



# OAKLAND ATHLETICS

## Media Release

Oakland Athletics Baseball Company • 7000 Coliseum Way • Oakland, CA 94621  
510-638-4900 • Public Relations Facsimile 510-562-1633 • [www.oaklandathletics.com](http://www.oaklandathletics.com)

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### Improving A's Mount Solid Second Half Performance in 2009

#### **Oakland Posts 38-38 Mark After the All-Star Break; Young Pitching Staff Finishes No. 3 in AL ERA**

OAKLAND, Calif. –Mired 12 games below the .500 mark at the All-Star Break, the Oakland Athletics appeared headed towards obscurity in 2009.

However, as Manager Bob Geren and club management began to accelerate their youth movement in earnest, something unexpected took place in the East Bay. The A's began to click on all cylinders and a seemingly hopeless campaign transformed into one of competitive baseball and a promising future.

After plunging to a 37-49 start that saw them fall out of AL West contention at the break, the A's rebounded sharply to play at a .500 clip (38-38) for the remainder of the 2009 campaign to finish at 75-87. Leading the resurgence was a lineup that pounded out the third best batting average (.280) in the American League after the All-Star Break, while also ranking first in doubles (165) and stolen bases (79), third in hits (743) and fourth in runs (398) after the break.

The A's offensive resurgence was fueled by catcher Kurt Suzuki (.274, 37 doubles, 15 HR, 88 RBI), center fielder Rajai Davis (.305, 27 doubles, 41 SB), third baseman Adam Kennedy (.289, 29 doubles, 63 RBI, 20 SB), right fielder Ryan Sweeney (.293, 31 doubles, 53 RBI) and DH-outfielder Jack Cust (.240, 25 home runs, 70 RBI, 93 walks), all of whom posted impressive numbers in the final months.

Oakland particularly excelled in September, when they registered a 17-10 record—the second best mark in the American League. The A's batted .297 in September, the second highest average in the majors behind the Yankees (.299) and the second best single month in Oakland history. Remarkably, the young-and-improving A's led the majors in runs (167), doubles (66) and stolen bases (28) last month.

Suzuki became the second catcher in A's franchise history to lead the team in RBI, 65 years after Frankie Hayes drove in a club-leading 78 runs for Philadelphia in 1944. He also paced Oakland in doubles, becoming the first catcher to lead the club in that category in 52 years (Hal Smith, 26, 1957). At the age of 25, Suzuki solidified himself as one of baseball's top catchers. Offensively this season, he led all AL catchers in doubles, RBI and stolen bases (8), while defensively he ranked first in games played (135), games started (132), innings caught (1173.1) and putouts (923).

The 28-year-old Davis, a reserve outfielder with the Pirates, Giants and A's during his previous three seasons in the majors, finally got his chance to start this season and he made the most of it. He rode hitting streaks of 14 and 12 games during a second half that produced the American League's ninth-best batting average (.325) and most steals (30, tied with Jacoby Ellsbury, BOS) after the All-Star break.

While Oakland's offense hit their stride in the final half, it was the A's young but fast maturing pitching staff that earned rave reviews throughout the league this year. Anchored by the rookie trio of All-Star closer Andrew Bailey (6-3, 26 saves, 91 strikeouts in 83.1 innings, 1.84 ERA) and 21-year-old starters Brett Anderson (11-11, 4.06 ERA) and Trevor Cahill (10-13, 4.63 ERA), the Athletics allowed the fewest home runs (156) and scrolled the third lowest ERA (4.26) in the American League—a remarkable achievement for a team that started a *rookie pitcher 116 times* this year, an Oakland record. The staff also set a franchise record for strikeouts in a season with 1,124.

Bailey, a leading candidate for 2009 AL Rookie of the Year honors, finished the season by reeling off a 21-for-21 save streak, the league's second longest of the season. He teamed with Michael Wuertz (6-1, 2.63 ERA, 74 games), Craig Breslow (8-7, 3.36 ERA, 77 games) and Brad Ziegler (2-4, 3.07 ERA, 69 games) to form the cornerstone of a bullpen that led the American League in ERA (3.46), strikeouts (514) and innings pitched (559).

