

Salazar holds A's to 1 hit in Tribe's 3rd straight win

By Jordan Bastian and Jane Lee / MLB.com | + 50 COMMENTS

OAKLAND -- Michael Bourn's go-ahead double in the ninth inning helped the Indians secure their third straight win, a 2-1 decision over the A's at the Coliseum on Friday night.

Lonnie Chisenhall led off the ninth with a base hit against A's closer Edward Mujica, who struck out Giovanny Urshela before falling behind Bourn, 2-0, and serving up a ground-rule double to right-center field, making a winner out of Danny Salazar. The right-hander held the A's to just one hit -- an Eric Sogard single in the third -- over eight innings.

"Man, he was good," Indians manager Terry Francona said of Salazar. "He limited the damage that [third] inning, and then really pitched great after that. It just sets up the whole game. We're not doing a whole lot offensively, but because he held them in check, we tie it and then we go ahead. So, every run we got was meaningful."

A's righty Kendall Graveman, who had a 10.22 ERA over his last three starts, returned to form with 6 2/3 strong innings, allowing one unearned run and five hits. But A's hitters couldn't offer their starter much support for a second straight night, having compiled a total of three hits in the first two games of this four-game set.

"Anytime you waste a good start, as a hitter you get frustrated about that," A's catcher Stephen Vogt said. "When you can't give your boy two runs and he goes up there and gives up one unearned he should get the win for that, and we weren't able to do that for him."

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Urshela's error: With runners on the corners and no outs in the third, A's shortstop Marcus Semien sent a sharp grounder to Tribe third baseman Giovanny Urshela. The rookie bobbled the ball, recovered quickly and threw hard across the diamond. First baseman Carlos Santana's footwork did him no favors and he missed a swipe tag attempt, allowing Semien to reach and a run to score, giving Oakland a 1-0 lead.

"I think Carlos got out of whack there," Francona said. "I don't know if he thought Gio was going to go to the plate, because he started out where, I don't know if he couldn't find the bag or didn't find the bag, because the throw was right there. He just got a little bit mixed up."

Semien's slip: A throwing error by Semien in the seventh helped Cleveland to an unearned run as well. With runners on second and third and two outs, it was Urshela who chopped a ball to the A's shortstop this time around. Semien charged and gloved the ball, but his errant throw helped Urshela reach first safely. Yan Gomes scored from third to pull the game into a 1-1 tie. It was Semien's Major League-leading 29th error of the season following a stretch of 14 games without one.

"That's a play that's gotta be made," Semien said. "Kendall deserves that win. We get one hit and still could have won that game. If that play's made, we get out of the inning. It's frustrating on my part because I know I can make that play."

Locked when loaded: The Indians went on to load the bases with two outs in the seventh, but that situation has been problematic all year for the Tribe. A's reliever Fernando Rodriguez entered and induced an inning-ending groundout from Mike Aviles. With the out, Cleveland's season average dropped to .128 (10-for-78) with the bases loaded this year.

QUOTABLE

"I was in fastball mode. Four-seam. Two-seam. I was sticking with that the whole game. I threw a few changeups and a few curveballs and I got a few ground balls and fly balls with the curveball, too. But fastball was the key tonight." -- Salazar on his outing

"We know what to do to turn it around. It's just about doing. We know that already in here. We know they've been pitching well pretty much all year. You'll have a bump in the road here or there, but for the most part, collectively as a unit, they give us a chance to go out there and win a ballgame every time. We can't ask for anything more." -- Bourn on the Indians' strong starting pitching

REPLAY REVIEW

Francisco Lindor beat out an infield single to lead off the fourth inning but was picked off at first base after an A's challenge that resulted in the initial safe call being overturned.

WHAT'S NEXT

Indians: Rookie starter Cody Anderson (2-2, 3.26 ERA), a native of Quincy, Calif., will have a host of family and friends on hand when he takes the ball against the A's at 6:05 p.m. PT Saturday. The big Cleveland right-hander has an 11.88 ERA in his past two starts (8 1/3 innings) after posting a 0.89 ERA in the first four outings of his Major League career.

A's: Right-hander Aaron Brooks, acquired from the Royals on Tuesday in the deal for Ben Zobrist, will make his A's debut Saturday in a home start against the Indians, beginning at 6:05 p.m. PT. Before the trade, Brooks spent the majority of the season with Triple-A Omaha, going 6-5 with a 3.71 ERA in 18 games, 17 of them starts.

Tribe deals Rzepczynski to Friars for Almonte

By Jordan Bastian / MLB.com | @MLBastian | + 48 COMMENTS

OAKLAND -- Even after learning he had been traded to the Padres on Friday afternoon, lefty Marc Rzepczynski stuck around for a bit with his now former Indians teammates. The pitcher said his farewells and made a point to chat briefly with Indians manager Terry Francona before leaving the Coliseum.

Shortly before the 4 p.m. ET non-waiver Trade Deadline, Cleveland shipped Rzepczynski to San Diego in exchange for Minor League outfielder Abraham Almonte. Francona said it was tough to see the reliever go, especially given the scene that unfolded in the visitors' clubhouse.

"It was kind of bittersweet. It happened late," Francona said. "I was watching him say goodbye to everybody. He didn't just run out of here. He stayed around and said goodbye to everybody and told me how much he enjoyed it. You get close to guys. Then, when you have to say goodbye to them, it kind of hits you a little bit. Hopefully, this will be good for him."

The deal was the third of the week for Cleveland, which sent outfielder Brandon Moss to the Cardinals on Thursday for pitching prospect Rob Kaminsky and traded outfielder David Murphy to the Angels on Tuesday for shortstop prospect Eric Stamets. All three trades shed some salary for both this season and next for the Tribe.

The 29-year-old Rzepczynski, who was acquired by Cleveland prior to the 2013 non-waiver Trade Deadline from the Cardinals, posted a 2.70 ERA in 145 games as a member of the bullpen over the last three seasons. This year, the lefty had a 4.43 ERA in 45 games, while earning \$2.4 million through arbitration. Rzepczynski will be eligible for arbitration again for next season.

As a lefty specialist, Rzepczynski had given up an opponents' batting average of .264 against left-handed batters this season. Righties such as Ryan Webb (.184), Cody Allen (.174), Bryan Shaw (.128) and Jeff Manship (.118) had better marks out of the 'pen for the Indians.

"We're in a situation where, we probably had righties that were getting lefties out better than him," Francona said. "Truth be told, when relievers start making some money, you've got to be the left-on-left guy."

The 26-year-old Almonte, who has been optioned to Triple-A Columbus, has split this season between San Diego and Triple-A El Paso. In 31 games for the Padres, the switch-hitter posted a .204 average and .530 OPS. He has hit .275 with four homers, 24 extra-base hits, 35 RBIs, 43 runs and 11 stolen bases in 61 Triple-A games this year, serving mostly as a center fielder.

Almonte has turned in a .233/.283/.336 slash line in 115 Major League games in parts of three seasons with the Mariners and Padres. He has the ability to play all three outfield positions.

"He's an athletic outfielder who can play all three spots and he has some Major League experience," Indians general manager Chris Antonetti said. "We think he will be able to contribute for us at some point this year in the Major Leagues."

Prior to Friday's game against the A's, the Indians also purchased the contract of outfielder Jerry Sands, who can fill in at first base or the corner spots. Cleveland also activated righty Josh Tomlin from the 60-day disabled list and optioned him to Triple-A Columbus, and outrighted righty Toru Murata off the 40-man roster, while keeping him at Triple-A.

Francona hinted that Cleveland may have some moves coming soon to account for the loss of Rzepczynski in the bullpen.

As for the offense that was removed with the trades of Murphy and Moss, Antonetti said the Indians plan on evaluating what they have in the fold before looking for upgrades in the offseason.

