



TEXASRANGERS.COM

Rangers draft high school power on Day 1

By T.R. Sullivan / MLB.com

06/05/12 1:21 AM ET

OAKLAND -- The Rangers, who rebuilt their farm system around young pitching, are starting to bring back the offensive firepower as well.

The Rangers potentially added to their collection of power-hitting offensive prospects in the Minor Leagues when they drafted high school outfielder Lewis Brinson and third baseman Joey Gallo with their first two picks in the First-Year Player Draft on Monday.

Brinson is a 6-foot-4 center fielder from Coral Springs (Fla.) High who was taken in the first round with the 29th overall pick. Gallo was the 39th overall pick out of Bishop Gorman High School in Las Vegas and was the Nevada High School Player of the Year.

Brinson has a scholarship to the University of Florida, and Gallo has one waiting for him at LSU. The Rangers still expect to sign both, and Brinson said he is close to doing just that.

"They will be Texas Rangers," club scouting director Kip Fagg said. "We have confidence in the work we did and the process we went through. We did a lot of work from the ground level, as far as our area scouts knowing them. We have full confidence that the kids are going to work hard. We have confidence in the player development to develop these guys. It's all about getting premium athletes, talents with great makeup and character that end up being big leaguers for you."

Brinson was elated to be drafted by the Rangers.

Loss to A's goes downhill fast for Feldman

By Eric Gilmore / Special to MLB.com

6/5/2012 2:20 AM ET

OAKLAND -- Rangers right-hander Scott Feldman breezed through the first inning Monday night, retiring the Oakland A's in order and striking out the final two batters of the frame.

Then the bottom of the second arrived, and Feldman's nightmare began.

Feldman gave up seven hits, including a three-run homer to Brandon Inge, and eight earned runs during a second-inning disaster when the A's sent 13 batters to the plate. Feldman's ERA soared from 4.50 to 7.01, his record fell to 0-4, and the Rangers absorbed a 12-1 loss.

The Rangers never came close to mounting a comeback after spotting Oakland an early 8-0 lead. A's rookie right-hander Jarrod Parker held them without a hit for seven innings. Michael Young finally broke up Parker's no-hit bid when he grounded a single to center field leading off the eighth.

The A's entered the game hitting a Major League-worst .209 and had been shut out 11 times, the most in baseball. Then they proceeded to pound everything that Feldman threw in the second.

"I felt great," said Feldman, who lasted only 1 2/3 innings. "Everything in my preparation this week went well. I went out there tonight, had a good first inning then the second inning ran into some trouble. Hung a pitch. Inge hit it out. After that it was just like, you know, they just kept getting hits. Hit after hit after hit. I did leave a few pitches up there. They also just kept finding holes. It was like a runaway truck with no brakes. I just really couldn't stop the bleeding. That's not how you want to do things."

Feldman's past three losses came after replacing the injured Neftali Feliz in the rotation. Feliz is on the disabled list with a sprained right elbow and is out until at least the All-Star break. The Rangers signed right-hander Roy Oswalt to a Minor League contract last week. He threw two scoreless innings for Triple-A Round Rock on Saturday but will make at least three more starts before he's ready for a promotion.

The question now is whether Feldman will remain in the rotation.

"I don't think I had time to even think about anything like that," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "Good question, though."

Washington acknowledged that he doesn't have "a whole lot of options" for his rotation.

"I don't think anyone feels worse about tonight than Scott," Washington said. "He goes out there and pitches his heart out. It just didn't happen for him tonight. That's all."

Feldman said he hopes Washington gives him a chance to redeem himself.

"Everyone has bad games. Obviously it was a bad performance and put the team in a bad situation, getting down to an early deficit like that," Feldman said. "I'm hoping I can get the ball again and try to right the ship."

Parker allowed just one hit over eight innings against Texas, which entered the game hitting a Major League-best .288.

"An 8-0 lead is fun to pitch with, and after we got those runs, it was something where I just wanted to get out there and get the guys back in as quick as I could, and wanted to throw strikes, pitch good and let them put the ball in play and just followed [catcher Kurt Suzuki] all night," Parker said.

Parker had thoughts of pitching a no-hitter until Young singled to center in the eighth.

"He threw well," Young said. "You have to give him credit. We weren't able to get anything going offensively. When they had that big second inning, he did a great job of coming after us, which is what you have to do, throw strikes and work quickly."

Josh Hamilton struck out twice against Parker.

"He was great," Hamilton said. "He did a good job. He mixed his pitches and kept us off-balance."

A's center fielder Yoenis Cespedes opened the bottom of the second inning with a walk, and Seth Smith singled him to second. Inge then crushed a hanging curveball deep into the left-field seats, putting the A's ahead, 3-0, with his sixth home run of the season.

It only got worse for Feldman. Kila Ka'aihue and Suzuki hit back-to-back singles, and Cliff Pennington ripped an RBI double, snapping his career-high 0-for-29 skid. Jemile Weeks lined a two-run single to right, making it 6-0.

Feldman finally got an out, retiring Collin Cowgill on a ground ball to second. After Josh Reddick reached on a fielder's choice, Feldman struck out Cespedes, but Smith grounded a single to right, scoring Weeks and ending Feldman's night.

"They swung the bats," Washington said. "I wish some of those balls they hit found somebody, but it wasn't like he was walking people and putting them all over the bags and that was happening. You got to tip your hat. They swung the bats tonight. They're a Major League club and tonight they swung the bats and put up some runs."

Inge greeted reliever Robbie Ross with a run-scoring single, but Ross retired Ka'aihue to end the inning.

Mike Napoli ended the shutout with a homer in the ninth inning off of A's reliever Jim Miller, but that came long after far too much damage had been done.

Outfielder Gentry saves 'pen by pitching inning

By T.R. Sullivan / MLB.com

06/05/12 1:52 AM ET

OAKLAND -- The Rangers will not have to make a roster move on Tuesday to reinforce their bullpen. Outfielder Craig Gentry prevented that by pitching the eighth inning in the Rangers' 12-1 loss to the A's on Monday.

Manager Ron Washington hates the idea of having to use a position player as a pitcher. But Washington felt it was necessary after the second short start in five games by one of his starting pitchers.

"We ended up saving four guys and we were able to get the guys that we used out of there quickly, so they'll be ready to go tomorrow," Washington said after Gentry became the fourth position player to be used as a pitcher in club history.

"If I'm out there you know it's not a good situation," Gentry said. "But it is kind of fun. I was nervous at first. I didn't want to hit anybody."

Gentry pitched one inning in college at the University of Arkansas. He pitched regularly in high school and could throw 92-93 mph. He was around 88 on Monday while working under strict orders from Washington and pitching coach Mike Maddux not to mess around.

Gentry was caught totally by surprise when Washington asked him in the top of the eighth if he could pitch.

"I had no idea," Gentry said. "He came up to me and asked me if I could get us through one inning. I got down there and tried to throw as many warmup pitches as I could. I didn't want to try and do anything except throw it easily down the middle. They told me not to hurt myself, no off-speed pitches. Just throw it down the middle."

