



## Minnesota Twins Daily Clips

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### **Miguel Sano headed to the DL; Twins lose to Oakland**

Phil Miller | Star Tribune | June 1, 2016

A ghost of Twins Past inflicted significant pain on his old team Tuesday night. But that's nothing compared to the pain that struck Twins Future.

Danny Valencia, once a promising third baseman for the Twins, homered and doubled at O.co Coliseum, providing enough timely hitting to power the Oakland A's to a 7-4 victory, Minnesota's second straight loss.

But Miguel Sano, hustling down the first-base line to foil a double play and drive in a run, suffered a strained left hamstring and was immediately removed from the game. The Twins' most dangerous hitter was placed on the disabled list after the game, and Max Kepler was summoned to California for Wednesday's finale of the three-game series.

"It [hurts], because I want to help the team," said Sano, whose 11 home runs and 27 RBIs lead the Twins. "It's more frustrating because I was hitting the ball well."

Sano's absence, however long it turns out to be, represents a severe blow to a Twins offense that had begun to assert itself, however haltingly, over the past week. Minnesota's home run binge, 11 in four games last week, included tape-measure shots from the 23-year-old cleanup hitter in all four games.

"It's disappointing," said Twins manager Paul Molitor. "It's tough to have injuries, but you've got to deal with them along the way. They get bunched up once in awhile."

Don't the Twins know it. Sano's departure marks the second straight day that a hamstring injury has hobbled a Twins starter. Center fielder Danny Santana, hurt while running the bases on Monday, was placed on the disabled list Tuesday. Byron Buxton, who doubled and struck out twice in four at-bats, replaced him.

Tyler Duffey, meanwhile, was battered by Oakland for much of the night, and he finished a disappointing May by allowing five runs, three of them driven home by Valencia. After the Twins took an early 1-0 lead on back-to-back doubles by Robbie Grossman and Byung Ho Park — the

Korean slugger's first extra-base hit since May 16 — Duffey surrendered an RBI triple to Billy Burns in the bottom of the inning, on a ball that Sano pulled up short of near the right-field line, then had to chase when it took a weird sideways bounce.

"It's frustrating, because there were [four] times when we scored," Molitor pointed out, "and they came right back and answered."

Valencia rocketed a 3-1 fastball from Duffey, who allowed 16 runs in his final three May starts, in the third inning, a two-run blast that was his first home run ever against the team that drafted him a decade ago. And in the fifth, Valencia broke a 3-3 tie by doubling to deep center field, driving home Stephen Vogt from first base.

"It felt like I was behind everyone 2-0," said Duffey, who fell to 2-4. "I was fighting my fastball command all night. When I went out there in the first inning, knew it was going to be a rough one."

The loss meant the Twins ended May having trailed at some point in all but one game, same as they did in April. Minnesota has trailed in 49 of its 51 games this year.

Sano left on an RBI note, at least, a hustle play when he hit a one-out chopper to Valencia with the bases loaded in the third inning. The A's tried to turn an inning-ending double play, but Sano stretched to reach the bag, narrowly beating the relay throw and allowing the run to score — but at a serious cost.

"When he gets going, he moves pretty well for a big man," Molitor said. "He runs hard, he's not one of the guys you worry about. That one, you smell an RBI, and he did a good job getting down there."

Kepler, 2-for-12 in a brief stint with the Twins in April, was batting .286 with 10 extra-base hits, six of them triples, and 18 RBIs at Class AAA Rochester.

Etc.

Mauer was named AL Player of the Week on Monday, after collecting 11 hits in six games, four of them home runs, last week. It's the third such honor of Mauer's career, but his first since 2009. "I didn't really realize I was having the week I was," said Mauer, who receives a watch from MLB in recognition of the award.

Alex Meyer, who hasn't pitched since May 3 against the Astros, will have a cortisone injection into his pitching shoulder in hopes of relieving the pain that has nagged him for a month. An MRI found only inflammation and no structural damage, the Twins said. Meyer "feels great when he throws in the bullpen," assistant general manager Rob Antony said, "but the next day, it's sore again. ... We're hoping the cortisone quiets that down."

Closer Glen Perkins, feeling stronger as his throwing program advances, will pitch a bullpen session Saturday.