"I don't think we'll address it externally between now and the offseason," Antonetti said. "The opportunities in the outfield and other places on the team will come from guys that are already in the organization. And then, at the end of the season, we'll sit down, assess where we are and where we may have needs. At that point, we'll have better information and a better understanding of what our internal alternatives are."

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Salazar continues rotation's sizzling run

By Jordan Bastian / MLB.com | @MLBastian | + 1 COMMENTS

OAKLAND -- Danny Salazar wanted to pitch the ninth inning on Friday night. The Indians starter knew that if he fell even one inning shy of a complete game, he would hear it from his rotation-mates. After all, they had gone the distance in each of the previous three games for Cleveland.

Alas, all good streaks must come to an end.

"I tried," Salazar said with a smile following the Indians' 2-1 victory over the A's at the Coliseum. "But, we need to let the bullpen feel like they're a part of this team, too."

Eight stellar innings would have to do.

After Trevor Bauer, Corey Kluber and Carlos Carrasco each spun a complete-game gem from Tuesday through Thursday, Salazar fell one frame short in a one-hit show in Oakland. The hard-throwing right-hander allowed just one unearned run -- thanks in part to a fielding error by third baseman Giovanni Urshela in the third inning -- and ended with four strikeouts and one walk in a 111-pitch performance.

After Eric Sogard singled with no outs in the third inning, Oakland's lineup went 0-for-19 against Salazar the rest of the way. Tribe closer Cody Allen, who had not appeared in a game in a week, finished the job by inducing three straight groundouts in the ninth, sealing his 21st save and the third win in a row for the Indians.

The bullpen phone was bound to ring again at some point.

"Eventually," Allen said with a laugh.

Over the past four games, Bauer, Kluber, Carrasco and Salazar combined to allow five runs (four earned) on only 13 hits in 35 innings of work. That equated to a 1.03 ERA, along with a 0.49 WHIP when taking the four walks into account. The strikeouts have been down a touch (23 total) for a group known for its power, but the effectiveness has been off the charts.

While the Indians (48-54) have hardly performed to expectations, it's this rotation that has the team optimistic about a swift turnaround.

"They're why we're going to be good for a while," Allen said. "That rotation right there is good. Any time you've got five arms like that, they can just go out there each time it's their turn, and they're going to give you a chance to win. What we've seen the last four days is they can go out there and dominate baseball games."

Salazar (9-6, 3.47 ERA) said the key was fastball command.

"I was in fastball mode," he said. "Four-seam. Two-seam. I was sticking with that the whole game."

Oakland's hitters tipped their caps to the Indians' righty.

"He mixed his pitches a lot better," A's first baseman Ike Davis said. "His percentages were a lot more fastball-heavy, and he ended up throwing a lot more offspeed, and he was effectively wild. It's not like he was just pounding strikes the whole time. He mixed it up really well, and I don't think we were swinging the bats too well tonight."

The only thing missing was another complete game.

And, because Salazar fell one inning shy of that goal, the 1983 Indians remain the last team to have four full efforts in a row. Tom Brennan, Rick Sutcliffe, Neal Heaton and Lary Sorensen turned in four consecutive complete games from Aug. 7-10 that year for the Tribe.

Indians manager Terry Francona was fine with eight from Salazar.

"We'll take it," Francona said. "If the relievers aren't pitching, that's a nice problem to have."

After trade rumors, Carrasco remains with Tribe

By Jordan Bastian / MLB.com | @MLBastian | + 0 COMMENTS

OAKLAND -- Indians manager Terry Francona heard that Carlos Carrasco's name was continuing to surface in trade rumors in the hours leading up to Friday's non-waiver Trade Deadline. Given that he had already assured the pitcher that he was not going anywhere, Francona found it all to be a bit amusing.

True to Francona's word, Carrasco, who pitched a complete-game gem on Thursday vs. the A's, was still with Cleveland when the 4 p.m. ET Deadline came and went.

"I was kind of laughing at some of the reports that were out there, because I knew," Francona said before Friday's game against the A's. "I understand. [General manager Chris Antonetti] is going to listen to teams, but that doesn't remotely begin to mean something was going to happen. I told [Carrasco he wasn't going anywhere]. If I would've thought there was a chance [he'd be traded], I wouldn't have said that. "I told him the truth. I said, 'Teams call, because they want pitching. Chris is not going to hang up on them.' I didn't see anything that was going to happen."

It made sense for teams to inquire about Carrasco given his age (28), performance (11 wins, 2.83 FIP, 4.03 ERA, 140 strikeouts and 27 walks in 127 1/3 innings this year), career mileage (499 2/3 innings in parts of six seasons) and team-friendly contract (\$22 million guaranteed through 2018 with team options for '19 and '20). It also made sense for Antonetti to entertain offers to gauge how much opposing teams were willing to give up for him.

"It's part of my responsibility to understand how other teams value our players," Antonetti said. "There are a lot of discussions at this time of year. I can tell you, a number of teams called us with interest in a variety of players on our Major League roster. I think that's a good sign for us, given the level of interest that was out there from other teams. Hopefully that's an indication of the talent level that we have."

Cleveland's rotation -- a group that includes American League Cy Young-winner Corey Kluber, Trevor Bauer, Danny Salazar, Cody Anderson and Carrasco -- is a main reason the organization feels it can quickly turn things around after what has been a rough season to date.

"I don't know how many times we've said it, but it kind of starts with pitching," Francona said. "If you can't pitch, you're in real trouble. We have guys that, although are young and are still learning, they have good arms and should get better. It's a hard way to get better when you don't have pitching."

Kluber after Indians' trades: 'It's not over yet'

By Jordan Bastian / MLB.com | @MLBastian | + 6 COMMENTS

OAKLAND -- Corey Kluber was not ready to concede this season for the Indians. Sitting at his locker inside the visitors' clubhouse at the Coliseum before Thursday's 3-1 win, the leader of Cleveland's rotation shrugged off the trades made by the team's front office over the past few days.

The way Kluber saw it, there was no correlation between the transactions and the way the team should approach the final two months of the current campaign.

"I don't think that it means that we've given up on this year," said Kluber, who won the American League Cy Young Award last year. "I think it means that [general manager Chris Antonetti] saw an opportunity that he thought would make the team better in the future, and he took it. "Yeah, things haven't gone their way we've wanted them to so far, but I don't think just because we traded a couple guys away that it means we've given up on this year."

Early Thursday morning, the Indians dealt slugger Brandon Moss to the Cardinals for 20-year-old pitching prospect Rob Kaminsky. Two days earlier, Cleveland sent outfielder David Murphy to the Angels in exchange for Double-A shortstop Eric Stamets. Both moves showed that Antonetti and the Tribe's decision-makers already have an eye on 2016 and beyond.

• Callis: Tribe makes out well in Moss-Kaminsky swap

The remainder of the second half will now be used as an evaluation period for some of Cleveland's younger players.

"We want to make sure that we learn something about ourselves in the second half," Antonetti said on Thursday. "We have to look at it as an opportunity for us to go into the offseason and next year in a better position."

Kluber is not concerning himself with next year quite yet.

"It's not over yet. We're not eliminated from anything," Kluber said. "So, I think while the front office does their job, we can't really worry about anything but the 25 guys in here trying to come each day and win that [day's] game. Hopefully, we can win enough of them that we get to play in the postseason."

Kluber was quick to point to last July, when the Indians traded starter Justin Masterson to the Cardinals and shortstop Asdrubal Cabrera to the Nationals, and still found a way to contend until the final weekend of the regular season.

"If you look at last year, we traded our Opening Day starter and our starting shortstop, and it wasn't like the ship crashed after that," Kluber said. "It depends on how you want to look at it. There's always going to be something that's an uphill climb in a season -- whether it's injuries or this or that. I don't think any team goes through a season with 100-percent smooth sailing. I think it's what you make of it."

Indians manager Terry Francona said, while the goal from here on out remained to try to win as many games as possible, the organization needed to proceed with an eye toward the future, too.