Wuertz, a 30-year-old righthander acquired from the Cubs in February, became only the third relief pitcher in Oakland A's history to reach the 100-strikeout milestone, as he fanned 102 batters in 78.2 innings. Breslow, who was claimed off waivers from Minnesota in late May, added the key lefthanded piece to the 2009 bullpen, fashioning a 7-5 record and 2.60 ERA in his 60 appearances with Oakland. Ziegler, meanwhile, led AL relievers in inducing double play ground balls (14).

While ultimately the A's fell short of their postseason goal, it was a memorable season nonetheless. Among the highlights:

- Rallying from a 12-2 third-inning deficit vs. Minnesota July 20, the A's staged the greatest comeback victory in Oakland history by beating the Twins, 14-13, at the Coliseum.
- Down 9-2 in the fifth inning at Anaheim Sept. 26, Oakland rallied to beat the eventual AL West champion Angels, 15-10.
- Bailey winning AL Rookie of the Month for August, when he went 2-0, did not allow a run and converted all seven of his save opportunities in 11 games and 11.0 innings. He allowed just four hits, did not walk a batter and struck out seven during the month.
- Anderson's two-hit, nine-strikeout shutout masterpiece against the Red Sox at Boston's Fenway Park July 6, a 6-0 A's win.
- Kennedy, becoming only the second player in Oakland history to belt out two five-hit games in one season (Sal Bando, 1969), as he went 5-for-7 at Boston July 28 and 5-for-5 against the Chicago White Sox Aug. 15.
- The retirement of Rickey Henderson's jersey No. 24 in Aug. 1 ceremonies, a week after he was inducted into Baseball's Hall of Fame.
- A special tribute at the Coliseum June 6, when A's and their fans honored the 1989 World Series championship team.
- Opening Day (April 10), when the A's paid tribute to the four Oakland Police officers, Sgts. Mark Dunakin, Ervin Romans and Daniel Sakai and Officer John Hege, who were tragically killed March 21, 2009. The team generated \$130,000 for the family's trust funds.

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## 2009 Team Accomplishments

