

**Oakland A's come up short in 7-5 loss to New York Yankees**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

NEW YORK -- Going down quietly Sunday against Mariano Rivera would not have fit the A's season, which has included its share of heartbreakers.

The A's began the ninth inning trailing by three against the New York Yankees closer but cut the deficit to two with the bases loaded and one out, only to see David DeJesus line into a double play to cement a 7-5 defeat at Yankee Stadium.

It was the first run Rivera has allowed at home all season.

"We put ourselves in position where we had a chance to go ahead in the ninth inning," manager Bob Melvin said. "It's good to feel confident about it and then to line out like that is obviously deflating."

It typified Oakland's season, where one facet of the team shines while another springs a leak.

The A's collected 15 hits and got a 5-for-5 day from designated hitter Hideki Matsui.

But starting pitcher Gio Gonzalez surrendered six runs and was pulled in the fifth, having thrown 111 pitches.

That left too much ground to make up as the A's dropped two of three in the Bronx. They have lost 10 straight series against the Yankees, an Oakland record for consecutive series lost to any team.

Much of the damage against Gonzalez (9-7) came with two outs.

After being handed a 2-0 lead, Gonzalez allowed Andruw Jones' run-scoring single in the second. With two outs in the fourth, he hit Russell Martin with a pitch and walked Jones. Eduardo Nunez followed with a two-run double.

The Yankees tacked on three in the fifth for a 6-2 lead, when Gonzalez walked Derek Jeter to open the inning before allowing Curtis Granderson's two-run homer. Jones' two-out RBI single chased Gonzalez.

"It's really what preceded the runs (that hurt)," Melvin said. "You've got two outs. You get a hit batter, they score some runs. A walk later, and they score some runs."

Gonzalez is 1-4 with a 7.27 ERA in five career starts against New York. He has allowed 21 earned runs and 20 walks in 26 innings.

"I've just got to throw strikes," Gonzalez said. "That's against any team."

Down 6-2, the A's scored twice in the eighth on RBI doubles from Matsui and Kurt Suzuki.

They could have moved closer had Josh Willingham been able to score from first on Suzuki's double. Willingham was running on the full-count pitch, but third-base coach Mike Gallego held him at third.

Willingham still isn't moving too well since missing 17 games with a strained left Achilles before the All-Star break.

"I'm sure he's being careful, trying not to push it," Melvin said.

The Yankees tacked on a run against Joey Devine in the bottom of the eighth for a 7-4 lead.

That appeared to be plenty for Rivera, but Willingham lined a bases-loaded single with one out that scored Jemile Weeks to make it 7-5. With the bases still loaded, DeJesus lined a 2-1 pitch right at first baseman Mark Teixeira. Ryan Sweeney, pinch-running for Willingham, was caught way off the bag and Teixeira easily doubled him up to end it.

"(The pitch) was cutting pretty good," said DeJesus, who is hitting .228. "I got inside of it, and with my luck right now, I was just like, 'Ahh, it's right at him.' "

Matsui is 15 for 32 with two homers and 11 RBIs in eight games since the All-Star break. That might catch teams' attention as Sunday's nonwaiver trade deadline approaches.

### **A's update: De Los Santos strikes out an impressive side**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

NEW YORK -- A's reliever Fautino De Los Santos encountered a tough situation in the sixth inning Sunday.

After walking Brandon Laird to lead off the inning, he faced Derek Jeter, Curtis Granderson and Mark Teixeira -- the top three hitters in the New York Yankees lineup.

De Los Santos struck out all three, getting them to wave at sliders.

It was the latest impressive outing for the right-hander, who is starting to emerge after being sidetracked by elbow ligament replacement surgery in 2008.

De Los Santos, 25, has allowed just one earned run in seven appearances since being recalled from Triple-A Sacramento on July 1 for his second big league stint.

Over his past three outings, he has allowed one hit with no runs and nine strikeouts in five innings.

"Looking at the numbers and what he's done to this point, he's been terrific," A's manager Bob Melvin said Saturday. "He's also working on things, like holding runners on, and that's something that's tough to do at the major league level."

De Los Santos had surgery in May 2008 and didn't appear in another game until July 2009.

His live fastball and sharp slider have caught the attention of scouts.

The A's aren't likely to trade him. Any moves they make before Sunday's nonwaiver trade deadline would likely be an effort to acquire young players, not deal them.

Joey Devine, who issued three walks Friday and had problems gripping the baseball in the humidity, had more adventures Sunday.

He threw his first pitch behind the right-handed hitting Eduardo Nunez in the eighth. Nunez singled, was bunted to second and stole third. He scored on Jeter's ground out, adding an insurance run for the Yankees in their 7-5 victory.

Devine, who planned to use a gel-like substance called Sweat Shield to improve his grip, used mostly off-speed stuff early in the inning before mixing in fastballs.

"I think it was more of him getting a better grip on his breaking ball," Melvin said. "We'll get back to less humid weather in Oakland and we'll be better off."

Tyson Ross, battling shoulder soreness, allowed five runs and four walks in a three-inning rehab start for Triple-A Sacramento.

The A's have not won any of their last 11 road series.

### **Chin Music: A's go for rare series victory over Yankees**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 7/24/2011 9:51am

The temperature has taken a small dip today, and there's even a chance of rain for the A's-Yankees series finale ...

The A's would take the series with a victory, and it would be significant. They've dropped nine straight series to the Yankees, an Oakland record for most consecutive series lost against any team.

The morning's news ...

-Tyson Ross will make a rehab start for Triple-A Sacramento today, throwing 65-70 pitches. His role once he's activated from the DL is TBA (starting or relieving?), and I'd think the decision is tied to A) how Guillermo Moscoso continues

performing in the rotation, and B) which pitchers (if any) are dealt before the trade deadline. If Moscoso has another shaky outing or two, perhaps the A's swap in Ross for that rotation spot. I can't see Ross replacing any of the current relievers unless someone is traded. He could also join Sacramento's rotation.

