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Wilson's arm does talking as Rangers rout A's
By T.R. Sullivan / MLB.com | 8/13/2011 2:00 AM ET

OAKLAND -- A crowd of 20,288 booed lustily when Rangers pitcher C.J. Wilson was introduced on Friday night. Wilson doesn't like the Oakland Coliseum, he made that clear on Wednesday and now he's Public Enemy No. 1 here in the East Bay.

Nine innings later, he was called something else: winning pitcher. He hadn't been called that in a while.

Two days after criticizing the Coliseum's pitching mound, Wilson thrived on it, leading the Rangers to a 9-1 victory over the Athletics. Texas, with its sixth win in eight games, retained a two-game lead over the Angels in the American League West. The Rangers are now 21-12 within their division this season.

"The funny thing is the fans were very colorful in their comments they made," Wilson said. "It fired me up. It felt like a playoff game, having the whole stadium against you except the 15 people who were there with me."

Wilson said he learned to survive and thrive in that kind of hostile environment.

"I do, absolutely," Wilson said. "It makes me stronger, I turn it into focus. I used to do that in Yankee Stadium. They have 50,000 people who would stab you with a butter knife if they thought it would help their team win. We're the same in Texas. You have to be able to compete in that atmosphere. It's what the playoffs to compete in that atmosphere. It can either work for you or you can block it out. I like to let it fuel me."

Wilson, leading 6-0 before pitching his second inning, went six frames and allowed one run on four hits while walking three and striking out seven. He had a two-hit shutout into the sixth before two-out doubles by Josh Willingham and Conor Jackson drove home a run. Wilson threw 114 pitches in raising his record to 11-5 with a 3.28 ERA.

"C.J. did a great job tonight," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "The thing about C.J. is you know you're going to get the best he has every night. That team is playing well and swinging the bats well. We needed to come in here and play a good baseball game and we did."

It was Wilson's first victory almost a month. He was 0-2 with a 4.84 ERA in his last four starts -- all losses for the Rangers -- since a 5-1 win over the Mariners on July 16. Until those four games, the Rangers had not lost two consecutive starts by Wilson all season. Last year, they lost consecutive starts by him only twice and never more than two in a row.

"To go a month without winning a game ..." Wilson said. "I won a go-kart race the other day, that was the first thing I've won in a while. I was stoked about that."

In addition to his vocal displeasure with the Coliseum, Wilson was critical about the lack of fan support in Oakland. The Athletics weren't happy about Wilson's comments, but that wasn't much help once the game began.

"Obviously there was some scuttlebutt before the game," Athletics manager Bob Melvin said. "You can't help but notice some of the quotes. I think each guy takes that a little differently. Some will let it motivate them, some play their game and go out there and prepare accordingly."

"I would have liked to seen us put a few more runs on the board tonight, and early, but when they scored like they did, at times it can take the wind out of your sails. We typically do battle back. Tonight was the first night in a while we were just beaten and beaten badly. Only counts as one, one loss, but it certainly doesn't make you feel any better."

Oakland starter Brandon McCarthy had a much rougher night and had to leave the game in the fourth inning when he took a line drive hit by Endy Chavez off his right leg. The ball was hit so hard that it caromed deep into foul territory behind first base, allowing Chavez to record a double. McCarthy, who walked off the field, was diagnosed with a contusion on his right knee.

"It scared me," Chavez said. "I made good contact and it sounded pretty loud. The good thing is I'm not a power hitter. I'm not strong enough to hurt anybody."

The Rangers jumped on McCarthy for six runs in the second inning. Michael Young opened the inning with a triple off the right-field wall, just beyond the glove of outfielder David DeJesus. The hit gave Young an 11-game hitting streak, and he scored on a single by Nelson Cruz.

A's shortstop Cliff Pennington then bobbled Mike Napoli's hit-and-run grounder for an error, putting runners on first and second. Mitch Moreland and Yorvit Torrealba followed with run-scoring singles, Chavez doubled home another run and a one-out single by Elvis Andrus made it 5-0.

Josh Hamilton then smacked a hard grounder that Pennington knocked down and could only get a force at second, allowing the final run of the inning to score. Torrealba's single gave him a 10-game hitting streak.

"I told myself after that I was still pitching in a 1-0 game," Wilson said. "I didn't want the score to dictate my pitch selection. I wanted to keep putting up zeroes."

Asked about the mound, Wilson said, "It was the same as always."

Cahill, Lewis renew rivalry in Oakland **By Cash Kruth / MLB.com | 8/13/2011 1:50 AM ET**

The Rangers' Colby Lewis and the A's Trevor Cahill will once again square off Saturday, a familiar occurrence a year ago, but one that hasn't happened yet this season.

In 2010, Lewis and Cahill faced each other five times, with the A's winning the first four before the Rangers finally edged Cahill in September.

"It seemed like every time we faced, it was pretty close," Lewis said. "It makes for good competition. He's going to be here for quite a few years, and I'll be around a couple more years, so we probably haven't seen the last of it."

"Within our league, you're going to face a lot of guys several times. I just happened to face him a lot last year. It's not a big issue. I still have to have a game plan and execute it, not worry about what the other guy is doing."

For the Oakland right-hander, Saturday's game also will be a welcomed homecoming. Cahill has struggled on the road this season, posting a 5.42 ERA on the road compared to a 2.52 mark at Oakland Coliseum. Plus, Cahill will be facing a Rangers squad he's dominated throughout his career.

"Every time I've faced them, going through the lineup, it's one of the better lineups you're going to face," said Cahill, who is 8-3 with a 2.19 ERA in 12 starts against the Rangers. "I think it's just kind of a coincidence that I feel that I've always had good stuff against them and my arm's always felt good and my command has been there."

