

**Fan dies after fall during Texas Rangers' win over Oakland A's**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

ARLINGTON, Texas -- All was quiet in the A's clubhouse Thursday night, but not because of a 6-0 loss to the Texas Rangers.

Players were visibly shaken after a fan sitting in the left-field bleachers died from injuries suffered in a 20-foot fall during the second inning at Rangers Ballpark.

The fan was later identified as Brownwood, Texas, firefighter Shannon Stone by several news sources.

Several A's relievers were in the visitors' bullpen located in left-center, not far from where the incident happened.

Oakland's Conor Jackson lined a foul ball into the left-field corner that ricocheted into fair territory. Rangers left fielder Josh Hamilton retrieved the ball and tossed it up to a male fan sitting in the first row behind the out-of-town scoreboard that's built into the left-field wall.

The man lunged forward, and as he caught the ball with his bare hands, tumbled over a railing and fell headfirst to the concrete below.

The area where the man fell was behind the 14-foot-high scoreboard and out of sight from the field.

Shaken A's reliever Brad Ziegler, who was consoled by his family members outside the clubhouse after the game, said the man was conscious as he was taken out of the stadium.

"It was me and (Craig) Breslow and (Joey) Devine," Ziegler said while standing at his locker, his eyes still bloodshot. "They had him on a stretcher and were carrying him out. He was saying stuff, like, 'Please check on my son.' They had his arms splinted. You're just assuming he was (going to be OK) -- he was conscious and talking. To find out he's not is tough."

There was no break in game action, though Texas catcher Mike Napoli briefly motioned toward left field as it was apparent something had happened.

The man did have his son, a young boy, sitting next to him.

Ronnie Hargis, who was sitting next to Stone, said: "He went straight down. I tried to grab him, but I couldn't. I tried to slow him down a little bit."

A's manager Bob Melvin said the tragic news began circulating through the dugout as the game unfolded.

"When you think you've had a bad day, something like that puts things in perspective," Melvin said. "It's devastating. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family."

The tragedy happened one year and one day after another man fell over a railing from the second deck at Rangers Ballpark. That man suffered a fractured skull. He also was a firefighter.

Rangers president Nolan Ryan, who had former President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura, sitting with him at the game, issued a statement passing along his condolences.

That news overshadowed another poor night by A's hitters, as Texas lefty Derek Holland threw a four-hitter for his third career shutout.

The A's, who have averaged 2.13 runs over their past 15 games, didn't advance a runner past first base until the ninth.

Oakland is hoping to use this four-game series to make up ground on first-place Texas, but the A's are now a season-high nine games back.

A's starting pitcher Rich Harden was not sharp, lasting just five innings and giving up five runs on eight hits.

"It was the first game in a while that it just didn't feel like we were in it," Melvin said.

Left fielder Josh Willingham was activated from the D.L. earlier in the day and batted cleanup. Hideki Matsui slid into the No. 3 spot. Coco Crisp batted second behind Jemile Weeks, as Melvin said he likes the speed they offer.

The Rangers pecked away at Harden, scoring in all but the second inning against him. Ian Kinsler got things going right away, leading off the bottom of the first with a double and scoring on Hamilton's grounder to short.

Hamilton notched four RBIs despite getting just one hit in four plate appearances. He singled a run home in the third and added two sacrifice flies. Michael Young hit a solo homer in the fifth.

### **Oakland A's update: Texas Rangers pitcher C.J. Wilson stands by his 'lawyer ball' comments about A's hitters**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

ARLINGTON, Texas -- The A's will face C.J. Wilson on Friday for the first time since the Texas Rangers pitcher dismissed their hitting approach as "lawyer ball." Wilson's remarks came after the A's handed him a May 9 defeat, when he walked a season-high five and allowed five runs despite giving up just two hits in seven innings.

"They take everything close. If it's not called a strike, then they walk. It's lawyer ball," Wilson told espn.com, adding: "I have to make a bunch of mistakes and walk a bunch of guys because they're not that good of a hitting team."

The "lawyer ball" reference implied the A's let the umpire -- or judge -- dictate what happens. The comments were posted in the A's clubhouse the next day and prompted a tongue-in-cheek response.

The A's sent a baseball to Wilson that read "From the law office of "... with the signatures of several hitters.

Wilson downplayed the incident Thursday but stuck by his comments.

"It's part of their game, right?" he said. "Some teams swing at anything close and are trying to hit home runs. Oakland, one thing about them, they work really well as a team. Maybe it's the white-shoe unity program, I don't know. They all seem like they have (the patient approach). That's what makes them effective."

The A's ranked ninth out of 14 A.L. teams with 261 walks entering Thursday's 6-0 loss to Texas.

"Any time anybody says that, you want to go out there and beat him again," A's outfielder Ryan Sweeney said of the "lawyer ball" comments.

The A's activated outfielder Josh Willingham and reliever Grant Balfour from the 15-day disabled list and optioned pitchers Graham Godfrey and Guillermo Moscoso to Triple-A Sacramento.

Moscoso threw seven shutout innings against Seattle on Wednesday. But the A's wanted an eight-man bullpen for the Rangers series, and Moscoso wouldn't have been available in relief.

A's manager Bob Melvin said Moscoso will pitch July 14 for Sacramento, with the tentative plan to have him rejoin the A's for a July 19 start at Detroit. Because of the All-Star break, that's the next time a fifth starter is needed.

"I consider him a part of this team," Melvin said. "Now, things can change. "... But you guys have seen him pitch. He deserves to be a front-runner."

### **Chin Music: Josh Willingham, Grant Balfour return from DL; Guillermo Moscoso optioned to minors; Coco Crisp batting second vs. Rangers**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 7/7/2011 5:13pm

There was lots of pregame activity for the A's today. Let's get to it ...

—Josh Willingham and Grant Balfour were both activated from the DL, with pitchers Guillermo Moscoso and Graham Godfrey being optioned to Triple-A Sacramento. Yes, it's awkward timing for Moscoso to go down given the gem he threw Wednesday. But there's a plan behind this: The A's want all the bullpen reinforcements they can have for this four-game series in homer-happy Rangers Ballpark. Moscoso would have been unavailable all weekend. "They need fresh arms," Moscoso said. He also said he's been told that he'll pitch July 14 for Triple-A Sacramento, and that — tentatively — the plan is for him to return to the major league rotation July 19 and start at Detroit. Moscoso knows nothing is set in stone. A's manager Bob Melvin confirmed the A's are eyeing July 19 for Moscoso's return to the rotation. That's no guarantee, but

Melvin acknowledged Moscoso is the front runner. "You guys have seen him pitch, he deserves to be a front runner," Melvin said. That seems to indicate the A's might be eyeing Tyson Ross as a reliever when he gets healthy, assuming Ross rejoins the major league roster when he comes off the DL.

The A's want Godfrey to stretch back out again and be ready if he's needed as a starter or long reliever.

-The lineups:

A's: Weeks 2B, Crisp CF, Matsui DH, Willingham LF, Sizemore 3B, Jackson RF, Carter 1B, Suzuki C, Pennington SS; Harden RHP.

Rangers: Kinsler 2B, Andrus SS, Hamilton LF, Beltre 3B, Young DH, Cruz RF, Moreland 1B, Napoli C, Chavez CF; Holland LHP.

-Melvin dropped the hot-hitting Scott Sizemore from second to fifth, keeps Weeks as his leadoff man and slots Crisp right behind Weeks, giving the A's a speedy combo atop the lineup. "Coco can hit anywhere in lineup, and I appreciate what he did in the '3' hole when he was there," Melvin said. "I want him to be able to swing. I don't want him to go up there and have to take all the time, and in the first spot you gotta be a little more selective. He's a smart hitter, and when a hole is open between first and second he's able to pull the ball and get his hands over. He's got a pretty good awareness of what he needs to do every at-bat and I want him to be able to go up there and swing."

-Melvin said he plans to give Matsui a day off Friday, and thinks some of Matsui's struggles might be because he's a little worn down. (Willingham will DH on Friday). You'll also notice Chris Carter remains in the lineup at first base against the lefty Derek Holland. "With our lack of production here recently, he's a guy we look to produce for us. You gotta stick with some guys," Melvin said.

### **Man dies after fall from outfield seats in Texas**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

A year and a day after a fan fell from the second deck at Rangers Ballpark and was severely injured, a man sitting in the front row of the left-field seats plunged 20 feet from his seat to the field level behind a scoreboard on the left-field wall and later died from his injuries.

The fan, identified by Texas newspapers as firefighter Shannon Stone, had attended Thursday night's game between the A's and Rangers with his young son. In the second inning, after a foul ball by Oakland's Conor Jackson bounced into left field, Texas outfielder Josh Hamilton attempted to throw the ball toward Stone. He leaned over and caught it before falling over the rail onto the concrete behind the out-of-town scoreboard.

Several of the A's relievers were waiting to get through the tunnel to the bullpen, and they were stopped there while Stone was wheeled through.

"They had him on a stretcher, and they were carrying him out, and he was saying stuff," said A's reliever Brad Ziegler, who was in tears after the team was informed of the man's death. "He was saying, 'Please check on my son. I was here with my son,' and people were saying, 'We'll check on your son. We'll make sure he's OK.'"

"He had his arms splinted, and he was talking, conscious. To come inside and find out something like this - it's just tough."

The A's clubhouse was silent, and the Rangers did not open their clubhouse after beating Oakland 6-0.

"The game and everything doesn't matter," Oakland starter Rich Harden said. "What happened - it's terrible."

Harden, who allowed five runs in five innings, said, "It's difficult. You've got to try to refocus. You've got a job to do, but it's hard just to ignore that."

Harden was with Texas last year when a fan, Tyler Morris, fell 30 feet and landed on the people below him. Morris, also a firefighter, was hospitalized with a fractured skull and broken ankle. Harden called that incident "awful."

More than 90 minutes after Thursday's game, there were officials in the left-field corner looking closely at the area.

"We are deeply saddened to learn that the man who fell has passed away as a result of this tragic accident," Rangers President Nolan Ryan said in a statement. "Our thoughts and prayers are with his family."

Texas manager Ron Washington told reporters that he will decide today if Hamilton needs the day off. Ryan described Hamilton as distraught, "as the entire team is."

A's manager Bob Melvin said, "It's just devastating. I don't even know what to say."

### **Rangers rock A's Rich Harden in makeup game**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

When the A's and Rangers originally tried to play Thursday night's game, on May 11, Texas jumped out to a big lead that was washed away.

In the makeup game, the Rangers scored five runs against their former teammate, **Rich Harden**, and beat Oakland 6-0 at Rangers Ballpark. When that May game was rained out, Texas led 7-0.

