

A's News Clips, Wednesday June 29, 2011

Oakland A's top Florida Marlins 1-0

By Ben Enos, Oakland Tribune

A's pitcher Gio Gonzalez had to wait through a rain delay of more than an hour before taking the mound Tuesday against the Florida Marlins.

Once he got started, Gonzalez wasn't going to wait around anymore.

A rare June storm caused a delay of 1 hour and 12 minutes, but once things got started, Gonzalez was masterful, allowing one hit in eight innings to outduel Javier Vazquez in a 1-0 victory at the O.Co Coliseum. He bolstered his All-Star credentials by improving to 7-5 and lowering his ERA to 2.38.

A steady rain fell in Oakland all afternoon, causing the tarp to stay on the field past the scheduled 7:05 p.m. start. That left Gonzalez waiting, and finally at 8:17, the left-hander from Hialeah, Fla., got to take the mound.

"Gio was chomping," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "He had some people back in Florida watching, I'm sure, and he wanted to get out there and get the game going. I saw him every 15 minutes or so, checking to see 'Are we going to play? What time's the game?' "

The A's got Gonzalez the narrow lead he needed in the second. Hideki Matsui got the inning started with a double into the left-field corner and stayed put as Conor Jackson reached on a throwing error by Hanley Ramirez.

A ground out to first by Ryan Sweeney advanced both runners. Kurt Suzuki followed with a fly ball to right, and despite a diving catch by Mike Stanton, it was more than enough to score Matsui and give the A's a 1-0 lead.

That narrow margin was enough for Gonzalez (7-5), who cruised through the early stages of the game in dominant fashion and at one point retired 13 in a row. A single to lead off the game by Emilio Bonifacio was the Marlins' lone hit. Gonzalez walked just three and struck out nine before giving way to Andrew Bailey after throwing 106 pitches.

"I understood completely," Gonzalez said of the decision to take him out. "Bob told me, and I gave them eight. With a closer like Bailey, it's exciting to see him go out there and give us a (win)."

Bailey had his back put to the wall immediately, as Bonifacio made it to second on a throwing error by third baseman Scott Sizemore. That didn't matter to the A's closer, who struck out Omar Infante, Greg Dobbs and Hanley Ramirez to end the game.

Gonzalez also got stronger as the game went along, which was evident in the seventh inning. He walked Infante to begin the inning, but he struck out Gaby Sanchez on a checked-swing attempt for the first out. Sanchez argued the call and was ejected.

The left-hander had no trouble with the next two hitters, striking out Ramirez and Stanton quickly to end the inning.

"Performance-wise, best I've seen him pitch," Melvin said. "Ranks right up there with maybe the best pitched game from a starter since I've been here."

The A's starter had to be as good as he was, considering the offense was having its own tough time getting to Vazquez (4-8). The A's collected just four hits, with two singles coming off the bat of Coco Crisp.

"It was just one of those wins where you move forward," Gonzalez said. "Vazquez pitched a great game, and it was one of those 1-0 ballgames that kept everyone on the edge of their seat."

Balfour heads to D.L.; Harden starts on Friday

By Ben Enos, Oakland Tribune

The A's injury carousel took another turn on Tuesday, with reliever Grant Balfour heading to the disabled list and the announcement that Rich Harden will make his 2011 debut on Friday.

A strained right oblique landed Balfour on the D.L., with the move being retroactive to June 22. Trystan Magnuson was recalled from Triple-A Sacramento to take Balfour's place.

"Arm feels great, body feels great. It's just one part of me right now that's a little sore and I've got to get that fixed up," Balfour said.

Balfour has been one of the most valuable members of the bullpen this season, compiling a 4-1 record with a 2.48 ERA and getting some mention as a possible All-Star.

"If that was something that was going to happen, hopefully it does," Balfour said. "I've had a few decent years where I've liked to have had a chance to make it. I'd definitely hate to see this jeopardize something like that."

Both Balfour and manager Bob Melvin said they anticipate the right-hander will be ready to return once he's eligible to come off the D.L.

Melvin said Magnuson's second stint in Oakland this season will be as a long reliever. Melvin also said that Graham Godfrey will be available in long relief this week, as Harden will take his spot in the rotation. Guillermo Moscoso now will start Wednesday instead of Godfrey, and Trevor Cahill will start Thursday.

Harden's return will come a little earlier than expected for the A's, as he allowed three runs in 42/3 innings for Sacramento on Saturday and was scheduled to make one more rehab appearance.

Instead, Harden said he likely will throw around 90 pitches in his first major league appearance since Sept. 29, 2010, with the Rangers.

"That was kind of what I had in my mind anyway. I was kind of looking towards this date," Harden said. "I'm feeling good out there."

Brandon McCarthy also might be back in the mix soon. Rain pushed his scheduled rehab appearance on Tuesday back a day, but Melvin said there's still a chance McCarthy could return this weekend. Melvin said he wanted to get past the rehab start first before making that definitive.

The A's announced the signing of three draft picks, including Cal infielder Austin Booker and infielder Shane Boras, son of agent Scott Boras. Booker is the son of former major leaguer and Cal standout Rod Booker. Outfielder Dusty Robinson of Fresno State, a 10th-round pick, also signed.

Back from the College World Series, the Cal baseball team will be honored before Wednesday's game against the Marlins. Bears coach David Esquer will throw out the ceremonial first pitch.

Marlins outfielder Scott Cousins, who ended Giants catcher Buster Posey's season on May 25 on a home-plate collision, did not make the trip despite being eligible to come off the D.L. on Monday. He has a strained back.

Chin Music: New start time: 8:15 p.m.

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/28/2011 7:49pm

Ben Enos filling in for Joe Stiglich

Obviously the game didn't start at 7:30, eh? We're now told 8:15 for first pitch, and both teams have begun to limber up. Walked down to the concourse and looked out the other side of the Coliseum and it doesn't look like there's any rain behind us. So, 8:15 first pitch.

Chin Music: Start time pushed back to 7:30

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/28/2011 6:44pm

Ben Enos here, filling in for Joe Stiglich

UPDATE (7:05 p.m.): Well, the tarp is off the field and the rain has stopped. I'm thinking 7:30 might be a stretch, but it looks pretty good that there might be baseball played tonight. They're pushing water around the outfield at the moment, and the warning track is well puddled but the kitty litter is out and in full use. I'll keep ya posted.