—Scott Sizemore gets a day off, with Eric Sogard playing third and batting ninth. Cliff Pennington, 11 for 27 over his past seven games, moves up to eighth.

—Interesting note from Elias: Hideki Matsui has hit 32 percent of his major league home runs (54 of 169) off left-handed pitchers. That's the highest percentage among the 62 left-handed hitters with 50 or more career homers.

The lineups:

A's — Weeks 2B, Crisp CF, Matsui DH, Willingham LF, DeJesus RF, Jackson 1B, Suzuki C, Pennington SS, Sogard 3B; Gonzalez LHP.

Yankees — Jeter DH, Granderson CF, Teixeira 1B, Cano 2B, Swisher RF, Martin C, Jones LF, Nunez SS, Laird 3B; Colon RHP.

### **A's fall to Yanks 7-5 but rediscover their offense**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

**NEW YORK** -- The A's lost two of three to the Yankees this weekend, falling 7-5 on Sunday, but felt somewhat good about themselves.

Maybe not Trevor Cahill or Gio Gonzalez. But lots of hitters, and that's a new twist. The A's collected at least 10 hits all three games, finished the series with 38 and batted .330. Not exactly the norm.

Is it possible to resume the trend in Oakland, where the A's begin a weeklong home stand tonight?

"Let's try it out," David DeJesus said. "Let's do it there, too. At least there won't be this heat. It'll be back-to-normal Oakland weather."

It was an almost bearable 85 degrees Sunday, down from 93 on Saturday and 100 on Friday, all games played in muggy conditions. By comparison, the Coliseum will be Antarctica, which will be welcomed.

The offense was so alive that Yankees manager Joe Girardi summoned 12-time All-Star closer Mariano Rivera in the eighth inning after the A's scored twice off David Robertson. With two outs, two on and a two-run lead, Rivera retired Cliff Pennington on a weak grounder to second.

The A's nearly brought down Rivera in the ninth, bunching four one-out singles to score a run, making it 7-5. Up stepped DeJesus, who lined Rivera's 2-1 cut fastball down the first-base line. But Mark Teixeira, crowding the line to prevent an extra-base hit, caught the ball and stepped on the bag for a game-ending double play.

"With my luck, right at him," DeJesus said.

Hideki Matsui was the main man on offense, going 5-for-5 - the first Athletic with five hits at Yankee Stadium since Dave Philley of the Philly A's on Aug. 19, 1951 - and finished the series 7-for-13. Oakland's 15 hits weren't enough to climb from the hole Gonzalez dug.

Two days after Cahill surrendered 10 runs in two innings, Gonzalez gave up six in 4 2/3 . Four runs came with two outs, and his fourth inning was particularly bothersome - with two outs and the bases clear, he hit a batter, walked another and gave up Eduardo Nuñez's two-run double.

A few other plays that didn't go Oakland's way made a difference.

Pennington briefly bobbled a hard grounder by Derek Jeter, enabling Nuñez to score from third, a key eighth-inning Yankees insurance run.

Josh Willingham's speed, which isn't much in the wake of his Achilles' injury, played a role at two other moments. He barely missed Nuñez's two-run double in left-center and didn't score from first on Kurt Suzuki's two-out double to right-center in the eighth.

He was held by third-base coach Mike Gallego and stranded when Rivera finished the inning.

### **A's reserve outfielder Ryan Sweeney bides his time**

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

**NEW YORK** -- - Starting outfielders **Josh Willingham**, **David DeJesus** and **Coco Crisp** are candidates to be traded before Sunday's deadline, and moving at least one would open more playing time for **Ryan Sweeney**.

Sweeney is batting .279, tops among hitters who have been with the A's all season. He's 0-for-16 against lefties but hitting .309 off righties. He's not platooned and has played little since the arrival of manager **Bob Melvin**, who plays right fielder DeJesus and designated hitter **Hideki Matsui** regularly.

Since Willingham came off the disabled list on July 7, Sweeney has started four of 13 games and hit .238.

Asked about Sweeney, Melvin said, "I think he's a good, pure hitter. He's got a natural swing, hits the ball the other way, pulls the ball. Maybe a guy that should be given the opportunity to play every day, but based on the three guys that we have here right now, he gets the short end of the stick as far as starts go."

Sweeney is homerless with 11 RBIs in 165 at-bats, an obvious reason he's not playing more. His last homer was May 4, 2010.

"If he was given the opportunity to play every day, you might see some more power," said Melvin, who cited several reasons why Sweeney is a valuable bench player, including speed, versatility and defense. Plus, he's 4-for-12 as a pinch-hitter.

**Matsui vs. lefties:** Matsui's homer Saturday was off **Boone Logan**, a lefty. No surprise. Seven of Matsui's eight homers this year were off lefties, as are 54 of his 169 in the majors.

That's 32 percent, the highest among the 62 active left-handed hitters with at least 50 home runs.

"He's always hit lefties well," Melvin said.

Previous manager **Bob Geren** rarely played Matsui against lefties. All five of Matsui's hits on Sunday were off righties.

**Briefly:** Former Yankees manager **Joe Torre** visited the A's clubhouse to congratulate Matsui for reaching 500 homers, including his time in Japan. ... **Joey Devine** continued to deal with grip problems in the Bronx heat, especially with his fastball. ... In the latest step in his rehab, **Tyson Ross** threw 69 pitches for Triple-A Sacramento on Sunday. Ross allowed four hits, four walks and two home runs in three innings against Reno.

## **A'S LEADING OFF**

**Swing away:** One reason manager Bob Melvin prefers Jemile Weeks over Coco Crisp at leadoff is Crisp's aggressiveness. "He's a swinger. I don't want him to necessarily take too many pitches and think about on-base percentage too much," Melvin said.

## **Drumbeat: Stat of the day on Hideki Matsui**

John Shea from Yankee Stadium, where the A's are looking to win the series and finish the trip 3-2 . . . 7/24/2011 10:59am

Remember in the Bob Geren days when Hideki Matsui hardly played against left-handed starting pitchers? That all changed when Bob Melvin took over and inserted Matsui in the lineup no matter what hand the pitcher threw with.

