

Oakland A's win second game, split doubleheader against Los Angeles Angels

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

A's fans got all the baseball they could handle in Saturday's doubleheader.

In the end, they also got a victory.

After Oakland spent most of the day squandering opportunities with runners in scoring position, Scott Sizemore's 10th-inning, two-out walk-off single in the nightcap lifted the A's to a 4-3 victory over the Los Angeles Angels and a split of the twin bill.

The Angels won the first game 4-2.

Sizemore fell behind 0-2 to Angels reliever Rich Thompson but battled back to a 2-2 count and drilled a curve ball to right-center that scored pinch runner Cliff Pennington from second.

The A's rushed out to mob Sizemore after the first walk-off hit of his career.

"It's a great one to win, tough one to lose," manager Bob Melvin said. "We had some (runners) out there, we just couldn't come up with the big hit until the last at-bat."

The A's stranded 20 runners combined in both games, including nine in losing the opener.

If they're to play better baseball over the second half, they have to win more of the close ones. Their victory in the nightcap was just their second in 12 games in which the score was tied after eight innings.

But they've taken two of the first three in this four-game series.

Sizemore was in a 0 for 18 slump -- matching the longest hitless streak of his career -- until dropping a bunt single in the third inning of the second game.

Josh Willingham helped set the stage for Sizemore in the 10th, drawing a leadoff walk. Pennington pinch-ran, and David DeJesus bunted him to second. Conor Jackson grounded out to third, and Landon Powell drew a walk to put runners on first and second.

"I missed one on the first pitch," said Sizemore, referring to a fastball he fouled off. "I battled until I got one I could handle, and I found a hole."

The A's combined for 20 hits in both games but also hurt themselves with baserunning errors. In the opener, DeJesus was thrown out at home by more than 10 feet when third-base coach Mike Gallego waved him around third on Kurt Suzuki's double off the wall in left.

In the nightcap, Ryan Sweeney was thrown out to end the first while trying to stretch a double into a triple.

The A's received two stellar starting pitching efforts, important after Melvin used six relievers in Friday's win.

Trevor Cahill pitched seven innings of three-run ball in the opener. The A's scored twice in the seventh to close to within 3-2, but the Angels tacked on an unearned run in the ninth off Fautino De Los Santos.

In that first game fans nearly witnessed Hideki Matsui's 500th professional homer. He doubled high off the out-of-town scoreboard in right field. Umpires went to instant replay to review where the ball hit, and correctly upheld it as a double. A homer would have tied the game 3-3.

In the second game, Rich Harden gave the A's seven strong innings, allowing three runs and striking out nine.

An encouraging sign for Oakland is the play of rookie leadoff man Jemile Weeks. He is 7 for 13 with three stolen bases since the All-Star break despite nursing a jammed ring finger on his left hand. He dropped a bunt single in the nightcap, a weapon he hasn't shown much to this point.

"There's a few things you probably didn't see me do too much in the (first) half," Weeks said. "I'm trying to mix it up."

A's update: Trevor Cahill weathers rocky start in 119-pitch outing

By Joe Stiglich

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Cahill weathers rocky start in 119-pitch outing

Trevor Cahill knew he needed to eat up innings Saturday, so the start to his day was hardly ideal.

The right-hander walked three in a 31-pitch first inning but eventually settled in. His outing was a silver lining in the A's 4-2 loss in the opening game of a doubleheader against the Los Angeles Angels.

Cahill walked just two more hitters after the first, going seven innings and allowing three runs on five hits. He struck out eight.

With Oakland having burned through six relievers in Friday night's win, and the need for available arms in Saturday's nightcap, manager Bob Melvin needed to lean heavily on Cahill.

"The first couple innings it didn't look like he had his command," Melvin said. "But that's what good pitchers do. They regroup."

Cahill threw a career-high 119 pitches.

"I was just a little off in the first, and then I settled in after that," he said.

The A's did add bullpen depth between games, recalling lefty Jerry Blevins from Triple-A Sacramento and optioning infielder Adam Rosales.

Melvin volunteered another explanation for sending Rosales down.

"He needs to play," Melvin said. "This is more about getting him at-bats. He's a major league player."

Rosales had appeared in just 12 of the A's 34 games since being activated from the disabled list, going 4 for 33.

As part of '80s "Turn Back The Clock Day," the A's will honor rapper M.C. Hammer -- an Oakland native and former A's bat boy -- before Sunday's game. The first 15,000 fans will get M.C. Hammer bobbleheads.

Of all the A's players surveyed Saturday, third baseman Scott Sizemore knew the most song titles from the Hammer catalog -- "U Can't Touch This," "Too Legit To Quit" and "Addams Groove."

Melvin was asked if he was a fan.

"My genre is more classic rock," Melvin said with a smile. "But I know his impact, especially here in the Bay Area. I am a fan."

Reliever Joey Devine said he was feeling better Saturday after leaving Friday's game with back spasms.

The A's were 5 for 5 with runners in scoring position Friday night, the first time in Oakland history they were perfect with at least five at-bats in that category.

Chin Music: Bullpen depth key for A's in doubleheader

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 7/16/2011 12:58pm

A's manager Bob Melvin could sure use a long outing from Trevor Cahill in today's doubleheader opener. Six relievers pitched last night, and while most could probably come back and pitch in one game, how many can pitch in both today? Keep an eye on the A's bullpen situation as the game(s) unfold. Brian Fuentes and Fautino De Los Santos were the only two relievers not to throw Friday night.

Joey Devine said he feels better after leaving Friday's game with back spasms. He was set to throw before the game to gauge whether he can pitch, and he was hopeful of being available for the second game. Devine said he's had back spasms before (most recently in early April), and that it's typically a 24-to-48 hour thing. That would seem to leave him doubtful for today, but Melvin is hopeful of having Devine for one of the games.

Triple-A Sacramento is playing at home tonight and Josh Outman is slated to start. In a real pinch, the A's could promote Outman and get him here in time for the nightcap.

—Melvin said Josh Willingham will serve as DH in both games, figuring that's the only way Willingham could play in both. The A's are still being conservative with how they use Willingham considering his recent Achilles injury. Hideki Matsui is playing left field in the first game and is likely to sit the second.

Lineups for first game:

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

Angels – Aybar SS, Hunter RF, Abreu DH, Wells LF, Callaspo 3B, Kendrick 2B, Trumbo 1B, Mathis C, Trout CF; Weaver RHP.

A's top Angels for 1st doubleheader win in decade

[Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer](#)

Sunday, July 17, 2011

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Oakland had not won a game in a doubleheader since 2001, until Saturday evening at the Coliseum, when the A's bounced back from a 4-2 loss to the Angels in Game 1 with an extra-inning victory in Game 2.

With two outs in the 10th and two men on, Scott Sizemore drilled a 2-2 pitch from Rich Thompson into the big open space in right-center, sending pinch-runner Cliff Pennington in from second and giving the A's a 4-3 victory and a split of the first scheduled doubleheader in the majors since 2003.

"I battled until I got one I could handle, and I found a hole," Sizemore said.