"Just facing them so many times, they know what you've got, but then you also figure out their strengths and weaknesses, too. It works in both favors. I think I just try to switch it up and keep them guessing, and luckily I've always felt good against them."

Rangers: Lewis and long balls

Like Cahill, Lewis should be looking forward to pitching in the pitcher-friendly Coliseum. The right-hander has allowed 1.72 home runs per nine innings this season, the highest in the American League. If that ratio holds throughout the season, it would be the highest mark in Rangers history. Rick Helling allowed 1.68 home runs per nine innings for the Rangers in 1999, while the Major League record during the past 50 years belongs to Jose Lima, who allowed 2.20 home runs per nine innings for the Astros in 2000.

Athletics: Crisp should avoid DL

Center fielder Coco Crisp missed his fifth straight game Friday because of a strained right calf, but he doesn't appear to be heading to the disabled list. A's manager Bob Melvin said Crisp ran Friday and when asked if he expected Crisp to be placed on the DL, Melvin said, "As of right now, I would say no."

- Andrew Bailey has converted all six of his save opportunities since the All-Star break and is a perfect 29-for-29 in his career in the season's second half.

Worth noting

- Texas leads the season series, 7-4.
- The A's are hitting .292 since the All-Star break.
- A's DH Hideki Matsui is hitting .353 (6-for-17) with two homers in his career against Lewis.

Hamilton getting it done sans homers

By T.R. Sullivan / MLB.com | 08/12/11 9:30 PM ET

OAKLAND -- Rangers outfielder Josh Hamilton hit a home run on Wednesday against the Mariners. He was thrilled.

"About time, isn't it?" Hamilton said before Friday's game with the Athletics. "It would be nice if they came in bunches. I'll take at least six or seven on this road trip."

Hamilton's home run was his 14th of the season and first since July 19 against the Angels, a span of 20 games and 82 at-bats. During those 20 games, he was still hitting .321 with five doubles and 10 RBIs. But his slugging percentage was .432.

"I told him I'll still take doubles," manager Ron Washington said.

Hamilton's overall numbers are down because he missed six weeks with a fractured bone in his right arm and he doesn't have enough plate appearances to be listed among the league leaders in percentage categories. But two ratios show that Hamilton is still driving in runs.

He has a one RBI for every 5.02 at-bats. That would rank fourth best in the league if he had enough plate appearances to qualify. However his ratio of one home run for every 22.92 at-bats would rank 21st.

In the same categories last season, Hamilton ranked fourth with a home run every 16.19 at-bats and eighth with an RBI every 5.18 at-bats.

"Honestly, I try not to think about it," Hamilton said. "If you think about it, sometimes you get out of your approach at the plate. You try to create something happening and you quickly spiral downward."

Field work cancels batting practice

OAKLAND -- With an off-day on Thursday, the Rangers normally would have taken both early batting practice and regular batting practice before Friday's game. Both were cancelled because workers were still getting the Oakland Coliseum back into baseball shape after the Raiders played an NFL exhibition here on Thursday night.

Workers were still putting the backstop and outfield fences back in place three hours before game time. Rangers manager Ron Washington, who spoke with Oakland grounds crew before the game, said the biggest concern was center field, which took a beating because retractable football stands were dragged across the grass. Washington said the infield was fine, even though much of it is in play during the football game.

"Center field may be tough, but that's about it," Washington said.

Washington shrugged off comments made by pitcher C.J. Wilson on Wednesday that he hated pitching in Oakland because of the poor mound and lack of fan support for the Athletics.

"I love it here," said Washington, who was on the Oakland coaching staff for 11 years before being named Rangers manager. "The only thing that concerns me is they know I love it here."

Wilson's comments apparently riled some of the Athletics. According to the San Francisco Chronicle, pitcher Dallas Braden left a commemorative perfect game T-shirt in Wilson's locker with a pointed message to him.

"There is an old saying that if you can talk the talk and walk the walk, then you can wear the bull's eye," Washington said.

"That wouldn't have been my choice of words, but C.J.'s entitled to his opinion," Rangers general manager Jon Daniels said. "As an organization, we've got nothing but respect for Oakland and their group. I'd prefer to let our performance and actions speak for us. My expectation is C.J. will do just that, as he usually does."

Beltre with Rangers, but doing little

OAKLAND -- Third baseman Adrian Beltre has joined the Rangers for this 10-game road trip but is doing very little in the way of physical activity. Beltre remains on the disabled list with a strained left hamstring and had to start over from scratch when he reinjured himself running the bases on Sunday in Arlington.

Beltre had been on the disabled list since July 23 and if he passed that running test, he would have been ready to go on a medical rehabilitation assignment in the Minor Leagues.

"Before it happened, I felt no pain and was running 100 percent," Beltre said. "I did all the explosion tests, running to first, running to second, stop and go, no problems. Then, all of a sudden I hurt it again. It's really frustrating because I felt good enough to get into a game. It was the last thing I was doing, sprinting to second, when it happened.

"Maybe I should have run a little less. Maybe I was trying to put too much effort into it trying to build up speed. I had been running for a while, maybe I should have dialed it down."

Washington wants to see 'Moneyball'

OAKLAND -- Rangers manager Ron Washington said he plans on seeing "Moneyball," the movie being made about Oakland general manager Billy Beane. The movie, starring Brad Pitt, is scheduled to premiere in late September.

The movie is based on the best-selling book, and Washington was with the Athletics during the time it was written. Washington's character appears briefly in the movie, although he is not listed in the credits by name.

"I'm certainly going to check it out," Washington said.

Washington did not read the book.

"I started it but never finished it," Washington said. "I'm going to finish it."

How far did he get?

"The first chapter," Washington said. "Then I got distracted ... by a lot of things."

