record over the next three years. He also had a winning record over three seasons in San Diego after replacing Bowa in May 1988. Ditto over four seasons in Cincinnati after taking over for Ray Knight in July 1997.

His biggest repair job was with the 2003 Marlins, spelling a deflated Jeff Torborg (who started 16-22) and six months later stunning the Yankees in the World Series.

The only troubled team he didn’t mend (or have much control over) was Charlie Finley’s A’s, for whom he had two stints. He was fired after a 26-27 start in 1977 (“Wasn’t bad for a Triple-A club,” he said) and rehired in May 1978.

“It was the greatest experience anyone could have,” McKeon said. “You want to manage, manage for Charlie Finley. He’ll get you prepared.

You’ll try options A, B, C, D, E and F, and you’ll still be wrong, and he’d call you during games to tell you. It was crazy stuff. But I liked the guy.”

One day after McKeon benched Ramirez, who has pushed the buttons of past managers, he made him the new cleanup hitter. Ramirez had two hits in each of the next two games.

“He’s having fun,” McKeon said. “We’re all having fun now.”

After all, Jack cares, right?

Don’t believe it.

### **Athletics top Phils, snap three-game skid**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

PHILADELPHIA -- Winning close games hasn't exactly been the A's forte this season.

Stung by 17 losses decided by one run, they've endured plenty of frustration in such games, including one on Friday against the Phillies.

So on Saturday, fresh off yet another disappointing defeat, they turned the tables and jumped out to their own one-run lead. A late dose of ninth-inning insurance runs, coupled with a strong performance from Trevor Cahill, combined for a 4-1 victory in Philadelphia to even the three-game set and snap a three-game losing streak.

Cahill compiled 12 ground-ball outs and six strikeouts while allowing just one run and three hits in 7 2/3 frames, further supporting the case that he's his old self. The right-hander is now 2-0 with a 1.17 ERA over his past two starts following a five-game losing streak that brought about a 5.67 ERA and .302 opponents' batting average.

"I think in my last outing, I got a little more confidence," Cahill said. "I wasn't afraid to throw the ball over the plate. I knew they were going to be aggressive, so I let my sinker run in on them and got good results with it."

He found just as much success apart from the sinker in his first road victory since May 9, at Texas.

"It was just about a good mix of pitches," manager Bob Melvin said. "Good curveball, [he] threw a lot of changeups, sinkers to both sides. When he's got three pitches working, he's tough to think along with. When he's got two, it can be difficult, but three, like he had tonight ... That's a hard task."

The 23-year-old Cahill, who has now gone at least seven innings in each of his last two outings and nine times total this season, compiled five 1-2-3 innings and at one point retired 12 in a row.

The righty's gem was interrupted in the second, when he issued his only two walks of the night before Carlos Ruiz's two-out RBI base hit gave the Phillies an early one-run edge.

The A's wasted no time responding, though, as Adam Rosales' homer off lefty Cole Hamels -- his second of the season -- quickly knotted the score in the third. An RBI base hit from Scott Sizemore in the fourth represented run No. 2.

Sizemore, who joined the big league club on June 6, is 16-for-49 (.327) with seven RBIs in 15 games, offering the A's the type of production they were mostly missing from the demoted Kevin Kouzmanoff and Andy LaRoche.

Oakland endured an eighth-inning scare when Cahill put runners on first and third with two outs, at which point Melvin called upon closer Andrew Bailey to put away the Phillies' Chase Utley.

Bailey, who grew up in nearby Haddon Heights, N.J., entered to a packed house that included nearly 100 friends and family members.

"It was pretty cool to get that call," Bailey said. "It was definitely exciting."

Making his first appearance in a week, the right-hander induced a line-drive out to first base to end the threat.

"I had to get [Bailey] in a game today," Melvin said. "Because of that, he was ready for a four-out save. I really thought Trevor was going to get through the inning, but once he really didn't throw the ball anywhere near the plate, which wasn't really conducive to what he was doing all night long, it was time for Bailey."

"He came in with fire in his eyes. He's got a tough matchup right away there with Utley, but he concentrated on making his pitches."

Hamels, meanwhile, went eight innings, taking the loss despite surrendering just two earned runs with five strikeouts and two walks.

"They're notorious for being patient," Hamels said. "I don't think they'd be an Oakland team if they weren't patient. That's kind of the way they always drafted their players. When you know that, you want to go ahead and throw strikes, but unfortunately, I don't think I was locating that well."

Mark Ellis' RBI bloop single and a sacrifice fly from Coco Crisp in the ninth off reliever Michael Stutes further secured the A's fate, especially when Bailey put runners on first and second with just one out in the bottom half of the frame.

Domonic Brown's ensuing grounder to second was fielded by Weeks, who flipped the ball to shortstop Cliff Pennington to jump-start a game-ending double play.

"That was probably one of the slickest double plays I've ever seen," Bailey said.

"I have to say the glove flip gets my heart fluttering a little bit," Melvin admitted, "but he's a confident kid."

Weeks' defense was matched by his offense, as he tied a career high with three hits.

Adding to the highlight reel was Conor Jackson, who robbed Utey of at least a double in the third inning with a diving grab in right field.

"The defense was just incredible," Ellis said. "[It was a] good team win all around."

### **Balfour day to day with sore right oblique**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

PHILADELPHIA -- Grant Balfour has been deemed day to day with a sore right oblique, likely leaving the A's without one of their most consistent right-handed relievers for Saturday's contest against the Phillies.

Balfour first experienced the pain while stretching in the clubhouse on Friday, and he was unavailable for the series opener, which resulted in a 1-0 loss when lefty Brian Fuentes surrendered a walk-off single to Ben Francisco in the ninth inning.

"When he came out to throw before the game, it was an issue," manager Bob Melvin said. "So we shut him down for last night's game, and I don't know if he'll be available tonight."

Balfour, who has allowed just one run in his past 10 appearances, has a 1.13 ERA in June. He is tied for first among American League relievers in wins, with four, and tied for eighth in appearances, with 33. He's also held opponents to a .198 batting average, including a .136 mark with runners in scoring position.

