

# ASTROS DAILY CLIPS

## Friday, April 29, 2016

### **Astros report: Will Harris has been a key contributor to bullpen**

By: Jake Kaplan / Houston Chronicle

SEATTLE - A middle reliever's performance will go mostly unnoticed when his team is struggling, but Astros righthander Will Harris has been on a roll to start the season.

Harris, 31, has reeled off a string of nine consecutive scoreless outings spanning 92/3 innings. He has not allowed a run since yielding one to the Yankees on April 7 in his first appearance of the season.

Harris recorded four outs in the Astros' 7-4 win against the Mariners on Wednesday night at Safeco Field, their first win in four games.

"He's our unsung hero all the time in the 'pen," Astros manager A.J. Hinch said. "I put him in every situation available, whether it's mid-game, late-game. He usually is the guy that goes out and gets four outs for you. He's been exceptional since he's been an Astro. The value of having him down there to troubleshoot and get out of as many messes as he does is pretty remarkable."

Harris' 0.82 ERA came into Thursday's games tied for fifth-best among American League relievers who have already logged at least 10 innings. He is inducing groundballs at an 80 percent rate, the best among AL relievers.

"I feel pretty good," Harris said. "Just kind of same old, same old. I prepare every day the same. Just try and fill up the strike zone, try and pitch off my fastball and work in a few breaking balls to keep hitters off balanced, move the ball around. It's just kind of the same formula that I've always tried to do."

#### McHugh adding fastball velocity

Collin McHugh admittedly wasn't at his best Wednesday night at Safeco Field, but the Astros' No. 2 starter can take some solace in registering by far his highest average velocity of the season's first month.

McHugh's fastball averaged a season-high 92.39 mph over his five innings against the Mariners, according to BrooksBaseball.net. The righthander's previous highest average velocity this season came in at 90.47 mph in his last start, a loss to the Red Sox.

Last year, when McHugh won 19 games and posted a 3.89 ERA over 32 regular-season starts, his fastball averaged 91.28 mph, according to BrooksBaseball.net.

#### McHugh signs brand contract

Collin McHugh was one of five major leaguers and 10 professional athletes across three sports who recently agreed to a brand contract with Fantex, Inc., the company announced Wednesday.

In the deal, McHugh will agree to sell 10 percent of his future on- and off-field earnings to Fantex in exchange for \$3.96 million up front. According to the company, the contracts are contingent upon Fantex "obtaining financing necessary to pay the applicable purchase price."

McHugh said Wednesday he could not yet publicly discuss the deal, citing matters of confidentiality. Phillies third baseman Maikel Franco, Orioles second baseman Jonathan Schoop, Padres shortstop Yangervis Solarte and Twins pitcher Tyler Duffey were the other major leaguers to reach similar agreements for varying payments with the company, which plans to sell shares of the players' stocks to investors.

### **Colby Rasmus fulfills offseason passion by stocking Alabama cattle farm**

*Outfielder feeds new offseason passion by stocking Alabama farm at cattle auction*

By: Evan Drellich / Houston Chronicle

Only a handful of people in a crowd of about 400 knew who the man with camouflage and a hat was. To the rest, he was some young guy unexpectedly making high bids.

The bids were unexpected even to him, but the rush of the process brought a high.

"The bull, I knew he was going to be somewhat expensive. But that morning I walked out there, and I was like, 'I'm taking you home with me, dude. I don't care,' " Colby Rasmus said. "We started the bidding at like \$5,000. Next thing you know, we're at 20,000, and I'm like, 'Yaaaaah!' "

Retelling this moment, Rasmus sounded like he was urging a horse to gallop faster, lifting his arm at the same time - this was how he placed his bids at

Gibbs Family Farm's annual cattle sale in Ranburne, Ala., in November.

"My heart's like dum dum dum - 'Oh no, what am I doing?'

"Yaaaaaah!!!"

Rasmus made another bid. When it reached \$39,000, he sat there.

"Nobody in the place knew that I was doing the bidding because I was just sitting there," Rasmus said. "I had glasses on, big camo hat, and I'm just sitting there."