Worth noting

- Rangers outfielder Craig Gentry was ready to go on Friday after being activated from the disabled list on Thursday. He missed almost two weeks with a concussion and said, "I've got no issues whatsoever. I feel good, I'm happy to be back and ready to push to the end of the season."
- Saturday's game is on FOX and will be broadcast to 16 percent of the nation. Tom Grieve and Glenn Kuiper will do the game. It will be the Rangers' sixth Saturday appearance on FOX, and they will also be on Sept. 3 against the Red Sox.
- Ian Kinsler's 18 home runs from the leadoff spot lead the Majors, one more than Milwaukee's Rickie Weeks.

Patience pays off for Rangers prospect Ross Southpaw makes most of opportunities in ascent to Double-A By Louie Horvath / MLB.com | 08/12/11 10:00 AM ET

FRISCO, Texas -- Trading away prospects does not only affect those directly involved, it can also give opportunities to players in the lower levels of an organization's farm system. If one was looking for the biggest Minor League benefactor of the Rangers' trade of Double-A starters Robbie Erlin and Joe Wieland for Major League reliever Mike Adams, look no further than newly minted Double-A starter Robbie Ross.

While Ross put up an attractive 2.26 ERA in Myrtle Beach's pitcher-friendly park, he watched as Wieland and Erlin zoomed past him to Frisco by putting up miniscule ERAs of 2.10 and 2.14, respectively, with Myrtle Beach to begin the season.

"It's important to be patient with it," Ross said. "Once you start getting so caught up in 'I want to move, I want to move, I want to move,' it just gets so consuming and can take away from what your real goal is, to learn things."

Robbie Ross entered Friday with a 9-5 record and a 2.44 ERA in 23 Minor League appearances (22 starts) this season. (MiLB.com)

Ross also was friends with Erlin and Wieland, so it was hard for him to harbor ill feelings towards them, even though they got promoted before him.

"I was happy for them, because they were my friends," Ross said. "It becomes a business to a point, sometimes. I never [thought], 'Oh man, I deserve that over them.' I understood that my timing is the timing that is going to be perfect. I still needed to do some stuff that they didn't need to do."

The trio terrorized the Carolina League to the tune of a combined 18-9 record, with a 2.18 ERA. The team finished 40-29 in the first half of the season to ensure that the Pelicans would play for the Carolina League championship at the end of the season.

"It was awesome," Ross said. "We had [Barret] Loux there, we had [Neil] Ramirez there; that rotation. We had a great time. There it was like we may lose a game today, but there was a good chance the guy pitching the next day would win."

While the team is still in first place in the Carolina League Southern Division overall standings, the Pelicans are below .500 in the second half, largely because Wieland and Erlin were busy turning heads in Frisco.

When those two were traded to the Padres, the RoughRiders lost two-fifths of their starting rotation in one move. Wieland and Erlin barely had time to settle into San Antonio before Ross was called up from Myrtle Beach to fill Wieland's spot in the rotation on Aug. 4.

Ross has noticed that Double-A hitters as a group are smarter than their high Class A counterparts, and he is working on keeping hitters off-balance.

"There's a different type of hitter in Double-A," Ross said. "In high [Class] A, there are still guys trying to find themselves, but here, there's a lot more experienced guys. There are a lot of guys that have moved up from Double-A to the Majors. You just have to learn and understand that there are guys here who can crush. You can't always overpower them."

One of the main adjustments is that Ross must learn an offspeed pitch on the fly, because he throws primarily sliders and fastballs, and he must develop a slower pitch to keep those experienced hitters from timing him and making solid contact consistently. He has experimented with a curveball and changeup in his first two Frisco starts.

"I throw a slider [along with the fastball], so right now, everything I throw is really hard, and I try to put something behind it," Ross said. "It's now to the point where I need to throw something a little bit slower just to get the timing off. I've been trying to work on a little curveball here and there."

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

Boos push Wilson as Rangers crush A's Posted Saturday, Aug. 13, 2011 By JEFF WILSON

OAKLAND, Calif. — C.J. Wilson had to deal with the boo birds and colorful comments Friday night. The messages he received on Twitter were worse, even threatening.

But it took about an inning for the disdain of fans at O.co Coliseum for Wilson to peter out. That's how long the opener of the Texas Rangers' three-game series against Oakland was competitive.

Michael Young tripled to jump-start a six-run second inning, and Wilson allowed only a run in six innings as the Rangers rolled to a 9-1 victory only two days after Wilson made harsh comments about the stadium's mound and A's fans.

All the flak Wilson caught from the announced crowd of 20,288 didn't distract him, as some Bay Area sports-talk hosts suggested it would. The booing and cursing had the opposite effect.

"You've got to make it work for you," Wilson said after beating Oakland for the second time this season. "You can't let it get to you. You're going to pitch on the road. You're going to pitch in the playoffs. The crowd's going to be hostile."

"It's the same thing when you pitch in New York or Boston or Anaheim when they bust out the Rally Monkey. You have to be prepared and insulated for those types of things."

Wilson caught heat from the time he stepped onto the field to stretch and warm up. The fans booed loudly when he was introduced before the game, and got vocal again before the first inning.

But the Rangers' offense quickly quieted the crowd against right-hander Brandon McCarthy. Young tripled off the out-of-town scoreboard in right field to open the second and scored as the next hitter, Nelson Cruz, singled.

Cliff Pennington then muffed Mike Napoli's grounder to open the way for three straight hits. The Rangers had six hits in the inning.

They added three runs to the lead in the fourth. Endy Chavez, who went 3 for 4, provided a scare for Brandon McCarthy with a line drive that struck McCarthy on the outside of his right knee and caromed into foul ground as Chavez went to second base.

McCarthy left the game, limping off the field under his own power, with what was diagnosed as a bruised knee. McCarthy, the former Rangers pitcher, said that X-rays were not taken after an exam showed stability in the knee.