"He's always hit lefties well," Melvin said today.

It seems. Here's a stat passed on from A's PR man Bob Rose, courtesy of Elias Sports Bureau:

Thirty-two percent of Matsui's 169 homers in the majors were hit left-handed (54), the highest percentage among the 62 active left-handed hitters with at least 50 homers.

Seven of Matsui's eight homers this year were off lefties, including No. 501 (Boone Logan) on Saturday.

## **A's cut down in Bronx rubber match**

### **After promising start, Gonzalez loses steam in loss to Yanks**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com | 7/24/2011 6:15 PM ET

NEW YORK -- The script, it seems, has become rather predictable -- at least when the setting is Yankee Stadium.

A young Oakland arm, emerging among the league's best, enters one of baseball's biggest stages and simply falters. The offense, meanwhile, shows life -- but it's not enough. And so, another loss is added to the A's season.

Such was the case again on Sunday, when Oakland managed a season-high-tying 15 hits but still dropped a 7-5 game to a Yankees team that has now claimed victory in 26 of the last 31 meetings between the two clubs since 2008, including 14 of 16 in the Bronx.

A's lefty Gio Gonzalez was the latest victim, suffering his worst statistical start of the season by surrendering six runs, seven hits and three walks with five strikeouts in just 4 2/3 innings, bumping up an already towering career ERA against the Yankees to 7.27.

The forlorn tale nearly took a turn for the better in the ninth inning, when the A's collected four consecutive hits off the stalwart arm of Mariano Rivera, who was left to face David DeJesus with just one out and the bases loaded. DeJesus, who entered with one career hit (a home run) off Rivera in five at-bats, grabbed hold of a 2-1 cutter and let loose for a sharp liner.

"The sound off the bat sounded good," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

But the result wasn't as pretty, as first baseman Mark Teixeira easily snatched the ball before tagging the bag for a game-ending double play.

"I got inside the ball," DeJesus said. "I saw his cutter pretty good, but with my luck right now, I thought, 'Oh, that's right at him.' I hit it decent, but they're guarding the line, so what can you do?"

"It's frustrating, but it shows we didn't give up. A lot of teams, when Mariano comes in, they hang their heads and say the game's over, but we didn't feel that way."

That very confidence stems from a renewed showing at the plate, where the A's are batting .308 as a team since the All-Star break. But they went 2-3 on this road trip, with the losses resulting in a combined 22 earned runs in just 11 1/3 innings from their starters.

Gonzalez's shaky performance came two days after righty Trevor Cahill attached 10 runs to his name after just two innings in New York, the end result a 17-7 defeat. Oakland starters are 1-5 with a 10.38 ERA against the Yankees this season.

Making the biggest dents in Sunday's matinee were Eduardo Nunez's two-run double in the fourth and Curtis Granderson's two-run monster shot to right field in a three-run fifth frame. The trouble extended deeper, though, as Gonzalez saw three baserunners cash in free passes (two via walk and one a hit batsman) for runs.

"I can't be hitting people or putting them on base because of walks," the All-Star lefty said. "They do a good job up there. They work the count pretty good, but you have to go out there and attack the strike zone."

"He made a couple of mistakes," Yankees outfielder Andruw Jones said of Gonzalez, "and we took advantage of them."

The damage wiped away a 2-0 lead gained by the A's in the second inning against Yankees veteran right-hander Bartolo Colon via RBI hits from Cliff Pennington and Eric Sogard. Colon went seven innings for the Bronx Bombers, scattering eight hits while walking one and striking out four along the way.

RBI doubles from Hideki Matsui and Kurt Suzuki in the eighth narrowed New York's lead to two, but the A's were kept at bay thereafter in the wake of Rivera's arrival en route to a four-out save.

Oakland fell to 18-35 on the road, the third-worst record in the American League, but with the loss came a bright spot via Matsui's second career five-hit day. The A's designated hitter is 15-for-32 (.469) since the All-Star break, bringing his season average up 18 points in a span of nine games and potentially adding to general manager Billy Beane's lengthy list of trade bait as next Sunday's non-waiver Trade Deadline nears.

"It feels like right before the break is when I started feeling pretty good," Matsui said through translator Roger Kahlon. "My balance is much better now, and in addition to that, my bat speed is much better."

Matsui isn't the only one heating up. Pennington, who put together a 2-for-4 day, has hit safely in each of his last six games, batting .440 over the stretch. Moreover, Coco Crisp has nine hits in his last 22 at-bats, and the last of two on Sunday marked his 200th career double.

"In the second half, the offense has much better," Matsui said. "We're starting to put together rallies, and guys are starting to hit, so it's coming around."

The A's will soon see if that trend can continue in Oakland, where they're set to begin a seven-game homestand beginning on Monday.

"Let's try it out," DeJesus said. "Let's do it there, too."

### **A's unsure of role injured Ross will inherit**

### **As Trade Deadline looms, rotation spot may open up**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

NEW YORK -- A's right-hander Tyson Ross, on the mend from a right shoulder setback, is scheduled to make a rehab start for Triple-A Sacramento on Sunday.

Ross will be limited to 65-70 pitches as he works to increase his exertion level, manager Bob Melvin said, though that doesn't necessarily guarantee him a starting role when he's ready to return to Oakland.

"We'll see how it plays out," Melvin said. "We have five guys right now. Things have a way of working themselves out. Certainly, there's some time before we get there, and once we do, we'll figure it out."

That very decision could potentially be made easier should the A's choose to move a starter before next Sunday's non-waiver Trade Deadline. Right-hander Rich Harden has reportedly garnered interest, and the A's could also make righty Brandon McCarthy available.

Ross was earning all sorts of praise for his efforts in lefty Dallas Braden's absence, posting a 3-2 record and a 2.50 ERA as a starter, but this marks his third injury in less than a year. The 24-year-old was shut down in August last year with a strained right elbow and in May was sidelined by an oblique strain before suffering the shoulder setback.