Harden, making his second start after missing the first three months with a muscle strain under his right arm, allowed eight hits, including a solo homer by **Michael Young** in the fifth, and he walked two.

Oakland managed two hits through the first eight innings, and four altogether, against **Derek Holland**, who threw his third career shutout. The A's have been shut out 10 times this season, tied for the most in the league.

**Willingham returns:** Outfielder **Josh Willingham** came off the disabled list after missing nearly three weeks with Achilles tendinitis and went 1-for-3.

Expect several contending teams to take note, because he is considered to be among the top trade targets before the deadline at the end of the month; the Phillies, in particular, have long-standing interest.

With Willingham back, **Hideki Matsui** returned to the third spot in the order and **Coco Crisp** hit second.

**Moscoso sent out:** **Guillermo Moscoso**, whose spot in the rotation doesn't come back up until July 19, came off the roster when the A's added two players, and he will make a start at Triple-A Sacramento on Thursday.

Manager **Bob Melvin** said that, while nothing is guaranteed, Moscoso deserves to be considered the front-runner for that July 19 start at Detroit. Moscoso has a 1.96 ERA over his past seven starts. He will remain in Texas to work out with the A's.

**Briefly:** Reliever **Grant Balfour** came off the DL after missing 15 days with a right oblique strain. ... Rookie **Graham Godfrey** was sent to Triple-A Sacramento to get his innings built back up in case he's needed to spot start; he said he'll work on a new changeup grip taught to him by pitching coach **Ron Romanick**. ... Willingham will be the designated hitter

tonight, and Matsui will get the day off. .... Melvin said that first baseman **Chris Carter** is going to keep getting a lot of time, for now, and then, "We'll see where we are at the break," Melvin said.

## **Leading off**

**Nervous secret service:** When Josh Hamilton lost his bat on a swing in the first inning, it flew near ex-President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura, who were sitting with Rangers President Nolan Ryan in the front row.

## **Drumbeat: Willingham back, Guillermo Moscoso sent down...temporarily**

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at Rangers Ballpark 7/7/2011 4:23pm

Josh Willingham is back a bit more quickly than he'd thought he might be just five or six days ago, when he felt that his nagging Achilles tendinitis might keep him on the DL until after the All-Star break. He's in the lineup, batting cleanup and playing left.

Chris Carter remains here, and he's playing first base tonight. Manager Bob Melvin made it sound as if the team is still trying to get as much of a look at him as possible, which indicates that this still is not a permanent situation - Carter is getting a lot of opportunities now, while here.

Best guess: When Guillermo Moscoso returns later in the month, Carter goes back to Triple-A Sacramento unless he is really contributing in a major fashion.

Moscoso was sent out today when the A's brought Willingham and reliever Grant Balfour off the DL, but Moscoso isn't actually going anywhere. He's staying here in Texas the next four days and working out with the team, he's doing all his throwing sessions with pitching coach Ron Romanick. He'll pitch at Triple-A Sacramento next Thursday, during the All-Star break, and then he's more than likely to jump back into Oakland's rotation on July 19. That's the next time the A's would need a fifth starter, and he'd be on turn for it.

Melvin said there are no promises in this game, and as an example, he said with a smile that the team could trade 10 people, including him, before that fifth spot in the rotation comes up again. But he said that Moscoso has earned the right to be the "frontrunner" for that July 19 start. I'd be tempted to write it in ink rather than in pencil; unless Moscoso just falls apart entirely at Sacramento next week or gets hurt, that spot is his. He's been the A's second-best starter, after Gio Gonzalez, for more than a month. It just so happens that he's the man to have pitched five days before the break, meaning he's unavailable for this series and then the team doesn't play again until July 15.

With Willingham's return, Hideki Matsui goes back to hitting third and Coco Crisp to hitting second. Scott Sizemore did a very nice job hitting second, but, Melvin said, Crisp is so versatile, he handles the bat so well - and he likes the speed at the top of the order with Jemile Weeks and Crisp.

Sizemore's not going far. He's batting fifth. Here's the lineup:

Weeks 2b, Crisp cf, Matsui dh, Willingham lf, Sizemore 3b, Jackson rf, Carter 1b, Suzuki c, Pennington ss

On a sad note, Hall of Fame manager Dick Williams, who took the A's to two titles, died today. Williams was among the most respected men in the game, and he was a treat to be around when he came to A's events or showed up at the winter meetings. Amazing stories - he worked for Charlie Finley, so that was plenty of fodder right there - told with good humor and with a real, abiding love for the game. My deepest condolences to Williams' family, including his son, Rick, who is a big-league scout with the Yankees and who is every bit as sharp and funny as his dad.

## **DICK WILLIAMS** **1929-2011**

### **The A's were champs, and 'he was the boss'**

#### **Manager cultivated hate with a purpose**

Bruce Jenkins, San Francisco Chronicle

The Bay Area has known its share of esteemed and high-profile managers, a list including Bill Rigney, Frank Robinson, Billy Martin, Roger Craig, Tony La Russa and Dusty Baker, but none so accomplished as Dick Williams, the Hall of Fame manager who passed away Thursday. No matter what the sport, it's rare to find someone so crucial to the history of three different

franchises.

And for a man essentially soft-hearted at the core, he had the toughest exterior you ever saw in your life.

In the manner of so many successful managers, Williams was a born leader with only marginal playing skills. He played 13 years in the big leagues, never hanging around one place too long, but he had the fortune of breaking in with the Brooklyn Dodgers of the early 1950s, a veritable graduate school of structure and fundamentals founded by legendary executive Branch Rickey.

Just three years after retiring from the game, he was a 37-year-old rookie manager with the Boston Red Sox, a dreadful team coming off eight consecutive sub-.500 years. In a season dubbed "The Impossible Dream" and still remembered with great fondness in New England, he led them to the 1967 pennant and a thrilling World Series, won by the St. Louis Cardinals in seven games.

When Williams replaced John McNamara to manage the Oakland A's in 1971, the impact was nearly as stunning. A decent, 89-win team became a 101-win powerhouse, and although the A's lost in the American League Championship Series to Baltimore that year, Williams guided them to consecutive World Series titles in 1972 and '73.

Those were the days of bold, larger-than-life personalities — Reggie Jackson, Vida Blue, Catfish Hunter, Mike Epstein, so many more — but Williams wielded the hammer. It's a concept both foreign and repulsive to current general manager Billy Beane: a brash, wildly opinionated manager able to handle the press, no matter what the crisis, and literally make a difference in the standings with his on-field genius.

And this roguish, free-wheeling team — owned by the tempestuous Charlie Finley — became one of the best and most fascinating in the history of the game.

Williams gave the distinct impression that he didn't much care for anyone. He constantly feuded with Finley, forever meddling with on-field affairs or concocting some crazy new way to present a ballgame, and he forged a dugout atmosphere built on a fierce competitiveness.

"Players give you 100 percent not because they want something, but because they hate something," Williams wrote in "No More Mr. Nice Guy," his 1990 autobiography. "I gave 100 percent because I hated losing. Others hated failure. For the ones who treated losing and failure lightly, I figured I'd give 'em something even better to hate. Me." For all of their bombast and internal strife, the A's played the game right. But Finley had it all wrong, humiliating Williams to the point of no return. After second baseman Mike Andrews made two costly errors in Game 2 of the '73 World Series against the Mets, Finley forced Andrews to sign a false document declaring he was injured — thus allowing Finley to replace him on the roster. Williams expressed his outrage to the media, and right then, in the middle of the Series, he knew he could no longer work for Finley.

He resigned at season's end, leaving the dynasty (good for another title in '74) to Alvin Dark.

Williams went on to manage the Angels and Montreal Expos, with varying levels of success, and in 1984, he took another apparently downtrodden team, the San Diego Padres, to a dramatic NLCS victory over the Chicago Cubs and the first World Series in their history — to this day, as spectacular an achievement as that franchise ever had. He retired in 1988 after the last of three seasons with Seattle, and it was hardly a mellow farewell. In reviewing his book for Sports Illustrated, Ron Fimrite (who died last year) wrote, "The list of people Williams trashes is too long to recount here, but suffice it to say that it includes virtually everyone he has ever worked for and who has ever played for him."

But there was one passage, near the end, that revealed a side of Williams more familiar to his wife, Norma, and those who spent time around the long-married couple: "By God, I thought, sometimes all of baseball's (expletive) can be worth it.

Sometimes your wins really are perfect, with no strings, nothing but feelings you haven't had since you were a child. Sometimes this game really can be beautiful."

That's how we'll remember Williams' Oakland A's: crazy, arrogant and occasionally out of their minds, but purveyors of a beautiful game.

### **Leader of '72, '73 teams dies at 82**

By Tom FitzGerald, San Francisco Chronicle

The title of Dick Williams' 1990 autobiography, "No More Mr. Nice Guy: A Life of Hardball," was a joke, and everybody in baseball got it.

He was abrasive and confrontational with players and management alike, but he got results.

In 21 years as a big-league manager, he led three different franchises to the World Series.

He was inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame in 2008.

The manager who steered Charlie Finley's A's to three straight AL West titles and Series titles in 1972 and '73 died Thursday at 82 at a hospital near his home in Henderson, Nev., from a ruptured aortic aneurism, according to the Hall of Fame.

"He was a brilliant and feisty leader — and universally recognized as one of the greatest managers in major-league history," A's managing partner Lew Wolff said. He "played a key role in bringing the Bay Area its first ever team world championship."

Mr. Williams was an established skipper by the time he got to Oakland.

In 1967, he took over the Red Sox and led them to their first winning season in nine and to the American League pennant in what was known to generations of Red Sox fans as the "Impossible Dream" season.

But he enjoyed his greatest run of success with the A's, who featured Reggie Jackson, Catfish Hunter, Rollie Fingers and Vida Blue. Jackson, Hunter and Fingers are in the Hall of Fame. It was Mr. Williams who changed Fingers from a starter to a closer, essentially originating the role.

"We were young and needed to understand how to go about winning and take the final step to become a great team," Jackson said. "He was very important in that. He demanded excellence."

He clashed often and publicly with Finley but had the longest tenure — three years — of any of Finley's managers.

"I loved playing for Dick," outfielder Joe Rudi said. "A lot of guys had issues with his style. For the guys who were established, he treated you like gold.

That's not to say he wouldn't get on your butt. You knew he was the boss, not Finley."

Second baseman Dick Green said, "I played for a lot of managers — 10 or 12 of them. But of all the managers, he was the best baseball man that I played for."

He added, "He wasn't my favorite person."

The A's were a feisty bunch, and they took their cues from their manager.

Starter John "Blue Moon" Odom took himself out after five innings in the final game of the 1972 American League playoffs after getting sick in the dugout. Vida Blue completed a 2-1 win over the Tigers, and the A's won the pennant.