- The A's finished the 2009 season with a 75-87 record, their third consecutive season with a losing record...this is the first time the A's have finished with a losing record in three straight seasons since 1993-98 when they had six straight...the A's .463 winning percentage was 10<sup>th</sup> lowest in Oakland history and it was the worst mark since the 1998 club went 74-88 (.457)...this marks the third consecutive season the A's winning percentage has decreased...the only other times that happened in Oakland history was from 1972-74 and 2003-05...finished in last place in the American League West for the seventh time in Oakland history and the first time since 1998 (also 1977, 1979, 1993, 1995 and 1997)...spent an Athletics record 161 days in last place, including every day since May 3.
- The A's batted .262, which ranked ninth in the American League but was the 10<sup>th</sup> best batting average in Oakland history...hit 135 home runs, which were the fewest in the AL and fourth fewest in the majors...it marked the first time in Oakland history the A's ranked last in the AL in home runs...the last Athletics team to finish last was the 1967 Kansas City A's...over the last 20 years, the only A's team to hit fewer home runs in a non-strike season is last years club, which finished with 125...had 527 walks, which were the A's fewest walks in a non-strike season since 1985 when they had 508...ranked last in the AL in slugging percentage (.397) and currently have the fourth fewest extra base hits (463) and the fourth lowest on-base percentage (.328).
- The A's stole 133 bases, which ranked fourth in the American League and the majors...those were the most steals by an A's team since the 1992 club had 143...**Rajai Davis** led the A's and ranked fifth in the AL with 41 steals...he became the ninth player (24<sup>th</sup> time) in Oakland history to steal 40 bases, the first since Rickey Henderson in 1998 (66)...the A's had two players with 20 steals (**Adam Kennedy**, 20) for the first time since 1995 and five with 10 or more for the first time since 1993.
- The A's pitching staff set an Athletics franchise record with 1124 strikeouts, breaking the mark of 1117 set in 2001...finished with a 4.26 ERA, which was third best in the American League...now have a 3.95 ERA since 2001, which is the lowest mark in the AL and third lowest in the majors over that span...the A's allowed the fewest home runs in the AL (156) and hit the fewest batters (36).
- A's starting pitchers were 51-64 with a 4.76 ERA...tossed just 888.0 innings, which was second fewest in the American League and in Oakland history in a non-strike season...had just two complete games, which tied for the fewest in the AL and in Athletics history...had the fourth fewest wins in the AL and the fourth highest ERA.
- The A's started a rookie pitcher in an Oakland record 116 games...broke the previous mark of 93 set in 1983...eight different rookies started a game, matching the record from 1983...started a rookie in 90 of the final 115 games and had at least four rookies in the rotation since Vin Mazzaro was recalled on June 2.
- **Brett Anderson** had a team-leading 11 wins and **Trevor Cahill** added 10 as the A's became just the 13<sup>th</sup> team since 1900 with at least two 10-game winners under the age of 22...Cahill led the A's with 32 starts and Anderson had 30, making the A's the fourth team since 1900 with two pitchers under the age of 22 with 30 or more starts...the A's had just three pitchers over the age of 27 start a game this year and those three pitchers combined for just eight starts (Tomko 6, Giese 1, Reineke 1)...the A's are one of just four teams since 1900 to have nine pitchers under the age of 27 make at least five starts.
- The A's bullpen compiled an American League leading 3.46 ERA, marking the first time the A's led the AL in ERA since 1990...had 514 strikeouts, which set an Oakland record, was the most in the AL this year and third most in AL history...allowed just 42 home runs, which was the fewest in the AL...led AL bullpens in innings pitched (559.1), had the second lowest opponents batting average (.242) and the third best save percentage (76.0%).
- The A's committed 105 errors, which tied for fourth most in the American League and was the most by an A's team since 2003 (107)...had committed fewer than 100 errors in each of the previous five seasons.
