

Oakland A's fall to Orioles

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Gio Gonzalez left another dangerous situation to his bullpen Monday, then watched as another potential victory fell through.

A's rookie Fautino De Los Santos entered with the bases loaded and no outs in the seventh and surrendered two costly hits that gave the Baltimore Orioles a 6-2 victory before a paltry turnout of 10,122 at [O.co](#) Coliseum.

Gonzalez (9-11), who has lost a career-high-tying five straight starts, was in control until pitching himself into trouble in the seventh with Oakland ahead 2-1.

Two singles and a walk loaded the bases, and A's manager Bob Melvin called on the hard-throwing De Los Santos.

After Mark Reynolds struck out, Robert Andino drove a two-run double over the head of A's center fielder Coco Crisp. Then Josh Bell chopped a two-run single up the middle, and Oakland trailed 5-2.

"It's always frustrating when it's your runners on base," Gonzalez said of leaving the game in that situation. "It's a tough pill to swallow. I still trust my bullpen."

Gonzalez's final line looked worse than he pitched -- six-plus innings, four hits, four earned runs, three walks, four strikeouts. But the left-hander would serve his own cause well by pitching deeper into games.

He has failed to complete seven innings in any of his past five starts. He had thrown 105 pitches Monday when Melvin pulled him.

In his previous start Wednesday, Gonzalez loaded the bases with no outs in the sixth inning against Toronto and handed a 3-1 lead to Craig Breslow, who gave up an RBI single and grand slam.

Monday's seventh-inning collapse underscored the vulnerability of the A's middle relief corps.

Right-hander Michael Wuertz is on the disabled list with right-thumb tendinitis (he's just now starting to play catch), submariner Brad Ziegler was traded July 31 to Arizona, and right-hander Joey Devine was demoted to Triple-A Sacramento on July 27.

"The seventh inning is a key inning," Melvin said. "Typically that's the guy that's coming in to bail out the starter. ... (De Los Santos) has been our best guy, our best right-hander and has pitched well to this point. He just threw one down the middle, and (Andino) was first-pitch hacking."

Oakland's bullpen entered Monday having allowed 37 percent of its inherited runners to score (57 of 154), the fourth-highest percentage in the American League.

Matt Wieters crushed a 1-2 fastball from Gonzalez deep over the center-field wall in the top of the second to put Baltimore ahead.

The A's answered in the bottom half against Tommy Hunter (2-2).

David DeJesus' RBI double scored Josh Willingham, and Cliff Pennington's single drove in another run to make it 2-1.

Oakland began this 10-game homestand with a 31-24 home record but has lost four straight. Baltimore came in having lost 14 of its previous 17 road games.

The loss overshadowed another strong game from A's first baseman Brandon Allen, who started his third straight game with Conor Jackson sidelined by neck soreness.

Allen singled in his first three at-bats and finished 3 for 4. He is 6 for 8 in the past two games.

He also made two nice defensive plays in the third.

A's update: Baltimore Orioles' Brad Bergesen adjusting to relief role

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Brad Bergesen is pitching well in long relief for the Baltimore Orioles, but the role has taken some getting used to.

"I think the biggest adjustment is knowing that every day you go to the ballpark you might pitch," Bergesen said before Monday's game against the A's. "So it changes your workouts, your mindset."

Bergesen, a Foothill High-Pleasanton graduate, spent his first two major league seasons in Baltimore's rotation. He's shuffled between starting and relieving this year.

Though the right-hander threw a four-hit shutout May 14 at Tampa Bay, he is 2-7 with a 5.78 ERA in his 12 starts.

Bergesen was struggling with his sinker, and he's worked with pitching coach Rick Adair to correct his release point and arm angle on the pitch.

He's posted a 4.38 ERA in 11 relief appearances, but he's allowed just one run over 71/3 innings in his past two outings.

"Brad has been doing a really good job out of the bullpen," Orioles manager Buck Showalter said.

Bergesen was a candidate to start Tuesday against the A's, but the Orioles instead are recalling lefty Brian Matusz for that assignment. There's speculation in the Baltimore media about whether Bergesen, 25, might have found a long-term home in the bullpen.

Bergesen said he's content helping Baltimore any way he can. He's also happy away from the field.

His wife, Shea, welcomed their first child -- a son, Parker -- just two weeks ago.

A's first baseman Conor Jackson is likely to miss a few more days with a sore neck. Jackson said the pain is near the area where he recently suffered a back spasm. He still experiences "sharp pain" in the area but is hopeful that a cortisone shot he received Sunday will begin to take effect.

Right-hander Brandon McCarthy (right knee contusion) got through his bullpen session fine and appears on target for Wednesday's start.

According to multiple reports, the A's placed outfielder Coco Crisp and pitchers Rich Harden and Craig Breslow on waivers to gauge other teams' interest in those players.

The A's agreed to terms with two draft picks before Monday's 9 p.m. deadline -- right-hander Colin O'Connell (eighth round) and left-hander Christopher Lamb (11th round). Lamb attended Berkeley High. Oakland came to terms with 30 of its 49 total picks.

Mark Purdy: Oakland A's are lucky to get piece of Phil Garner's mind

By Mark Purdy Mercury News Columnist

What is Phil Garner doing in Oakland, anyway?

Last week, the A's announced he was joining the team as a "special adviser."

