

Kernels clinch with Mauer's 200th win

Written by Mike Condon

Tuesday, 16 June 2015 21:50 - Last Updated Wednesday, 17 June 2015 11:04



Jake Mauer admitted after his Cedar Rapids Kernels defeated Burlington, 2-1, that he did not know about either bit of information passed his way as he sat in his office Tuesday night.

When told the win over the Bees was his 200th as the Kernels' manager, his comment was simply, "Really? To win it like that is pretty fun."

Then he was told the win also secured a playoff berth for the team. His comment: "Are you sure?"

Once assured the playoff spot was secured, Mauer joined the player celebration in the clubhouse that spilled into the shower room and resulted in players and coaches alike coming out soaking wet.

Cedar Rapids (39-26) sent a crowd of 3,070 home from Veterans Memorial Stadium happy after a gritty effort resulted in a comeback win.

Mauer is now 200-143 in his three seasons as the Cedar Rapids manager. He will also be taking his team to the Midwest League playoffs for the third straight time.

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Tuesday's victory left Mauer beaming with pride. The Kernels had nothing going on offense into the eighth inning and it appeared a third-inning solo home run from Burlington catcher Wade Wass might hold up.

Jorge Fernandez led off the eighth with a single for Cedar Rapids. After Max Murphy struck out, T.J. White walked and Brian Navarreto singled to right, loading the bases. Pat Kelly was retired on a pop to first for the second out.

Tanner English worked a full count off Burlington reliever Eduardo Paredes before drawing a walk to tie the score. Then Nick Gordon fell behind in the count and kept fouling off pitches. Finally, on the 11th pitch of the at-bat he drew a walk, bringing home what proved to be the winning run.

"(Nick) and Tanner English were great," Mauer said. "They kept battling and battling, fouling off close pitches. Those were two very professional at-bats."

Burlington's Justin Anderson entered the game in the second inning in relief of starter Jeremy Rhoades, who was scheduled to pitch only the first inning in an effort to keep his innings regulated.

Anderson (4-4) was the tough-luck loser. In 6 2/3 innings of relief, he allowed six well-spaced singles before coming out with two outs in the eighth in favor of Paredes. Mauer was concerned that the offense was struggling, but said he liked the way the Kernels competed.

"We weren't getting many threats throughout the entire night," Mauer said. "Our pitching kept us in it. (Luke) Bard getting out of it in the eighth, with them having the bases loaded gave us a chance."

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Bard (4-0) got the win for his work in the eighth. Starter Felix Jorge was outstanding, allowing just three hits while striking out five in seven innings.

"He was really good, really impressive," Mauer said of Jorge. "He did a fantastic job. He's been doing that all year for us."

Burlington (33-31) was the last team with a chance to deny the Kernels a playoff spot. Quad Cities has all but locked up the first half title in the Western Division with the Kernels a solid second. The first half concludes Sunday.

Mauer does not plan to change anything with a playoff spot secured.

"You just keep going and continue to play every day," he said. "You keep trying to win every game, but it is nice to have a little breathing room as far as the playoffs are concerned."

BURLINGTON (1): Yacinich, ss, 4 0 2 0, Hermosillo, dh, 4 0 1 0, Daniel, 2b, 4 0 0 0, Delgado, rf, 4 0 1 0, Houchins, 3b, 4 0 0 0, Adams, cf, 3 0 0 0, Wass, c, 4 1 1 1, Selz 3 0 1 0, Salcedo, lf, 3 0 0 0. Totals: 33 1 6 1.

KERNELS (2): English, cf, 3 0 2 1, Gordon, ss, 3 0 0 1, Larson, lf, 4 0 1 0, Real, dh, 3 0 0 0, Fernandez, 1b, 3 1 1 0, Murphy, rf, 3 0 1 0, White, 3b, 2 1 0 0, Navaretto 3 0 1 0, Kelly, 2b, 3 0 0 0. Totals: 27 2 6 2

Burlington ▯ 001 000 000 - 1 6 0

Kernels ▯ ▯ 000 000 02x - 2 6 0

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Rhoades, Anderson (2), Paredes (8) and Wass. Jorge, Bard (8), Hildenberger (9) and Navarreto. W - Bard (4-0). L - Anderson (4-4). S

- Hildenberger (7). 2B - Delgado (9). HR - Wass (3). SB - Larson (7). T

- 2:05 A - 3,070.