- The A's used 51 different players in 2009, which matched last years total for second most in Oakland history...the record of 54 was set in 2007...used an Oakland record tying 26 pitchers, equaling the mark set in 1997...14 different pitchers started a game, matching the 1977 club for second most in Oakland history...the record is 16 set in 1983.
- The A's used the disabled list 17 times in 2009 after setting an Oakland record with 25 last year...have now used the DL 64 times since the start of the 2007 season...the 17 players combined to miss 995 games, an average of 58.5 games per stint...had at least five players on the DL every day since April 29 and for the third consecutive season had at least three players on the DL for the entire season...have not had fewer than three players on the DL since the end of the 2006 season when they had just one.
- The A's finished the season with a 40-41 (.494) record in Oakland, marking the second time in the last three years the A's finished with a losing record at home (40-41 in 2007)...were one of just four American League teams with a losing record at home...were 35-46 (.432) on the road, the A's third consecutive season with a losing record on the road.
- The A's set an Oakland record and currently rank third in the American League with a .280 batting average after the All-Star Break...hit .246 before the break, which was last in the AL...led the majors with 79 stolen bases after the break, which were the most by an A's team since 1989 (90)...also led the majors with an Oakland record 165 doubles after the break after tallying the fourth fewest before the break (142)...had the fourth most runs scored in the majors after the break (398) after finishing with the sixth fewest before the break (361)...had the fifth most extra base hits in the majors after the break (243) after ranking last before the break (220).
- The A's went 31-43 (.419) over the first 74 games in 2009 but then played .500 ball (44-44) over the final 88 games beginning on June 29...went 23-34 (.404) against American League West teams, which was the A's third worst record ever in divisional play...went 3-10 (.231) in extra inning games, which was the lowest winning percentage in extra inning games in Oakland history...were 15-23 (.395) in one-run games, which was the second worst record in Oakland history (16-26, .381 in 1980).
- **Brett Anderson** led Major League rookies and set an Oakland rookie record with 150 strikeouts...led the A's and tied for fourth among American League rookies with 11 wins...fell one short of the Oakland rookie record of 12 wins set by Chris Codioli in 1983 and matched by Joe Blanton in 2005 and is one of four 21-year olds in Oakland history to win 10 or more games...went 3-7 with a 5.74 ERA, .304 opponents batting average and 13 home runs over his first 13 starts and 8-4 with a 2.96 ERA, .237 opponents batting average and seven home runs over his final 17 starts.
- **Andrew Bailey** led Major League rookies and set an Oakland rookie record with 26 saves...the saves tied for sixth most in American League history by a rookie and ranked ninth among all AL pitchers in 2009...converted each of his final 21 save opportunities, which is tied for the second longest streak in Oakland history and tied for the third longest streak in the majors in 2009...is currently tied for the lead among AL relievers with a .167 opponents batting average and that is the fifth best mark by a reliever in Oakland history...also ranked second among AL relievers in strikeouts (91) and third in ERA (1.84) and innings (83.1)...the ERA is fourth best in Athletics history among all pitchers with 80 or more innings.
- **Trevor Cahill** led Major League rookies with 32 starts, which tied for second most in Oakland history by a rookie...it was also second most in Oakland history and fourth most in Athletics history by a 21-year old...with 10 wins, he became the eighth Oakland rookie and fourth 21-year old to win 10 games...set an Oakland rookie record by allowing 27 home runs
- **Rajai Davis** batted .325 after the All-Star Break, which is currently the ninth best batting average in the American League...**Ryan Sweeney** hit .319, which is currently 10<sup>th</sup> best...Davis tied for the Major League lead with 30 steals after the break...he appeared in just 25 of the A's 48 games over the first two months of the season and hit .146...he then batted .324 over his final 100 games from June 1 until the end of the season, which is currently the fourth best average in the AL and 11<sup>th</sup> best in the majors.

