

## A's News Clips, Saturday, August 27, 2011

### Oakland A's rout Boston Red Sox 15-5

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

BOSTON -- How things have changed inside the A's clubhouse these days.

Oakland's hitters spent the first half of the season praising their pitching staff, pledging they would eventually start carrying their share of the load.

Now it's the pitchers crowing about their offensive teammates. The latest example came with Friday's 15-5 shellacking of the Boston Red Sox before 38,239 fans at Fenway Park.

The A's established a season high for runs and banged out 16 hits, including eight doubles -- their most since June 6, 2009, against Baltimore.

Remember those 2-1 losses the A's seemed to have copyrighted?

Consider that Oakland has scored 36 runs over 37 innings in the first four games of this road trip. As a team, the A's are hitting .281 since the All-Star break, up from .233 before the break.

They're scoring two runs more per game (5.4 to 3.4) in the second half compared with the first.

"Give all the credit to the offense," winning pitcher Gio Gonzalez said. "It's fun to watch, seeing the way they're swinging the bats."

The A's preached the importance of forgetting about Thursday's historic 22-9 loss to the New York Yankees. But they retained a helpful lesson.

They led New York 7-1 before getting outscored a staggering 21-2 over the final six innings as the Yankees became the first team to hit three grand slams in a game.

On Friday, the A's jumped ahead of Boston 8-1, and when the Sox cut it to 8-4, the A's went back to work, scoring seven runs over the final three innings.

"I think the way we came out, we set the tone," second baseman Jemile Weeks said. "When we set the tone, we played through it the same way that we started game."

The A's, 22-40 on the road at the start of this 10-game trip, are 3-1 so far against the Yankees and Red Sox, the A.L.'s top two teams.

They're scheduled for a doubleheader Saturday, hoping to complete this three-game series before heavy storms from Hurricane Irene hit the New England area Sunday.

But weather.com forecasts were calling for a 40 percent chance of rain in the afternoon, increasing to 60 percent by the evening.

Gonzalez (11-11) wasn't his sharpest, giving up four runs over 5<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings.

"It was maybe not his best performance, but I think he pitched according to the game," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

A six-run fourth gave Gonzalez an 8-1 cushion.

The A's batted around that inning against knuckleballer Tim Wakefield (6-6), who lasted just four innings. Scott Sizemore and Josh Willingham each hit two-run homers in the rally.

David DeJesus had three RBIs. Weeks and Cliff Pennington each had three hits.

The A's switch hitters -- Weeks, Pennington and Coco Crisp -- all employed the same strategy, hitting right-handed off the right-hander Wakefield. It's an interesting but not uncommon strategy against a knuckleballer, Melvin said.

Hitting coach Gerald Perry planted the seed in his hitters' heads about hitting right-handed.

"Right on right, you have less time to react," Melvin explained. "You see it from the left side, and quite often you're out in front too much."

Thursday's loss got so bad that Yankees catcher Jorge Posada actually played the final inning at second base against Oakland. On Friday, the A's delivered such a spanking that Boston manager Terry Francona had outfielder Darnell McDonald pitch the ninth.

He airmailed his first pitch to the backstop and allowed Willingham's two-run double, but the crowd cheered wildly for every strike McDonald threw.

### **A's update: Graham Godfrey to pitch today's second game**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

BOSTON -- Right-hander Graham Godfrey will be recalled from Triple-A Sacramento to start the second game of Saturday's doubleheader against the Red Sox.

Godfrey went 1-1 with a 4.24 ERA during three starts in June with Oakland -- his first big league exposure. He's 13-3 with a 2.75 ERA in 18 games (17 starts) for Sacramento.

The A's needed an extra arm because Sunday's game was bumped up to be part of a twin bill Saturday. The A's and Red Sox are trying to avoid heavy storms from Hurricane Irene that are expected to hit Boston on Sunday.

Guillermo Moscoso will oppose Red Sox lefty Jon Lester in Saturday's first game, set for the 9 a.m. PDT start, with Godfrey matching up against lefty Erik Bedard in the 2 p.m. PDT nightcap.

The A's could have started Brandon McCarthy on three days' rest Saturday. They also could have gone with Josh Outman, who was promoted from Sacramento on Friday along with fellow lefty Jerry Blevins to fortify the bullpen.

Outman is 8-3 with a 3.91 ERA in Sacramento's rotation and was on turn to pitch Saturday. But he's in his first season back from reconstructive elbow surgery and has been on a five-inning limit.

"We felt like both were certainly candidates," A's manager Bob Melvin said of Godfrey and Outman.

Outman, slated for long relief duty, said he's encouraged by his overall arm strength for this time of year.

Barring injuries, Melvin said he doesn't see his rotation changing over the final four-plus weeks. But Outman would appear a candidate for next season's rotation.

Melvin said the team will make a roster move to clear a spot for Godfrey before the second game.

Outman and Blevins took the bullpen spots of Bruce Billings and Jordan Norberto, who gave up a combined 11 runs and nine walks in Thursday's 22-9 loss to the Yankees.

Catcher Anthony Recker had quite the unique experience for his major league debut Thursday, working behind the plate for all nine innings of the A's 13-run loss.

"It's too bad that his first day in the big leagues, he had to deal with something like that," Melvin said, adding that Recker will catch Saturday's nightcap.

### **Chin Music: A memorable weekend awaits at Fenway**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 8/26/2011 3:38pm

There's always something nutty that happens when the A's play at Fenway Park. Earlier this season, they lost to the Red Sox in 14 innings and we saw Boston's Jonathan Papelbon and Jason Varitek get ejected within minutes of each other. Last season, Brett Anderson was lost to an elbow injury during one of his starts. This weekend, Hurricane Irene will rear its (her?) ugly head. Scheduling a doubleheader Saturday may not solve all problems. Weather.com calls for a 40-50 percent chance of rain in the early evening, and the second game is set for a 5 p.m. start. Could it be that rescheduling Sunday's game to avoid a rainout results in a ... rainout??