Blue teased Odom in the clubhouse afterward, prompting what Mr. Williams called "the first championship clubhouse fight in history."

Blue recalled Thursday that he had gone through basic training with the Army but that Mr. Williams "made those drill sergeants look like Boy Scouts. He scared me. Going to his office was like being behind the Iron Curtain. But he taught us all how to play, how to move runners over, how to take the extra base, how to hit the cutoff man. He was tough but fair."

He finally quit after the 1973 championship, tired of Finley's intrusions and miffed by the owner's public humiliation of second baseman Mike Andrews for his two errors in Game 2 of the World Series.

"We all wore black armbands for Andrews," said A's broadcaster Ray Fosse, a catcher on that team. "Charlie went berserk, and Dick called a team meeting and said, 'Regardless what happens in this Series, I'm resigning afterward.' And he stuck to his word.

... What more can I say than you wanted to play hard for him?"

A's broadcaster Ken Korach became good friends with Mr. Williams after he'd retired from baseball, and Mr. Williams worked Pacific Coast League telecasts with Korach in the early-to-mid '90s.

"He had very strong opinions, and he was an old-school guy, pretty rigid in his thinking — his own man," Korach said. "When he got into the Hall of Fame, it meant so much to him, and he deserved it. We'd all worried it might come later, after he was gone."

When he took the Padres to their first World Series in 1984, he joined Hall of Famer Bill McKechnie as the second manager to lead three different franchises to the Fall Classic.

Mr. Williams managed the Angels from 1974 to 1976 and built the Expos into pennant contenders during his five seasons (1977 to '81) with them. After taking over San Diego in 1982, Mr. Williams turned around yet another franchise. He remained with them through the 1985 season, then piloted the Mariners from 1986 to '88 before retiring.

Giants coach Tim Flannery, who played for Mr. Williams with the Padres, said the skipper was so intimidating "that if you were on the team flight and you knew he was looking for you, you'd literally hide in the bathroom.

"He's the reason I coach the way I do. He's the reason I played the way I played. He showed us a way to win and way not to win. He said in the first meeting, 'I don't care if you don't like me, ever. I don't care if you ever talk to me, ever.' " Mr. Williams' son Mark told [MLB.com](#) that the family intends to honor his wishes and have his father's ashes spread at the Hall of Fame. Funeral services will not be held.

Chronicle Staff Writers Susan Slusser, Henry Schulman and Gwen Knapp and the Associated Press contributed to this story.

## **Champion A's manager Dick Williams dies at 82**

San Francisco Chronicle

Hall of Fame manager Dick Williams, who led the A's to the 1972 and 1973 World Series titles, has died in Las Vegas.

Williams' friend, Bob Blum, said Williams died today at his home. He was 82.

Williams managed the 1967 Red Sox Impossible Dream team, which lost the World Series in seven games to the Cardinals. In 1984, he managed the pennant-winning Padres, who lost to the Tigers in a five-game Series. That team included current Giants manager Bruce Bochy and coach Tim Flannery.

Williams also managed the California Angels, Montreal Expos and Seattle Mariners during a 21-year career.

When Williams was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2007, The Chronicle's Susan Slusser wrote that Williams spent so many years waiting for the call from the Hall that the final few minutes were especially excruciating for he and his wife, Norma.

"They said they would call and let me know the results around 7 a.m.," Williams said then. "Then 7 a.m. came, no call. At 7:01, no call. At 7:02, my wife and I looked at each other, no call. Between 7:02 and 7:03, the phone rang and it blew our minds. We're just so thankful. Norma and I broke down and cried."

Williams was elected by the Veterans Committee.

Williams was a rookie manager when he took the Red Sox of Carl Yastrzemski and Jim Lonborg to the AL pennant in 1967.

"We were a 100-1 shot, no chance whatsoever," Williams said of that Boston club. "Winning on the last day of the season in a four-team race, totally unbelievable."

The A's won three division titles and two Series championships under Williams, who often clashed with owner Charlie Finley but had the longest tenure (three years) of any of Finley's managers.

Longtime Oakland closer Rollie Fingers credited Williams with turning around Fingers' career after he had floundered as a starter. "I wouldn't be in the Hall of Fame if it wasn't for Dick, " Fingers said when Williams was elected.

## **A's lose amid tragic circumstances**

By Louie Horvath / MLB.com

ARLINGTON -- The death of a fan in the outfield stands overshadowed any thoughts of baseball in the A's 6-0 loss to the Rangers at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington on Thursday.

The fan was attempting to grab a ball flipped into the stands by Rangers left fielder Josh Hamilton. The ball had been fouled off by Oakland's Conor Jackson, and caromed toward Hamilton, who decided to toss the potential souvenir into the stands as



many players typically do. As the fan got his hands on the ball, he tumbled over the top rail of the left-field seats, falling approximately 20 feet to the area just behind the outfield wall.

The man died on his way to the hospital, due to injuries sustained in the fall.

"When you think you've had a bad day, something like that puts things in perspective," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "It is devastating. I don't even know what to say. Obviously, our thoughts and prayers are with the family."

Some of the people closest to the fan were the A's players in the bullpen, which was roughly 70 feet away from where the man fell.

Even though he was attended to by stadium personnel immediately, the players could still hear pieces of the conversation.

"When they had him on a stretcher and they were carrying him out, he was saying stuff like 'Please check on my son, he's left up there by himself,'" reliever Brad Ziegler said. "The people that carried him out reassured him that, 'We'll get your son, we'll make sure he's OK.' We just kind of assumed that he's talking, he's conscious, he'll be OK. To find out he's not is just ... tough."

The A's understandably looked distracted, notching just four hits against Derek Holland. The only Athletics player to get a hit against him in the first eight innings was Kurt Suzuki, who collected two hits.

Holland, who had struggled mightily in his last outing, kept the A's off balance all game, striking out seven batters in the shutout.

"He threw more curveballs than we saw in our reports," Melvin said. "Good changeup, really both sides of the plate. He was able to pitch in as a left-hander, and make right-handers aware of the inside. It opens up for balls away. His offspeed stuff, we were just in between. This was the first game in a while where I just didn't feel we were in it."

The A's made a run in the ninth, loading the bases with two outs on two singles and a walk. But Jackson flied out to right field to end the game, and preserve Holland's shutout.

Holland allowed four hits and two walks, with seven strikeouts.

Holland's opposite number, Rich Harden, did not look anywhere near as sharp in allowing five runs over five innings -- ultimately earning the loss.

"He was behind a little bit, maybe more than he was last game," Melvin said. "There were some balls up, some breaking balls. Usually with the fastballs, he can pitch up in the zone and get away with it, because his breaking ball is down. Early on, I think he left some breaking balls up that they took advantage of, and they got some better counts this time."

The damage started on the first batter, when Ian Kinsler doubled to lead off the Rangers' half of the first inning. A bunt and an RBI groundout helped plate Kinsler with the first run. But the Rangers didn't stop there, tacking on runs in four of the next five innings.

"Rich was Rich," Rangers manager Ron Washington said of Harden. "We made him get the ball up, and made him work hard. He certainly wasn't erratic, and it was a different Rich than what we saw last year. He competed hard."

While the Rangers did not batter Harden -- only tallying three extra-base hits off him -- they were consistently able to use timely hits to drive in baserunners.

After the game, Harden said that he struggled to focus on his pitching after the fan's fall.

"You've got to try to refocus and see the job to do. But yeah, it's hard to just ignore that," Harden said.

Harden was with the Rangers one year and one day ago, when another Rangers fan fell from the second deck chasing a foul ball.

"The game doesn't really matter, you know what I mean?" Harden said. "Obviously, it does. But with what happened tonight, it was incredible."

## **Fosse recalls former skipper Williams**

By Louie Horvath / MLB.com

ARLINGTON -- The Athletics saw the passing on Thursday of former manager Dick Williams, who presided over the first two seasons of the A's back-to-back-to-back World Series championships from 1972-74.

"I know that every one of those players that played for him is very sad," A's broadcaster and starting catcher for the 1973 team, Ray Fosse, said. "He was very well respected, and what more can you say about playing for someone that you want to play hard for."

Williams, 82, is believed to have suffered a brain aneurism at his Las Vegas home earlier on Thursday.

Fosse said that Williams was a master of ensuring that the players were not involved with the dealings of the A's owner at the time, Charlie Finley, who was notoriously frugal.

"We knew things were going on, but Dick never let us know what was happening," Fosse said. "We played to win, and he was a very, very good manager."

Williams resigned after the A's won the 1973 World Series, when he and Finley did not reach terms on a new contract.

"He made some great players on those teams," Fosse said. "Changing Rollie from starter to closer, Hall of Fame career because of it, he could see things like that."

Williams himself was inducted into the Hall of Fame, as one of two managers to take three different teams to the World Series.

## **Willingham rejoins lineup**

ARLINGTON -- Josh Willingham returned to the Oakland lineup, batting cleanup and starting in left field on Thursday, after missing 17 games with a left Achilles strain.

A's manager Bob Melvin said there should be no issues for Willingham with running the bases or playing left field.

"That's the reason we went the extra yard," Melvin said. "Hopefully, it's not an issue. And if I was only able to DH him, I probably wouldn't have activated him. He even said when he was doing the rehab that he'd get stiff moreso DH-ing and sitting around between at-bats. The focus all along was once we get him back, we'd be able to play him in the outfield."

Last Sunday, Melvin said the team was moving back Willingham's starting point indefinitely to ensure that he was healthy, and Thursday appeared to be the first day that he could.

Melvin also said he planned to start Willingham at designated hitter on Friday.

## **Godfrey sent to Minors**

ARLINGTON -- With Grant Balfour coming off the disabled list for Thursday's game, the A's sent down long reliever Graham Godfrey to Triple-A Sacramento.

Balfour has not allowed a run in nine of his last 10 outings, and only allowed a single run in the other outing.

"First with Godfrey, we took him out of the rotation, obviously, with guys coming back. He was in the long role, [but] didn't get to pitch," Athletics manager Bob Melvin said.

The 26 year old was sent down in order to ensure he was pitching regularly, and would be able to come back up if any starters sustained an injury that he would need to fill in for.

"He was preparing and staying ready. But now, it has gotten to the point where he has to just go down and pitch," Melvin said. "Get his pitch counts back up, whether it's insurance on a starter or long reliever, or something along those lines."

## **Moscoso heads to Triple-A**

ARLINGTON -- Just one day after pitching seven shutout innings in Oakland against the Seattle Mariners, Guillermo Moscoso found himself going down to Triple-A Sacramento to make room for Josh Willingham.