Ross owns a career 2-4 record with a 3.49 ERA and 1.27 WHIP as a starter, compared to a 2-3 mark with a 4.91 ERA and 1.58 WHIP as a reliever.

### **Melvin prefers to use Sweeney's bat off bench**

NEW YORK -- Never mind the small sample size Bob Melvin has seen of Ryan Sweeney. The A's manager is well aware of the outfielder's abilities, not to mention his transition from starter to bench player this season, and Melvin believes the latter role suits Sweeney well.

"His bat does play off the bench," Melvin said. "He's a guy with a short stroke and kind of has a low-maintenance swing. It's a pretty natural swing. A lot of guys will have a little more difficulty coming off the bench and getting your share of hits, [which] he's still able to do."

Sweeney entered Sunday hitting .279 with 11 RBIs in 67 games this season, just 40 of which he's started. But his slugging percentage stands at a mere .379, as only seven of his 46 hits have been for extra bases and none has accounted for a home run.

That missing power, which has long been etched aside Sweeney's name, won't come so long as he remains out of the everyday mix, Melvin maintains.

"To have a type of power stroke, to develop that, is difficult to do," Melvin said. "So his focus is to let the ball travel and get the base hits and drive in some runs. If he was given the opportunity to play every day, you might see some more power."

"I think he's a good, pure hitter. He's got a great swing, hits the ball the other way, pulls the ball -- maybe a guy that should be given the opportunity to play every day, but based on the three guys that we have here right now, he gets the short end of the stick, as far as the starts go."

Melvin explained that it took a while upon his arrival to realize David DeJesus needs to be in the outfield on a daily basis if he's going to have a chance to be productive. DeJesus has started all nine games since the All-Star break and, as a result, entered Sunday 10-for-29 (.345) in that span.

Those numbers could very well make DeJesus a strong trade candidate in the coming week, meaning all three of Oakland's regular outfielders are essentially available, as Josh Willingham and Coco Crisp have already gathered great interest. A week

from Sunday, then, when the non-waiver Trade Deadline passes, Sweeney could ultimately find himself back in a starting role.

### **Worth noting**

- Hideki Matsui's home run off Yankees lefty Boone Logan on Saturday was his eighth of the season and 169th as a Major Leaguer. He has hit 32 percent of his home runs off left-handed pitchers in his career (54 of 169), the highest percentage among the 62 active left-handed batters with at least 50 lifetime homers.

Seven of Matsui's homers this season have come vs. lefties, against whom he's hitting .253 this season. Comparably, he's batting just .213 with a right-hander on the mound.

"He's always hit lefties well," manager Bob Melvin said. "Typically, lefties who hit lefties really stay in there. Sometimes, with a righty, you get a false sense of security trying to pull. You open up a little too soon and end up rolling over a pitch, where a left-hander maybe keeps your shoulder in there a bit longer and everything's moving away from you instead of toward you."

- Scott Sizemore received a day off Sunday, while Eric Sogard earned his first career start at third base. It marked Sogard's second career appearance at the position, though he played there 14 times for Triple-A Sacramento last season.

### **Rays hope to break through in Oakland**

By Joey Nowak / MLB.com | 7/24/2011 5:35 PM ET

Hoping to find a rhythm, the Rays will head to a ballpark at which they've been unable to do so over time.

Tampa Bay and Oakland will meet for a four-game set beginning on Monday night at Oakland Coliseum, where the Rays are 18-43 all time.

Tampa Bay has lost eight of its last 12 games, while the A's are coming off a series loss to the Yankees in New York.

"I've watched them a few times on video," said Rays right-hander Jeremy Hellickson, who will take the ball in Monday's series opener. "I faced them last year -- one of my four starts. They have pretty much the same guys as last year."

Hellickson has a 4.26 ERA in 6 1/3 innings against Oakland.

Meanwhile, the A's are hoping Guillermo Moscoso's last outing was just a hiccup and his previous four were a better indication of the direction the right-hander's season is heading.

After allowing just one earned run in his previous four starts, Moscoso was knocked around for seven runs (six earned) and nine hits over 4 2/3 innings against the Tigers on Tuesday.

"It's frustrating when you're throwing the ball well all day," Moscoso said in reference to Detroit's six-run fifth inning. "And then I started missing my spots. You can't miss a spot in this game."

Moscoso has never faced Tampa Bay, which is a season-high 9 1/2 games behind first-place Boston in the American League East and 6 1/2 back of New York in the AL Wild Card race.

It's Tampa Bay's largest deficit in the hotly contested division since the end of the 2009 season.

### **Athletics: Matsui on a roll**

Athletics designated hitter Hideki Matsui, who was 7-for-13 with three runs scored, a homer and two RBIs against his former team over the weekend, was 12-for-21 on Oakland's road trip.



He recorded his second career five-hit game on Sunday and is 15-for-32 (.469) since the All-Star break, having raised his season average 18 points in a span of nine games.

"It feels like right before the break is when I started feeling pretty good," Matsui said through translator Roger Kahlon. "My balance is much better now, and in addition to that, my bat speed is much better."

### **Rays: Sweet six?**

- The Rays have gone to a six-man rotation for the time being, though Hellickson wasn't sure the extra rest would factor much.

"I don't think one extra day affects us," Hellickson said. "Sixteen days, maybe, but I don't think an extra day is going to affect us too much."

- Tampa Bay, which scored first on Sunday, is 39-12 when doing so, compared to 14-35 when the opponent scores first.

### **Worth noting**

- The Rays are 1-5-1 in their last seven series after having gone 5-1-0 in their previous six.

- The A's have committed 79 errors this season and were tied with Texas for the most in the AL entering Sunday. Oakland is 21-34 when committing one or more errors in a game.

### **Yankees hold off A's 7-5**

By MIKE FITZPATRICK, ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Mariano Rivera was in rare trouble. Four straight singles trimmed Oakland's deficit to two and left the bases loaded for David DeJesus.