It made the 62-year-old Garner sound like someone who would stand behind manager Bob Melvin in the dugout and whisper in his ear: "Hey, kid, my special advice here is to tell this pitcher if he doesn't throw strikes, you'll set his uniform on fire with jet fuel. Now, where do we eat steaks after the game?"

But, no, that's not the case. Garner is being much more low-volume, low-intensity and low-profile. He dons a uniform before games for instructional duties during batting practice, then changes into civvies and watches from the stands, taking notes. Afterward, he visits with Melvin to discuss ... well, stuff. Basically, Garner is a sounding board for Melvin, far more ear than mouth. At least for now.

"He's just a great resource for the whole organization," Melvin said Monday night before the A's lost 6-2 to the Baltimore Orioles. "The more we go along, the more we'll get into it in terms of what he'll be doing."

Still, when you bring aboard someone with Garner's pedigree, people are going to talk. As anyone who followed his career knows, the man is one of baseball's all-time competitors. That's how he earned the nickname "Scrap Iron." Garner won a World Series as a player (Pittsburgh, 1979) and steered another team there as a manager (Houston, 2005).

One natural bit of speculation, therefore, is whether Garner could be an A's manager-in-waiting if Melvin should not be retained at season's end. Garner wants to squash that notion before the bud begins to bud.

"I'm absolutely not a candidate to be manager here," Garner said. "Absolutely not. I'm not here to take anybody's job. I want to say this with emphasis: I am not here to be destructive. I would hope to be constructive."

That is Melvin's notion, too. In fact, bringing aboard Garner was mostly Melvin's idea -- even though general manager Billy Beane did the hiring. Melvin and Garner have known each other since 1988. Garner was finishing his playing days as a San Francisco Giant. Melvin was a 26-year-old catcher and eager to learn about as much scrap iron as possible. In turn, after Garner became the Milwaukee Brewers' manager, he gave Melvin his first major league coaching gig in 1999.

"I'm very comfortable with him," Melvin said.

Good. Now, their collective mission should be to make A's opponents far more uncomfortable than they have been over most of the summer.

Melvin was hired as manager June 9, and while the A's haven't improved substantially in the won-lost department, he has clearly received more buy-in from the players than predecessor Bob Geren. Rightly or wrongly, the players perceived that Geren would never criticize a player, invoke discipline or make any significant moves without Beane's approval.

That perception doesn't exist with Melvin. Last weekend, his public seething over a four-error game was excellent to see -- and was easily the best every-player-must-be-held-accountable speech by an A's manager since the Tony La Russa era.

In fact, Melvin's remarks were mindful of the way Garner kept his teams honest as a manager in Milwaukee, Detroit and Houston. He was fired by the Astros in 2007, at least partially for being too outspoken. Oddly, he has had no more managerial offers. The only time he has worn a baseball uniform since then was in 2008. He stepped in briefly to coach the University of Houston-Victoria Jaguars while his friend and former Astros teammate Terry Puhl was in China managing the Canadian national team at the Beijing Olympics.

How'd the Jaguars do with Garner at the helm?

"We went 7-1," he said.

Yup, the A's can use a guy like him. He can enlighten them on so many small things. Just ask him about all the permutations of infield meetings on the pitchers' mound, then sit back and listen for 15 minutes. As a bonus, Garner provides a link to franchise tradition. His first major league experience was in 1973 with the A's on the second of their three consecutive World Series championship teams.

Garner plans to be in Oakland for every home game and will probably make some trips. At season's end, he plans to create a detailed report on his observations and lace it with suggestions.

"I'm certainly not going to hold anything back," Garner said. "That's why I was fired in Houston ... but I'm hopeful that whatever happens with the team leads to a real solid statement for Bo (Melvin) going forward."

What about Garner's potential role next season?

"I haven't given it any thought," Garner said. "But I don't view this as a steppingstone to anything."

That said, he didn't sound like a special adviser who wants to stop stepping, period. The special advice here is to keep him around the current A's as much as possible.

Chin Music: Conor Jackson remains out; Brandon McCarthy appears ready for Wednesday start

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 8/15/2011 4:45pm

Slow pregame scene for the A's today, so here's the lineups and what little there is to report ...

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

Orioles: Reimold LF, Hardy SS, Markakis RF, Jones CF, Guerrero DH, Wieters C, Reynolds 1B, Andino 2B, Bell 3B; Hunter RHP.

–Conor Jackson is still out with a sore neck as expected. Manager Bob Melvin says he's getting better, but no word on his projected return.

–Brandon McCarthy (right knee contusion) made it through his bullpen session fine, so he looks on target for his Wednesday start.

–Scott Sizemore gets a day off, with Eric Sogard playing third.

Bad inning costs A's, Gonzalez in 6-2 loss to O's

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Through six innings Monday night, Gio Gonzalez appeared to have ironed out any bumps that snuck into his game after the All-Star break.

A stumble in the seventh inning erased that previous fine work. Gonzalez allowed the first three Orioles hitters to reach base, and reliever Fautino De Los Santos let them all score, along with one of his own runners, as Baltimore came back to beat the A's 6-2. Oakland has dropped four in a row and is 15 games under .500 for the first time since Sept. 9, 2009.

Oakland's biggest plus Monday, just as the day before, was first baseman Brandon Allen, who does not look as if he wants to come out of the lineup. Filling in for Conor Jackson, who remains out with neck stiffness, Allen had his second three-hit game in a row. He also made several nice plays in the field, and if Jackson isn't better tonight, he'll be in the lineup again, manager Bob Melvin said.

