

Hu, Wade give Kernels 'international' win

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 10 July 2014 22:02 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 July 2014 22:22



Chih-Wei Hu and Logan Wade live on the other side of the world when they are not playing professional baseball in the United States, but they formed a winning combination in Cedar Rapids Thursday night for the Kernels.

Hu, from Taiwan, pitched six strong innings in his first outing for the Kernels. And Wade, from Australia, made sure it had a happy ending in his first game back from a lengthy stay on the disabled list.

The result was a 7-5 victory over the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers before 2,700 fans at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

Wade belted a three-run homer in the eighth inning to erase a 4-2 deficit and give the Kernels a 5-4 lead, then Alex Swim gave Cedar Rapids a 7-4 cushion with a two-run double after Wisconsin relief pitcher Tyler Alexander hit two batters.

Cedar Rapids Manager Jake Mauer thinks Alexander may have hit Chad Christensen on purpose after Wade hit his three-run homer. Alexander was on the mound when the Kernels and Timber Rattlers had a bench-clearing incident earlier this season and Mauer was suspicious about what happened Thursday.

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"I don't care if you write it. He (Alexander) is the one who started the problem before," said Mauer. "I don't think he hit Tanner (Vavra) on purpose, but he might have taken a shot at Chad.

"I don't know," said Mauer. "The guy hits a three-run homer in front of him.

"We had the bench-clearer with these guys and he was on the mound. So I don't know. A little too fishy for me."

Christensen appeared to be OK, but Vavra left the game after the eighth inning and will have X-rays taken on his forearm Friday.

Ironically, Alexander was literally knocked out of the game when Mitch Garver hit a line drive off Alexander's leg in the eighth inning, right after Christensen had been hit by a pitch.

"The baseball gods do funny things, man," said Mauer. "Things have a funny way of evening out."

Hu, 20, joined the Kernels this week from Elizabethton in the Appalachian League. He had a rough first inning when Cedar Rapids committed three errors - including an errant throw by Hu - that led to four unearned runs and a quick 4-0 lead for the visitors.

Hu did not let the sloppy beginning bother him and tossed five shutout innings before leaving the game. He pitched six innings with five strikeouts, five hits and one walk.



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"It just happens, every game," Hu said with linguistic help from Dean Lin, an editor with MLBTW.net of Taiwan who covers players from Taiwan in the United States. "It did not affect him so much."

The Minnesota Twins signed Hu as a non-drafted free agent on Aug. 3, 2012. He pitched for Minnesota's Rookie team in the Gulf Coast League last season before climbing two more rungs this season.

Hu said he was not nervous on the mound Thursday. "No. Not nervous. Not at all," he said with Lin's help.

Mauer helped conduct clinics in Taiwan several years ago and liked what he saw of Hu Thursday night.

"He did really well. He overcame a lot of adversity," said Mauer. "We didn't catch the ball too much behind him, didn't do too much to help him."

"But he didn't panic. Six innings. Got some quick outs. Got some double-play balls, kept attacking. That's what you want to see."

Wade went on the disabled list May 8 and was not activated until this week. He got about 20 at-bats with the GCL Twins the past two weeks and was glad to be back in a Kernels uniform Thursday night.

"It's good to be back," he said. "It's exciting."

The Kernels (38-51) open a series in Clinton Friday night at 5:30. They'll finish a suspended game with the score tied, 3-3, in the top of the 10th inning, then play a regular nine-inning game after that Friday.

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WISCONSIN (5): DeMuth, 3b, 4 0 2 1, Davis, cf, 5 1 2 0, McFarland, dh, 3 1 0 0, Ratterree, rf, 4 0 0 1, Neda, c, 4 1 0 0, Brennan, 1b, 4 1 1 0, Garcia, lf, 4 0 1 1, Halcomb, 2b, 4 1 1 1, Ortega, ss, 4 0 2 0. Totals 36 5 9 4.

KERNELS (7): Walker, ss, 4 0 1 0, Wade, 3b/2b, 3 1 1 4, Christensen, lf, 3 1 0 0, Garver, dh, 4 1 1 0, Swim, rf, 4 0 2 2, Kanzler, cf, 3 0 0 0, Quesada, c, 3 0 0 0, Altobelli, 1b, 2 2 2 0, Vavra, 2b, 2 2 1 1, Haar, 3b, 0 0 0 0. Totals 28 7 8 7.

Wisconsin 400 000 001 - 5 9 0

Kernels 002 000 05x - 7 8 5

Williams, Alexander (8), Spurlin (8) and Neda. Hu, Muren (7), Gallant (9) and Quesada. W - Muren (3-1). L - Alexander (5-4). 2B - Altobelli (8), Swim (2). 3B - Vavra (1). HR - Wade (2). SB - Christensen (20). E - Hu (1), Wade (7), Christensen (5), Walker (6), Altobelli (5). T - 2:38. A - 2,700.