

## Corcino lifts Kernels by Bandits

Written by S.D. Buhr

Thursday, 25 June 2015 22:20 - Last Updated Thursday, 25 June 2015 23:12

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The Cedar Rapids Kernels staggered slightly coming out of the gate in their first game of the second half of their Midwest League season Thursday night, but they utilized some late-inning heroics to top the River Bandits, 4-3, on Edgar Corcino's game-winning single in the bottom of the ninth.

Through five innings, the home crowd of 2,700 paying customers had little to cheer about other than another outstanding pitching performance by Kernels starter Felix Jorge. Thursday marked the 10th consecutive start in which Jorge finished at least six innings.

The heroics began in the field during the sixth inning when Kernels left fielder Zack Larson made a leaping catch at the left field wall to snag a drive by Jacob Nottingham.

"I didn't think it was going that far off the bat," Larson said. "He hit it and I thought, 'The thing's still going.' I heard Corcino yell, 'Wall!' and I just jumped and it went in the glove."

That catch kept the Kernels within striking distance, and strike they did with a three-run eighth inning.

Pat Kelly lined a double into the left field corner to start the eighth and Corcino bunted his way

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on base to put runners at the corners. Corcino stole second and Kelly scored Cedar Rapids' first run on a wild pitch.

Nick Gordon followed with a single and advanced to second on a throw from the outfield, putting Kernels on second and third with Larson at the plate. Larson came through in the clutch again with a base hit to left field, driving in both Corcino and Gordon and putting the Kernels up 3-2.

That lead was short-lived, however, as Quad Cities pulled even with a run in the ninth, sending the game tied 3-3 into the home half of the ninth.

Jorge Fernandez led off the ninth for Cedar Rapids with a single to left field and Brian Navarreto followed with a sacrifice bunt, advancing pinch-runner Tanner English to second. One out later, Corcino contributed the final heroics to the night.

After falling behind in the count with two quick strikes, Corcino got a changeup from Bandits pitcher Jorge Perez and lined his third hit of the game to right field, sending English gliding home to give the Kernels the win.

"I just tried to win the game," Corcino said in a happy Kernels clubhouse. "I was just trying to do my best. Anything that was close to the zone, I was just swinging at it."

Kelly also added three hits to the Kernels' attack and T.J. White contributed two.

"The biggest thing is that they didn't give up, which these guys don't," Manager Jake Mauer said. "They keep coming back. We executed when we needed to and got some big hits when we needed to."

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Jorge struck out five Bandits in six innings, two days after pitching an inning in the Midwest League All-Star Game in Peoria. Only one of the Quad Cities runs was earned.

Brandon Bixler, in his first appearance for the Kernels this season, worked two innings of shutout ball in relief.

Luke Bard (5-0) surrendered a run in the ninth inning, but provided his own defensive heroics, catching a soft line drive off the bat of Bandits leadoff hitter Jason Martin and doubling runner Luis Reynoso off second base for an inning-ending double play. That play kept the game tied 3-3.

The Kernels and Quad Cities continue their series Friday night at 6:35. Both teams clinched playoff berths in the first half of the season.

QUAD CITIES (3): Martin, lf, 5 0 1 0, Boyd, cf, 3 1 0 0, Nottingham, c, 4 0 0 1, Bottger, 1b, 2 0 0 0, McMullen, dh, 4 1 1 0, Laureano, rf, 4 0 1 1, Trompiz, ss, 3 1 1 0, Reynoso, 3b, 4 0 1 0, Lindauer, 2b, 3 0 2 1. Totals 32 3 7 3.

KERNELS (4): Corcino, cf, 5 1 3 1, Gordon, ss, 4 1 1 0, Larson, lf, 4 0 1 2, Real, dh, 3 0 1 0, Murphy, rf, 4 0 0 0, White, 3b, 4 0 2 0, Fernandez, 1b, 4 0 1 0, English, pr, 0 1 0 0, Navarreto, c, 3 0 0 0, Kelly, 2b, 4 1 3 0. Totals 35 4 12 3.

Quad Cities 110 000 001 - 3 7 0  
Kernels 000 000 031 - 4 12 1

Ferrell, Mills (5), Perez (6) and Nottingham. Jorge, Bixler (7), Bard (9) and Navarreto. W - Bard (5-0). L - Perez (1-1). 2B - Kelly (7). 3B - Laureano (2). SB - Corcino (4), Larson (8). E - Jorge (3). T - 2:25. A - 2,700.