

Kernels show feet of clay in loss

Written by Jim Ecker

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For awhile Wednesday night it looked like Sam Clay might have a good story to tell his grand-kids some day.

He learns Tuesday night that he's being promoted from Elizabethton to Cedar Rapids, hustles to Iowa on short notice and is the starting pitcher for the Kernels in their Midwest League game against Peoria at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

All goes well for awhile as Clay, a 22-year-old southpaw from Georgia who pitched for the Kernels earlier in the year. He tosses three shutout innings to begin the game and Cedar Rapids grabs a 2-0 lead.

Peoria scores three runs in the top of the fourth for a 3-2 lead, but the Kernels score twice in the bottom of the fourth for a 4-3 advantage and Clay needs just three more outs to qualify for a victory.

Unfortunately for Clay and the Kernels, the Chiefs score three more runs in the top of the fifth and proceed to a 7-5 victory over the Kernels before 1,859 fans at the stadium.

Clay (0-3, 4.70 ERA) suffered the loss, allowing six runs (only three earned) in five innings.

The setback left the Kernels with an 11-12 loss in August as they limp toward the end of the regular season and the playoffs.

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Edgar Corcino went 3-for-5 for the Kernels, raising his average to .293. Rafael Valera went 2-for-5 and scored twice, putting his batting average at .287.

Harrison Bader went 4-for-4 for Peoria with two triples and three RBIs.

The Kernels begin a new series with Kane County Thursday night at the stadium at 6:35.

PEORIA (7): Seferina, 2b, 4 1 2 0, Mercado, ss, 5 2 2 0, DeJong, 3b, 5 1 1 0, De Leon, 1b, 3 1 1 1, Bader, cf, 4 1 4 3, Thompson, rf, 4 0 1 1, O'Keefe, dh, 4 1 1 1, Bean, c, 3 0 1 0, Peoples-Walls, lf, 4 0 0 0. Totals 36 7 13 6.

KERNELS (5): Miller, ss, 3 0 1 1, Valera, 2b, 5 2 2 0, Corcino, rf, 5 0 3 1, White, 3b, 4 0 1 2, Murphy, lf, 4 0 1 0, Real, dh, 4 0 1 0, Doe, 1b, 4 0 0 0, Navarreto, c, 3 1 0 0, Diemer, cf, 3 2 1 1. Totals 35 5 10 5.

Peoria ▯ ▯ 000 331 000 - 7 13 1

Kernels ▯ 101 200 001 - 5 10 1

McKinney, Bray (7), Then (9) and Bean. Clay, Wilson (6), Theofanopoulos (8) and Navarreto. W - McKinney (3-0). L - Clay (0-3). S - Then (1). 2B - Mercado (23), Valera (7), White (20), Diemer (7), Murphy (14), Corcino (15). 3B - Real (3). HR - O'Keefe (4). SB - Valera (2). E - Bader (1), Doe (4). T - 2:48. A - 1,859.