

**Tom Milone sharp in Oakland A's debut with victory against Kansas City Royals**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Tommy Milone's sterling effort in his A's debut wasn't so much an eye-opener as an extension of what his teammates have come to expect.

That's why nobody in the clubhouse seemed blown away after Milone held the Kansas City Royals to three hits over eight innings, leading the A's to a 1-0 victory Monday night in the opener of a three-game series.

The consensus was that Milone wasn't even in top form, considering he issued three walks.

"I thought he pitched great," A's catcher Kurt Suzuki said. "Obviously he didn't have his best command, but he found a way."

The left-hander became just the second pitcher in Oakland history to throw eight or more scoreless innings in his A's debut (Mike Norris tossed a shutout in 1975).

The only thing that would have made it better was more eyewitnesses. Attendance at the Oakland Coliseum was announced at 10,054, but it appeared less than half of that showed up to the A's third home game of the season.

Milone is showing himself to be the hidden jewel of the four-player package the A's received from the Washington Nationals for Gio Gonzalez in December.

His effort Monday was an extension of his spring training outings -- non-flashy effectiveness. He became the first A's pitcher since Matt Keough in 1980 to toss eight shutout innings without a strikeout.

"Even if he gets behind in the count, he has a pitch to get him out (of a jam)," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

Milone got a big lift from his defense, starting in the first inning.

After Jason Bourgeois led off the game with a double, he tried tagging up on Lorenzo Cain's fly ball to right. Josh Reddick fired a strike to third to nail him, with Josh Donaldson picking the short hop and applying the tag as he stood his ground and took a shot from the sliding Bourgeois.

"My catcher instincts," Donaldson quipped.

Having made the switch to third base in the spring, Donaldson enjoyed a fine overall game. He drove in the game's only run with a two-out, opposite-field single that scored Seth Smith in the second. Donaldson also left his feet to stop Bourgeois' sixth-inning grounder that was headed for left field, getting up and making the throw to first.

First baseman Daric Barton, activated from the 15-day disabled list before the game, made a diving catch of Brayan Pena's liner in the fifth. And Suzuki cut down Eric Hosmer trying to steal third in the fourth.

"The defense was probably the biggest thing tonight," Milone said.

Reliever Joey Devine will undergo surgery Tuesday on his right elbow, the A's announced late Monday. Dr. James Andrews, who performed Devine's reconstructive elbow surgery in 2009, also will perform this procedure in Pensacola, Fla.

There were no details available on what kind of surgery Devine was having or how much time he might miss.

"That's very disappointing, certainly for him but also for us," Melvin said.

Devine had Tommy John surgery in April 2009 and missed all of that season as well as 2010. He returned to the bullpen last season and was expected to be a key late-inning reliever to start this season.

To make room for Barton on the 25-player roster, Brandon Allen was designated for assignment, meaning the A's have 10 days to trade him, release him or send him to the minors if he clears waivers.

Even as Barton was slowed during the spring while recovering from shoulder surgery, all indications were that he remained in the first base picture.

He played four games on a rehab assignment with Triple-A Sacramento and went 7 for 19 with five RBIs, including a grand slam Sunday. That was enough to convince the A's he was ready.

"That was the plan all along," Melvin said. "He was going to have the time off, and whenever we felt like he was comfortable coming back and playing here, he was going to be in the lineup."

The A's commitment to Barton, 26, is somewhat puzzling given his overall track record. But their faith appears tied to his 2010 season, when he hit .273 with 10 homers, 57 RBIs, 33 doubles and an American League-leading 110 walks.

He began last season as their starting first baseman but was sent to the minors in June after hitting .212 in 67 games and committing eight errors.

He played just a few weeks for Sacramento before being shut down for the season and undergoing surgery to repair a torn labrum in his throwing shoulder.

"It just feels good to be here," Barton said.

Brett Anderson, recovering from Tommy John elbow surgery, is up to 45 pitches in his bullpen sessions, Melvin said.

### **Tim Kawakami: Yoenis Cespedes proving to be a force for Oakland A's**

By Tim Kawakami, Mercury News Columnist

You want a spontaneous natural reaction from Yoenis Cespedes? Ask him if he is surprised that he is having so much success with the A's so soon.

Just ask him.

"Noooooo," Cespedes said with a chuckle and a quizzical glance at translator Ariel Prieto and me to make sure we weren't joking.

FYI: Cespedes is absolutely not surprised by this.

His answer and chuckle needed no translation, and neither does Cespedes' performance at this point.

That epic 462-foot blast in the home opener Friday was crystal clear in all languages. So were his two other homers, giving him three in the A's first four games.

Those three swings -- plus countless other details -- proved that the recent Cuban defector belongs in the majors, only months after his arrival in the United States.

Cespedes doesn't just belong, he could immediately dominate.

For an A's team that has almost no other selling points and drew one of the sparsest crowds I've seen Monday against Kansas City, Cespedes' emergence happily wakes the echoes.

"As far as the raw power, he's definitely up there with the big boys we've seen come through here," said A's coach Mike Gallego, a teammate of Mark McGwire and Jose Canseco during the "Bash Brothers" days.

"But actually, he's more of an athlete. Canseco was definitely athletic himself, but this guy, he just moves around like a smaller player.

"Then you stand next to him, you realize how big he really is."

Cespedes isn't a giant; he is listed at 5-foot-10, 210 pounds, certainly not a Bash Triplet.

But big home runs have a way of making a player seem large in scale, no doubt.

When I asked Cespedes before the game what was his favorite moment of this season, he had an instant answer.

"When I hit the home run in Japan (against Seattle) to put the team ahead," Cespedes said via Prieto.

That, eventually, will be the twin measure of Cespedes' debut season: Can he help the A's win games and can he liven up the Coliseum?

The A's are paying him \$36 million over four years to do large portions of both.

For his teammates, there is no question that Cespedes is a good player and will only get better as he adjusts to the culture, to the language and to the major leagues on the fly, without any time in the minors.

"When the lights go on, he comes on," second baseman Jemile Weeks said of Cespedes' power. "Glad to have that on our side.

"You knew he was going to come with the power, he was going to come with the speed -- things like that -- or they wouldn't have done what they did for him. And it can only get better, because he can get more comfortable and feel like he's a part of this team."

A's manager Bob Melvin said pitchers already have adjusted to Cespedes -- twice.

First they saw Cespedes crank a homer in his first spring training at-bat, so they started throwing him more breaking balls.

Then he rocketed a few breaking balls, and it's back to more fastballs.