"We have to be realistic. We played ourselves into this situation," Francona said. "Again, when the game starts, nothing changes. You don't ever sacrifice trying to win a game. I don't think anybody here doesn't want to get hot. But, Chris and his guys have a responsibility to look out for the organization. They're kind of the caretaker. Our responsibility is on the field and, to this point, we haven't done a very good job."

"We have work to do, but we have young pitching and we have a core of young players that we really like. And, we need to do better on the field. I know Chris is trying to do his part. I think the idea is not to get too caught up in what is happening and just play the game, because when we play the game right, and we play the game well, things usually work out pretty well."

After trades, Indians give Sands chance to shine

By Jordan Bastian / MLB.com | @MLBastian | + 4 COMMENTS

OAKLAND -- The Indians feel that it is time to reward Jerry Sands for being a good soldier. The journeyman has willingly accepted a role as an organizational depth player to this point this year, but Cleveland wanted to see if there is more potential in the right-handed corner outfielder.

With a vacancy on the active roster following the trade that sent lefty Marc Rzepczynski to the Padres on Friday, and an offense in need of help in the wake of the deals that shipped Brandon Moss and David Murphy out of town earlier this week, the Tribe recalled Sands from Triple-A Columbus before Friday's 2-1 win over the A's.

Indians manager Terry Francona said Sands would get time in the outfield and could help out at first base.

"We want to try to wait [to promote Sands] until we were sure we could keep him," Francona said. "Now, it's the time. He'll play some outfield, some first. He's certainly a guy that he deserves the chance. When he's come here, he's done well. In Triple-A, he's done everything we've asked. He's been a great teammate, a hard worker. So, we kind of want to watch him more, for sure."

The 27-year-old Sands -- signed to a Minor League contract over the offseason -- hit .375 (9-for-24) with one homer and two doubles in 10 games between a pair of earlier stints with the Indians. Both times, he filled in in the wake of other issues on the roster and was subsequently designated for assignment due to being out of options. Sands was willing to accept an outright assignment to Triple-A.

"Obviously, they gave me the two chances already," Sands said. "I felt like I had a good spring and I had the relationship with [general manager Chris Antonetti and Francona], and the whole coaching staff and front office. I felt like that was valuable for me to kind of lean on and say, 'I don't want to really start fresh somewhere else, where I'm not really sure what I'm getting into.'"

At Triple-A Columbus, Sands hit .287 with 14 home runs, 12 doubles, 46 RBIs and a .948 OPS in 66 games.

"He can hit a little bit. And I think he's an underrated defender," Francona said. "So, we just want to see him play a little bit. We're big fans of how he's acted and how he's handled things. I don't think there's any other way to really say it. He's really a professional."

Jordan Bastian is a reporter fo

Closer Jeff Johnson is a prospect to watch for Cleveland Indians: Class AA Reports

Elton Alexander, on July 31, 2015 at 1:01 PM, updated July 31, 2015 at 3:02 PM

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- The Akron RubberDucks have a real success story in relief pitcher Jeff Johnson, and that bodes well for the future of Indians baseball.

The 6-0, 185-pound closer's numbers speak well on their own. But the back story says "even better days ahead."

What Johnson has done this season -- 17 saves in 17 chances, only five earned runs allowed, 41 strikeouts in 38.2 innings, 0 homers -- is even more impressive as he's coming off a missed 2014 campaign after Tommy John surgery. His 17 saves ranks fourth in the Eastern League.

Typically, it is the second season after Tommy John when a pitcher gets back to 100 percent, which means the 25-year-old, 10th-round pick (2011) from Cal-Poly San Luis Obispo is tracking for a bigger/better season in 2016.

He has only allowed 19 hits and 16 walks. Twice this season he has allowed three walks in a game, which means his wild spells are brief, with only 10 walks in the remaining 35 innings of work. To back that up, Johnson has recorded a 'first-batter' out in 30 of 36 attempts this season.

Johnson is currently not on the Indians' 40-man roster, but if he has no issues the remainder of the 2015 campaign, it might be hard to keep him off the Tribe's short list going forward.

Roster move: Outfielder Anthony Gallas was called up to Columbus on Thursday when Tyler Naquin was injured and shortstop Eric Stamets was added to the RubberDucks roster. Stamets, 23, was acquired Tuesday when the Indians traded outfielder David Murphy to the Angels. Stamets was hitting .248 with three homers and 23 RBI this season at Class AA Arkansas of the Texas League.

Zimmer update: After a hot start on the road with the Ducks, outfielder Bradley Zimmer struggled in his first homestand, going 3-for-20 with two doubles, three runs scored and an RBI. He was called up from Class A Lynchburg on July 15. Zimmer was the Indians' No. 1 draft pick in 2014.

Yandy is dandy: Third baseman Yandy Diaz is eighth in the EL with a .305 average. He leads the league in games (101), on-base percentage (.408) and walks (62), and is fourth with 109 hits.

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Michael Martinez's versatility could help Cleveland Indians in near future: Class AAA Report

Branson Wright, on July 31, 2015 at 12:17 PM, updated July 31, 2015 at 4:55 PM

CLEVELAND, Ohio - Michael Martinez is not a particularly young prospect at age 32, but he has been top level for the Class AAA Columbus Clippers recently as an all-around utility outfielder/infielder.

Martinez has hit safely in 12 of 15 games in July (.423, 22-for-52), bumping his average 34 points during the month. Since Jose Ramirez was optioned on June 9, Martinez has appeared in only 28 of 47 games, but has hit .371/.435/.515 in that time (97 at bats). Prior to June 9, he had a line of .230/.303/.370 in 165 at bats.

Last season, Martinez appeared in 26 games for the Pirates. He played all three outfield positions and second base. He hit .128 (5-for-39) with two RBI.

From 2011 through 2013, Martinez played with the Phillies. He made the Phillies postseason roster in 2011 after he hit .196 (41-for-209) during the regular season.

Gallas called up: Strongsville native Anthony Gallas was called up from Class AA Akron after Clippers outfielder Tyler Naquin was injured this week. Gallas played with the Clippers in 2012. He was hitting .268 at Akron with a team-leading 12 homers and 43 RBI.

Naquin stopped: Naquin, the former No. 1 pick, was placed on the DL after suffering a concussion Wednesday when he crashed into the outfield wall making a catch. He was placed on the DL the next day with concussion symptoms and the Indians said he would be evaluated again. It also ended his string of 25 games of getting on base, one game shy of his career best.

Tomlin update: Josh Tomlin was a tough-luck loser on Thursday when he gave up two runs on six hits in 6.1 innings of a 2-1 loss to Indianapolis. Tomlin was making his sixth rehab appearance since returning from shoulder surgery. He is 1-2 with a 3.42 ERA in those six games, allowing nine runs, 24 hits and four walks while striking out 17 in 23.2 innings. The Indians activated Tomlin from the 60-day disabled list on Friday and optioned him to the Clippers.

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Jobu is back: Cleveland Indians Class A Report

Tim Warsinskey, on July 31, 2015 at 10:30 AM, updated July 31, 2015 at 4:56 PM

EASTLAKE, Ohio – Jobu is back, and he's bringing Bernie Kosar, Kevin Mack, Earnest Byner, Campy Russell and "Super Joe" Charboneau with him. The eclectic mix of Cleveland sports characters highlight the Lake County Captains' most anticipated promotion Saturday at Classic Park.

"Cleveland Sports History Night" will be celebrated in a variety of ways.

The first 1,500 fans are to receive a Captains-themed Jobu bobble doll. Jobu was the good-luck doll belonging to the character Pedro Cerrano in the film "Major League" about a rag-tag Indians team.

Last year, the Captains first Jobu giveaway was so popular fans began lining up at 4:30 a.m. Fans can guarantee a Jobu bobble by purchasing a VIP package that also includes early entry for celebrity autographs.

Kosar, Mack and Byner are former Browns. Russell was a Cavaliers' star and Charboneau was the American League Rookie of the Year with the Indians.