While it was a tough break for Moscoso, A's manager Bob Melvin said that he fully expects for Moscoso to be back on the A's 25-man roster very soon.

"I consider him part of this team, and we'll see what happens on the 19th." Melvin said.

"I can't promise him anything, but you've seen this guy pitch. You've seen what he's done for this team. He deserves to be the frontrunner [to return]."

Melvin said that one of the biggest reasons Moscoso went down was that the impending All-Star break, starting on Monday, made it unnecessary to carry the starter through until his next start on the 19th.

"He was sent down because of the fact that there were no more starts for him, at this point, until the end of the first half," Melvin said. "I couldn't use him in long relief here because he just threw 110 pitches. He'll go down, he'll pitch on the 14th. Our next start where we need a fifth starter here is on the 19th."

With reliever Grant Balfour and Willingham coming up for Moscoso and long reliever Graham Godfrey, the A's are ensuring that they will have enough pitchers in the bullpen to go toe-to-toe with the AL West-leading Texas Rangers for four games at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington.

"I spelled it out for him, and he understood there wasn't another start, and he was basically unusable in this series. And in a four-game series in this ballpark, you do need pitching," Melvin said. "We still have an eight-man bullpen, and that's important to have here. In that respect, he understood. But he certainly was disappointed. I feel bad for him."

### **Worth noting**

- The Rangers and A's are first and second in the American League in both errors and unearned runs.
- The A's are 13-12 against other AL West foes, and just 26-37 against everyone else.
- Oakland has hit two home runs or fewer in each of its last 59 games.
- The A's .235 team batting average would be their lowest going into the All-Star break since 1982.

### **All-Star hurlers square off in Arlington**

By Nick Kosmider / MLB.com

Oakland lefty Gio Gonzalez and Texas southpaw C.J. Wilson are looking forward to their opportunity to be teammates on the American League All-Star team on Tuesday, where they will aim to help their league earn home-field advantage in the World Series.

But there is a little business to tend to first.

Before they join forces during the Midsummer Classic, Gonzalez and Wilson will oppose each other on the hill on Friday in the second of four games between the two teams heading into the All-Star break.

The Rangers blanked the A's, 6-0, in the opener.

"It's always a battle with Gio out there," said Rangers manager Ron Washington, who selected both Gonzalez and Wilson to the AL team. "This should be a very interesting battle."

Gonzalez has fared well against the Rangers, going 4-1 with a 2.18 ERA in nine career appearances against them. That doesn't include a start on May 11 against Texas, when he gave up seven runs -- including a grand slam to Mitch Moreland -- because the game was rained out after four innings.

Wilson has a 4.42 ERA in 55 career innings against the A's.

"Gio is part of that good young pitching staff that Oakland has, and is having an outstanding season," Washington said. "C.J. is very deserving of being an All-Star. He has done everything we've asked him to do."

Both pitchers could be prime candidates to start for the American League on Tuesday. But Washington said he would prefer Wilson come out of the bullpen, because of his previous experience there.

But if his manager changes his tune, Wilson would be ready to start the game.

"I would be super stoked if that were the case, but it's not my call," Wilson said. "Who wouldn't want a chance to start an All-Star Game?"

### **A's: Willingham returns**

Josh Willingham's return to the lineup caused manager Bob Melvin to tweak his batting order.

Melvin moved Coco Crisp into the No. 2 spot to give him more freedom in the batter's box.

"I want him to be able to swing," Melvin said. "I want him to not have to go up there and take all the time. And in the leadoff spot, you have to be a little more selective. He's a smart hitter. When the holes open between first and second, he's able to pull the ball and roll his hands over. He's got a pretty good awareness of what he needs to do each and every at-bat, and I want him to be able to go up there and swing."

### **Rangers: Ogando could be an All-Star**

Rangers skipper Ron Washington may be managing one more of his own players when he guides the American League into the All-Star Game on Tuesday.

With three of the AL's pitchers -- Justin Verlander, Felix Hernandez and James Shields -- scheduled to pitch on Sunday, which would force them to be replaced on the roster, Alexi Ogando could be in position to earn a spot on the squad.

If any player drops out of the game, he will be automatically replaced by the next highest vote-getter on the list, and Ogando is expected to be near the top of that list.

"We'll just have to see what happens," Washington said.

### **Worth noting**

- The A's have hit just 47 home runs, fewest in the American League.
- Thursday's game marked a stretch of three straight series against AL West foes for the Rangers.

### **Hall of Fame skipper Williams dies at 82**

#### **Won pennants with Red Sox, A's, Padres: enshrined in '08**

By Spencer Fordin / MLB.com

Dick Williams, an iconic Hall of Fame manager who spent six decades in baseball, died Thursday at the age of 82. Williams, who suffered an aneurysm in his aorta, according to his grandson Matt Ulfelder, is one of two managers in Major League history to win a pennant with three different teams.

Williams, who was born in St. Louis, first signed a professional contract with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. He went on to have a 13-year playing career that saw him suit up for Brooklyn, Baltimore, Cleveland, Boston and the Kansas City Athletics, and he retired after the 1964 season with a .260 career batting average.

From there, though, Williams saw his career take a new route. Williams earned the first of his six managing jobs in 1967. Behind the pitching of Jim Lonborg and the clutch hitting of Carl Yastrzemski, the "Impossible Dream" Red Sox won the American League pennant on the final day of the regular season and took the Cardinals seven games before dropping the World Series.

The close-cropped Williams went 260-217 in parts of three seasons with Boston, but he was relieved of his duties with nine games remaining in the 1969 campaign.

That, for Williams, turned out to be a blessing. Williams signed on with the A's and combative owner Charlie Finley, and led Oakland to a 101-win season in 1971.

Williams grew out his gray hair and sported a mustache like many of his players, who included Hall of Famers Reggie Jackson, Catfish Hunter and Rollie Fingers and stars such as Joe Rudi, Bert Campaneris and Vida Blue. The "Swingin' A's" won World Series titles in 1972 and '73, becoming the first team since the 1961-62 Yankees to win consecutive World Series titles. But Williams resigned after the latter campaign.

"It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Dick Williams today," current A's owner Lew Wolff said in a statement. "He was a brilliant and feisty leader, and universally recognized as one of the greatest managers in Major League history.

"Beyond his status as a Hall of Famer, Dick's name will forever be associated with the Oakland Athletics, as he led the team to back-to-back World Series titles in 1972 and 1973, and played a key role in bringing the Bay Area its first ever team World Championship. A's fans and our franchise will always have a warm spot in their hearts for Dick Williams. We offer our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends."

After the Yankees' attempt to sign him failed -- Williams was still under contract to Oakland and Finley wanted compensation -- Williams moved to the California Angels. His former team -- the A's -- went on to a World Series three-peat that season, and Williams struggled for three seasons to turn the Angels into a winning organization.

Williams made his next stop in Montreal, a team that was coming off a 107-loss season. The Expos slowly turned it around over the next few years and finished second in the National League East in 1979 and 1980. The Expos struggled early in the strike-marred 1981 campaign, though, and Williams was let go even though the team was in first place in the second-half standings at the time.

At that point, Williams was 52 years old and had already managed four teams, but he found a way to make a fitting encore. Williams took over San Diego in 1982, and after a pair of .500 seasons, he led the Padres to a 92-70 record in 1984 before losing in five games to the Tigers in the Fall Classic.

"We are deeply saddened at the loss of Dick Williams, one of the most important and influential figures in the history of our franchise," said Padres vice chairman and CEO Jeff Moorad. "Dick ushered in one of the greatest eras in Padres history, making a tremendous impact not only on our team, but on the city of San Diego during the 1980's. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. He will be greatly missed."

Williams later took charge of the Seattle Mariners, but he posted a 159-192 record in parts of three years with that club. Williams, for his career, notched a 1,571-1,451 record as a manager, and he is one of two big-league managers -- along with Lou Piniella -- to lead four different teams to a 90-win campaign.

The Veterans Committee paid Williams the ultimate compliment in December 2007, when he was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. Williams was inducted to Cooperstown the following summer, and he lived out the latter years of his life in retirement in Las Vegas.

### **Father, curveball help propel All-Star pitcher Gonzalez**

Aileen Voisin, Sacramento Bee

OAKLAND – Max Gonzalez remembers the moment as if it happened last week, not more than a decade ago when his son, A's left-hander Gio Gonzalez, was a ninth-grader in Hialeah, Fla.

Max had seen enough by then to know Gio was a "pretty special" pitcher with big-league potential. He was striking out 15 or 16 batters a game for a travel league team and was throwing a wicked curveball – a pitch Max taught him – that was all but unhittable.

Max also knew Gio could squander that potential unless he became more dedicated to pitching, unless he kept learning and working.

So he approached Gio and made him a promise.

"I told him, 'Give me four years of your life. Let me teach you what I know, and I'll make you a millionaire. I know the game of baseball. I know what's good for you,' " Max recalled. "He believed it, and it worked. So far so good."

It worked so well that Gio Gonzalez, 25, was selected for the American League All-Star team this year in just his second full big-league season with the A's. His parents, Max and Yoly, were in Oakland visiting Gio when the announcement came Sunday morning, just hours before he earned his eighth victory of the year as the A's beat Arizona 7-2.

And they'll be at Chase Field in Phoenix for the All-Star Game on Tuesday.

"My dad grew up playing baseball," Gio said. "My dad knew everything about the game. He's still my coach when I call home."

### **Mom deserves credit, too**

Gio Gonzalez grew up in Hialeah, a Miami suburb of more than 200,000 people that's home to many Cuban Americans and exiles from Cuba. His grandparents on both sides were born in Cuba. Yoly came to the United States from Cuba when she was a little girl, but Max was born in Jersey City, N.J., where he lived before moving to South Florida.

In Hialeah, baseball is king.

"Baseball is something that every Latin father knows back home," Gio said. "It was something we all grew up watching. My dad was always a big inspiration and into baseball. He didn't know much about basketball, which was a sport I used to love a lot.

"He was like, 'Baseball is something I know. I can teach you what I know.' He taught me and my brother (Max Jr.) to play. We loved it."

Said Max, "Every Cuban wants their kid to play baseball."

Max taught Gio how to pitch, but Gio gives his mom much of the credit for his competitiveness and aggressiveness on the mound.

"I think in my other life I was a man," Yoly said, laughing. "I love everything that has to do with boxing, shooting, motorcycle riding. We're totally opposite, my husband and I. I love football. I love roughness. I love karate. He's very calm."

Yoly said both of her sons were "very competitive" in baseball and other sports while growing up.

"Personally, I always thought his brother would make it over Gio," Yoly said. "(Gio) was a little weak. His brother was more like a tough character. Like Max says, Gio listens. He just got better and better. That's why he's at where he's at now."