"It's not like they don't throw breaking balls in Cuba," Melvin said. "He's seen breaking balls."

Melvin wanted to ease Cespedes into the cleanup spot, but after the first two regular-season homers -- including the 462-foot shot -- Melvin went right to Cespedes batting fourth Saturday.

And he homered that day.

"There's no doubt that his bat is electric," Gallego said. "I think you have to compare him to Canseco, no doubt. But he's got the ability and athleticism like a Kirby Puckett out there. Puck had some pop, too, as well. I'd say Kirby Puckett with a little more power -- that's not a bad player at all."

Cespedes struck out in his first at-bat Monday but had another Cespedes moment in batting practice when he knocked a ball to almost the exact spot as his 462-foot monster.

Only this one was higher and farther.

"I know no one looks away when he takes batting practice, still," Melvin said. "And we've seen him take batting practice many days. It's still a nice little show to watch."

It's a great show, and it's not at all surprising. Well, it's not surprising to Cespedes, which is the largest sign of all that this show could get better and go on for while.

### **Inside the Oakland A's: Daric Barton gets another crack as A's first baseman**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 4/9/2012, 7:02pm

The big pregame A's news of the day: Daric Barton was activated from the disabled list and is starting at first base tonight against the Royals, batting seventh. To make room for him, Brandon Allen was designated for assignment, which means the A's have 10 days to trade or release him, or send him to the minors if he clears waivers. There's a good chance somebody grabs Allen off waivers, considering he's still relatively young (26) and still holds power potential, so I think we might have seen the last of him in green and gold.

It looks like Barton will grow some roots in the starting lineup. "From this point on, we expect Daric to be the everyday first baseman," A's manager Bob Melvin said.

Is it surprising to see Barton back in the big league lineup? Yes and no. You can hardly say he forced his way back to the majors. He was sent down last June after struggling mightily with the bat, and he played just a few weeks with Triple-A

Sacramento before undergoing season-ending surgery Aug. 12 to repair a torn labrum in his throwing shoulder. This spring, Barton saw very limited playing time as he continued rehabbing, and he played in just four games with the River Cats before being called up Monday. He did go 7 for 19, with a grand slam on Sunday, but that's hardly a big enough body of work to make him the obvious choice to install at first.

But it's clear, going back for quite some time now, that the A's brass still sees Barton as an impact player. Melvin was asked how easy of a decision it was to go with Barton at first base. "That was the plan all along," Melvin said. "Whenever we felt like he was comfortable coming back (after surgery) and playing, he was going to be in the lineup."

That's a head-scratcher to me. The A's are placing a lot of faith in a player who has posted just one truly productive major league season. That came in 2010, when Barton hit .273 with 10 homers, 57 RBI and 33 doubles. He also led the American League with 110 walks and played very good defense. But last season was a step backward offensively, and Barton also committed eight errors in 67 games.

Granted, neither Allen nor Kila Ka'aihue had shown they're the clear-cut answer at first. But for a team that has lacked power more than anything in recent years, it would have been good to see if either of them could provide an upgrade in that department over an extended period.

Tonight's lineups:

A's: Weeks 2B, Crisp LF, Reddick RF, Cespedes CF, Smith DH, Suzuki C, Barton 1B, Donaldson 3B, Pennington SS; Milone LHP.

Royals: Bourgeois LF, Cain CF, Hosmer 1B, Butler DH, Francoeur RF, Betancourt 3B, Pena C, Escobar SS, Getz 2B; Mendoza RHP.

### **Tommy Milone shuts down Royals in A's debut, 1-0**

John Shea, San Francisco Chronicle

Twelve days after their season began, in their fifth game, the A's finally used their No. 3 starter. Now they can't wait to see Tommy Milone again.

The most advanced of the young pitchers general manager Billy Beane acquired in the offseason, Milone is a let-'em-hit-it lefty who relies on his baffling repertoire and defense, and that formula was plenty in Monday night's 1-0 victory over the Royals.

Brandon McCarthy and Bartolo Colon each started twice because the A's had a week off between opening in Japan and reopening in Oakland, and it was worth the wait for Milone, who surrendered three hits and issued three walks.

"I don't like to walk as many guys as I did tonight, but if I did walk guys, those are the guys I'd want to walk," said Milone, who free-passed Eric Hosmer twice and Jeff Francoeur once. "The defense was probably the biggest thing."

Right fielder Josh Reddick and third baseman Josh Donaldson - who drove in the only run on a second-inning single - set the defensive tone in the first inning, retiring Jason Bourgeois, who tried advancing to third on a fly to right. Donaldson made a backhanded short-hop pick and, in the same motion, tagged the charging Bourgeois.

"I used my catcher's instincts," said Donaldson, who moved from catcher to third after Scott Sizemore's season-ending knee injury. In the A's cleanest defensive game, Donaldson and first baseman Daric Barton, who was reinstated from the disabled list before the game, robbed Royals of hits, and catcher Kurt Suzuki nailed a runner trying to steal.

Milone, mixing a cutter, curve and changeup with his in-and-out fastball, threw 93 pitches, and manager Bob Melvin summoned Grant Balfour, who retired three of four batters for the save.

The A's won in Oakland for the first time this season, and it was the first Oakland game in which Yoenis Céspedes didn't homer. He drew his first walk of 2012 but went 0-for-3 with two strikeouts, both times chasing Luis Mendoza's sliders in the dirt for the third strike.

His batting practice was impressive, again. Remember that homer in the Coliseum opener that cleared the luxury boxes in center field? In Monday's BP, Céspedes not only cleared the same luxury boxes but also sent the ball several rows above the boxes. If the homer in the opener was estimated at 462 feet, this was closer to 480.

"I know no one looks away when he takes batting practice," Melvin said. "It's still a nice little show to watch."

A show that fans didn't see again because the gates didn't open until Céspedes was done hitting. Not that there would have been a big gathering anyway. Officially, attendance was 10,054. Realistically, it was less than half that. But the team is discussing ways to allow early-arriving, Céspedes-loving fans to actually see his BPs.

David Rinetti, vice president of stadium operations, said one option that was discussed is to let fans into "isolated areas of the stadium."

### **A's activate Barton, cut loose Allen**

John Shea, *San Francisco Chronicle*

**Daric Barton** returned to the A's as the everyday first baseman, and manager **Bob Melvin** said, "That was the plan all along. He was going to have the time off. Whenever we felt he was comfortable coming back and playing here, he was going to be in the lineup."