Santana said Monday his left hamstring strain is in the same leg as the injury that sidelined him in April. But Twins trainers checked their records and reminded Santana that he was mistaken — the previous injury was to his right hamstring.

## **Byron Buxton returns to Twins with a fresh approach**

**Phil Miller | Star Tribune | June 1, 2016**

Joe Mauer, who knows a few things about ignoring social media critics, has some simple advice for anyone who doubts Byron Buxton's future as a major leaguer.

Just wait.

"He'll be fine. He's a one of the most talented players I've ever seen, but you've got to give him a little time," said Mauer, the only player in Twins history drafted higher than his overall No. 2 teammate. "He's still realizing what he has and how to play this game. Nowadays, people get impatient for that, but give him a chance. He's going to be a good one."

The Twins have faith in that, too, all the more after watching how he responded to a gruesome start to the season in the majors and a humbling demotion to Class AAA Rochester after 17 games. His seven hits in the majors suddenly blossomed into 39 for the Red Wings, his every-other-at-bat strikeout rate tumbled to an acceptable one-in-five. And his confidence?

"I went down and got myself back together," Buxton said shortly before his new start, triggered when Danny Santana injured his left hamstring Monday. "You get sent down and then you get hot again and get your confidence back."

Not to mention his batting stroke. Buxton — his timing a mess and his approach oddly tentative by the time he was sent down — temporarily adopted a leg kick as a timing device, and gradually excised it as his results improved.

"Once I got the timing down, everything just kind of sunk in," he said.

Everything but his numbers. Buxton batted .336 in his six weeks in the minors, and he got hotter as his stint went on, collecting seven extra-base hits in his final seven games.

Buxton was 1-for-4, including a sixth-inning double to left, in Tuesday's 7-4 loss to the Athletics. He struck out twice and flied out to deep right-center in his other at-bats.

"I don't think anybody was worried about him," manager Paul Molitor said. "There has been some tweaking to his swing, particularly in the area of how he's getting set. Picking that foot up a little bit more, trying to increase his balance, giving him a little bit more time to recognize and drive pitches a little more."

True, but none of the hype surrounding Buxton will be fulfilled if he doesn't hit. And after three unimpressive, though brief, stints in the majors in the past year, aren't the Twins concerned that doubts might be creeping in — not to his impatient critics, but inside his own head?

"I really don't think the early stage of the season was something that he couldn't handle. ... He stayed fairly strong through that," Molitor said. "The strikeouts were tough to deal with for a guy who can run the way he can, and he knows that. But he's trying to fill in some of those gaps that were holding him back from being a consistent player up here."

Molitor immediately restored Buxton to the Twins' lineup, albeit batting ninth once more rather than his familiar leadoff spot he occupied in the minors. Buxton said the adjustments he made while in Rochester — some on the advice of Torii Hunter, who called two or three times a week to share his expertise — shouldn't be difficult to apply when facing major league pitchers.

"I was just able to slow it down better than I was here. Not chasing too many pitches out of the zone. I've been more aggressive to the fastball and swinging at better pitches," Buxton said. "I didn't change anything. I changed my mentality. Just try to hit the ball hard [up the middle]. That allowed me to keep my hands through the ball a little bit more and drive the ball a little better."

And his mental state?

"You've got to have the confidence, you've got to believe in yourself," Buxton said. "Know that you're going to get a hit, and go up there and swing at good pitches and put the ball in play."

Such a simple game.

"It was time to get him back," Molitor said. "So I'm looking forward to seeing him play."

### **Twins hope Byron Buxton can set expectations aside and 'be himself'**

**John Shipley | Pioneer Press | May 31, 2016**

Byron Buxton doesn't seem to mind what's expected of him as the top prospect in baseball.

"I just try to put it on the side and worry about what I have to do," he said upon his return to the major leagues on Tuesday.

The Twins think that's a good plan.

Buxton, 22, was back with the Twins and starting in center field in the Twins' late game against the A's on Oakland, ready, he said, to make the permanent leap to the major leagues after a rough start that landed him back at Triple-A Rochester in April after making the team out of spring training.

He was hitting .156 with 24 strikeouts in 17 games when he was sent down. With the Red Wings, Buxton hit .336 with nine doubles, two triples, six home runs and 14 runs batted in in 29 games.