Just as I finished my last blog post, we got word that first pitch for tonight's game between the A's and Marlins is now scheduled for 7:30 p.m. A quick glance at Diamond Vision reveals that "tonight's game has been delayed until at least 7:30 p.m."

Grab some cocoa. We're gonna be here a while.

Chin Music: Rain, rain go away

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 6/28/2011 6:41pm

Ben Enos coming at ya tonight, filling in for Joe Stiglich at the O.Co Coliseum.

Well, it's a rainy and dreary night here in Oakland as the A's return home for the start of a nine-game homestand that begins with three against the Marlins.

Or, at least they hope its the start of the homestand. Mother Nature may have other plans.

On a day where there's plenty of news to report, the A's may not have actual baseball to discuss. The tarp remains on, and save a brief moment where they took it off and then put it back on, it's been on all afternoon. And, the rain doesn't seem to be stopping anytime soon. We haven't had any kind of delay announced yet, but I'll keep ya posted if we get one. Seems hard to imagine that not happening.

In actual news, the wheels are definitely still turning. Reliever Grant Balfour was placed on the 15-day DL, retroactive to June 22, because of the sore right oblique he's been dealing with. Trystan Magnuson was recalled from Triple-A Sacramento to take his place.

Balfour was understandably disappointed, saying everything else feels great except for his oblique. Both he and Melvin said that they expect the right-hander to be ready to go once his DL stint is over.

The other bit of news is Rich Harden will not make his next scheduled rehab appearance in Sacramento. Instead, he'll next pitch here in Oakland, as manager Bob Melvin said that Harden will start Friday against Arizona.

Harden will take Graham Godfrey's spot in the rotation, and that means there are some rotation dominoes that have to fall into place. Guillermo Moscoso will start tomorrow against Ricky Nolasco, and Trevor Cahill will pitch Thursday against Chris Volstad. Godfrey will be available in relief this week, Melvin said.

Harden said he's excited to get going, and said it might feel a little like Opening Day for him when he pitches Friday. He said he felt comfortable with all of his pitches in Saturday's start at Sacramento, and he'll likely throw about 90 pitches on Friday.

Brandon McCarthy had his scheduled Tuesday rehab start postponed because of rain, and he'll start Wednesday instead. Melvin said that there's a chance McCarthy could be back to pitch for Oakland this weekend, but that he'd like to see how the rehab start goes first before making that official.

OK, now that we've got that out of the way, here are the lineups. Let's see if we actually get to see them in action.

A's – Weeks 2B, Pennington SS, Crisp CF, Matsui DH, Jackson 1B, Sweeney LF, Suzuki C, DeJesus RF, Sizemore 3B.
Gonzalez P

Marlins – Bonifacio LF, Infante 2B, Sanchez 1B, Ramirez SS, Stanton RF, Lopez 3B, Morrison DH, Buck C, Wise CF. Vazquez P.

Monte Poole: Florida Marlins interim manager Jack McKeon, 80, trades in comfort for dugout

By Monte Poole Bay Area News Group

It's late afternoon, the ballpark is empty, and constant rain threatens the first pitch, scheduled for 7:05 p.m., not that any of this matters to the man standing in the dugout.

He is once again a big-league manager. He is 80 years old. He is holding a cigar, and he has stories he can tell deep into the night.

Jack McKeon himself is quite a fascinating story, a living symbol of pluck and perseverance, of sacrifice and reward, of succeeding and failing with principles intact.

He is back in a Florida Marlins uniform, his second tour managing the franchise. He was at church -- he goes every day -- in North Carolina a little more than a week ago, and upon returning home, his wife gave him the phone message.

Marlins manager Edwin Rodriguez had resigned, and owner Jeffrey Loria wanted to know if McKeon would come back as interim manager of the team that he led to the 2003 World Series championship. McKeon had semiretired after managing the Marlins in 2005, moving into the role of special adviser to Loria.

"I had a great job," McKeon says, staring out at the soggy [O.co](#) Coliseum field before Tuesday night's game against the A's.

Yet McKeon says it took "about 17 seconds" to decide he would get back into uniform, onto planes and into dugouts across the country.

He willingly explains why he is doing this, but he would rather re-create moments from the late 1970s, when he spent two seasons in Oakland working for firebrand A's owner Charles O. Finley, whose energies by then had turned from promoting quality baseball to tormenting and belittling those employees outside his personal spy network.

McKeon delights in telling of Finley addressing the team in Anaheim, using physical demonstration to augment a corny speech about taking advantage of opportunity.

"I have to go over to the door to show you what he did," says McKeon, who skips to the dugout restroom door and knocks.

"Hello," he says to an imaginary voice on the other side.

"Who is it?" he adds.

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Opportunity. Well, (expletive), come on iiiinnnnnn."

McKeon laughs. Everybody in the dugout laughs. The late George Burns couldn't have done it better. And Burns was not a baseball manager but a comedian.

McKeon pauses. The TV cameras are gone now. It's just the old baseball man, puffing on his cigar and regaling an audience of five. He is comfortable, in his element.

"He fired me in '77 and brought me back in '78," McKeon says of Finley. "When the press asked him about it, he said, 'Well, he's smarter now than he was then.' That was Charlie. He was a pistol."

Jack recalls the routine 6 a.m. phone calls during which it was evident Finley, who lived in Indiana, had seen the box score and wanted details. More specifically, he checked to see if his manager's details matched those provided by broadcaster Monte Moore or "special assistant" Stanley Burrell (later MC Hammer), both of whom were considered Finley's inside sources.

Finley's penny-pinching and his unwillingness to trust his baseball people may have cost the A's a chance to acquire pitcher Ron Guidry, who was in the New York Yankees organization.

"(Yankees manager) Billy Martin didn't like him," McKeon says, "but I'd seen him in the minors and thought, 'Wow, this kid is special.' We could've had Guidry for Mike Torrez, but Charlie didn't want to make the trade.

"Charlie was a pain in the ass. But I had a great experience here. I learned a lot. Figured if I could do OK here, I could do the job anywhere."

McKeon has managed five teams: Kansas City, Oakland twice, San Diego, Cincinnati and Florida twice. "Trader Jack" was the general manager who assembled the Padres' pennant-winning team in 1984.

He is a baseball lifer who has written two books and hosted a sports-talk show. He is a husband who says he has smoked for 60 years yet still tries to hide cigars from his wife.

In the age of superficiality, when plastic surgeons are busier and wealthier than those who treat cancer, McKeon is a throwback, a genuine article.