He hit a line drive toward first — and suddenly the game was over. Rivera and the Yankees had caught a break.

DeJesus hit into a game-ending double play when pinch-runner Ryan Sweeney got trapped off first base, and New York held on to beat the Oakland Athletics 7-5 Sunday.

"It's part of the game," Rivera said. "Broken bat, base hit. Line drive, double play. Figure it out."

Bartolo Colon pitched seven effective innings to end a three-start losing streak and Curtis Granderson had a two-run homer for the Yankees. Eduardo Nunez hit a two-run double and catcher Russell Martin was in the middle of everything all afternoon.

New York chased All-Star lefty Gio Gonzalez and returned to its winning ways against the A's when Rivera staved off a ninth-inning rally with a touch of good fortune.

Hideki Matsui's fifth hit, which matched a career high, loaded the bases with one out. Josh Willingham cut it to 7-5 with an RBI single, the only run Rivera has allowed at home this season.

DeJesus then hit a liner to first baseman Mark Teixeira, and Sweeney broke immediately for second. He had no chance to get back before Teixeira stepped on the bag.

"My run doesn't mean anything. I just kind of got overanxious. I didn't even realize he was playing on the line," Sweeney said.

The 41-year-old Rivera earned his 116th career save of more than one inning, but first this year. He reached 25 saves for the 15th consecutive season, extending his major league record.

"I'd be surprised if someone could outdo that," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "That's one of those records I don't think anyone will break."

A one-run loss Saturday snapped New York's 11-game winning streak against Oakland. But the Yankees rebounded behind Colon, taking two of three in the series. The Athletics have lost 10 straight series to New York, an Oakland record against any club.

Matsui tormented his former team again, going 5 for 5 with two doubles and an RBI for the A's. The day before, he homered and scored twice in a 4-3 victory.

The broiling heat subsided a bit, with a game-time temperature of 85 degrees following readings of 93 on Saturday and 100 on Friday night.

A brief shower in the eighth cooled off the crowd of 45,586, just as Oakland mounted a comeback with three doubles off All-Star setup man David Robertson. Kurt Suzuki's second two-bagger of the game cut it to 6-4, but Rivera retired Cliff Pennington on a broken-bat grounder to end the inning.

Nunez manufactured an insurance run in the eighth, scoring without a throw on Derek Jeter's RBI groundout against a drawn-in infield.

Andruw Jones had a pair of RBI singles for New York, a big league-best 29-6 in day games. The Yankees have won 16 of 18 against Oakland and 26 of 31 matchups overall since the start of the 2008 season.

The A's are 7-26 in their last 33 road games.

"It's frustrating, but we didn't give up," DeJesus said. "A lot of teams, when Mariano comes in, everyone hangs their heads. Like all right, the game's over. But we didn't feel that way. Just little by little, hit after hit, believed in ourselves. Hit one right at him."

Colon (7-6) allowed two second-inning runs and scattered eight hits in his first win since July 2 against the Mets. The 38-year-old right-hander had dropped three straight starts since winning four in a row.

"My slider was working today. I threw a lot of them for strikes," he said through a translator.

It was Colon's first win after the All-Star break since 2005.

Gonzalez (9-7) lasted 4 2-3 innings, the second time in three starts that he's failed to get through five. Before that, he had pitched into the sixth in every outing this year.

Gonzalez yielded a season-high six earned runs and fell to 0-4 with a 5.59 ERA in five starts against the AL East this year.

"You've got to go out there and attack the zone. You can't be hitting people or putting them on base on walks," Gonzalez said. "Just no explanation for what happened."

Nunez's two-run double over Willingham's head in left put the Yankees ahead 3-2 with two outs in the fourth. An athletic play by Martin helped them protect that slim lead in the fifth.

With a runner on first and two outs, Matsui doubled to right-center. Granderson cut the ball off just in front of the warning track and started a long relay. Second baseman Robinson Cano's throw home was high, but Martin made a leaping grab and came down in time to tag a sliding Eric Sogard on the hip.

Martin also singled twice, stole a base and threw out a runner attempting to steal. He scored on Nunez's double and Jones' two-out single in the second.

NOTES: Oakland RHP Tyson Ross, on the disabled list since May 20 with a strained left oblique, was slated to throw 65-70 pitches in a rehab start for Triple-A Sacramento. But interim manager Bob Melvin wouldn't commit to putting Ross back in the rotation once he's healthy. ... Matsui also had five hits for the Yankees on July 22, 2007, against Tampa Bay. ... Oakland tied a season high with 15 hits. ... The A's are winless in their past 11 road series. ... New York reliever Rafael Soriano (right elbow inflammation) allowed a solo homer in a one-inning rehab outing for Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

### **Oakland Athletics closer Andrew Bailey prides himself on having deep roots in Garden State**

By **Zach Berman/The Star-Ledger**

NEW YORK — Andrew Bailey can easily recite the New Jersey-bred players wearing major-league uniforms.

New Jersey roots are a point of pride for Bailey, a Haddon Township native who attended Paul VI High School. But even Bailey, the Oakland Athletics closer who is a two-time All-Star, will concede bewilderment in the lack of his New Jersey brethren throughout the major leagues.

There are 17 New Jersey-born players who have played in the majors this season, although that total includes players such as Derek Jeter and Jason Heyward, who were born locally but raised elsewhere. It does not include players such as **A's outfielder David DeJesus**, a Brooklyn native who attended Manalapan High School and Rutgers.

"Everybody was worried about going down the Shore," Bailey joked earlier this month when the A's visited the Mets, remarking that New Jersey wasn't a hotbed for baseball.

DeJesus attributed the shortage to the heavy football influence in North Jersey. He said baseball is more popular in South Jersey, which Bailey emphasized when discussing the influence his Haddon Heights Legion team had on his development.

"Baseball's always been big in South Jersey," Bailey said. "Haddon Heights Legion, that was always the goal, 12, 13, 14 years old, that's who you wanted to play for."