Gentry allowed two runs on three hits and a walk while facing seven batters. Scott Feldman started the game and got knocked out in the second inning. He was followed by Robbie Ross for 2 1/3 innings, Mark Lowe for an inning and Yoshinori Tateyama for two innings.

The Rangers did not want to use another reliever, especially considering Derek Holland pitches on Tuesday and he was knocked out in the second inning in his last start. The Rangers do not need a shorthanded bullpen right now, and Gentry kept that from being the case.

"Anyway I can help out I will," Gentry said.

Shortstop Jeff Kunkel made two appearances as a pitcher for the Rangers in 1988, outfielder Jose Canseco blew out his elbow in a one-inning appearance against the Red Sox in 1993 and utility player Scott Sheldon pitched one-third of an inning in a game on Sept. 6, 2000, against the White Sox. Sheldon played all nine positions in that game.

Holland, Rangers looking to rebound in Oakland

By Christian Corona / MLB.com

6/5/2012 3:07 AM ET

After being shut out for the third time in four games, the Athletics scored a season-high 12 runs and held the Rangers hitless for seven innings on Monday.

The last time the Rangers were defeated by more than the 11 runs they lost by in Monday's 12-1 series-opening loss was less than a week ago. The Mariners handed the Rangers a season-worst 21-8 loss Wednesday, scoring eight runs in both the second and third innings. Derek Holland, who was responsible for every run in that eight-run second inning, makes his first start since that defeat Tuesday against the Athletics.

"It's over. I'm not going to sit and dwell on the last start," Holland said. "It's time to get ready for the next one. It's just one really bad game, but I've got myself prepared. I'm ready to go for this next one, move past that and not worry about what happened before."

Holland and Yoshinori Tateyama, who allowed all eight runs in the third inning of Wednesday's loss, became the first duo in Rangers history to give up at least eight runs in consecutive innings. Scott Feldman, like Holland last week, lasted just 1 2/3 innings and gave up eight runs, falling to 0-4 on the year as he has not made it through five innings in any of his five starts this season.

"I believe Derek is going to bounce back. He has to bounce back," said Rangers manager Ron Washington. "If he goes out there and has another one and two-thirds of an inning, I think I might have to pull my belt off and throw him across my lap and spank him. My belt is loose around my waist."

The last time Holland turned in a poor performance, when he gave up a 4-0 lead and three home runs in a 6-5 loss to Houston on May 19, he followed it with a solid start. Holland held the Blue Jays to two runs on five hits over 7 1/3 innings in a 14-3 win May 25 while striking out nine and walking just one. He'll be looking to bounce back in a similar way Tuesday.

"It's time to worry about what's up ahead, and that's take on the Athletics," Holland said. "I just got to control my emotions. I really let that kind of get away from me in the last game but, at the same time, I just got to get out there and execute my pitches, execute a little bit better than I did. That's what hurt me the last game."

The Athletics will turn to Travis Blackley against the Rangers, who are 13-4 in their last 17 games against the A's. Blackley made his first start with the A's in a 5-4 loss to the Twins on May 28, giving up one run on three hits over five innings and getting a no-decision. The A's and Rangers split their two meetings prior to this series.

"We've got them at home and that's always the goal, to take the series," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "But we do need to play it day to day ... I think if you get too far ahead of yourself with a team like that, 'Let's try to look two or three games ahead of ourselves,' it's probably not appropriate for us right now."

Blackley will be looking for his second Major League win, with the first coming nearly seven years ago. His only other big league victory came against the Rangers July 1, 2004, while Blackley played for a Mariners team managed by Melvin.

Rangers: Andrus heating up

- After batting .235 in his first 17 games, Elvis Andrus has batted .352 in his last 36. Over that stretch, Andrus is batting .352 with 12 doubles, 19 RBIs, 26 runs, 19 walks and 18 strikeouts. Since April 25, his .345 batting average and .407 on-base percentage are second in the American League only to Paul Konerko while his 26 runs are tied for third in the AL behind Jason Kipnis and David Ortiz.

- Center fielder Craig Gentry became the fourth position player in team history to take the mound for the Rangers. Gentry pitched the ninth inning of Monday's 12-1 loss, allowing two runs on three hits and walking one batter. He threw 20 pitches, 10 of which were strikes.

A's: Bats bounce back in big way

- Before Monday's 12-1 win over the Rangers, the A's were struggling offensively. They had scored just 47 runs and batted .188 in their previous 20 games before scoring 12 on runs on 15 hits, including six extra-base hits (three doubles, one triple, two home runs). The A's .213 batting average and .336 slugging percentage are both the worst in the Major Leagues while the A's are last in the AL in runs (173) and on-base percentage (.346). The Rangers lead the Major Leagues in all four of those categories.

Worth noting

- Double-A Frisco infielder Jurickson Profar was named the Texas League Player of the Month for May. Profar hit .322 with nine doubles, two triples, three home runs, 14 RBIs and 21 runs scored in the month. He also had a 29-game hitting streak and reached base in 50 straight games.

- Frisco infielder Mike Olt was the Texas League Player of the Week after recording 12 hits in 23 at-bats, including six home runs, 11 RBIs and 10 runs scored. Olt leads the Texas League with 17 home runs.

- The Rangers have released reliever Sean Green from Triple-A Round Rock and reinstated infielder Greg Miclat from the disabled list.

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

Rangers no-hit for 7 innings as Feldman roughed up early

Posted Monday, Jun. 04, 2012

By Jeff Wilson

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Jarrod Parker held the Rangers without a hit through seven innings Monday night, and Oakland scored eight times in the second inning against Scott Feldman en route to an easy 12-1 victory to open a four-game series at O.co Coliseum.

Michael Young started the eighth inning with a single through the middle to end Parker's no-hit bid. The Rangers have been hit three times in their history, with the last coming April 18, 2007, against Mark Buehrle. Parker, a rookie, was replaced after eight scoreless innings.

Mike Napoli started the ninth with a home run off Jim Miller as the Rangers avoided their first shutout of the season, but they lost for the fifth time in their past six games. The A's entered having lost 10 of 11 and had been shut out in three of their past four games.

Much like Derek Holland last week, Feldman lasted only 1 2/3 innings but worked a 1-2-3 first with two strikeouts. The first seven A's batters reached in the second, a span that included a three-run homer by Brandon Inge. Feldman has lost all three of his starts since taking over in the rotation for Neftali Feliz (sprained elbow) on May 23.

In an attempt to preserve the bullpen for the remaining six games of this road trip, manager Ron Washington reluctantly used center fielder Craig Gentry to pitch the eighth inning. He allowed two runs on three hits.

Rangers take the high (school) road in MLB draft

Posted Monday, Jun. 04, 2012

By Drew Davison

Adding high-ceiling players with character and makeup is what the Texas Rangers went into the 2012 MLB First-Year Player Draft wanting to do. They feel they accomplished that with their first three picks on Day 1, all high school players.

The Rangers selected outfielder Lewis Brinson with their first-round pick, 29th overall. They added third baseman Joey Gallo with the 39th pick and right-hander Collin Wiles with the 53rd pick in the compensation rounds.

