

Kernels bash big leaguer, sweep Rattlers

Written by S.D. Buhr

Sunday, 23 June 2013 16:16 - Last Updated Monday, 24 June 2013 11:10

GRAND CHUTE, Wis. - For two innings, it looked as though Cedar Rapids was going to be overmatched by Milwaukee Brewers pitcher Marco Estrada, who struck out five Kernels hitters and gave up only one hit, a first-inning double by Jorge Polanco.

Estrada, who's been on the Brewers' disabled list with a hamstring injury, was making a rehabilitation start for the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers.

Estrada recorded only two more outs, however, as the Kernels batted around against the big leaguer in the third inning and built a 6-2 lead they did not relinquish en route to a 13-9 win to sweep the four-game series against the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers at Time Warner Field.

J.D. Williams got the Kernels on the board first with a lead-off home run, his sixth of the year, to right field off of Estrada in the third inning. Williams said after the game that he wasn't looking for any particular pitch against Estrada.

"3-2 (count), I was just looking for a strike," said Williams.

Estrada's fastball wasn't all that impressive on this day.

"(It was) 87 miles an hour, pretty straight," commented Kernels third baseman Travis Harrison, who scored twice and had a single and his 22nd double of the season. "We lit him up a little bit."

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For the second straight game, every batter in the Kernels lineup had at least one hit. The last Kernel to get his hit was center fielder Byron Buxton, who waited until the top of the fifth inning to line an RBI triple to right-center field. Buxton finished with two hits in five at-bats and walked once in front of a crowd of 3,001 that included Minnesota Twins General Manager Terry Ryan.

Ryan was in town for the entire series and said of Buxton before the game, "it's getting to that point now where he might need another challenge."

Polanco led the Kernels offensive attack with four hits and was one of five Kernels to score at least two runs. Max Kepler, a recent addition to the Kernels roster, had two doubles and a single in six at-bats.

"Kepler's going to help us," commented Kernels Manager Jake Mauer. "He's going to be a pretty good hitter."

No lead seemed safe for the Kernels in this game, however.

"We needed every run today," commented Mauer. "The third and fifth innings were fun." His Kernels sent 12 hitters to the plate in the six-run third inning and 10 hitters also scored six runs in the fifth.

Hudson Boyd (2-4) went five innings and got credit for the win, despite giving up five runs (all earned) in his five innings on the mound. Caleb Brewer followed Boyd and was nicked for four runs in his two innings of work.

Steve Gruver finished things off for the Kernels with two perfect innings, striking out a pair of Timber Rattlers in the process.

The Kernels, now a perfect 4-0 in the second half of the season, have Monday off before beginning a homestand with a 12:05 game against the Burlington Bees on Tuesday.

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KERNELS (13): Buxton, cf, 5 1 2 1, Goodrum, ss, 5 1 1 0, Polanco, 2b, 6 2 4 1, Hicks, 1b, 4 2 2 2, Harrison, 3b, 5 2 2 2, Kepler, dh, 6 1 3 3, Waler, rf, 5 2 2 2, Arias, c, 5 0 1 1, Williams, lf, 4 2 3 1, Boyd p, 0 0 0 0, Brewer, p, 0 0 0 0, Gruver, p, 0 0 0 0. Totals 45 13 20 13.

WISCONSIN (9): Reed, lf, 5 0 0 0, Arcia, ss, 3 2 10, Taylor, cf, 4 2 2 0, Roache, dh, 5 1 3 4, Garza, 3b, 4 1 0 1, Giacalone, 1b, 4 1 0 0, Walla, rf, 5 1 3 0, Roberts, c, 4 1 3 2, A.Williams, 2b, 3 0 0 2, Estrada, p, 0 0 0 0, Gibbard, p, 0 0 0 0, Gainey, p, 0 0 0 0. Totals 37 9 12 9.

Kernels 006 060 100 - 13 20 3

Wisconsin 112 103 100 - 9 12 3

Boyd, Brewer (6), Gruver (8) and Arias. Estrada, Gibbard (3), Gainey (6) and Roberts. W-Boyd (2-4). L-Estrada (0-1). 2B-Polanco (20), Harrison (22), Kepler 2 (3), Taylor (21), Walla (4). 3B-Buxton (10). HR-Williams (6), Walker (11), Roache (7), Roberts (1). SF-Hicks. SB-Williams (13), Arcia (11). E-Goodrum 2 (12), Arias (2), Taylor (2), A.Williams (1), Walla (1). T-3:10. A-3,001.