Right-hander Michael Wuertz and lefty Craig Breslow were also not options on Friday because of their heavy workload recently, but they are expected to be available on Saturday. Melvin is also insistent on creating an opportunity for Andrew Bailey, who hasn't worked since June 18.

"I definitely have to find a way to get [Bailey] in there tonight," he said. "He's a guy that has to pitch today."

### **McCarthy, Harden get closer to return**

PHILADELPHIA -- Oakland's rotation could potentially get stronger during the next homestand, with right-handers Brandon McCarthy and Rich Harden nearing a return from the disabled list.

Fellow righty Tyson Ross, battling a left oblique strain, isn't too far behind but is likely looking at another two or three weeks of rehab. He'll throw a three-inning simulated game on Saturday night in Arizona before making his first rehab start with Class A Stockton on Thursday.



McCarthy (shoulder) is scheduled to make his second rehab start with Triple-A Sacramento on Tuesday and is expected to reach up to at least 80 pitches. On Thursday he compiled four shutout innings of three-hit ball, with no walks and four strikeouts.

Harden, who has yet to pitch in a big league game this season because of a nagging shoulder injury, was slated to undergo his second rehab start in Sacramento on Saturday and, barring any setbacks, will go again on Thursday.

The trio's progression signals several looming decisions for the A's, who have received impressive performances from fill-ins Josh Outman, Guillermo Moscoso and Graham Godfrey. There has been no indication which moves will be made as McCarthy, Harden and Ross make their way back.

### **Carter to be a pinch-hitter in Philadelphia**

PHILADELPHIA -- Top power prospect Chris Carter, called up on Thursday to replace the injured Josh Willingham on the roster, isn't expected to see any starts this weekend in Philadelphia and instead will be used in a pinch-hitting role.

Once the team returns to the Bay Area for a nine-game homestand beginning on Tuesday, Carter will likely be an option for a start as designated hitter, preferably against left-handers, manager Bob Melvin explained on Saturday.

"That's kind of what I'm forecasting," Melvin said.

Melvin's desire to see what Carter has to offer at DH reflects a widespread belief that the rookie may best be suited for that role in the long term given his weak defensive skills. Carter made two errors in the outfield during his short big league stay last year, and he dropped the first ball hit his way at first base on Thursday.

Carter was on Triple-A Sacramento's disabled list from April 22 to June 4 with a sprained left wrist, but upon his return, he went 11-for-33 (.333) with three home runs and eight RBIs in just nine games. That power could provide a boost for an A's team that has hit one home run or fewer in each of its last 28 games.

Moreover, the A's entered Saturday having hit just one home run in their last 40 innings, and their 40 home runs on the season are the fewest in the Majors. The club is on pace to compile just 84 long balls, 10 short of the Oakland record for fewest in a season, reached in 1968.

### **Worth noting**

Shortstop Cliff Pennington was supposed to have the day off on Saturday. He was held out of the starting lineup, which allowed Adam Rosales to make his first start in nearly a week.

"I felt like this was a good day to do it," manager Bob Melvin said. "He's been going out there every day pretty hard. Everybody needs a rest, and Rosie needs to get in there at a position he's comfortable with."

Rosales made the most of his opportunity, getting the A's on the board with a solo homer off Cole Hamels in the third inning.

And as it turns out, Pennington saw action in the 4-1 victory. He entered the game in the bottom of the eighth, and in the ninth, he walked and scored on Mark Ellis' single.

### **Visit from the Doc the remedy for Phils' bullpen**

By Aaron Taube / MLB.com | 6/25/2011 10:57 PM ET

With the recent news that Philadelphia closer Ryan Madson will miss the next several days with swelling between the knuckles of his right middle and ring fingers, the prescription for the ailing Phillies' bullpen is simple: a visit from the Doc against the A's in Sunday's rubber game at Citizens Bank Park and, they hope, lots of rest.

Roy Halladay threw more frames than anyone in his league in two of the past three seasons and is again leading the National League in innings pitched, with 118 1/3 in 16 starts. His effectiveness could lessen the load on a young bullpen that has been without regular closer Brad Lidge since the beginning of the season and fellow reliever Jose Contreras since June 20.

"This is the most work they've ever had out of the bullpen," said manager Charlie Manuel of his relievers. "The season's much longer, and it's tougher."

The A's will counter with Josh Outman, who has delivered a quality start in five of his last six outings.

Due in part to Outman's stellar campaign, A's starters boast the third-best ERA in the Majors, at 3.18. Led by the "Big Four," Philadelphia's starters are tops in the league, at 3.07.

A win on Sunday would make the A's winners of three of their last four series after losing 12 of 13 games to the White Sox, Orioles, Red Sox and Yankees. Since then, Oakland has gone 7-4 against Kansas City, San Francisco and the New York Mets.

Winning the series would be especially impressive given the challenge of doing so against the league's best rotation. The three pitchers the A's face this weekend are a combined 20-8 with a 2.54 ERA.

As of Saturday, Halladay either led the NL or was tied for the lead in wins, complete games, innings pitched, strikeouts and walks per nine innings.

"It is what it is. You look at pitching matchups, and it seems like everybody has a couple of good ones," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "These guys have four guys that can be considered No. 1s. You don't want to look at it and shy away from it. They're very good pitchers, and you know when you're coming in here you're going to get a solid rotation. It's just something you have to deal with."

#### **A's: Balfour day to day with sore oblique**

The A's could be without right-handed reliever Grant Balfour on Sunday after he was listed as day to day with a sore right oblique on Saturday. He first experienced the pain on Friday and has not pitched in this series.

#### **Phillies: Bastardo, Stutes to close**

In Madson's absence, the Phillies will use Antonio Bastardo and Mike Stutes as closers. The shift could leave space in the sixth and seventh innings, where they had been pitching, forcing the Phillies to rely on recent callups Juan Perez and Scott Mathieson.

#### **Worth noting**

- Oakland's walk-off loss in Friday's opener was its 27th one-run game of the year. The A's are 10-17 in such contests this season.
- Philadelphia's 4-1 loss on Saturday night was its first defeat at home since June 9, snapping a season-best, eight-game home winning streak.

#### **Cahill shuts down Phillies in A's 4-1 win**

By DAN GELSTON, AP Sports Writer

Andrew Bailey kidded that Joe Carter spoiled his childhood.