And playing it cool as the bidding heated up.

Of course, he had one more "Yaaaaaah!" in him. Rasmus wasn't going to let this bull, which he named The Rock, pass him by. He picked up 15 heifers as well.

A big week in November

Rasmus knew he'd be back in Houston this season - he's presently raking to the tune of .275/.414/.623 with seven home runs and 19 RBIs - after he agreed to take the Astros' qualifying offer of \$15.8 million on Nov. 12, the same day he made a preliminary visit to the Gibbs farm. The next day, he was in Houston for a news conference, and the auction was Nov. 14.

"We didn't know that (he had the news conference) until the next day," Gibbs farm marketing manager Gordon Hodges said. "He had just asked if he could come and look at the sale cattle on Thursday, and Friday was tied up, so that was all we knew."

Rasmus had cows at a young age. In the 2014-15 offseason, he scooped up some land near his Alabama home and put up fencing, laying the ground work. He wanted to start his own farm, and this past offseason, he set out to make that dream come true.

"For some reason, I just felt a calling to do it," Rasmus said. "I live in the South, and you never know how things are going to turn out. But if you've got cows, you're always going to have meat to eat. ... I like the atmosphere, and there's good folks in the cattle industry. I just thought it would be something cool.

"I love cows. I love being on the farm. I love the lifestyle," Rasmus continued. "I just want to have a huge farm. I can just ride around and pull up to the farm and send the dogs out, and they'll round the cows up and feed 'em and all those kinds of things."

Not ego-driven purchases

The undertaking isn't a light one. Hodges has seen people with disposable income dive headfirst into unpleasant results.

But Rasmus wasn't trying to become an overnight dominant force in the industry.

"I try to kind of throw a red flag up if they are wanting to spend a giant amount of money and you can tell their goal is, 'I want to be one of the top cattlemen in the country, and I want to spend a lot of money and very little time,' " Hodges said. "Colby did not really have those desires. He said he wanted it more for personal satisfaction. He wanted to look out his window at his place and see some really good cows."

Rasmus has nonetheless faced a learning curve. Trying to figure out the ideal bull to match up with a heifer and understanding how the cattle are evaluated, he said, is a little like managing a baseball team.

"Oh my goodness," Rasmus said. "Well, I dove off in it, and I didn't realize what I was in, and I've educated myself now. So I'm caught up. But the good thing is it's kind of a slow-moving industry. So you have time.

"I just put (The Rock) out there with 15 heifers, and just look at him. 'There he is. Man, he looks good!' ... I was going out there every day (during the offseason). I dropped my little girl off at school, and I'd go out there every day from 9 o'clock to 2. Every day."

Can't keep identity hidden

Because the bull is so highly regarded, Rasmus' foray made some ripples in the industry. The North American International Livestock Exposition was underway in Louisville, Ky., at the time of the auction, and word of Rasmus' purchase spread fast.

But even by the end of the auction in Alabama, some people figured out who the guy in camo was.

"It turns out the contending bidder that was the breeder from Kansas, he ... is a pretty big baseball fan, and he recognized (Rasmus) from when he played with ... I guess it was St. Louis," Hodges said.

"They were both standing in the balcony area that we have in our sales arena. They weren't but 15 feet apart. That guy walked over to Doug (Gibbs, the farm operations manager) and said, 'Isn't that the outfielder that used to play with St. Louis?'

"And he said, 'Well, yeah, I think it is.' "

## **'Frustrated' Astros aiming to get back on track**

By: Brian McTaggart / MLB.com

HOUSTON -- From baserunning to pitching to hitting, the Astros clearly haven't hit on all cylinders in the first month of the season, which is why they find themselves heading into Friday's series against the A's in Oakland tied with the Twins for the worst record in the American League at 7-15.

The starting rotation, which has been without righty Lance McCullers (shoulder soreness), has underperformed, with anchors Dallas Keuchel and Collin McHugh having yet to duplicate the success they had last year. Reliever Ken Giles -- the team's biggest offseason acquisition -- has been roughed up in the bullpen, and the offense has been inconsistent at best.