If one of the games gets canceled, the A's may only be forced to make it up if it impacts the Red Sox's postseason chances. The A's aren't scheduled to return to the East Coast again during the regular season. We often see teams play just 161 games for these reasons.

–Right-hander Graham Godfrey will be promoted to start Saturday's second game (Guillermo Moscoso will throw the opener). The A's also made two moves to fortify the bullpen, recalling lefties Josh Outman and Jerry Blevins and optioning out Jordan Norberto and Bruce Billings, who both struggled big-time Thursday. The A's need all the fresh arms they can find over this two-day span.

Though Outman is in the bullpen now, he'd been starting for Triple-A Sacramento. I'm intrigued to see how he fares because I see this guy as a serious rotation candidate next season. A's manager Bob Melvin said he doesn't foresee any changes with this year's rotation barring injuries. But looking ahead, Rich Harden will be a free agent, Brett Anderson and Dallas Braden are mending from surgery, and Tyson Ross is still a bit of an unknown quantity. Outman says his arm feels as strong now as it has all season. Hopefully we get to see him pitch in some meaningful situations.

–Today's lineups

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

Red Sox: Ellsbury CF, Scutaro SS, Gonzalez 1B, Pedroia 2B, Ortiz DH, Lowrie 3B, Aviles LF, Saltalamacchia C, McDonald RF; Wakefield RHP.

### **A's bounce back from N.Y. debacle, pound Red Sox**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Before Friday's game at Fenway Park, manager Bob Melvin said the A's wouldn't dwell on the disaster of the previous day, and he was quick to note how well the offense performed at Yankee Stadium this week.

The hitting continued at Boston, where the A's jumped out to a sizable lead for the second game in a row - but considering their utter collapse one day before, the outcome never appeared entirely certain until the very late stages of Oakland's 15-5 victory.

Oakland held a 7-1 lead at Yankee Stadium on Thursday only to fall 22-9, allowing the most runs by an A's team since 1955. According to stats expert David Feldman, the A's are the first team since the 1950 Pirates to allow 20-plus runs in one game, then come back and score 15-plus runs the next.

"That was a huge lift, stopping the bleeding right away," A's starter Gio Gonzalez said. "Not letting it spiral out of control."

In the first four games of this trip, the A's have scored 36 runs, and they have won three of the four games they've played against the two teams vying for the AL East title. Oakland was swept in a three-game series at Fenway Park in June, and the A's entered the evening with eight wins in their previous 24 games here.

The A's did do something Friday they could not the previous day - they added onto their early edge, scoring seven runs in the final three innings.

"That was big," A's second baseman Jemile Weeks said. "We started off great in New York and then they pounded us last game. But we know what we're capable of and we came out the same way."

Oakland was particularly good at scoring with two outs - 13 of the A's runs came with two down.

On Friday, the hitting stars were Josh Willingham, who hit his 23rd homer of the season, a two-run drive in the fourth; Hideki Matsui, who rapped a two-run double the same inning; and Scott Sizemore, who smacked a two-run homer, also in the fourth. Willingham has hit eight homers this month, and 12 since the break, putting him among the league leaders.

Switch-hitting Weeks, batting right-handed against right-handed knuckleballer Tim Wakefield, recorded a double and single off him, and also reached on a strikeout-passed ball. He added another double in the ninth inning off Matt Albers. David DeJesus, who doubled in two runs in the eighth, is 7 for his past 14.

On Thursday, the game got so out of hand against the A's that longtime New York catcher Jorge Posada played second base in the ninth. On Friday, it was so skewed in Oakland's favor that Red Sox outfielder Darnell McDonald pitched the ninth. He walked two and gave up a two-run double to Willingham.

"The theme of the second half is that the offense has come alive," Melvin said.

### **A's shuffle pitchers as another storm looms**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

After Thursday's pitching implosion and with a doubleheader wedged in today, the A's called up two relievers Friday and will add a starter today before the second game at Fenway Park.

**Graham Godfrey**, who is having one of the best years among Pacific Coast League starters, is slated to go in Game 2, although there already are concerns that Hurricane Irene might disrupt that game.

Oakland pitchers threw 237 pitches Thursday in a 22-9 loss to the Yankees. Two of the A's least effective pitchers from that debacle, **Jordan Norberto** (five walks, four runs) and **Bruce Billings** (four walks, seven runs) were sent down to Triple-A Sacramento, and left-handers **Josh Outman** and **Jerry Blevins** joined the team in Boston.

"Especially with three games in two days, it was going to be a rush to get enough pitching," said Billings, who threw 57 pitches. "It's part of the business. They need arms. It makes a lot of sense."

Outman was scheduled to start at Triple-A Sacramento today but will be used in relief with Oakland. He said he is on a five-inning limit, a nod to his 2009 Tommy John surgery. He didn't pitch for a year and a half, and the A's don't want his workload to get too extreme, so they're hoping to cap his season at 125 total innings.

"I had it in the back of my mind that if I found my way back here this year, it would be in the bullpen," Outman said.

The A's will have to make another transaction today to put Godfrey on the roster, so Blevins or Outman might have a short stay. Or the team could send out Game 1 starter **Guillermo Moscoso**, depending on the pitching. Godfrey is 13-3 with a 2.75 ERA at Sacramento and went 1-1 with a 4.24 ERA in a short stint with Oakland earlier this year.

**Recker's day:** Thursday's disaster was particularly unfortunate for the A's catcher, **Anthony Recker**, who was making his big-league debut and was behind the plate for what turned out to be one of the worst pitching performances in franchise history.

"For a debut, that's a difficult one to persevere through," manager **Bob Melvin** said.

Melvin said that Recker's lack of familiarity with some of the relievers was not an issue Thursday and that Recker will start Game 2 today. Recker caught Godfrey regularly at Sacramento.