Raised in southern New Jersey a diehard Philadelphia Phillies fan, Bailey spent his nights rooting for them through Carter's homer in the 1993 World Series, the lean years that followed, and straight into their resurgence early last decade.

Against his favorite team, it was Bailey's turn to play spoiler.

Bailey thwarted a Phillies' rally in the eighth inning and held on for a four-out save in front of hundreds of cheering fans, helping the Oakland Athletics beat the Philadelphia Phillies 4-1 on Saturday night.

Trevor Cahill tossed three-hit ball into the eighth inning and Adam Rosales homered for the A's.

The moment belonged to Bailey.

His parents and wife were part of the 165th straight sellout at Citizens Bank Park, and cheers for his entrance were heard from various pockets throughout the stadium. Bailey entered with the A's holding a one-run lead and two runners on.

Bailey retired Chase Utley, yes, one his favorite players, on a grounder. He worked the ninth for his fifth save.

"It was pretty cool to get that call," Bailey said. "It was good times in Philadelphia when they were winning like it is here now. With all my family being back here, diehard Phillies fans, it's nice to go out there and beat them today.

"Make them have the decision who to cheer for," Bailey said.

There were few reasons to cheer the Phillies, who snapped a season-high eight-game home winning streak.

Cahill and Phillies starter Cole Hamels had a nice and easy duel going in a game that breezed by until the Phillies threatened to take the lead in the eighth.

Cahill (8-5) won his second straight start after dropping five straight and spoiled Hamels' bid to win his 10th game.

Scott Sizemore's RBI single in the fourth made it 2-1, and Cahill and Bailey held the lead from there. Cahill struck out six and walked three in 7 2-3 innings, and has allowed one run or less 10 times this season.

"I wasn't afraid to throw the ball over the plate," Cahill said. "I just let my sinker kind of work for me."

Hamels lost his second straight start, but extended his streak of not allowing more than two earned runs to six straight outings.

Hamels (9-4) put runners on base in every inning but the second, but the A's failed to bust the game open with one big swing. In the eighth, they had runners on first and third with one out, but Hamels retired the last two batters on grounders to escape the jam.

Hamels allowed eight hits and struck out five in eight innings.

The Phillies nearly bailed him out in the eighth.

Ross Gload hit a one-out, pinch-hit double. There was a visit to the mound to chat with the righty and Michael Martinez came in to pinch run.

The A's faith in Cahill was rewarded for one more at-bat.

He struck out Jimmy Rollins swinging at a 79 mph curveball. Martinez scampered to third on a wild pitch with Placido Polanco batting. Cahill, who ran out of gas around the 100-pitch mark, walked Polanco and that was it for the A's starter.

Bailey then got Utley.

"He came in with fire in his eyes," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

The A's put Bailey back on the mound in the ninth with little pressure after Mark Ellis' RBI single and Coco Crisp's sacrifice fly off Michael Stutes made it 4-1.

Bailey, though, put two runners on before retiring Domonic Brown on a game-ending double play.

The Phillies had only five hits.

In the Phillies clubhouse, Bailey sent a handwritten note asking for Rollins to sign a baseball for him for his charity. "Best of luck the rest of the way," Bailey wrote.

The A's entered with an AL-worst 40 homers until Rosales poked one over the right-field wall for his second home run to tie the game at 1 in the third.

Hamels issued a one-out walk to Crisp in the fourth and Hideki Matsui singled, setting up Sizemore's go-ahead single.

Cahill ran into his toughest jam in the second inning and was fortunate the Phillies only scored one run. He walked Ryan Howard and Shane Victorino to open the inning, then struck out the next two batters. Carlos Ruiz singled up the middle for a 1-0 lead.

"They got good pitching," Phillies manager Charlie Manuel said. "At the same time, we've got to score runs. I think it might have been a little bit of both."

NOTES: Phillies RHP Roy Oswalt has a mild bulging disc in his back and likely won't return until August. ... The A's have hit one home run or less in 29 straight games. The team record is 31 straight back in 1978. ... Gload leads the majors with 12 pinch hits.

### **Younger Weeks is on a roll as Athletics get spark from new addition**

By TOM HAUDRICOURT / Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

In the eighth round of the 2005 draft, the Brewers selected high school second baseman Jemile Weeks, younger brother of Rickie Weeks, who was within days of being called up to begin his career as Milwaukee's second baseman.

The Brewers knew the younger Weeks had a scholarship offer from the University of Miami and would be difficult to sign but they took a shot anyway. Instead, Jemile went to college and emerged three years later as a first-round draft pick of the Oakland Athletics.

Imagine what might have happened had Jemile signed with the Brewers. Would he have taken his brother's job? Would the Brewers have committed long-term to Rickie as they did this spring?

We'll never know, but suffice to say Jemile has made an immediate impact in Oakland. In fact, he was playing so well after being summoned from the minors June 7 that veteran Mark Ellis did not reclaim the second-base job after coming off the disabled list last week.

Entering Saturday, the 24-year-old Jemile had established himself atop Oakland's batting order with a .305 batting average. Ellis, now considered trade bait, said he understood why Weeks did not relinquish the job.

"Jemile is playing too well to take him out," Ellis said. "He's provided a spark. You can't take him out. I hope he does well and plays 10 years in Oakland."

Jemile, a 5-foot-9 switch-hitter, is making a similar impact with the A's that catcher Buster Posey made across the bay in San Francisco when summoned in the first half of the 2010 season. Beyond that, their backgrounds are similar.

Both were first-round picks in '08, with Posey going fifth and Weeks 12th. Both were college stars in Florida, with Posey coming out of Florida State. Both were seen as possible difference-makers, offensively and defensively.

Obviously, Weeks can only dream of having the same first-year impact of Posey, who went on to claim rookie of the year honors and help the Giants win the World Series.

"I have nerves," said Weeks, who was batting .321 with a .417 on-base percentage at Class AAA Sacramento when summoned. "At the same time, they're exciting nerves, like readiness."

Weeks was fortunate to receive counsel and advice along the way from his big brother as well as former Athletics standout Rickey Henderson. There also has been the leadership and magnanimity of Ellis, who holds no grudges.