"In Lew Brinson, we have a tremendous body, a center fielder with plus-run, plus-throw, a five-tool talent," said A.J. Preller, the Rangers' senior director of player personnel. "In Joey Gallo, another big body, probably as much power in the bat. Collin Wiles is a strike-throwing pitcher with a good breaking ball, delivery and command.

"We do feel we have players with upside."

They feel that all three will sign and forego their college commitments.

"They will be Texas Rangers," said Kip Fagg, the Rangers' director of amateur scouting.

Texas went into the draft with five of the first 93 picks, including Nos. 83 and 93 today. Day 2 begins at 11 a.m. with rounds 2-15, and the draft wraps up with rounds 16-40 on Wednesday.

Brinson is a 6-foot-4, 180-pounder from Coral Springs [Fla.] High School who bats and throws right-handed. He is considered a raw player with significant upside, and has drawn comparisons to Dexter Fowler and Cameron Maybin.

Brinson, committed to the University of Florida, had a .394 average with four doubles, four triples, four home runs and 21 RBIs this season for Coral Springs. As a junior, he had a .473 average and 29 runs.

Under the draft's new budget rules, the Rangers are slotted \$1.6 million to sign Brinson.

"We are very excited to select a player of Lewis Brinson's ability," Fagg said. "We have done a ton of work on him. He is a player with great upside and makeup who can throw, run and hit with power."

It's the fourth consecutive year that the Rangers took a high school player with their first selection.

The Rangers stayed on the high-ceiling route by drafting Gallo and Wiles. Gallo, from Bishop Gorman High School in Nevada, is a 6-foot-5, 205-pounder who projects to be a left-handed power bat. He has committed to LSU.

Wiles, who has committed to Vanderbilt, is 6-foot-4, 187 pounds and wasn't expected to be a Day 1 selection. But he went 8-0 with a 0.10 ERA and 76 strikeouts in 461/3 innings this past season for Blue Valley West.

Gallo is slotted for a \$1.3 million bonus, while Wiles is slotted for \$955,000.

The Rangers had the two compensation picks because C.J. Wilson and Darren Oliver departed via free agency last offseason.

Holland not excusing poor start against Mariners

Posted Monday, Jun. 04, 2012

By Jeff Wilson

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Maybe it is an amazing inability to grow a mustache that has folks blaming youthfulness each time Derek Holland struggles on the mound.

His birth certificate also gives credence to the belief that the 25-year-old is still growing as a pitcher and is susceptible to the occasional blowout.

The one he and the Texas Rangers suffered Wednesday against Seattle was one of the worst in club history, 21-8. He gave up eight of those in only 12/3 innings.

It was his 73rd career regular-season start. That doesn't make him as seasoned as Nolan Ryan, but he's also not a just-off-the-farm left-hander feeling his way around the big leagues for the first time. And Holland knows it.

"I don't like that excuse," he said. "The way I feel is, I've been here long enough that I should know how to handle myself and take care of things. I don't like to hear those things."

Holland (4-4) will be back on the mound tonight at O.co Coliseum, where the Rangers played a late game Monday night against Oakland and rookie right-hander Jarrod Parker.

Holland was a rookie in 2009 when he made 21 starts and followed that up with only 10 starts during an injury-marred 2010 season. But he stuck in the rotation through 2011, going 16-4 with a 3.95 ERA over 32 starts.

He has also logged 351/3 innings the past two postseasons, in situations that might make a rookie's knees buckle.

"He's played a lot of big ballgames," manager Ron Washington said. "He's been in a lot of tough situations, and he's done well in them. We expect Derek to go out there and keep us around and give us a chance to win. We expect that. I know he expects that from himself."

To listen to Holland on Monday was like listening to a veteran. The bad start, which pushed his ERA from 4.05 to 5.11, didn't stay with him long. He allowed the media to dissect the performance, while he moved on.

Holland didn't make any drastic changes to his mechanics or notice anything that might have been tipping his pitches to Mariners hitters. He admits to coming unnerved after Dustin Ackley hit a two-out, three-run homer that he didn't think would clear the right-field wall, but otherwise just didn't pitch well.

The eight runs were the second-most he has allowed in his career.

"Just bad pitching," Washington said.

Said Holland: "I've got to control my emotions. That got away from me the last game, but at the same time I have to make my pitches and execute a little bit better than I did. I don't want to throw too much on it. I know what I'm capable of and what I need to do."

Oakland might be the team that gets him back on track. Holland is 3-1 with a 1.64 ERA in six starts against the A's, who entered Monday with losses in 10 of their past 11 games.

Holland has allowed one run or no runs in four of those six career starts and is 1-1 with a 2.49 ERA in his career at the A's spacious home ballpark.

He has moved on from last week's disastrous outing, as a veteran pitcher would. And the Rangers expect him to rebound as a veteran would.

DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Rangers take high school OF Lewis Brinson with first draft pick

By Gerry Fraley

9:08 PM on Mon., Jun. 4, 2012

The Texas Rangers selected outfielder Lewis Brinson of Coral Springs, Fla., with the 29th overall choice in the amateur draft on Monday night.

"We are very excited to select a player of Lewis Brinson's ability," Rangers Director of Amateur Scouting Kip Fagg said. "We have done a ton of work on him. He is a player with great upside and makeup who can throw, run and hit with power."

Brinson, listed at 6 feet 4 and 180 pounds, hit .408 with 12 extra-base hits in 71 at-bats this season. He is considered a "toolsy" player who needs refinement. There are questions about his bat, but he won a home-run derby in a prospects game at Chicago's Wrigley Field last summer.

Brinson has committed to the University of Florida but is expected to sign. The recommended bonus for the Brinson under the new system is \$1.625 million.

This is the sixth time in the last seven years that the Rangers took a high-school player with their first choice.

Fraley: Rangers show patience by picking long-term projects in MLB Draft

By Gerry Fraley

Published: 04 June 2012 11:18 PM

Whenever possible, take the younger player with the greater potential.

For the second time in the last three years, the Rangers opened the draft by taking high school players with their first three picks. The Rangers had last opened a draft with three consecutive high school picks in 1993.

The Rangers started with outfielder Lewis Brinson of Coral Springs, Fla., with the 29th choice. They added third baseman Joey Gallo of Las Vegas with the 39th pick and ended with right-hander Collin Wiles of Overland Park, Kan., as the 53rd choice.

The approach reflects a belief that with the major league club performing well, there is no need to cut corners and add older players with lower upsides who may be closer to being big league ready. The Rangers have time to develop players. Atlanta followed a similar approach during its run of 14 consecutive playoff appearances.

"We don't try to put any type of limitations on our scouts," said A.J. Preller, senior director of player personnel. "We're not directing them college vs. high school. What we're trying to get them to do is tell us the players they like. We're comfortable taking guys our guys like. Just get all the info you can so that we can make the best picks."

The first order of business is to sign the picks. All three have committed to high-profile collegiate programs, but scouting director Kipp Fagg vowed "they will be Rangers." Brinson is the closest to a deal.