Other sports celebrities scheduled to attend include former Negro League player Ted Toles Jr., former Cavalier Elmore Smith and pro boxer and native Clevelander Antonio Nieves. Several sports authors will be on hand.

The Captains' blue and orange jerseys will honor the Cavaliers jerseys of the 1980s and will be auctioned off for charity after the game.

First pitch against the Great Lakes Loons, a Dodgers affiliate, is 7 p.m.

Last year's event was a finalist for Minor League Baseball's promotion of the year and the inaugural event in 2009 was named ESPN The Magazine's Minor League Baseball Promotion of the Year.

Bradley bashing: First baseman Bobby Bradley hit home runs Tuesday and Wednesday, bringing his Midwest League-leading total to 16. Wednesday's shot cleared the batting cage building behind right field at Classic Park.

Catching on: Catcher Francisco Mejia, 19, is considered one of the Indians' top prospects, but has struggled offensively.

He's catching on now.

Mejia raised his average 31 points in the last two weeks and is hitting .232 with eight home runs, 12 doubles, 52 strikeouts and 30 walks. In his last six games through Thursday, he was 12-for-24.

Behind the dish, he has thrown out 28 of 79 runners (35 percent).

Chen bouncing back: It took a while, but 19-year-old shortstop Yu-Cheng Chang appears to be getting his legs back under him seven weeks after getting beamed. He suffered a concussion when hit in the head by a pitch June 8 and missed 19 days. He had just four hits in his first 14 games back, but has turned the corner recently.

In his last 13 game through Thursday, the big shortstop from Taiwan hit .373 (19-of-51) with two doubles, a triple, a home run, nine runs and eight RBI.

Overall, he is hitting .232 with 22 extra-base hits.

Walk away: The Captains had two walk-off victories this week against Lansing. Anthony Santander's bases-loaded, two-out single gave Lake County a 5-4 win Thursday.

On Wednesday, Chang's line drive off the wall scored Bradley from second with the winning run in the 10th for a 7-6 victory.

Walking to nowhere: Lake County drew 10 walks and left 16 runners on base Tuesday, both tying season highs.

Border battle: The Captains announced the Eastlake North-Willoughby South football game Oct. 22 will return to Classic Park after not being played there last year.

LYNCHBURG HILLCATS

Rodriguez hurt: Outfielder Luigi Rodriguez was placed on the seven-day disabled list, retroactive to Thursday, with a right hamstring strain. His .295 batting average leads the team.

RBI guy: Dorssys Paulino had 12 RBI in his first 16 games since being called up from Lake County.

Spot start: Right-hander Antonio Romero was called up to Triple-A Columbus for a spot start against Indianapolis on Tuesday. He allowed one run on three hits, striking out five in four innings. He returned to Lynchburg Wednesday.

Hot hand: Over his last seven games, infielder Yhoxian Medina hit .444 (12-for-27).

Triple threat: Speedy infielder Ivan Castillo hit five triples in four games last week. His 12 triples this season were four more than any other player in the Carolina League. Overall, he was hitting .246 with 11 doubles, no home runs and 16 stolen bases in 20 attempts.

New arms: Lefthanders Jayson Aquino and Rob Kaminsky, both acquired by the Indians in trades this week, are with the Hillcats, but haven't been scheduled to pitch yet.

Streaking: Lynchburg won nine of 10 through Thursday and was in first place in the Carolina League North Division.

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Danny Salazar fuels momentum of Cleveland Indians' rotation in win over Oakland A's

By Paul Hoynes

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Danny Salazar was ready for the ninth inning. The three starters before him, Carlos Carrasco, Corey Kluber and Trevor Bauer all went the distance and he wanted to join the fun.

Manager Terry Francona had other ideas.

"I tried," said Salazar when asked if he tried to convince Francona to let him go for the complete game, "but we need to let the bullpen feel like they're part of the team, too."

Salazar was smiling when he said that.

So Salazar finished with eight innings and 111 pitches. He allowed one hit and one unearned run in the Indians' 2-1 victory over the Athletics at O.co Coliseum.

Closer Cody Allen retired the A's in order in the ninth for his 21st save, but he knows better than anyone where the Indians future is.

"This rotation is why we're going to be good for a while," said Allen.

The Tribe's starters are 3-1 with a 1.03 ERA in the last four games. The streak includes three consecutive complete games, something the Indians haven't done since 1994. If Francona had let Salazar finish the ninth, it would have been the first time since August of 1983 that the Indians had four straight complete games. The four pitchers that did it then were Tom Brennan, Rick Sutcliffe, Neal Heaton and Lary Sorensen.

How is this for symmetry?

On Thursday, Carrasco threw a two-hitter in a 3-1 win over the A's. On Friday, Salazar and Allen combine on a one-hitter.

Danny Salazar on beating A's on Friday night

Indians right-hander Danny Salazar didn't pitch a complete game Friday night, but he did go eight innings in a 2-1 win over Oakland. In the Tribe's previous three games, Trevor Bauer, Corey Kluber and Carlos Carrasco pitched complete games.

Francona said Salazar had no problems leaving after eight.

"That was good," said Francona. "We actually needed to get Cody in there and I was thrilled because Cody commanded the ball,"

Oakland took a 1-0 lead in the third on an unearned run because of third baseman Giovanny Urshela's error. Oakland starter Kendall Graveman made that stand until the Indians scratched out a run in the seventh to tie the score.

The only hit Salazar allowed came in the third on Eric Sogard's single. He retired the last 16 batters he faced.

Salazar (9-6, 3.47) had a need for speed against the A's.

"I was in fastball mode," he said. "Four-seam, two-seam and I was sticking with that the whole game. I threw a few changeups and a few curveballs. But the fastball was the key tonight."

He was not worried about losing 1-0.

"Right now, the way we're playing, it's aggressive," said Salazar. "We have energy. We're having fun out there. That's the big key."

The Indians scratched out a run in the seventh to tie the score. Then won it in the ninth on Michael Bourn's double.

One more thing Salazar isn't worried about – getting traded. The non-waiver trade deadline came and went Friday. The rumors seemed to bother Carrasco and Francona told him that he wasn't getting traded.

"I think, like this right now, we are perfect," Salazar. "I don't think the Indians are going to trade any of us starting pitchers."

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 08.01.2015

Danny Salazar, Lonnie Chisenhall, Michael Bourn push Cleveland Indians past Athletics: DMan's Report, Game 102

By Dennis Manoloff

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Right-hander Danny Salazar allowed one hit and one unearned run in eight innings and right fielder Lonnie Chisenhall went 3-for-4 with a run as the Cleveland Indians defeated the Oakland Athletics, 2-1, Friday night at O.co Coliseum in Oakland, Calif. Chisenhall, promoted from Class AAA Columbus on Thursday, made his first career MLB start in right.

Michael Bourn doubled to drive in Chisenhall with the go-ahead run in the ninth.

Here is a capsule look at the game after a DVR review of the Fox SportsTime Ohio telecast:

Streaking: The Indians (48-54) have won three in a row.

No GPS required: The Indians are 28-22 on the road.

Reeling: The Athletics (45-59) have lost three straight and seven of eight.

Start them up: Salazar delivered the Tribe's fourth consecutive superb start.

1. On Tuesday night in Cleveland, Trevor Bauer allowed five hits in a complete-game loss to the sizzling Kansas City Royals, 2-1.

2. On Wednesday afternoon in Cleveland, Corey Kluber pitched a five-hitter in a 12-1 victory over the Royals.

3. On Thursday night in Oakland, Carlos Carrasco pitched a two-hitter in a 3-1 victory in the opener of a four-game series.

Carrasco allowed the run and both of the hits -- single, RBI double -- in the first inning. He walked one, in the fourth. He retired the final 16 batters (17 outs).

Carrasco gave the franchise three straight complete games for the first time since 1994.