Gonzalez and Melvin were both encouraged by the left-hander's outing, despite the late lapse. "Based on what he did previously, it looked like he righted the ship," Melvin said.

"A positive outing," said Gonzalez, who mentioned his improved changeup and successful pickoff move. "Little by little, I'm going forward."

Gonzalez's only blemish through six was a two-out solo blast off the facing in center field by Matt Wieters in the second inning. Wieters is 7-for-13 lifetime against the A's starter.

Adam Jones and Vladimir Guerrero opened the seventh with singles off Gonzalez, who then walked Wieters, not the worst outcome considering their history.

Rookie De Los Santos took over, and after Mark Reynolds struck out, Robert Andino drilled a double to deep center, scoring two runs. Bell sent in Wieters and Andino with a single to center.

Much of the year, a more experienced reliever would have entered in the seventh, an inning that Melvin called "key," but Brad Ziegler (to Arizona for Allen) and Jordan Norberto were traded last month, Michael Wuertz is on the disabled list with a thumb injury and Joey Devine is at Triple-A Sacramento, where he allowed a run Monday but has a 1.50 ERA overall. De Los Santos has pitched well enough to work late in games, though; he entered the game with some impressive numbers, including a .186 batting average against.

Since the break, Gonzalez is 1-5 with a 6.29 ERA. He has lost his past five decisions, tying the longest losing streak of his career, and his ERA is 7.90 during that stretch.

When Gonzalez gets three or more runs of support, he's 26-2 lifetime. No more than two runs, and he's 5-29. Monday, it was two, both in the second inning. Oakland got only one man past second thereafter.

Oakland A's waiver wire a procedural matter

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Waiver-wire lists don't seem to be quite as confidential as they're supposed to be these days, and many national outlets have noted some of the A's players who have gone through waivers this month.

To make things simple: It's all of them.

"It's a completely administrative function this time of year," assistant general manager **David Forst** said. "Ninety-nine percent of the time, it's meaningless."

As a procedural matter, Oakland, like most teams, puts everyone on the roster through waivers in August in order to maintain every possible option. There is no reason not to - if a player is claimed, the team can pull the player back or work out a trade if so desired. If a player clears, a trade with any team is possible.

Waivers are not an indication that a team is looking to get rid of players. The A's stance remains exactly what it was before the July 31 non-waiver trade deadline.

"We approach it exactly the same way," Forst said. "We're not shopping players, and we're not going to give somebody away. Absolutely not - that would defeat the purpose of what we did two weeks ago."

Coco Crisp, **Hideki Matsui** and **Rich Harden** are seen as players who could help contenders, and the Yankees, who need pitching, had a scout at Harden's start Sunday. Crisp is among those expected to bring back a draft pick were he to sign elsewhere, so he'd be less likely to be moved, unless the A's were to get a substantial offer.

Back to Japan? There were rumblings in the Japanese media that the A's had been considered for a season-opening series in Tokyo in 2012; that is not currently under discussion, but the possibility might be raised again.

After the A's opened the 2008 season in Tokyo, team officials were clear that they'd jump at any opportunity to return. Should the team decide to bring back Matsui, they'd be assured an instant fan base if they played in Tokyo.

Briefly: **Brandon McCarthy** threw a bullpen session and is on track to start Wednesday. ... **Michael Wuertz** (right thumb) played catch and will do so a few more times before throwing off the mound. ... The A's signed right-hander **Colin O'Connell** (eighth round, Cal State Fullerton) and left-hander **Christopher Lamb** (11th, Davidson) before Monday's deadline. Only one of the team's top 20 picks did not sign: left-hander **Jace Fry**, ninth round, will attend Oregon State.

Statue for Texas fan: The Rangers announced that they will erect a statue to honor Shannon Stone, the fan who died after falling over a railing during the A's game at Texas on July 7. The statue will portray Stone and his son, Cooper, 6.

Drumbeat: Conor Jackson still out: McCarthy looks like a go Wednesday

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser, 8/15/2011 4:54pm

Conor Jackson tells me he hopes he'll miss only a few days with neck stiffness that he said he first experienced during Saturday's game. It doesn't sound as if he'd be available today and I'm guessing - just a guess - that if he misses tomorrow night's game he probably also sits out the Wednesday day game.

At any rate, this is a good opportunity for Brandon Allen to make a strong impression, and the A's have been pretty direct in their approach with young players - come in and have an impact, like Jemile Weeks, and you've won yourself a spot. Fail to produce and you'll go back to Triple-A Sacramento, ala Chris Carter (not to mention older players such as Kevin Kouzmanoff, Daric Barton and Andy LaRoche).

Allen looked great yesterday - three hits, no problem hitting a lefty or going the other way, and he also looked confident at first base, no signs of being tentative. This isn't a league for playing with trepidation, and it looks as if Allen might be a guy who goes for it. And now he'll get several games in a row to show what he can do. One scout told me recently he thought that was a great deal for the A's - Allen *and* Jordan Norberto for Brad Ziegler; he was surprised Oakland got two players for Ziegler, for starters, but especially that one was Allen.

Brandon McCarthy's bullpen session went well, so it appears as if he'll be fine to start Wednesday after getting drilled by a line drive on the right knee on Friday. After seeing Arizona's Jason Marquis wind up with a broken right shin after being hit with a line drive yesterday, it's clear this could have been much worse. Big sigh of relief for the A's.