It was the first walk-off hit of Sizemore's career, and it was the A's third win this season in their final at-bat. They improved to 6-10 in extra-inning games and 13-21 in one-run games.

Sizemore had bunted for a base hit his first time up in Game 2, ending a career-high 0-for-18 streak, and, he said, "I've definitely been struggling a little bit, so I was doing anything to get on, and when you get a hit, it gives you confidence - I took that into my last at-bat and came through."

The A's had been swept in each of their four previous doubleheaders over the past decade, and Game 2 starter Rich Harden said, "To lose twice today would have been tough."

Oakland had stranded men in scoring position in five of the six previous innings and the A's were 5-for-15 with runners in scoring position in the game.

The second game featured another homer into the second deck in left; Josh Willingham's on Friday was the first to be hit there by an Oakland player since Frank Thomas' in August 2006, and Vernon Wells' blast to the same area was the first by an opponent since Vladimir Guerrero's in April 2006.

Wells' homer was a solo shot in the sixth off Harden, who'd allowed a two-out, two-run homer to Mark Trumbo in the second; both homers came on changeups up in the zone.

Oakland scored twice in the fourth, with RBI singles from David DeJesus and Landon Powell, and once in the fifth, thanks to a run-scoring groundout by Coco Crisp.

The A's starters in both games, Harden and Trevor Cahill, each went seven innings and allowed three runs.

In Game 1, the A's were unable to record a hit off All-Star Game starter Jered Weaver, the major-league ERA leader, until the fifth inning, when with one out, DeJesus singled to center. He was erased in a play at the plate that same inning, waved home by third-base coach Mike Gallego on Kurt Suzuki's double to center only to find the relay from shortstop Erick Aybar waiting for him. That was the final out of the inning.

"You've got to be aggressive," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "That was the only opportunity we had at the time. If the throw is off line ..."

Gallego's decision stood out all the more when the A's scored twice in the seventh to cut the Angels' lead to one. DeJesus doubled, Conor Jackson singled - and DeJesus was held at third, only to score on a sacrifice fly by Suzuki. Pennington singled, and Jemile Weeks sent in Jackson with a soft base hit to right center on a 2-2 pitch. Weeks, the A's rookie second baseman, had five hits on the day and is batting .311.

Hideki Matsui nearly tied the game in the eighth when he hit a drive to right off reliever Scott Downs, but the ball hit the out-of-town scoreboard several feet below the yellow home-run line. Melvin requested a review and got one, but Matsui was correctly credited with a double. A homer would have been No. 500 for Matsui's professional career, combined between the major leagues and Japan. He's been stuck on 499 for a month.

Saturday's traditional afternoon doubleheader, which drew 27,379, was the first doubleheader to be played in Oakland since Aug. 22, 1998, against Detroit, which was the result of a rainout. The last scheduled doubleheader to be played in Oakland before Saturday's was on Aug. 10, 1997, against Milwaukee.

A's call up Jerry Blevins as temporary bullpen help

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Sunday, July 17, 2011

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In between games of Saturday's doubleheader, the A's stayed busy, using the time to make a transaction.

After using everyone in the bullpen in a span of 22 hours, and **Michael Wuertz** twice, Oakland called up left-hander **Jerry Blevins** from Triple-A Sacramento and sent utility player **Adam Rosales** out.

Oakland definitely needed an extra arm for the second game, and manager **Bob Melvin** made it clear that Rosales remains in the team's plans. Rosales missed spring training and the first month of the season after offseason foot surgery, and he'd had 33 at-bats in the past six weeks.

"Rosy needs to play," Melvin said. "He's not getting the at-bats he's used to. This is more about getting him ready for the second half. He's a major-league player."

Moscoso back Tuesday: As expected, **Guillermo Moscoso**, back from a brief staying-sharp stay at Triple-A Sacramento, will start at Detroit when the A's next road trip kicks off.

Blevins, who was not used in Game 2, might not remain long.

Oakland reliever Joey Devine left Friday night's game with back spasms, but he said everything was much improved Saturday and he hopes to be available today.

Moscoso is 3-4 in eight starts with Oakland, but he has a 2.16 ERA and opponents are batting .186 against him. With **Brett Anderson** out for the season after Thursday's Tommy John surgery, Moscoso appears to be in the rotation to stay.

Briefly: **Ryan Sweeney** established an Oakland record for consecutive errorless games by an outfielder with 166, after playing just one inning in Game 1. He also played in Game 2. ... The A's 5-for-5 night Friday with runners in scoring position was the first time in Oakland history the team was perfect with men in scoring position and at least five at-bats in that situation, according to stats expert **David Feldman**. ... **Kevin Kouzmanoff** was a scratch at Sacramento on Friday because of a sore back and **Andy LaRoche** also was unavailable, prompting **Chris Carter**'s appearance at third two nights in a row.

LEADING OFF

Bailey rumors: Lots of contenders are looking for relief help, and there's increased interest in A's closer Andrew Bailey - but it would take a massive offer for Oakland even to consider moving the two-time All-Star, who isn't a free agent until after the 2014 season.

Baseball needs more like A's old-school twin bill

[Bruce Jenkins, Chronicle Columnist](#)

Sunday, July 17, 2011

-- The Coliseum crowd looked and felt like one from a Saturday afternoon in the late 1980s, when Oakland baseball defined the art. The sun was out, the A's had two runners on in the seventh inning, and there was a sweet buzz of anticipation as Jemile Weeks stepped to the plate against the American League's All-Star starter, Jered Weaver.

Because it's the 2011 A's, with a certain grim reality in place, it really didn't matter how the situation played out. As it happened, Weeks managed a single that cut the Angels' lead to 3-2. But this particular Saturday was more about the scene, and the fact that it was only the first game of a real, old-style doubleheader.

It felt just right.

You're never quite sure of the actual A's attendance on a given day or night. Chances are the announced figure is a joke, far from the 8,000 to 9,000 you witnessed with your own eyes. This was just a great crowd, period, by the A's standards (a very legitimate 27,379). It spoke well for the future of the doubleheader, no matter what nonsense you hear from the commissioner's office.

The fact is that baseball will be expanding its playoff structure to include two more wild-card teams, and the time frame of the 162-game season *has* to be shortened to get things done before the onset of November. If teams played just one doubleheader a month - with the trade-off of some Monday off days - it would help tighten things up.

And yet, we recently heard Selig tell reporters that "fans today don't want doubleheaders." What a pathetic, self-serving remark. He's only speaking for the owners, who can't see anything clearly beyond the dollar sign. Selig went on to say that the modern-day version of the doubleheader - at separate times of the day, with separate admission prices - is "more fan-friendly." Well, now he's just plain lying. Somebody get this guy off the podium before we all become ill.

The fact is that fans don't at all mind a one-price doubleheader, especially little kids who love the idea of watching their favorite player come to bat eight times. The players can live with it, on occasion, as long as you don't split their work day into day-and-night shifts. Only the owners recoil at the notion, and in a perfect world, they wouldn't have a say on *anything* that matters. Not after their long history of full-fledged buffoonery.