4. Salazar, run down by pitch count (111), narrowly missed making it four straight CGs. Closer Cody Allen worked a perfect ninth; all three of the outs came on grounders to second baseman Mike Aviles.

Salazar (9-6, 3.47 ERA) and Allen (21 saves) retired the final 21 batters.

Salazar allowed the run and hit in the third. His ability to limit the damage to one run was the key to the outcome. Here is how the inning unfolded:

(R) Mark Canha (2-for-21 since All-Star break, .232 average overall) -- 1-1 fastball barely outside, 2-1 fastball low and away, 3-2 fastball low, walk.

Skinny: First Oakland runner since Brett Lawrie walked with one out in fourth inning Thursday.

(L) Eric Sogard (.154 average in July, .280 OPS overall) -- 0-1 fastball, single to right. Canha to third.

Skinny: Sogard put a good swing on a pitch on the inner half. First Oakland hit since Josh Reddick's one-out RBI double in first inning Thursday.

(R) Marcus Semien (.167 in previous 16 games, .291 OBP overall) -- 0-1 changeup, grounder to third.

Skinny: Giovanni Urshela fumbled what should have been a routine grounder, which would have caught Canha off third. Urshela's recovery throw to first was on time but Carlos Santana's messy footwork cost an out. For some reason, Urshela was charged with the error.

(L) Billy Burns -- 1-2 fastball, swinging strikeout.

Skinny: Salazar overmatched Burns, who desperately wanted to slap at something off-speed, in a huge spot.

(R) Brett Lawrie -- 3-0 fastball above belt called strike; 3-1 fastball swinging strike; 3-2 fastball foul; 3-2 fastball foul; 3-2 fastball, fielder's choice 4-6. Runners at first and third.

Skinny: Salazar caught a break on the 3-0 pitch, then threw four quality heaters.

(L) Josh Reddick (.432 with RISP and two outs) -- 0-0 fastball foul; 0-1 fastball called strike; 0-2 fastball high and away; fastball foul; 1-2 changeup foul; 1-2 changeup down and away; 2-2 fastball, pop to center.

Skinny: Salazar and catcher Yan Gomes picked the correct time to go to the changeups, which set up one more heater. Reddick slammed his bat in disgust.

Locked in: Salazar was in total control the remainder of his outing. He finished with the one walk and four strikeouts.

Salazar relied primarily on a fastball/changeup combination. He moved both pitches all over the zone, and expanded with a purpose. He rarely left a fastball in the middle of the plate and above the knees.

Salazar crafted his second scintillating start against Oakland this season. On July 10 in Cleveland, Salazar allowed one unearned run in 8 2/3 innings of a 5-1 victory.

Awakening late: The losing pitcher of that game July 10 was righty Kendall Gravemen, who gave up four runs on seven hits in 5 2/3 innings.

Salazar and Gravemen met again Friday, and this time Gravemen was up to the challenge -- even though he had been slumping. Through six innings, the Indians managed three singles and one walk against him and trailed, 1-0.

Tribe batters had all sorts of trouble with Gravemen's sinker and changeup.

Gravemen retired the first two in the seventh before Gomes shot an 0-1 fastball to right for a single. Chisenhall stayed on a first-pitch fastball and slashed a double to left, Gomes stopping at third.

Urshela, too eager against a pitcher's pitch, grounded to short for what should have been the end of the Tribe threat. Instead, Semien threw wide enough to pull Ike Davis off the bag, enabling Gomes to tie the score. Semien committed his 29th error, although replays showed that maybe, just maybe, Davis pulled his foot too soon thinking the throw was wider than it actually was.

Bourn walked to load the bases. Gravemen exited in favor of righty Fernando Rodriguez, who retired Aviles on a grounder to second.

Aviles finished 0-for-4 in 11 pitches, extending his skid to 0-for-21. He is batting .224 overall.

The Indians, thanks to Chisenhall and Bourn, pulled ahead in the ninth against righty Edward Mujica.

Chisenhall led off and fell behind, 1-2. He fouled, then displayed exceptional barrel awareness by punching a good pitch up the middle for a single. In a 1-1 count on Urshela, Chisenhall shocked the world by stealing second.

Urshela eventually struck out swinging. Bourn, ahead in the count, 2-0, sat on a fastball in a particular location. Mujica, a former Indian, provided it and Bourn smashed the ground-rule double to right-center.

Chisenhall, who went 0-for-3 on Thursday as the designated hitter, was the only player on either side Friday with multiple hits. The Tribe had eight. Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 08.01.2015

Cleveland Indians beat Oakland Athletics, 2-1, with ninth-inning rally

By Paul Hoynes, Northeast Ohio Media Group

OAKLAND, Calif. – Danny Salazar knows what Corey Kluber feels like.

Kluber has been deserted by his offense for most of the season. Salazar has shared that feeling for the last three starts.

Unlike Kluber, however, Salazar has had better luck when it comes to wins and losses. That was evident Friday night when the Indians beat Oakland, 2-1, with a ninth-inning rally keyed by two of manager Terry Francona's lost souls -- Lonnie Chisenhall and Michael Bourn.

Chisenhall, recalled from Class AAA Columbus on Thursday, started the winning rally with a single off Eddie Mujica (2-3). He stole second and scored the winning run on Bourn's ground rule double to right center.

It was Chisenhall's third hit of the night. Bourn, who has struggled to produce for the first three years of a four-year \$48 million contract, is hitting .389 (14-for-36) since the All-Star break.

Salazar (9-6, 3.47) allowed one run on one hit in eight innings. He struck out four and walked one to end his two-game losing streak. The run was unearned.

Cody Allen pitched the ninth for his 21st save.

Oakland starter Kendall Graveman was almost as good as Salazar. He came into Friday's start on a three-game losing streak, the first of the three losses coming against the Indians on July 10. In those three games, he allowed 14 earned in 12 innings.

On Friday, Graveman held the Indians scoreless until they scratched out the tying run in the seventh. Yan Gomes scored from third on a throwing error by shortstop Marcus Semien.

It was Semien's 29th error.

Gomes started the two-out rally with a single. Chisenhall doubled him to third. Gomes scored when Giovanny Urshela sent a bouncer to Semien. He charged the ball, but made a high throw to first as Urshela ran his way out of trouble.

The A's took a 1-0 lead in the third on Urshela's error.

Salazar walked Mark Canha to start the inning. He gave up a single to Eric Sogard to chase Canha to third.

Semien sent a sharp grounder to Urshela with Canha going on contact. If he had fielded it cleanly, Urshela could have easily thrown out Canha at the plate, but the ball squirted off his glove and between his legs.

It was Urshela's third error of the season, but Salazar limited the damage by striking out Billy Burns, inducing Brett Lawrie to hit into a force play at second and retiring Josh Reddick on a fly ball to center.

What it means

The Indians (48-54) have won three straight to improve to 28-22 on the road. They are 15-10 against the AL West.

Oakland (45-59) has lost three straight and is 10-17 against the AL Central. The A's have lost seven of their last eight games.

Ripped by replay

Francisco Lindor started the fourth with a single to the hole at short. He didn't advance because Graveman picked him off.

First base umpire Stu Scheurwater called Lindor safe on his dive back to the bag. The A's challenged and Lindor was called out after a review of 1:45.

Tribe D

Remember the Indians defense last year? They led the big leagues in errors.

They entered Saturday's game tied with Seattle for fourth in fielding percentage at .985. Their 55 errors were the third fewest in the AL.

Nice pitching

In the last four games, the Indians' rotation is 3-1 with a 1.03 ERA.

They have allowed four runs in 35 innings. Those four starts belong to Salazar, Carlos Carrasco, Corey Kluber and Trevor Bauer. Carrasco, Kluber and Bauer threw complete games.

Thanks for coming

The Indians and Indians drew a crowd of 28,152 fans to O.co Coliseum on Friday night.

What's next?