### Leading off

**More from Thursday:** Leftover tidbits from the 22-9 loss at Yankee Stadium: The A's allowed 35 baserunners, the most in Oakland history. The game raised the A's ERA .15 runs to 3.68. The 16 runs allowed by the bullpen were an Oakland record. The bullpen has a 5.05 post-break ERA.

### **Drumbeat: Graham Godfrey to start Game 2 tomorrow; A's call up two relievers**

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser at Fenway Park 2:31pm 8/26/2011

Graham Godfrey, up earlier this season for a time, will be called up tomorrow to start Game 2 of the doubleheader at Boston. He was the logical choice - he was scheduled to pitch for Triple-A Sacramento tonight, and he is having a terrific season there, going 13-3 with a 2.75 ERA. Anthony Recker, usually Godfrey's catcher at Sacramento, will be behind the plate for that game.

Game 2 is already in peril, though - Hurricane Irene might be getting close enough to cause some problems from late afternoon on tomorrow. Some of the Fenway Park regulars have been saying that the doubleheader should have been scheduled for today to be on the safe side - the Red Sox, in a race with the Yankees - need to make sure they get in every game they can. They can't afford to be playing makeup games right before the postseason starts. (Although if the makeups were just to determine first-place vs. wild-card - and it appears both will come out of the East - then the makeups won't be played.)

The A's called up some bullpen help after yesterday's debacle; Bruce Billings and Jordan Norberto, who'd thrown plenty of pitches - 38 for Norberto, 57 for Billings - are out. Josh Outman and Jerry Blevins return to Oakland, and I very much hope this isn't a return of one - or two - days for Blevins, who has been the designated yo-yo this year. The A's will need to make a transaction to get Godfrey onto the roster and the best bet is a reliever who gets used tonight or in Game One tomorrow.

Outman was scheduled to start for Sacramento tomorrow, but he is on a five-inning limit because of his 2009 Tommy John surgery; when he was sent down last time, he already was at 100 innings pitched, and, he told me this afternoon, the decision was made then to keep the left-hander on a strict inning- and pitch count. So he knew if and when he got back to Oakland it would be in the bullpen. A five-inning-only starter wouldn't work well in this league.

So the A's have a bunch of lefties in the bullpen again: Outman, Blevins, Craig Breslow, Brian Fuentes.

One thing that was clear throughout that series in New York was that the idea that the Yankees get the benefit of borderline calls has some substance to it. The A's pitchers didn't get some of the same strike calls the Yankees did - most glaringly Andrew Bailey's pitch to Robinson Cano on Tuesday that should have ended the game. In a 22-9 thumping, a team isn't going to complain about borderline calls, but the trend seemed to continue, and I know there are a few sites that track such things.

A's manager Bob Melvin is familiar with such sites, too, and with the concept that New York - and Boston, too - gets more calls than their opponents.

"You have to persevere and not let it get to you, even if that is the case," Melvin said. "These are exciting places to play, well attended by passionate fans. If that really comes into play, who knows? But you have to deal with it."

Melvin didn't think Recker's lack of familiarity with some of the A's relievers played into any of the team's pitching plummet yesterday. He said Recker was really just reduced to trying to get some of the relievers (read: Norberto and Billings) to throw the ball down the middle, and even that was proving difficult.

"It's too bad it was his first game," Melvin said. "He did get a lot of work - he might have lost a few pounds."

## **A's use six-run fourth to cruise past Sox**

### **Gonzalez yields four runs over 5 2/3 frames en route to 11th win**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

BOSTON -- The A's needed no pep talk, no consoling or motivating pats or hugs of the sort to avoid any aftereffects of one of the worst losses in club history.

Sent out of New York on Thursday night after absorbing a 22-9 defeat that spanned nearly five hours, the A's entered Fenway Park void of any deflated feelings that could understandably come with such an embarrassing debacle.

Instead, Oakland simply chose to use the resulting emotions to beat up on one of the league's best.

Carried by a six-run fourth inning against Boston knuckleballer Tim Wakefield, the A's continued on their offensive journey through the east by way of a 15-5 victory over the Red Sox on Friday, bringing Oakland's run total in the first four games of a 10-game road trip to 36.

"Really and truly, we just gave up a bunch of runs yesterday," manager Bob Melvin said. "I don't think it had an effect on us coming in here today. I really don't. You have to just move on, and I think we try to dwell on the positives from yesterday, which is we scored a lot of runs."

And they've collected even more hits. The A's managed 16 on Friday, boosting their sum to 53 on the trip. They're batting .338 over this four-game stretch after hitting just .213 with 31 runs scored in 10 games on their last homestand.

"I think it's big," Jemile Weeks said. "We've been playing good offensively, and we've just been trying to put everything together. It's good for the confidence, and it helps you as an individual, feeling like you need to go out there and prove something to help out the team."

Weeks posted three hits on the night, as did Cliff Pennington. Moreover, at least six A's players got at least two hits, and each of the club's starting nine managed one aside from Coco Crisp. The barrage, needless to say, was more than enough to push aside any remnant of Thursday's onslaught.

"It's definitely a way to bounce back from yesterday," David DeJesus said. "That was a tough game, a long game, and today was a long game, but we were on the other side of it today."

Boston responded first in the three-hour and 36-minute affair against lefty Gio Gonzalez by jumping out to a 1-0 lead, but RBI singles from DeJesus and Pennington in the second put the A's on top, and they never looked back.

Oakland got five extra-base hits off Wakefield, who endured a lengthy fourth inning that marked his last and saw 10 A's batters step to the plate -- among them Scott Sizemore, who launched a two-run shot over the Green Monster with one out to make it 4-1.

Weeks nearly recorded out No. 2, but a swinging third strike resulted in a passed ball, allowing the A's second baseman to safely reach first. Catcher Jarrod Saltalamacchia paid for the miscue, as an ensuing walk to Crisp was followed by a two-run double from Hideki Matsui, who scored on Josh Willingham's two-run homer, his 23rd of the season.