It's all added up to a frustrating few weeks for the Astros, who were picked by many to win the American League pennant and expected by almost everyone to at least return to the playoffs. There's still plenty of time for them to reach those goals, but the turnaround has to start soon.

"Naturally we all are searching for answers," second-year Astros manager A.J. Hinch said. "I think the hardest thing to do at this level, it's an accumulative mental grind. Our guys have to be tough enough to handle it. ... Easier said than done sometimes, but I'm sure all of our guys are collectively frustrated but need to find the resolve to get back on track."

Several key players, including Giles, outfielder Carlos Gomez and catcher Jason Castro, have struggled, but the Astros haven't played clean baseball as a whole. Costly errors, baserunning gaffes and not taking advantage of scoring situations have plagued them.

"If you're given an out, take it," Hinch said. "Don't try to do too much. If you're given an extra base, take it. If not, the game will stop you. We'll start to reap the benefits of that by trying to play the game in a clean fashion."

Keuchel, citing the Astros' sloppy play, said after his start Tuesday against the Mariners that the Astros weren't playing as a "cohesive unit" and that "some people" needed to play better. Hinch said comments were aimed at the team's inconsistent play as a whole and not an indictment on any single player.

"You want to handle stuff internally as much as possible," Hinch said. "I think what Dallas is referring to is playing complete baseball, clean baseball all the way through where everyone is making plays, everyone is making pitches, everyone is doing what the game gives you. One of the key takeaways from the first few weeks is you get penalized in this game if you don't take what the game gives you."

The Astros are 14th in the AL -- ahead of only the Yankees -- in batting average with runners in scoring position (.197) after going 5-for-10 in Wednesday's win over Seattle. They have the highest ERA (4.97) in the AL, including 5.31 from a starting rotation that has struggled to work deep into games.

The pitching staff has been hampered by walks, which is one of the reasons the starters haven't been efficient, and they're second in the AL with 30 homers allowed.

"I thought with the way spring went, everything was clicking, and we were playing really well," Castro said. "We got into a funk early on, and we need to reassess with the off-day, and hopefully everyone can clear their minds and come back ready to play our baseball. I don't think we've done that yet. We've had some flashes of it here and there, but we really haven't put together Astros baseball like we know we can play."

As the early losses mounted, the Astros got outside of their element by pressing. Jose Altuve twice in the last week was thrown out at second trying to stretch a single into a double and said both times he was trying to do too much. But he's not alone. Poor baserunning has been an epidemic.

"The natural human reaction is try a little bit harder, is to grip the bat a little bit more, to swing a little bit harder, it's to fine-tune and aim the ball when we're pitching," Hinch said. "Baseball's hard. And at this level, the type of talent that's at this level, if you try to go outside your realm of how you play the game, it isn't always a positive result."

## Taillon, Benintendi among top prospect performers Thursday

*Pirates prospect continues to impress while Boston outfielder stays hot at the plate*

By: Mike Rosenbaum / MLB.com

With Jameson Taillon's impressive start to the 2016 season, you would never suspect that he hadn't pitched competitively since '13.

The Pirates' No. 4 prospect (No. 51 overall) improved to 2-0 on Thursday, firing seven innings of one-run ball for Triple-A Indianapolis in a win against Norfolk. Taillon scattered five hits and issued two walks in the outing, which was his longest of the season for the Indians.

It seemed as though Taillon, the No. 2 overall pick of the Draft in 2010, was destined to join Gerrit Cole in the Pirates' big league rotation in 2014 after he had finished the previous year at Indianapolis. But injuries derailed the right-hander's progress up the ladder, as Tommy John surgery and then surgery for an inguinal hernia wiped out his '14 and '15 seasons, respectively. Now 24, Taillon finally is healthy and making up for the lost time in a hurry with a lights-out start to the season in Triple-A.

Taillon has not allowed more than two earned runs in any of his four starts for the Indians, and he's pitched to a stellar 1.54 ERA and 0.86 WHIP in 23 1/3 innings in that span. The right-hander's command has really stood out, as the two free passes he permitted on Thursday were his first of the season, giving him an overall K/BB ratio of 23/2.