Here's the lineup behind Gio Gonzalez: Weeks 2b, Crisp cf, Matsui lf, Willingham dh, DeJesus rf, Allen 1b, Pennington ss, Suzuki c, Sogard 3b

Nice to see Willie Eyre get a shot in the Orioles' bullpen - he's a great guy, he's 33 and he's stuck around waiting to get back to the big leagues; I know the A's had released him with an eye toward him getting a better shot elsewhere. He's worked 3 2/3 scoreless innings for Baltimore.

Another mention about August waivers, the "trade" waivers. Lots of A's names are flying around as guys who are on the waiver wire, but once again - this doesn't mean anything. Teams routinely run their entire roster through waivers in August as a procedural matter. It allows them to keep all their options open. If a player gets claimed, he's almost always pulled back, unless it's Esteban Loaiza. Waiver deals do happen, but teams that don't make deals before the July 31 deadline are no more likely to make waiver deals - unless they're able to finally get the offer they want. And sometimes that happens as contenders start to really get desperate for that one last part they need.

But the A's remain unlikely to move any of their players - particularly any of the pending free agents who are likely to bring draft picks if they sign elsewhere - unless Oakland were to get a significant return. Rich Harden isn't among those who'd bring back a draft pick, and no matter what happens, the A's know that he'd probably like to re-sign here next year - but even so, Oakland won't give him away.

Remember, when you hear names this time of year, it means basically nothing. About 99 percent of big-leaguers go through waivers right now.

UPDATE: Michael Wuertz (right thumb) threw today (he played catch) and he said it went well. He'll do it again a few times before throwing off the mound.

Seventh inning spoils Gio's outing in loss

By Rick Eymer / Special to MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Brandon Allen knows he may not be in the Oakland lineup every day. It doesn't matter, though, because he'll be ready whenever he's called upon.

Allen, in the lineup because of Conor Jackson's stiff neck, continued to make the most of his opportunity, collecting three hits for the second straight day for the A's, but it wasn't enough as Tommy Hunter notched his first win in an Orioles uniform with 6 2/3 strong innings in a 6-2 victory over the Athletics on Monday night.

"This is the same game, just a new environment," Allen, who was acquired by Oakland from the D-backs in July, said. "I'll always be ready to go. I try to improve my game every day."

He's been one of bright spots during Oakland's four-game losing streak, and A's manager Bob Melvin continues to flirt with the idea of putting both Allen and Jackson in the lineup.

"He's been impressive since he's been here, and he looks comfortable around first base," Melvin said. "He definitely has some talent."

David DeJesus and Cliff Pennington each drove in a run for the A's, who are 4-9 over their past 13 games. The team also set a dubious Oakland record. The A's went homerless for the fifth consecutive contest and have hit two or fewer home runs in each of their last 92 games, surpassing the old mark of 91 set in 1974-75.

"That's part of the game," Allen said. "We got some good at-bats against Hunter, but he bore down when he felt the threat. They were able to get the key hits and we weren't."

Gio Gonzalez pitched well enough but was victimized by one bad inning. He tied a career high with his fifth straight loss, and has not won since beating the Angels on July 17.

"It was a positive outing," Gonzalez said. "I took a stride forward. My changeup was great. My luck is turning a little bit, and I want to stay positive."

That's exactly how Melvin wants Gonzalez to approach his starts.

"You have to expect good things to happen," Melvin said. "If you keep good thoughts you feel like things will go your way. Maybe it's something minor, like getting ahead of a hitter but not being able to put him away. His results just aren't there."

Gonzalez went six-plus innings, giving up four runs on four hits. He walked three and struck out four as he fell to 0-6 against the American League East this year.

"I thought he threw the ball very well," Melvin said. "In the seventh, a couple of guys get on and he walks the third guy and he's over 100 pitches. [Fautino] De Los Santos has been our best right-hander, and he got the first strikeout. Bases loaded nobody out -- that's a tough situation for any pitcher. He tries to throw a first-pitch strike and [Robert] Andino puts a good swing on it. That was the key hit of the game. We didn't maximize the amount of baserunners we had."

Hunter limited the damage to two runs on 10 hits. He walked one and struck out three.

The A's, who had won 12 of the 13 previous meetings with the Orioles in Oakland, fell to a season-low 15 games under .500, the first time they've been that many under since Sept. 9, 2009.

Hideki Matsui, who went 1-for-4, has reached base safely in 27 of his 28 games since the All-Star break and is batting .394 (43-for-109) over that span.

Jemile Weeks is still looking for his first career home run, a streak of 58 games. That's the longest since Mike Bordick set the Oakland record with a 132-game streak before hitting his first home run in May of 1992.

Matusz looks to top A's in return to Majors

By Adam Berry / MLB.com

While the A's are out to bring their recent funk to a halt on Tuesday in Oakland, the Orioles will be hoping Brian Matusz can make a smooth return to the Majors.

Projected to be the Orioles' No. 2 starter before stumbling through six starts earlier this season, Matusz will make his first Major League appearance since June 30 against the A's, losers of four straight. The left-hander owns a 1-4 record, 8.77 ERA and 1.99 WHIP through 25 2/3 innings this season -- numbers he's looking to put behind him.

Instead, he is hoping to build on his impressive outings with Triple-A Norfolk, including a shutout in his last start.

"I've been able to get in a nice, consistent groove and feel confidence about all my pitches and have a good idea of what I'm doing out there," Matusz said. "I'm really looking forward going into my start tomorrow, especially coming off a bunch of good outings down there, and being able to keep my groove going.