Barton was activated from the disabled list on Monday, and **Brandon Allen** was designated for assignment, leaving **Kila Ka'aihue** as Barton's backup.

"They've been really loyal to me ever since I've come over here," Barton said. "You can't expect that's going to happen, but it's something that's happened. I'm really grateful for every opportunity they've given me, and I want to come out here and show what I can do."

Barton was far more productive in 2010 (.273 .405 on-base percentage, 10 homers, 57 RBIs, 159 games) than 2011 (.212, .267 OBP, no homers, 21 RBIs, 67 games). He underwent shoulder surgery in August and played only seven Cactus League games and four more for Triple-A Sacramento.

Melvin became A's manager in June and admitted he had to "rely on people in the organization" to evaluate Barton, adding, "I didn't see much of him before. I've seen his numbers. At his best, he's got an on-base over .400, gives you gap to gap power with an occasional longball, and he plays plus defense."

Barton said the shoulder doesn't affect his swings but does affect his throws and that he must "save my bullets, basically. Overall, it's felt pretty good. It's getting better every day."

Asked if he'll provide more power this year, Barton said, "When I put a good swing on a good pitch, it can go out. I'm not going to be like (**Yoenis**) **Céspedes** and hit it off the center-field facade."

**Another Devine surgery:** Reliever **Joey Devine**, who missed two seasons after undergoing elbow reconstructive surgery, will have another elbow operation Tuesday. Dr. **James Andrews**, who performed the first procedure on April 21, 2009, will also do Tuesday's.

Devine returned to the A's last season and appeared in 26 games, but he was placed on the DL March 28 after just three Cactus League outings.

**Allen's departure:** Melvin said he hopes Allen, 26, will be claimed off waivers by a big-league team but would also like him to clear waivers and return to the A's organization. Allen was 0-for-7 with five strikeouts.

"It was tough. Kila was just playing better at this point in time," said Melvin, adding Allen's batting practices "started to get better. We felt he was making progress, then he faced **Felix (Hernandez of Seattle)**, who can make you feel bad about yourself."

A'S on deck

## **Tuesday**

vs. Royals

7:05 p.m. **CSNCA**

Duffy (4-8) vs. Godfrey (1-2)

## **Wednesday**

vs. Royals

12:35 p.m.

Chen (12-8) vs. McCarthy (9-9)

## **Thursday**

Off

A'S leading off

**Out of sight, out of mind:** Here's your weekly update on Manny Ramirez from manager Bob Melvin: "I don't know where Manny is. I'm not really concerned about him at this point."

## **Let's face it - some baseball teams are money**

Scott Ostler, San Francisco Chronicle

The Red Sox and Yankees got off to slow starts. I guess this proves that money doesn't rule baseball.

In reality, MLB stands for Moolah League Baseball. No other major sport has such a comically wide gap between the haves and have-nots. Or, if you wish, the plunderers and the plunderees.

The folks who believe baseball is fine as it is, by wild coincidence, tend to be fans of teams with big payrolls. They also tend to believe the world is flat.

As evidence for their case that baseball is fine and fair - even when one team spends \$198 million (Yankees) and two teams (Padres, A's) spend \$55 million apiece - these folks offer anecdotal evidence, small-payroll teams that went Cinderella.

This is like telling of a gambler winning a fortune in Las Vegas by hitting on 17 when the blackjack dealer was showing a six. You can win that way, but not steadily.

Following is a list of the seven teams with the best odds of winning the next World Series, according to the cold-hearted oddsmakers at Bovada (odds may have changed recently, so use 'em for entertainment purposes only). In parentheses is the opening-day payroll ranking of the team, of the 30 MLB teams (USA Today figures):

1. Phillies (\$ No. 2), 2. Yankees (\$ No. 1), 3. Angels (\$ No. 4), 4. Tigers (\$ No. 5), 5. Rangers (\$ No. 6), 6. Red Sox (\$ No. 3), 7. Giants (\$ No. 8).

Hmm. But, you protest, there is a luxury tax. Yes. Without it, the A's would probably spend \$30 million.

The Yankees have been to the World Series 40 times of a possible 107. No other team has more than 18. Does this prove that New Yorkers are smarter than the rest of us? Possibly.

But it could be that you win more games when you can afford to buy Babe Ruth.

*C'est la vie.* Rich guys run baseball and they stack the deck. If you hit on 17 and win the pot, celebrate, but don't get too cocky.

### **The Drumbeat: The latest Daric Barton era begins for A's**

John Shea reporting from the Coliseum. . .4/9/2012, 6:12pm

The A's activated Daric Barton from the disabled list and designated Brandon Allen for assignment. Barton is in tonight's lineup at first base hitting seventh.

"That was the plan all along," manager Bob Melvin. "He was going to have the time off. Whenever we felt he was comfortable coming back and playing here, he was going to be in the lineup."

Why so much faith?

"It was based on what we saw from him before," Melvin said. "I wasn't here. I have to rely on people in the organization. I didn't see much of him before. I've seen his numbers. At his best, he's got an on-base (percentage) over .400, gives you gap to gap power with an occasional long ball, and he play plus defense."

Barton hit .212 with a .267 on-base percentage with no homers and 21 RBIs in 67 games last year and underwent season-ending shoulder surgery on Aug. 12. In 2010, he hit .273 with a .405 OBP, 10 homers and 57 RBIs in 159 games.

Barton said the shoulder doesn't affect him when swinging, but he's still far from 100 percent with his throws. He said he has to "save my bullets, basically. Overall, it's felt pretty good. It's getting better every day."

He smiled when offering this line: "Luckily, I don't have to throw when I hit, and that's good."

Asked if we'll see more power from Barton, he said, "When I put a good swing on a good pitch, it can go out. I'm not going to be like (Yoenis) Cespedes and hit it off the center-field façade."

### **Milone goes eight scoreless as A's top KC**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com | 4/10/2012 3:00 AM ET

OAKLAND -- Consider the A's well-rested.

They at least looked the part against the Royals on Monday, after an off-day that followed a defensively-challenged showing the two nights prior.

Finally facing a team not named the Mariners, Oakland put on an excellent defensive expo to back an equally impressive outing by lefty Tommy Milone, who tossed eight shutout innings in his season debut en route to a 1-0 A's victory -- marking Oakland's first win since March 29 in Tokyo.

"We have to play good defense," manager Bob Melvin said. "It was a little bit disappointing the first two games we didn't, but to come back with this today, where we played well in a game that had the feel of a low-scoring game early on, was what we needed.

