

English delivers in clutch for Kernels

Written by S.D. Buhr

Monday, 06 July 2015 22:15 - Last Updated Monday, 06 July 2015 22:22



Tanner English's July at the plate had not been worth celebrating so far, with just one hit in the month going into the Kernels' game Monday night against Beloit.

The Cedar Rapids center fielder finally got untracked, driving in three runs with a pair of hits and leading the Kernels to a 7-5 win before 1,701 fans at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

His fourth-inning double drove in Rafael Valera and Brian Navarreto to put the Kernels up, 4-2. After the Snappers put three runs on the board in the visitor's half of the sixth, English tied things 5-5 with an RBI single in the home half of the frame. He came around to score Cedar Rapids' seventh run for a two-run cushion.

English was happy to pick up a few RBIs for his club.

"(RBIs) are hard to come by nowadays," English said in the winner's clubhouse. "I keep grinding and making adjustments, trying to help the club out any way I can. Tonight I was trying to make contact in those situations and it kind of worked out for me."

His manager, Jake Mauer, was also glad to see English break out offensively a bit.

"He's had a tough go," the skipper said. "Couple of big RBIs, so it was good to see."

Starter Sam Gibbons (3-2) went six innings in picking up his third win of the season. Gibbons was charged with all five Beloit runs, giving up seven

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hits and striking out four Snappers.

As has frequently been the case this season, however, all the Kernels had to do was stake their pitching staff to a lead and let the bullpen do its thing in the late innings. Gibbons left the game with a 7-5 lead and his relief took over from there.

Jared Wilson threw a pair of no-hit innings, collecting four strikeouts in the process, and Trevor Hildenberger worked a scoreless ninth inning, notching all three outs via strikeout to collect his 10th save.

Cedar Rapids pitching coach Henry Bonilla was naturally pleased with the way his relievers did their jobs.

"You know, that's the way it's supposed to go," Bonilla said. "It's not always like that, but today it went well. The back end of the bullpen did a really, really nice job."

Bonilla was quick to credit Navarreto, the Kernels' catcher, for his part in the effort.

"I think most of the credit goes to Nava," he pointed out. "(The pitchers) were burying curveballs in the dirt. He had a long night, but he blocked everything.

"Some of those balls are a foot in front of home plate and they're swinging at it and he blocked them. That just shows how much confidence they have in Navarreto."

Navarreto also contributed with the bat Monday night, adding a pair of hits, including his fifth double and scoring twice.

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Nick Gordon and Edgar Corcino joined English and Navarreto, each adding a pair of hits to the Kernels' 11-hit attack. Corcino had two doubles.

The Kernels wrap up their homestand at noon Tuesday against Beloit.

BELOIT (5): Harris, cf, 5 1 1 1, Gilbert, 2b, 4 0 0 1, Bennie, dh, 3 1 0 0, Brizuela, 3b, 3 1 2 0, Kuhn, 1b, 3 1 1 1, Higley, lf, 4 0 0 0, Munoz, ss, 4 0 1 2, Duinkerck, rf, 4 0 1 0, Akau, c, 4 1 2 0. Totals 34 5 8 5.

KERNELS (7): English, cf, 5 1 2 3, Gordon, ss, 5 0 2 1, Corcino, rf, 4 0 2 1, Real, dh, 4 1 1 0, Murphy, lf, 3 1 0 0, Fernandez, 1b, 4 0 1 0, Valera, 3b, 2 2 1 1, Navarreto, c, 4 2 2 0, Kelly, 2b, 3 0 0 1. Totals 34 7 11 7.

Beloit □ □ 002 003 000 - 5 □ 8 1

Kernels □ 020 203 00x - 7 11 1

Mendez, Vattuone (6), Torres (6), Grundy (8) and Akau. Gibbons, Wilson (7), Hildenberger (9) and Navarreto. W - Gibbons (3-2). L - Vattuone (0-2). S - Hildenberger (10). 2B - Brizuela (12), Munoz (9), Gordon (11), English (10), Corcino 2 (9). 3B - Harris (2). SB - English (26). E - Brizuela (13), Gordon (11). T - 2:45. A - 1,701.