Bailey returned to the East Coast this weekend with the A's visiting the Yankees. Although the A's are among the worst teams in the American League and an early-season injury prevented Bailey from appearing in his third consecutive All-Star Game, he's quietly producing another strong season.

He recorded his 11th save Sunday and has 2.37 ERA with 19 strikeouts in 19 innings. He registered a sub-2.00 ERA in both of his first two seasons and has established himself as one of the better closers in baseball.

His season was saved in March when the right-hander visited James Andrews — an ominous sign for any pitcher — after suffering an arm injury while pitching in the seventh inning of a spring training game. The injury was even more frightening considering Bailey's injury history, which includes Tommy John surgery in 2005 and cleanup surgery last offseason.

But the news from Andrews was positive — or as positive as could be — and Bailey only had a strained forearm. He returned May 29 and has allowed only five earned runs in 19 appearances. He said last month that his injury was behind him and cautioned against any fear of enduring another setback.

"It took a little while to come back," Bailey said. "It's in the back of your head. Is this going to hurt? But then you start focusing on your stuff, and it's just getting outs."

He was excited last month when the A's road trip brought him to New York and Philadelphia, knowing well that time near home is limited. Bailey makes his offseason home in Connecticut, but still has family in Cherry Hill and returns to New Jersey at least once a month during the offseason. He visits his high school and spends time with his childhood friends, ever proud to carry the New Jersey mantle.

"Even my friends are all the same," Bailey said. "Still riding me a little bit."

### **Gutierrez: Matsui now A's trade bait?**

Paul Gutierrez, CSNCalifornia.com

*Random observations from the A's 7-5 rubber-match loss to the New York Yankees Sunday afternoon at new Yankee Stadium in the Bronx.*

The story of the day, of course, was Hideki Matsui and his five-hit day, including a pair of doubles. Since the All-Star Break, Godzilla is 15-for 32, with two home runs and 11 RBI.

Could he have hit his way onto Billy Beane's purported trade bait list with his recent run?

- By the way, Matsui's five-hit game equaled his career-high, which he previously accomplished in going 5-for-6 against Tampa Bay on July 22, 2007 for the Yankees at old Yankee Stadium.

- Speaking of Matsui, another look at his milestone 501 combined career home runs.

I wrote Wednesday night it was tough to wrap my mind around the feat, considering only 168 of Matsui's 500 homers through Wednesday came against Major League pitching. I did not want to diminish the number of 500, but I wondered

where 168 homers since Matsui made his big league debut in 2003 ranked over that same time frame. So I shot an email to the great Feldini, AKA David Feldman.

The answer: Matsui's 168 homers from Opening Day 2003 through Wednesday night, when he went yard for No. 500, ranked just 44th -- FORTY-FOURTH!!! -- in the major leagues over that time frame. Such homer-hitting, ahem, luminaries as Pat "The Hat Trick" Burrell (210), Aubrey Huff (203), Raul Ibanez (194), Miguel Tejada (175) and Nick Swisher (172) went yard more often than Matsui.

So there you go, besides just 33.6 percent of his 500 combined professional home runs coming in MLB games, his 168 homers since 2003 through Wednesday were the 44th most in that time frame. Discuss.

- And speaking of trade deadline rumors, did Fautino De Los Santos just make Grant Balfour all the more expendable? De Los Santos looked the part of a dominant set-up man in New York this weekend. After striking out three and walking one in an inning and a third Sunday, De Los Santos struck out seven Yankees in a combined 3 1/3 innings at new Yankee Stadium.

- We seemed to see the maturation process of Gio Gonzalez in one inning. Despite being victimized by a Cliff Pennington error to open the third and a blown umpire's call that cost him a strike-him-out, throw-him-out double play, Gonzalez settled down to get out of the jam unscathed. However, we saw the skittish, unfocused Gonzalez return in the fourth, when he got the first two hitters out but then hit Russell Martin, walked Andruw Jones and then gave up a two-run double to Eduardo Nunez.

- You saw the pitching match-ups coming into this series - Trevor Cahill, Rich Harden and All-Star Gonzalez - and if you would have guessed that Harden would have been the only one to go five innings, well, give yourself an old school WWF-style Barry Horowitz pat on the back.

- At least the A's offense continued to purr. Oakland banged out 15 hits on Sunday and in the three-game set, the A's scored 16 runs and had 38 hits. And still dropped two of three.

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Walk-off Cats: Cardenas wins it in 11th inning**

By Veronika Tafoya / Sacramento River Cats

Adrian Cardenas hit a walk-off single in the 11th inning to give Sacramento a thrilling 11-10 victory over rival Reno on Sunday afternoon at Raley Field.

A three-run homer from shortstop Adam Rosales in the fourth inning helped Sacramento comeback from a 6-1 deficit and take a 8-7 lead in the season series against their Interstate 80 rivals.

Rosales, who made his first rehab appearance with Sacramento on June 1, has struggled to get the hits flowing. He said heightened focus helped him Sunday. "If I had to describe it I'd say I was focused, concentrated, and that I had a good approach to the game," said Rosales, who went 3-for-5 and collected four RBIs. "I did some early hitting practice with (River Cats Hitting Coach Tod Stevenson) and I think that helped, too. I've had a mellow week and I think the hit gave us some good momentum early in the game."

Aces catcher Konrad Schmidt snatched the lead with a three-run homer in the first inning, and another two-run homer in the third by Lucas May increased the Aces lead to 5-1.

But the lead wouldn't last for long.

Josh Donaldson doubled in the fourth to score LaRoche and leave two men on base for Rosales' three-run blast over the left field wall. The home run was his second of the season and cut Reno's lead to 6-5.

Reno steadily picked up hits for the rest of the game. Juan Miranda homered in the fifth, and in the sixth Collin Cowgill scored off a bases-loaded sacrifice fly to make the score 8-5.

With Reno's lead slowing taking off, the River Cats had to get some work done, and Kevin Kouzmanoff, perhaps still reeling from his game-winning homer Saturday, was up to the challenge.