"My loyalty is obviously to Oakland, but I realize the situation," Ellis said. "Jemile is the future, and we play the same position. It's something I have zero control over, anyway."

### **A triple threat**

Is anyone outside of Chicago noticing the huge year that White Sox first baseman Paul Konerko is putting together? Entering Saturday, he was in the top three in the American League in all three Triple Crown categories with a .326 average, 21 home runs and 59 RBI.

Some folks wondered when the Sox signed the 35-year-old veteran to a three-year, \$37.5 million extension over the winter, but those skeptics have vanished. Konerko is quick to credit hitting coach Greg Walker and his assistant, Mike Gellinger, for his ongoing success.

"That's a big deal for me, as far as having those guys look at me, because I trust them with every inch of my swing," Konerko said. "It's a nice luxury to have."

Beyond Konerko's on-field production, Walker said his contributions to the club are immeasurable.

"As good of a player as he is on the field, he has been an unbelievable captain for this team over the years," Walker said. "And he's getting better with it."

"Last year, when we were in the deepest, darkest spot, he was taking the young kids to lunch, talking to veterans after games and helping us get out of it. So not only is he taking care of his own game, but he cares enough about this organization and this team that he's sharing his knowledge with other people, too."

It's a long season

Remember early in the season, when Pittsburgh right-hander Charlie Morton appeared to be a great candidate for National League comeback player of the year? Through 11 starts, he was 6-2 with a 2.52 ERA, a dramatic turnaround for a pitcher who was 2-12 with a 7.57 ERA in 2010.

Well, Morton has fallen on hard times in his last three starts, going 1-2 with a 12.27 ERA. He was hammered Monday at home by Baltimore, surrendering seven runs (six earned) in two innings.

Manager Clint Hurdle announced he was skipping Morton's turn Saturday against Boston because of arm fatigue. Funny how quickly your arm fatigues after a few horrible starts.

"Is he tired? No," Hurdle said. "Does he feel strong? Yes. But is there some fatigue involved? Absolutely."

Morton built his early success primarily by throwing a sinker that was devastating after the Pirates changed his delivery in spring training to a three-quarters style similar to that of Roy Halladay. But Morton said his sinker had less life in recent starts so he went to more breaking balls that were ripped.

"I was pitching too well for too long for it all to go out the window," Morton said. "I'm going to work on this."

A night to remember

In baseball, it's difficult for a player to win a game single-handedly. After all, you usually need some pitching, some offense and some defense to get it done.

Nevertheless, Atlanta right-hander Tim Hudson came very close to being a one-man gang Monday against Toronto. Hudson blanked the Blue Jays on two hits over eight innings, allowing only one walk with eight strikeouts.

And, oh yeah, he socked a two-run homer in the seventh inning off Ricky Romero for the only runs of the game. Hudson was pulled after surrendering a walk and infield hit to open the ninth, with closer Craig Kimbel coming on to strike out the next three hitters.

With his second career homer and his 1,600th career strikeout in that game, the 35-year-old Hudson called it his most memorable performance.

"You can ask any starting pitcher, if they have a good game, throw seven, eight shutout innings and get the RBI for the only run, it's an awesome day for them."

"So, to be able to hit a big home run, in front of your home crowd the day after Father's Day? It's definitely my most memorable."

Back in form

After being pummeled by the Washington Nationals on May 31 for six runs in 5 1/3 innings, left-hander Cliff Lee was 4-5 with a 3.94 ERA. Not exactly what the Phillies had in mind when shocking the baseball world by reacquiring the free-agent prodigal son over the winter.

Just when folks were wondering what was going on with Lee, he turned things around to go 4-0 with a 0.27 ERA over his next four starts. After a complete-game shutout over St. Louis on Wednesday, he had pitched 23 consecutive scoreless innings.

Lee's night started uncharacteristically with seven consecutive balls. After the seventh pitch, he shook his head in disgust, returned the ball to catcher Carlos Ruiz and requested another.

"I was just hoping it was the ball, basically," he said.

Apparently, it was, because the Cardinals had no chance against Lee after that. Was manager Charlie Manuel concerned when his strike-throwing machine started with seven consecutive balls?

"I figured I'd better not jump up and take him out," Manuel deadpanned.

A team-first guy

Detroit right-hander Justin Verlander would appear to be a legitimate choice to start for the AL in the All-Star Game. Entering his start Saturday night, he was 9-3 with a 2.54 ERA, a league-high 110 strikeouts and ridiculous 0.854 WHIP (walks and hits per inning).

But don't look for Verlander to be toeing the slab in Phoenix on July 12. The Tigers' rotation is aligned for Verlander to start July 10 at Kansas City in Detroit's final game before the break.

Under rules instituted last year, that would make Verlander ineligible to pitch in the All-Star Game. If he is named to the AL staff, another pitcher would replace him.

Manager Jim Leyland did not apologize for that possible conflict.

"I know people are going to talk about it," Leyland said. "This is just the way it worked out. If it had worked out another way, I would have been thrilled to death."

Leyland also ruled out the radical possibility of skipping Verlander the day before the break so he could pitch in the All-Star Game.

"I'd have a hard time explaining to my owner that I'm going to keep this guy from pitching so he can maybe pitch one inning in the All-Star Game," Leyland said.

Verlander agreed, saying, "Would it be nice to go out there and pitch (in the All-Star Game)? Yes. But what's more important? Obviously this, for the Tigers."

## AROUND THE BASES

### PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

MLB: Cincinnati CF Chris Heisey

Heisey helped the Reds split a doubleheader with the Yankees on Wednesday by socking three home runs in a 10-2 romp. Heisey was the 20th leadoff batter in major-league history to hit three home runs in one game.

BREWERS: RHP Zack Greinke

Greinke turned in his best performance of the season Tuesday against Tampa Bay, allowing four hits and one run over seven innings, with no walks and 10 strikeouts in a 5-1 victory. Greinke is 5-0 in six home starts with only two walks and 43 strikeouts in 38 innings.

### WEEK AHEAD

Red Sox at Phillies: Tuesday-Thursday. Possible World Series preview.