- **Kurt Suzuki** led the A's in hits (156), doubles (37) and RBI (88)...he is just the second catcher in Athletics history to lead the team in RBI, joining Frankie Hayes who had 78 RBI for Philadelphia in 1944...this is the second consecutive season he led the team in hits...he led American League catchers in games started for the second consecutive season (132)...also led AL catchers in innings caught (1173.1) and currently leads in games (135)...offensively, he led AL catchers in doubles (34), RBI (83) and stolen bases (8), ranked second in runs (71) and third in hits (144)...his 83 RBI as a catcher ranked second most in Oakland history.
- **Michael Wuertz** led American League relievers and ranked second in the majors with 102 strikeouts...he became just the third reliever (sixth time) in Oakland history to fan 100 or more in a season.

## 2009 Organizational Accomplishments

- The Oakland A's Community Fund supported more than **1,500** charitable organizations through monetary contributions, donated auction items and tickets this season in its efforts to support charitable organizations in improving the quality of life for people throughout the Bay Area. Specifically, the Fund supported endeavors to improve educational programs, aid the underprivileged, assist in crime and drug prevention, promote health awareness, and champion children and senior welfare. The A's Community Fund donated approximately **\$650,000** to various community programs.
- On September 5, the A's raised **\$75,690** on Breast Cancer Awareness Day with proceeds benefiting the American Cancer Society, Northern California Cancer Center and Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Over the past 11 years, the A's Breast Cancer Awareness Day has raised over **\$1,075,000** for breast cancer education and research. Funds were raised through the sale of special ticket packages, commemorative pins and hats, and an A's autographed quilt raffle. In addition, as a part of "A Gift of Faith" grant, the A's donated **\$5,000** to Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center in memory of the late Faith Fancher, the longtime KTVU Channel 2 reporter. A's Breast Cancer Awareness Day was presented by Olay Skin Care, while additional sponsors included Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, Comerica Bank, Comcast, Contra Costa Times, Ross Dress For Less and State Roofing Systems.
- The A's raised more than **\$25,000** at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual MUG Root Beer Float Day August 6 with proceeds benefiting the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Funds were raised through the sale of root beer floats, tips given in exchange for autographs and pictures with the celebrity scoopers, the sale of autographed mugs and a silent auction of sports memorabilia. Since 2003, the A's have raised over **\$270,000** for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation through MUG Root Beer Float Day. MUG Root Beer Float Day was sponsored by Pepsi. The ice cream for the event was donated by Dreyer's.
- The Oakland A's Community Fund Golf Classic, staged at Castlewood Country Club in Pleasanton June 25, raised more than **\$150,000** for the A's Community Fund through the tournament and silent and live auctions. Chevron and State Roofing Systems of San Leandro were the title sponsors of the event and Union Bank was the grand slam sponsor.
- The A's Community Fund held silent auctions of various sports memorabilia on all Saturday and Sunday home dates. Various charity groups received a portion of the more than **\$50,000** in proceeds raised as silent auction partners.
- The Oakland A's generated **\$130,000** for the family trust funds of the four Oakland Police officers, Sgts. Mark Dunakin, Ervin Romans and Daniel Sakai and Officer John Hege, who were tragically killed March 21, 2009. Funds were raised through A's fan and player donations, the A's Silent Auction and a special law enforcement ticket offer, plus a matching donation by A's Owner Lew Wolff and Principal Partner John Fisher.
- With the help of Oakland A's fans and the A's Community Fund, Kurt Suzuki and his wife Renee raised over **\$61,000** for the "Jon Wilhite Recovery Fund" this season. The Fund was set up to assist the Suzukis' good friend and former teammate from Cal State Fullerton, Jon Wilhite, who was the lone survivor of April 9, 2009 crash that took the lives of Angels' pitcher Nick Adenhardt and two others.
- The Ken Korach "A's Winning for the Community" Program raised **\$23,000** to assist the Oakland Athletic League high school baseball programs in funding equipment, uniforms and field maintenance. Funds were raised through donations by A's radio play-by-play announcer Ken Korach and the A's Community Fund for each A's win this season, in addition to fan donations and corporate sponsorship.
- The Third Annual Dave Stewart/Oakland A's High School Baseball Showdown was hosted by De La Salle High School and the A's Community Fund May 16 at the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum. In hopes of promoting youth interaction at the high school level, the event featured games between local high schools and an appearance by former A's pitcher Dave Stewart. The event raised **\$15,000** through ticket sales, sponsorships packages, scoreboard messages and signage and will benefit Oakland inner-city youth programs, including the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League and signage for the new Rickey Henderson Field of Dreams field at Oakland Technical High School.
- The A's collected **2,934** pounds of food and **\$2,174.93** on Food Bank Wednesdays this season, which provided **14,500** meals for children and adults facing hunger in Alameda County.
- Over **20,000** students in **100** Bay Area schools participated in the A's Home Run Readers program during the 2008-09 school year. Seventy-eight schools reached their goals and 20 schools received a visit from a member of the A's front office and the A's mascot Stomper. Six of those schools received a visit from an A's player or coach to congratulate the students for reaching their goals and to encourage them to continue reading outside of the classroom. The program concluded with A's Home Run Readers Day May 27 at the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum. The Home Run Readers program was sponsored by the California Police Youth Charities and Teammates for Kids Foundation.
- The A's designed and distributed over **22,000** "Mathletics" workbooks, which utilize simple formulas for calculating statistics of A's players, to students in an effort to stress the importance of math among Bay Area youth. Both workbooks were also available online at oaklandathletics.com. Students who completed their workbooks correctly, and submitted the answer sheet to the A's, received two ticket vouchers. In addition, one school that demonstrated outstanding participation in the program received a visit from an A's player. Since the program's inception in 2003, over **170,000** Bay Area and Northern California students—grades first through eighth—have participated. The "Mathletics" program was sponsored by Ross Dress For Less.
- Before selected A's home games, volunteers offered tutoring at the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum for at-risk students as a part of the Green Stampede Homework Club. Students who attend the study group were rewarded with tickets to that night's game and if the student attends all eight study groups they received a visit from an A's player.
- The A's Amigos program gave Hispanic children the opportunity to hear an A's player speak about the importance of education, sportsmanship and hard work. In addition to the pregame visit, each child received a game ticket and an A's hat. The A's Amigos program was sponsored by Kelly-Moore Paints.
- Over **10,000** children from low- to moderate-income families were treated to A's games as part of the Little A's program. In addition to a game ticket, each child received an A's pin and pennant. The Little A's program is sponsored by Union Bank and Clorox.
- This season, over **2,000** A's tickets were donated to local charities and non-profit agencies by A's players Dallas Braden, Mark Ellis and Brad Ziegler. The charities and non-profits included Big Brothers Big Sisters of the East Bay, Boys & Girls Club of Oakland, Hoover Tyler Little League of Stockton and Operation One Family.
- Since 1986, The Men's Wearhouse and George Zimmer have donated more than \$1 million dollars to the Oakland Zoo through the A's Double Play program.