### **Bumpy path to majors**

Coming out of high school, Gonzalez was the 38th overall draft pick in 2004, chosen by the Chicago White Sox. But his road to the big leagues and the All-Star Game was anything but smooth.

From 2005 to 2008, he was traded three times. The White Sox sent him to Philadelphia as part of a deal for Jim Thome in 2005. The next year, Philadelphia shipped him back to the White Sox as part of a package for Freddy García. Then in 2008, the White Sox traded Gonzalez, Ryan Sweeney and Fautino De Los Santos to the A's for Nick Swisher.

"It was tough growing up through the minor leagues where I was always being bounced around, so I never had kind of a feel for the players, never had a comfortable setting," Gonzalez said. "Once Oakland gave me an opportunity to play, that's where I finally got to settle in. I was just happy to be in an organization that finally kept me and decided to run with me."

Yet even with the A's, Gonzalez endured some rough times. After beginning the 2008 season with the River Cats and going 8-7, the A's called him up Aug. 6 and put him in the rotation. Gonzalez went 1-4 with a 9.32 ERA over seven starts and was moved to the bullpen for the rest of the season.

Gonzalez began the 2009 season in Sacramento and was called up twice for one-game stints before being promoted to the A's for good on June 24. He went 4-1 with a 2.51 ERA in Sacramento and 6-7 with a 5.75 ERA in Oakland.

Gonzalez made strides in 2009, but he still had trouble controlling his emotions on the mound. One or two bad pitches would often lead to a disastrous inning.

When he arrived for spring training in 2010, Gonzalez wasn't considered a lock to make the A's Opening Day roster.

### **Elevating his game**

Gonzalez not only made the roster, he earned the No. 5 spot in the rotation, and then he had a career year.

With veteran left-hander Dallas Braden mentoring him, Gonzalez went 15-9 with a 3.23 ERA in 33 starts. He struck out 171 batters in 200 2/3 innings. He ranked eighth in the American League in ERA and 10th in opposing batting average (.229).

"It was just getting an opportunity to pitch," Gonzalez said. "Getting sent up and down, up and down, up and down, it's pretty tough to get a rhythm and get something going. "Once I got my feet wet, Dallas Braden took me under his wing where he took care of me and helped me keep my composure, worked on my attitude."

This season, Gonzalez has taken his game up a few more notches. He's 8-5 with a 2.31 ERA. He has 106 strikeouts in 109 innings, mixing his devastating curveball, a fastball in the low-to-mid-90s and an improving changeup.

"I think everybody in here knew he had all the talent in the world to be the type of pitcher he is right now," A's catcher Kurt Suzuki said. "Just a matter of learning. He's still real young, so he's learning what it takes to become successful at this level."

Closer Andrew Bailey said Gonzalez learned how to concentrate on each pitch and avoid those meltdowns that led to huge innings.

"I think that has a lot to do with maturity," Bailey said. "Before, he sort of let things build up. Before you know it, there's a two- or three-spot on the board, and you still have no outs. I think he kind of learned how to limit the damage and put things behind him, keep moving forward."

Off the field, Gonzalez is still a kid, typically wearing T-shirts with Marvel comic characters and greeting teammates and fans with a warm smile. He's one of the most fan-friendly players on the team. To a large degree, he can thank his father for that approach.

"I remember when he was young, we used to take him to spring training," Max said. "What turned me off is a lot of baseball players would pass by and not stop and talk to the fans. I couldn't understand that. I told Gio, 'Don't ever, ever do that. Don't forget, this is a 15-minute hurrah. What comes up goes down. Always remember there's life after baseball. Don't be one of these egotistical guys.' I guess that stuck with him."

One more lesson learned.

### **Fan fatality overshadows A's 6-0 loss in Texas**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ARLINGTON, Texas — Josh Hamilton and the Texas Rangers were devastated Thursday night after a fan fell from the stands trying to grab a ball tossed by the center fielder and later died.

"It's sad, it's very sad," Rangers manager Ron Washington said following a 6-0 victory over the Oakland Athletics.

A man attending the game with his young son fell about 20 feet to the ground, the Rangers and Arlington fire officials said.

The accident occurred in the second inning after Oakland's Conor Jackson hit a foul ball that ricocheted into left field. Hamilton retrieved the ball and tossed it into the stands. Replays on Oakland's television broadcast show the man reaching for the ball and apparently catching it before tumbling over the rail.

"We spoke to the ballclub, they understood what has happened and we spoke to Josh," team president Nolan Ryan said. "I think as any of us would be, Josh is very distraught over this, as the entire team is."

The Rangers clubhouse was closed to reporters after the game.

Hamilton, the reigning AL MVP, drove in four runs and was selected earlier this week to start his fourth consecutive All-Star game next week. Washington said he would wait before determining if Hamilton would play against the A's on Friday night.

"I think we'll deal with that tomorrow when he gets here, to see how he feels," Washington said.



A very somber Ryan called it a tragic accident.

"As an organization, and as our team members and our staff, we're very heavy-hearted about this," Ryan said. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family."

TV replays showed the man, whom the Rangers and fire officials didn't identify, falling head-first and landing behind a 14-foot-high wall supporting a video board for replays and scores. The area where he fell is out of sight from the field.

"When you think you've had a bad day, something like that puts things in perspective. It's just devastating," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said. "I don't even know what to say. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family."

The visitor's bullpen at the stadium is in left-center field. Athletics reliever Brad Ziegler was in tears after the game when he found out the man had died.

"They had him on a stretcher. He said, 'Please check on my son. My son was up there by himself.' The people who carried him out reassured him. 'Sir, we'll get your son, we'll make sure he's OK,'" Ziegler said. "He had his arms swinging. He talked and was conscious. We assumed he was OK. But when you find out he's not, it's just tough."

There was an audible gasp in the stands when the man tumbled over the rail, eerily similar to an accident last July when a man fell about 30 feet from the second-deck of seats down the right-field line while trying to catch a foul ball. That fan, Tyler Morris, suffered a fractured skull and sprained ankle.

It is the second fatal fall at a MLB ballpark this season. In May, a 27-year-old man died after he fell about 20 feet and struck his head on concrete during a Colorado Rockies game.

Derek Holland (7-4) rebounded from his shortest outing ever with a four-hitter for his third career shutout. He struck out seven and walked two while allowing only four singles. The left-hander had allowed five runs and four hits while getting only two outs in his previous start Saturday night against Florida.

"Obviously, he was outstanding," Washington said. "He came out and pounded the strike zone from the very first pitch. He never looked back and stayed focused."

Hamilton drove in a run in each of his first four at-bats, putting Texas ahead to stay with an RBI groundout in the first. The outfielder added a run-scoring single in the third before two sacrifice fly balls after that.

This was the makeup of a May 11 game that was rained out after Texas built a 7-0 lead through four innings.

Rich Harden (1-1) gave up five runs and eight hits over five innings in his second start of the season for the A's.

"(The game) didn't really matter after what happened," said Harden, who was with Texas last season. "It's horrible. You try to refocus. You have a job to do. But it's hard to ignore that."

Before the Rangers batted in the second, manager Washington spoke briefly with one of the umpires. Michael Young, who was leading off the inning, could be seen talking to A's catcher Kurt Suzuki and pointing toward the area where the previous accident happened.

Holland struck out four of the first six batters he faced, getting all three outs in the first on strikes.

After Suzuki's single in the fifth, Holland retired 10 consecutive batters without a ball leaving the infield before giving up a pair of singles and a walk in the ninth.

It was the 10th time this season that Oakland was held scoreless.

Holland threw a five-hit shutout at Cleveland on June 4. He was 1-3 in his five starts until Thursday night.

Mitch Moreland had a grand slam wiped out when the May 11 game was rained out and none of the stats counted.

Moreland had a double and a single in the makeup. He led off the Texas fourth with his double and scored on a single by Mike Napoli that made it 3-0.

Notes: Young led off the fifth with his eighth homer. That was also his 959th career run, breaking his tie with Rafael Palmeiro for the most in the Washington/Texas franchise history. Young was already the team's career leader in games

played, hits, doubles and triples. ... Oakland is 5-10 since a season-high six-game winning streak. ... Harden, who pitched with Texas last season, is 5-3 against the Rangers.

### **Gutierrez: Perspective offered from A's 6-0 loss**

Paul Gutierrez, CSNCalifornia.com

*Random observations from the A's 6-0 loss to the Texas Rangers Thursday at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington.*

-- Much perspective was offered with the postgame news that the fan who fell 20 feet from the stands in the second inning died of his injuries. The unnamed fan had been attempting to retrieve a ball thrown his way from Rangers left-fielder Josh Hamilton after Conor Jackson had lined a pitch foul. The fan lost his balance and fell straight down, head first. It makes analyzing the A's sleepwalking through the opener of such a key series seem almost meaningless by comparison. So I'll just keep it straight.

-- Rich Harden did not have his best stuff and his off-speed pitches stayed up, making them seem easy targets for Rangers hitters. Still, Harden might have been helped had first baseman Chris Carter been able to corral a couple of hot shots hit his way that led to Texas runs.

-- Hamilton, meanwhile, showed the A's what a No. 3 hitter looks like. He had four RBI in four plate appearances with one hit. The A's have been on a season-long search for a third-place hitter.

-- Until the ninth inning, when Oakland loaded the bases, Kurt Suzuki was the A's entire offense as he had both of their hits against Derek Holland. That the struggling Suzuki was the only A's batter with a hit until the final frame speaks volumes about how the left-handed Holland flummoxed them throughout.

-- Michael Wuertz bounced back from an ugly last outing on Sunday, when he loaded the bases without getting a batter out. The right-handed reliever had a perfect seventh inning against the Rangers, getting three ground outs.

-- The A's showed some fight by loading the bases against Holland in the ninth, including base hits by Jemile Weeks and the returning-from-the-disabled-list Josh Willingham, but it was too little, too late.

### **Gutierrez: 'Make or break' for A's in Texas?**

Paul Gutierrez, CSN California

OAKLAND -- Would it be too rash to say this weekend's four-game series at Texas is a make-or-break deal for the A's?

Depends upon your perspective and, really, the end result.

"It's pretty big," A's closer Andrew Bailey said following Wednesday's 2-0 defeat of Seattle at the O.co Coliseum on Wednesday. "If we can sweep them, we're four games back in it. So hopefully we go in there, play good baseball and come out of there looking good for the second half."

In layman's terms, sweep the Rangers, and the A's find themselves riding a five-game winning streak and an unreal wave of momentum into the All-Star break by pulling within four games of the American League West division pace-setters.

Get swept, and the last-place A's are 12 games back, 14 games under .500.