Brinson epitomizes the Rangers' thinking. His selection marked the sixth time in the last seven years that the Rangers have opened the draft by selecting a high school player.

Brinson is considered a "tools" player: exceptional natural skills that will require refinement in the minor league system. Preller described him as a potential five-tool player.

Those tools need polishing. The plan is to get Brinson into the system so the managers, coaches and instructors can work him and wait several years for a finished product to emerge just the way the Rangers want.

"We have confidence in the work we did," Fagg said. "We're fully confident in Lewis' athleticism, makeup and willingness to work."

With a lanky body and exceptional speed, Brinson has been compared to San Diego center fielder Cameron Maybin. The biggest concern is his swing, considered long and in need of refinement.

Brinson's offensive game slipped this season. As a junior, he hit .473. As a senior, he dropped to .394 with 12 extra-base hits.

Brinson described himself as a "head case" at the plate this season because of increasing expectations that he would be a first-round draft choice. He said it took about half a season to repair the swing.

"It was a mental thing at the beginning of the year," Brinson said. "I was putting too much pressure on me to do good and carry my team. I couldn't relax. But I did fix it. I relaxed and everything fell into place. I was back to my old self."

Brinson, who has committed to the University of Florida, said he is "pretty close to a deal. Under the new slotting system, the recommended signing bonus for Brinson is \$1.625 million.

The bonus could help Brinson provide for his mother, Susie. She raised him as a single mother after the death of his father, Lewis Jr., from cancer in 2005. When the call came, she broke down in tears.

"It was a really big day for her," Brinson said. "She definitely led me on the right path. She's my hero."

She's about to hand over her son to the Rangers' player-development machine. A finished player will come out in a few years. That's the Ranger way.

A few observations from the Rangers 12-1 loss to Oakland

By Evan Grant

12:41 AM on Tue., Jun. 5, 2012

OAKLAND, Calif. - Let's just dispense with any introductions or pleasantries and get right down to it, shall we:

- The Rangers will have to decide whether it's wise to let RHP Scott Feldman start again for them on Saturday at San Francisco. He hasn't gotten through five innings in any of his five starts and joins David Clyde (twice), John Burkett and Lloyd Allen as the only pitchers in Rangers history to go five consecutive starts in a single season without pitching at least five innings. Feldman allowed eight runs in 1.2 innings on Saturday. Feldman's ERA as a starter: 8.20. The Rangers have lost four straight starts after winning his first one. Most alarming: He's allowed an equal number of walks (11) to strikeouts (11).

- The options if Feldman doesn't start are not attractive.

You could rush Roy Oswalt to the majors after only one 36-pitch start in the minors (which seems a bit panicky and hasty if the idea is to have him pitch well for an extended period).

You could try to pitch Robbie Ross, who was a starter in the minors, but he'd be extremely limited. Ross has not thrown more than 40 pitches this season and threw only 34 on Monday. The Rangers could have tried to stretch him out Monday, but opted not to. Plus, if Ross goes into the rotation for a couple of starts, the Rangers lose their one lefty in the bullpen.

You could call somebody up from the minors, but nobody at Triple-A has shined. LHP Martin Perez seems to be getting back on track after a very rough stretch and did pitch on Monday, but it was only last week the Rangers sent pitching coordinator Danny Clark to visit the Round Rock club to talk with Perez. Doesn't seem like the right time.

Ron Washington's only words of advice: "Don't get ahead of yourself. We haven't looked at anything yet."

- Disturbing: 1B Mitch Moreland is 1-for-20 with three walks in his last eight games. He has struck out four times and has eight double plays, including one on Monday. Strikeouts and double plays are the bane of the Rangers' approach at the plate. They constitute unproductive outs. In those eight games, more than half of his plate appearances have been unproductive outs.

- OF Josh Hamilton is not off to a good bid if he's trying to Threepeat as AL Player of the Month. Hamilton is 2-for-16 (.125) in the first four games of the month and has six strikeouts. He doesn't have a home run or an RBI. And he's 0-for-6 with runners in scoring position.

- In losing five of their last six, there are lots of places to place blame. After all, the pitching staff has allowed three different innings of eight runs and the defense has allowed eight unearned runs. But what about the Ranger hitters. Speaking of unproductive outs: They've struck out 35 times and hit (or run) into 11 double plays in the stretch. In no way are they playing like the Rangers of the last two years.

- Best promo I've seen this year: The A's are giving out Coco Crisp Chia Pets on June 17 to honor his world-class afro.

Grant: Oswalt not ready, but Scott Feldman's struggles may force Rangers to act

By EVAN GRANT

Published: 05 June 2012 12:03 AM

OAKLAND, Calif. — The Rangers were no-hit into the eighth inning on Monday. And Craig Gentry became the first position player to pitch for them in 12 years.

And you know what: Those were the least of their problems.

Five days after allowing the moribund Seattle Mariners three touchdowns (and extra points), Rangers pitchers allowed Oakland, an even worse offense than Seattle, a season high in runs in an embarrassing 12-1 loss.

It was especially embarrassing for Scott Feldman, the one-time 17-game winner who grew up in the Bay Area. Feldman couldn't make it out of the second inning, allowing the first seven hitters in the second to reach base. He was charged with all eight runs in the inning. It was the third time in the last week the Rangers had allowed an opponent eight runs in an inning.

It was also the fifth straight start in which Feldman, who moved into the rotation when Neftali Feliz went down with a sprained right elbow ligament, failed to get through five innings. In the club's history, only four other pitchers went five consecutive starts in a single season without getting through five and the list, as you might expect, is not spectacular.

In 1999, as he pitched his way out of the rotation, John Burkett began the season with six such starts. Poor David Clyde did it in 1973 and again in 1974. And somebody named Lloyd Allen, who went the last 51 appearances of his career without a win, did it in 1973.

The question for the Rangers is do they allow Feldman a chance to extend the streak.

They are in a difficult spot.

They are still at least two or three starts away from having Roy Oswalt as a viable option. No advanced minor leaguer has shown himself to be ready to take the spot on an interim basis. And the only real option in the bullpen, Robbie Ross, has not thrown more than 40 pitches this season. Feldman is scheduled to pitch again Saturday in San Francisco.

Like Derek Holland did a week ago in that unforgettable game against Seattle, Feldman had a sharp first and then could not get through the second. He allowed a leadoff walk to Yoenis Cespedes to start the inning, then a single to Seth Smith and then a three-run homer to Brandon Inge. And he allowed another four hits before getting an out.

It set in a motion a series of events that must have the Rangers thinking seriously about tweaking their pitching staff. Because Feldman is the only real long reliever on the staff, there is no one to back him up with four or five innings if he gets in trouble. Instead, the Rangers had to try and cobble together six innings, while saving the "winning" pieces in the bullpen for another night.

After Ross went 2 1/3 sharp innings and Mark Lowe allowed half of a cycle (a double and a two-run homer) in his one inning of work, Yoshinori Tateyama pitched two innings before manager Ron Washington finally relented from his stance earlier in the season in which he pledged no position player would ever pitch for him. He had no choice but to send Gentry to the bullpen to warm up. Gentry ended up allowing two runs in the eighth. By that time, at least, the Rangers had gotten a hit. Michael Young singled up the middle to start the eighth.