The rest of the best performances from top prospects Thursday

- No. 22 overall prospect Andrew Benintendi (Red Sox's No. 3) hit a go-ahead, bases-clearing double with two outs in the bottom of the eighth inning to lead Class A Advanced Salem past Frederick, 7-4. He drove in four runs in the game, giving him 18 RBIs in 20 games this season, while his 2-for-4 performance at the plate extended his hitting streak to 17 games. Overall, the 2015 No. 7 overall Draft pick is batting .346/.407/.642 with 17 runs scored, 16 extra-base hits and four steals.
- No. 31 overall prospect Jesse Winker (Reds' No. 1) and No. 68 Jose Peraza (Reds' No. 5) went a combined 6-for-8 with four extra-base hits to power Triple-A Louisville in a win against Durham. Peraza collected three of the four extra-base knocks, going 3-for-4 with a pair of doubles and his first home run of the season, while Winker doubled as part of a 3-for-4 effort.
- No. 37 overall prospect A.J. Reed (Astros' No. 2) connected on his fifth home run of the season in Triple-A Fresno's win against El Paso. The 22-year-old first baseman has collected hits in five straight games for the Grizzlies, with two home runs and six RBIs in the span.
- No. 40 overall prospect Brent Honeywell (Rays' No. 3) picked up his second win of the season for Class A Advanced Charlotte with 5 2/3 innings of one-run ball against St. Lucie. The right-hander scattered five hits, walked two and struck out five in the outing, with 62 of his 97 pitches going for strikes. Honeywell, 21, has been outstanding in his five starts for Charlotte this season, posting a 0.89 ERA, a 0.79 WHIP and 31/4 K/BB in 30 1/3 innings while holding opposing hitters to a .187 average.
- No. 83 overall prospect Albert Almora (Cubs' No. 5) collected three hits for the fourth time in his past nine games as Triple-A Iowa doubled up Colorado Springs, 10-5. One of those three knocks was Almora's third home run of the season -- a three-run shot that padded the I-Cubs' lead in the bottom of the eighth inning -- and he also picked up his second steal in the contest. The 22-year-old center fielder has opened his first Triple-A campaign on a tear, batting .362/.403/.551 with 15 runs scored in 18 games.
- After allowing a combined 15 earned runs over his first three starts for Class A Rome, Braves No. 6 prospect Touki Toussaint got back on track -- and picked up his first win -- Thursday by tossing five innings of one-run ball against West Virginia. The 19-year-old righty allowed two hits and struck out three while finding the zone with 36 of his 58 pitches, and he also induced six groundball outs in the outing.
- Giants No. 9 prospect Andrew Suarez struck out a career-high 10 hitters in 6 2/3 innings as Class A Advanced defeated Stockton in 11 innings, 3-2. The 2015 second-rounder allowed one run on five hits and did not issue a walk in the outing. He's piled up 19 strikeouts in 13 2/3 innings between his past two starts, notching 30 strikeouts (against just three walks) in 22 2/3 innings on the season.
- Cardinals No. 10 prospect Harrison Bader's solo home run accounted for Double-A Springfield's only run in a loss to Northwest Arkansas. The 21-year-old outfielder has homered in back-to-back games for Springfield and has three in his past four contests. The Cardinals assigned Bader to Double-A for his first full pro season, having him bypass the Class A Advanced level entirely, and he's responded to the challenge by batting .342/.398/.539 with four homers and 12 RBIs in his first 19 games.
- White Sox No. 11 prospect Tyler Danish fired a nine-inning shutout for Double-A Birmingham against Pensacola in what was the best start of his Minor League career. The right-hander yielded three hits and walked two in the gem, which he needed 105 pitches (71 strikes) to complete, and he generated 14 groundball outs while striking out six hitters.