Buxton said he worked on his timing for a week and half, but most of his adjustments were mental.

"I just tried to hit the ball hard, a one-hopper to second base, and that allowed me to keep my hands through the ball a little bit more and drive the ball a bit," he said.

In his major league debut, Buxton hit .209 with 44 strikeouts in 46 games last season, well below what was expected of Baseball America's top prospect in baseball.

"I don't know how much he reads the paper or social media, but (criticism) was all over," assistant general manager Rob Antony said Tuesday. "I know I couldn't get away from it; if he pays attention, he couldn't either. That can wear you down. It's tough to hear all those negative things when you've been so successful, and done all the things to be one of the best, if not the best, prospects in baseball.

"He needs to forget all that and not try to live up to expectations, just be himself."

The No. 2 overall pick in the 2012 amateur draft, Buxton has hit .400 and .336 in two stints at Triple-A. He hit .283 in 59 games at Double-A Chattanooga, and nearly .340 combined and low- and high-A ball.

Doing that in the majors, of course, is always the hard part. He went 1 for 4 with two strikeouts in a 7-4 loss to the A's in his return Tuesday.

"He was really struggling; we're all aware of the numbers, the strikeouts, all those things," Antony said. "He was talking to a lot of people, and everybody was giving him advice. He's cleared his head of all that and was able to step back, look at some video and see what he did that was successful, what he did to make him one of the best prospects in the game.

"He needs to just carry that on and become Byron Buxton."

#### MOVE COMING

Buxton took the active roster spot of Danny Santana, placed on the 15-day disabled list after leaving Monday's 3-2 loss with a strained left hamstring.

"In our situation, we couldn't sit around and see if he could play," Antony said. "We needed a center fielder, and Buxton was the logical guy."

The Twins have 13 pitchers on their 25-man roster and will add right-hander Kyle Gibson on Thursday, when he is expected to start against Tampa Bay in the opener of a 10-game home stand. The Twins likely won't decide which pitcher is moved until then.

#### BRIEFLY

Trevor Plouffe started at third base Tuesday, his first start since leaving Thursday's 7-2 victory over Seattle with a bone bruise in his right knee. He pinch hit and was a defensive replacement on Monday. ... The Twins arrived in Oakland on a four-game winning streak after sweeping the Mariners in Seattle. "What I'm most pleased about is the amount of energy, and the excitement they showed when they won that crazy game (6-5) on Saturday," Antony said. "You can't look at the record because you can't change what's already happened; all you can do is look ahead to tonight and tomorrow and the next day, and I think that's what they're doing. I hope they continue with that approach."

### **Sano to DL after straining hamstring vs. A's**

**Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | June 1, 2016**

The Twins received a major blow to their offense on Tuesday, as right fielder Miguel Sano was placed on the 15-day disabled list with a strained left hamstring. The Twins called up top outfield prospect Max Kepler for a second time this season to take Sano's spot on the roster.

Sano, who had homered four times over his previous six games, suffered the injury in the third inning against the A's while beating out a potential double-play ball with the bases loaded. With one out, Sano hit a hard grounder to third baseman Danny Valencia, who tried to turn a double play. Sano hustled down the line and beat it out, scoring Eduardo Nunez from third to give the Twins a 2-1 lead in their eventual 7-4 loss to the A's. But Sano said he felt the hamstring strain one step before reaching the bag, and it's the first time he's dealt with the injury.

"I was trying to hustle for the team," Sano said. "It's tough because I want to help the team and I can't do that when I'm out. It's frustrating. I was hitting the ball well."

Sano came up limping after reaching first base and was looked at by trainer Dave Pruemer before leaving the game. Oswaldo Arcia replaced him as a pinch-runner and took over in right field. Sano, 23, was hitting .235/.341/.458 with a team-leading 11 homers and 27 RBIs in 50 games.

It's the second hamstring injury in as many days for the Twins, as center fielder Danny Santana was placed on the 15-day DL with a left hamstring strain on Monday.

"It's disappointing," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "It's certainly tough. Injuries, you have to deal with them along the way. They get bunched up once in a while. You have to make due and when you call up people they get an opportunity, and hopefully they perform."