The pitching debacle leaves the Rangers in need of reinforcements for the bullpen. They may need to make emergency tweaks to the rotation.

It was a bad night for the Rangers. The problem is you put a bunch of those nights together and you get a week. You put a bunch of those weeks together and you get a bad month. Put those months together and you get a disastrous year.

The Rangers are trying to stop things before a bad week threatens to become a very bad month.

ESPNDALLAS.COM

Craig Gentry gives bullpen some relief
June, 5, 2012
By Jeff Fletcher

OAKLAND, Calif. — A couple hours after Texas Rangers right-hander Scott Feldman couldn't manage to get three outs before the Oakland A's torched him for eight runs, outfielder Craig Gentry took the mound with simple instructions.

Throw fastballs down the middle.

He gave up two runs and got three outs.

"I was a little nervous at first," said Gentry, who last pitched an inning when he was in junior college eight years ago. "I didn't want to hit anybody. But it was fun. I had no idea where the ball was going."

Gentry's performance was one of the lighter moments in the Rangers' 12-1 loss to the A's on Monday night at the Coliseum. Although no one in baseball wants to have his team resort to using a position player on the mound, this inning ended up working out just as planned. Gentry kept the Rangers from using up a real pitcher, and he didn't get hurt.

"Any way I can help out, I will," said Gentry, who became the first position player to pitch for the Rangers since Scott Sheldon on Sept. 6, 2000.

Gentry said he had no idea that he was on Washington's list of emergency pitchers. When Washington approached him late in Monday's game and asked if he could get through an inning, Gentry hopped off the bench and went down to the bullpen for what turned out to be only seven or eight warmup pitches.

Working the bottom of the eighth in a 10-0 game, Gentry got Kurt Suzuki on a lineout, but then Cliff Pennington singled. Jemile Weeks hit a flyout for the second out, but the next two hitters reached and then Yoenis Cespedes yanked a two-run down the left-field line. Gentry retired Seth Smith on a flyout to end the inning.

Gentry topped out at 88 mph with his fastball.

"They said just relax and don't throw too hard," Gentry said. "Just nice and easy and throw it down the middle."

Scott Feldman roughed up, wants another shot
June 5, 2012
By Jeff Fletcher

OAKLAND, Calif. — Scott Feldman stood at his locker, eyes wide, head shaking, unable to quite make sense of what had happened to him a couple hours earlier.

Facing the team that has been the worst offensive team in the league this year, Feldman gave up eight runs in one horrific night.

A's on Monday night at the Coliseum. "I did everything in my prep this week. Everything went well. I went out and had a good first inning (1-2-3, with two strikeouts) and the second inning I ran into some trouble."

Some trouble?

"I hung a pitch and (Brandon) Inge hit it out, and after that they just kept getting hits. Hit after hit after hit. I did leave a few pitches up there, but they also kept finding holes. It was like a runaway truck with no brakes. I couldn't really stop the bleeding."

Seven consecutive A's hitters reached base. This was a team that came into the game batting .209 and had been shut out 11 times in its first 54 games.

Manager Ron Washington was also at a loss explain just what went wrong for Feldman. He did say that he was at least throwing strikes, which was some consolation.

"I wish some of those balls they hit would have found somebody," Washington said, "but it wasn't like he was walking people. They are a major league club and tonight they swung the bats."

The question Washington now faces, although he didn't seem ready to face it in the immediate aftermath of Monday's game, is whether Feldman stays in the rotation. Feldman stepped in after Neftali Feliz went on the disabled list, and he hasn't made it through the fifth in any of his four starts.

"I don't think I had time to think about anything like that," Washington said.

When pressed he conceded: "We don't have a lot of options."

The ideal replacement would be Roy Oswalt, but he's made only one minor league start so far for a total of two innings. He's not projected to be ready for at least another two weeks. Another alternative might be Robby Ross. The reliever

followed Feldman to the mound Monday and worked a crisp 2 1/3 innings, retiring six of the eight batters he faced and erasing one of the runners with a double play. He hasn't pitched three innings in a game yet this season.

Feldman said he hopes Washington sticks with him.

"Everyone has bad games," he said. "I'm hoping I can get the ball again and try to right the ship."

In the meantime, he said he's going to watch some video of this performance, but not too much.

"You've got to have a short memory on something like that," he said. "I'll look and see if there's something I was doing that can be fixed."

Washington said the numbers from Feldman's last three starts — 15 earned runs in 10 2/3 innings — aren't indicative of how he's pitched.

"Against Seattle (on May 23) one pitch cost him, a grand slam," Washington said. "The next time he faced them (on May 29), it was a ground ball we didn't make a play on. Tonight was one of those nights it didn't fall in place for him. He certainly put us in a good spot to be in the ballgame the first two times. I don't see it like you see it."

Rapid Reaction: A's 12, Rangers 1
June 4, 2012
By Jeff Fletcher

OAKLAND, Calif. — A nightmarish start by Scott Feldman ended most of the drama early in this one as the Texas Rangers fell 12-1 to the Oakland Athletics on Monday night at the Coliseum. The A's, hitting .209 when the night began, scored eight runs in the second inning against Feldman.

To make matters even worse for Texas, A's right-hander Jarrod Parker took a no-hitter into the eighth before Michael Young broke it up with a single. The Rangers have lost five of their past six games, allowing at least 10 runs in three of them.

A long, short night: Feldman cruised through the first inning, with two strikeouts, but then he only managed two more outs before his disastrous outing ended. After Feldman gave up a walk and a single to the first two hitters of the third, the Rangers were actually preparing for a bunt from the offensively-challenged A's. But Feldman hung a curve ball to Brandon Inge, who hit a three-run homer. The hits kept coming and the A's had seven runs on the board when they knocked out Feldman, who was charged with an eighth after he left.

Now what?: Feldman has not made it through the fifth inning in any of his six starts. His latest performance certainly begs the question of whether he should stay in the rotation. Roy Oswalt, the natural successor, isn't expected to be ready for a couple more weeks.

Again?: It was the third time in seven days the Rangers gave up at least six runs in an inning, and all of them have been against the A's and Mariners, the worst two hitting teams in the American League.

Nice cleanup: Robbie Ross followed Feldman to the mound and did solid work. He gave up two hits in 2 1/3 scoreless innings. He retired six of the eight batters he faced and got a double play to erase one of the hits. Ross has allowed one earned run in his past 16 1/3 innings.

Utility pitcher: Outfielder Craig Gentry pitched the bottom of the eighth, becoming the first Rangers position player to pitch since Scott Sheldon on Sept. 6, 2000. Gentry, whose fastball hit 88 mph, gave up two runs on three hits and a walk.

Defensive miscues: The Rangers had a couple misplays that weren't ruled errors. In the eight-run second, Adrian Beltre made a high throw to second as the Rangers failed to record an out when they had Jemile Weeks in a rundown. In the fifth, left fielder David Murphy couldn't catch a ball that he ticked off his on the warning track. It was a tough play, and it was ruled a triple for Seth Smith.