- Braves No. 12 prospect Lucas Sims was dominant in his second Triple-A start, striking out a season-high 11 hitters in seven innings as Gwinnett outlasted Toledo in 15 innings, 4-3. The 21-year-old righty, a first-round Draft pick in 2012, has been impressive this season in five starts between Double-A Mississippi and Gwinnett, posting a 2.03 ERA with 42 strikeouts in 26 2/3 innings (14.2 K/9).
- Royals No. 16 prospect Jorge Bonifacio extended his hitting streak to nine games in Triple-A Omaha's rout of Oklahoma City, going 3-for-5 with three RBIs and three runs scored. After back-to-back years in Double-A, Bonifacio, 22, is batting .346/.354/.603 with four home runs and 17 RBIs through 20 games this season in his first taste of the Triple-A level.
- Indians No. 21 prospect Willi Castro filled out the stat sheet in Class A Lake County's win against Burlington, going 4-for-5 with his first home run of the season, a triple, four RBIs and two runs scored. After an 0-for-17 stretch at the plate, the 19-year-old switch-hitter has collected six hits in 10 at-bats in his past two games for the Captains.
- Rangers No. 21 prospect Travis Demeritte slugged his eighth home of the season and second in as many days to retake the Minor League lead as Class A Advanced High Desert beat Lake Elsinore, 6-4. The second baseman has torn the cover off the ball so far this season, with a .288 average and a 1.116 OPS through 18 games, though his 33 strikeouts in that span suggests he could be in store for regression.

## McHugh signs \$3.96M brand deal with Fantex

By: Brian McTaggart / MLB.com

HOUSTON -- Astros pitcher Collin McHugh, whose 28 wins since Aug. 1, 2014, rank second in the Majors in that time span behind only Jake Arrieta (30), has entered into a \$3.96 million brand contract with Fantex, which will receive 10 percent of McHugh's future earnings on and off the field.

In the future, Fantex expects to sell shares of McHugh's "stock" to public investors. In this case, those investors will see a profit if McHugh earns more than \$39.6 million in his career. Major League Baseball and the MLB Players Association each have approved agreements like this in the past.

McHugh declined to discuss the deal following Wednesday's game in Seattle, citing a confidentiality agreement.

McHugh, 28, isn't eligible to reach arbitration until 2017, which means he's still making slightly over the Major League minimum of \$507,500. The deal gives him a financial windfall before he's eligible to sign his first sizable contract.

Fantex announced brand contracts with 10 professional athletes, including five baseball players: McHugh, Tyler Duffey (Twins), Maikel Franco (Phillies), Jonathan Schoop (Orioles) and Yangervis Solarte (Padres).

Last September, Fantex agreed to a similar deal with Angels rookie Andrew Heaney that was worth \$3.34 million up front to Heaney in exchange for receiving 10 percent of all Heaney's future earnings, and all future earnings tied to his brand.

## Elias Says...

By Elias Sports Bureau, Inc.

Arrieta home scoreless streak ends just short of record

The Brewers managed to score against Jake Arrieta on Thursday, but not before Arrieta had thrown four more scoreless innings to pass Walter Johnson for the second-longest home shutout streak in the modern era. Alex Presley's two-out double in the fifth inning snapped Arrieta's streak at 52.2 scoreless innings at Wrigley Field, just short of the longest home-game streak since 1900. Ray Herbert tossed 54 straight shutout innings at Comiskey Park for the White Sox in 1962-63.

Assuming this was Arrieta's final appearance of the month, he will finish April with a 5-0 record and a 1.00 ERA. Only six other pitchers won five games in the month of April with an ERA of 1.00 or lower: Walter Johnson (1913), Fernando Valenzuela (1981), Randy Johnson (2000), Cliff Lee (2008), Zack Greinke (2009), and Ubaldo Jimenez (2010).

Mattingly gains revenge against his former team

Don Mattingly made a conspicuous return to Los Angeles, as his Miami Marlins completed a four-game sweep with a 5-3 victory over the Dodgers on Thursday night. Mattingly became the first manager in more than 30 years to sweep a series of four or more games against a team he managed in the previous season. The last skipper to do so was Rene Lachemann of the Brewers against the Mariners in 1984. The only others during the expansion era are better known: Whitey Herzog for the Royals against the Angels in 1975, and Billy Martin for the Yankees against the A's in 1983. Note that Herzog managed only four games for the 1974 Angels between the firing of Bobby Winkles and the hiring of Dick Williams.