Ask about his age, McKeon flicks away the question like ashes from his stogie.

"I work out, two or three hours a day," he says. "I had a new hip put in at 60, or else I'd be jogging. I do the treadmill three or four miles. I lift weights, do cardio work. I have 15 acres at home that I mow on a tractor."

He will concede he is an inspiration to America's elderly, but he would rather laugh at the memories that come back with a visit to this ballpark.

Ask him if he minds the travel, McKeon says it's not a factor.

"You know what I don't like? Hanging around the hotel," he says. "I just want to get up and eat, go to church and get to the ballpark."

On a stormy night, A's Gio Gonzalez blows away Marlins

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

In terms of interleague matchups, the Marlins at Oakland was not, perhaps, the most attractive of options.

The battle of last-place clubs, combined with a rain delay of more than an hour before the start of the A's 1-0 victory, kept the fans away, with well under the announced total of 12,124 actually in attendance.

But Gio Gonzalez, a South Florida native, was well worth watching. The A's left-hander, a strong candidate to be the team's All-Star representative, allowed one hit - to the first batter of the game, Emilio Bonifacio - and two walks in eight innings. Gonzalez struck out nine.

"My phone hasn't stopped ringing, so many people are texting me," Gonzalez said. "Hialeah (Miami-Dade County) is watching. This is for the people in Hialeah."

After walking Omar Infante to open the seventh, Gonzalez struck out the next three batters on a total of nine pitches.

In each his past four starts, Gonzalez (7-5) has allowed no more than two earned runs, lowering his ERA to 2.38.

Manager Bob Melvin decided against sending Gonzalez out for the ninth because he was at 106 pitches and if a runner had reached in the ninth in a one-run game, he would have lifted him - and Melvin noted that closer Andrew Bailey is used to coming in to start innings. Gonzalez said he understood the decision and was fine with it.

An error by third baseman Scott Sizemore put Bonifacio at second base with nobody out in the ninth. Bailey then struck out the side.

Oakland's pitching, mostly good even during some of the worst stretches of the season, should get a boost in the next week with two starters nearing their return from the DL - beginning Friday, when Rich Harden will match up against Arizona.

Harden, the A's former ace, will be making his first appearance for the team since he was traded to the Cubs in 2008. He has been out with a muscle strain under his right arm since the day pitchers reported to spring training.

"I hope to make up for missing the first half, step in and pitch the way I can," Harden said. "It's a little strange, but it's like Opening Day for me."

The A's also might get right-hander Brandon McCarthy back soon. McCarthy, on the DL with a stress reaction in his right shoulder, will make a rehab start at Class-A Stockton tonight.

To wedge Harden into the rotation, rookie Graham Godfrey is coming out, and Trevor Cahill's next start is being moved up a day to Thursday; he'll be working on his normal four days' rest.

The start of the game was delayed for one hour and 12 minutes by rain. Gonzalez has had three starts delayed by rain this year and in them, he's 2-0 and has allowed one run in 22 innings.

A's Grant Balfour placed on disabled list

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

-- Right-hander **Grant Balfour**, one of the top candidates to be Oakland's All-Star representative this year, was placed on the disabled list Tuesday with the right oblique strain that kept him out of the series at Philadelphia over the weekend.

"Disappointing, for sure," said Balfour, who has four wins and is holding opponents to a .198 average, including .136 with men in scoring position. "All I can do now is whatever I can to get healthy quick."

Balfour, who went on the DL retroactively, will be eligible to come off it July 7, and he said he believes he will be ready to come back before the All-Star break, which starts four days later.

An MRI exam showed the injury to be more significant than Balfour had believed, and the A's couldn't afford to go short in the bullpen much longer. Plus, manager **Bob Melvin** said, Balfour is a high-energy reliever who probably wouldn't baby an injury very carefully.

"Grant isn't a guy who can ease into things," Melvin said. "He's a full-out, max-effort guy. We don't want the potential to reinjure this."

Rookie right-hander **Trystan Magnuson**, obtained from Toronto in the **Rajai Davis** deal last fall, was recalled. Magnuson said he has worked a lot on his cutter since his brief May call-up. He also is working on a split-finger fastball.

Magnuson and **Graham Godfrey** are the top possibilities to come off the roster when starters **Rich Harden** and **Brandon McCarthy** come off the DL in the next week.

Briefly: Oakland's puny offense got its run in Tuesday's game off **Javier Vazquez** in the second. **Hideki Matsui** doubled, **Conor Jackson** reached on an error, the runners advanced on a groundout, and Matsui scored on a sacrifice fly by **Kurt Suzuki**. ... Shortstop **Cliff Pennington** is 0 for his past 23. ... The A's agreed to terms with 10th-round pick **Dusty Robinson**, an outfielder from Fresno State; 33rd-rounder **Austin Booker**, a second baseman from Cal; and USC second baseman **Shane Boras**, son of super-agent Scott Boras.

Leading off

Cal tribute: The A's, who feature three ex-Cal players - manager Bob Melvin, outfielder Conor Jackson and right-hander Tyson Ross - will honor the Bears, just returned from the College World Series, tonight. Half-price field-level tickets are available with the coupon code "Cal" on the A's website.

Drumbeat: Rich Harden will start Friday for A's; Grant Balfour goes on DL

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at the Coliseum 5:45pm 6/28/2011

Rich Harden will go for the A's against Arizona on Friday - his first start of the season after missing the first half with a muscle strain under his right arm (the teres major, to be specific). The A's expect Harden to go about 90 pitches after throwing 72 pitches in his last rehab outing.

Harden said, "I hope to make up for missing the first half. ... It's a little strange, but it's like Opening Day for me."

With Harden's return, the A's are juggling their rotation. Guillermo Moscoso pitches tomorrow night, and Trevor Cahill moves up to start Thursday, while Graham Godfrey moves into long relief.

The A's also have another option in long relief: Trystan Magnuson was called up from Triple-A Sacramento today when reliever Grant Balfour went on the DL with that oblique strain that kept him out of the Philadelphia series.

Balfour anticipates that he'll be ready to come off the DL when eligible on July 7. He hopes that the injury won't derail his possible All-Star shot; he figures if he was considered deserving beforehand, he still should be afterward.

The A's could be getting starter Brandon McCarthy back as soon as Sunday. Magnuson and Godfrey are the most likely possibilities to come off the roster when Harden and then McCarthy return. McCarthy is making a rehab start at Triple-A Sacramento this evening.