Make or break? More likely, especially 88 games into a 162-game season, somewhere in the middle.

Originally, this series was scheduled as a three-game set deep in the heart of Texas to begin on Friday. But All-Star left-hander Gio Gonzalez's rain dance on May 11, when he was pounded for seven runs in 2 2/3 innings, washed it all away. The make-up game was scheduled for this trip since both teams had off-days on Thursday and nothing from rain-out was official. Thus, Gonzalez's ERA of 2.31 is best among big league southpaws, rather than 2.82, which it would have been had the May 11 game counted and would be ninth overall in the American League.

You get the picture, right?

The make-up is Thursday night and the series pitching match-ups begin with right-hander Rich Harden (1-0, 3.00 ERA) facing lefty Derek Holland (6-4, 5.10).

The rest of the series -- Gonzalez (8-5, 2.31) vs. lefty C.J. Wilson (8-3, 3.02) on Friday; right-hander Brandon McCarthy (1-5, 3.33) vs. right-hander Colby Lewis (8-7, 4.29) on Saturday; and right-hander Trevor Cahill (8-6, 3.17) vs. lefty Matt Harrison (6-7, 3.28) in the series finale Sunday.

Under former manager Bob Geren, the A's took four of the first six meetings this season, but were outscored by a cumulative 27-26.

This will be interim manager Bob Melvin's first taste of the series with the Rangers.

"It is what it is on the schedule but four games usually are a little more significant than a three-game series (and) it is a team that is ahead of us," Melvin said. "Like I said before, we're not trying to look at the standings too much, but (Texas is) a team that was in the World Series last year and you can always get up to play the defending American League champions.

"If we can't get up to play those games, then something's wrong with us."

We'll find out soon enough.

### **Former A's manager Dick Williams dead at 82**

By Josh Dubow, Associated Press

Hall of Fame manager Dick Williams, who won two World Series titles with the A's and led two other franchises to pennants, has died. He was 82.

Williams died from a ruptured aortic aneurysm at a hospital near his home in Henderson, Nev., the Hall of Fame said.

"I admired the man," said A's broadcaster Ray Fosse, who was Williams' starting catcher in Oakland. "I played for a lot of managers, and I can't say there was one I respected more than Dick Williams, as a person and a manager. He was a good man."

Williams won pennants with Boston and San Diego as well as the championships in Oakland, joining Hall of Famer Bill McKechnie as the only managers ever to take three franchises to the World Series.

He also took the Montreal Expos to their only playoff berth in the strike-shortened 1981 season as he had much success turning around struggling franchises with his hard-nosed disciplinarian style.

"I owe Dick a lot," said Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn, who played for Williams in San Diego. "The city and the Padres owe him a lot. I think a lot of fans bought right into it like the players did, like in '82, when he first took over, then '84 when we went to the World Series. I think the fans realized that his style of play, the way he wanted us to play, could be successful if we bought in, and we did."

But he had his biggest success during three tumultuous seasons in Oakland in the 1970s. Williams led the A's to 101 wins and the American League West title his first year in 1971 before being swept by Baltimore in the AL championship series.

He then won World Series titles the next two years with Charlie Finley's brash team led by Hall of Famers Reggie Jackson, Rollie Fingers, Catfish Hunter as the A's became the first team to repeat since the 1961-62 New York Yankees.

But fed up with Finley's meddling style of ownership, Williams resigned after the 1973 title instead of sticking around for what turned out to be a third consecutive championship season.

"He was a brilliant and feisty leader, and universally recognized as one of the greatest managers in Major League history," A's owner Lew Wolff said. "Beyond his status as a Hall of Famer, Dick's name will forever be associated with the Oakland Athletics, as he led the team to back-to-back World Series titles in 1972 and 1973, and played a key role in bringing the Bay Area its first ever team World Championship."

Before coming to Oakland, Williams was part of Boston's "Impossible Dream" team in 1967 that won the pennant for the first time since 1946 before losing the World Series in seven games to St. Louis. The Red Sox had finished ninth in the 10-team American League the previous year, helping form Williams' reputation as a master of the turnaround.

Williams also took the Expos to the NL championship series in 1981 and led the Padres to their first playoff berth and first NL pennant in 1984. San Diego lost to Detroit in five games in the Series that year.

"He knew how to win," said Texas Rangers pitching coach Andy Hawkins, who pitched for Williams on the Padres. "He got the most out of his people, he demanded the most out of his people and he got it. He handled his pitching staff real well, I ended up throwing real well for him. I liked him as a manager, I sure did. He was a tough man to break in for, but as a veteran, he was great to play for."

Williams had a record of 1,571-1,451 in 21 seasons, also spending time with the Angels and Seattle Mariners. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2008 after being elected by the Veterans Committee.

"Well, he wasn't like they are today. He could raise some hell," said baseball lifer Don Zimmer, who played with Williams in Brooklyn in the 1950s. "Great manager. He really knew what he was doing."

Williams was back in Cooperstown, N.Y., last month when he managed both teams at the Hall of Fame Classic at Doubleday Field in a legends contest featuring six Hall of Famers and 20 former major league stars.

"Dick Williams' lasting legacy will be his innate ability to lead, turning franchises into winners wherever he managed," Hall of Fame President Jeff Idelson said. "No one wore the mantle of 'Hall of Famer' more proudly than Dick. We will miss him in Cooperstown."

Williams also played 13 years in the majors for the Dodgers, Orioles, Indians, A's and Red Sox. He had a .260 career average with 70 homers and 331 RBIs as mostly a part-time player. He retired after the 1964 season and soon began his career as a manager. There will be no funeral services held.

### **Dick Williams, Hall of Fame Manager, Dies at 82**

By RICHARD GOLDSTEIN, New York Times, 7/7/2011

Dick Williams, the hard-nosed Hall of Fame manager who achieved the rare feat of taking three different teams to the World Series, died on Thursday at his home in Las Vegas. He was 82.

His death was reported by Major League Baseball on its Web site. The cause was believed to be a brain aneurysm.

A journeyman outfielder with a weak arm although he played in the major leagues for 13 seasons, Williams studied baseball strategy when he was sitting on the bench. His savvy and intensity served him well in turning losing ball clubs into pennant winners in his 21 seasons as a manager.

Insisting that his players hustle, avoid mental errors and pay attention to fundamentals, Williams took the Boston Red Sox to their "impossible dream" American League pennant of 1967, the Oakland A's to World Series championships in 1972 and 1973, and the San Diego Padres to the National League pennant in 1984.

Williams and Bill McKechnie are the only managers to lead three franchises to the World Series, and Williams was among seven managers to win pennants in both leagues. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame by the Veterans Committee in 2008.

Managing the A's, Williams had formidable lineups led by Reggie Jackson, Bert Campaneris, Sal Bando, Gene Tenace and Joe Rudi, and outstanding pitching staffs featuring Catfish Hunter, Vida Blue, Ken Holtzman, Blue Moon Odom and Rollie Fingers.

But the early 1970s were a tempestuous and bizarre time in Oakland, the players sometimes fighting among themselves while pitted against a strong-willed manager in Williams and a meddling club owner in Charlie Finley, who outfitted them in green and gold and allowed his mule mascot, Charlie O., to roam the outfield during batting practice.

"This team was basically 25 versions of me," Williams said in his 1990 memoir, "No More Mr. Nice Guy," written with Bill Plaschke. "They didn't care about their appearance (we looked like damn hippies) or their deportment (we fought like sailors)," he recalled, adding that they didn't care about "anything but winning."

When Williams was voted into the Hall of Fame, his former pitching stars paid tribute. Fingers, converted by Williams from a starter to a reliever, credited him with providing the approach that propelled him to the Hall of Fame. And Blue said Williams was essential to the A's success.

"When you think of the '70s, you think of Dick Williams and the A's doing their thing," Blue told The San Francisco Chronicle. "He's always joking about how he rode our coattails, but he's the one who taught us to play winning baseball. Dick Williams was that X-factor."

Born in St. Louis on May 7, 1929, Williams moved with his family to the Los Angeles area as a youngster and was signed by the Brooklyn Dodger organization out of high school in 1947.

He was schooled in baseball fundamentals at Dodgertown, the innovative training base in Vero Beach, Fla., where Branch Rickey, the Dodgers' general manager, assembled a corps of instructors teaching every minor leaguer in the organization the fine points of the game.

Williams joined the Dodgers in 1951, saw little action as a rookie, then separated a shoulder diving for a fly ball in left field in August 1952. He never regained his arm strength, but he became a versatile player, appearing in the outfield and at first, second and third base with the Dodgers, the Baltimore Orioles, the Cleveland Indians, the Kansas City Athletics and the Boston Red Sox. He hit 70 home runs and had a career batting average of .260.

After managing in the Red Sox farm system for three seasons, Williams was named the Boston manager in 1967, taking over a team that finished ninth the previous season and had not won a pennant in 21 years.

Tom Yawkey, the Red Sox owner, had a reputation for coddling his players, but everything changed when Williams arrived. He stripped the star left fielder Carl Yastrzemski of his captain's designation to make clear that he was the only one in charge, and he demanded dedication from all his players. Yastrzemski captured the batting triple crown, Jim Lonborg won 22 games, and the Red Sox won a four-way pennant race by a single game. They lost to the St. Louis Cardinals in a seven-game World Series, but Williams had engineered a memorable summer.

The Red Sox finished fourth the next season and were en route to a third-place finish in 1969 when Williams was fired in late September. After he coached for a season with the Montreal Expos, he was hired by Finley to manage the A's.

Williams took the A's to World Series victories over the Cincinnati Reds' Big Red Machine in 1972 and the Mets in 1973. But during that '73 Series he told his players that he was quitting, incensed by Finley's attempt to remove second baseman Mike Andrews from the roster with a phantom injury after Andrews had made a pair of errors, a maneuver disallowed by Commissioner Bowie Kuhn. In departing, Williams took with him an enduring flourish: a mustache to match the facial embellishments of his ballplayers.

George Steinbrenner named Williams to manage the Yankees after the '73 season, but the deal fell through when Finley insisted on receiving two leading prospects as compensation.

After managing the California Angels (1974-76) and the Expos (1977-81), Williams was hired to manage the Padres, an expansion team created in 1969. In 1984, he took them to their first pennant. Fired after the 1985 season, he then managed the Seattle Mariners for three seasons. Steinbrenner hired Williams as an adviser and scout in 1993, and he remained with the Yankees for 10 years.

Williams and his wife, Norma, had two sons, Rick and Mark, and a daughter, Cathy. Williams had a brother, Ellery. Information about his survivors was not immediately available.