Sanchez earns a Ryan-like victory

Anibal Sanchez walked seven batters in 5.2 innings but held the A's to two runs, improving his record to 3-2 in the Tigers' 7-3 win. It had been 14 seasons since a Detroit pitcher won a game despite issuing seven or more bases on balls, and the last one to do so was a knuckleballer, Steve Sparks. How about this: Nolan Ryan won 33 games in which he walked at least seven batters. The only pitcher with even half as many such wins since 1900 was Bob Feller (21).

Orioles are hitting homers in bunches

Manny Machado set a career-high with five RBIs, including a grand slam, and Chris Davis and Mark Trumbo also homered in the Orioles' 10-2 win over the White Sox. It was the third time this season that Baltimore's starters in the second, third, and fourth batting slots all homered in the same game. They had never before done so even twice in the same month, nor three times in the same season.

Nats finally face a winning team

The Phillies improved their record to 12-10 by completing a three-game sweep at Washington with a 3-0 victory. Thursday's game was a novelty for the Nats, who had not previously faced a team with a winning record at game time this season. Although there might be a tendency to view Washington's 14-7 record with some skepticism because of its weak opposition, consider this: 12 other teams in major-league history played their first 20 games of a season without facing a team with a record above .500 at the time of the game. Only two had a record through 20 games as good as Washington's: the 1911 Tigers (18-2) and the 1923 New York Giants (15-5).

Another four-hit game for Markakis

Nick Markakis went 4-for-5 with 3 RBIs in the Braves' 5-3 win over the Red Sox. Markakis and Robinson Cano were the only players with a four-hit game in each of the past 10 seasons (2006-15). Cano, whose streak began in 2005 (one year before Markakis'), has not had four hits in any game this season. Fun fact: Roberto Clemente had a four-hit game in each of the 18 seasons in which he played in the majors.

Ten strikeouts, two hits, no runs.

Diamondbacks fans got spoiled on games like that during the heyday of Curt Schilling and Randy Johnson. Over four seasons from 2001 through 2004, Johnson made six starts in which he allowed no runs and two or fewer hits, and also reached double-digits in strikeouts; Schilling made five. But over the next 12 seasons, there were only two such start by Arizona pitchers, both by Ian Kennedy (2010 and 2011). Until Thursday night, that is, when Rubby De La Rosa did it in a 3-0 victory over the Cardinals. It was the first time in De La Rosa's 64 major-league starts that he struck out as many as 10 batters.

## **Three Grizz homers compliment Wojo's power start**

*Perez, Singleton and Reed go yard in 4-2 win over El Paso in series opener*

By: Fresno Grizzlies

On Thursday night at Chukchansi Park, Grizzlies starter Asher Wojciechowski retired the final 10 batters he faced, striking out five of the final six. The trio of Eury Perez, Jon Singleton and A.J. Reed erased the only two blemishes of Wojciechowski's night, as each launched a solo home run in a 4-2 victory over the El Paso Chihuahuas in the first of a four game series.

After Wojciechowski allowed three hits in the third, including an RBI double to Carlos Asuaje and an RBI single to Alex Dickerson for a 2-0 El Paso lead, he allowed just one more hit the remainder of the evening.

In the bottom of the third, Eury Perez (3-for-4) blasted his first home run with Fresno way out to left field to cut the El Paso lead in half. An inning later in the fourth, Perez singled with two out for his second RBI of the night, scoring Matt Duffy after he led off with a hit-by-pitch to tie the game 2-2.

With one out in the fifth, Astros top prospect A.J. Reed (1-for-2, 2 BB) took his team-leading fifth home run out to right field for a 3-2 Fresno lead. That extended a season-high hit streak to five for Reed as well.

In the sixth Jon Singleton (2-for-4) completed the night's scoring, pulling a dinger of his own to right, and the Grizzlies led 4-2. Thursday was the first three-homer game for Fresno this season.