"A lot of times in games like that, it's a defensive play or a defensive miscue that ends up costing you the game, and I know if I'm Tommy on the mound and know those guys are making the plays, it's a lot easier for me."

The eight frames were a career-high for Milone, who didn't surpass the sixth inning in any of his five starts with the Nationals last season. Washington packaged him and three others in a trade to acquire All-Star Gio Gonzalez in the offseason, and the A's have been more than pleased with their end of the bargain so far.

"He pitched great," said batterymate Kurt Suzuki, whom Milone didn't shake off once. "Not the best command he would have liked, but he found the way. Him being a young guy able to do that at this level is awesome."

Three times Milone walked a batter and three times he surrendered a double, but the southpaw watched his teammates wipe away every baserunner. Each play proved crucial, as the A's hardly made much noise on the offensive side, their only run coming in the second courtesy of an RBI single from Josh Donaldson off Kansas City starter Luis Mendoza.

Fittingly, Donaldson played a role in a couple of the club's noteworthy plays, the first coming in the first following Jason Bourgeois' leadoff double. Lorenzo Cain sent a fly ball to right field, where Josh Reddick readied himself and quickly made the glove-to-hand transfer with ease, sailing a perfectly lined throw to third base. Donaldson, stationed at the bag as Bourgeois drew closer, snatched up the ball on one hop -- channeling his days as a catcher -- and made the tag for the out.

Perhaps of distant memory by the time the last pitch was thrown, the play's significance wasn't lost on those involved.

"That's an inning-changer," Milone said. "After that, we got rolling."

"That was a key, key play in the game, to throw out a runner of his magnitude," Melvin said. "That's a fast runner on top of it, and he was on the run when he caught the ball. You lose sight of those as the game goes along, but that's as big a play as any."

Even Bourgeois saluted Reddick, who, like Milone, came over via trade -- he was part of the Andrew Bailey deal -- and has been a steady presence for the A's.



"I tip my hat to him," the Royals speedster said. "I had to challenge him right there, trying to get in scoring position. I knew he probably had a good chance because he had time to get under the ball with his timing. But he put it right on the money."

Donaldson's slick pick finished him off, and the A's third baseman was then on the receiving end of a throw from Suzuki in the fourth, when Eric Hosmer -- who initially boarded via a walk and moved to second on Billy Butler's groundout -- was caught stealing third base. Just minutes later, Jeff Francoeur garnered a free pass from Milone and, he too, was caught stealing thanks to steady awareness by the left-hander, who picked off the outfielder.

Milone notched three outs that inning with use of just two strikes -- 10 pitches overall. His efficient performance, helped along by his teammates, resulted in just 93 pitches in front of a slim announced crowd of less than 11,000. It's likely half of that total was present.

"Even back to high school, I don't like guys getting on first base and knowing that they're going to steal," the pitcher said. "Plays like that obviously keep you in the ballgame longer, too."

A's closer Grant Balfour, relieving Milone in the ninth, tossed a scoreless frame for his second save of the season to cap an all-around well-played game by the hosts, which was much needed.

"Great effort," Suzuki said. "Everybody chipped in. We talked about it today, about doing your part, taking care of your job and trusting your teammates. If you do all that, good things will happen."

Said Donaldson: "We know we have a good defensive team, we just haven't proved it the last couple of days. We're going to hopefully go out there and continue playing like we did. I think it was very important for us. Hopefully it gives us a bit of an identity. We hope to score a lot of runs here, but if we don't we know we have our pitching and our defense to back us up."

### **Barton slated for full-time duty upon return**

### **First baseman activated, Allen designated for assignment**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- For all the talk made of the A's first-base competition over the past two months, it appears one may have never truly existed.

The winner, all along, was Daric Barton. Brandon Allen and Kila Ka'aihue were simply alternate options, until Barton was deemed healthy. That time came Monday, when the A's reinstated Barton from the 15-day disabled list and designated Allen for assignment.

"From this point on, we expect Daric to be the everyday first baseman," manager Bob Melvin said. "We feel confident about it, or he wouldn't be here at this point."

Barton was immediately inserted into the lineup, batting seventh against the visiting Royals and playing in his first game with Oakland since June 21, 2011, when he was demoted to Triple-A following an unfavorable offensive start. He was hitting .212 with zero home runs in 67 games at the time and appeared in 17 more with Sacramento before hitting the DL with a strained right shoulder.

Barton, 26, underwent surgery on the shoulder in August, and the A's are expecting his old self back now. They believe his injury largely affected his performance last season, which brought about a career-low .325 on-base percentage. The year before, in his only full season in the big leagues, that number was at .393.

Getting on base remains Barton's priority, though Melvin suggested it's nice to know he has the potential to hit one out every now and then. He has 26 career home runs in 438 Major League games.

"I'm not going to be like [Yoenis] Cespedes and hit 'em off the center-field façade, but if I run into them, I run into them," Barton said, smiling. "I'm not going up there trying to hit home runs, just going up trying to hit the ball."

"He's a good defender -- actually, a great defender -- and an on-base guy that's going to make our offense better," Melvin said.

The A's have always held Barton -- acquired in the 2004 Mark Mulder trade -- in high esteem, and the infielder is not blind to the patience they've demonstrated with him.

"I think they've been real loyal to me ever since I came over here, and it's something that you can't really expect to happen, but it's something that's happened," Barton said. "I've been real grateful for every opportunity they've given me, and I'm just going to go out there and show them what I can do now."

Barton did not appear in a spring game until March 12 and, in seven games, hit just .176 with a double. But in a four-game stint with Sacramento, he managed to collect seven hits in 19 at-bats, including a double, triple and, on Sunday, a grand slam. Hitting has not affected his shoulder -- in fact, Melvin believes his swing velocity has increased -- like the way fielding has. Barton said he still experiences stiffness in the shoulder while playing first base but noted: "It's just something I'm going to have to deal with."

"It gets stiff in colder weather, but it's something I'm going to have to work through and play through and do what I can to get the job done," Barton said. "I knew it would be stiff and sore, but once the adrenaline gets going through my veins, hopefully some of that will go away."

Barton said he will "save his bullets" when making throws and that the toss to second during a double play remains his focus, as the first one he made in Sacramento sailed into left field. Since, Barton has made some adjustments he hopes will translate to the big-league scene, as he continues an adjustment process with his shoulder.

The A's are likely to be cautious when it comes to deciding how many consecutive days he can handle fielding. Monday marked his fifth game at first base in a row, yet Sacramento had an off-day in between that time. Oakland, too, has an off-day Thursday, which should help Barton along.