Rookie right-hander Cody Anderson (2-2, 3.26) will face Oakland right-hander Aaron Brooks (0-0, 6.23) on Saturday at 9:05 p.m. SportsTime Ohio, WTAM and WMMS will carry the game.

Anderson will be trying to end a two-start losing streak. In his last start he allowed seven runs on eight hits in 5 2/3 innings against the Royals. Anderson, from Quincy, Calif., will be pitching in front of family and friends.

The A's acquired Brooks from Kansas City as part of the Ben Zobrist deal. He made two relief appearances in four tours with the Royals this year. He was 6-5 with a 3.71 ERA in 18 games, including 17 starts, at Class AAA Omaha.

Anderson has never faced the A's. Ditto for Brooks and the Indians.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 08.01.2015

After three trades by Cleveland Indians, Jerry Sands finally gets real look

By Paul Hoynes,

OAKLAND, Calif. – This much we know. The Indians had no real intention of trading a starting pitcher. And if they did, it probably wouldn't have been Carlos Carrasco.

"I was kind of laughing at some of the reports that were out there," said manager Terry Francona, a couple hours after Friday's trading deadline expired. "I understand. Chris (Antonetti, general manager) is going to listen to teams. That doesn't remotely mean something was going to happen."

While the rotation of Corey Kluber, Carrasco, Danny Salazar, Trevor Bauer and Cody Anderson stayed intact, the Indians did send left-hander Marc Rzepczynski to San Diego for switch-hitting outfielder Abraham Almonte.

The Tribe made three moves before the deadline, sending outfielders David Murphy and Brandon Moss to the Angels and Cardinals for minor league prospects, respectively, and Rzepczynski to the Padres.

The departures of Murphy and Moss have given Jerry Sands an opportunity. Sands, who hit 14 homers and drove in 46 runs at Class AAA Columbus, was promoted on Friday.

It's his third tour with the Tribe this year and should be his longest.

"We wanted to get in a situation with Jerry that when we brought him back, we wanted to be able to keep him," said Francona.

Sands doesn't have options and the Indians have already outrighted him twice this year. He had a chance to become a free agent, but each time accepted the assignment to Columbus.

"He'll play some outfield and first base," said Francona. "He's a guy that certainly deserves a chance. He's had success here and done everything we've asked of him in Triple-A."

"We want to see him work. We want to see him play a little bit."

Sands is hitting .375 (9-for-24) with one homer and six RBI in 10 games for the Tribe. He slashed .287/.409/.538 in 66 games at Columbus.

"We're big fans of how he's acted and how he's handled things," said Francona. It's one of the reasons Sands didn't become a free agent when the Indians twice designated him for assignment.

"Really, it was because of the relationship I've built here," said Sands. "They gave me two chances already. I felt I had a good spring training. I had a good relationship with Tito and Chris and the coaching staff."

"I felt that was valuable for me to lean on and say, 'I don't want to start fresh somewhere else where I don't know what I'm getting into.'"

Sands wasn't in the lineup Friday night in Oakland, but Lonnie Chisenhall was. The Tribe's opening day third baseman, recalled from Columbus on Thursday, was making his first big-league start in right field.

Chisenhall played some right field at Columbus following his demotion on June 7.

"We've heard that he's kind of taken to it rather easily," said Francona. "He always shagged balls and looked really athletic out there running around and having fun. I think he really enjoys it."

"I'm looking forward to watching it. We know he has plenty of arm and he runs good."

Said Chisenhall, "I spent the entirety of my time (at Columbus) at third and right field. Each game I felt a little better in right. I haven't had the hiccup yet where I've thrown to the wrong base or forgotten an assignment."

"I know those things will happen. Hopefully, you can learn from it and make that quick change."

The last two seasons, the Indians' bullpen set AL records for appearances. This year three of those arms are already gone – Scott Atchison was released, Nick Hagadone is done for the season following left elbow surgery list and Rzepczynski has been traded.

The Indians didn't trade Rzepczynski until just before the deadline. He was already at the O.co Coliseum and waited to say goodbye to his teammates.

"With Zep it was bittersweet," said Francona. "The trade happened late and he stayed around to say goodbye to everybody. You get close to guys and when you have to say goodbye it hits you a little bit."

Francona has only one lefty reliever – Michael Roth. He's been starting all year at Columbus and isn't a left-on-left matchup guy. The Indians added him because he can pitch multiple innings.

"Now that the deadline is over, and without saying the moves, you'll probably see some of additional things happen down the road when we get our roster more in order where we can compete," said Francona.

After the Indians acquired Almonte, 26, they optioned him to Columbus. He played 31 games for the Padres and 61 for Class AAA El Paso this year.

"He's an athletic outfielder who can play all three spots and has some major-league time," said Antonetti.

It would not be a surprise if Almonte appears with the Indians in the final two months of the season. As for adding players from the outside to replace the offense lost with the trades of Moss and Murphy, it doesn't sound like that was part of the Tribe's plan.

"Well, I don't think we'll address it externally between now and the off-season," said Antonetti. "The opportunities in the outfield and other places on the team will come from guys who are already in the organization."

Antonetti said the situation would be evaluated at the end of the year.

"At that point we'll have a better understanding of what our internal alternatives are," said Antonetti.

Cleveland Indians kept pitching intact at trade deadline, but how will the team find some offense?

Print Email Zack Meisel, Northeast Ohio Media Group By Zack Meisel, Northeast Ohio Media Group

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- The Indians preserved the strength of their team at the trade deadline. They resisted opponents' overtures at their starting pitchers.

But what about that offense, that underwhelming group of hitters that hasn't backed the starting staff with much support?

General manager Chris Antonetti jettisoned Brandon Moss and David Murphy from the roster. Marc Rzepczynski was sent to San Diego as well. Enter Jerry Sands, man. And Lonnie Chisenhall and Tyler Holt. And, eventually, a few other familiar faces such as Jesus Aguilar and Nick Swisher and Zach Walters.

The Indians are about to conduct another two-month experiment, in which Chisenhall, Sands and other hitters will attempt to place themselves in the organization's good graces.

Antonetti said Friday that the team would focus on internal candidates for its lineup from now until the end of the regular season. That would seemingly rule out any additions via a waiver deal in August. Anyone with enticing value would have trouble clearing waivers, anyway.

So, the offseason would seem to be the Indians' most opportune time to acquire a bat or two or three. Of course, it was last year, too. That's when the Tribe traded for Moss, who didn't pan out as the club had hoped.

"At the end of the season," Antonetti said Friday, "we'll sit down and assess where we are and where we may have needs. At that point, we'll have better information and a better understanding of what our internal alternatives are." A season founded on late-October aspirations has evolved into a tryout camp of sorts.

The Indians don't have much in the form of elite hitting prospects in the upper ranks of their farm system. Holt and James Ramsey might better the team defensively, but they don't wield imposing lumber. The jury is out on Walters and Aguilar.

The Indians' starting rotation is locked up -- and for only a pocketful of spare change -- through at least the 2020 campaign. The offense will need a face lift over the winter, though. The Indians can't rest on their laurels and assume that those already in tow will seamlessly progress or that those who excel over these final two months will turn that production into a year-long tear in 2016.

Money will undoubtedly factor into the equation. Swisher and Michael Bourn are still on the bankroll, after all. The Indians won't have much financial flexibility until owner Paul Dolan remembers the combination for the lock on his safe.

Somehow, though, the Indians need a few new hitters, likely via trade. Odds are, the team's unfathomably appalling clip with the bases loaded (.130/.230/.156 -- .386 OPS vs. league average .735 OPS) will improve, regardless of the bodies standing in the batter's box. Odds are, the team's deplorable slash line with runners in scoring position and two outs (.173/.306/.277 -- .583 OPS vs. league average .691 OPS) will improve, regardless of who occupies the spots in Terry Francona's lineup.

Odds are also that a lineup featuring the same names that presently patrol the Indians' clubhouse won't provide the necessary support to propel the team into some October plans next year.