Wojciechowski (win, 2-1) ended with a final line of four hits, two earned runs, one walk and nine strikeouts in seven innings pitched. The nine punchouts equaled Brad Peacock from Tuesday at Reno for the Grizzlies' individual season high. Greg Reynolds (loss, 1-2), lasted just five innings, allowing six hits and three earned runs, with a walk and three strikeouts. He allowed the first two homers to Perez and Reed, with Singleton's coming off reliever Aaron Northcraft.

The Grizz bullpen shut it down from there, as Jordan Jankowski tossed a scoreless eighth with a strikeout. In the ninth, Jandel Gustave retired El Paso in order with a strikeout for his first save of the season in his first opportunity.

Game two of the series, beginning an eight-game homestand, is set for Friday evening at 7:05 p.m. Right-handers Carlos Pimentel (2-1, 4.96) for El Paso and Brady Rodgers (0-2, 4.32) for Fresno are the scheduled starting pitchers.

## **Midland Completes Sweep**

### *Hooks Drop Seventh in Last Eight*

By: CCHooks.com

CORPUS CHRISTI - Dylan Covey allowed one run and three hits over six innings and Beau Taylor doubled twice and drove in two runs as Midland thumped Corpus Christi 8-1 Thursday at Whataburger Field before 4,009.

Covey (1-1) walked and struck out five, facing three over the minimum in frames two through six. Fifty-seven of his 94 pitches were strikes.

Chase McDonald's two-out, two-strike single to center plated Teoscar Hernandez from third and gave the Hooks (9-10) a 1-0 first-inning edge. Midland (12-8) responded right away, Jaycob Brugman's opening double blossoming into the first RockHounds run. Taylor moved Brugman home by bouncing out to the right side.

The visitors tallied an unearned run in the third. Franklin Barreto singled into left-center and took second on a James Ramsay error. Danny Oh sacrificed Barreto to third and he crossed when Ryon Healy grounded out to shortstop.

Midland added another in the fourth off Kyle Smith, Taylor's double over the head of Ramsay sending Yairo Munoz (one-out walk) home.

Aaron West cleared up Smith's trouble during the fifth, retiring three straight with runners at second and third. Smith (0-3) was responsible for two earned runs, seven hits, two walks, and three strikeouts.

The next inning, West's 1-1 curveball to lead-off man Munoz left the yard. Midland was just getting started, as the RockHounds struck three more times with RBIs from J.P. Sportman (single), Oh (fielder's choice), and Healy (sacrifice fly). Taylor and Wade Kirkland scored after doubling and singling, respectively.

Matt Chapman's Texas League-leading sixth home run in the ninth off Reymin Guduan closed the scoring. It was the first run off Guduan in 2016, a span of eight appearances and 11 2/3 innings.

Covey, Ben Bracewell, and Ryan Doolittle teamed to hold Corpus Christi hitless over the final eight innings.

Barreto owns a six-game hitting streak.

The Hooks spend the next eight days in Frisco and Midland, playing four-game series with both the RoughRiders and RockHounds. Catch all the action on NewsRadio 1360 KKTXX, Michael Coffin and Kevin Piel on the call.

## **Batted hits, hit batter send 'Hawks to walk-off**

### *Ninth inning rally culminates in bases loaded hit by pitch to take rubber game*

By: JetHawks.com

LANCASTER, Calif. - Alejandro Garcia was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded and two out in the bottom of the ninth to bring home the winning run, as the JetHawks knocked off the Bakersfield Blaze 5-4 in the rubber game of the series on Thursday night at The Hangar.

The JetHawks (7-11) entered the ninth down 4-3. They loaded the bases on singles by Nick Tanielu and Bobby Boyd, and a walk to Ramon Laureano. With two out, Jamie Ritchie delivered an RBI infield single off the glove of third baseman Jay Baum. On a 2-0 pitch, Garcia was hit in the left shoulder on a fastball from Ramon Morla (0-2).