The A's other candidates right now are tonight's starter, Gio Gonzalez, and Cahill, who has sprung back into his April form.

Here's the lineup: Weeks 2B, Penn. SS, Crisp CF, Matsui DH, Jackson 1B, Sweeney LF, Suzuki C, DeJesus RF, Sizemore 3B, Gonzalez P

A's much like Giants except in the clutch

John Shea, San Francisco Chronicle

Time flies when you're having fun or managing an A's team that scores runs as infrequently as the Giants.

Bob Melvin had been manager for 16 games before entering a nine-game homestand Tuesday night.

"Has it been 16 games already?" he asked. "It's a lot. It doesn't seem that long. It's been a lot of fun."

Melvin was told he started 8-8.

"Is that what we are? Well, we'd like to be better than that."

With a few breaks, or a few more hits, they could have been. Four of the losses were by one run, another by two runs. Brad Ziegler plunked a batter to end one game, and a chopper over Scott Sizemore's head ended another.

The kind of games the Giants win, the A's lose.

An exception came Tuesday when Hideki Matsui scored the only run on a sacrifice fly, Gio Gonzalez threw one-hit ball for eight innings and Andrew Bailey struck out the side in the ninth after the leadoff man reached on a two-base error.

For all the praise heaped on Melvin (deservedly so) and for all the energy, goodwill and optimism he has introduced to the A's clubhouse since replacing Bob Geren, he still inherited a team with a ton of hitting woes. Not even Connie Mack, Melvin's predecessor by several decades, would have an easy time changing that.

Since Melvin took over June 9, the team ERA has actually improved while the batting average has actually worsened, a difficult task considering how low the offense ranked when Melvin came aboard.

A glance at the averages through Melvin's first 17 games tells the story: David DeJesus .111, Kurt Suzuki .136, Landon Powell .143, Adam Rosales .154 and Cliff Pennington .175. Daric Barton was at .167 before getting the ax.

In other words, thank goodness for Matsui, Jemile Weeks and Sizemore for providing a little balance.

Yes, it's a small sample size under Melvin, but today's game will be Oakland's 81st, marking the midway point, and that's a plenty big sample size.

"It's baseball. It's not an easy game," said Conor Jackson, whose .261 average is awesome by comparison. "It's tough going

up there and looking up at the scoreboard and seeing what you're hitting. It's definitely not a confidence booster. But at the end of the season, come Sept. 28, guys aren't going to be where they're at right now."

Jackson is the first baseman now that Barton is in the minors, and perhaps that was predictable. Melvin remembers Jackson averaging 14 homers, 71 RBIs and .292 over three seasons when he managed in Arizona, and anything similar would be welcomed in the second half.

On many statistical fronts, the A's and Giants are the same team. The A's sport a 3.13 ERA (Giants, 3.22) while collecting 281 runs (Giants, 284, no longer fewest in the majors) and 633 hits (Giants, 645).

Granted, the leagues vary, but there's no disputing the biggest difference between the sides — records in one-run decisions. The Giants own the majors' best mark, 22-11. The A's have the worst, 11-17 (3-4 under Melvin). A difference between first place and last.

The anticipation is that bats ultimately will be swung better on Melvin's watch. Josh Willingham, the team's homers and RBI leader, is expected back Sunday, and as Jackson said, the averages can't stay this low, especially with warmer weather ahead. Can they?

Melvin says no.

"When a guy's struggling, you find out a lot more about him," Melvin said. "Like Kurt Suzuki. He's struggled. I know he's a much better hitter than this. He'll come around, but he hasn't let it affect his catching at all in terms of how vocal he is in pitchers' meetings, putting aside an at-bat and going out to catch the next inning, dealing with umpires, all those things. You find out what they're made of when they're not playing their best baseball."

DeJesus, too.

"He's been a terrific teammate," said Melvin, who vowed to play him four straight games in right field. "For a guy who's used to playing every day and having success, this is very difficult for him, but he puts on a happy face every day for the sake of the team. In my conversations with him, which have been difficult the last couple of weeks, he's made it easy on me. He's been great."

Players' admiration for Melvin seems to be universal, one reason we can expect the interim tag to disappear eventually.

"It's been a nice ride for me to this point, and the guys have made it easy on me," said Melvin, optimistically foreseeing an offensive upgrade. "You're never as bad as you are when you're going bad, and you're never as good as you are when you're going great. It's somewhere in the middle."

For the A's, "middle" would be a good start.

Masterful Gonzalez befuddles Fish

By Tom Green / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Gio Gonzalez grew up cheering for the Marlins in South Florida. He witnessed the club bring two World Series titles to Miami in a relatively short time. So in the eyes of the A's 25-year-old lefty, the young Florida franchise has history.

"I love the Marlins," Gonzalez said. "This is the team I grew up watching."

But on Tuesday night, it was the Marlins who watched Gonzalez.

The A's lefty, facing his hometown team for the first time in his young career, pitched a gem as he led the A's to a 1-0 win to kick off their nine-game homestand.

Gonzalez glided through eight innings and allowed only one hit and four baserunners, rewarding the small contingent of A's fans who weathered a 72-minute rain delay. The rain, it seems, always comes when Gonzalez is scheduled to toe the rubber.

"Kind of used to it -- the days I pitch are rainy days," Gonzalez said. "I learn to adapt to it."

And adapt he has. After giving up a leadoff hit to Emilio Bonifacio in the opening frame, Gonzalez completely shut down the Marlins' offense, extending the Marlins' franchise-worst month by handing them their 23rd loss in June.

After Bonifacio reached on a ground-ball single to right field, Gonzalez retired the next 13 batters he faced before surrendering a two-out walk to Jose Lopez in the fifth. But the Miami native didn't let the free pass slow his momentum, as he struck out Logan Morrison to end the frame.

Gonzalez retired the Marlins in order in the sixth, before he issued his second walk. He responded by striking out Gaby Sanchez (who was ejected after the at-bat), Hanley Ramirez and Mike Stanton -- all on pitches in the dirt.

Gonzalez [7-5] struck out nine, walked three and gave up the lone hit as he lowered his ERA to 2.38 and earned his third straight quality start. During that span the southpaw has fanned 27.

"Performance-wise, the best I've seen him pitch," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "Ranks right up there with one of the best pitched games from a starter since I've been here."