"Kind of an inconsistent knuckleball tonight," Sox manager Terry Francona said of Wakefield. "Some he threw so well and had sharp break and some were up that got hit. It looked like we got the third out, and then the ball gets by Salty because it is moving, and they tack on four more. Kind of a rough night all around."

Gonzalez, meanwhile, appeared geared to wipe away the support he had so quickly garnered when he offered up back-to-back leadoff homers to Dustin Pedroia and David Ortiz to start the fourth. But the lefty settled down, his only other blemish coming in the form of Marco Scutaro's fielder's-choice RBI groundout in the fifth.

Otherwise, Gonzalez managed to keep the ball in the park through the remainder of the night. His outing didn't last long either, though, as he was chased away with two outs in the sixth as a victim of a high pitch count (105).

"Those guys came in here hot," Gonzalez said. "They were swinging good, and the best I could do was hold them down a little bit. I give all the credit to the offense and the bullpen. I was just trying to minimize the damage as much as possible."

Oakland's lead remained intact unlike the 7-1 advantage it held Thursday in New York, and Pennington added onto Friday's in the seventh with an RBI double off Sox righty Scott Atchison, marking his seventh hit in 16 at-bats on the trip.

Rookie Brandon Allen was also very much a part of the party, as he collected two doubles -- the latter of which brought in the first of four runs in an eighth frame that included DeJesus' second RBI hit of the night and one from Kurt Suzuki. As if that wasn't enough, the A's toppled Darnell McDonald, who came in from right field to pitch the ninth, for two more runs via a two-run Willingham double.

Positive vibes extended to the A's bullpen, which allowed just one run over 4 1/3 innings from the relief quartet of Brian Fuentes, Grant Balfour, Craig Breslow and Jerry Blevins to help the club to its seventh win in its last 10 tries.

"The way we came out, it set the tone," DeJesus said. "And when we did that, we played through it the same way we started the game. When they started coming back, we just kept fighting."

"The offense has come alive and stayed consistent to this point," Melvin said, "and it certainly makes things easier on everybody when they're scoring some runs."

### **As Irene approaches, Sox-A's set for twin bill**

By Jesse Sanchez / MLB.com

The Athletics and Red Sox have altered their schedule this weekend to accommodate Mother Nature's timetable.

Both teams hope the move results in a win-win situation. On Friday, the A's defeated the Red Sox, 15-5, in the first game of the series. On Saturday, the clubs will play a split admission doubleheader.

"It is what it is, and both teams have to deal with it," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said. "Our pitching is set up, and we'll see where we go with the second game. I heard the weather for the first game is going to be potentially a lot better than the second. I don't know how quickly it moves in, but I think that's more in-game decisions. Once we get there, we'll worry about the weather."

Hurricane Irene is expected to make its way through the Northeast this weekend and the clubs elected to cancel Sunday's game in favor of the doubleheader Saturday. Fans who had tickets to the originally scheduled game at Fenway Park on Saturday must use them for Game 1. Tickets for the Sunday game will be honored at Saturday's nightcap.

Oakland starter Guillermo Moscoso remains on schedule to pitch Saturday in the first game, while Graham Godfrey will be recalled from the Minor Leagues by the A's on Saturday to start the second game. Godfrey made three starts for the A's in June, surrendering eight runs in 17 innings for a 4.24 ERA. He's gone 13-3 with a 2.75 ERA in 18 games at Triple-A.

Oakland right-hander Brandon McCarthy, who was originally scheduled to pitch for the A's on Sunday, will likely pitch Monday in Cleveland.

As for the Red Sox, they will go with Jon Lester, who allowed three hits and a run over six-plus innings against the Royals in his last start, in Saturday's opener. Erik Bedard will start Game 2 for Boston.

The Red Sox are prepared for the challenge the pitching staff faces this weekend. On Friday, the club bolstered its bullpen by recalling right-hander Scott Atchison from Triple-A Pawtucket.

"We just really wanted to protect our bullpen," said manager Terry Francona. "On a day like today, we went and got Atch so something doesn't happen. If we have a lead, we're fine. But if something would happen where somebody exits early and we're losing, you can ruin your bullpen. That's why it's important to have somebody here."

#### **Athletics: Beantown twin bills**

- Saturday will mark the third doubleheader for the A's against the Red Sox in Boston in franchise history. The two others were played on Aug. 10, 1971, and July 22, 1972.
- Right-hander Michael Wuertz (right thumb) reported no problems after throwing a 30-pitch bullpen session on Thursday. The A's reliever, Melvin said, is "fairly close" to a rehab assignment.
- The A's have committed 104 errors this season. It marks the second time in the last eight years that the club has committed more than 100 errors in a season.

#### **Red Sox: Crawford gets night off**

- Carl Crawford was given the day off Friday, but he should be back in the lineup Saturday. The speedy outfielder is hitting .255, with nine home runs and 46 RBIs this season. He's stolen 17 bases.

"We're going to try to give as many guys some time off as we can," Francona said "There's only so much we can do. I thought Carl was cramping a little bit during the game, so, with the late arrival and everything, I thought it would be a good day. He's going to probably play both [Saturday]."

- Boston closer Jonathan Papelbon is one save shy of becoming the first pitcher to record 30 or more saves in each of his first six full Major League seasons.

#### **Worth noting**

- The Red Sox are 4-2 against the A's this season.
- Lester is 2-3 with a 4.95 ERA for his career against the A's. Oakland hitters have a lifetime batting average of .298 against the left-hander.
- Boston reliever Bobby Jenks, who is on the disabled list with back tightness, is scheduled to begin a rehab assignment Saturday with Class A Salem.

#### **With bullpen taxed, Outman, Blevins join A's**



By Jane Lee / MLB.com

BOSTON -- A day after their bullpen was forced to throw 139 pitches in a 22-9 loss in New York, the A's brought in a pair of relief reinforcements for Friday's series opener in Boston, recalling lefties Josh Outman and Jerry Blevins from Triple-A Sacramento.

