

## Kernels waste good effort by Slegers

Written by S.D. Buhr

Sunday, 06 July 2014 19:03 - Last Updated Sunday, 06 July 2014 19:39

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Cedar Rapids Kernels pitcher Aaron Slegers was named the club's Pitcher of the Month in April and now, after some inconsistency in May and June, the tall right-hander is trying to make a case for the same honor in July.

On Sunday, Slegers (5-6) was the hard-luck loser as Cedar Rapids batters managed just one hit in 13 opportunities with runners in scoring position en route to a 3-2 loss to the Beloit Snappers before 1,354 fans at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

Slegers went seven innings and was charged with all three Beloit runs.

It was the second straight strong start for Slegers, without a win to show for it. On Tuesday in Appleton, Wis., Slegers worked five scoreless innings against Wisconsin before an hour-long rain delay in the middle of the sixth inning put an end to his evening.

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Slegers carried a 2-1 lead through seven innings Sunday, but gave up a double to first batter he faced in the Beloit eighth inning. When he hit Snapper right fielder Tyler Marinicov with an errant slider, his afternoon's work was over.

Todd Van Steensel relieved Slegers and by the end of the inning, the Snappers held a 3-2 lead that would stand up.

Slegers spoke about the good and the bad of these past two starts.

"I was staying in the zone, throwing three pitches for strikes - the slider, the change-up and two-seam fastball," he said. "That's sort of the recipe for success with me when I have those three pitches in the zone and keeping (hitters) off-balance.

"When that doesn't happen I get myself into trouble, and that's what I experienced in the eighth inning. I really struggled with that today, especially late in the game. The slider kind of left me a little bit."

Kernels Manager Jake Mauer was as disappointed as Slegers.

"It's a shame," said Mauer. "Cruising, (gives up a) double, hit a guy. You know what, though, it shouldn't have come down to that.

"We should have scored five or six runs easily. We had base-runners all over. It's frustrating when we're finally pitching and our offense is going the other way."

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Bryan Haar, who was 3-for-4, scored both of the Kernels' runs and fell just a home run short of hitting for the cycle. He tripled and scored in the second inning, singled and was stranded in the fourth and doubled and scored in the sixth.

Jason Kanzler notched both Kernels' RBIs, scoring Haar on a ground-out in the second inning and with a single in the sixth.

The injury bug that's been nagging the Kernels all season bit the team again in the fifth inning. Shortstop Engelb Vielma had to leave the game after a collision in the outfield with left fielder J.D. Williams.

Mauer predicted the team will be without its shortstop for at least a week, given the mandatory Disabled List term for players involved with a head injury.

Even if it's just for a week, Mauer is hoping to get a replacement for Vielma. "We need somebody," the skipper said. "Don't have enough bullets."

The Kernels are idle Monday and host Wisconsin Tuesday night.