Meanwhile, the A's have 10 days to trade, release or pass Allen through waivers. He's an intriguing option for clubs on the lookout for a first baseman with power potential, having compiled 142 home runs and 534 RBIs in 807 Minor League games over eight seasons. He hit .314 with two home runs and 14 RBIs this spring and, in three games with the A's, including an Opening Day start and two against Seattle ace Felix Hernandez, he went 0-for-7 with five strikeouts.

Fellow left-handed hitter Ka'aihue has received just one start -- with three appearances overall -- and is 3-for-8 following a spring campaign that resulted in a .250 average and three home runs in 17 games.

"It was a tough decision," Melvin said. "I've grown pretty close to Brandon here in a short time. The start he got off to was terrific, and then he went a little downhill. This spring, we asked him to do some things offensively, do something different in his swing, while he was trying to battle for a spot, which is difficult to do."

"Kila was just playing better at this point in time. We knew Daric was coming at some point and we were going to have to make this decision. I think it was more about how Kila was playing right now, as opposed to Brandon."

### **Ka'aihue happy to still be in mix at first base**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Brandon Allen's name was taken off the roster upon Daric Barton's return from the disabled list on Monday, forcing the question: Is Kila Ka'aihue next to go?

It's a strong possibility, given that both Barton and Ka'aihue are left-handed hitters, and the A's are already equipped with plenty of other bats on the bench. They'll need to recall a fifth starter next week and, when they do so, will have to make a decision on Ka'aihue, who is off to a 3-for-8 start.

Ka'aihue said on Monday that he knew he could have been the one packing his bags when Barton was reinstated from the DL and said he wasn't sure "what went into their decision," but is grateful he's still around.

"While I'm here, I'm going to continue to try to do my best," he said. "I've just been trying to make the most of my opportunity, and I feel like I've done that. I'm putting together good at-bats."

Manager Bob Melvin said Monday's decision between Allen and Ka'aihue came down to offensive performance, and he is expected to use Ka'aihue off the bench as a pinch-hitter and at first base when Barton needs to rest his shoulder.

Should the A's choose at some point to designate Ka'aihue, who is out of options, Melvin has said he is comfortable with Josh Donaldson as a backup first baseman.

### **Davis keeping Cespedes in A's dugout loop**

OAKLAND -- Just as Yoenis Cespedes is making his way through the language barrier, so, too, are his teammates and coaches.

The Spanish-speaking Cespedes, adjusting to his new life with help from Ariel Prieto, is without his interpreter in the dugout during games, making communication during that time a challenge. Luckily, hitting coach Chili Davis knows enough to at least ensure there is some.

"I'm not fluent, but I'm learning as I go," Davis said. "Throughout the years of Minor League baseball, Major League baseball and winter ball, I've learned how to communicate to a certain extent. I stumble on a few words and sentences, but if I take the time to try to slow down and think about what I'm trying to say, I can do all right. Ariel has helped me a lot."

When necessary, Davis can find Prieto nearby in the clubhouse, where he often escapes to in search of the right verbiage. The biggest trial, he says, comes in expressing the intensity with which he wants to get his point across. Still, some Spanish is better than none.

"I think 90 percent of the Spanish I've learned has come from baseball -- either baseball, or my housekeeper at home," Davis said, laughing. "But my job is to communicate, anyway, so it helps a lot."

"From what I hear, he sounds fluent to me," manager Bob Melvin said of Davis. "So he's the one who's talking to him during the games."

And it's first-base coach Tye Waller, standing on the front step of the dugout while the A's are on defense, who's pointing Cespedes around the outfield, with scouting reports on each hitter in mind. Helping him make the right adjustments, then, has been a collaboration of sorts.

"I think we're all developing a good relationship with him," Davis said. "We have to allow him the time to make those adjustments, just like any other player who comes up. A lot of times we expect so much more of him because of his ability that we fail to notice the progression he's already gone through."

"I'm just soaking it up right now, soaking up Yoenis Cespedes."

### **Devine scheduled to undergo elbow surgery**

OAKLAND -- The A's on Monday evening announced that reliever Joey Devine will undergo right elbow surgery on Tuesday, with more detailed information to come following the procedure.

Dr. James Andrews, who performed Tommy John surgery on Devine in 2009, will do this procedure in Pensacola, Fla.

Devine, 28, has made just 26 big league appearances since the Tommy John operation. He endured three spring outings early on in camp this year before flexor tendon tendinitis sidelined him again.

"He was as effective a pitcher as any when I first got here," manager Bob Melvin said. "It really looked like he was back to form last year. And now he has to undergo surgery, which is very disappointing certainly for him, but also for us."

### **Worth noting**

Jonny Gomes, who did not start Monday against Kansas City righty Luis Mendoza, is likely to garner the final two starts of the three-game series at designated hitter. The Royals are scheduled to throw out a pair of southpaws for those contests, and Gomes has a pretty decent resume against Kansas City. In 25 career games vs. the Royals, he is batting .347 with 12 home runs and 22 RBIs.

### **Tommy Milone shuts down Royals in strong A's debut**

Janie McCauley, Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif.—Ned Yost will be aggressive on the basepaths with his young Royals team -- even when it means missing some chances along the way.

Kansas City was thrown out on the bases three times in a 1-0 loss to the Oakland Athletics on Monday night, including in the first inning after the Royals put themselves in prime position to grab an early lead.

"That's the way we play. We play aggressive and we play to win," Yost said. "We don't play safe. We pick our spots, and give them credit, they executed."

A's starter Tommy Milone allowed three hits over a career-high eight innings in an impressive debut with his new team. Milone (1-0) faced the minimum in five of his innings, including getting through the fourth despite throwing only two strikes among his 10 pitches.

Perhaps for a night, Milone made it easier for the small group of fans who turned out at the Coliseum to picture life without lefty Gio Gonzalez. The A's acquired Milone from the Nationals in December, sending All-Star Gonzalez to the nation's capital.

Milone won his sixth career start after the Nationals won all of his five starts last season. Grant Balfour finished the three-hit shutout for his second save in as many chances.

"You've got to kind of take your hat off to him. He did a fantastic job of keeping the ball off the barrel of our bats," Yost said. "He did it by changing speeds, he did it by changing location in and out. We just couldn't center him up. We had two opportunities, two leadoff doubles, and didn't capitalize." Milone started the game by allowing a leadoff double to Jason Bourgeois, who was then thrown out on an impressive double play in which right fielder Josh Reddick caught Lorenzo Cain's liner and fired to third baseman Josh Donaldson, who backhanded the short one-hopper and put the tag on from his knees.