"Tomorrow is my only focus, and getting myself back into this level, facing big league hitters," he added. "Sure, it would be nice to be able to establish myself and be able to have good starts and finish the season strong, and stay on a good track throughout the course of the year."

Orioles manager Buck Showalter also expressed his faith in Matusz's ability and spoke optimistically about the lefty's return to the rotation.

"I just want to see where he is compared to where he was when he left," Showalter said. "[There are a] lot of good things being said about him, and he seems to have a good look in his eye and feels good physically. He seems to have a lot of challenges that he had behind him. So, we'll see."

The A's, meanwhile, have plenty of their own obstacles to overcome. With Monday's 6-2 loss, Oakland is a season-worst 15 games under .500.

Hoping to turn their losing streak around, the A's will send right-hander Guillermo Moscoso to the mound. Moscoso won his last start in Toronto, allowing one earned run in six innings, and has posted a 3-2 record since going winless in seven June appearances.

Orioles: Bundy, Esposito, Delmonico sign deals

- The Orioles agreed to deals with three of their top Draft picks Monday night, including right-hander Dylan Bundy, the fourth overall selection in June's First-Year Player Draft. Bundy signed a five-year Major League deal with a \$4 million signing bonus. The 18-year-old power righty went 11-0 with a 0.25 ERA and 158 strikeouts and five walks in 71 innings in his senior season in high school.

Baltimore also added third basemen Jason Esposito, its second-round pick, and Nick Delmonico, a sixth-round selection. Overall, the Orioles agreed to terms with 22 of their 50 picks.

- Top pitching prospect Dan Klein will undergo exploratory surgery on his right shoulder Tuesday morning, a season-ending procedure for the young right-hander. Orthopedic surgeon Lewis Yocum will perform the surgery, which involves repairing the SLAP tear in Klein's labrum. There is no certain timetable for Klein's return.

A's: Allen taking advantage of opportunity at first

- Brandon Allen, starting at first base in place of Conor Jackson (neck tightness), recorded his second straight three-hit game on Monday night. Jackson is batting .313 since the All-Star break and is expected to be back in the lineup Thursday night against the Blue Jays.

Until then, Allen will continue to get more playing time -- something he's eager to capitalize on, if his past two outings are any indication.

"Based on Conor being out a few days, he'll get some consistent at-bats," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

- Right-hander Brandon McCarthy, hit on the knee by a line drive Friday night, threw a routine bullpen session Monday and reported no discomfort, stating that he planned to make his scheduled start Wednesday against the Orioles.

Worth noting

- Baltimore's 6-2 win Monday was only its second victory in Oakland since 2008, a span of 14 games. The win also gave the Orioles back-to-back victories for the first time in nearly a month, as they last strung together consecutive wins on July 16-17.

Allen again at first as Jackson out with tight neck

By Rick Eymer / Special to MLB.com

OAKLAND -- A's first baseman Conor Jackson's neck tightness has become Brandon Allen's opportunity.

Jackson woke up on Sunday with pain in his neck that was so irritating he was immobilized for most of the day. He was scratched from the starting lineup and Allen, who was supposed to be ready to pinch-hit, replaced him.

Allen collected three hits, including a double, and drove in his first run with Oakland in the A's 7-6 loss to the Rangers.

With Jackson out for a second straight day, Allen will get a few more at-bats, as the A's opened a series with the Orioles on Monday night.

"Based on Conor being out a few days, he'll get some consistent at-bats," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

It's tough luck for Jackson, who is batting .313 (30-for-96) since the All-Star break and has great numbers against Baltimore. He's reached base safely in each of his 10 career games against the Orioles.

The earliest Jackson's expected back in the lineup is Thursday night's game against the Blue Jays. Meanwhile, Allen said he approaches batting practice with the same attitude whether he's scheduled to start or not. He just wants to be ready.

No discomfort for McCarthy during 'pen session

OAKLAND -- A's right-hander Brandon McCarthy went through a routine bullpen session on Monday and reported no discomfort after he was hit on the right knee with a line drive on Friday night.

McCarthy felt some soreness Saturday but was able to complete his normal pregame routine and declared himself ready to make his regular start on Wednesday against the Orioles.

McCarthy said he "saw a flash of light" before he felt any discomfort in his knee. He's been dutiful with his treatment, which made a difference.

"I was surprised by how well he felt a day later," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

Right-hander Michael Wuertz, on the disabled list with right thumb tendinitis, won't be pitching for a little while longer. He was eligible to come off the DL on Sunday but is still in the early stages of rehab.

Wuertz played catch before Monday night's game and it will take him a few throwing sessions before he pitches again.

A's sign two more picks before deadline

OAKLAND -- The A's signed eighth-round pick Colin O'Connell and 11th-rounder Christopher Lamb just before the deadline passed at 9:01 p.m. PT on Monday night.

The right-handed O'Connell was 7-3 with a 2.44 ERA as a junior at Cal State Fullerton, Kurt Suzuki's alma mater.

Lamb, a Berkeley native, was 1-7 with a 3.75 ERA for Davidson College but struck out 85 in 81 2/3 innings.

The A's signed seven of their top eight picks from the June First-Year Player Draft, 18 of their top 20, and 30 overall. The A's previously signed their first-round pick, pitcher Sonny Gray, drafted 18th overall out of Vanderbilt.