"Give the guy credit, he knew how to get our hitters out," Marlins manager Jack McKeon said. "But I think if we were patient with him he would have walked four or five more guys, which is his history. He doesn't get by with one walk, two walks. But he did a great job, no question. We knew he's got good stuff. He's a good pitcher, but he's beatable."

But Gonzalez wasn't beatable on Tuesday, and the southpaw admitted that having this kind of performance against his hometown team was special, especially with all of his friends back home watching the game.

"My phone hasn't stopped ringing from so many people back home texting me from Flanigan's in Hialeah,[Fla.]" he said. "Everybody is watching. This is for the people in Hialeah."

While all of his friends watched from back home, Gonzalez's family watched from the stands. His parents -- who cooked him a tuna omelet for breakfast and pasta with salchicha sausage for lunch -- and brother were all in attendance on Tuesday.

"My mom and dad are always a big inspiration to me, my brother too," Gonzalez said. "They're definitely my coaches off the field. They keep me grounded. My dad cooked for me today, cooked me a good breakfast and kept me focused. There was no outside distraction, there was nothing."

With Gonzalez dealing on the mound, the A's gave him just enough offensive support to improve to 9-8 under Melvin. Kurt Suzuki, whom Gonzalez credited with keeping him focused throughout the night, picked up an RBI in the second with a sacrifice fly to right to score Hideki Matsui.

The run was unearned, and it was the only one the A's scored off Marlins starter Javier Vazquez. Vazquez got the loss despite pitching seven strong innings and limiting the A's to three hits.

Andrew Bailey cemented Gonzalez's effort by closing out the ninth and earning his sixth save of the season. After Bonifacio reached on a two-base throwing error from third baseman Scott Sizemore to lead off the inning, Bailey struck out the side to help the A's improve their Major League-worst record in one-run affairs to 10-17.

Along with improving their record in one-run games, the A's also improved to 1-0 this season when Gonzalez wears a green jersey at home. The lefty wore gold during all of his previous home outings, but decided to switch it up after the team's recent luck in the gold tops ran out on their last road trip.

"I figured we overused the gold jersey on the road, so how about we switch it up and put a little green in there?" Gonzalez said. "It started us off in the right direction, and hopefully we start a trend now with the green."

Former ally may help A's against Nolasco

By Jon Star / MLB.com

The Marlins are mired in their worst month in recent memory, and following yet another loss Tuesday, in which they scored one run or fewer -- for the 12th time this month -- the club is looking for answers as to how they can find momentum.

Having lost 15 of their past 17 games and falling to 3-23 in June, the Marlins are looking for any way to stop their downward trend. Their slide only amplifies the loss of ace Josh Johnson, who Marlins president Larry Beinfest admitted would help, but whose arm, on its own, wouldn't be enough.

"We definitely do miss that, because you know every fifth day when he's going out there what he's able to do," said Beinfest. "But that's not the problem here. We would like to have him, and hopefully we would have had some of that benefit. We found ways to lose basically. We need to find ways to win."

On Wednesday, Jack McKeon will hand the ball to Ricky Nolasco to relieve the sting of yet another low-scoring loss. Nolasco's (4-4, 4.44 ERA) recent stretch has mirrored the club's overall woes. The right-hander is 0-4 in his last six outings, turning in just two quality starts among them.

The A's, meanwhile, will rely on some inside information in hopes of sending Nolasco to his fifth consecutive defeat. Josh Willingham, who played with Nolasco in Florida from 2006-08, is dishing out his own scouting reports.

"I'll tell them what Ricky likes to do and what his pitches are," said Willingham, who is on the disabled list. "They're going to have all the video they need on him, but I'll give them a little insight on his tendencies and what he likes to do. But other than that, they'll have all the information they need."

The A's may need all the help they can get, as they are hitting just over .200 as a team in Interleague Play this season.

Squaring off against Nolasco will be Guillermo Moscoso, not Graham Godfrey as originally planned, after Oakland manager Bob Melvin decided to shuffle his rotation and send Godfrey to the bullpen.

Moscoso took a tough-luck no-decision his last time out, blanking the Phillies over seven innings and allowing two hits. The right-hander has allowed only two unearned runs over his past 11 2/3 innings.

Marlins: Managerial switch agrees with Hanley

Hanley Ramirez is enduring the slowest first half of his career, but the shortstop appears to be turning a corner. Could McKeon's return to the bench be a reason for Ramirez's recent surge? Ramirez has hit safely in five of the six games since June 20 -- McKeon's first game back -- and is hitting .333 (8-for-24) over that span.

"He's playing like crazy," McKeon said of his shortstop. "I've watched a lot of games, and he's playing the best he's played all year. I'm happy for him. He's happy. Hopefully, he turns his season around and has a good year. If he does, we're going to be in good shape."

Athletics: Power outage

The home run is a necessary element to a club's offense in today's game, but the A's are suffering through a low point in power. Oakland is on pace to hit the fewest home runs in the franchise's modern history. The A's 41 home runs are the

fewest in all of baseball, putting them on pace to hit just 85. That number would fall short of the 1968 A's, who hit 94 home runs. The lack of power coincides with the club's AL-worst .234 batting average.

Worth noting:

The Marlins have scored a first-inning run 30 times this season -- the highest rate in all of baseball. That figure surpasses the Yankees and Blue Jays, who have plated a first-inning run 29 and 27 times, respectively.

Balfour placed on DL with right oblique strain

By Tom Green / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Grant Balfour's right oblique strain has resulted in something that the dependable righty hoped to avoid: a trip to the disabled list.

The A's placed Balfour on the 15-day disabled list on Tuesday, retroactive to June 22, because of the injury, which has kept Balfour unavailable out of the bullpen since the team's series in Philadelphia over the weekend.

"Grant really isn't a guy that can ease into things," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "He's a full-out, max effort guy and a guy who is very important to us. We don't want to go down that road where we can potentially reinjure this thing.

"Oblique injuries can be tricky things, so we want to make sure that when he comes back he's fully healthy."

The decision to place Balfour on the disabled list came after the righty underwent an MRI that showed the soreness to be more than what the team expected. Balfour had the MRI because when he was throwing in Philadelphia, he felt that he couldn't throw beyond "50 to 60 percent" without feeling like he would worsen the injury.

"It's disappointing, for sure," Balfour said. "I felt great, my arm feels great and my body feels great. It's just one part of me right now that's a little sore and I need to get that fixed up. It's frustrating."