Kepler hit .282/.367/.455 with a homer, four doubles, six triples and 19 RBIs in 30 games with Triple-A Rochester. Kepler, ranked as the No. 39 overall prospect by MLB Pipeline.com, also saw limited action in nine games with the Twins early this season, hitting .167 with two walks and two doubles. But he's expected to get regular playing time in the Majors for the first time in his career in Sano's absence.

## **Twins can't erase Duffey's rocky start vs. A's**

**Rhett Bollinger and Jane Lee | MLB.com | June 1, 2016**

Danny Valencia homered and drove in three runs against his former Twins club, helping the A's secure the series victory with a 7-4 win at the Coliseum on Tuesday night, their fourth in a row.

Valencia's go-ahead, two-run homer in the third inning off Twins starter Tyler Duffey was his eighth of the season. The third baseman helped the A's retake the lead again in the fifth with an RBI double, and Stephen Vogt extended it in the eighth with a two-run double for his third hit of the night.

"It's a good feeling we have in here right now," Vogt said. "I feel like we're playing good, complete baseball. Guys are coming through with timely hitting and we haven't had that all year. It's been a good four-game stretch for us."

Duffey allowed five runs, yielding 10 hits and one walk with six strikeouts across 4 2/3 innings in the loss. A's lefty Eric Surkamp, recalled from Triple-A Nashville for Tuesday's start, also lasted just 4 2/3 innings, surrendering three runs on eight hits, including a pair of RBI doubles to Byung Ho Park and Robbie Grossman, who finished with a career-high three two-baggers.

"It was not a very good night for Tyler," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "He pitched behind a lot. That's one thing that really jumps out at you. A lot of hitter's counts. They did a good job laying off his breaking ball, and then when he got up in the zone, they whacked it a couple times."

### **MOMENTS THAT MATTERED**

Vogt counts: Twice, cleanup man Valencia put the A's on top with crucial hits, but Vogt's at-bats that preceded both of them proved equally significant. The A's catcher led off the third inning with a base hit, setting the stage for Valencia's opposite-field, two-run homer. Vogt then christened the fifth with another single, scoring again on Valencia's ensuing double. Vogt, who enjoyed his fourth three-hit game of the season, has reached base safely in 12 straight games and is 15-for-42 (.357) over that span.

"Big hits," Valencia said. "He's been getting on base, and he had as big of an at-bat as any in the game to make it a three-run game. Vogt's been doing a good job. He grinds out at-bats, gives you a tough at-bat every time, and we definitely need him to swing the bat he's swinging right now."

Something's not right: Both teams' starting right fielders made costly misplays on fly balls that led to runs on both sides. First, it was the Twins' Miguel Sano who couldn't keep a high Billy Burns fly ball in front of him, which bounced past to the wall for an RBI triple in the second. Three innings later, Oakland's Chris Coghlan made an almost identical misjudgment on a Grossman fly ball, allowing Trevor Plouffe to score from first as the Twins tied the game at 3-3 with the RBI double.

Less drama, more Dull: Ryan Dull, a magician with men on base, was at it again Tuesday, relieving Surkamp with two outs in the fifth inning and quickly stranding Grossman at second base by striking out Park. Dull, who earned the win, has stranded all 21 of his inherited runners this season, most in the Majors among relievers who have not allowed an inherited runner to score. His opponents are 0-for-28 with runners in scoring position.

Grossman doubles up: Since being called up by the Twins on May 19, Grossman has been one of the club's best hitters and continued that on Tuesday with a career-high three doubles, an RBI and two runs scored. Grossman has reached base safely in 10 of his 11 games, and is hitting .361 with nine RBIs. He also became the first Twins player with three doubles in a road game since Joe Mauer did it on Aug. 4, 2009.

"I'm just sticking with my approach," Grossman said. "I put a lot of time in studying pitchers and what they plan on doing with me. I'm trusting my ability."

#### SOUND SMART WITH YOUR FRIENDS

With his single in the ninth, Mauer now has 1,749 hits, tying Kent Hrbek for fourth on the Twins' all-time hits list, dating back to their move to Minnesota in 1961.

#### SANO LEAVES WITH INJURY

Sano hustled to beat out a potential double-play ball to bring home a run in the second inning, but suffered a strained left hamstring and exited the game. He was replaced by Oswaldo Arcia. Sano was placed on the 15-day disabled list after the game and the Twins called up prospect Max Kepler.