Righty Bruce Billings and left-hander Jordan Norberto, who combined to allow 11 earned runs and nine walks in just two innings Thursday, were optioned back to the River Cats. Billings needed 57 pitches in his 1 1/3 innings of work, while Norberto utilized 38 in two-thirds of a frame.

Making the moves all the more necessary is the arrival of Hurricane Irene, whose journey toward the East Coast influenced the A's and Red Sox to engage in three games in two days, with a doubleheader scheduled for Saturday.

"I threw a lot of pitches, and it makes a lot of sense baseball-wise," an understanding Billings said. "Who's to say something like yesterday won't happen again? Hopefully it doesn't, but they need fresh arms. It's just the circumstances."

This marks Outman's first stay in the bullpen since April 2009. The southpaw made eight starts in his first stint with the A's this year, posting a 3-3 record and 3.47 ERA before being optioned to continue work on a repertoire that wasn't yet up to full speed since he underwent Tommy John surgery in 2009.

While there, he added his sinker to the to-do list.

"I'm trying to use it to add more efficiency to my game," said Outman, who went 4-2 with a 3.10 ERA in nine starts following his July 3 option. "It's one of those things where I felt like I'd have six strong innings, but my pitch count was still high, so I'm trying to get some early ground balls with that. For me, it's the amount of pitches I throw that depends on how I feel the next day. And it's something I've always thrown some, but never a whole lot."

Physically, Outman feels great, but the lefty is also under inning restrictions this year, given his elbow procedure. The A's would like for him to not throw more than 150 innings, and Outman has already reached 125 between Sacramento and Oakland. As a result, he's been limited to five innings with the River Cats in each start, so he essentially knew that his next trip to the big leagues this year would result in a relief role.

"I'd imagine I'll be doing some long-relief from here on out," he said. "We all discussed what they thought I should do, and in the first half, I racked up a lot more innings than they expected me to. I'm here to do whatever they want me to do. I hoped I would have been called up in September anyway, and I'm comfortable with it. I've pitched out of the bullpen before. I'm just happy to be back."

Blevins, meanwhile, joins the A's for a fifth time this year. He most recently posted a 4.26 ERA in seven games following his most recent demotion Aug. 2, and in his five stints with Oakland, he has combined for a 3.93 ERA and .258 opponents' average in 17 appearances.

"We needed the length," manager Bob Melvin said, "and we now definitely have depth from the left side."

### **Godfrey to pitch nightcap of Saturday's twin bill**

BOSTON -- Expected to arrive in the Northeast well before Hurricane Irene does is right-hander Graham Godfrey, who is scheduled to be recalled by the A's on Saturday to start the second game of a doubleheader at Fenway Park.

Godfrey made three starts for the A's in June, surrendering eight runs in 17 innings for a 4.24 ERA. But he's been tremendous at Triple-A Sacramento, posting a 13-3 record and 2.75 ERA in 18 games, 17 of them starts.

The 27-year-old right-hander was scheduled to make his next start for the River Cats on Friday. Lefty Josh Outman was slated to go Saturday, but he was recalled Friday to add bullpen depth and is also being monitored closely by innings this season.

"We rely on the people that are watching them," manager Bob Melvin said of the decision. "Obviously because I'm not there, I have to rely on people that are. We felt that both of them were certainly candidates, but it's just the direction we went."

Given the uncertainties surrounding the hurricane's exact arrival time, there's some concern that the A's and Red Sox won't be able to take part in Game 2. Oakland is also expected to fly to Cleveland on Saturday night following the contests. All of the plans are just that, meaning the club will make changes as needed.

"It is what it is, and both teams have to deal with it," Melvin said. "Our pitching is set up, and we'll see where we go with the second game. I heard the weather for the first game is going to be potentially a lot better than the second. I don't know how quickly it moves in, but I think that's more in-game decisions. Once we get there, we'll worry about the weather."

### **Blowout loss to Yankees in rearview mirror**

BOSTON -- The A's on Friday weren't too interested in recalling any of the history they made just one day prior.

Despite giving up 22 runs to a Yankees team that set a Major League record with three grand slams on Thursday -- the most runs allowed by an A's team since moving to Oakland in 1968 -- manager Bob Melvin focused more on the positives and didn't feel the need to make mention of it in a routine team meeting Friday afternoon.

"I think we swung the bats well," Melvin said. "We scored nine runs. We're pleased with that. We just let it get away from us a little bit, but you move on. If someone had said you go in there and take two of three and get blown out one of them, based on our history there the last several years, we at least won the series.

"Typically you'll have a few games that get out of hand -- now, that one was extreme -- but you don't want to dwell on it."

It's a game catcher Anthony Recker likely won't forget. Making his Major League debut, Recker sat behind the plate for all four hours and 31 minutes of the nine-inning affair that featured six A's pitchers.

"I tell you, for a debut, that's a difficult one to persevere through," Melvin said. "You can't keep putting guys on base like that, especially with a lineup like that. He's trying to get them to throw the ball over the plate. It's too bad his first day in the big leagues he had to deal with something like that, but certainly going forward you would guess it gets a lot better than that. I felt bad for him."

It's notable that Melvin certainly didn't believe Recker's rookie status and lack of familiarity with a couple of the A's relievers influenced any of the mound woes.

"By the middle innings there, that's when you sit in the middle of the plate and just try to get the guys to throw strikes," he said. "That's what he was trying to do."

Recker, Melvin said, will start the second game of Saturday's twin bill in Boston.

### **Worth noting**

- Right-hander Michael Wuertz (right thumb) reported no problems after throwing a 30-pitch bullpen session on Thursday. The A's reliever, manager Bob Melvin said, is "fairly close" to a rehab assignment.
- The A's entered Friday batting .331 with 21 runs scored in the first three games of a difficult 10-game road trip after hitting just .213 with 31 runs scored in 10 games during their last homestand.

### **A's beat Red Sox, 15-5**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOSTON — The Oakland Athletics didn't hide their feelings over being able to rebound so nicely after such a miserable loss.