For Balfour, it's his sixth career stint on the DL, and it couldn't come at a worse time for the reliable setup man. Balfour is having a solid season out of the bullpen, and is in contention to represent Oakland in the All-Star Game.

The righty was tied for second among American League relievers with four wins at the time he was placed on the disabled list. He is 4-1 with two saves and a 2.48 ERA. In 33 appearances, opponents are hitting just .198 against him, including .136 with runners in scoring position. He has also not allowed a run in nine of his last 10 outings.

Despite the stellar stats, the oblique strain could hurt Balfour's chances of being named an All-Star for the first time in his career, but he hopes to be back before the All-Star break.

"If [being an All-Star] is something that was going to happen, hopefully it does," Balfour said. "I feel like I've had a few decent years where I've had a chance to make it, and I definitely would hate to see this jeopardize something like that. I got no control over that, I just have to get myself healthy and pitch for the team. Making an All-Star team would be awesome, but I have a team here that I need to worry about."

To replace Balfour, the A's recalled right-hander Trystan Magnuson to add a long reliever to the bullpen. It is Magnuson's second stint with the A's this year. During his first run, Magnuson made two appearances, pitching three innings and giving up six runs.

Melvin shuffles rotation with Harden on way

OAKLAND -- A's manager Bob Melvin shuffled the team's rotation on Tuesday prior to the start of the A's nine-game homestand, paving the way for righty Rich Harden to make his first appearance of the season.

Melvin moved righty Guillermo Moscoso into the starting spot for Wednesday's game against the Marlins, relegating fellow rookie Graham Godfrey to bullpen duties. The shuffle means that righty Trevor Cahill's next start will be in Thursday's series finale, and it sets up Harden for his Oakland debut on Friday against Arizona.

Harden has been sidelined all season with a right lat muscle strain after signing a one-year, \$1.5 million contract with the A's, but has made two rehab starts with Triple-A Sacramento in his quest to come back from the injury. During his time in Sacramento, he pitched 7 2/3 innings, allowing three runs with 12 strikeouts and three walks.

Harden was scheduled to make one last rehab start to get his pitch count up higher, but Melvin and the A's decided against it.

"We felt like at 90 [pitches], we can keep him," Melvin said. "That's a good number for us. We want him healthy, and he is healthy right now. The people that have the eyes on him feel like he was throwing well at this point. Rather than send him out one more time and get him to 110, we're comfortable with where he's been at this point."

Part of what played into the decision to forego a third rehab start for Harden is Godfrey's performance since being called up. The righty is 1-1 with a 4.24 ERA in three starts but has allowed just three earned runs in his last two appearances.

The shift means that Godfrey will add another long-relief option to an already stout bullpen, and Melvin said that the rookie could conceivably give the team up to 100 pitches in relief. Although he is used to being a starter, Godfrey isn't completely unfamiliar in a bullpen role, having spent about two weeks there last season in the Minors before returning to the rotation.

Despite being relegated to the bullpen, Godfrey is taking the move in stride.

"I feel fine," he said. "I'm still glad to be a part of the team. Even though it's a new role, I'm going to try to do the best that I can and try to contribute and help the team win."

Ellis, Powell had eyes on former universities

OAKLAND -- While Mark Ellis and Landon Powell are teammates on the field, the pair partook in a friendly rivalry off of it.

Ellis, who played college ball at the University of Florida, and Powell, who attended South Carolina, had a bit of a wager going on as their two former schools duked it out in the College World Series -- but neither would reveal the specifics of the bet, other than that it was "high stakes."

"My family wouldn't be ashamed of me," Powell said before Tuesday's home game against the Marlins. "It's not like I'm going to lose the house or anything, but we both are rooting for our team to win. It should be fun."

Powell said he still needed to talk trash to Ellis after South Carolina eked out a win in an extra-innings affair in Game 1 of the best-of-three championship series. And the trash talking will surely continue after the Gamecocks completed the sweep with a 5-2 win Tuesday night in Omaha, Neb.

Despite his team winning back-to-back championships, Powell admitted that he thought Florida was probably the better team this year -- something Ellis wholeheartedly agreed with. The A's longest tenured player was confident that his team would come back from the early loss and come away with the school's first CWS title, but the Gators fell short of that distinction, and now Ellis will have to pay up on the bet.

This isn't the first wager Powell has had during the CWS this year, either, as several of the teams involved in this year's tournament were well represented inside Oakland's clubhouse. Conor Jackson, Tyson Ross and manager Bob Melvin all spent time at Cal, and Cliff Pennington -- the victim of Powell's earlier bet -- attended Texas A&M.

"A lot of the guys in this clubhouse went to college; it's kind of the Oakland A's way," Powell said. "We all had good experiences in college, and we still root for our teams."

Worth noting

- Brandon McCarthy, who has been sidelined with a stress reaction in his throwing shoulder, was scheduled to make a rehab start on Tuesday in Stockton, but it was rained out. The righty will instead take the mound Wednesday for the Class A Ports.

A's manager Bob Melvin hinted that he tentatively has McCarthy scheduled to make his return to the club sometime over the weekend, but that could change.

- The A's announced on Tuesday that the team agreed to terms with three more players selected in this month's First-Year Player Draft, including Fresno State outfielder Dusty Robinson, the team's 10th-round selection. The team also agreed to terms with 33rd-round pick Austin Booker, who helped guide Cal to an appearance in the College World Series, as well as 39th-round pick Shane Boras, who is the son of agent Scott Boras.

The club has now signed or agreed to terms with 25 of its selections, including 18 of its first 25 picks.

Gio combines with Bailey to one-hit Marlins in 1-0 A's win

Sam McPherson, examiner.com

For purists, a 1-0 baseball game with only five total hits is paradise.

For the 2011 Oakland Athletics, yesterday's 1-0 win over the Florida Marlins was merely a sign that the team can win a close game every so often.

Gio Gonzalez allowed one hit in eight innings, the offense scored an unearned run in the second inning, and Andrew Bailey struck out the side in the ninth for the save.

Pretty good, but also pretty lucky.

The A's are only 11-17 now in one-run games, and every contest like this they win moves them closer to being something half relevant on the national scene -- just like every loss in a contest like this continues to kill their chances at the postseason.

Oakland remains six games out of first place, despite its 36-44 record, and if the team can somehow just manage to finish even in one-run games this year, that will be a positive step forward.