"It was one of those things he threw it right on the base and I really didn't want him to get to the bag," Donaldson said. "I used my catcher instincts."

Donaldson also delivered an RBI single in the second that held up for Milone. The A's missed chances to add on that inning, then Donaldson struck out swinging with the bases loaded in the sixth.

Luis Mendoza hung tough through 5 2-3 innings in the opener of Kansas City's lone trip to Oakland this year. The right-hander (0-1), who went 4-0 with a 0.47 ERA in six spring training starts, allowed one earned run on five hits, struck out two and walked four.

Those two strikeouts were impressive just based on who they were against -- new A's cleanup hitter Yoenis Cespedes.

"I felt great. I made good pitches," Mendoza said. "Just in the second inning I think the umpire squeezed me a little bit."

Cespedes, who hit three home runs in his first four games that were all against Seattle, also drew a walk and grounded out. Coco Crisp, who moved to left field so Cespedes could start the year in his familiar center field spot, singled in the seventh then stole his first base of the year. Kurt Suzuki added three hits for the A's.

After a day off Sunday following two home games with the Mariners to wrap up a season-opening series that began with two games in Tokyo, the A's were returning to a more regular regimen.

Yost sat Mike Moustakas and Alex Gordon for the opener of the three-game series after Moustakas went 1 for 11 and Gordon 0 for 13 in Kansas City's winning series to open the year at Los Angeles. Yost said both would be back in the lineup Tuesday night.

Bourgeois led off in Gordon's spot and gave Kansas City more production there in one at-bat than it got in the entire three-game series against the Angels.

Kansas City is eager to return home this weekend considering the Royals haven't been back since before spring training began in February.

Notes: Yost will look to get Mitch Maier in a game this week after he didn't play in the first four. ... Crisp is successful in his last 24 steal attempts. ... Attendance was bleak: listed at 10,054 but probably more than half that.■

## **A's defense comes alive**

By: Malaika Bobino, Oakland Post

Oakland, CA – The A's want to turn things around this series. With a rough start to the season, Oakland is confident they will get better, after all it's still a whole lot of baseball to be played.

Taking a 1-0 victory over the Kansas City Royals, the A's defense came alive. Daric Barton also returned to the lineup to help provide a spark on defense which has been heavily missed thus far.

"We have to play good defense," manager Bob Melvin said. "It was a little bit disappointing the first two games we didn't, but to come back today and play well in a game that had the feel of a low-scoring game early on, was what we needed."

After being reinstated from the 15-day disabled list, Barton got back to doing the things he's known for and that's making great plays. He made a diving catch off Brayan Pena's liner in the fifth.

Oakland's defense began early in the first frame when Jason Bourgeois doubled on a fly ball to center field. Lorenzo Cain then flew out to Josh Reddick in right field, Reddick threw to third for the out and to prevent the scoring run.

"We know we have a good defensive team, we just haven't proved it the last couple of days," said Josh Donaldson. "We're going to hopefully go out there and continue playing like we did. We want to score a lot of runs here but if we don't we know we have our pitching and defense to back us up."

Donaldson's single RBI was the only play that put the A's on the board. They had enough opportunities after Royals pitcher Luis Mendoza walked two batters in the second inning putting them in scoring position.

A wild pitch moved Kurt Suzuki to third and Mendoza walked Cliff Pennington to load the bases with two outs. Jemile Weeks was at bat but he grounded into second to end the inning.

Despite the offense taking the night off, southpaw Tommy Milone tossed eight shutout innings in his season debut. Giving Oakland their first win since March 29 in Tokyo.

Milone in his sixth start of his career, tossed at least six innings in one of his five starts, allowing two runs or fewer twice and walked one batters or fewer four times. Tonight nothing got passed him for eight innings. Allowing only three hits and three walks, Tommy didn't have a much to complain about.

"He pitched great," Suzuki said. "Not the best command he would have liked, but he found the way. Him being a young guy able to do that at this level is awesome."

## **A's beat Royals 1-0 behind Milone, strong defense**

Rael Enteen, csnbayarea.com

Rookie Tommy Milone benefited from strong defense behind him as he tossed eight shutout innings in the A's 1-0 win over the Kansas City Royals Monday in Oakland.

Royals left fielder Jason Bourgeois led off the game with a double, but was gunned down attempting to advance to third base on a fly out to right field. Josh Reddick fired the ball all the way from near the right field foul line to third base, where Josh Donaldson blocked the bag and applied the tag.

"It was one of those things he threw it right on the base and I really didn't want him to get to the bag," Donaldson said. "I used my catcher instincts."

Milone allowed just two more hits from that point on, both doubles, but none after the third inning. The 25-year-old left-hander walked three and had no strikeouts as he picked up the second win of his career and his first as an Athletic. The lack

of strikeouts put Milone in the record books as the first pitcher in six years to throw at least eight scoreless innings without a punch out. Justin Verlander was the last to do so on May 17, 2006.

"I don't consider myself a strikeout pitcher," Milone said. "I go after hitters. I want to throw as many strikes as I can and get them out there in the first three pitches."

The lone run of the game came in the second inning. After Yoenis Cespedes struck out to lead off the frame, Seth Smith reached on an infield single and came around to score three batters later on Donaldson's single to right field.

That was all Milone, acquired in the offseason trade of Gio Gonzalez, would need. The last three 1-0 A's victories before Monday were all won by Gonzalez.

Milone threw 93 pitches, 52 for strikes, in his eight innings of work before giving way to closer Grant Balfour, who shut the door on the Royals for his second save of the season and improve the A's record to 2-3.

"He was efficient with his pitch count," manager Bob Melvin said of Milone. "To go eight [innings] was terrific. It really was."

Cespedes, who entered the game with home runs in his last two games, went hitless in three at-bats. He struck out twice and walked once. The Cuban defector who signed a four-year deal with Oakland this offseason has now reached base in all five games, the only Athletic to do so.

Catcher Kurt Suzuki was 3-for-3 and drew a walk in the middle of the A's second-inning rally.

The only other A's hits came from Jemile Weeks and Coco Crisp, who also added his first stolen base of the season.

After being recalled from Triple-A Sacramento early Monday, first baseman Daric Barton went hitless in three at-bats and added a walk out of the seventh spot in the lineup.