When Williams was named to the Hall of Fame, he surveyed a baseball world that had undergone huge changes from his heyday. Ballplayers had become millionaires with the arrival of free agency and were presumably far less inclined to accept the edicts of a hard-line manager.

"I wouldn't last a week," Williams told The Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

But he defended his approach.

"If some guys couldn't stand the heat, then they didn't belong in the major leagues," he said. "I don't know anybody who refused the World Series checks I helped them get."

### **Oakland Athletics present MC Hammer bobblehead night**

By Matt Brooks, Washington Post 7/7/2011

The Oakland A's will give away 15,000 MC Hammer bobbleheads on July 17. (MLB.com - MLB.com)  
The Major League Baseball season is a grind. And with 81 home games a year, it's also a serious test of creativity and ingenuity for team organizations looking to keep fans lining up at the gates, even in the dog days of summer.

After studying the pitfalls of the Cleveland Indians' infamous 10-cent beer night, the Washington Nationals did bang-up business earlier this season with Dollar Monday, featuring \$1 tickets, hot dogs, peanuts, popcorn and parking. Next up for the Nats: Jayson Werth bobblehead night.

Well, it appears the Oakland Athletics are taking the bobblehead craze to a new level when they don their parachute pants and hand out 15,000 MC Hammer bobbleheads on July 17 as part of the team's "80s weekend."

Hammer — a former A's batboy (who knew?) — will be on hand to throw out the first pitch. The A's are asking fans to "come dressed in your freshest gear."

The Hammertime throwback is enough to remind one of other great moments in retro bobblehead history.

Like this 1980's themed Adam Dunn bobblehead (which looks more like the lovechild of David Letterman and Steve Butabi) released by the Cincinnati Reds in 2008.

Here's a look back at some of the best MLB promotional giveaways from the 2010 season.

Now stop... Hammertime!

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Sacramento losing streak ends at nine**

By Mike Morris / Sacramento River Cats

The streak is over.

The Sacramento River Cats won Thursday night 8-1, ending a nine-game losing streak and earning their 51st win against the host Las Vegas 51s.

Early offense and a solid outing by left-hander Lenny DiNardo broke the streak before it could reach double digits.

The River Cats started July in a polar-opposite way that they opened June. After a strong six-game winning streak to start June, the River Cats lost their first six games in July.

Prior to Thursday night, Sacramento had been outscored 37-70 in the last nine games, allowing six or more runs in each game during that span. Sacramento's previous longest losing streak was six, set on seven different occasions, the last time being April 18-24 last season.

The River Cats scored three in the first inning but made sure they added on to that early lead before Las Vegas could scratch away.

On Wednesday, Fresno was down three runs early but clawed their way back to win. Sacramento was swept for the second straight series, something that has never happened in the franchise's history.

Sacramento topped their three-run first inning with four in the second. Matt Carson and Michael Taylor homered to left field, giving the River Cats a commanding 7-0 lead.

DiNardo pitched his best game when it was needed most Thursday night against a strong Las Vegas offense. The left-hander allowed one run on three hits Thursday night, his best numbers as a starter this year.

The River Cats will send pitcher Travis Banwart (4-6, 5.36 ERA) to the mound Friday night to face Las Vegas lefty Brad Mills (7-6, 3.64 ERA).

While one streak is over, the River Cats look to undo what they've done by starting a different kind of streak before heading into the All-Star break (April 10-13).

### **RockHounds' Jeremy Barfield making own name in professional baseball**

By Jordan Mason, Midland Reporter Telegram

It's June 14 and the Midland RockHounds are trailing the Frisco RoughRiders 8-2 in the second to last game of what has been a frustrating eight-game homestand.

The RoughRiders handed Midland a humbling seven-run defeat the day before and now, up six with no outs in the sixth, were looking to fatten their already healthy lead.

With a man on second, Engel Beltre lines one to right that Jeremy Barfield catches for what appears to be a routine out.

But after walking to start the inning and advancing to second on a passed ball, Frisco outfielder Jonathan Greene is feeling greedy and wants to test the right fielder's arm.

Bad idea.

Greene tags up and starts to advance, but Barfield sends a rocket throw to third base.

Shortstop Grant Green cuts off the throw and whips it to Stephen Parker who has Greene out on a 9-6-5 double play that sends RockHounds play-by-play radio announcer Bob Hards into a tizzy.

"Jonathan Greene, what are you doing?" Hards said with his voice rising. "That's Jeremy Barfield."

Maybe Greene didn't read the scouting report on Barfield, the 6-5, 240-pound right fielder with a cannon for a left arm.

Or maybe he just didn't respect his arm.

No problem, it's not like Barfield hasn't had to earn respect before.

Barfield is the son of former Toronto Blue Jay and New York Yankee right fielder Jesse Barfield, and if being the second baseball-playing son of a former All-Star isn't hard enough, Jeremy has had his own share of adversity to overcome.

Jeremy, whose older brother plays in the Philadelphia Phillies organization, has had five surgeries on his knees and two on his ankles, the latest to cure a staph infection in his left knee that put him out of action for five months before spring training.

Yet Jeremy scoffs at the idea of using injuries as an excuse.

"A lot of guys will tell you it's a grind," he said. "You've just got to be prepared to play through adversity, travel, it doesn't matter. Everybody goes through it, so you can't use it as an excuse."

Earlier in his career, though, Jeremy had to deal with a bigger challenge than surgery.

In 2006, the Houston Chronicle reported that Jeremy had been arrested on a Sunday morning after shoving his father down a flight of stairs during an argument that resulted in Jesse being sent to the hospital.

The story went national and all of a sudden the 18-year-old Jeremy was being labeled and not for the physical gifts that caused the New York Mets to select him in the ninth round of the 2006 draft out of Klein High School.

Jeremy said the “hothead” stereotype followed him to San Jacinto College where he opted to attend instead of playing professional baseball.

“People didn’t respect me,” he said. “Somebody who doesn’t respect their father, how can they respect their teammates or coaches?”

Jesse, though, will be the first to tell you that that perception of Jeremy can’t be further from the truth. The two talk daily, and Jeremy credits his father for his love of the game.

And Jesse is a source of never-ending advice, helping Jeremy with everything from his footwork in the outfield to his mechanics at the plate.

As for the 2006 incident, both say that’s behind them now and that they’ve learned from it despite the aftermath.

“That’s not who I am as a whole, and just one incident, unfortunately, seemed to define who I am at that point,” Jeremy said.

Jesse said he blames himself partly for the public misperception.

“When a person’s upset you don’t pour gasoline on the fire and get in their face,” he said. “If I had to do it all over again I wouldn’t have done it that way.”

For Jeremy, the incident was the first in a number of events that helped him mature both as a player and person.

The next was his two-year stint at San Jacinto, which Jeremy said was crucial to his maturation as a person and a player.

“If I would’ve signed out of high school I wouldn’t be surprised if I was out of baseball right now,” Jeremy said.

Instead, Jeremy is in the fourth season of a minor league career that has seen the Spring native venture as far as Vancouver.

And Jeremy has seen his game improve this season, going 8-for-19 with two doubles and a towering home run in his last five games.

“I’m kind of proud of how he’s not allowed his at-bats to affect his next at-bat,” RockHounds hitting coach Tim Garland said. “That comes along with his maturity.”

That’s welcome news for Jeremy, who said he simply wants to improve every day, and for Jesse, one of his most avid supporters.

“I’m always rooting for the underdog because I was an underdog myself coming from nothing without a father,” Jesse said. “I’m glad that he was given a second chance, and he’s taken full advantage.”

If Jeremy continues to do that then maybe runners like Greene will respect him enough to stop testing his arm -- or at least to read the scouting report.

### **Travs Win It In Ninth After Surrending Lead**

By Tony Lenahan, Arkansas Travelers

North Little Rock - The Travelers won their second consecutive game, defeating the Midland Rockhounds 5-4 on Thursday, July 7, in front of an announced crowd of 4,139 at Dickey-Stephens Park.

Travs first baseman Roberto Lopez singled with the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth inning to score Darwin Perez with the winning run. Midland reliever Brett Hunter walked Perez to start the inning and hit Luis Jimenez with a pitch to put runners at first and second with no outs.

Jon Meloan relieved for Hunter and Travs' left fielder Chris Pettit moved the runners to second and third with a sacrifice bunt for the first out. Meloan intentionally walked Gabe Jacobo to load the bases before Lopez hit the game winner. Hunter (0-1, 2.25) blew the save and wound up with his first loss with the Rockhounds. He pitched two-thirds of an inning, giving up the winning run while walking two and hitting a batter.



Rockhounds' starter Shawn Haviland got two quick outs to start the bottom of the first, but walked the third baseman Jimenez. Pettit followed with a single to right field and the designated hitter Jacobo hit the left-field wall for a double, scoring both runs for a 2-0 Travs' lead.

The Travs (9-4) picked up another two-out run in the bottom of the third when Jimenez tripled to right field with two outs and scored on Pettit's single up the middle for a 3-0 lead.

Haviland gave up three runs and seven hits in five innings for the no-decision. He walked two and struck out three.

The Travs loaded the bases in the bottom of the fourth with two outs, but a diving catch by left fielder Shane Peterson on Jimenez' drive to left-centerfield got Midland out of the inning with no damage done.

After no-hitting the Rockhounds through the first four innings, Travs' lefty starter Andrew Taylor walked Jeremy Barfield to begin the top of the fifth and gave up his first hit to Peterson, a line drive up the middle that deflected off of Taylor. Centerfielder Tyler Ladendorf hit a one-out single to centerfield to load the bases, but Taylor got leadoff man Wes Timmons to pop up to Jimenez at third for the second out before striking out Grant Green looking to end the inning.

Taylor got the no-decision pitching five shutout innings, giving up two hits and three walks, while striking out one.

After Angel Castillo was hit by a pitch and was caught stealing for the first out in the bottom of the fifth, second baseman Matt Cusick singled up the middle to centerfield. Catcher Alberto Rosario hit a pitch off relief pitcher Jared Lansford's shin, reaching on a single. Rosario advanced to second and Cusick to third base when Lansford threw the ball past the first baseman for an error trying to throw Rosario out.

With one out and runners at second and third base, Mike Trout hit a hard liner to a diving third baseman for an out, who then stepped on third base, doubling up Cusick to end the inning.

The Rockhounds (6-7) got on the board in the top of the seventh inning when second baseman Wes Timmons hit a two-out homerun off of reliever Eddie McKiernan over the left-field fence to get Midland within two runs.

Midland took the lead 4-3 in the top of the eighth inning. Stephen Parker singled to right field to begin the inning. Jeremy Barfield popped out to first baseman Roberto Lopez for the first out and consecutive singles loaded the bases for Ladendorf. Ladendorf grounded it to Perez at shortstop for a potential double play, but Perez threw past Cusick for an error, allowing two runs to score and tie the game 3-3.