He hit a solo home run in the seventh, and Chris Carter followed with one of his own. But Kouzmanoff wasn't finished. He hit another home run in the eighth, this time bringing in Cardenas and Jermaine Mitchell to tie, 10-10.

Sacramento relievers kept control of that tie, with Neil Wagner striking out three in 2.0 scoreless innings, and winning pitcher Willie Eyre tossing a flawless 11th inning.

However, Cardenas' clutch two-out RBI single in the bottom of the 11th was the real game-ender -- it was his only hit in six at-bats.

The River Cats will see the Aces on Monday for the last time of the regular season, with Sacramento's Graham Godfrey facing Zach Kroenke at 7:05 p.m. at Raley Field.

### **San Antonio stops RockHounds**

Jordan Mason, Midland Reporter-Telegram

After losing four straight to the Midland RockHounds, including a 12-inning thriller Saturday, the San Antonio Missions were determined to jump on their hosts Sunday and not let up.

Blake Tekotte made sure that happened, starting 3-for-3 at the plate with two RBI and a run, including a solo home shot to right in the Missions' 4-2 win at Citibank Ballpark.

"They've been playing us real tough lately," Tekotte said. "You just come out and try to put some runs up early on them and maybe try to get them out of their rhythm."

San Antonio made it hard for Ethan Hollingsworth (3-3), making just his second start since returning from the disabled list, to get into a rhythm, starting with an Anthony Contreras RBI single to right in the second that opened the scoring.

Just two pitches later, Bryan Altman snuck an RBI single into right to put the Missions up 2-0.

Then, two batters later, Tekotte got the first of his two RBI when he belted a single to right to drive in Dean Anna for a 3-0 lead.

That lead might have continued to grow had it not been for a scorching outfield assist by Jeremy Barfield to get Contreras out at third and end the inning.

Ryan Ortiz put the RockHounds on the board with an RBI single he punched into right to cut the lead to 3-1, but the second inning became the first of four straight innings where the Rockhounds stranded at least two runners, culminating in a bases-loaded groundout by Barfield in the sixth.

"Their starter (Rob) Musgrave just was able to, even though it looked like we were getting close to getting him," RockHounds manager Steve Scarsone said, "he still seemed to be able to get the groundball when he needed it and keep us off balance enough to where we couldn't sneak some things through."

Tekotte, meanwhile, fattened the Missions lead with his solo shot off Hollingsworth in the fifth that put the Missions up 4-1.

"He just challenged me with the fastball in, and luckily I hit it through this 90 mile an hour wind, and it snuck over by a ball," Tekotte said.

Yet the RockHounds bats, which came up with timely hits Saturday were never able to get going as the only run they were able to muster was an RBI on a Grant Green fielder's choice in the sixth.

The RockHounds will look to win the series outright with a victory in the finale today at 6:30 p.m..

Tekotte and the Missions, though, won't be taking them lightly after winning for just the second time in seven tries against the RockHounds Sunday.

"Anything can happen," Tekotte said. "Especially when they've got guys swinging the bat like that right now."

Jordan Mason can be reached at [jmason@mrt.com](mailto:jmason@mrt.com)

'HOUND BITES: Grant Green (0-for-5) saw his six-game hit streak snapped Sunday but did get an RBI on a fielder's choice in the sixth. Green was coming off two three-hit games. ... Missions pitcher Rob Musgrave was dominant in his first start against the RockHounds, posting a 1.93 ERA in a 1-0 win, and impressed again Sunday. The southpaw went six innings and

despite giving up 10 hits, only allowed two runs. ... RockHounds pitcher Jonathan Ortiz relieved Ethan Hollingsworth in the sixth and retired the first eight batters he faced before Jedd Gyorko got a single off him in the seventh. ... Shortstop Tyler Ladendorf made a run-saving play in the ninth by scooping up a Bryan Altman grounder and firing home to get Dean Anna out at the plate.

TODAY'S PROBABLES: Gary Daley (4-2, 4.22) will get the nod for the RockHounds in the series finale today while Simon Castro (2-4, 6.28) is expected to start for the Missions.

### **Grand Slam Sinks Stockton**

#### Stockton Ports

The Bakersfield Blaze came from behind in the ninth inning to defeat the Stockton Ports for the second time in this series by a close 7-6. The Ports had the lead for much of the game, and nearly got it back in the end, but a Brodie Greene grand slam would secure the Bakersfield victory.

The Blaze would pick up the game's first run in the top of the first. After a lead-off single by shortstop Didi Gregorius and a walk for center fielder Ryan LaMarre, Ports starter Jacob Brown drew two flyouts. But the trouble wasn't over, as third baseman Alex Buchholz singled to shortstop, scoring Gregorius before Brown struck out right fielder A.J. Means for the third out.

Stockton would retaliate in the home half of the first, beginning with a single to left by left fielder Myrio Richard. Designated hitter Michael Gilmartin stepped up and homered to right field to give the Ports the lead. Center fielder Michael Choice followed with a walk, extending his on-base streak to 44 games. First baseman Anthony Aliotti kept things going with a double to center, moving Choice into position to score on a ground out by right fielder Rashun Dixon.

Brown would retire three in a row in the second, and the Ports would go down in order as well, at the hand of Blaze starter Josh Ravin.

In the top of the fourth, Bakersfield would get a run back when Chris Richburg led the inning off with a home run to left field. Buchholz would single, but was out when Means grounded into a force. Designated hitter Jose Gualdrón would also single, but the Ports would get out of the inning by turning a double play on a ground ball hit by catcher Jordan Wideman.

The Ports had a chance to get something started in the bottom of the fifth, Richard singling once again to left, and then reaching second on a wild pitch. However, Richard would get caught in a rundown between third and home on an infield single by Choice. Richard was thrown out at third, and Choice was injured trying to beat out the throw. Choice was promptly pulled from the game, and Mitch LeVier was brought in to pinch run. After the game, Choice confirmed that he had a quad strain.