The A's signed just one of their three junior college picks and none of their 14 high school selections.

Ninth-rounder Jace Fry, a left-hander who was 10-0 with a 1.42 ERA for Southridge High in Beaverton, Ore., is going to Oregon State. Left-hander Sasha Kuebel, drafted in the 31st round, is headed to Iowa. He was 6-1, with a 1.98 ERA for St. Louis University High.

Shortstop Alex Blandino, from nearby St. Francis High in Mountain View, is headed to Stanford. The A's drafted him in the 38th round.

Melvin has learned plenty from Garner

OAKLAND -- A's manager Bob Melvin started learning a lot more about baseball from Phil Garner, who was hired as a special advisor to Melvin on Friday, when they played together on the Giants in 1988.

"I guess he saw something in me," Melvin said before the game against the Orioles on Monday night. "He was always taking me aside and pointing things out. Everybody has a mentor, and he's one of mine."

When Melvin was announced as Oakland's interim manager on June 9, he inherited an unfamiliar coaching staff. He immediately thought of Garner, a former Major League manager who started his playing career with the A's during their heyday in the 1970s.

"The first thing I did was approach [general manager] Billy [Beane], and he was all for it," Melvin said. "Then I had to go to [Garner] to see if he was interested in coming back."

Garner is 13 years older than Melvin, but gives him a sense of comfort.

"He's a guy I am comfortable with, a guy I know," Melvin said. "He's another set of eyes for evaluation. It's just not me; Billy can use him, too."

Would Melvin like to see Garner on the coaching staff next year?

"I have to make sure I'm here first," Melvin said. "I don't want to get too far ahead of myself."

A's lose fourth straight

ASSOCIATED PRESS.

OAKLAND — Brandon Allen has had a pretty good couple of days since making his AL debut. The Athletics haven't benefited from them yet.

Allen got three hits for the second straight day but the Athletics failed to hold a lead and fell to the Baltimore Orioles 6-2 on Monday night, their fourth straight loss.

David DeJesus doubled home a run and scored on Cliff Pennington's single for the A's, who have dropped four straight.

"It's part of the game," Allen said. "We got some good at-bats but their pitcher seemed to bear down when he felt a threat. Unfortunately they got the key hits and we didn't."

The Orioles managed only two hits off Oakland left-hander Gio Gonzalez (9-11) through the first six innings before scoring four times in the seventh.

"It was a positive outing," said Gonzalez, who lost his fifth straight start. "I took a stride forward. My luck is turning a little bit and I just want to stay positive."

Matt Wieters and Mark Reynolds both homered to help the Orioles begin a 10-game road trip with a victory following a 3-7 homestand.

Robert Andino hit a go-ahead bases-loaded double in the seventh inning and Josh Bell added a two-run single.

Adam Jones and Vladimir Guerrero both singled before Gonzalez walked Wieters to load the bases. After a strikeout, Andino greeted reliever Fautino De Los Santos with a deep double over the head of center fielder Coco Crisp to drive in Jones and Guerrero.

Bell, batting only .143 coming into the game, followed with a bouncing single up the middle. Wieters and Andino both scored easily to make it 5-2.

"The seventh inning was a problem," A's manager Bob Melvin. "Based on how he pitched leading up to that, it looks like Gio is righting the ship."

It's only Baltimore's fourth win in its last 18 games on the road. The Orioles also won for just the second time in 14 games at the Oakland Coliseum since the start of the 2008 season.

Tommy Hunter (2-2) allowed two runs over 6» innings to earn his first win with Baltimore. The right-hander, who struck out three and walked one, had been winless in two starts since being acquired in a trade from Texas on July 30.

He also got help from the Orioles defense, which turned a double play in the second inning. Wieters also threw out Jemile Weeks trying to steal, the 28th runner the Baltimore catcher has caught this season.

Hunter allowed 10 hits and improved to 5-0 in six career starts against the A's.

Oakland, outscored 23-8 while getting swept in a three-game series by Texas over the weekend, fell a season-low 15 games under .500.

Gonzalez gave up four runs and four hits while walking three to raise his majors-leading total to 72.

The A's strung together four consecutive hits in the bottom of the inning to go in front.

Josh Willingham singled and scored on DeJesus' double to left center. Allen followed with a base hit before Cliff Pennington's RBI single gave Oakland a 2-1 lead.

It stayed that way until Baltimore scored four times in the seventh.

Reynolds, who had been in a 1 for 28 slump with 14 strikeouts, homered off Trystan Magnuson in the ninth.

NOTES

The A's set an Oakland record with their 92nd consecutive game with two home runs or fewer.

Melvin expects Conor Jackson to be out a few days after the first baseman woke up with a sore neck.

MINOR LEAGUE NEWS

Sacramento gets back to winning ways

By Zeke Fine / Sacramento River Cats

The River Cats stopped an eight-game losing streak Monday night at Raley Field by defeating the Round Rock Express, 5-3. Tyson Ross (1-1, 7.97) turned in his best start of the season for the River Cats. Ross threw 5.0 innings, allowing one unearned run on five hits and one walk while striking out nine batters. He has nursed a strained oblique for most of the season.

"I just went out there and tried to get ahead in the count and control every at bat," Ross said on his approach to the game. "Everything really came together tonight."

Ross's only run allowed came in the first inning, when a fielding error by second baseman Andy Laroche enabled Round Rock to take an early lead.