Indians at Reds: Friday-Sunday. Indians swept first meeting.

Giants at Tigers: Friday-Sunday. Verlander has been dominant.

Cardinals at Rays: Friday-Sunday. First Reds, then Cards for Rays.

## BREWERS THIS WEEK

After an off-day Monday, the Brewers' 15-game interleague gantlet concludes with a three-game series in New York and a three-game set in Minnesota. At Yankee Stadium, the Brewers will do battle with a familiar face, CC Sabathia. They'll find out what it was like for Milwaukee opponents to face him during the second half of the 2008 season.

## DID YOU KNOW?

After games through Wednesday, 11 pitchers were tied for the major-league lead with nine victories. According to the Elias Sports Bureau, it was the first time since June 27, 1950, that at least that many pitchers were tied with nine "Ws." The co-leaders that day were Joe Dobson, Ted Gray, Art Houtteman, Bob Lemon, Ed Lopat, Robin Roberts, Preacher Roe, Johnny Sain, Curt Simmons and Warren Spahn.

## YOU FIGURE IT OUT

Colorado right-hander Jason Hammel balked home what proved to be the winning run Wednesday in a 4-3 interleague loss to Cleveland. It was an easy balk to call because Hammel stopped in the middle of his windup.

Why?

"I can honestly tell you I forgot what I was throwing," said Hammel. "I've never had that happen before. Just a brain fart, and it stinks that that's the one that cost us."

Rockies manager Jim Tracy was less than thrilled with that explanation.

"I was told he forgot what pitch it was that he was going to throw," said Tracy. "That's the answer to your question. When you look at the final score, it's certainly significant."

## **Golden era for Philadelphia baseball?**

### **Yes, it is. But the city also had three others.**

By Frank Fitzpatrick, Inquirer Sports Columnist

This weekend, as they visit their ancient homeland for an interleague series with the Phillies, the Oakland Athletics will enter a baseball atmosphere that has been as rare in Philadelphia as inspired civic leadership.

Once a sports afterthought in a market the Eagles came to dominate, the Phillies have become a Philadelphia phenomenon, a wildly popular amalgam of red, white, and gold.

Citizens Bank Park is sold out for the three-game series with Oakland, packed with jersey-wearing fans whose passions have been inflamed by a Phillies team that since 2007 has won four consecutive National League East titles, two pennants, and a World Series. The Phillies are No. 1 in baseball attendance, No. 2 in payroll. Their roster is loaded with all-stars. They have become huge attractions on local TV and in opponents' ballparks.

A generation of Phillies fans, many recent converts who knew little but baseball frustration, now understandably believes that this is the golden era of Philadelphia baseball.

But is it?

Though Philadelphia's 128-year history as a major-league city has been marked by much more failure than success, there have been a few - painfully few - other periods of extended success. Four, in fact - roughly one every 30-plus years.

From 1910 to 1915, Connie Mack's A's won three World Series, while a few blocks away on Lehigh Avenue the Phillies made their first appearance in one. The 1929-31 Athletics are among baseball's most talented teams ever, having captured two world championships and three consecutive pennants in their shamefully brief reign. And from 1976 to 1983, the Phillies won five division titles, two pennants, and their first World Series while reawakening this city's baseball ardor.

Was one team, one era superior to the others? It's difficult to say. Each had its merits and shortcomings. But while changes in lifestyles, economics, fitness, and technology make inter-era comparisons difficult and ultimately pointless, with the A's back in the town they once owned, it seems like an apt time to try.

## 1910-15

**Pros:** In terms of on-the-field success, it's difficult to argue against this period. The Athletics won pennants in 1910, 1911, 1913, and 1914, and World Series in 1910, 1911, and 1913. Brand-new Shibe Park, built in 1909, was baseball's best facility. The Phillies, who played blocks away in the Baker Bowl, finished above .500 in four of those six seasons. The National Leaguers were 28 games above .500 in 1913 and two years later won the franchise's first pennant.

**Cons:** The A's and Phils never drew more than a combined 910,000 in any of these seasons. But remember, this was at a time when baseball was played exclusively during the day, at an hour when most baseball fans were working. Neither team had smart financial leadership, and the dropoff after 1915 was precipitous, particularly for the A's, who, in response to competition from the new Federal League, unloaded their stars.

**Stars:** Do you think Philadelphia is loaded with pitching talent now? Between the A's and Phillies, there were at least five future Hall of Fame arms: Eddie Plank, Chief Bender, and Herb Pennock on the A's, Grover Cleveland Alexander and Eppa Rixey on the Phils. The A's, managed by a young and vital Mack, also had Frank "Home Run" Baker and Eddie Collins in the infield.

**Buzz:** Baseball was the unchallenged king of American sports. And Philadelphia, at that time, might have been its capital. Reach Sporting Goods, which supplied big-league baseballs, bats, and gloves, was located here. So was the popular sports magazine The Sporting Life. The A's were the best team and Shibe Park among the game's best facilities. And even given the relatively primitive state of mass communications, the city's baseball stars were among its best-known citizens, regulars in the columns of a dozen daily newspapers. Parades, banquets, and vaudeville appearances by the players went on for weeks after their 1910 title.

**Ranking:** No. 1 in a race that goes down to the wire.

## 2007-????

**Pros:** The present Phils era already has produced several franchise firsts - most notably four straight division titles (2007-10) and two consecutive World Series appearances (2008-09). This era also might be the only one of those discussed here in which a team was transformed in mid-dynasty. While at first the Phillies won with power and offense, they now are doing so with pitching and defense. Team coffers have never been so flush, and the team has shown a willingness - almost an eagerness - to spend.

**Cons:** Like all the other golden eras of Philadelphia baseball, this one won't last forever. And unless this core of players can produce another world championship for a fan base that's come to expect nothing less, their legacy could forever be tarnished.

**Stars:** Ryan Howard, Chase Utley, and Jimmy Rollins might not end up as Hall of Famers, but each will be recalled as the best Phillie ever at his position. Curiously for a team that began this run as big boppers, it might be the pitching staff that produces its Hall of Famers. Roy Halladay seems a lock at this point, and Cliff Lee and Cole Hamels could each follow him to Cooperstown.