Defensive changes in the sixth for the Ports moved Richard into Choice's position in center field, and LeVier in at left field. Richard would make two of the inning's three outs in center, including the diving catch of a ball off of the bat of Buchholz.

The Ports extended their lead to 4-2 in the bottom half. With two outs and two runners on base, Richard doubled, bringing in shortstop Dusty Coleman to score. Catcher Ryan Lipkin attempted to score as well colliding into Wideman at the plate, but Wideman held onto the ball for the third out.

Mike Benacka took the mound for the Ports in the seventh, Brown having gone six full innings giving up two runs on six hits with three strike outs. Despite two walks and two wild pitches, Benacka got out of the inning unscathed with two strike outs.

The Blaze would also go to their bullpen in the seventh, Drew Bowman taking the mound in place of Ravin. Ravin went six innings, giving up four runs on eight hits. LeVier would single and Aliotti would double facing Bowman, but Bowman would strike out the side without a run scored.

After Benacka's single inning of work, Josh Lansford would take the hill for the Ports. Second baseman Brodie Greene would lead off with a double to center field, and would score on an infield single. Lansford got two strike outs in the inning, and drew an inning-ending ground out from Josh Fellhauer, who was brought in to pinch hit for Gualdrón.

In the bottom of the eighth, with two outs, second baseman Conner Crumbliss laid down a bunt single on the third base side, then reached second on a balk called on Bowman. Richard would be intentionally walked, but ball four would get away

from Wideman, moving Crumbliss up to third. Crumbliss would not score, however, as Gilmartin struck out to end the inning.

In the ninth, Jose Guzman came in to close for the Ports. Wideman led off the inning with a single to left. Guzman struck out Hunt before giving up a double to Gregorious. Guzman would intentionally walk LaMarre to set up the force out at every base. Greene came to the plate and cleared the bases with a grand slam, and just like that, the Blaze took the lead 7-4.

But the Ports weren't finished just yet. In the bottom half, facing new Blaze pitcher Derrik Lutz, Mitch LeVier hit a lead-off home run way out over the center field wall. Aliotti drew a walk, and advanced to second on a ground out by Dixon. Third baseman Jason Christian struck out, and with two outs, Coleman hit an RBI single to cut the deficit to one run. But that one run lead would be enough for the Blaze to win the game, Lipkin grounding into a force to end the game.

The Ports close out the series tomorrow with righty Dan Straily facing off against Mike Serrano at 7:05 p.m. The Ports will be looking to snap a five game losing streak.

### **Dragons Keep Bees Winless on the Road Trip**

By Jon Versteeg, Burlington Bees

DAYTON, OH-The Dayton Dragons (9-20) scored seven runs on 13 hits to earn a 7-1 win over the Burlington Bees (21-8) before 8,571 fans at Fifth Third Field on Sunday night. The game was delayed by three hours and one minute at the start of the game due to rain.

The Dragons scored a run in the second inning. C Tucker Barnhart (2-4) doubled and scored on a double by LF Juan Duran (1-4) for a 1-0 lead. Burlington 2B Ryan Pineda (1-4) hit a solo home run over the left field wall to tie the game in the third inning at 1-1.

Dayton scored single runs in the third and fourth innings. CF Theo Bowe (2-4) hit a leadoff single in the third inning and stole second base. Bowe went to third base on a single by SS Billy Hamilton (1-4). 2B Ronald Torreyas (3-4) singled home Bowe for a 2-1 lead. RF Jaren Matthews (1-4) singled home Lutz in the fourth inning to make it 3-1.

Dayton added four runs in the fifth inning to take a 7-1 lead.

RHP Jose Macias lasted four and one-thirds innings and allowed seven runs, (four earned runs), to suffer the loss.

The Burlington Bees and Dayton Dragons finish their series on Monday night at 6:00 p.m. RHP Blake Hasebrock (5-6, 2.43) gets the start for Burlington against RHP Daniel Corcino (9-4, 3.61) for Dayton. Pre-game coverage begins at 5:40 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.

### **Jamieson Leads Vermont To 3-2 Victory**

By Paul Stanfield / Vermont Lake Monsters

BURLINGTON, VT --- Sean Jamieson went 3-for-4 including a game-tying RBI single as the Vermont Lake Monsters scored two runs in the bottom of the seventh inning for a come-from-behind 3-2 victory over the Jamestown Jammers in New York-Penn League action Saturday night at historic Centennial Field.

The game was scoreless until the bottom of the fifth inning when Vermont's Chris Affinito drilled a 2-0 pitch the opposite way over the right field wall for his second home run of the season. Jamestown quickly rallied to take the lead with two runs in the top of the sixth on a Eddie Rodriguez two-run single.

Affinito started the rally in the seventh for the Lake Monsters as he was hit by a pitch with one out. After Affinito was forced out at second on a Diomedes Lopez grounder, Lopez stole second and moved to third on a Sam Roberts bad hop single to second base with two outs.

Jamieson tied the game as he grounded a 0-1 pitch between short and third to plate Lopez with the tying run. Jammer reliever Blake Brewer (2-1) then struggled with his control as he walked Chad Oberacker on a 3-2 pitch and Chad Lewis on four pitches to force home Roberts with the go ahead run.

The Lake Monsters got strong outings from a pair of pitchers who had struggled coming into the game. Starter Kurt Wunderlich tossed four scoreless innings, allowing three hits with one walk and three strikeouts to lower his ERA from 10.59 down to 8.57 for the season. Jailer Castillo (1-1) gave up the two runs in the sixth, but also struckout three in three innings of relief for the win lowering his ERA down to 9.18.

Rodriguez, Kentrell DeWitt and Josh Adams each had three hits for Jamestown (20-16), while starter Joshua Hodges allowed just the Affinito home run and three hits over six innings. Lake Monster Drew Bailey struckout one in a scoreless eighth, while Tanner Peters a scoreless ninth for his sixth save of the season.

Vermont (18-16), which has won two of its last three after a five-game losing streak, and Jamestown will play Sunday afternoon at 1:05 pm at Centennial in the middle game of the three-game series.