What a day for the Fox crew to give the A's national exposure. Viewers probably saw the lively, engaged crowd and wondered what all the fuss is about. As we know too well, things are not OK around here, as expressed in the large white banners placed alongside each other in the right-field bleachers:

Fisher: Slumlord Billionaire

(Bob Geren's name crossed out) *1 Down, 3 to Go: Wolff, Fisher, Beane*

Wolff Lied, He Never Tried

Wow, Billy Beane takes a hit as well as co-owners John Fisher and Lew Wolff? Tough crowd. "That's pretty personal," remarked a security guard who works both Bay Area ballparks. "The Giants would never allow those banners."

Then again, nobody's all that cranky at AT&T Park, where they might as well be serving free caviar in the aisles.

Scoreboards aside, the best part of the A's long day had to be Rich Harden's outing in Game 2. Not that anyone's suggesting any long-term investments, but over the course of three starts, he's been a different pitcher than the one who last wore the Oakland uniform.

If anything, he was getting stronger once he surpassed the 100-pitch mark, striking out the side in his final inning (the seventh) and finishing it off with a 95-mph fastball that blew away rookie Mike Trout.

Was it a perfect day for the A's? Hardly. But on a day with an entirely different feel, the afternoon worked on a number of levels. I spent most of the day in the stands, where a fan turned to me and said, with a satisfied smile, "Why don't they play tripleheaders?"

Saturday crowds

The A's average reported home attendance is 19,141, which is second-lowest in the majors behind the Marlins. Here's a look at their Saturday home crowds:

Date	Opponent	Attendance
April 2	Seattle	15,088
April 16	Detroit	16,265
April 30	Texas	27,285*
May 14	Chicago	17,291
May 28	Baltimore	23,795**
June 18	Giants	36,067
July 2	Arizona	30,338**
July 16	Angels	27,379

* Rickey Henderson bobblehead night

** Fireworks nights

Drumbeat: Game 2: lineup, and between-games move - Jerry Blevins up, Rosales out

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at the Coliseum 7/16/2011 5:00pm

Game No. 2, Drumbeat No. 2. Here's the lineup: Weeks 2b, Crisp cf, Sweeney lf, Willingham dh, DeJesus rf, Jackson 1b, Powell c, Sizemore 3b, Sogard ss

The A's made a move after Game 1, sending out utility player Adam Rosales and bringing up reliever Jerry Blevins. Manager Bob Melvin emphasized that Rosales is a big-league player but he hasn't had many at-bats lately and he needs to go play. Rosales missed all of spring training and the first two-plus months after offseason foot surgery. He's only had 33 at-bats in the past six weeks.

Everyone in Oakland's bullpen has now worked in the course of the past 22 hours, so Blevins is an extra arm if needed. I don't think he's here to stay long; he hasn't pitched all that well at Triple-A Sacramento, allowing 15 hits, five walks and 11 runs in 19 1/3 innings; he does have 23 strikeouts there. He has only allowed one run in his past 10 appearances.

The A's lost Game 1 4-2.

Drumbeat: State of A's bullpen for doubleheader; Devine thinks he's OK to go

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at the Coliseum 7/16/2011 12:10pm

Reliever Joey Devine, who jarred his back when landing in the hole left by all the other pitchers last night, said the back spasm that drove him out of that game has subsided after a lot of work this morning. He said he had a rough night, not much sleep with it, but it has calmed down significantly.

Devine went out and played catch to see how he felt about 45 minutes ago, and he said the throwing session went well. He's hoping to get the OK from the training staff to be available today. I'm guessing that manager Bob Melvin will try to stay away from him, however, unless he is really pressed for pitching in the doubleheader.

If the A's were to have some sort of pitching disaster in Game One and need an extra arm, Triple-A Sacramento is at home tonight and it's Josh Outman's turn to go. Trystan Magnuson worked last night, unfortunately - I'd like to see him back here at some point soon. He and Fautino De Los Santos have both appeared to have made some major improvements in the past few months. De Los Santos and Brian Fuentes are the two guys who are assured to be available today.

Guillermo Moscoso will start Tuesday at Detroit, no surprised there. He deserves it, and with Tyson Ross out for a week, there really wasn't even another option.

Here's the lineup for Game One, with Trevor Cahill on the mound: Weeks 2b, Crisp cf, Willingham DH, Matsui lf, Sizemore 3b, DeJesus rf, Jackson 1b, Suzuki c, Pennington ss.

I'll do a quick new Drumbeat if possible between games (we have 35 minutes to get downstairs to talk to Melvin and Trevor Cahill, so we'll see how that goes). Melvin already has said he expects to DH Josh Willingham in both games, and Hideki Matsui is likely not to start in Game Two. Landon Powell will be behind the plate for that one, and Rich Harden is on the mound.

As I wrote in the little "Leading Off" section of the Chronicle today, Grant Green is now playing center field at Double-A Midland, and I hear he made some nice plays there last night in his first game at his new position.

Sizemore lifts A's to twin bill split in 10th

Harden shakes off homers, fans nine in seven strong innings

By Tom Green / MLB.com | 7/17/2011 12:55 AM ET

[Comments \(18\)](#)



LAA@OAK: Sizemore wins it with a walk-off single

OAKLAND -- Scott Sizemore picked an ideal time for his first career walk-off hit.

After the A's dropped the first game of the club's first scheduled home doubleheader in 14 years to the Angels on Saturday, Sizemore drilled a Rich Thompson pitch to left-center field with two outs in the bottom of the 10th to score Cliff Pennington and give the A's a 4-3 win. The Angels won the first game, 4-2.

Sizemore's game-winning hit was just the club's fifth in 15 at-bats with runners in scoring position, and helped the A's improve their American League-worst record in extra-inning games to 6-10.

"We don't have a ton of power in our lineup, so we need to cash in when we have those runners in scoring position," Sizemore said. "If we can keep that up, we'll have a chance to win a lot of ballgames."

Sizemore entered the late game of the doubleheader in the midst of an 0-for-18 slump, but he reached base in the third on a bunt single that he said helped rebuild his confidence at the plate.

Four at-bats later, Sizemore used that renewed confidence to lift his team at the end of a grueling day that began more than seven hours earlier. After falling behind, 0-2, to Thompson (1-3), Sizemore took a pair of balls out of the zone and fouled off two pitches before coming through, big time.

"It always feels good to come through in the clutch," Sizemore said. "You have to always stay in the present and do everything you can to help the team when you get the chance to, and fortunately I was able to do that today."

"Typically, those kind of at-bats, where you're fighting like that and you're down, and you're fouling balls off and seeing a lot of pitches, at that point in time nothing really surprises you," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "Just try not to pull and stay up the middle and be ready for all his pitches, and we've seen Scotty has a way of hitting the ball the other way and letting the ball travel, and that's what he did."

The walk-off knock capped a disastrous outing for Thompson, who hadn't pitched in 10 days. The righty tossed 26 pitches, 14 of which were out of the zone, and walked two of the first four batters he faced before Sizemore connected on the 27th pitch.

"It's the life of a relief pitcher," said Thompson. "When things aren't going your way, you try to make them put the ball in play. That's what [Sizemore] did, and they won."