"I just wasn't right tonight," he said. "If there was a fitting end to the day, that would probably be it."

Down 9-0, the A's couldn't muster any offense until there were two outs in the sixth. Back-to-back doubles provided the lone run against Wilson, who got Kurt Suzuki to line out to end the threat.

Wilson (11-5) threw 114 pitches, allowing four hits, walking three and striking out seven. He won for the first time in five starts.

"They fell behind early, but they were still able to throw Oakland A's baseball," manager Ron Washington said. "They make you work. He ended up having to come out after six, but I thought he did a great job. He gave us a chance."

On Wednesday, Wilson said that the mound "sucks" at O.co Coliseum and so do the fans. The comments were picked up by local news outlets, and fans peppered Wilson with boos and other commentary early on.

But the six-run second took the starch out of the fans. Wilson wasn't even booed as he ran off the field after retiring the final batter in the sixth.

"They were very colorful in their distaste with the comments they made, and it actually fired me up a bit," he said. "It felt like a playoff game out there, having the whole stadium against you."

How Rangers pitchers fared: C.J. Wilson met more resistance from Oakland fans than Oakland hitters. He allowed a run on four hits in six innings, though he piled up 114 pitches. Mark Lowe worked a perfect eighth and hasn't allowed a run in his past 12 games.

How Rangers hitters fared: Michael Young (11 games) and Yorvit Torrealba (10 games) extended their hitting streaks in the Rangers' six-run second inning. Endy Chavez went 3 for 4 and is now hitting .356 (32 for 90) on the road this season.

A's fans boo, heckle Rangers' Wilson

Posted Friday, Aug. 12, 2011

By Jeff Wilson

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Fans didn't flock to O.co Coliseum on Friday night to show C.J. Wilson their civic pride, though the ones who did come showed their displeasure toward the Texas Rangers left-hander.

They heckled him as he warmed up 30 minutes before the game, booed him as he was introduced and booed him even more loudly as he jogged to the mound before the first inning.

The comments he made Wednesday found their way to the Bay Area and were the topic du jour on area sports-talk shows. In the end, though, the crowd was only louder than normal.

On the field, the team went down quietly. The Rangers scored six runs in the second on their way to a 9-1 win.

The playing surface was the Rangers' biggest concern. The Oakland Raiders hosted a preseason NFL game Thursday, and the field had to be transformed from football to baseball Friday.

Work wasn't completed until 5 p.m., so batting practice was canceled. That mound that Wilson dislikes so much had to be rebuilt, and the grass in center field showed signs of having half of a stadium sitting on it.

"The infield is in good shape," manager Ron Washington said. "I walked it, and other than center field, left and right field seem to be OK. When they have to leave that stuff out there for eight, nine or 10 days, it can get rough."

Rangers players seemed amused by the work being done as they arrived Friday afternoon. The outfield wall had to be reassembled, as did both bullpens, and there were multiple mowers and tractors on the field for several hours.

There were even two painters assigned to cover up the yard markers and boundary lines of the football field, which stretched from left field to right field and from the pitcher's mound into shallow center field.

"It was pretty bad," outfielder David Murphy said upon his initial inspection.

Unable to do any work before the game, Rangers players weren't sure what to expect once the game started. Infielders didn't have much to worry about, though shortstop Elvis Andrus said chasing pop-ups into the outfield could be a little tricky.

The toughest task fell to Endy Chavez in center field, where the grass was discolored and possibly matted down some from having the portable and gigantic Mount Davis upon it.

"I can't believe they're doing a turnaround this quick," said Josh Hamilton, who started in left field but could play center field this weekend. "You can deal with the surface. You don't worry about your footing. You worry about how the ball's going to bounce more than anything."

There were more than the 6,000 fans Wilson said typically attend A's games, but the attendance was plenty sparse. The made-over mound didn't seem to bother Wilson.

Many of the boos reserved for Wilson were used in the second on right-hander Brandon McCarthy, who allowed six hits, and shortstop Cliff Pennington, who committed an error and couldn't start a double play later in the inning.

Washington, who coached with the A's for 11 seasons, said that he hadn't met with Wilson to discuss what he said and didn't offer any comment about Wilson's words.

Oakland left-hander Dallas Braden reportedly gave Wilson a T-shirt with an inscription that suggested sometimes it's best to not reveal all of his thoughts.

As expected, Washington had nothing bad to say about Oakland.

"Hey, I love it here," he said. "The only thing that's concerning to me is that they know I love it here."

Beltre tries to relax as he awaits rehab

Posted Friday, Aug. 12, 2011

By Jeff Wilson

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Adrian Beltre's days the past week have consisted of watching movies on his iPad and just waiting until his left hamstring is good enough to resume baseball activities.

It's not there yet, though Beltre has accompanied the Texas Rangers in anticipation that he will soon be able to begin to test the strain he suffered Sunday.

The new strain is in the same area but a little lower on the hamstring than the original injury suffered July 23. He had nearly completed various tests of the leg before leaving for a rehab assignment Sunday when the hamstring grabbed again as he was running toward second base.

"Before that happened, I felt no pain at all," said Beltre, who on Friday missed his 19th game because of the injury. "I was running at almost 100 percent. I had done all of the explosion tests. That's why I'm more frustrated. I was good enough to be in a game."

The second injury won't drastically alter how aggressive Beltre is during this rehab period. He said that he might not run as hard as quickly but will do what it takes to return as quickly as possible.

He hasn't targeted a day to get back in the lineup, though he said hopes it's sooner than September. The Rangers said that Beltre would be out three weeks, which would put him back Aug. 28.

"I'm a quick healer," he said.

Sun bursts

Josh Hamilton's day-game woes first surfaced in 2008 at Oakland. He played center field under the high skies May 4, lost a fly ball in the sun for a double, and the next batter hit at two-run homer.