McKiernan hit the next batter Timmons with the first pitch to load the bases again and Grant Green followed with an RBI single to left field to score catcher Ryan Ortiz for an unearned run to make it a 4-3 Travs' deficit.

McKiernan (4-7, 6.16) ended up with win, pitching four innings in relief of Taylor, giving up four runs (three earned) on six hits and two walks without a strikeout. Pettit, Jacobo, Castillo, and Rosario each had two hits for the Travs. Jacobo added two RBIs and Jimenez scored two runs while batting 1 for 3.

Peterson led the Rockhounds with a 2 for 4 night while scoring a run.

The Travs outhit the Rockhounds 11 to 8 and left 12 men on, batting 3 for 9 with runners in scoring position. Midland hit 3 for 10 with RISP and left 11 men on in a game that lasted three hours and 14 minutes.

The Travs look to make it three in a row when they play the Midland Rockhounds in the second game of their three-game series on Friday, July 8, at Dickey-Stephens Park. Travs righty Matt Shoemaker (6-1, 2.90) will start for the Travs and righty A.J. Griffin (1-0, 4.76) starts for the Rockhounds.

Shoemaker last pitched on July 2 against Midland and got the no-decision. He gave up five runs (four earned) in six innings, surrendering eight hits and three walks, while striking out five. Griffin pitched on July 1 and got the win against the Travs in his first Texas League start of his career. He gave up three runs on four hits and a walk in five and two-third innings, and struck out five. First pitch is scheduled for 7:10 and gates open at 6:10.

## **Bad Night For Stockton: Fall 20-2**

Stockton Ports

After nearly a month of out-hitting and out-scoring their opponents, the Ports got a taste of their own medicine Thursday night, falling to the Nuts 20-2. Its the second time in Banner Island History that a visiting team has put up 20 runs against the Ports, and the worst loss ever at the ballpark.

The Nuts were hot from the get-go. Delta Cleary started the game by reaching on a fielding error by Conner Crumbliss out in center, allowing Cleary to reach second. David Christensen doubled to right field, scoring Cleary for the first run of the night. Two outs later, Kiel Roling singled to center field, bringing in Christensen for the second run of the inning. Josh Rutledge then hit the second double of the inning, allowing Roling to score the final run of the inning.

The Nuts added another run by way of the long ball in the second. On the very first pitch of the inning, Carlos Martinez hit a home run to center field. The Ports would get out of the second without any more damage. The Ports would really feel the Nuts wrath in the third inning.

The Nuts really made the Ports pay in the third, putting up 12 runs in the third. Back-to-back singles started the inning, followed by a walk to load the bases. Two runs came across with a single from Beau Seabury. A bunt single from Martinez reloaded the bases for the Nuts. Cleary doubled for two more runs. A sac fly by Christensen, and an error by Gilmartin brought the next two runs home for the Nuts. That would end the nightmare for Jake Brown who was replaced by Mike Hart with runners on second and third. Hart would promptly give up a single to score two more runs for the Nuts. A second error by Gilmartin, followed by a two-run homer by Martinez, his second of the night, brought the final runs for the Nuts across home plate.

The Ports finally got a run across the plate in the third. Three straight singles from Anthony Aliotti, Leonardo Gil, and Crumbliss loaded the bases for Myrio Richard. Richard grounded into a double play which allowed Aliotti to cross home for the lone run of the inning.

Things would remain quiet for both teams until the seventh. Scott Deal relieved Hart in the fifth and pitched 2.0 scoreless innings for the Ports. Connor Hoehn came in to pitch the seventh and was given a rude welcome by Jared Clark of the Nuts, who promptly hit a solo shot to the Jackson Rancheria Back Porch. Hoehn would get out of the inning without any further damage, but the score would read 17-1 at the seventh inning stretch.

The Nuts replaced Edwar Cabrera in the seventh, after giving up just one run and fanned nine Ports batters. Kurt Yacko, who replaced Cabrera, was also greeted rudely, as Dixon led off the seventh with a triple. The Ports would drive in Dixon for their second and final run of the evening.

As if to illustrate just how bad the night had been for the Ports, the Ports replaced Hoehn in the eighth with the centerfielder, Conner Crumbliss. Crumbliss pitched a scoreless eighth inning, becoming the only Ports "pitcher" to retire the Nuts in order. Crumbliss could not repeat the feat in the ninth, hitting Roling to start the inning, giving up a double to Rutledge, and a sac fly to Rutledge for a run. The Nuts tacked on two more runs in the inning before Crumbliss would end the night getting Angelys Nina to fly out.

The Ports stayed off the board in the ninth, and despite never giving up could not muster anything against the heavy hitting Nuts. The Ports look to redeem themselves on Friday, as Dan Straily takes the mound for the Boys of Banner Island at 7:05 p.m.

## **River Bandits Win 7-6**

By Matthew Wheaton

BURLINGTON, IA - The Burlington Bees (5-7) lost to the Quad Cities River Bandits (5-8) by a score of 7-6 in front of 821 fans at Community Field Thursday night. The Bees scored four runs over the eighth and ninth innings but fell just short of the victory.

The River Bandits started the scoring in the top of the first inning after CF Michael Swinson (3-4) hit a lead-off solo home run to right field for a 1-0 lead.

In the top of the third inning, Quad Cities SS Ronny Gil (1-4) singled on a ground ball hit to Bees 3B Wade Kirkland and advanced to second base on a wild pitch. An RBI single from DH Oscar Taveras (2-4) put the River Bandits up 2-0.

Bees CF Jose Crisotomo (2-4) led off the bottom of the third inning with a double and scored on a two-out single by RF Josh Whitaker (2-4) to make the score 2-1.

After a one-out single to center field by Quad Cities RF Nick Longmire (2-5), C Cody Stanley (0-4) flied out to left field and Longmire advanced to second base. 3B Victor Sanchez (0-4) reached first base on a throwing error by Bees SS Yordy Cabrera. With 2B Packy Elkins (0-3) at the plate, Burlington RHP Blake Hassebrock (4-5) threw a wild pitch and Longmire scored to give the River Bandits a 3-1 lead.

In the top of the fifth inning, Taveras reached first base on a fielder's choice. 1B Jonathan Rodriguez (1-4) was hit by a pitch and Taveras advanced to second base. A single by LF Chris Edmondson (1-5) moved Taveras to third base and Rodriguez to second base. Longmire hit a two-RBI single to right field to put the River Bandits up 5-1.

Elkins walked to start off the top of the sixth inning, and scored on a triple to center field by Swinson. An RBI single to right field by Taveras scored Swinson to make the score 7-1.

Burlington C Beau Taylor (2-4) hit a RBI single to left field in the bottom of the sixth inning, which drove in 1B A.J. Kirby-Jones (0-4) to make the score 7-2.

In the bottom of the eighth inning, Whitaker hit a solo home run to center field to get Burlington within four runs 7-3.

After a single by Taylor to lead off the bottom of the ninth inning, Kirkland walked. A triple to right field by Crisotomo scored Taylor and Kirkland. A sacrifice fly by 2B Nino Leyja (0-4) plated Crisotomo to make the score 7-6.

Hassebrock allowed five runs on eight hits, walked one and struck out two in five innings of work and earned the loss. RHP Zack Thornton pitched three innings, allowed two hits, two runs, walked two and struck out three. RHP Blake Treinen finished the game by throwing the final frame in his first appearance at home.

The Bees and River Bandits wrap up their series on Friday at 6:30 p.m. It's "Christmas Eve In July" and "Big Fun Friday" at Community Field. Fans can enjoy Christmas in July with music, lights, and even Christmas cookies. Fans can also enjoy 16 oz. cans of Bud Light and Busch Light for just \$3.25 sponsored by Budweiser, Today's Hit Music Hot 97.3, and Your Hometown Station, Big Country 103.1. RHP Trevor Rosenthal (3-7, 3.54) gets the start for the River Bandits against RHP Tyler Vail (1-4, 5.57) for the Bees. Pre-game coverage begins at 6:10 p.m. on Newsradio 1490 KBUR and online at [www.gobees.com](http://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](http://www.gobees.com), or stop by the box office at Community Field during normal business hours.

### **Vermont Rallies For 5-4 Win Thursday**

By Paul Stanfield / Vermont Lake Monsters

BROOKLYN, NY --- The Lake Monsters overcame an early three-run deficit and reliever Drew Bailey struckout eight of 12 batters he faced in 3 2/3 scoreless innings of relief as Vermont rallied for a 5-4 New York-Penn League victory over the Brooklyn Cyclones Thursday night at MCU Park.

The Cyclones took a 3-0 lead in the bottom of the third on a three-run homer from Brandon Brown off Vermont starter Kurt Wunderlich, who had walked the first two batters of the inning. After another walk and one-out single, Bailey relieved Wunderlich and retired the final two batters of the inning on a popout and strikeout.

Bailey (2-0), who entered the game with nine strikeouts in 9 2/3 innings over his first six appearances, struckout two in both the fourth and fifth innings before striking out the side in the sixth. The only Brooklyn batter to reach off Bailey was a one-out single in the fifth from Javier Rodriguez.

Meanwhile Vermont worked its way back into the game with single runs in the fourth on a Nick Rickles RBI infield single and in the fifth on a Jordan Tripp sacrifice fly following a Sean Jamieson leadoff single. The Lake Monsters then took the lead with three runs in the seventh for their eighth come-from-behind victory of the season.

After loading the bases with no outs on back-to-back walks and an error on Jamieson sacrifice bunt, Rickles scored on a wild pitch to tie the game and Aaron Shipman gave Vermont a 4-3 lead when he scored on a Chih-Fang Pan sacrifice fly. A Tripp RBI infield single gave the Lake Monsters a 5-3 lead before Brooklyn got an unearned run in the bottom of the seventh on a Rodriguez RBI double to cut the Vermont lead to one.

A single and balk put the tying run on second with no outs in the eighth for Brooklyn, but reliever Tanner Peters struckout the first two batters he faced and then worked around a leadoff single in the ninth for his fifth save of the season.

There were 30 strikeouts between the two teams, including 16 strikeouts combined from four Vermont pitchers. Orlando Tovar (1-1) allowed three runs (two earned) in the seventh inning to take the loss for Brooklyn (11-10), while Brown was 3-for-5 with two runs and three RBI.

Vermont (13-6) will look to complete the three-game sweep at Brooklyn on Friday night starting at 7:00 pm. The Lake Monsters, who have never won more than two games in a row against the Cyclones in 51 meetings all-time, return to historic Centennial Field on Saturday for the start of a three-game series against the McNamara Division-leading Staten Island Yankees.