"I was trying to hustle for the team," Sano said. "It's tough because I want to help the team and I can't do that when I'm out. It's frustrating. I was hitting the ball well."

#### WHAT'S NEXT

Twins: Lefty Pat Dean is set to make his third career start on Wednesday against the A's at 2:35 p.m. CT. Dean has been impressive in his first two starts, posting a combined 2.77 ERA with 13 strikeouts and three walks in 13 innings. He's coming off his first career win against the Mariners on Friday.

Athletics: The A's will close out their homestand with a 12:35 p.m. PT matchup with the Twins in Wednesday's series finale at the Coliseum. Left-hander Sean Manaea is scheduled for his seventh start of the season, having gone 1-3 with a 7.03 ERA in his first six outings.

### **Mauer's recent surge worthy of All-Star support**

**Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | May 31, 2016**

The Twins don't have any players among the leading vote-getters for the 2016 All-Star Game, but first baseman Joe Mauer is strengthening his case to be an All-Star for the first time since '13.

Mauer, who was named the American League Player of the Week on Tuesday, is hitting .281/.389/.427 with six homers, six doubles and 18 RBIs in 49 games. He's coming off a week in which he hit .440 with four homers, seven RBIs and seven runs scored in six games. Mauer's .389 on-base percentage is tied for the seventh-best mark in the AL.

Mauer, though, faces stiff competition at his position, as Kansas City's Eric Hosmer leads all AL first baseman with 871,222 votes. He leads Detroit's Miguel Cabrera (466,523), Baltimore's Chris Davis (387,876), Boston's Hanley Ramirez (296,276) and Chicago's Jose Abreu (189,963).

Twins utility man Eduardo Nunez isn't on the ballot, but he warrants consideration, as he's hitting .338/.366/.506 with five homers, nine doubles, nine stolen bases and 20 RBIs in 41 games. Nunez, who has seen action at shortstop, second base and third base, ranks third in the AL with his .338 average.

### **Grossman emerges as Twins' Mr. Reliable**

**Do-Hyoung Park | MLB.com | June 1, 2016**

It was expected that this Twins lineup full of power potential and free swingers would struggle to string together hits at times.

That has indeed been the case this season: Consider the fact that Miguel Sano's .235 batting average ranks third among the Twins' qualified hitters.

But outfielder Robbie Grossman, one of the Twins' newest additions, has provided pop from the heart of the order without sacrificing his average, and has quickly become one of the most reliable hitters. He again flashed that consistency in Minnesota's 7-4 loss to the Athletics on

Tuesday, finishing 3-for-4 with a career-high three doubles, an RBI and two runs scored.

Grossman has reached base in 10 of the 11 games since he was promoted on May 20 and has also notched four multi-hit games in that span. He became the first Twin to hit three doubles in a game since Eddie Rosario did it against the Yankees on July 24, 2015, and the first to do so on the road since 2009.

"I'm just putting up competitive at-bats and going in with a solid approach," Grossman said. "I barreled some balls and they found the grass." For Grossman, that approach has involved meticulous study of opposing pitchers, making sure that he knows their tendencies so that he never feels surprised by anything they throw at him.

"He takes the information that he's given, and he does his homework to give himself a good chance in terms of approach on a given pitcher," said Twins manager Paul Molitor. "He fought off a couple of balls tonight, but it was a way to get the ball in play, and it fell in."

In 11 games this season as the Twins' primary left fielder, Grossman has hit .361 with two home runs, nine RBIs and eight runs scored. Most significantly, he has drawn six walks to go with just six strikeouts, reliably putting the ball in play and getting on base in the middle of a strikeout-heavy lineup.

"He's finding ways to get on base and he's doing a good job," Molitor said.

### **Buxton rejoins Twins after hot stint in Minors**

**Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | June 1, 2016**

This time, the Twins hope Byron Buxton will be in the Majors for good.

Buxton, who entered the season as MLB Pipeline.com's No. 2 overall prospect, rejoined the Twins on Tuesday, starting in center field and batting ninth against the A's after Danny Santana went on the 15-day disabled list with a strained left hamstring. Buxton, 22, hit .336/.403/.603 with six homers, nine doubles, two triples and four stolen bases in 29 games with Triple-A Rochester after being optioned on April 25.