At the plate, Hamilton went 0 for 4 with three strikeouts.

But things have been looking up for Hamilton lately under the sun. He is 5 for 16 in his past four day games and has hits in three of the four.

Hamilton thinks he has found the solution -- eye drops that help relax the eyes. They will be in used again today and Sunday afternoon, but Hamilton isn't making any guarantees about his performance.

"When eyes are relaxed, you see better," said Hamilton, who is hitting .153 in day games this year. "We'll see how it goes here. I know I haven't had success here in the daytime."

Hamilton has a .349 average at night and all 14 of his homers. He hit a solo shot Wednesday to snap a 20-game power drought, and manager Ron Washington believes that more could be coming.

"Now that's he's gotten it, he'll probably be relaxed," Washington said. "He's been concerned about not hitting the ball out of the ballpark. I just told him, 'I'll take doubles, too.'"

Familiar matchup

Colby Lewis knows that he and Trevor Cahill faced each other five times last season, and that Cahill won three times and the A's won four of the five.

They meet this afternoon for the sixth time in their careers but the first time in 2011.

"Oh, good Lord," Lewis said when reminded of the matchup. "Within our league you figure you're going to face a lot of guys. I just happened to face him a lot of times last year."

Lewis said that it doesn't matter who he faces. The game plan doesn't change, and he still needs to execute. He has done that in his career at O.co Coliseum.

The right-hander is 4-1 with a 2.63 ERA there.

'Moneyball' style didn't rub off on Wash Posted Friday, Aug. 12, 2011

Texas Rangers manager Ron Washington coached in Oakland for 11 seasons and has a full understanding of the philosophy of general manager Billy Beane, which has been made famous by the book Moneyball.

Hollywood has taken its turn with the book, with a movie being released next month. Washington plans to see the movie and someday wants to finish reading the book, after failing to get through it on the first attempt.

Washington doesn't need to read the book to know that his managerial style with the Rangers clashes in one significant way with the Moneyball way. Washington likes to be aggressive on the bases, whereas the Beane teams during the early 2000s didn't like to give away outs on the base paths.

"I just have an aggressive personality," Washington said. "I grew up in the game of baseball taking it to people. During the period I was there, we just didn't like giving up outs on the bases."

"That philosophy comes into play. You get to a part of the game where you can't afford outs on the base paths, you shut everything down. But early in the ballgame, I'm willing to take chances."

The A's weren't built with much speed while Washington served as third-base coach. They occasionally put on plays, but not at the rate the speedy Rangers have under Washington.

"We've got guys with the ability right now to run the base paths," he said. "I don't want to take that away from them, because that's one of their assets. Sometimes that asset might hurt us, but for the most part that asset has been an advantage."

-- Jeff Wilson

DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Fralei: A's fans lose interest in booing C.J., whose arm does talking

By GERRY FRALEY

Published 13 August 2011 12:14 AM

OAKLAND – As Rangers manager Ron Washington said, left-hander C.J. Wilson talked the talk when he ripped everything about the Oakland Athletics short of their white elephant mascot.

On Friday night, Wilson walked the walk ... on a smooth path.

Without a hint of dramatics, Wilson pitched a workmanlike six innings during a 9-1 win against light-hitting Oakland to keep the Rangers' lead at two games in the American League West. The Athletics scored a minor victory by forcing Wilson to throw 114 pitches, which kept him from going deeper into the game.

Wilson earned the first win in 14 career appearances, only two as a starter, at his most despised ballpark: the O.co Coliseum. And yes, the mound was the same as it always is, according to Wilson. That is to say, bad.

Despite playing to the hilt the role of a pro-wrestling villain, Wilson was not much of a draw. The turnout was 20,288, only 1,012 more than the Athletics average league-low attendance. The customers brought banners featuring anti-Wilson messages and booed him early but lost interest as the Rangers' lead rose.

"The funny thing was the fans were very colorful in their distaste for the comments I made," Wilson said. "That actually fired me up a little bit. It felt like a playoff game, having the whole stadium against you except for the 15 people I had here."

Wilson on Wednesday added spice to this matchup by slamming the Athletics, their fan base and their park. Wilson made it clear that he dislikes the mound, the small crowds and the local weather. He said the Athletics probably "hate" him for comments such as his observation this season that Oakland plays "lawyer-ball" by working counts in hopes of getting walks.

The response by the locals did not faze Wilson. He revels in creating negative energy, turning to his advantage. Remember, this is the same guy who dresses in all black on his day to pitch.

"It makes me stronger," Wilson said of putting himself in the eye of a storm. "Like the Yankee fans. They'd stab you with a butter knife to help their team win. They're really adamant for their team. ... You have to be able to compete in that type of atmosphere. You have let it work for you."

Washington, who spent 11 seasons with the Athletics as a coach, again expressed his affection for the franchise and the area. Washington declined to comment on what Wilson had said. Washington did say that when a player draws attention to himself, as Wilson did, it is up to the player to respond.

Wilson did by winning for the first time in five starts. The drought was beginning to be an irritant, Wilson said. He has responded from the mini-slump of two consecutive starts in which he did not go beyond the fourth inning with two capable outings.

"When you get the ball 32, 33 times over the course of a year, you're going to have some bumps in the road," Washington said. "The way C.J. pitches is what he's been doing most of the year."

In the first of the poor starts, Wilson could not get through the fifth inning against Minnesota with a five-run lead. He was better with a big lead this time.

Wilson brought Minnesota back into the game by allowing three consecutive walks in the fifth. He threw strikes this time, preventing the A's from ever having a thought of climbing back. Oakland did not move a runner to second until Josh Willingham's two-out double in the sixth.

"It feels good to win, because I had a good chance to win against Minnesota and couldn't finish the fifth," Wilson said. "I had a similar situation here, and I told myself to pitch like it was a 1-0 game and not let the score dictate my pitch selection."