### **A's pitcher Godfrey 'a fighter'**

Matt Kawahara, Sacramento Bee

OAKLAND – A week ago, with the fourth spot in the A's starting rotation still publicly up for grabs, Graham Godfrey nailed what amounted to his final audition.

Godfrey threw five shutout innings in an exhibition game against the Giants, and it was later announced he had earned the job.

Because the A's do not need a fifth starter until mid-April, Tyson Ross was optioned to the Triple-A River Cats to start the season.

After the way Godfrey shuttled back and forth between Oakland and Sacramento last year, one might have wondered if he had pitched with an added edge – knowing another stint with the River Cats was on the line.

That is, if he had known.

"I thought we were going to carry five starters right from the gate," Godfrey said before the A's played the Seattle Mariners on Saturday. "In that sense, I guess I was a little lucky. It wasn't even in the back of my mind."

Instead, Godfrey said he was geared up that night to face the cross-bay Giants, the team he earned his first major league win against last June.

Whatever his motivation, it was effective.

Though his numbers this spring lacked luster – a 5.09 ERA in 17 2/3 innings – the 27-year-old right-hander made a strong enough case to be named to his first Opening Day roster.

Godfrey is scheduled to start the second game of the A's three-game home series against the Kansas City Royals on Tuesday.

"He's a fighter," said A's manager Bob Melvin. "His stuff doesn't blow you away looking at it, and this is really more a compliment to him than anything else.

"He competes very hard and expects to do well and believes in himself, and that goes a long way, especially at this level."

Godfrey spent much of last season with the River Cats, going 14-3 with a 2.68 ERA and leading the Pacific Coast League in wins despite being called up three times by the A's.

Godfrey was 1-2 with a 3.96 ERA in five appearances for the A's, including three starts in June. He was recalled from Sacramento for two days in late August to start the second game of a doubleheader in Boston and rejoined the A's for good in mid-September, making one middle-relief appearance down the stretch.

"A lot of guys have done it before me, and so just talking with them about it and how to handle switching between levels, going to and from the 'pen, they offered some good advice," Godfrey said.

"The biggest thing is just to be ready. Whether you're starting or coming in in the seventh, just make sure you're ready."

Stretches in Oakland also gave him a glimpse of what he needed to do to stay in the majors.

One of the keys, he said, was tinkering with his changeup, a pitch that last year mostly moved horizontally. In an effort to give it more downward movement, Godfrey rotated his grip on the ball to different seams.

Godfrey, who honed the pitch during winter ball in the Dominican Republic, said the rotated grip has "helped me a lot."

Still, Godfrey is not one to rely on a devastating repertoire to get hitters out, said A's catcher Kurt Suzuki.

"There's no mystery to his game," Suzuki said. "He's going to come at you with fastballs and move it in and out, up and down.

"He's not a guy that's going to out-stuff you. He's just that guy that's got no fear."

### **Milone, Oakland defense spark 1-0 win over Kansas City**

Sam McPherson, examiner.com

As far as blueprints for winning in baseball go, this isn't a bad one.

Tommy Milone threw eight shutout innings -- despite not striking out a single Kansas City Royal batter -- and the Oakland Athletics defense threw out three advancing Royals on the basepaths as the A's won their first home game of the season tonight, 1-0.

Josh Donaldson drove in the only Oakland run -- well, the only run of the game, obviously -- in the second inning with a two-out single. And the A's third baseman also made a great dig and tag on a throw from right fielder Josh Reddick to nail Royals centerfielder Jason Bourgeois trying to advance to third on a fly-ball out.

So the theme tonight was pitching and defense -- with a timely hit thrown in, and if executed properly, it's a great blueprint for winning baseball games. Just how many times the A's can deliver this formula for success remains to be seen.

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But tonight, it was a thing of beauty: Milone gave up three hits and three walks, seemingly putting the leadoff runner on every inning. But the defense came through, as did the young lefty, time and time again.

Kansas City hitters went 0-for-6 with runners in scoring position, and in addition to Bourgeois' base-runner blunder, both Eric Hosmer and Jeff Francoeur were caught attempting to steal bases.

So yes, it was a banner night for the A's, and after the first two games in the Coliseum against the Mariners, the Oakland fans in attendance -- barely 10,000 of them, officially -- were rewarded for their faith tonight.

As for Milone, he's now gone 19 straight innings without allowing a run, including spring games. His Oakland debut couldn't have gone any better.

The only true negative for the team tonight was the nine men left on base. The A's won, but they could have made it easier on Grant Balfour to earn his second save of the year in the ninth if they'd added some insurance runs.

To get one run despite 12 base runners (seven hits, five walks) isn't a great blueprint for success, and Oakland will need to work on that in the future, of course.

But for now, the A's are 2-3 and have a home win under their belts.

Life is good.

### **A's Swapping Out First Basemen**

By [Rob Neyer](#), SB Nation

Apr 9, 2012 - Monday, the [Oakland Athletics](#) activated first baseman [Daric Barton](#) from the Disabled List and designated [Brandon Allen](#) for assignment.

Barton played sparingly during spring training, and was retroactively placed on the DL on March 24 with a strained shoulder. He returned to action with triple-A Sacramento, and hit a grand slam Sunday. Allen was the A's Opening Day first baseman, but has gone hitless in seven at-bats, with five strikeouts.

Barton played well for the A's in 2010, posting a .393 on-base percentage, but his shoulder injury limited his playing time and his production in 2011. Meanwhile, Allen's got impressive numbers in the minors but has batted .205/.291/.375 in the majors, and he's probably running out of chances.

With Allen gone, Barton figures to get most of the time at first base, though Kila Ka'aihue is still hanging around. There's not a platoon there, as both bat left-handed. Considering Barton's good glove at first base, Ka'aihue probably slides into a DH platoon with [Jonny Gomes](#) or some other nondescript right-handed hitter.

Allen probably takes Barton's spot with Sacramento, but only if he gets through waivers. We'll see if one of the other 29 teams is looking for a 4-A first baseman who can't hit the curveball.

### **MINOR LEAGUE NEWS**

#### **Oakland A's MLN: Carter Powers 'Cats**

Melissa Lockard, OaklandClubhouse.com

Apr 10, 2012

Experience won out down-on-the-farm in the Oakland A's system on Monday night, as the A's higher level affiliates found more success than their less experienced brethren. We have the details inside...

#### **Road Warriors: Sacramento Continues Fast Start**

The Sacramento River Cats have started their season on a roadtrip, but that hasn't prevented them from dominating in the early going this season. After taking three of four games versus the [Las Vegas 51s](#), Sacramento won game one of their series versus the Tucson Padres by a score of 5-4.