Danny Salazar dominates as Indians edge A's

OAKLAND, Calif. — Danny Salazar thought about asking for the chance to finish his start Friday night. He decided against it, wanting to include the bullpen.

Salazar allowed one hit over eight innings, Michael Bourn doubled in the tiebreaking run in the ninth and the Cleveland Indians beat the Oakland Athletics 2-1 for their third straight win.

"I was ready to go back out there," Salazar said. "The bullpen is part of this team too."

Indians pitchers threw complete games in each of the previous three games. This time, Cody Allen pitched the ninth for his 21st save in 23 chances.

Lonnie Chisenhall had three hits, stole a base and scored the go-ahead run for the Indians, who were 3-8 before their little spurt.

"It feels good to get a win, especially the way Danny went out and pitched," Chisenhall said. "It was good to put some at-bats together."

Salazar (9-6) struck out four, walked one and ended a two-game slide. He has a 1.53 ERA over his last four starts and 29 1/3 innings.

"This team has so much energy, and we're having fun out there," Salazar said.

Edward Mujica (2-3) was the loser.

Oakland went ahead in the third when third baseman Giovanny Urshela mishandled Marcus Semien's grounder for an error, allowing Mark Canha to score. Canha walked to open the inning and reached third on Eric Sogard's single.

Salazar retired the next 18 hitters. He also set down his first six.

Oakland starter Kendall Graveman rebounded from his shortest outing this season, giving up an unearned run and five hits over 6 2/3 innings. He walked two and struck out seven.

Graveman allowed four runs and seven hits in 1 1/3 innings against San Francisco on Sunday and had yielded 14 runs in his previous three starts and 12 1/3 innings.

"I was getting ahead of hitters and trusting everything I threw," Graveman said. "The change-up was big tonight. I got a few swing-and-misses on the change."

Cleveland tied the score in the seventh when Yan Gomes singled with two outs, Lonnie Chisenhall doubled and Semien's throwing error on Urshela's grounder to shortstop allowed Gomes to score.

Trainer's room

Athletics: Outfielder Coco Crisp is expected to play in at least one more rehab game and rejoin the team on Sunday.

* Left-hander Sean Doolittle is scheduled to throw a bullpen session Saturday and could advance to pitching batting practice if all goes well.

Up next

Indians: Right-hander Cody Anderson (2-2, 3.26) starts tonight. He allowed seven runs and eight hits, including a pair of home runs, in his last start. Anderson is 1-1 with a 2.89 ERA in three career road starts and has yet to walk a batter away from home.

Athletics: Right-hander Aaron Brooks (0-0, 6.23) makes his Oakland debut tonight. Acquired from Kansas City for Ben Zobrist on Tuesday, Brooks will be making his second career start and his first since May 31, 2014.

Cleveland Indians trade reliever Rzepczynski to San Diego at trade deadline

By Jeff Schudel, The News-Herald & The Morning Journal

POSTED: 07/31/15, 8:12 PM EDT | UPDATED: 2 HRS AGO 0

The Indians made a deal before the 4 p.m. deadline on July 31, but it wasn't the foundation shaker some national writers were tracking.

The Tribe sent left-handed relief pitcher Marc Rzepczynski to the San Diego Padres for outfielder Abraham Almonte. It was the third trade by the Indians this week and the first involving a pitcher.

Almonte was immediately optioned to the Columbus Clippers, the Indians Triple-A farm team. Almonte in 31 games with the Padres this year batted 54 times with 11 hits. He drove in four runs and scored six and did not hit a home run. He walked 21 times and struck out 37 times.

Rzepczynski pitched in 45 games this season. He was 2-3 with a 4.43 ERA in 20.1 innings.

Earlier in the day, Ken Rosenthal of Fox Sports reported the Indians were in trade talks with the Chicago Cubs involving Tribe starter Carlos Carrasco. Carrasco, the Tribe's winningest pitcher this season, tossed a complete game in a 3-1 victory at Oakland on July 30 to lift his record to 11-8.

During a conference call on July 30, Indians general manager Chris Antonetti said he would listen to all offers right up to the trading deadline, but in the end decided to hold onto his starting pitching.

The Indians on July 28 traded outfielder David Murphy to the Los Angeles Angels for shortstop Eric Stamets and sent him to AA Akron. On July 30, they traded outfielder/first baseman Brandon Moss to the St. Louis Cardinals for pitching prospect Rob Kaminsky and sent him to their high-A team in Lynchburg, Va.

The Indians filled the Rzepczynski roster vacancy by promoting outfielder Jerry Sands from Columbus.

Indians send reliever Marc Rzepczynski to Padres

CLEVELAND -- The Indians have made their third trade this week, sending left-handed reliever [Marc Rzepczynski](#) to the [San Diego Padres](#) for outfielder [Abraham Almonte](#).

Rzepczynski went 2/3 with a 4.43 ERA in 45 games this season. Earlier this week, the Indians, who recently lost six straight games and fell back in the AL wild-card race, dealt outfielder [David Murphy](#) to the Angels and sent slugger [Brandon Moss](#) to St. Louis.

The 26-year-old Almonte has split the season between San Diego and Triple-A El Paso, batting .275 with four homers, 35 RBIs and 11 steals in 61 games in the minors. He has spent two stints in the majors, batting .204 in 31 games. The 5-foot-9, switch-hitting center fielder signed with the Yankees in 2005.

Rzepczynski joined the Indians in 2013, coming over in a trade with St. Louis. He appeared in 73 games last season.

RailRiders 3, Clippers 2 | Clippers blow lead, lose series opener

The Clippers lost a third key offensive player in three days to the Cleveland Indians on Friday and dropped a 3-2 decision to the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders in Moosic, Pa.

The Indians purchased the contract of first baseman/outfielder Jerry Sands earlier in the day. He left to join outfielder Tyler Holt and third baseman/outfielder Lonnie Chisenhall with Cleveland in Oakland, Calif.

Jesus Aguilar hit a solo home run off former Clippers pitcher Kyle Davies in the sixth inning to break a scoreless tie. The Clippers extended the lead to 2-0 in the seventh.

Erik Gonzalez started the rally with a leadoff single. With one out, Brett Hayes singled him to third base. Audy Ciriaco then drove in Gonzalez with a single.

Jarrett Grube turned a one-hit shutout over to the bullpen in the seventh inning, but Giovanni Soto and Trey Haley combined to allow Scranton to tie the score.

In the eighth, Dustin Molleken (5-3) entered for the Clippers and gave up a leadoff home run to Austin Romine to break the tie

Top prospects square off on mound, Lake County Captains walk off on Great Lakes Loons, 4-3

By **David Glasier**, *The News-Herald*

Justus Sheffield of the Captains and Grant Holmes of the Great Lakes (Mich.) Loons were high-profile high-school pitchers taken close to each other in the first round June 2014 draft.

Sheffield, a 5-foot-10 right-hander from Tennessee, went to the Indians with the 31st overall pick.

Holmes, a 6-1 right-hander from South Carolina, was taken by the Los Angeles Dodgers with the 22nd overall pick.

Their showdown July 31 at Classic Park gave evidence of why they are so highly rated as prospects and why they received signing bonuses of \$2.5 million (Holmes) and \$1.6 million (Sheffield).

The Captains prevailed, 4-3.

Holmes blanked Lake County on six hits over six innings, striking out seven while issuing only one walk. His fastball sat at 93 mph and topped out at 95.

Sheffield shut down the Loons through five innings before giving up two runs in the top of the sixth inning. With his fastball sitting at 92 mph and topped out at 95. He struck out four and walked one.

Neither were involved with the decision.

Both are 19-years-old and having the kinds of seasons that indicate they will be upwardly mobile in their respective organizations.

In 19 starts covering 87 innings, Holmes is 6-2 with a 2.59 ERA. He's piled up 104 strikeouts while issuing 44 walks.