The River Cats did not take long to get back in the game. In the second inning, Chris Carter hit a one-out single. After a lineout by Anthony Recker, Adrian Cardenas bunted for a single to set the table for Adam Rosales, who hit a liner up the middle to drive in Carter, and enable Cardenas to score on a throwing error by center fielder Leonyns Martin. Rosales advanced to third on the error, and subsequently scored on a double to left field by Jermaine Mitchell to make the score 3-1.

Sacramento added to their lead in the third inning on a two-run home run by Chris Carter that went over the River Cat clubhouse on a bounce, his 11th of the year with the River Cats. Carter went 2-for-4 on the day with two RBIs, two runs scored and one strikeout.

Adam Rosales gave the offense a much-needed boost, going 2-for-3 with two singles, one RBI, one run scored and one walk.

Round Rock came back later in the game, scoring one run in both the sixth and seventh inning off Joey Devine and Vinnie Chulk. Both pitchers threw one inning and allowed one earned run on one hit, with Chulk walking one batter and striking out two.

Neil Wagner came in to pitch for the eighth inning and helped shut down the potent Round Rock offense with a scoreless inning with one walk and two strikeouts. Fernando Cabrera came in to pitch in the ninth inning, and shut the door without allowing a baserunner and striking out one to collect his seventh save of the season.

The win snapped an eight-game losing streak, which is the second longest the team has had this season. The longest streak lasted nine games and went from June 26-July 7. Monday night's win was their only victory of the series, as Round Rock took three out of the four games.

The River Cats will start a four-game series Tuesday night against the Albuquerque Isotopes at Raley Field.

Green Named Texas League Player of the Week

Midland Rockhounds

Grant Green received player of the week honors on Monday for his performance in games from Monday, August 8th thru Sunday, August 14th. Green hit .500 as the 'Hounds reached a season high eight game winning streak.

Green is in his third professional season and his first full season at the Double-A level after being selected in the 1st round (13th overall) of the 2009 first year player draft by the A's. Earlier this year, the California native was named MVP of the MLB Future's Game in Arizona.

The RockHounds continue a late push for a playoff spot behind Green as less than a month of the regular season remains.

Green propels RockHounds over Naturals

Jordan Mason, Midland Reporter-Telegram

Grant Green had no idea he'd been named Texas League Player of the Week Monday, but that didn't stop him from playing like it as the center fielder had a part in three of his team's four runs in the Midland RockHounds' 4-2 win against the Northwest Arkansas Naturals.

"For a guy that made a position change and could've easily let that distract him," RockHounds manager Steve Scarsone said, "he was able to continue to, if anything, step up his offensive game and not let that position change overwhelm him."

Green, who moved over to center from shortstop in July, continued his hot hitting of late, extending a 14-game hitting streak while going 3-for-4 with an RBI and two runs to help Midland keep pace with the first-place San Antonio Missions, who they trail by three games in the Texas League South.

"I'm seeing the ball well right now," Green said. "So, I'm just trying to keep it going."

Scarsone said Sunday that he wanted to see his team get out to a faster start in its next game, and Midland did just that Monday, leading off the first with a walk and a Green single before Stephen Parker hit into an RBI groundout to open the scoring.

Two pitches later, Michael Spina lined one to left to score Green and put the RockHounds up 2-0 in the opening frame.

"We were aggressive," Scarsone said. "I thought we did some good things."

Midland, though, would see the lead it worked so hard to build evaporate in frustrating fashion.

Jamie Romak led off the top of the second with a flare to the right of the mound that Gary Daley went airborne to nab but wasn't able to control for the diving catch.

Romak advanced to second on a wild pitch, then third on a groundout before Nick Francis drove him in on a sacrifice fly that made it 2-1.

Then in the third, with two men down, Christian Colon dropped a beautiful bunt to reach first, then advanced to third when Daley's pickoff attempt got away from Spina for a two-base throwing error.

On the very next pitch, Jeff Bianchi ripped one up the middle to score Colon and tie the game at two.

Yet that was the last run Daley gave up as he gave the RockHounds 6 2/3 solid innings, allowing just five hits and one earned run.

"Seems like he had a lot of movement on his pitches and was getting behind in counts but was bearing down and making pitches when he needed," Scarsone said.

Midland responded in the next inning when Spina sent a laser to left that allowed Parker to score from first and put Midland up 3-2.

The inning, though, ended in disappointment as the RockHounds left the bases loaded on a Ryan Ortiz strikeout.

Midland missed another golden opportunity in the fifth when Adam Heether hit into an inning-ending double play with the bases loaded.

The RockHounds finally got one across in the seventh when Green turned on an 0-1 pitch from Buddy Baumann and blasted it into the left field bullpen for a solo home run and a 4-2 lead.

"That was a big solo shot," Scarsone said. "He gave us that extra-run lead -- obviously a big difference between a run and a two-run game going to the ninth."

That was all the run-support Midland needed, though, as Jonathan Ortiz, who Scarsone said was key, combined with Jared Lansford to keep the Naturals off the board the rest of the game.

The RockHounds now begin a six-game road swing before returning home for the final homestand of the season Aug. 23.

And Green said his team has as good a chance as any to make the playoff if it continues to play the way it did Monday.

"As long as we can keep the momentum going, hopefully, we'll be able to carry it on in the next roadstand, homestand, and then after that we've got San Antonio for four," Green said. "If we have the momentum for that, you can probably pretty much flip a coin on who's going to win the second half."