Before the game, the Oakland A's activated first baseman [Daric Barton](#) off of the disabled list. Barton had been playing first base for the River Cats as part of a rehab assignment. With Barton back in Oakland, [Chris Carter](#) was able to resume his



normal place at first. He responded with a big game offensively, doubling twice in four at-bats and driving in three runs. Carter is batting .421 over the first five games of the season.

Veterans [Jeff Fiorentino](#) and [Adam Rosales](#) added two hits a piece, and [Wes Timmons](#) scored twice and stole two bases. [Derek Norris](#) added his third double in his fourth game of the season. He also has two homeruns. [Grant Green](#) went 0-for-4 at the plate, but he did contribute with the glove, recording an outfield assist from centerfield.

Lefty [Fabio Castro](#) got the start for Sacramento and he allowed two runs on four hits and three walks in four innings. [Justin Souza](#) earned the win with two strong innings of relief. He allowed only a hit and struck-out one. [Evan Scribner](#) allowed a solo homerun, but was otherwise effective in two innings of work. He didn't walk a batter and he struck-out two.

[Neil Wagner](#) came on in the ninth inning with a two-run lead. After striking out Daniel Robertson, he allowed a single to [Sawyer Carroll](#) and a triple to [Brad Davis](#) to shrink the lead to one run. Wagner was able to escape with the save, however, when he got [Beamer Weems](#) to line-out to short and he then struck-out [Anthony Contreras](#) to end the game. It was Wagner's first save of the season.

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### Midland Rebounds With Win Behind Daley Gem

A day after being blown-out by the [Springfield Cardinals](#), the Midland Rockhounds picked up a win in game two of the series, defeating the Cardinals, 5-4. [Gary Daley, Jr.](#) was brilliant in his first start of 2012, limiting his original organization to two hits and two walks in six shutout innings. He struck-out four.

Daley's strong effort was almost wasted by a Cardinals' comeback, however. Springfield scored three runs in the bottom of the seventh off of sidearmer [Paul Smyth](#), who allowed a three-run homer to number nine hitter [Rinel Rosario](#). [Trey Barham](#) worked around two walks and a hit to record the final out of the seventh and the first two outs of the eighth.

[Jonathan Ortiz](#) came on with two-on and two-outs in the eighth. He struck-out Audy Perez to end that threat. Ortiz didn't have an easy ninth inning, however. After recording two quick outs, Ortiz allowed a solo homerun to [Kolten Wong](#) to cut the 'Hounds' lead to 5-4. Ortiz then allowed a double to [Oscar Taveras](#) before inducing an Xavier Scruggs' ground-out to end the game.

Offensively, Midland was quiet until sixth inning, netting only an RBI single from [Leonardo Gil](#) until that inning. The Rockhounds extended their lead in dramatic fashion in the sixth. Midland loaded the bases with one-out when [Dusty Coleman](#) came to the plate, hitless on the season. He picked a good time to collect his first knock, cracking an opposite-field grand slam to right to give Midland the 5-0 lead. Coleman struck-out in his other three at-bats and has 11 strike-outs in 14 at-bats this season. The homerun broke a streak of two straight games where Coleman struck-out in all of his at-bats.

Lead-off hitter [Conner Crumbliss](#) continued his hot start with a two-for-four with one walk night. One of the hits was a double and he stole two bases. The utilityman, who was at second base on Monday, has four extra-base hits, four stolen bases and five walks over his first five games this season. April was Crumbliss' worst month last year.

In total, the Rockhounds drew 10 walks in the game. [Shane Peterson](#) had three walks and [Michael Choice](#) and [Josh Horton](#) each had two. Horton also stole his first base of the year.

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### Stockton Stumbles Versus Bakersfield

After a strong first series versus the [Lake Elsinore Storm](#), the Stockton Ports struggled during game one of their set with the [Bakersfield Blaze](#), losing 10-4. [Josh Bowman](#) was roughed up in his California League debut, allowing seven runs (six earned) in 3.1 innings. Reliever [Arnold Leon](#) also had a difficult outing, allowing four hits and three runs (two earned) in two-thirds of an inning in his second outing of the season.

Offensively, the Ports were relatively quiet, collecting only eight hits and walking only once. [Miles Head](#) and [Max Stassi](#) each homered for the first time this season, but both were solo shots. The homerun for Stassi saved what was otherwise a difficult evening during which the catcher struck-out three times and had a passed ball.

[A.J. Kirby-Jones](#) was the highlight for Stockton. Batting eighth, Kirby-Jones had three hits, including a double. He is six-for-his-first-12 and may be the most powerful number eight hitter in the California League. Over his first two professional seasons, Kirby-Jones homered 27 times in 169 games.

Although Bowman and Leon struggled, Stockton relievers [Nathan Long](#) and [Connor Hoehn](#) turned in solid efforts. Long tossed 2.2 scoreless innings, walking two, but striking out three and allowing only one hit. Hoehn threw 1.1 perfect innings, striking out a batter. Stockton pitchers combined to strike-out highly regarded Reds' prospect [Yorman Rodriguez](#) five times in five at-bats.

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### **Burlington Drops Home Opener**

The Burlington Bees were unable to secure a win for the hometown fans in their season opener on Monday night, dropping their game against the [Wisconsin Timber Rattlers](#) by a score of 6-2.

[Raul Alcantara](#) and [Max Perlman](#) were the tandem starters for Monday's game. Alcantara, making his A's organizational debut, pitched around trouble for most of his four innings of work. He allowed two runs (both in the first inning) on six hits and two walks and he struck-out two.

Alcantara gave way to Perlman in the fifth and the Harvard alum had a rough first inning of his 2012 season. The tall right-hander allowed four runs (three earned) in the fifth inning, an inning made worse by Perlman's own throwing error. He settled down after that, tossing three scoreless innings to finish with a line of four runs (three earned) on four hits in four innings. He walked none and struck-out two and was hung with the loss. [Chaz Mye](#) recovered from disastrous first outing of the season (four runs allowed in one inning) to pitch a scoreless ninth on Monday.

The Bees didn't generate much offense outside of the efforts of centerfielder [Bobby Crocker](#). Crocker came into the game hitless in six at-bats, but he turned that around in a hurry. In four at-bats on Monday, Crocker had three hits and he scored a run. Outside of Crocker, Burlington managed only four other hits and three walks. Crocker also recorded an outfield assist.