Buxton went 1-for-4 with a double and two strikeouts in his first game with the Twins since April 24. Minnesota fell short in Oakland, 7-4. "We felt like of our options there, he was the most prepared," Twins assistant general manager Rob Antony said. "Ideally, we would've loved him to keep it going and build on this, but at the same time he's playing well and it's not like we're just bringing him in because we need a body."

Buxton showed a marked improvement from his struggles with the Twins early in the season, when he hit .156/.208/.289 with 24 strikeouts in 49 plate appearances. Buxton said he took the late April demotion to the Minors in stride and that his impressive numbers there helped him regain his confidence.

"I think I was able to slow it down a little bit better than I did up here," Buxton said. "Not chasing as many pitches out of the zone. I've been aggressive to the fastball and swinging at better pitches."

Buxton cut down on his strikeouts at Rochester, with 26 in 129 plate appearances, which pleased Molitor, who wanted him to increase his contact rate to take more advantage of his speed.

"It's a different game down there, but he did what we asked him to and put the ball in play more consistently," Molitor said. "I think the ratio was more like 5-to-1 or 4-to-1 rather than 2-to-1 up here."

Buxton also tweaked his mechanics at Rochester, ditching his toe tap for a more pronounced leg kick. Buxton downplayed the change as the reason for his success, instead attributing it to better plate discipline. But Molitor said he noticed a difference from watching video of Buxton in the Minors compared to what he was doing with the Twins.

"There's been tweaking to his swing in terms of a variation of how he gets set, picking up his foot a little bit more to increase his balance," Molitor said. "It gives him time to recognize pitches and drive the ball, which he's done."

Worth noting

Closer Glen Perkins, on the 15-day DL retroactive to April 11 with a strained left shoulder, is set to throw off a mound for the first time on

Saturday, Antony said. He was scheduled to throw a bullpen session on May 23, but saw it pushed back after suffering a setback. Perkins is expected to throw a few bullpen sessions before starting a rehab assignment. He's not eligible to return until June 10 after being placed on the 60-day DL on Wednesday.

Right-hander Alex Meyer, who has been dealing with a right shoulder strain since being optioned May 4, had an MRI exam that revealed inflammation in his shoulder, according to Antony. Meyer will receive a cortisone shot in his shoulder, and there's no timetable for his return.

Top pitching prospect Kohl Stewart was promoted to Double-A Chattanooga on Tuesday. Stewart, ranked as the club's No. 7 prospect by MLB Pipeline.com, had a 2.61 ERA with 44 strikeouts in 51 2/3 innings with Class A Advanced Fort Myers. Right-hander Randy LeBlanc, who had a 0.74 ERA in 61 innings at Class A Cedar Rapids, was promoted to Fort Myers.

### **Lefties Manaea, Dean duel as A's seek sweep**

**Do-Hyoung Park | MLB.com | June 1, 2016**

A pair of rookie southpaws will face off in Wednesday's series finale between the Twins and Athletics at the Coliseum.

Oakland will turn to 24-year-old Sean Manaea, who has been inconsistent in six starts since his callup in late April. He has yet to last seven full innings and has given up more than four earned runs in four starts. His lone victory came three starts ago, on May 16, when he allowed one run and scattered four hits in 6 2/3 innings vs. the Rangers.

Minnesota will counter with left-hander Pat Dean (1-1, 3.43 ERA), who has impressed in both of his starts following his Major League debut in the bullpen on May 11. In his last start, Dean struck out eight Mariners while walking none as he worked seven innings in a 7-2 Minnesota victory.

Things to know about this game

Heading into Tuesday, the Twins were hitting a league-low .211 as a team against left-handed pitching. Manaea has allowed just three hits this season to left-handed hitters, who are hitting just .130 off the southpaw compared to .349 by right-handed batters.

Danny Valencia has had seven multi-hit games -- including four three-hit games -- since coming off the disabled list on May 7.

Oakland had won 14 of its last 17 games against Minnesota at the Coliseum. The Twins have not won a series in Oakland since May 18-19, 2011.