Last year, the A's finished 23-20 in one-run games, which was a huge step forward for the team after they finished 15-23 in 2009.

Continuing that momentum this year has been a difficult challenge, although generally there is no consistent correlation in this area from year to year as luck tends to rule the ledger -- and that balances out over the course of several seasons, even if rosters remain somewhat static.

But the myth is a good bullpen and a group of clutch hitters create success in one-run ball games, even though statistical analysis of historical trends has proven those illusions to be false.

Hence, the old baseball adage you'd rather be lucky than good.

So Gonzalez and Bailey were good, while the A's offense -- which grinded to the tune of four total hits and one walk off Marlins pitching -- was lucky.

Good teams win close games, but great teams don't bother with them at all -- they don't need to.

We know the A's aren't a great team, and they're still struggling to be a good team.

And for the purist, Tuesday night's game demonstrated Oakland's capacity for being just that.

Gonzalez almost perfect over Marlins

Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post

Oakland, CA – Upon returning home the Oakland A's picked up where they left off. The seventy-two minute rain delay was no problem for Gio Gonzalez, who in fact probably could have lasted the full game but was taken out after pitching eight scoreless innings.

The A's backed Gonzalez's almost perfect night with a 1-0 win over the Florida Marlins. The lefty is ranked fifth in the American League with an ERA 2.38 and made his first appearance against a team he grew up watching in Hialeah, Florida.

"I love the Marlins," explained Gio. "This is the team I grew up watching. These guys, they have history in my opinion, I grew up watching some of these guys. Even Gaby Sanchez, a friend of mine, it's fun to watch that team. Tonight was just one of those wins, it was one of those 1-0 ball games that kept everybody on the edge of their seat."

Emilio Bonifacio was the only hitter to get a hit off Gonzalez. He led off the first frame with a single to right field and that was it for the Marlins. The next thirteen batters were retired before Gio surrendered a walk to Jose Lopez and then struck out Logan Morrison to end the inning in the fifth.

Florida woes continued as they recorded their 23rd loss in the month of June. Their offense was missing in action and the defense made a few costly errors. After opening the the season with a 14-4 in one-run games they have lost their 14th straight one-run decision.

"It's just one of those things where it's happening," Sanchez said. "We have to continue to press and continue just to battle and battle through it. Things will change, we'll go on a streak where we'll win 14 straight one-run games. That's baseball, it happens that way. Hopefully we can at least finish off June right with two more games and get July going in a good way."

Gaby over the past two seasons has owned the month of June, posting a .318 average with eight home runs and 26 RBI's. But his average has fallen this month and tonight he was ejected by umpire Phil Cuzzi for throwing his bat after being called on strikes.

The frustration mounted when the Marlins failed to capitalize on Scott Sizemore's fielding error on Bonifacio's leadoff grounder when he over threw to first base that advanced Emilio to second. But closer Andrew Bailey struck out the next three batters to end the game.

"He did a good job, no question," said interim manager Jack McKeon. "Once again when you see our hitters up there, he didn't get us, we got ourselves. Give the guy credit, he knew how to get our hitters out. But I think if we were patient with him he would've walked four or five more guys, which is his history."

Gonzalez pitched eight innings, allowed one hit, no runs, three walks and struck out nine. Fanning 27 batters, he has now earned his third straight start. The second inning belonged to Oakland when designated hitter Hideki Matsui led off the second frame with a double. Conor Jackson reached first due to a throwing error by short stop Hanley Ramirez. Kurt Suzuki's sacrifice fly to right field brought in the A's first run which gave them a 1-0 lead.

"Performance-wise, the best I've seen him pitch," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "Ranks right up there with one of the best pitched games from a starter since I've been here."

MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

Tonight's Cats game postponed due to rain

Sacramento River Cats

Tonight's game at Raley Field between the Sacramento River Cats and the Reno Aces has been postponed due to rain and wet field conditions. The game will be made up as part of a doubleheader during the July 22-25 four-game series when the Aces return to Raley Field. The exact doubleheader date will be announced at a later time.

All tickets for Tuesday's (June 28) game can be exchanged at the Raley Field Ticket Office for tickets of equal or lesser value for any remaining regular season Sunday through Thursday home game during the 2011 season, subject to availability.

There are no refunds. Visit rivercats.com for more information.

Tuesday's rain-out marks just the fourth rain-out in River Cats franchise history, with the last rain-out occurring on April 21, 2007.

14 runs in 14th Win

Stockton Ports

The streak continued in Stockton on Tuesday, as the Ports scored 14 runs in their 14th straight win by beating the Bakersfield Blaze 14-4. A giant eighth inning for the Ports helped propel the streaking Boys of Banner Island to victory.

Similar to the night before, the Blaze opened the scoring in the game, putting two runs on the board in the second inning. Stephen Hunt started the inning with a leadoff double. First base was quickly filled by Josh Fellhauer as Ports starter Dan Straily walked the left fielder. The Blaze's first run came across home as Alex Buchholz singled to left field, followed closely by a Ryan La Marre sac fly to right field. Dan Straily got out of the jam, and the inning, with a beautiful pick off of Buchholz, who had strayed too far from the bag and was unable to beat the throw back to first.

The Ports responded in the bottom of the inning, manufacturing a run to get on the board. Anthony Aliotti singled to start the inning for the Ports, and quickly advanced to second on a wild pitch. Rashun Dixon followed the wild pitch with a walk to put runners on first and second. The Ports benefited from a bit of luck as a passed ball was called and both Aliotti and Dixon were able to advance 90 feet. Ryan Lipkin then stepped up and hit into a fielder's choice, which was enough to allow Aliotti to come home for the run.

The Ports drove in another run two innings later to tie it up. After Dixon grounded into a double play, Lipkin reached on an error, and advanced to second on a Dusty Coleman single. Lipkin made it all the way home on a Leonardo Gil single up the middle. The Ports would maintain the lead the rest of the game.

The Ports took the lead in the fifth, thanks to a single swing from the hottest hitter on the team: All-Star Michael Gilmartin. Gilmartin, who is batting .500 over the last five games, including two home runs and 7 RBIs, blasted a 2-0 pitch over the Jackson Rancheria Back Porch. Gilmartin was a big spark for the Ports in the game, hitting just a triple shy of the cycle in the game.

The Ports extended their lead in the sixth, tacking on two more runs. Lipkin was the first runner on board for the Boys of Banner Island in the inning, smacking a double to right field. With two outs in the inning and Lipkin still on second, Gil drew a walk before Conner Crumbliss drove both men in with a double of his own.

