

## Kernels waste good work by Nolasco

Written by Jim Ecker  
Sunday, 26 April 2015 17:07 -

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Minnesota Twins pitcher Ricky Nolasco did his part to help the Cedar Rapids Kernels Sunday afternoon, but once again the Kernels did not do enough to help themselves in a 3-2 loss to Kane County before 1,397 fans at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

The light-hitting Kernels scored only four runs in the three-game series against Kane County and dropped all three games.

Nolasco, working to recover from inflammation in his right elbow, threw 66 pitches in five innings before calling it a day. Kane County scored an unearned run against him in the fifth inning when Kernels center fielder Tanner English dropped a long fly ball, but otherwise Nolasco had a fairly easy time against Class A minor leaguers.

He struck out five batters, allowed three hits, did not walk anyone and left with a no-decision.

"It was good," said Nolasco, who has been on the disabled list since April 9. "The main thing was just to get back into it.

"I threw pain-free, nice and easy. I got to work the kinks out a little bit in the first, just being back out there again.

"I threw some real good curveballs there," he said. "That was the main thing that was going to be a test, to see if I could snap off that curveball, and it was good."

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Nolasco said he'd like to get back onto the mound with the Twins as soon as possible. He headed back to Minneapolis after Sunday's game.

"I don't want to be out too long," he said. "It was just a little bump in the road and I feel good right now. Hopefully I can go right back in there."



"That was the plan. We wanted to take an aggressive approach on it, as soon as we found out there was no damage to the ligament. I don't want to take too many days off, because I don't want to lose everything that I've done in the offseason and spring training."

"Everything was good today," he said, "so I feel like I'm ready to go."

Kernels Manager Jake Mauer liked what he saw.

"He looked good. Healthy. That was key," said Mauer. "He got his work in."

"I hope some of our guys were paying attention on how he attacked some of those hitters who were being over-aggressive. Sinking it, moving it, spinning it. That's why he's a big leaguer. That's why he's so effective."

Nolasco signed a four-year deal worth \$49 million with the Twins in November of 2013. He did a rehab assignment with the Kernels in 2014 and is glad to have a team in the Midwest League when he needs a tuneup.

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"It's nice to have this team here," he remarked. "It's a great field and everything like that. They made me feel welcome, so I just want to say thanks for that."

"I don't want to be here, but it's a good place to come and rehab if you must."

Kane County took a 3-1 lead in the seventh inning with two runs against Kernels reliever Michael Theofanopoulos. The Kernels loaded the bases with one out in the eighth inning, but did not score.

Tanner English led off the bottom of the ninth with his first home run of the season to make it 3-2. The Kernels had runners on first and second with two outs, but Max Murphy grounded out to end the game.

The Kernels left 12 runners on base, including five in the last two innings.

"We threatened several times, which was better than yesterday," said Mauer, whose club lost a doubleheader to Kane County Saturday. "We needed one hit. That's been hurting us."

Cedar Rapids (11-7) is idle Monday before beginning a three-game series at Quad Cities Tuesday. The Kernels return home Friday night against Clinton.

**KANE COUNTY (3):** Bray, cf, 2 0 0 0, Alcantara, ss, 4 0 0 0, Heyman, lf, 4 1 1 0, McQuail, dh, 4 0 2 0, Trahan, c, 4 0 1 0, Herum, 1b, 4 1 1 0, Regis, 3b, 2 0 0 0, Ozuna, 2b, 4 1 1 1, Reyes, rf, 4 0 1 0. Totals 32 3 7 1.

**KERNELS (2):** Granite, lf, 4 0 2 0, Gordon, ss, 4 0 1 1, Larson, rf, 3 0 0 0, Vavra, 1b, 3 0 0 0, Murphy, dh, 4 0 1 0, White, 3b, 3 0 1 0, Hinojosa, 2b, 4 0 0 0, Navarreto, c, 4 0 1 0, English, cf, 4 2 2 1. Totals 33 2 8 2.

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**Kane County** █ 100 000 200 - 3 7 0  
**Kernels** █ █ █ █ █ 001 000 001 - 2 8 1

Mejia, Solis (5), Elias (6), Ramirez (9) and Trahan. Nolasco, Theofanopoulos (6), Tillery (8) and Navarreto. W - Elias (2-0). L - Theofanopoulos (0-1). S - Ramirez (2). 2B - McQuail (4), Ozuna (6). HR - English (1). E - English (1). T - 2:40. A - 1,397.