More ugly: Nelson Cruz also had a defensive lapse that was more embarrassing than harmful. He broke in on Kila Ka'aihue's fifth-inning fly ball, then slammed on the brakes and raced back. The ball cleared the fence.

Still scuffling: Mitch Moreland hit into a double play and struck out in his first two trips, seeing his slump continue. He walked in the ninth, but he's now 1 for his last 21. ... Beltre, who had been one of the hottest Rangers prior to his recent hiccup, is now 0-for-11 with seven strikeouts in his past three games.

Oh, by the way: Mike Napoli helped the Rangers avoid a shutout by homering against reliever Jim Miller in the ninth. The opposite-field blast was Napoli's 10th homer of the year.

Rangers draft HS players with upside

June 4, 2012

Richard Durrett

The Texas Rangers took three high school players they believe have high upside on Monday, the first day of the 2012 MLB Draft.

The club stuck with its organizational philosophy: Take the best available player no matter the position.

The scouts like athletic players with plenty of tools and they believe in their developmental staff's ability to mold those young players into major leaguers.

"We have confidence in the work we did and the process we went through to get these players," said Kip Fagg, director of amateur scouting.

The Rangers, also, expect to get all three players signed.

"They will be Texas Rangers," Fagg said.

The Rangers selected outfielder Lewis Brinson from Coral Springs High School with their first pick. It's the fourth straight year the Rangers have selected a high school player with their top pick and the second outfielder in the past three years (Jake Skole in 2010).

Brinson, a 6-foot-4, 180-pound right-handed batter, hit .394 with 21 RBIs and 11 stolen bases during his senior season. He admitted that he got off to a slow start and needed to make some mental adjustments.

"It was more just pressure of everything," said Brinson, who grew up a Miami Marlins fan. "I knew I was going to get drafted and possibly go high. I was putting too much pressure on myself to do good and carry my team. I needed to relax. I wasn't doing that the first half of the season. By middle of the season, spring break, I relaxed and from then on I was back to my old self."

The club views Brinson has a "five-tool player" who has good power and speed. He showed that in winning the Under Armour Game's Home Run Derby this season.

"I take pride in my defense, my arm and having instincts out there," said Brinson, who said he is "close" to getting a contract done with Texas. "I think that's probably my strength. At the plate, I'm really focused and developing a good eye."

Texas took Joey Gallo, a third baseman out of Nevada, with its first compensation pick (for C.J. Wilson) 39th overall. He hits left-handed and throws right-handed and did pitch in high school. He helped lead his high school to its seventh consecutive 4A state title, batting .509 with 21 homers, 80 RBIs and 13 stolen bases. He was 1-1 on the mound with a 0.00 ERA in 13 2/3 innings with 23 strikeouts and 10 walks in five games, including a no-hitter.

But the Rangers made it clear they view Gallo, 6-foot-5, 205-pound athlete as a hitter.

"We fully took him as a hitter," Fagg said. "We scouted him as a hitter. We saw him pitch, but we don't view that as an option. He's an athletic player who can hit."

The final pick of Monday for Texas was right-handed pitcher Collin Wiles from Blue Valley West High School in Overland Park, Kansas. He was 8-0 with a 0.10 ERA with 76 strikeouts in 49 1/3 innings. The Rangers liked Wiles' breaking stuff, which includes a good curve and changeup.

The draft resumes at 11 a.m. on Tuesday and continues through round 40 on Wednesday.

Buzz: Elvis Andrus' flashy plays OK with Wash

June 4, 2012

Jeff Fletcher

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Anyone who has been around Ron Washington for any period of time knows the Texas Rangers manager is all about solid fundamentals over flash.

But when it comes to Rangers shortstop Elvis Andrus making throws from mid-air, Washington has no qualms with the style -- as long as the results are there.

"As long as he doesn't do it on routine backhands, I'm good with it," Washington said before the Rangers' game in Oakland on Monday night. "On routine backhands, plant and throw. The ones he does that on, they are not routine. He has no choice."

The discussion came a day after Andrus made another spectacular play against the Los Angeles Angels. He went far to his right to grab Mark Trumbo's grounder, leapt into the air and threw to first to nail Trumbo.

"His momentum was taking at such a pace to get the ball it was the only way he could make it," Washington said.

It's a play that New York Yankees Derek Jeter popularized. Although many shortstops in today's game watched Jeter, Andrus is one of the few shortstops with the athleticism to pull it off.

"This is his third year doing it," Washington said. "He didn't do that his rookie year. This shows you how this kid sees and learns and how he can apply it. He's seen Jeter do it before he got to the big leagues. He does it like it's his. I've only seen one throw he made that was in the dirt. Other than that it was right on the money."

Notes:

* Nelson Cruz's monster homer Sunday was further encouragement for Washington that his right fielder is regaining the consistency he had lost earlier this season. Cruz was batting .216 on May 6, but since then he's hit .330 with six homers in 14 games.

Last week Washington promoted Cruz from seventh to sixth in the order, which Washington said was also a function of David Murphy's struggles.

"We know Nelson is going to have his days, we just like to see him more consistency and I'm more than certain he would too," Washington said. "He seemed to be pretty happy (batting sixth) yesterday so I left him there."

* The Rangers have been successful on 21 of their past 23 stolen-base attempts, a 91.3-percent rate. They began the season successful in just 20 of 31 (64.5 percent) attempts.

* Rangers pitchers did not allow a hit in the first three innings in any of the games over the weekend in Anaheim. The Angels were 0-for-28.

* The Rangers may not see Manny Ramirez this week in Oakland. Although the embattled slugger is now eligible to come back from his 50-game suspension, the A's are still waiting for him to find his swing at Triple-A Sacramento. He's also been battling some leg tightness.

W2W4: Rangers vs. Oakland

June 4, 2012

By Richard

ANAHEIM, Calif. -- The Texas Rangers and Oakland A's begin a four-game series tonight. It's the first time the Rangers have visited the Coliseum this season. A few things to watch:

* Scott Feldman. He remains in the rotation and says he isn't worried about Roy Oswalt or anything else. His job is to keep the Rangers in the game and see if he can get past the five-inning barrier. Feldman believes that with each start -- and each chance to get on a regular routine between starts -- he can build that innings count. In two of his starts, Feldman has gone 4 2/3 innings because of Adrian Beltre errors. Both errors came with two outs and ended Feldman's outings.

* Elvis Andrus. The shortstop bounced back Sunday and played one of his better games of the season, making highlight-reel plays and producing clutch hits. We'll see if it's something he can build on and turn into another extended run of solid play (like he did earlier in the season).

* Opportunity. Texas is catching Oakland as the A's are in the midst of big struggles. Their lineup just can't produce runs. Oakland is 29th in the majors in runs and has been shut out 11 times in its first 54 games. It's the first time a team has been shut out that many times in the first 54 games since the 1954 Pirates and the first AL team to do it since the 1917 (Elias Sports Bureau). Oakland has lost 10 of its last 11 games.