Scott Sizemore and Josh Willingham each hit two-run homers during a six-run fourth inning that carried the Oakland Athletics to a 15-5 win over the Boston Red Sox on Friday, one day after they lost 22-9 at Yankee Stadium and allowed a major league-record three grand slams.

"It's a huge lift," winning pitcher Gio Gonzalez said. "It's stopping the bleeding right away and not letting it spiral out of control."

Like Thursday in New York, the Athletics opened a big lead early. The difference was they kept scoring and held the hot hitting Red Sox down.

"I think it's good," said second baseman Jemile Weeks, who had three hits and scored three runs, of the team's rebound. "I think we came out and set a tone. We started out great in New York and they pounded us in that game."

The win denied Tim Wakefield's bid for his 200th career victory.

Dustin Pedroia and David Ortiz hit consecutive homers for Boston, which opened a nine-game homestand after going 6-2 on a recent trip through Texas and Kansas City.

Wakefield (6-6), trying for the sixth time to become the 108th pitcher to reach 200 wins, gave up eight runs — four earned — on eight hits, walking two and striking out three. He's 0-3 with a 4.97 ERA during the six games.

"Not a real good night (for Wakefield). Kind of an inconsistent knuckleball tonight — some he threw so well and had sharp break and then some were up," Boston manager Terry Francona said. "Then it looked like we get the third out and the ball gets by (Jarrod Saltalamacchia) because it is moving and they tack on four more, so just kind of a rough night all the way around."

Cliff Pennington also had three hits, and Willingham drove in four runs for the Athletics, who won for the seventh time in nine road games after losing 30 of their previous 37 away from home.

"We just tried to move on (from Thursday)," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said, downplaying it a bit more than his players. "We really just tried to move on."

Gonzalez (11-11) gave up four runs, seven hits, striking out five and walking three in 5 2-3 innings for his second straight win after losing five in a row. He picked up just his third road win in 10 decisions.

Leading 2-1 in the fourth, the Athletics scored six runs off Wakefield — four coming after Saltalamacchia's passed ball on Weeks' strikeout with two outs.

"I think that's my biggest disappointment, knowing that we had a doubleheader tomorrow and I was only able to go four innings," Wakefield said.

Sizemore started the scoring with a home run into the last row of Green Monster seats in left, making it 4-1. After Weeks fanned but reached first, Coco Crisp walked before Hideki Matsui doubled both home with a drive off the center-field wall.

Willingham then homered into the Monster seats, his 23rd, making it 8-1.

Boston outfielder Darnell McDonald pitched the ninth, allowing Willingham's two-run double after walking the first two batters.

For a while it looked as though it could be similar to Thursday afternoon in New York when Oakland opened a 7-1 lead before its pitching staff was pounded.

Boston answered with a pair of runs in the bottom of the fourth on consecutive homers by Pedroia and Ortiz. Pedroia's was his 17th, tying his career high set in 2008 when he won the AL's MVP award. Jacoby Ellsbury tripled and scored in the fifth.

The Red Sox had runners on first and second with one out in the sixth, but Gonzalez got McDonald to pop to second. Brian Fuentes relieved and Ellsbury fouled weakly to third.

Boston stranded two more in the seventh.

Oakland ended any likelihood of a comeback by scoring four in the eighth against Matt Albers, opening a 13-4 lead.

Boston grabbed a 1-0 lead in the first on Adrian Gonzalez's RBI single before Oakland took the lead with two in the second, coming on RBI singles by David DeJesus and Pennington.

**NOTES:** Red Sox LF Carl Crawford didn't play, getting a night off to rest before playing both ends of Saturday's doubleheader. "He was cramping up a little bit (Thursday)," said Francona, who hoped to rest some other players but also knew the club has both Sunday and Monday off after Sunday's afternoon game was moved to Saturday night because of the expected severe weather from Hurricane Irene. ... Francona said RF J.D. Drew, on the disabled list with a left shoulder injury, was scheduled to DH for the Class-A Lowell Spinners on Friday night and he's also scheduled — along with Kevin Youkilis, on the DL with a strained lower back — to get some at-bats with Triple-A Pawtucket Tuesday or Wednesday. ... Red Sox reliever Bobby Jenks (back) is scheduled to pitch an inning at Class A Salem on Saturday and the hope is he can get in some work at Pawtucket before he returns from his third stint on the DL. ... Boston is planning to go with Jon Lester (13-6) in the opener on Saturday against Guillermo Moscoso (6-7), scheduled for a noon start. Erik Bedard (4-9) is slated to face Graham Godfrey (1-1) in the nightcap that's planned for 5 p.m. Godfrey will be recalled from Triple-A Sacramento before the game. He made four starts with the A's earlier this season. ... Oakland recalled left-handers Josh Outman and Jerry Blevins from Sacramento before the game, sending Jordan Norberto and Bruce Billings to the Triple-A club.

## **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Perlman Helps River Cats Solve Grizzlies**

By Noah Frank / Fresno Grizzlies

FRESNO- The Sacramento River Cats have already clinched the Pacific South Division title, but had still failed to accomplish one seemingly modest task with just 11 regular season games remaining- they had yet to beat the Grizzlies in Fresno. The visitors rectified that on Friday night, improving to 1-5 at Chukchansi Park this season with a 6-2 victory in front of 10,962 spectators.

Sacramento (79-55) held a lead for an inning for the first time this series, as Wes Timmons turned a 3-1 fastball from Matt Yourkin (9-7) into the left field bleachers with one out in the top of the third. The River Cats used the longball again to stretch the lead to 3-0 in the top of the fifth as Josh Donaldson singled in front of an Adam Rosales home run, to nearly the same spot as Timmons' blast.

River Cats starter Max Perlman, who was summoned from Rookie Ball to make the start in place of the recently recalled Graham Godfrey, baffled the Grizzlies offense for five innings. Perlman (1-0) allowed just a first-inning walk to Edgar Gonzalez and a second-inning single to Bill Hall while shutting the Grizzlies out, leaving with a 3-0 lead.