The Rangers made it a smooth ride for Wilson by knocking around former teammate Brandon McCarthy in the second.

Shortstop Cliff Pennington, of Texas A&M, botched two potential double-play grounders in the inning. The first mistake opened the way to the big inning. With the Rangers leading 1-0, Washington had Nelson Cruz running on the pitch to Mike Napoli. That rattled Pennington, who kicked Napoli's grounder and failed to get an out.

When Pennington made another mistake in the inning, the locals turned him. Booming C.J. Wilson was a futile exercise.

A's beaten-up field 'won't be an excuse' Rangers' Washington says Grounds crew doesn't have long to get facility ready for baseball

By GERRY FRALEY

Published 12 August 2011 11:17 PM

OAKLAND, Calif. — The conditions could be difficult for fielders during the Rangers' weekend series against Oakland at the Coliseum.

The NFL's Raiders, who share the facility with the Athletics, played their exhibition opener Thursday evening. That left the stadium grounds crew with about 18 hours to transform the facility into a baseball field.

The crew had to repair the dirt portion of the infield and rebuild the mound, which Rangers left-hander C.J. Wilson this week called his least favorite. Both areas are in play during an NFL game.

Center field was also badly in need of repair after being crushed under the weight of temporary stands used for football games.

The conditions prevented the Rangers from having their usual early afternoon workout before the first game of a road series. Both clubs had to take batting practice in the limited indoor facility.

Rangers manager Ron Washington toured the field and found it to be playable. He was most concerned about the footing in the damaged outfield area.

"It won't be an excuse," Washington.

Washington, a coach with Oakland for 11 seasons, is familiar with the strain that NFL games put on this field. He said the conditions are much worse in late September, when the Raiders have played up to four games on the field.

The Rangers play one more series at the Coliseum: Sept. 20-22. They will get a break, because the Raiders will not have played on the field in the 22 days leading up to that series.

Oakland crowd showers C.J. Wilson with boos

Published 12 August 2011 09:49 PM

As expected, the few but passionate Oakland fans greeted the appearance of Texas Rangers starter C.J. Wilson with boos before tonight's game at the Coliseum. Wilson this week ripped the small fan base and the playing conditions in Oakland.

When asked before the game about Wilson's comments, several Oakland players simply smirked. Manager Bob Melvin dismissed the comments as much ado about nothing.

"Everybody handles it their own way," Melvin said. "I don't put much credence into it. Guys say things during the season. If a certain player wants it to motivate him, that's fine. But I don't pay much attention to it."

Rangers manager Ron Washington emphasized his deep affection for Oakland, where he spent 10 seasons as a coach. He did not offer a ringing endorsement of Wilson.

"If you talk the talk, you've got to be able to walk the walk," Washington said.

Gerry Fraley

Hamilton ends HR drought, admits it was wearing on him Published 12 August 2011 11:20 PM

Outfielder Josh Hamilton began the series with a sense of relief. He can still hit a home run.

Hamilton ended a streak of 82 at-bats without a homer with a blast off Seattle left-hander Jason Vargas on Wednesday. Hamilton admitted the power outage had begun to wear on him.

"You can't help but think about how long it's been since you've hit one," Hamilton said. "It might take you out of your routine. It might make you do a little more than you need to. They're going to come when they come."

Hamilton hit for average during the power outage, batting .317. He had only five extra-base hits and 10 RBIs in that span.

Gerry Fraley

Beltre trying to be patient while on DL; team 8-8 without him Published 12 August 2011 11:23 PM

Third baseman Adrian Beltre, admittedly an impatient man, said he will try his best to be patient in his on-going rehabilitation from a strained left hamstring.

Beltre injured the leg July 22, and last weekend seemed close to returning from the disabled list. That plan ended Saturday when Beltre, running in the afternoon for the second consecutive day, aggravated the injury. The Rangers now believe he could be out until early September.

"I should have pulled back a little bit, but I was feeling so good," Beltre said. "I'll try to be more patient, but it's not easy to be sitting here knowing that I was almost ready to go back into the game."

The Rangers opened this series at 8-8 with Beltre on the disabled list.

Briefly: Oakland manager Bob Melvin said he expects outfielder Coco Crisp to miss the series because of a strained right calf. Crisp began the day leading the American League in stolen bases with 37. ... Angels manager Mike Scioscia has not identified his starter for Monday's series opener against the Rangers, but he will not rework the rotation to get right-hander Dan Haren into the series. Haren, scheduled to start Sunday at Toronto, is the only Angels starter whom the Rangers will not face in the series. Haren has two no-decisions and a 6.00 ERA against the Rangers this season.

Gerry Fraley

Rangers-A's scouting report: Colby Lewis unbeaten (2-0) vs. Oakland in 2011 at Oakland, 3:10 p.m. Saturday (Ch. 4) Published 12 August 2011 09:26 PM

Rangers starter: RHP Colby Lewis (10-8, 4.12) gave up three runs in 7 1/3 innings in a no-decision Sunday against Cleveland. Lewis is 3-1 with a 3.66 ERA for six starts this season on five days rest, one more than the norm. Lewis leads the American League in homers allowed with 28. Oakland has only 76 homers, third-lowest total in the AL. Lewis is 2-0 with a 2.95 ERA in three starts against Oakland this season.

Matchup of note: Catcher Kurt Suzuki is only 3-for-18 lifetime against Lewis, but two of the hits were solo homers.

Oakland starter: RHP Trevor Cahill (9-10, 3.93) gave up three runs in six innings in a no-decision at Tampa Bay. Cahill is 3-10 with a 5.08 ERA for his last 17 starts. Cahill has the sixth-highest rate of walks-per-nine innings in the AL at 3.87. Cahill is 5-2 with a 2.06 ERA in his last eight starts against the Rangers.