In 20 appearances covering 94 innings, Sheffield is 7-4 with a 4.21 ERA. His strikeout/walk totals of 105 and 27 are slightly better than Holmes' numbers.

Walkoff specials

Francisco Mejia's two-out, bases-loaded single in the bottom of the ninth inning capped a late comeback that gave the Captains three straight walkoff wins.

The Captains trailed, 3-0, after 7 1/2 innings. They pulled even with three runs in the bottom of the eighth. Taylor Murphy drove in one run with a sacrifice fly. Mejia and Yu-Cheng Chang added RBI singles.

With three straight victories and four in the last five games, the Captains improved to 16-18 in the second half and 52-50 overall.

Swisher rehab

Nick Swisher continued his second rehab appearance of the season with the Captains, going 0 for 3 as designated hitter. He'll be off Aug. 1 and return Aug. 2 in the series finale against Great Lakes.

Returning

Captains manager Shaun Larkin is scheduled to rejoin the team Aug. 1 after a four-day personal leave at his home in Arizona.

Hitting coach and interim manager Larry Day has a 3-1 record in Larkin's stead.

A's held to one hit in loss to Indians

By **Carl Steward**

OAKLAND -- Ben Zobrist was the only hitter the A's dealt away before the trade deadline, but the past two nights it's felt as though they traded all their big sticks.

Oakland managed just one Eric Sogard third-inning single against Cleveland's Danny Salazar and Cody Allen on Friday night in a 2-1 defeat after getting just two first-inning hits Thursday night against the Indians' Carlos Carrasco.

To be sure, the fireworks at the Coliseum didn't take place until after the A's left the field and a pyrotechnics show began before the 28,152 in attendance. Oakland not only managed just one hit in the game, it's the only hit they have managed over the last 17 innings. The A's (45-59) hadn't been held to three hits over two games since 1953.

Over a longer stretch, the A's have scored three or fewer runs in eight of their last 10 games, so it's little wonder they've lost seven of their last eight and are 4-9 since the All-Star break.

Salazar (9-6) was good, as was Carrasco the previous game, but clearly, the A's hitters made both Cleveland pitchers look better than they actually were.

"I don't think we're swinging the bats too well right now," said first baseman Ike Davis. "I got some pitches to hit tonight, and I just didn't do it."

Davis wasn't alone in that admission. Catcher Stephen Vogt had a brutal month of July (13 for 80, .163) and he extended a hitless streak to 21 at-bats with an 0 for 3.

"I'm struggling," Vogt said. "I'm jumpy, I'm not very good on pitch selection, I'm not getting anything to hit, and I'm not being patient enough. It's been a really bad month for me, and it's frustrating."

The A's only run was unearned. Mark Canha walked to lead off the third in front of Sogard's clean single to right, and Canha scored when Giovanni Urshela booted Marcus Semien's easy one-hopper to third. After that, the A's made 21 consecutive outs.

For a while, it looked like that lone run might be enough. Oakland starter Kendall Graveman, who had gone through a three-start rough patch when he posted a 10.22 ERA and lost all three decisions, regained his stellar June form and shut out the Indians on three hits over the first 62/3 innings.

But with two outs and nobody on in the seventh, it came undone. Yan Gomes' single to center was followed by Lonnie Chisenhall's double to left. Urshela then hit a slow chopper over the mound to shortstop Semien, who made a nice effort to field the ball but then pulled Davis off the bag at first for his major-league leading 29th error as the tying run scored.

Graveman exited after a subsequent walk that loaded the bases, and while Fernando Rodriguez got the final out, the Indians won it in the top of the ninth against Edward Mujica (2-3) on Michael Bourn's one-out RBI double to deep center.

Allen pitched the bottom of the ninth and recorded his 21st save, getting three straight weak grounders to second base from the first three hitters in Oakland's order.

While A's manager Bob Melvin thought the error call on Semien was incorrect, the young shortstop did not.

"That's a play that's got to be made," Semien said. "It's game of inches, and if I aim a little more to the left side of (Davis), we get out of that inning. Kendall deserved that win. As a team, we got one hit and we still could have won the game if that play's made. I know I can make that play."

The A's traded reliever Ryan Cook just before the deadline to the Boston Red Sox for a player to be named later or cash considerations. Cook, a bullpen fixture from 2012-14, has spent most of the season at Triple-A Nashville after appearing in just four games with the A's and posting an 0-2 record with a 10.38 ERA.

Cook, 28, never solved command issues that have troubled him since the end of last season. He had his best year with Oakland in 2012, when he posted a 2.09 ERA with 14 saves and allowed just 42 hits in 731/3 innings while striking out 80. He made the All-Star team that season and pitched a perfect inning.

Coco Crisp played nine innings for a second straight night for Class-A Stockton on Friday, this time as D.H. He might play another game Saturday with the Ports, but he'll return to Oakland on Sunday and possibly play Monday against Baltimore. Crisp, who has been out since May 19, has played just 13 games with the A's this year.

Melvin said the A's don't yet have a plan for left-hander Felix Doubront, acquired from the Toronto Blue Jays for cash considerations just before the trade deadline, but he's inclined to think Doubront will get some starting opportunities. A 25-man roster move will be made once Doubront arrives in Oakland.

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Cleveland spoils Kendall Graveman's outing, edges A's

By Steve Kroner Updated 10:49 pm, Friday, July 31, 2015

Following Friday night's game against Cleveland, the A's put on a Fireworks Night at the Coliseum.

That provided quite a contrast with Oakland's offense the past two evenings; it made barely a peep.

Danny Salazar (eight innings) and Cody Allen combined on a one-hitter, retiring the final 21 Oakland batters in a 2-1 decision Friday.

On Thursday, Carlos Carrasco held the A's to two first-inning hits in a 3-1 Cleveland victory.

So, to sum up the first two games of the A's 11-game homestand: 18 innings, three hits, zero wins.

"You look up and there's three hits combined the last two nights," Oakland catcher Stephen Vogt said, giving Carrasco and Salazar their due. "That's pretty indicative of how they pitched. We just couldn't get anything going."

Vogt, in particular, is having trouble getting anything going. The All-Star is hitless in his past 21 at-bats and finished July 13-for-80 (.163).

"I'm struggling, just flat-out," Vogt said. "I'm not getting anything to hit and not being patient enough. It's been a really bad month for me.

"It's been frustrating."

Oakland starter Kendall Graveman had struggled in his three previous outings (0-3, 14 earned runs in 121/3 innings), but he rebounded nicely Friday. He gave up one unearned run in 62/3 innings.

Graveman said his improvement stemmed from a better changeup and from going after hitters more aggressively.

The rookie said he was "really trusting everything I threw tonight, attacking hitters. I think that was the biggest thing."

After a dismal April (1-2, 8.27 ERA), Graveman was sent to Triple-A Nashville. He pitched well for the Sounds and also did well for Oakland in the first nine starts after his recall.

That gave manager Bob Melvin the confidence that Graveman would respond as he did Friday.

"Based on what he had to deal with earlier in the season," Melvin said, "a couple of bad starts weren't going to get him going totally in the wrong direction."

Through six innings, Graveman had limited Cleveland to three hits and the A's were up 1-0.

After he retired the first two hitters in the seventh, Yan Gomes singled and Lonnie Chisenhall doubled, moving Gomes to third.

Giovanny Urshela then chopped one over the mound. Shortstop Marcus Semien fielded the ball cleanly, but his throw to first pulled Ike Davis off the bag. Semien's 29th error of the season — he had gone 14 games without committing one — tied the game 1-1.

It remained 1-1 until the ninth. Then, Chisenhall led off with a single, his third hit of the night. He came into Friday with a .206 batting average.

As Edward Mujica (2-3) was striking out Urshela, Chisenhall stole second. Soon thereafter, Chisenhall scored the go-ahead run on Michael Bourn's ground-rule double to center.

The A's have gone 2-3 against Cleveland this season, which seems almost impossible, considering what their offense has done in those five games: 23-for-152 (.151).

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