Bakersfield (8-12) scored a pair of runs in the first inning without the aid of a hit. The JetHawks answered with a single tally in the bottom of the inning on an RBI double by Laureano, who had three hits and came a home run shy of the cycle.

In the third, Laureano came through again, this time with an RBI triple. He now leads the JetHawks with 11 RBI this season.

The score remained 2-2 until the seventh, when Bakersfield re-took the lead on Brock Hebert's RBI triple. They added another in the eighth inning to make it 4-2. Garcia drove in a run on a ground out in the bottom of the eighth to bring the JetHawks within one once again.

Eric Peterson (1-0) picked up the win in relief for the JetHawks. The right-hander tossed 1.1 shutout innings and struck out two. Rogelio Armenteros started for Lancaster in his JetHawks debut. He lasted five innings and surrendered just one hit and two runs while striking out five.

The JetHawks travel to Lake Elsinore tomorrow night to open a three-game weekend series. Trent Thornton (0-0) will start for Lancaster against Dinelson Lamet (3-0). First pitch is at 7:00 p.m.

## **Goedert gets Bandits doubleheader sweep**

*Connor Goedert homers, drives in six*

By: Lance Ragland / Quad Cities River Bandits

DAVENPORT, IA. - Connor Goedert slugged six RBIs in game one, and scored in game two, to help the Quad Cities River Bandits sweep the doubleheader and take the series over the South Bend Cubs on Thursday night at Modern Woodmen Park. The River Bandits collected 14 hits on their way to an 11-2 victory in game one then took game two in shutout fashion, 3-0.

The Bandits jumped out to a hot start in game one of the doubleheader. After giving up a run in the top of the first, Quad Cities countered with two in the bottom of the frame. Osvaldo Duarte led off with a single and Daz Cameron followed with a hit of his own. Goedert drove in Duarte with a sacrifice fly and Cameron scored after stealing third and advancing home, giving the Bandits a 2-1 advantage.

Quad Cities added to the lead in the second frame thanks to four hits. Dexture McCall doubled, Johnny Sewald singled, and Antonio Nunez followed with an RBI-single to start the inning. Later in the frame Goedert came to the plate with the bases loaded and capitalized, clearing the bases with a double to put the Bandits on top 6-1.

South Bend got one run back in the fourth, but the Bandits put game one away with a five-spot in the sixth. Nunez scored after a misplay by the Cubs' center fielder Donnie Dewees. Kyle Tucker drove in Duarte and Goedert followed with a two-run homer to right field. A RBI-single from Brooks Marlow finished the scoring in the inning and the Bandits took an 11-2 lead.

Chris Murphy (1-2) earned his first win of the season with a six-inning effort. The right-hander allowed two runs on eight hits, striking out two for the Bandits. Justin Steele (1-3) struggled in his start for the Cubs. The lefty gave up six runs on seven hits in 1 1/3 innings in game one.

The Bandits' pitching took over in game two of the twin bill at Modern Woodmen Park. Matt Bower (1-0) tossed five shutout innings to clinch his first win of 2016. The lefty struck out six while scattering five hits in the victory. Ralph Garza finished the team shutout with two scoreless frames to earn his second save of the season.

The River Bandits took the lead in the third inning. Aaron Mizell laced a one-out triple to right field and scored thanks to a sacrifice fly from Bobby Wernes, giving Quad Cities a 1-0 advantage.

The Bandits added to the lead in the third with a two-out rally. Goedert doubled to left and McCall cranked a home run onto the left field berm to put the Bandits up 3-0.

Ryan Kellogg (2-2) gave up three runs over six innings, while taking the loss for the Cubs in game two of the doubleheader.

The River Bandits welcome the West Michigan Whitecaps to town on Friday night. RHP Kevin McCanna (0-1, 2.84) gets the nod for Quad Cities. The Whitecaps send LHP Matt Hall to the mound. First pitch is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. CT at Modern Woodmen Park and you can join Jake Levy and Lance Ragland for the Lloyd Agencies Pregame Show at 6:45 p.m. on 1170 AM K-BOB in the Quad Cities, and on RiverBandits.com or the TuneIn app anywhere.