Matchup of note: Cahill has slowed the Rangers by keeping Ian Kinsler off base. Kinsler has hit .190 with a .292 on-base percentage in 24 career plate appearances against Cahill.

Gerry Fraley

Rangers likely to catch Angels' aces in last two games of four-game set at LA **Published 11 August 2011 11:06 PM**

Los Angeles Angels manager Mike Scioscia was evasive when asked about his pitching plans for next week's four-game series at home against the Rangers.

"We're going to take a look at things, how things fall into place in the next few days," Scioscia told reporters before the Angels' 6-5 loss Thursday at the New York Yankees.

In their current arrangement, the Angels would start a pair of rookie right-handers in the first two games: Garrett Richards (0-1) and Tyler Chatwood (6-8). Richards, who was 12-2 in the Double-A Texas League, made his major league debut Wednesday and gave up six runs in five innings in a loss at the Yankees.

The Angels would use the more accomplished duo of right-handers Ervin Santana and Jered Weaver in the final two games. Right-hander Dan Haren is scheduled to start Sunday at Toronto and miss the series.

Gerry Fraley

Around the American League West **By Gerry Fraley / Reporter** **12:50 AM on Sat., Aug. 13, 2011**

A look at Friday's developments elsewhere in the American League West:

LOS ANGELES ANGELS: Right-hander Ervin Santana pitched the third complete game in his last four starts in a 5-1 win at Toronto. Santana is 6-0 with a 1.50 ERA in his last nine starts. The Angels are 8-1 in those games but only 14-11 in his starts for the season.

OAKLAND:Right-hander Sonny Gray, whom the Athletics selected out of Vanderbilt with the 18th overall pick in this year's draft, made his first start at the Double-A level. Gray gave up two hits and had five strikeouts in 2 2/3 scoreless innings for Midland against Tulsa of the Colorado organization.

SEATTLE:First baseman Justin Smoak lasted less than two innings in his return after missing the previous seven games because of a bruised left thumb. Smoak left the 6-4 loss against Boston in the second inning after a bad-hop grounder by Jarrod Saltalamachia struck him in the face, breaking his nose.

This puts a crimp in manager Eric Wedge's plan to use Smoak daily until the end of the season in the hopes that he could finish well.

Cowlshaw's 5 on Friday: Rangers' bats shouldn't cool off in Oakland **By Tim Cowlshaw** **Published 12 August 2011 01:17 PM**

Five things I either didn't expect to see this week or we shouldn't have had to see. Period.

2. The Yankees' 6-5 win over the Angels Thursday increased the Rangers' lead on LA to two games but it came in disturbing fashion for New York. Closer Mariano Rivera gave up a three-run home run to Russell Branyan, marking the third straight game in which he has been scored upon going back to Sunday's loss at Fenway Park.

Maybe Rivera is just having a rare run of bad luck. Then again Rivera is 41. And, greatest closer of all time or not, he's not going to be unhittable forever. His numbers for the year remain outstanding. But Yankee fans have to cross their fingers and hope this is just a passing phase. There's not much question he has been the greatest weapon for baseball's best team over the last 15 years. When that weapon is gone, the Yankees become much more beatable.

4. I don't know what has happened in Oakland but, for this season, anyway, it's not the pitchers' park it has always been.

I was thinking the Rangers might have a difficult transition this weekend after going from 100-degree nights in the most hitter-friendly park in the majors to Oakland with that monstrous foul ground. The Ballpark in Arlington ranks No. 1 in producing runs this year. Oakland, usually right next to its across-the-bay counterpart in San Francisco (which ranks 30th) ranks 12.

It's not about disappointing Oakland pitchers, either, because that would show up on the road. Anyway, don't look for a lot of 2-1 games in Oakland this weekend. The Rangers have too many hot bats, and Oakland is no longer the place to cool them off.

ESPN DALLAS

Rapid Reaction: Rangers 9, A's 1

August, 13, 2011

By ESPNDallas.com

After a six-game homestand with grueling triple-digit temperatures, you can say the Rangers thrived on the cool Oakland winds Friday.

With a first-pitch temperature of 58 degrees and swirly conditions, the Rangers breezed to a 9-1 win over the Athletics to start their 10-game road trip. C.J. Wilson earned his 11th win of the season on his fifth try, and No. 9 hitter Endy Chavez was 3-for-4 with an RBI and two runs scored.

The Rangers maintained a two-game lead over the Los Angeles Angels, who beat Toronto 5-1 earlier Friday.

- C.J. Wilson, who ripped the A's mound and fans earlier this week, received the expected boo-bird treatment from fans. But if he doesn't like the A's mound, he sure didn't show it Friday after cruising through six innings and not permitting a hit until the third. He allowed just four hits and one run while striking out seven and walking three. He ran into trouble in the sixth when Josh Willingham doubled off the left-field wall with two outs, giving the A's their first runner in scoring position of the night. Conor Jackson followed with a line-drive double that put A's on the board. After walking David DeJesus, Wilson got Kurt Suzuki to line out to center to curb the threat.

- The Rangers scored six runs (two of them unearned) during a second-inning outburst that was aided by shaky defense on the part of Oakland. Michael Young started the inning with a triple and ended it with a groundout to first. In between, the next five batters reached either on a base hit or miscues -- both costly and courtesy of Oakland shortstop Cliff Pennington. When the dust cleared, Texas had six runs and former Rangers right-hander Brandon McCarthy had thrown 40 pitches.

- Michael Young extended his hitting streak to 11 games with his second-inning triple. He was 2-for-5 with an RBI on the night.

- Endy Chavez ended McCarthy's night in the fourth when his line drive struck the starter in the right knee. The ball ricocheted into the vast foul territory at O.co Coliseum's first-base side. McCarthy, whose time with the Rangers was plagued by injuries, was diagnosed with a right-knee contusion. Trystan Magnuson pitched 3 2/3 innings of relief.