Thompson's mistake marked the lone blemish for either team's relievers. The two bullpens combined used five arms, and only Thompson allowed a run to cross the plate. The Oakland trio of Grant Balfour, Andrew Bailey and Brad Ziegler -- who earned the win -- each tossed a scoreless inning of relief after taking over for righty Rich Harden, who pitched his longest outing of the season after returning from the disabled list at the beginning of the month.

Save for two mistakes, Harden was impressive in his first outing after the All-Star break. The righty tossed 110 pitches over seven innings and struck out nine while giving up three runs -- all of which came courtesy of the long ball.

"My three starts I've gotten hurt off my changeup," Harden said. "I've left a few up, and it's not the guys you want to leave it up to. That's what has cost me."

Angels rookie Mark Trumbo hit a two-run blast in the second to put the Halos on top, 2-0, early. But Harden didn't let the round-tripper shake him, retiring 12 of the next 14 batters he faced before Vernon Wells launched a solo shot of his own to the second deck in left field to knot the game in the sixth.

Harden matched Angels starter Ervin Santana pitch for pitch, as Santana also surrendered three runs. Most importantly, Harden's lengthy outing allowed the A's to limit the use of their already-extended bullpen, which had seen eight relievers combine for nine appearances between Friday night and Saturday's first game.

"Every start you want to go out there and go as deep as possible," Harden said. "It was even more important, obviously this series, with the doubleheader. It's definitely something I wanted to do."

The A's pitching staff's collective effort, combined with Sizemore's timely hit, helped Oakland avoid falling to 1-2 after the All-Star break and improved the club's record in one-run affairs to 13-20 (.393) -- slightly better than the Astros' .385 win percentage in those games.

"Any win is a big one, especially to start the second half," Sizemore said. "We need to build some momentum, get some wins under our belt and keep building on the positives, and I think we'll be able to do that."

Late rally not enough for A's in Game 1

Cahill settles down after first inning, but missed chances hurt

By Jane Lee / MLB.com | 7/16/2011 8:37 PM ET

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LAA@OAK: Matsui's double upheld upon review

OAKLAND -- The first scoop of Saturday's double-dipper proved rather unsavory for the A's, who fell victim to yet another all-too-familiar storyline featuring missed offensive opportunities in a 4-2 defeat to the Angels.

Oakland, fresh off what could have been a momentum-building win against the Angels' Dan Haren in the first contest of the second half on Friday, hit to the tune of "too little, too late" this time around vs. Angels All-Star hurler Jered Weaver.

The opener of the doubleheader, marking the first scheduled twin bill in Oakland since Aug. 10, 1997, brought about something of a pitchers' duel between Weaver and A's righty Trevor Cahill in the early innings of the affair.

While Cahill struggled with his command out of the gates in his first post-break outing, enduring a lengthy one-run first inning that saw him walk three and throw 31 pitches, he settled down thereafter and compiled four consecutive scoreless frames.

"It's kind of one of those things after the break where you feel you haven't thrown a lot longer than you have," the righty said. "I played catch and stuff, but just not being on the field is an awkward feeling and it just takes a while to get back into things. At the beginning that was probably the reason why I was so erratic in the first inning.

"I just didn't really feel any command and was just a little off in the first, and I kind of slowed down after that. I don't think it was anything mechanical, I just didn't feel that comfortable out there and kind of settled in."

All the while, Weaver no-hit the A's through 4 1/3 innings, a scene that continued a frustrating trend for Cahill, who entered the day having received no run support in each of his last three starts.

"The first couple innings, it didn't look like he had his command, and that's what good pitchers are able to do -- regroup and think positively, especially against a guy like Weaver, when you know that runs are going to be at a premium," manager Bob Melvin said. "For him to be able to stop that and get his command back and shut them down in the fashion he did was impressive."

The A's attempted to aid those efforts in the fifth, when David DeJesus collected the team's first hit off Weaver in the form of a clean, one-out single.

Down, 1-0, at the time, they nearly knotted the contest on Kurt Suzuki's double off the left-field wall, but DeJesus -- waved in by third-base coach Mike Gallego -- was easily tagged out at the plate on a relay from left fielder Vernon Wells to shortstop Erick Aybar to catcher Jeff Mathis.

"You gotta be aggressive," Melvin said. "It was the only opportunity we had at the time. The throw was off-line a little bit, and we had a chance to score a run right there. I'm fine with it."

Howard Kendrick's RBI groundout in the sixth extended Los Angeles' lead to two, and a one-out solo shot off the bat of Aybar just over the right-field wall made it 3-0 in the seventh.

Upon Cahill's departure following the frame, the A's responded in the bottom half with two runs against a previously untouchable Weaver, who gave up back-to-back hits to DeJesus and Conor Jackson with one out. Suzuki's sacrifice fly put Oakland on the board, and Jemile Weeks made the most of his turn with an RBI single that again narrowed the lead.

The turn of events forced Weaver's exit, but reliever Scott Downs proceeded to induce an inning-ended ground ball from Coco Crisp.

"Obviously, I would have liked to finish the seventh," Weaver said, having been yanked after 114 pitches. "They were able to put the ball in places where we weren't. The bullpen came through, and it was a good team win."

A game-changing, not to mention historic, moment nearly occurred in the eighth, when Hideki Matsui launched a ball off Downs deep to right field for a double with one out. A review of what could have been home run No. 500 between the USA and Japan confirmed the original call that the ball did not clear the fence, and the A's ultimately failed to capitalize with runners on first and second in the frame.

"From my angle," Melvin said, "I thought it hit the ledge. You have to go out there and at least let them take a look at it."

The A's manager spoke for less than five minutes at the conclusion of the game, as he had to prepare for the encore, which welcomed in lefty Jerry Blevins from Triple-A Sacramento. The A's reliever was recalled to give the club bullpen help, while infielder Adam Rosales was optioned.

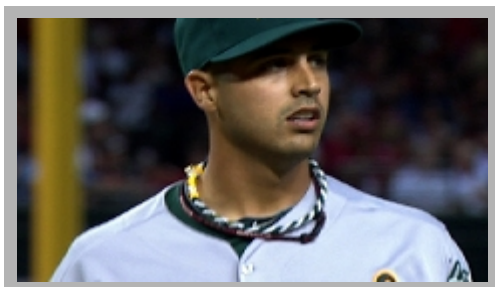
After utilizing six relievers in Friday's win, the A's used three Saturday. But it was the seven innings from Cahill, which resulted in 119 pitches, that greatly preserved an already overworked 'pen.

"I feel like it's part of the job of any starting pitcher to go deep in the game, especially with what happened last night and the doubleheader today," he said. "Whatever I could do to be helpful, trying to throw strikes after that first inning."

Angels hope to come up clutch vs. All-Star hurler

By Doug Miller / MLB.com | 7/17/2011 1:44 AM ET

[Comments \(1\)](#)



2011 ASG: Gonzalez fans Bruce to end the eighth

Gio Gonzalez has had the Angels' number, so when the A's left-hander makes his first start following his first appearance in an All-Star Game, he'll have to be on his game to continue that trend.