**Buzz:** This is where this era has a big edge. Phillies caps and jerseys are ubiquitous. The team's fan base has expanded to include far more women and young adults than ever. Neither Mack nor Bill Giles could have anticipated 200 sellouts in a row, which is something this team soon will accomplish. Of course, technology has given the current era a huge advantage in marketing and promotions. The Cleveland Indians, 30th in 2010 attendance with a little more than 1.3 million, would have been No. 1 in any of the other periods noted. Every Phillies game is televised, on radio, and streamed live online.

**Ranking:** A close No. 2 for reasons that go beyond the field.

## 1929-31

**Pros:** While the post-1915 Phillies took several decades to recover, Mack rebuilt the Athletics in 15 years. The result may be the single-best Philadelphia team ever. Those A's won 313 games in three seasons. They dominated the American League despite the enormous presence of the Murderers Row Yankees, with Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, et al. They went 104-46 in '29, finishing an astonishing 18 games ahead of the Yanks. In '30, they were 102-52 and 16 games in front of third-place New York. In '31, they had an even better regular season, going 107-45 and winding up 13 1/2 games better than the Yankees.



**Cons:** Their reign was shorter than it needed to be. Mack, as always, needed capital, and to get it he prematurely tore apart his second and last dynasty. If that team had stayed together for a few more seasons, it could have become the best in history. Mack's punishment was never being able to recapture the magic. The Philadelphia A's did not win another pennant.

**Stars:** Some of baseball's all-time greats populated those A's teams. In fact, the Society of American Baseball Research's list of the top 100 players of all-time includes four - first-baseman Jimmie Foxx (14), pitcher Lefty Grove (33), catcher Mickey Cochrane (50), and outfielder Al Simmons (66). The MLB Network recently named Grove the best lefthanded pitcher of all time.

**Buzz:** Two World Series wins in three straight appearances is just one step shy of perfection, so this team generated plenty of hype - hometown and national - in its own era and for the future. Most of those photos you see of crowds lining the rooftops of homes surrounding Shibe Park were from this period. The A's were fifth in baseball attendance each of those three seasons, and the World Series games here were massive civic events.

**Ranking:** No. 3. In terms of pure baseball talent, the best era, but its brief run cost it.

### 1976-83

**Pros:** The long baseball sleep that Philadelphia fell into in 1932 - a snooze broken only briefly by 1950's Whiz Kids - ended in this era of artificial turf, hair perms, and powder-blue road uniforms. These Phils finally reaped the rewards of Carpenter's investment, reaching postseason play in 1976, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1981, and 1983. They won a franchise-record 101 games twice - in '76 and '77. More important, they captured the franchise's first World Series (1980) and helped a city forget about the traumas of 1964 and 1977.

**Cons:** This team should have won more than one World Series. The Phillies captured their division titles by besting an outstanding Pittsburgh Pirates team, but faltered annually in the NL Championship Series, losing painfully to Cincinnati and, in consecutive years, the Los Angeles Dodgers. The breakup came in 1982 - though the '83 Wheeze Kids squeezed out one last pennant - and probably could have been done more gradually.

**Stars:** Future Hall of Famers Mike Schmidt and Steve Carlton anchored the lineup and rotation, respectively. Straddling the dawn of free agency, this club stayed together for a lengthy period. Homegrown talents such as Schmidt, Bob Boone, Larry Bowa, and Greg Luzinski were supplemented by Carlton, Paul Owens acquisitions Garry Maddox, Bake McBride, and Tug McGraw, and finally by free agent Pete Rose.

**Buzz:** This era's Phillies had a more complex relationship with the city and its fans than the other teams noted here. Playing on the cusp of a seismic shift in sports coverage, it still garnered considerable interest and fervor - averaging more than 30,000 fans a game - and its TV and radio following exploded. But these Phils weren't particularly lovable. They feuded with the media, the fans, and themselves. All was forgotten, however, in the explosion of civic joy that followed their '80 championship.

**Ranking:** No. 4, primarily because it won just one championship.

### A's rebound with big win against Phillies, 4-1, behind Cahill, Bailey and offense

Sam McPherson, examiner.com

Sometimes, it just all clicks into place, and the Oakland Athletics look pretty good.

Like tonight, against the Philadelphia Phillies on the road, the A's played like world-beaters: Trevor Cahill won his eighth game with 7 2/3 innings of one-run ball, and two-time All-Star reliever Andrew Bailey got the last four outs for his fifth save of the year since he came off the disabled list on May 29.

Oakland won the game, 4-1, and it's hard to grasp why the A's can't play this well more often. In beating 2008 World Series MVP Cole Hamels in the process, the team served notice they can actually play with the big boys once in awhile.

On the road, too.

After struggling to score in the past three games, the A's bats woke up -- and that always helps when your pitching staff leads the American League in earned run average (3.19 coming into today's game). Oakland hitters registered ten hits tonight, including eight off Hamels' in his eight innings of work.

Jemile Weeks had three hits atop the order, and Mark Ellis had two hits from the No. 2 spot. Hideki Matsui also had two hits, his coming from the clean-up position, and just like that, the A's were able to score four runs -- including two big insurance runs in the top of the ninth inning.

And what do you know? No errors from the defense, either.

This was about as close to perfect as Oakland can get in 2011.

For the A's, perfection always starts with the starting pitching: Cahill has righted whatever was wrong with him for that dry spell from May 15 to June 14. In his last two starts -- both wins -- he's given up just two runs in 15 2/3 innings, while striking out 13 batters.

From there, the offense rose to the challenge. Single runs in the both the third and fourth innings against Hamels gave the A's a 2-1 lead which Cahill held until the eighth when Bailey relieved him with two outs.

The Oakland All-Star got out of the two-on, two-out jam, and then he closed out the Phillies in the ninth after being gifted the extra cushion by his teammates.

Now, if the A's could just do this again tomorrow against Roy Halladay?

Then they'd be a big story

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Kouzmanoff's five RBIs lift Sacramento**

By Alex Sadorf / Sacramento River Cats

Kevin Kouzmanoff's three-run home run in the third inning lifted Sacramento to an 8-3 victory over Reno on Saturday night in the first of a four-game series.