- Scott Feldman allowed a leadoff double and walk before finishing off the A's in the ninth.

How will West standings look after trip?

August, 12, 2011

By Richard Durrett

The Rangers begin a 10-game road trip through Oakland (three games with A's), Anaheim (four games with Angels) and Chicago (three games with White Sox). The question is what will the AL West standings look like once that trip is over?

Texas has a 2-game lead as this trip begins, sitting at 66-52. By the way, the 2010 Rangers were just one game better at this point last year at 67-51. The difference? The Angels are better. Texas had an eight-game lead by this time in 2010 and the division was basically over. That's not the case now.

In this next 10-game stretch, the Rangers face an Oakland team that is 11 games under .500, an Angels team hoping to tighten the AL West even more and the White Sox, who at one game under .500 are still just four games back in a competitive AL Central.

The Angels play three in Toronto followed by four against the Rangers and three against Baltimore.

So where will the division lead be by the time that span is done? Let's take a conservative approach here and say the Rangers take two of three in Oakland, split with the Angels and win two of three from Chicago. That would put them at 6-4 on the trip (and I wouldn't be shocked if the Rangers went a game better than that at 7-3).

But if they were 6-4, the Angels would need to match that to stay 2 games back. I'll predict they won't (Toronto is pesky at a game over .500 and could win that series at home). So when the Rangers come back, they'll be at least 3 games ahead in the AL West. And the schedule doesn't get any easier after that.

What do you predict? How many games up or behind will the Rangers be in the AL West when this road trip is done?

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wilson pitches Rangers past A's 9-1

August 13, 2011

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) -- C.J. Wilson stopped a mini-slide with his first career victory in Oakland, and it didn't change a thing.

He still hates playing here.

Wilson pitched six effective innings to earn his first win in a month and the Texas Rangers beat the Athletics 9-1 on Friday night.

The left-hander was showered with boos in his first appearance at the Coliseum since his critical remarks on Wednesday, when he said he didn't like the mound or the weather in Oakland, and was critical about the attendance for A's games.

"It felt like a playoff game having the whole stadium against you," Wilson said. "The funny thing was it fired me up a little bit. It made me stronger. It puts it all in focus. You have to be able to compete in that type of environment."

Wilson (11-5) allowed a run and four hits, struck out seven and walked three. He was 0-2 with a 4.84 ERA in four starts since his last victory, on July 16 at Seattle.

"When you go a month without a win it grates on you," Wilson said. "I won a Go-Kart race the other day and it was my first win in a while. I was kind of stoked by that."

Endy Chavez had three hits, scored twice and drove in a run as the Rangers won for just the third time in their last nine road games. Michael Young added two hits and an RBI.

AL West-leading Texas remained two games ahead of the Los Angeles Angels, who won 5-1 in Toronto.

"C.J. knows what is at stake," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "We need him to play good baseball. The way he pitched tonight is the way he's pitched most of the year. You know you're going to get everything he's got."

Brandon McCarthy (5-6) was knocked out of the game when he was struck by Chavez's line drive in the fourth, sidelined by a bruised right knee.

"I don't know what it feels like to have a knee blown apart or to do something serious to it but it didn't feel like anything too horrible," McCarthy said. "It wasn't even the first thing I noticed. When I tried to stand up, I noticed it. I was in pain but I knew it wasn't too horribly serious."

The ball hit off the outside of his right knee and ricocheted into the visiting bullpen down the right-field line.

"I'm not really thrilled with the whole day but all things considered it's not as bad as it could be," McCarthy said.

Trystan Magnuson replaced McCarthy, who allowed seven runs, five earned, and eight hits in 3 1-3 innings.

The Rangers grabbed control with six runs in the second inning. The first six batters reached against McCarthy, who also was hurt by some shoddy defense.

Young hit a leadoff triple and scored on Nelson Cruz's base hit. Mike Napoli reached on an error by shortstop Cliff Pennington before Mitch Moreland and Yorvit Torrealba had consecutive RBI singles. Chavez, Elvis Andrus and Josh Hamilton also drove in a run in the inning.

After McCarthy left the game in the fourth, Kinsler and Young each singled home a run. Another run scored on an error by right fielder David DeJesus.

Wilson seemed to enjoy the extra attention he received from the 20,288 fans in attendance, who booed his every step before the game. He improved to 1-2 with two saves and a 3.38 ERA in 15 career appearances in Oakland.

"You have to make it work for you," Wilson said. "It's the same in New York, where they will stab you with a butter knife to help their team win, or Boston or Anaheim when they bust out the rally monkey. Being a closer has helped me with that."

Wilson retired 17 of his first 21 batters before back-to-back doubles from Josh Willingham and Conor Jackson produced the A's only run.

NOTES: Young extended his hitting streak to 11 games. Torrealba extended his streak to 10 games. ... The A's six-game losing streak to the Rangers is the longest since a nine-game streak between June 19-Sept. 30, 1986. ... RHP Trevor Cahill will take the mound for the A's on Saturday. He is 8-3 with a 2.19 ERA in 12 career starts against Texas, including a 2-1 record with a 1.25 ERA in three starts this year. ... Former Athletics pitcher Colby Lewis starts for the Rangers on Saturday. He's allowed 11 runs over his last 18 innings but is 5-1 with a 3.11 ERA over his last 10 starts. He's allowed 28 home runs, second in the majors. Lewis is 4-1 with a 2.53 ERA in seven career starts in Oakland, pitching at least five innings and allowing three runs or less in all seven starts. ... The A's hired former major league manager Phil Garner as a special adviser. ... The A's announced they agreed to terms with INF B.A. Vollmuth, their third-round draft pick.