Meanwhile, the Angels have been hot and hope to continue their winning ways deep into the summer to catch up to the equally scorching Rangers in the American League West. These will be topics of discussion as the Angels take on the A's in Oakland Coliseum on Sunday.

There's no secret that the Angels need to get better in several areas on the offensive side of the baseball. Manager Mike Scioscia is a big proponent of small ball, but his team has not been producing runs with outs or hitting consistently with runners in scoring position, and the skipper keeps tweaking the lineup in hopes that it will turn around. The Angels have used 75 different lineups in 96 games.

"We've been brutal this year scoring runs with outs and with runners in scoring position," Scioscia said. "We're trying to find looks that will get us moving in the right direction from an offensive standpoint."

To that end, Torii Hunter, a middle-of-the-order bat his entire career, has been hitting second lately, followed by Bobby Abreu and Vernon Wells.

"It's kind of new to me," Hunter said, "but I'm here to do whatever it takes to help us win games. Where I bat is secondary to that. Winning is what we're all here for, and I'm determined to make it to a World Series and win one."

The Angels will have to buck trends against Gonzalez. The Angels' best three hitters -- Abreu, Hunter and Wells -- are a combined 5-for-42 with no homers and three RBIs against the young lefty. Abreu is 1-for-16 with eight strikeouts and one RBI. Hunter is 2-for-17 with one RBI. Wells is 2-for-9 with one RBI. In fact, Russell Branyan is the only Angel to have homered against Gonzalez, and even with that long ball, Branyan is still 2-for-7 against Gonzalez.

Then again, they're not the only ones who've had problems.

Gonzalez, who will be opposed by Angels righty Joel Pineiro on Sunday, put up a 2.47 ERA in the first half and is averaging 8.8 strikeouts per nine innings. He said he's improved as he's gotten older and more experienced.

"I feel like I've matured a lot throughout the years," Gonzalez said. "When I was hopping from team to team, I really didn't have a solid foundation until Oakland came along and gave me an opportunity to pitch. I tried to do my best to represent them the best I could and mold myself into a good pitcher. I want to be the guy to constantly work and get better."

Angels: Pineiro in a groove

- The Angels have won all six of Pineiro's recent outings, and a big reason for it is that they've scored 42 runs in those six starts, an average of seven per game. Pineiro is 9-9 lifetime vs. the A's with a 4.19 ERA in 144 innings.
- First baseman Mark Trumbo's 17 home runs prior to the All-Star break led all Major League rookies and were the most by an Angels rookie before the break since Tim Salmon had 17 in 1993. Trumbo homered again in Game 2 of the Saturday doubleheader and now has 18 for the season.
- In spite of their offensive struggles, the Angels lead the AL with 23 come-from-behind victories, although they are 1-33 when trailing after eight innings.

A's: Can't touch this promotion

- It has been '80s weekend at the Coliseum for the Angels series. Both teams will be donning uniforms from the decade in Sunday's series finale, and the A's are honoring MC Hammer before the game. Hammer was a ballboy for the club when he was a kid growing up in the Bay Area. A's manager and Bay Area native Bob Melvin said he knows all about Hammer Time.

"My genre was probably more classic rock, but absolutely I know his impact, especially here in the Bay Area," Melvin said. "I am a fan."

- The A's on Saturday recalled left-handed reliever Jerry Blevins from Triple-A Sacramento and optioned infielder Adam Rosales to Sacramento following the first game of the doubleheader.
- Reliever Joey Devine has not allowed a home run this season and now has an 84-game, 81-inning, 328-batter homerless streak. He last allowed a home run April 7, 2006, at San Francisco (Moises Alou).

Worth noting

- The Angels are 15-16 against left-handed starters compared to 36-27 against righties.
- Ryan Sweeney extended his errorless streak to 167 games, setting the Oakland record for consecutive errorless games by an outfielder.

A's recall Blevins, option Rosales to Triple-A

By Jane Lee and Tom Green / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- After dropping the first game of Saturday's doubleheader against the Angels, the A's optioned Adam Rosales to Triple-A Sacramento and recalled left-handed pitcher Jerry Blevins.

The move was announced shortly before the second game, and was made to help bolster the A's bullpen for the second game of the scheduled doubleheader. The bullpen was used extensively in Friday's series opener, when six relievers took the mound in the team's 5-3 win.

Three players were used out of the bullpen in the first game Saturday, and it is unclear whether Joey Devine, who experienced back spasms Friday, would be available for the twin bill, leaving the club with limited options in relief.

Blevins was on the A's Opening Day roster and posted a 4.40 ERA in 15 relief appearances for the club this season. Opponents are hitting .260 against the southpaw in the Majors this year. In his last 10 appearances for the River Cats, Blevins has held opponents to a .079 average.

Meanwhile, the move sends Rosales back to Triple-A, where he made three rehab appearances earlier in the season during his recovery from foot surgery. After returning from the disabled list, Rosales appeared in 12 games for the A's, and hit just .121 with two home runs and five RBIs while making nine starts throughout the infield and one in left field.

"He needs to play, he needs some at-bats," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "I don't know that he was quite ready to play and he's not getting his at-bats that he's used to getting. This is more about getting him down there, getting him at-bats and getting him ready. He's a big league player."

Moscoso will get starting nod Tuesday

OAKLAND -- Right-hander Guillermo Moscoso will get the nod for Tuesday's series opener in Detroit, manager Bob Melvin announced Saturday.

The decision wasn't a surprising one, given Moscoso's strong showing as a fill-in starter in the first half. He was 3-3 with a 2.11 ERA and 1.00 WHIP in eight starts in the stead of Tyson Ross, who is still rehabbing following a shoulder setback.

Moscoso, currently stationed at Triple-A Sacramento, was optioned July 7 because of the impending All-Star break, which made it unnecessary for the club to carry him through his next scheduled big league outing.

Moscoso started for the River Cats on Thursday, giving up two earned runs on five hits with three walks and nine strikeouts in six innings while taking the loss.

Devine's back feeling better a day after spasms

OAKLAND -- Right-hander Joey Devine expressed great improvement on Saturday morning after exiting the previous night's game because of spasms near the middle of the right side of his back.

Devine played catch before the start of Saturday's traditional doubleheader against the Angels and believed that, after consulting with the team's medical staff, he could possibly be available for the second contest.

The reliever's presence would be a big boost for an A's club that utilized seven pitchers in Friday's 5-3 series-opening victory. Only left-hander Brian Fuentes and right-hander Fautino De Los Santos went unused, and the latter is seen as the team's lone long-man option in the event starters Trevor Cahill and Rich Harden are pulled early Saturday.

"It is what it is," said manager Bob Melvin, who said the A's "considered" calling up another pitcher for Saturday's twin bill. "You always have to worry about the long-end side of it."

Devine is no stranger to back issues, though each time they've been in different places. While with the Braves organization in 2006, he learned a disc in his lower back had virtually no cartilage left, which painfully left bone grinding against bone. Then, in April of this year, he suffered spasms similar to those he experienced Friday.

The 27-year-old righty, making his 23rd appearance of the season, left the game after tossing just four pitches -- perhaps, he said, partially the result of an All-Star break that broke up his usual routine.