'HOUND BITES: RockHounds first baseman Michael Spina started Monday 3-for-3 with two RBI after enduring an 0-10 stretch coming into the game. ... RockHounds shortstop Wes Timmons had a nice defensive paly in the fourth when Nick Francis hit a chopper right toward him. Timmons, staring right into the setting sun, backpedaled, fielded the ball, then, still backpedaling, whipped it to second to turn the 6-4-3 double play and end the inning. Timmons turned a second 6-4-3 double play in the very next inning. ... Midland remains three games behind first-place San Antonio in the Texas League South after the Missions snapped a three-game losing streak against the Arkansas Travelers Tuesday. The RockHounds need to win the Texas League South to make the playoffs.

Quakes 4th Inning Rumble Sinks Ports

Stockton Ports

RANCHO CUCAMONGA, Calif. - After using one big inning en route to a win in High Desert on Sunday night, the Stockton Ports fell victim to a large inning on Monday night in Rancho Cucamonga. The Rancho Cucamonga Quakes scored six runs on seven hits in the bottom of the 4th inning to take the opener of a three game set with the Ports by a final of 8-1.

The Ports took an early 1-0 lead, though they stranded five baserunners over the first two innings. In the 2nd with runners at the corners and nobody out, Mitch LeVier singled to center to score Dusty Coleman and give the Ports a 1-0 lead.

Stockton would go on to load the bases with two outs, but Michael Choice, on a deep line drive to left, would be robbed of a hit on a leaping catch made by Wilberto Ortiz to keep it a 1-0 score.

The Quakes tied the score with an unearned run off Ports starter Rob Gilliam (12-6) in the 3rd. Ramon Jean reached on a one-out throwing error made by third baseman Michael Gilmartin. Pedro Guerrero came up next and hit a fly ball to center that Myrio Richard lost in the twilight sky, putting runners at second and third and setting up a sac-fly that ensued from Nick Buss to tie the score at 1-1.

Rancho Cucamonga had their big offensive surge in the 4th. With one out, Angelo Songco homered to right to put the Quakes in front 2-1. The next seven batters reached base, which included RBI singles from Jessie Mier and Jean. Guerrero hit an RBI double to left to knock Gilliam from the game. Connor Hoehn came in from the bullpen and allowed a two-run double to Buss to make it a 7-1 Quakes advantage.

Gilliam would take the loss in his shortest outing of the season. He went 3.1 innings and allowed seven runs (six earned) on seven hits and did not record a strikeout.

Hoehn would pitch 1.2 scoreless innings in relief of Gilliam, allowing one hit and walking one. Mike Hart tossed two scoreless frames in relief of Hoehn and Scott Deal allowed a run in the 8th, his lone inning of work.

The Ports offense would be shut down the rest of the way by Quakes starter Andres Santiago (7-4). Santiago picked up the win, going seven innings and allowing one run on seven hits while striking out a season-high eight.

Jordan Roberts and Logan Bawcom each tossed a scoreless inning of relief down the stretch for the Quakes.

Anthony Aliotti singled in the 1st inning to extend his on-base streak to 40 consecutive games.

The Ports and Quakes will play the second game of their three-game set on Tuesday night at The Epicenter. A.J. Griffin (3-3, 4.05 ERA) takes the hill for Stockton, opposed by left-hander Aaron Miller (3-2, 3.60 ERA) for Rancho Cucamonga. First pitch is set for 7:05 p.m. PDT.

Bees Close Out Road Swing With Victory

By Jon Versteeg, Burlington Bees

BELOIT, WI- The Burlington Bees (19-31) scored two runs on seven hits to earn a 2-1 win over the Beloit Snappers (23-27) and win the series at Pohlman Field on Monday night. The Bees finish the six-game road trip with a 4-2 record. Burlington won two of three games in Quad Cities before coming to Beloit.

The Bees scored two runs in the fourth inning. 1B Josh Whitaker (1-4) led off the inning with an opposite-field solo home run for a 1-0 lead. LF Jose Rivero (0-3) walked and went to second base on a ground out by C John Nester (1-3). Following the Nester groundout, Rivero broke towards third base. Ray threw wide of third base and Rivero scored for a 2-0 lead.

The Snappers scored an unearned run in the fourth inning. 3B Jairo Perez (1-3) singled and moved to third base on a single by RF Daniel Ortiz (2-4). LF Derek McCallum (1-4) reached base on a dropped fly ball by Burlington LF Jose Rivero. Perez scored to cut the lead to 2-1.

RHP Blake Hassebrock pitched five innings and allowed one unearned run on six hits. He walked one man and struck out five to get the win. RHP Daniel Tenholder tossed three scoreless innings and RHP Blake Treinen pitched a scoreless ninth inning for his first save of the season.

BEES BUZZINGS: Tenholder's three innings is the longest he has pitched in a game in 2011.

The Bees return home to start a three-game series with the Cedar Rapids Kernels on Wednesday night at 6:30 p.m. It's "Kids Eat Free Wednesday" with all kids 12 and under receiving a hot dog and drink voucher at the game on Wednesday.

RHP A.J. Schugel (4-3, 2.59) gets the start for Cedar Rapids against RHP Jonathan Joseph (3-4, 6.63) for Burlington. Pre-game coverage starts at 6:10 p.m. Wednesday on AM 1490 KBUR and online at gobees.com.

2011 Bees tickets are on sale now! To single game tickets, or playoff tickets for game two of the first round of the Midwest League playoffs on September 8, 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.