This series is a battle of the PCL North Division leaders, the Reno Aces, and the Sacramento River Cats, leaders of the PCL South Division.

Kouzmanoff's homer over the left-field wall scored Wes Timmons and Eric Sogard, both of whom had been walked by right-handed pitcher Gaby Hernandez. Kouzmanoff hit a grand slam against the Tucson Padres on Friday.

"We take the field, we try to win," said Timmons, who went 1-for-2 with a run. "Doesn't matter who's out there."

Kouzmanoff drove in two more runs in the eighth when he hit a hard single past shortstop to Tony Abreu to score Adrian Cardenas and Eric Sogard and solidify the River Cats lead. The third baseman has nine RBIs over his last two games.

Home runs seemed to be contagious Saturday. In the fourth, Reno's Cody Ransom earned his 20th home run of the season, making the score 3-1 Sacramento.

Sacramento's Michael Taylor continued the home run trend in the sixth with a solo home run, his eighth of the season and seventh in June. Taylor followed the homer with a double to left field in the eighth.

Reno tied the game in the fifth inning. First, left fielder Brandon Allen hit the ball hard to right field to score Mark Hallberg and Abreu and tie the game, 3-3. Collin Cowgill also tried to score on the play, but was thrown out on a relay from Taylor and second baseman Timmons.

In the bottom of the fifth, Andy LaRoche gave Sacramento a 5-3 lead with a double to left field, just short of the warning track, to score Kouzmanoff and Jai Miller.

### **Missions Shut Out Hounds Behind Oramas**

By Bob Hards / Midland RockHounds

The 60's British pop group Herman's Hermits (yes, we had stupid group names back then, too, kids) had a hit song that included the line "... now ain't that just a little bit better?" The grammar was lacking, but Herman & his mates might well have been watching Friday's Texas League game between the RockHounds and the San Antonio Missions.

'Hounds starter Jason Bergmann turned in, by far, his best performance in 2011, pitching into the sixth and allowing just one run on four hits. The former Washington Nationals pitcher was making just his fifth appearance since August, 2010, and

looked to be regaining to form. San Antonio's Juan Oramas was "just a little bit better," tossing 6.0 shutout innings. Fabian Williamson relieved Bergmann in the sixth and, while not allowing a hit, gave up an insurance run on two walks and some Missions hustle, giving up the run on a wild pitch. The Missions bullpen was also better, with three relievers combining for 3.0 scoreless innings, capped by Brad Brach's 20th save. Brach gave up a double to Jeremy Barfield, but got out of the inning.

The RockHounds out-hit San Antonio, but the Missions took "just a little bit better advantage." Blake Tekotte doubled to lead off the sixth, and James Darnell continued his remarkable season, bringing Tekotte home with flair to right, breaking a scoreless tie. Darnell had two of San Antonio's four hits, bumping his average up to .342. The RBI, his 58th, was the game's only "ribbie."

San Antonio improved to 3-0 in the second half and 52-21 for the season, Minor League Baseball's second-best record.

**BATS** - Adam Heether extended his hit streak to 11 games. Adam is hitting .357 (15-42) in the 11-gamer, and has nine home runs and 31 RBI in 38 games ... Michael Spina and Jermaine Mitchell lead the club, each with 10 HR and 47 RBI (each has played in 71 games).

**ARMS** - Bergmann, who spent all or part of the last six seasons with the Nationals, showed flashes of his big league form. Seven full counts helped run up his pitch count (he finished at 99 pitches), but the command was noticeably sharper than in any of his first four starts. Jason signed with Boston as a free agent in the off-season, but was released from a deep Red Sox roster in Spring Training without seeing any game action in the Grapefruit League..

**ROAD 'HOUNDS** - Friday was game nine of the club's 12-game road trip (3-6). The RockHounds and Missions face off Saturday, Sunday and Monday evenings, followed by the Texas League All-Star game (two-day) break. On Wednesday, all eight Texas League clubs went back to 0-0 for the start of the 70-game second half. Arkansas (36-31) and San Antonio (49-21) were the first half pennant-winners.

**WELCOME, PETE** - Outfielder Shane Peterson has returned to the RockHounds from (Triple-A) Sacramento, giving the club a full, 24-man, roster for the first time on the road trip. Shane opened the season with the 'Hounds, hitting .278 with one home run, five doubles and five RBI in 14 games. "Pete" returns, but not because of any shortcomings at the AAA level. The recent reassignments of Kevin Kouzmanoff and Daric Barton and the activation of Chris Carter from the disabled list have added to the Sacramento roster (Barton and Carter are former RockHounds). In 46 games with the RiverCats, Shane hit .293 with seven doubles, three triples, six HR and 32 RBI.

**ROCKY TOWN** - The RockHounds' current road trip ends Monday (June 27), followed by the two day break for the Texas League All-Star Game (in San Antonio, June 29). The 'Hounds then open a 6-game home stand, hosting the Arkansas Travelers and Springfield Cardinals, June 30n through July 5. The 6-gamer opens with a Thirsty Thursday (featuring Breakin' B-Boy McCoy) and also includes Cap Night (Friday, July 1) and three fireworks shows celebrating Independence Day weekend. Check out all the details at [www.midlandrockhounds.org](http://www.midlandrockhounds.org).

### **Season-High 19 Hits Carry Ports To 11th Straight Win**

Stockton Ports

**SAN JOSE, Calif.** - At times the Stockton Ports have struggled offensively during the 2011 season. Saturday night was not one of those occasions at San Jose Municipal Stadium. The Ports banged out a season-high 19 hits and took advantage of a season-high five errors committed by the San Jose Giants to earn their 11th straight victory by a final of 9-7. In winning Saturday's contest, the Ports have won their first series of the season versus the Giants.

It was San Jose on the board with the game's first run in the 2nd. James Simmons tripled to left-center field with one out and scored when Michael Choice's throw towards third went into the Ports dugout, awarding Simmons the plate and giving the Giants a 1-0 lead.

Stockton took their first lead of the game in the 4th. With one out, Ryan Lipkin doubled to left and Leonardo Gil followed with an RBI single to center to make it a 1-1 game. Two batters later, Conner Crumbliss singled to right to give the Ports a 2-1 lead. Myrio Richard followed with a single to right to score Dusty Coleman and Michael Gilmartin followed with a sac-fly to right to make it a 4-1 game.