### **After loss, Minnesota Twins put Sano on DL, recall Kepler**

**Associated Press | June 1, 2016**

The Twins placed Miguel Sano on the 15-day disabled list with a strained hamstring and recalled outfielder Max Kepler from Triple-A Rochester after a 7-4 loss to the A's late Tuesday.

Former Twin Danny Valencia homered and drove in three runs for the A's, who won the first two games of this three-game series. The finale is Wednesday afternoon.

Sano left the game after straining his left hamstring running to first base in the third inning. To replace him on the 25-man roster the Twins recalled Kepler, who was hitting .282 with four doubles, six triples, one home runs and 19 RBI in 30 games for the Red Wings.

Marcus Semien and Billy Burns each had two hits and drove in a run for the A's, who beat the Twins at home for the 15th time in 18 games.

Sano, Byung Ho Park, Robbie Grossman and Kurt Suzuki each drove in a run for the Twins, who lost their second straight following a four-game winning streak. Grossman had a career-high three doubles.

Tyler Duffey (2-4) gave up at least five runs for a third consecutive start after giving up eight runs — five earned — through his first four starts combined. He allowed a career-high matching 10 hits, walked one and struck out six.

Valencia's two-run double in the fifth snapped a 3-all tie, though the Twins got a run back in the eighth. Valencia has nine hits in his last 14 at bats (.643) and has driven in 19 runs in 21 games since coming off the disabled list.



Ryan Dull (1-0) ended a scoring threat in the fifth and finished with 1 1/3 scoreless innings for the win. He has yet to allow a hit to his first batter (0 for 21) nor has he allowed any of his 21 inherited runners to score.

Starter Eric Surkamp, called up from Triple-A to make the start, lasted 4 2/3 innings, giving up three runs on eight hits. He walked one and struck out two.

John Axford worked the ninth for his first save in three chances.

## **Preview: Twins at Athletics**

**Associated Press | June 1, 2016**

What seemed like a brutal matchup for Pat Dean last week turned into his first major league win for the Minnesota Twins. Next, he faces a youngster also seeking his second career victory.

A pair of rookie left-handers square off on Wednesday when Dean and the visiting Twins hope to avoid a sweep at the hands of the Oakland Athletics, who send Sean Manaea to the mound seeking a fifth straight win.

Oakland (24-29) extended its winning streak to four games with Monday's 3-2 victory and Tuesday's 7-4 win, pushing its run over Minnesota (15-36) to four straight.

Danny Valencia drove in three runs and Steven Vogt added three hits and two RBIs on Tuesday, with the big blast Valencia's two-run home run in the third inning. Oakland's Nos. 2-4 batters have combined to hit .465 the last four games.

"It's a good feeling we have in here," Vogt said. "We're playing good, complete baseball. We're coming up with timely hitting, something we weren't doing earlier."

They hope to keep rolling in the series finale against Dean, who earned his first MLB win when faced with a daunting assignment on Friday in Seattle.

Dean (1-1, 3.43 ERA) held the Mariners to two runs and four hits in seven innings while striking out eight in a 7-2 victory, besting former AL Cy Young Award winner Felix Hernandez. It was the rookie left-hander's second start and fourth appearance since being called up May 11.

Dean, a 27-year-old who had been in the minor leagues for seven years prior to his promotion, settled down after allowing an opposite-field homer to the second batter he faced.

He retired the next seven hitters on the way to his longest outing in the big leagues.

"I talked to him after the first inning," Twins manager Paul Molitor told MLB's official website. "To give up a home run like that, then come back and get a couple of good hitters was a good sign. I think he was able to turn the page rather quickly."

Manaea (1-3, 7.03) pitched into the sixth inning in each of his last three starts, though after logging his first win, he has lost the last two with a 5.68 ERA.

The rookie gave up three runs and nine hits in six innings of Friday's 4-1 loss to Detroit, surrendering his fifth home run in six starts while walking two and striking out four.

Still, the 24-year-old feels like he is progressing.

"My slider was non-existent my first couple of games and now it's coming around," Manaea said. "The change has been huge for me and the fastball has always been there. My slider is pretty effective when I'm throwing it where I want to, and just going inside and not letting them get their hands extended."

Oakland has won 15 of 18 at home against Minnesota.