* Josh Reddick. He leads Oakland in basically every offensive category. Reddick is batting .271 with 14 homers and 29 RBIs. To illustrate Oakland's offensive woes, Josh Hamilton just won player of the month for May with 12 homers and 32 RBIs. For the month.

* Adrian Beltre. He's in a bit of a slump the past few games and will try to reverse his fortunes in Oakland this week. Beltre was 0-for-7 with five strikeouts the final two games of the Angels series and 2-for-11 overall.

* Nelson Cruz. He's streaky and that monster home run Sunday was his fourth homer in his last nine games. It's not easy to hit them out in Oakland, but Cruz is certainly crushing mistakes right now.

Week ahead: Draft and Bay Area June, 4, 2012 Richard Durrett

ANAHEIM, Calif. -- The Texas Rangers head to Oakland and San Francisco for a week, staying at the same hotel for seven consecutive nights, something they haven't done before. A few things to keep an eye on this week:

* While the team will play games in California, the front office will be hard at work in Arlington during the MLB draft, which starts tonight. You can read more about that here on the blog the next three days.

* Until this latest run by the Angels, the A's were the second-place team in the AL West. But losing nine of the last 10 going into Sunday's action has them fighting with the Mariners for third place.

* Going into Sunday's games, Oakland's starting pitching has a 4.12 ERA, sixth in the AL. The Rangers, BTW, were at 3.94, third in the league. Oakland's bullpen, however, is second in the AL at 2.76 ERA (Rangers are fourth at 2.82).

* The weekend sets up a rematch of the 2010 World Series and the first time, outside of spring training in Arizona, that the two teams have faced each other since that Game 5 in Arlington. San Francisco remains second in the NL West, trying to track down the Los Angeles Dodgers.

* Scott Feldman will get two starts this week as he continues to hold down the spot vacated by Neftali Feliz because of injury. While Feldman pitches, Roy Oswalt continues to stretch out as he hopes to stay on pace for an arrival in the rotation for around June 20.

* Texas was 6-4 at Oakland in 2011 (and 7-2 against the A's at home).

* The last time they played the Giants in the regular season was 2009. The club was swept in a three-game series at AT&T Park.

FOXSPORTSSOUTHWEST.COM

Little goes right for Rangers in lopsided loss Anthony Andro June 5, 2012

OAKLAND, Calif. — It was as if the all the stars of ugliness perfectly aligned Monday night for the Texas Rangers at O.co Coliseum.

For the second time in less than a week, a Texas starter yielded eight runs in the second inning and couldn't finish the frame against a team that came into the game with the worst batting average in the American League.

If that wasn't bad enough, the mighty Texas offense was no-hit into the eighth inning by a rookie, Jarrod Parker, making his ninth start in the majors.

At least the game ended with some levity as outfielder Craig Gentry became just the fourth position player to pitch for the Rangers, finishing the eighth inning in a 12-1 thumping at the hands of Oakland.

The Rangers have lost five of their last six games and are 1-3 on their 10 game road trip.

Gentry did fare better than Feldman, allowing two runs in his eighth inning. But when that and Michael Young breaking up the no-hit bid with a leadoff single in the eighth inning are the highlights, then you know it was a bad night for the Rangers.

"They're capable of putting runs on the board," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "They might put 12 on the board, but they're a major league club and some nights things happen for them. Tonight when we made pitches they found a way to put them in play. They happened to do it with runners in scoring position. I thought we would probably get to Parker."

Even if the Rangers would have gotten to Parker (2-2), it wouldn't have made a difference after the performance Feldman had. After a perfect first inning, the A's sent 13 batters to the plate in the second and rapped out eight hits, with seven of them coming off Feldman.

Brandon Inge hit a three-run homer, but he had plenty of company. The A's had been shut out in three of their last four games and came into the game with a team average of .209.

They raised that to .213 Monday as Feldman was charged with eight runs on seven hits and one walk. He's 0-4 on the season and has lasted a total of 11 innings in the three starts since he replaced an injured Neftali Feliz in the rotation.

"I hung a pitch and Inge hit it out and after that it was just like they just kept getting hits, hit after hit after hit," said Feldman, whose ERA is now 7.01. "I did leave a few pitches up there, but they also kept finding holes. It was like a runaway truck with no brakes. I couldn't really stop the bleeding and it's not how you want to do things."

While the A's were cooking on their way to a season high in runs and hits, the Rangers could do nothing with Parker.

He walked batters in the first and third inning, but after David Murphy's leadoff walk in the third, Parker retired 12-consecutive Rangers before Elvis Andrus drew a one-out walk in the seventh. With his pitch count over 100, Parker's his no-hit bid ended with Young's leadoff single to center to open the eighth.

Breaking up the no-hitter became a goal late for Texas, but it didn't take the disappointment from the loss.

"No one wants to get no-hit," Young said. "I've been no-hit in the big leagues before. It's definitely no fun. At that point we were definitely scratching, clawing trying to figure out a way to get one. It doesn't take away the sting from the game."

Gentry saved the bullpen with his work in the eighth inning. Washington dislikes having to use position player to pitch but the Rangers had already used Robbie Ross, Mark Lowe and Yoshinori Tateyama.

Washington asked Gentry, who said he pitched an inning in college, if he could get three outs. Gentry did that, but allowed two runs on three hits by throwing 20 pitches, all of which were fastballs.

Gentry didn't have much time to warm up because of a quick top of the eighth for the Rangers. He still hit 88 mph on the stadium radar.

"I wasn't trying to do anything," Gentry said. "I was trying to throw it easy down the middle. It saved us having to use another pitcher and any way I can help out I will."

Holland has put last start behind him

Anthony Andro

June 4, 2012

OAKLAND, Calif. – It's been five days since Texas lefty Derek Holland authored one of the worst starts of his major-league career.

Holland, who will start Tuesday's game against Oakland, moved on from his 1 2/3-innings outing quickly.

"I let you guys worry about that stuff," he said. "I'm fine. It was just one really bad game on my hands. I've got myself prepared. I'm ready to go for the next one. I moved past that and not worried about what happened before."

What happened before was Holland allowed eight runs in his start, with all eight coming in the second inning of a 21-8 loss. Holland's ERA jumped more than a run in that game and is now 5.11.

He spent nearly an hour Monday watching video and said there's no secret about what went wrong.

"It was just bad execution," he said. "That's really what it comes down to. That's why I said I'm not worried too much about it. I'm getting ready for now."

Holland (4-4) has had bad starts before and bounced back nicely. Last July he had a start in which he went just 2/3 of an inning against Florida and followed that with consecutive shutouts. He also had a 1 2/3-inning start against Cleveland in August. He won six of his seven decisions after that.

Holland is in his second full year of the rotation but isn't using experience as an excuse for his inconsistency either.

"I don't like that excuse," he said. "The way I feel is I've been here long enough that I should know how to handle myself and take care of things. I don't like to hear those things."

Texas manager Ron Washington said Holland needed "love" after his last start. If he doesn't improve Tuesday, he may have to go another route.

"I believe Derek his going to bounce back," Washington said. "Not for me, for him. If he goes out there and has another 1 2/3 of an inning, I think I might have to take my belt off, put him across my lap and spank him. If you want to tell him that you can."