San Jose cut the deficit to a run in the 4th on a two-run homer from Jose Flores off Ports starter A.J. Griffin to make it a 4-3 ballgame.

Griffin would go just four innings, his shortest outing of the season. He received a no-decision after allowing three runs (two earned) on five hits while striking out four.

The Ports would get to Giants starter Kelvin Marte in the 5th. With Rashun Dixon at first base and one out, Ryan Lipkin hit a double toward the wall in left field. The throw in to third was cut off by Giants shortstop Juan Ciriaco, who fired a throw to second to try and get Lipkin. The throw went into right field, an error that allowed Dixon to score and make it a 5-3 lead. Two batters later, Coleman hit a two-out double to left-center to score Lipkin and increase the Ports lead to 6-3.

Marte would receive a no-decision, going five innings and allowing six runs on a season-high 12 hits while striking out three.

San Jose would come through with their biggest inning of the night in the 5th. With Scott Deal (3-1) on the hill, Jarrett Parker reached on a fielding error committed by Coleman. Alex Burg followed with a double to put runners at second and third, and Parker scored on a wild pitch to make it 6-4. Ryan Cavan followed with an RBI single to center to cut the Ports lead to 6-5. Cavan would later score on a fielder's choice hit into by Flores to tie the game at 6-6.

The Ports took the lead back in the 6th against Giants reliever Jake Dunning (5-2). Dunning gave up a leadoff double to Richard and after a throwing error by Dunning on a pick-off attempt moved Richard to third, Gilmartin knocked an RBI single to right to give Stockton the lead back at 7-6. Two batters later, after an error put two aboard, Ryan Ortiz laced an RBI single to center to make it an 8-6 Ports advantage.

Dunning would take the loss on the night, going 2.1 innings and allowing two runs on five hits while striking out three.

The Giants would get one final run off Deal in the 6th. With two on and one out, Josh Lansford came into the game and gave up an RBI single to Burg. The run was charged to Deal and the Giants cut the deficit to a run at 8-7. With runners at the corners and one out, Lansford would get an inning-ending 6-3 double-play ball off the bat of Cavan to preserve the one-run lead.

Deal would pick up the win, going 1.1 innings and allowing four runs (two earned) on three hits while striking out three.

The hit from Burg in the 6th would be San Jose's final one of the night. Beginning with the double-play, Ports pitchers combined to retire 10 of the final 12 hitters of the game.

Lansford tossed 1.2 scoreless innings of relief. Jose Guzman (SV, 12) came on to pitch the 8th and pitched around a two-out error that put the possible-tying run at second base with two outs.

The Ports added an insurance run in the 9th on a two-out RBI single from Crumbliss to make it a 9-7 lead. Guzman came back out for the 9th and struck out the side, pitching around a two-out walk and getting Tommy Joseph swinging to end the ballgame.

Richard, Lipkin and Crumbliss all went 3-for-5 for Stockton. Gilmartin and Crumbliss each had two RBI on the night.

Stockton and San Jose will wrap up their four-game set on Sunday at Municipal Stadium. Rob Gilliam (7-4, 4.60 ERA) will head to the bump for the Ports, opposed by Giants right-hander and the California League's ERA leader Craig Westcott (8-0, 2.09 ERA). First pitch is set for 5 p.m. PDT.

### **Long Leads the Charge to 5-1 Win in Clinton**

By Jon Versteeg, Burlington Bees

CLINTON, IA-The Burlington Bees (1-1) received five solid innings from Nate Long (5-1) and pushed across five runs on ten hits to earn a 5-1 win over the Clinton LumberKings (1-1) at Alliant Energy Field on Saturday night.

Burlington opened the scoring in the first inning. 3B Tony Thompson (1-3) singled and moved to second base on a wild pitch. Thompson scored when 1B A.J. Kirby-Jones (1-4) reached base on an error for a 1-0 lead.

Long allowed just one hit, walked one and struck out seven. He retired the first nine hitters he faced before DH Stefen Romero (0-2) led off the fourth inning and was hit by a pitch. After getting CF Julio Morban (1-4) to pop out to left field, Long walked 3B Matt Browning (0-2) and retired the next two hitters to get out of the inning.

Long gave up a leadoff single to C Steven Baron (1-4) in the sixth inning before retiring the next three hitters in a row.

The Bees scored a run in the sixth inning. CF Jose Crisotomo (2-5) singled and moved to third base on a throwing error by Clinton RHP George Mieses (1-9). Thompson lifted a sacrifice fly to left field to score Crisotomo for a 2-0 Burlington lead.

LF Kevin Rivers (1-4) hit an RBI single up the middle against LHP Max Peterson in the sixth inning to score Morban from second base to make the score 2-1.

Burlington scored two runs in the seventh inning to take a 4-1 lead. SS Yordy Cabrera (2-4) singled and scored on a double by 2B Nino Leyja (2-4). He stole third base and scored on a sacrifice fly by LF Royce Consigli (1-4).

Consigli hit an RBI single in the ninth inning to score Leyja and give the Bees a four-run lead at 5-1.

**BEES BUZZINGS:** The Burlington Bees struck out 14 LumberKings on Saturday. In addition to Long's seven strikeouts, LHP Max Peterson added five strikeouts over three innings and Daniel Tenholder struck out two men in the ninth inning. Bees' pitchers have struck out 28 LumberKings hitters over the first two games of the series.

The Bees and LumberKings finish their series on Sunday night at 2:00 p.m. RHP Josh Bowman (5-2, 2.98) starts for the Burlington against LHP Anthony Fernandez (2-2, 4.17) for Clinton. Pre-game coverage begins at 1:40 p.m. on Newsradio 1490 KBUR and online at [www.gobees.com](http://www.gobees.com).

### **Vermont-Connecticut Game Suspended Saturday**

The Lake Monsters and Tigers game on Saturday night at Centennial was suspended by rain in the top of the fifth inning with Connecticut leading 2-0. The game will resume when the Tigers return to Vermont on Sunday, August 28th at 6:05 pm