"I think it's typically when I have a little bit of a break," he said. "It's happened before. It's just never happened in a game before like [Friday]. I fell into one of the holes from the previous guy on the mound and my foot gave out and kind of caused my back to wrench up and go into spasms.

"It's been a 24-hour to 48-hour thing in the past, and it's just [a matter] of getting the muscles to calm back down. I think we have it taken care of. I already feel a lot of relief already."

Should problems arise the A's in the first game, they could still bring up a pitcher for game No. 2 from Triple-A Sacramento, where the River Cats aren't slated to play until 7:05 p.m. PST.

A's earn doubleheader split

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Published: Saturday, July 16, 2011 at 6:05 p.m.

OAKLAND — Scott Sizemore singled with two outs in the bottom of the 10th inning, lifting the Oakland Athletics to a 4-3 victory over the Los Angeles Angels on Saturday for a split of the first scheduled doubleheader in the major leagues in eight years.

Jered Weaver won his sixth straight decision in the opener, leading the Angels to a 4-2 win.

This was the first planned doubleheader in the big leagues since Aug. 2, 2003, when San Diego played at Philadelphia. Since then, twinbills have been part of makeup games. And it was Oakland's first scheduled doubleheader at home since Aug. 10, 1997, against Milwaukee.

Sizemore hit a 2-2 pitch from Rich Thompson (1-3) to score pinch-runner Cliff Pennington from second.

Brad Ziegler (3-1) pitched a scoreless inning.

Mark Trumbo homered and drove in two runs and Vernon Wells also connected for the Angels.

David DeJesus, Landon Powell and Coco Crisp drove in runs for the A's.

Angels' starter Ervin Santana allowed three runs — two earned — and a season high-matching 10 hits over 6 1-3 innings. He walked two and struck out six as he remained winless in his last six road starts.

A's Rich Harden, making his third start since coming off the disabled list on July 1, gave up three runs on four hits over seven innings. Harden walked two and struck out nine.

Trumbo's two-run shot, his 18th home run, in the second inning gave the Angels an early edge. He leads all AL rookies in homers.

Harden set down 11 of the next 12 hitters he faced before Wells' 14th homer of the season tied the score in the sixth.

The A's tied the game at 2 in the fourth, getting RBI singles from DeJesus and Powell. Crisp gave Oakland the lead an inning later with a ground out, allowing Eric Sogard, making his first appearance of the season, to score after an error moved him to third.

Angels' reliever Hisanori Takahashi shut down the A's in the seventh after Sogard doubled, Jemile Weeks beat out an infield single and Crisp moved both runners up with a sacrifice. Takahashi struck out Ryan Sweeney, walked Josh Willingham intentionally and struck out David DeJesus to end the threat.

A's relievers Grant Balfour, Andrew Bailey and Ziegler kept the Angels off the scoreboard the rest of the way.

Takahashi pitched 2 2-3 scoreless innings.

Erick Aybar homered and Bobby Abreu drove in two runs in the opener for the Angels.

Weaver (12-4), the AL starter in Tuesday night's All-Star game, did not give up a hit until the fifth inning. He allowed two runs and seven hits in 6 2-3 innings.

"After a few days off I needed to get a feel for the speed of the game again," Weaver said.

Scott Downs got four outs and All-Star rookie Jordan Walden pitched the ninth for his 21st save in 27 chances.

Kurt Suzuki and Jemile Weeks each had three hits for the A's, who have lost five of six.

Trevor Cahill (8-8) lasted seven innings, allowing three runs on five hits. He walked five and struck out eight.

"Not being around the field for a while, it was kind of an awkward feeling," Cahill said. "It took a while to get back into things. Maybe that's why I was so erratic in the first inning."

NOTES: Harden last struck out nine or more on May 3, 2010 in Oakland when he was a member of the Texas Rangers. ... Santana's 13 wins over the A's are his most against any team. ... Sizemore broke an 0-for-18 streak with a bunt single in the third.

... The Angels last played a scheduled doubleheader on Sept. 9, 1978, against the Kansas City Royals.

Willingham's big night gets win over Angels

Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post, 7/16/2011

Oakland, CA – Considering the way the Oakland A's ended the first half of the season before the MLB All-Star break is now behind us. The struggles and lack of hits has been erased from the memory bank. A new half begins tonight when the A's kicked off the first of a four-game series against the Anaheim Angels.

One key element of this team returned from the fifteen day disabled list on July 7 and in his fifth game back he went 3-for-4. Josh Willingham's big night helped the A's win 5-3 over the division rivals Angels. Recovering from a left strained Achilles tendon, Willingham showed no signs of pain. Currently he leads the team with 12 home runs and was the spark to get the bats going.

"He's the guy in the lineup, certainly that can hit it out of any field, really" A's manager Bob Melvin said.

Kurt Suzuki led off the third inning with a double and Jemile Weeks hit an RBI single to give Oakland a 1-0 lead. Then Josh blasted a 2-run homer to left field. The bats were alive and continued in the fourth when David DeJesus doubled followed by Conor Jackson's RBI single that gave the A's a comfortable 4-0 lead. But that changed quickly in the fifth when the Angels offense woke up.

Brandon McCarthy got himself in a jam, he walked Russell Branyan, gave up a single to Jeff Mathis and a double to Erick Aybar to put the Angels on the score board, 4-1. He retired the next two batters to end the inning but didn't improve to start the sixth. Another single to Alberto Callaspo and Melvin did not hesitate to replace McCarthy with Michael Wuertz.

"You don't want to see a game get away from you when you've got a lead like that," explained Brandon.

Wuertz wasn't any better giving up an astonishing three straight consecutive walks to the only three batters he faced with the bases loaded. The Angels got their second run and were now down by two. Brad Ziegler gave up an RBI single to Mike Trout and the Angels are back in this game down by one. But Aybar's ground ball into a double play was huge to end the inning. Oakland's bullpen struggled but eventually found their way back to the controlling the mound.

"It was tailor made, right to Weeks," said Zeigler. "With the way those guys are playing right now, I'll try to get them to hit the ball to those guys as as mush as I can because they turn double plays. And the more they do it, the better they're getting at it."

The A's still had some life left in them, Hideki Matsui drove home the insurance run with a RBI single in the eighth. Willingham had doubled prior to set up a perfect opportunity for Oakland. The hits came at the right time, it's not often you see a team effort throughout the entire game but with the changes made in the first half of the season, the A's seem to be on the right track.

The defense stepped up and the bullpen continued to dominate. Allowing no runs or any possibility to tie the game, all hope for the Angels was denied. After Abreu's two-out double in the seventh Craig Breslow made sure Bobby would be left stranded, he retired Callaspo to end the inning. Grant Balfour was perfect in the eighth and Andrew Bailey closed with a stellar performance as well, he struck out the first two batters before Torii Hunter flew out to right field to end the game.

"We had opportunities to score with an out and couldn't do it," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "Reflecting on missed chances in the fifth and sixth innings, we paid a price as the game went on."

MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

Grand slam lifts Fresno past Sacramento

By Alex Sadorf / Sacramento River Cats

Sacramento's early lead - two-run home runs from Chris Carter and Matt Carson put the River Cats ahead 4-1 in the third -- didn't last as the Grizzlies came back to beat the River Cats 8-5 on Saturday night at Raley Field.

Brandon Belt hit his 11th double of the year in the first inning to score Justin Christian, who reached on a Adrian Cardenas error. Following Belt's RBI, left-handed pitcher Josh Outman struck out the next three batters.

After Carter's home run in the first, the score was 2-1 River Cats. With two outs in the third and Daric Barton on first, Carson hit his 18th home run of the year over the left-field wall. Carson's home run gave the Cats a 4-1 lead.

The Grizzlies didn't stay behind long, putting three runs on the board in the fourth. With runners on base, Christian doubled down the left-field line, scoring Max Ramirez and putting Tyler Graham on third. Edgar Gonzalez then hit the ball to Chris Carter and was thrown out at first, but Graham scored. Brett Pill's single to left field brought in Christian, the final run of the inning, to tie the game 4-4.

The Grizzlies weren't content with a tie, and with the bases loaded in the sixth Pill hit the ball to the clubhouse roof. The grand slam was Pill's 17th home run of the year and gave the Grizzlies an 8-4 lead.

The River Cats came back in the seventh to put one more run on the board. With Adrian Cardenas in scoring position, Carson hit a single to left field and brought Cardenas home. It was Carson's third RBI of the night and his 59th of the season.

"Their record doesn't show it, but they're a good team, or at least we don't play well against them," Carson said. "They are playing really confident baseball right now and they're stealing bases and they're playing good ball. We're kind of playing don't-make-a-mistake baseball, which you can't really win too many ball games doing."

Carson is hopeful though about Sunday's game against the Grizzlies.

"If we can get our confidence back against these guys and come out tomorrow and get a big win, we should be ok," he said.

Sunday is not only the final game in the homestand with the Grizzlies, it is also Dinger's Birthday Bash presented by Jelly Belly. The first 2,500 fans will receive a Dinger Bobblehead. Gates open at noon.

RockHounds score 3 in 12th to beat Missions

Oscar LeRoy, Midland Reporter-Telegram

For fans who left Citibank Ballpark early on Saturday night, they missed an unbelievable ending in the 12th inning between the Midland RockHounds and San Antonio Missions.

After the Missions scored two runs in the top of the 12th to take a 5-3 lead, the RockHounds stormed back to tie the game in the bottom of the inning then win it when Shane Peterson hit a seeing-eye single between the first and second baseman to score Michael Spina and give Midland an improbable 6-5 victory.

This was a game that saw the RockHounds battle from an early deficit, come back and force extras, fall behind again and then pull out some heroics in their final at-bat.

The late game loss was a rarity for the Missions, who were 54-1 this season when leading after eight innings.

A RockHounds victory didn't look very good in the top of the 12th when 'Hounds reliever Jon Meloan struggled, beginning with a leadoff triple by Daniel Robertson. The next four batters reached, and the Missions took a two-run lead before Meloan (1-3) locked in and got out of the inning by retiring the next three batters he faced.

Then in the bottom of the inning, Wes Timmons (4-for-4) continued his great game when he led off with a double. Grant Green then singled to put runners on first and second. After Stephen Parker flied out to the shortstop, Spina smacked a two-run double down the third-base line to tie the game at 5. Colt Hynes (0-4) then intentionally walked Adam Heether to set up Peterson's heroics.

The RockHounds had to battle back from the very start as Midland starter Jason Bergmann had a tough first inning for the RockHounds as the first four Missions to the plate reached base, three of them on walks. Andy Parrino had an RBI double, and Jason Hagerty added a sacrifice fly to center field to give the Missions a 2-0 lead.

San Antonio made it 3-0 in the third when Jedd Gyorko led off with a walk and later scored on a Hagerty single.

After the third inning, Bergmann really settled down and allowed just two more hits through his last three innings of work.

Bergmann settling down was a big help for the RockHounds as Missions starter Pedro Hernandez, making his first start for San Antonio, was solid through the first four innings. Hernandez scattered three hits over his first four innings of work.

But then in the fifth, Hernandez ran into some trouble as the RockHounds rallied to cut the Missions' lead to 3-2. It all started when Ryan Ortiz drew a leadoff walk. Then Tyler Ladendorf followed with an RBI triple to right field to score Ortiz. Timmons then followed with a sacrifice fly to right field to pull the 'Hounds to within a run.

Thanks to some mound magic from reliever Joe Bateman, the RockHounds stayed within a run heading into the bottom of the ninth inning. The Missions had the bases loaded with one out when Bateman struck out Blake Tekotte and Parrino, the Nos. 1 and 2 hitters respectively, to get out of the jam.

The RockHounds forced extra innings with a run in the ninth to tie the game at 3. Pinch hitter Matt Sulentic drew a walk to lead off the frame. A sacrifice bunt by Ortiz moved Sulentic over to second base. After Miles Nikolas struck out Ladendorf for the second out, Timmons followed with a flare single to shallow right field to score Sulentic.

'HOUND BITES: Grant Green made his second consecutive start at center field for the RockHounds. ...Missions RF Daniel Robertson had his second assist in as many nights when he threw out Adam Heether at third base after a single by Shane Peterson to right in the sixth inning. ...The RockHounds had a runner thrown out at home plate in the sixth when LF Jaff Decker threw out Peterson after a single to left by Ryan Ortiz. ...RockHounds RF Jeremy Barfield saw his hitting streak end at five games after going 0 for 3. ...Midland is now 6-3 in extra-inning games, while San Antonio dropped to 54-2.

TODAY'S PROBABLES: The RockHounds host the San Antonio Missions in the final game of a four-game series at 6 p.m. as RHP Yadel Marti makes his first appearance with the RockHounds, while San Antonio starts LHP Juan Oramas (6-0, 2.22) to the mound.

Home Runs Doom Ports

Stockton Ports

The Ports began their three-game homestand on a sour note, falling to the Visalia Rawhide 9-3 on Saturday night. A six-run first inning for the Rawhide was enough to power Visalia to the win.

The Rawhide got to Ports starter James Simmons from the very start of the game, driving the former 2007 first round pick from the game after just 0.1 inning. David Nick started the inning with a ground rule double to right-center field. Matt Davidson singled to left field, which was enough for Nick to score. Then Bobby Borchering hit a two-run home run to left field to put the Rawhide up by three. Jon Mark. Owings walked before Alfredo Marte hit his first home run of the evening to left field on a 3-1. Back to back doubles was all it took for Simmons to be pulled from the game.

Fabian Williamson, who had been with the Ports as a starter at the beginning of the season, entered the game to replace Simmons and made quick work of the final two batters to get the Ports out of the inning. Williamson returned to the Ports on July 14, after making 10 appearances with Double-A Midland. Williamson, who has made the transition to the bullpen pitched 3.2 solid innings, keeping the Rawhide from scoring any more runs.