Lineup switch

For the second-consecutive game, Nelson Cruz is batting sixth for the Rangers and David Murphy is hitting seventh. The Rangers usually go with Murphy sixth and Murphy seventh when both are in the lineup but Washington switched it because Murphy hasn't been providing the production Washington wanted.

Cruz has four home runs in his last night games, including one Sunday that was estimated at 484 feet.

That two-run blast to left-center is one of the longest hit by anyone this season and is as far as Cruz can hit a ball.

"I don't have anything else," said Cruz, who now has eight homers on the season. "I didn't see the ball land. I knew it went far."

Cruz is hitting .333 over the last 24 games and has 23 RBIs in that span.

"I feel good," he said. "I can see the ball better. I don't chase pitches out of the strike zone, sliders down in the dirt. It's a long season and you're going to go through a lot of things in the course of the season. The main thing is be consistent. I'm happy with the way the season's been going because I'm playing every day."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rookie nearly no-hits Rangers, Craig Gentry forced to pitch in A's rout

Published: 04 June 2012 9:15 PM

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Rookie Jarrod Parker chatted with teammates in the dugout and kept his same demeanor as he worked his way through seven hitless innings against the Texas Rangers. The way his changeup and fastball were working against baseball's top hitting team, there was no reason to change.

Parker held Texas hitless until the eighth inning and Brandon Inge drove in four runs in Oakland's eight-run second as the Athletics beat the Rangers 12-1 on Monday night.

"We went in with a really good plan and the execution of it was exactly what we wanted to do," Parker said. "It's one of those days. I had good stuff and they were off a little bit."

Parker (2-2) easily worked his way through the powerful Rangers lineup in his ninth career start before Michael Young grounded a single through the middle on a slider to lead off the eighth.

"I made a bad pitch and he hit it up the middle and did what he was supposed to do," Parker said.

Parker got a warm ovation from the crowd of 10,120 and then recovered to get out of the inning on two more pitches — a popup by Nelson Cruz and an inning-ending double play from David Murphy.

That ended the night for Parker, who allowed one hit, walked three and struck out six.

"We had a good tempo going," catcher Kurt Suzuki said. "In the beginning part he was kind of settling into his own. In the third inning he really settled in and started throwing quality pitches. Against a team like the Rangers, to do that was impressive."

Inge started the scoring in the big inning with a three-run homer off Scott Feldman (0-4) and capped it with an RBI single as the A's normally meek bats broke through with a big night. Kila Ka'aihue added a two-run homer for the A's, who had lost 10 of 11.

Feldman was charged with all eight runs in the second inning and lost his fourth straight start. Things got so bad for the Rangers in their fifth loss in six games that they brought in outfielder Craig Gentry to pitch the eighth, the first position player to take the mound for Texas since Scott Sheldon on Sept. 6, 2000.

Gentry allowed a two-run double to Yoenis Cespedes to give the A's a season-high with 12 runs. Oakland had been shut out in seven of its previous 18 games and had just 12 runs during a recent nine-game skid.

Parker did not make the A's rotation out of spring training after being acquired in an offseason trade from Arizona for All-Star Trevor Cahill. He has been sharp ever since being called up from the minors allowing two runs or fewer in seven of his eight starts for a 2.40 ERA.

But this was his best performance by far, as he struck out slugger Josh Hamilton twice to come close to pitching the second no-hitter in the majors in the last four nights. Johan Santana did it for the New York Mets on Friday against St. Louis.

"From the side I didn't see a whole heck of a lot that he had but undoubtedly he had something going on," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "He made it through some pretty good hitters. He used his fastball, he used his changeup, he threw some good breaking balls every now and then. You have to tip your hat to him. He did a good job against us."

Mike Napoli hit a solo homer in the ninth off Jim Miller for Texas' only run.

The first seven A's batters reached safely in the second inning against Feldman starting with a walk by Cespedes and single from Seth Smith. Inge followed with his fifth homer with Oakland.

Cliff Pennington added an RBI double to snap a career-worst 0-for-29 slump, Weeks had a two-run single and Smith hit an RBI single that knocked out Feldman. Inge greeted reliever Robbie Ross with an RBI single that made it 8-0.

"On offense, we talk about contagious. You have nothing and then all of a sudden somebody breaks through and somebody right after," manager Bob Melvin said. "Hopefully this is something to build on."

This marked the third time in the past week the Rangers had allowed eight runs in an inning. Seattle scored eight runs in the second and third innings last Wednesday in a 21-8 victory over Texas.

"It was like a runaway truck with no brakes," Feldman said. "Just couldn't stop the bleeding. That's not how you want to do things."

NOTES: There's still no timetable for Manny Ramirez to come up from the minors to join the A's. Ramirez was batting .243 with no extra-base hits in 11 games in the minors through Sunday. "It's difficult to bring a guy here when he's struggling," Melvin said. ... Derek Holland (4-4) looks to bounce back for Texas from a rough start against Seattle last week when he allowed eight runs in 1 2-3 innings when he takes on Travis Blackley (0-0, 0.82) on Tuesday. ... The Rangers used all three of their draft picks Monday on high school players. After taking OF Lewis Brinson from Coral Springs, Fla., with the 29th pick, they got 3B Joey Gallo from Las Vegas at 39, and right-hander Collin Wiles from Overland Park, Kan., 53rd overall.

AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Express fall to Albuquerque, 5-1

By Suzanne Halliburton

Monday, June 4, 2012

ROUND ROCK — For the season, the Express are missing the home-field long ball, which was a calling card just a year ago when they won a division championship.

And on Monday, Round Rock was desperately seeking any sort of offense, power or otherwise, in a 5-1 loss to Albuquerque.

A crowd of 9,137 at the Dell Diamond watched as the Isotopes, thanks to a dominating performance by starting pitcher Stephen Fife, broke their four-game losing streak. If not for a run with two outs in the bottom of the ninth, Round Rock would have suffered its first shutout since April 18.

"He sure kept us off balance," said Express manager Bobby Jones. "We only hit a couple of balls hard on him. He didn't look like he was overpowering, but he was sure hitting his spots."

Fife, in his seven innings, didn't give up a hit until Ryan Spilborgh's two-out single in the fourth and didn't allow a batter to get past first base until the seventh. Fife has pitched 13 shutout innings dating back to his last start, on May 30.

Round Rock (27-32) had its winning streak snapped at four.

The teams return to action tonight to finish the Express' homestand.

The lack of the long ball at Dell Diamond has perplexed Round Rock through the first two-plus months of the season. The Express have power in the lineup — coming into Monday night their 64 home runs were third-best in the Pacific Coast League — yet they can't clear the fences at home. Counting Monday, they've failed to come up with a homer in eight of their past 10 games at Dell Diamond. And for the season, they're averaging only .67 homers per game. A year ago, when blustery, hot weather conditions were optimum for power hitters, the Express averaged 1.46 homers per home game.

Away from home, Round Rock is hitting 1.44 homers per outing.

"You just look at our team, a lot of guys haven't hit their strides," said Round Rock third baseman Matt Kata.