The Blaze would finally respond in the top of the seventh, putting up a single run to bring them within two runs. The inning began with a pitching change from the Ports, as Josh Lansford replaced Dan Straily. Straily left the game on the hook for the win, having given up two earned runs and struck out four. AJ Means was the lone run for the Blaze in the inning. Means got on base with a single, promptly stole second and advanced to third on a wild pitch by Lansford. Means crossed home plate courtesy of a sac fly by Didi Gregorius before Brodie Greene struck out to end the inning.

The Ports quickly responded with a run of their own in the inning. Gilmartin, who had hit a double in the third and a home run to give the Ports the lead in the fifth, began the inning with a single, and was moved 90 feet as Michael Choice walked. Gilmartin crossed home plate on a sac fly by Dixon.

The Blaze got their final run of the game in the eighth inning, without ever recording a hit. Chris Richburg got on base courtesy of a hit by pitch, reached second on a steal and advanced to third on a groundout by Buchholz. Richburg crossed home plate courtesy of Lansford's second wild pitch of the evening, completing the hitless run.

While the game was close through the first eight innings, the Ports blew the game open in the eighth, sending 12 men to the plate in the inning. The inning was a nightmare for the entire Blaze team, but must have been particularly tough for Blaze reliever Jason Braun, who in his first outing for the team gave up all eight runs (seven earned), and saw his ERA jump to a ghastly 189.00.

The inning began with a Gil single. Crumbliss became the first out of the inning, striking out. However, Gil stole second on the swing and Myrio Richard promptly filled first base as he walked. Braun's woes truly began when Gilmartin stepped up to the plate, with Gilmartin facing a 3-2 count, Braun balked, advancing the runners to third and second. An odd decision was then made as Gilmartin was then intentionally walked. The decision would bite Braun back the next batter, as Choice was hit by a pitch to bring Gil home for the first run of the inning.

Things went from bad to worse for Braun, as Aliotti, Dixon, and Lipkin all singled back-to-back, driving in four runs. Coleman then stepped up and doubled to right field, driving in another run for the Ports. When Braun walked Gil, who by that time was the tenth batter of the inning, Mace Thurman was ready to step in and close out the disastrous inning. Thurman promptly got Crumbliss to ground into a force out, which was good for the second out of the inning, but allowed two runs to score, and closing the book on Braun. Richard quietly ground out to end the inning, and the nightmare for the Blaze.

Chris Mederos came into to close the game for the Ports, and made quick work of the ninth inning, getting all three Blaze batters on three-pitch K's to end the game. The Ports look to extend their win streak on Wednesday as Ports righty Murphy Smith takes the mound at 7:05 p.m.

Cougars Slug Their Way to 2nd Win in Series

Burlington Bees

BURLINGTON, IA- The Kane County Cougars (5-0) got two home runs to power their way to a 4-1 win over the Burlington Bees (1-4) before 725 fans at Community Field on Tuesday night.

The Cougars opened the scoring with a three-run third inning against Burlington RHP Tyler Vail (1-4). RF Geulin Beltre (2-5) doubled and 3B Ryan Stovall (1-2) walked. 1B Jake Kuebler (2-3) smacked a three-run home run over the left field wall for a 3-0 lead.

The Bees scored a run in the third inning to make it 3-1. SS Wade Kirkland (2-3) doubled and moved to third base on a wild pitch. LF Royce Consigli (0-4) grounded out to third base to score Kirkland.

3B Ryan Stovall (1-2) hit a solo home run in the fifth inning against Burlington RHP Pedro Vidal to make it 4-1.

BEES BUZZINGS: C Beau Taylor made his Burlington debut and went 0-3. He was assigned to Burlington from SS-A Vermont on June 27. RHP Drew Tyson pitched two scoreless innings in his first Burlington outing since June 2 when he worked the eighth and ninth innings.

The Bees and Cougars finish their series on Wednesday night at 6:30 p.m. It's "Kids Eat Free Wednesday" with all kids 12 and under getting a hot dog and drink at the game. RHP Yordano Ventura (2-2, 4.21) gets the start for Kane County against RHP Sean Murphy (0-1, 11.37) for Burlington. Pre-game coverage begins at 6:10 p.m. on Newsradio 1490 KBUR and online at www.gobees.com.

2011 Bees tickets are on sale now! To purchase season tickets, bonus books or single game tickets, please give the Bees a call at (319) 754-5705 (319) 754-5705, go online to www.gobees.com, or stop by the box office at Community Field during normal business hours.

Vermont Doubles Past Lowell 7-3

By Paul Stanfield / Vermont Lake Monsters

LOWELL, MA --- Every Lake Monsters starter had at least one hit and Vermont tied a team record with six doubles in a 7-3 New York-Penn League victory over the Lowell Spinners on Tuesday night at LeLecheur Park.

Jordan Tripp put the Lake Monsters on the board in the top of the first inning with a two-out solo home run for his second homer of the young season. Vermont then added four runs in the second inning on just two hits for a 5-0 lead.

After Chris Affinito led off the inning with a double, Diomedes Lopez lined a single off the foot of Lowell starter Hunter Cervenka to put runners on first and third. Cervenka (0-2) stayed in the game, but struggled with his control the rest of the inning as he walked three batters and allowed two runs to score on wild pitches.

Vermont added an unearned run in the fifth and got a Chad Lewis RBI double in the eighth inning. The Spinners got their three runs on a Travis Shaw solo home run to leadoff the bottom of the fourth and Will Middlebrooks two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth.

The six doubles tied a Lake Monsters record for doubles in a game for the eighth time, the last coming at Aberdeen on August 30, 2010. Including an Aaron Shipman triple and Tripp's solo home run, eight of Vermont's 11 hits were for extra bases on Tuesday.

Lewis was 2-for-5 with a pair of doubles, while Lopez was 2-for-4 with a run scored. Starter Seth Frankoff (2-0) gave up one run on three hits with two walks and five strikeouts over six innings for his second win of the season, while reliever T.J. Walz struckout five of the six batters he faced in two perfect innings.

Vermont (6-4) snapped a modest two-game losing streak with the victory and now head to Connecticut for a three-game series against the Tigers. The Lake Monsters return home for a quick two-game homestand against the Tri-City ValleyCats Saturday at 6:05 pm and Sunday at 1:05 pm.