Meanwhile the Ports struggled to get runs on the board, finally breaking through in the fourth inning. Birthday boy, Anthony Aliotti led off the inning with a walk, and advanced to second on a Rashun Dixon single up the middle. Leonardo Gil singled through the hole at shortstop, and on a bit of good base running, Aliotti was able to beat the throw home for the Ports first run of the night. Dixon, who had advanced to third on the throw came home on a Ryan Lipkin groundout for the Ports final run of the inning.

Connor Hoehn came in to relieve Williamson in the fifth inning. Hoehn, who earned the loss in his last outing on July 12, felt the wrath of the Rawhide bats quickly. With one out in the inning, Marte hit his second home run of the evening to a similar spot in left field. Keon Broxton singled to center field and advanced to second on a Choice fielding error. Hoehn fell victim to a pair of poor defensive plays for the second run of the inning. A pop up by Rossmel Perez fell between Gil, Myrio Richard and Michael Gilmartin for a single, and then a poor throw by Richard allowed Broxton to score. Nick then doubled to plate Perez for the final run of the inning.

Michael Choice put the Ports final run of the evening in the fifth, by way of the home run. Choice didn't waste any time, blasting the first pitch of the at-bat over the center field wall that left no doubt in fan's minds that the ball was hit hard.

Hoehn rebounded in the sixth, getting two strikeouts in a 1-2-3 inning before being replaced by Mike Hart in the seventh. Hart gave up two hits and no runs in the inning, and was replaced by Ports lefty, AJ Huttenlocker. Huttenlocker, who boasts the lowest ERA in the bullpen, a slim 1.59 after tonight, saw six up and six down to close out the night for the Ports.

The Ports look to rebound against the Rawhide tomorrow on Dallas Braden "209" Bobble-Belly giveaway night presented by EZ Network Systems. Gates open at 5 p.m., and the first 1000 fans will walk away with the coveted bobble-bellies. Ports righty Rob Gilliam takes the mound for the Ports against righty Trevor Harden for the Rawhide.

Long and Nester Shine in 7-5 Win

By Matthew Wheaton, Burlington Bees

BURLINGTON, IA - The Burlington Bees (8-14) squeaked past the Lake County Captains (8-14) 7-5 before 835 fans at Community Field Saturday night. Bees RHP Nate Long earned the win, pitching six scoreless innings, allowing two hits and striking out a career-high eight. C John Nester (2-4) added a two-run home run and finished with four RBIs.

Burlington started the scoring in the bottom of the second inning after 3B Wade Kirkland (2-3) hit a one-out double to left field. With SS Ryan Pineda (2-3) batting, Lake County C Moises Montero (0-4) allowed a passed ball, and Kirkland moved to

third base. A RBI double to center field by Pineda plated Kirkland. Nester smacked a two-run home run over the left field wall to put Burlington up 3-0.

Pineda hit a triple to left field to lead off the bottom of the fourth inning and scored on a RBI single by 2B Nino Leyja (1-3) to make the score 4-0 Bees.

In the bottom of the sixth inning, SS Yordy Cabrera (1-4) drew a lead-off walk. Kirkland hit a single to left field. A sacrifice bunt from Pineda moved Cabrera to third base and Kirkland to second base. Nester hit a two-run single to center field. Leyja walked. Nester scored on a RBI double by CF Tyreace House (2-3) to give Burlington a 7-0 lead.

Lake County RF Carlos Moncrief (0-3) walked to lead off the top of the eighth inning. DH Jordan Casas (1-4) hit a single to left field. With 1B Jesus Aguilar (0-3) batting, Casas stole second base. Aguilar walked. With 3B Giovanni Urshela (1-4) at the dish, Moncrief scored on a wild pitch from Burlington RHP Blake Treinen. Urshela hit a two-run single to center field, plating Casas and Aguilar. An infield single by SS Ronny Rodriguez (1-4) moved Urshela to second base. With LF Brian Heere (0-3) at the plate, Bees RHP Jonathan Joseph threw a wild pitch, advancing Urshela to third base and Rodriguez to second base. A RBI ground out from Heere plated Urshela and moved Rodriguez to third base. A RBI single by 2B Nick Bartolone (2-4) brought the Captains within two runs at 7-5.

The Bees and the Lake County Captains play game two of their three-game series Sunday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. It's "Faith Day" at Community Field. All fans that bring their church bulletin get \$1.00 off up to four general admission tickets on Sunday home games. It's also "Louisa Communications Kids Day." All kids 12 and under get in free, (when accompanied by a paid adult), and get to run the bases after the game brought to you by Louisa Communications. Also it's "Western Illinois Area Community Weekend" at Community Field and all fans who show their Illinois I.D. will receive discounted general admission tickets. Celebrate National Ice Cream Day with special ice cream from "Grandpa's Homemade Ice Cream." LHP JD Reichenbach (4-1, 3.74) gets the start for Lake County against RHP Josh Bowman (6-3, 3.43) for Burlington. Pre-game coverage begins at 1:40 p.m. on Newsradio 1490 KBUR and online at www.gobees.com.

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

Lake Monsters Beat Aberdeen 4-3 Saturday

By Paul Stanfield / Vermont Lake Monsters

BURLINGTON, VT --- Chad Oberacker led off the bottom of the seventh with a triple and scored the go ahead run on a Chad Lewis RBI single before reliever Jeff Urlaub had to strikeout the final two batters with the tying run on third base as the Vermont Lake Monsters defeated the Aberdeen Ironbirds 4-3 in New York-Penn League action Saturday night at historic Centennial Field.

Aberdeen took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first on a Sammie Starr one-out double and a two-out Joe Velleggia RBI single, but the Lake Monsters took the lead in the second inning on a Nick Rickles two-run double to right center. Vermont added another run in the fourth on an Aaron Shipman RBI single for a 3-1 advantage.

The Ironbirds tied the game in the fifth with a pair of unearned runs off Vermont starter Seth Frankoff on an RBI groundout and a Mychal Givens two-out RBI double. Frankoff allowed three runs (one earned) on six hits with one walk and five strikeouts over six innings in a no-decision.

The game stayed 3-3 until the seventh when Oberacker led off the inning with his second triple of the season. Lewis followed with line drive single to left on a 1-0 pitch to give Vermont the lead and also extend his hitting streak to nine games (12-for-42).

Back-to-back one-out singles in the ninth put runners on first and third for Aberdeen, but Urlaub came on in relief to strikeout Starr swinging and Givens looking for his second save of the season. Urlaub now has given up just one walk with 26 strikeouts in 17 innings pitched.

Shipman went 2-for-3 and is now 9-for-14 in his last three games, while Oberacker and Xavier Macklin both had two hits for Vermont (16-10). Drew Bailey (3-0) tossed 2 1/3 scoreless innings for the win, while Ironbirds reliever Ryan Berry (0-1) allowed one run on five hits over three innings for the loss. Givens, Connor Narron and Glynn Davis each had two hits for Aberdeen (7-22).

The Lake Monsters and Ironbirds will continue the series at Centennial Field on Sunday afternoon beginning at 1:05 pm. It will also beermont Teen Leadership Safety Program (VTSLP)/Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Day at the ballpark and "Have A Catch" on the field following the game.