The Grizzlies (60-74) finally came to life against River Cats reliever Joey Devine, who hit Max Ramirez to open the sixth, then surrendered a booming two-run shot to right-center to Andres Torres one-out later.

The Grizzlies threatened in the seventh against reliever Neil Wagner, who they have tormented this year, but a great diving catch by Jermaine Mitchell on a broken-bat floater to shallow center field by Justin Christian to keep Sacramento in front.

The River Cats would add on from there, riding Landon Powell's two-out, two-run shot in the eighth to reestablish their three-run cushion. Sacramento would add a final run in the ninth, as Rosales scored on a wild pitch from Ronnie Ray, making it 6-2.

Fresno has won 10 of the first 14 matchups in the 2011 highway 99 Showdown Series, the most in the history of the rivalry. The Central Valley matchup continues through the weekend, as left-hander Jason Stevenson (1-0) takes on recent Sacramento addition Ethan Hollingsworth (NR) at 7:05pm.

Walden Media and 20th Century Fox will be filming a feature production starring Billy Crystal at the ballpark on Saturday, so fans are encouraged to show up early to avoid long lines, due to an expected capacity crowd. Season-ticket holder gates will open at 5:05pm and all gates at 6:05pm.

WP: Perlman (1-0); LP: Yourkin (9-7); S: None; HR: Timmons (1), Rosales (3), Torres (4), Powell (1)

### **Hounds Sweep Twin Bill, Win Series**

Corpus Christi Hooks

MIDLAND, Texas - The RockHounds made a pair of one-run leads stick on a broiling Friday night in the Permian Basin, sweeping their doubleheader with Corpus Christi by scores of 2-1 and 3-2 at Citibank Ballpark.

In the nightcap, Kody Hinze wasted little time responding to the RockHounds (32-28, 59-71) first-game triumph, blasting a two-out, two-run home run to left field in the first inning.

Hooks (23-37, 48-82) reliever Josh Zeid, pressed into starting service due to Thursday's rainout, failed to hold the lead in the bottom half. Grant Green hit a one-out single and moved to second on a walk by Stephen Parker. With Michael Spina at the plate, Midland orchestrated a double steal, placing runners at second and third. Spina responded by cuing a slow-roller to short that allowed Green to score the RockHounds' first run. A passed ball of the glove of catcher Brian Esposito squared the game at 2.

Zeid held the pieces in place until he was lifted for Blake King (0-2) in the third. Tyler Ladendorf walked to open the frame and advanced to third thanks to a sacrifice bunt and wild pitch. Green capitalized with a groundball to second, vaulting the RockHounds to a 3-2 triumph.

Midland starter Sonny Gray dominated Friday's opener, tossing five innings of shutout ball. Oakland's 18th overall pick in this year's draft yielded five hits and did not issue a walk, fanning five while throwing 44 of 64 pitches for strikes.

Midland grabbed the game's first run in the fifth. Green stroked a one-out single off of Hooks starter Ross Seaton. After a wild pitch and an intentional walk, Seaton surrendered a five-pitch free pass to Spina to load the bases. Arcenio Leon then entered in relief of Seaton and promptly yielded a sacrifice fly to Adam Heether, putting the RockHounds up 1-0.

Down to its last out, Jon Gaston drew Corpus Christi even in the seventh with a mammoth home run to right field.

The Hooks' momentum was short-lived. Leon (3-4) walked Matt Sulentic to open the Hounds' seventh. Green was next and laid down a sacrifice bunt, forcing an errant throw from Leon that staged runners at the corners with no outs. Following Green's advance to second on defensive indifference, Leon intentionally walked Stephen Parker to load the bases. Spina followed and bounced a ball to Hinze at first base. Hinze fired a strike back to the plate, cutting down Sulentic at home for the first out of the inning.

Heether provided the winning run for Midland in the next at-bat. He scorched a sharp ground ball off the glove of third baseman David Flores that deflected into left field, allowing Green to cross the pay station.

The Hooks open their final homestand of the 2011 season Saturday night when San Antonio comes calling for the first of three at Whataburger Field. Casey Kelly (11-6, 4.22) heads to the hill for the Missions. Corpus Christi counters with Paul Clemens (2-0, 1.05) in the 6:05 opener. Frisco follows for four games to close the home slate. [Click here for the full rundown of giveaways and happenings at Whataburger Field.](#)

### **Ports Fall 9-6 On Pink Night**

Stockton Ports

The Stockton Ports may have been dressed to the nines for the fifth annual Pink Night to support breast cancer awareness, but they were unable to provide a win, falling to the Inland Empire 66ers 9-6 on Friday night.

The Ports got off to a quick start as the Boys of Banner Island as an unlikely home run hitter came through for Stockton. Conner Crumbliss, who has just six home runs on the season, came to bat and absolutely crushed a 1-1 pitch out to the delta behind the right field wall to give the Ports a 1-0 lead.

However Inland Empire responded with a solo shot in the second. Catcher Carlos Ramirez smacked his own home run to center field to tie the game for the first time in what turned into a roller coaster of a game.

The Ports reclaimed the lead in the second, plating a run in grind it out fashion. Ryan Lipkin lead off the inning with a single to right field and then advanced to second on a wild pitch to Petey Paramore. While Paramore and Rashun Dixon after him were unable to plate Lipkin, Leonardo Gil singled to center to get the run home.

Once again the 66ers tied the game up with a run in the fourth. Randal Grichuk doubled to left field to get within scoring position. One batter later, Adam Younger singled to center to score Grichuk and tie the game.

The Ports jumped back out to the lead in the bottom of the fourth, putting their first crooked number on the board in the game. With two outs already recorded in the inning, Myrio Richard singled, then advanced to second on a wild pitch. Crumbliss then drew his first walk of the game. Michael Gilmartin singled up the middle to score Richard and advance Crumbliss to third. The Ports got their second run of the inning on a wild pitch as Crumbliss came home on the pitch that hit the back stop.

Inland Empire took their first lead of the inning in the sixth. To this point, Ports Starter Rob Gilliam had looked strong, pitching out of jams and striking out six. However, Kole Calhoun singled to center field off Gilliam. Then Eric Oliver doubled to right field. Grichuk reached on a fielder's choice to score the first run of the inning. Ramirez then singled through the hole at shortstop to plate the second run. Jon Karcich singled to left field for the final run of the inning. That was all Manager Webster Garrison needed to see and Mike Hart was brought in to replace Gilliam. Hart was able to induce the groundout to end the inning.

The Ports retook the lead in the bottom of the inning. Crumbliss lead off the inning with his second walk of the game. Gilmartin followed with a walk of his own. Dusty Coleman then doubled to right field to score Crumbliss and put Gilmartin at third. Lipkin singled to score Gilmartin and the Ports were once again back in the lead.

The 66ers once again jumped back out to the lead in the seventh, putting up three runs against Hart. Travis Witherspoon was hit by a pitch to lead off the inning, and then promptly stole second. David Harris then doubled to score Witherspoon. Calhoun then hit a towering ground rule double to left field over Richard's head to plate another run. Next, Oliver singled to right field to get the final run of the inning. Hart settled down after that and induced all three outs after that.

Inland Empire tacked on an extra run in the top of the ninth, as Connor Hoehn replaced Hart in the eighth. Hoehn pitched a scoreless eighth, managing to maintain his strikeout an inning as Hoehn got Witherspoon to strike out swinging to end the inning. However, Hoehn was not so lucky in the ninth, giving up his 11th home run of the season to Harris to begin the inning on a 10 pitch at-bat. Hoehn got out of the inning without any further damage.

The Ports couldn't get anything done in the ninth, and the Ports dropped the first game of the series 9-6. However, their magic number drops to three as the Bakersfield Blaze also fell on Friday night. The Ports look to rebound from the loss on Saturday as RHP AJ Griffin faces off against RHP John Hellweg at 7:05 p.m.

### **Snappers Salvage Finale**

By Jon Versteeg, Burlington Bees

BELOIT, WI-The Beloit Snappers (27-33) recorded 18 strikeouts against the Burlington Bees (25-35) en route to a 6-3 win on Friday night at Pohlman Field.

DH Nate Roberts (1-3) hit a solo home run in the first inning against Burlington RHP Blake Hassebrock (7-8) for a 1-0 Beloit lead.

In the third inning 1B Andrew Leer (1-2) hit a two-run home run over the left field wall for a 3-0 lead.

The Bees scored a run in the fourth inning to make it a 3-1 lead. DH A.J. Kirby-Jones (1-4) singled and LF Douglas Landaeta (1-4) reached on a two-base error to push Kirby-Jones to third base. Kirby-Jones scored on a passed ball for a 3-1 lead.

The Snappers pushed across single runs in the fourth, fifth and eighth innings to earn a 6-1 lead.

The Burlington Bees scored two runs in the ninth inning. Landaeta and 3B Ryan Pineda (2-3) each singled and advanced to one base on a passed ball. CF Tyreace House (1-4) hit a two-run single to score both men for a 6-3 lead.

The Bees head to the Quad Cities to begin a four-game series with the River Bandits on Saturday at 7:00 p.m. RHP Jonathan Joseph (5-4, 5.58) gets the start for Burlington against LHP Ryan Copeland (4-3, 4.44) for Quad Cities. Pre-game coverage starts at 6:40 p.m. over Newsradio 1490 KBUR and online at [www.gobees.com](http://www.gobees.com).

### **Lake Monsters Shutout 5-0 On Friday**

By Paul Stanfield / Vermont Lake Monsters

NORWICH, CT --- The Lake Monsters fell out of first-place for the first time all season as the Connecticut Tigers took over the top spot in the Stedler Division with a 5-0 victory over Vermont at Dodd Stadium in New York-Penn League action Friday night.

The game was scoreless until the bottom of the fifth when the Tigers strung together three straight one-out singles off Vermont starter Kurt Wunderlich to take a 1-0 lead. Wunderlich was able to record the second out on a forceout, but reliever Omar Duran allowed the second run to score on a wild pick off attempt at first base allowing Edgar Corcino to score from third base.

The Lake Monsters had a chance to get right back into the game in the top of the sixth as they loaded the bases with no outs on a walk, error and Nick Rickles line drive single to center. But Tiger starter Thomas Collier struckout Dusty Robinson before reliever Jeff Barfield struckout Jordan Tripp and got Chad Lewis to groundout to keep Vermont from scoring.

The Tigers then added three more runs in the bottom of the sixth on a wild pitch, a two-out Aaron Westlake steal of home on an unsuccessful Vermont rundown of a picked off Lavier Azcona at first base and a Chad Wright RBI single.

Collier (3-1) allowed three hits with two walks and six strikeouts over 5 1/3 innings for the win as Connecticut (33-31) recorded its league-leading eighth shutout of the season. Westlake was 3-for-3 with a run and double, while Dean Green was 2-for-4 with two doubles and Wright 2-for-3 with two RBI for the Tigers.

Wunderlich (2-5) gave up two runs (one earned) on five hits with two walks and four strikeouts over 4 2/3 innings to take the loss for the Lake Monsters, which have now lost three straight games. Vermont (33-32) had been either alone or tied for first-place in the Stedler Division for the first 70 days of the season, but are now 1/2 game behind the Connecticut (33-31).

The Lake Monsters and Tigers will wrap up the Connecticut portion of the series on Saturday at 1:05 pm. The game was originally scheduled for 7:05 pm, but moved to the afternoon due to Hurricane Irene. The series is then scheduled to continue at historic Centennial Field on Sunday at 6:05 pm with the completion of a suspended game from June followed by a seven-inning contest.