

## 6-run frame dooms Kernels

Written by S.D. Buhr

Friday, 02 August 2013 21:45 - Last Updated Saturday, 03 August 2013 10:29

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BURLINGTON - Cedar Rapids Kernels hitting coach Tommy Watkins summarized the team's feelings in five words after the Kernels lost their third game in four days to the Burlington Bees Friday night.

"Can't wait to get home," said Watkins.

The Kernels came out on the short end of a 6-2 score in front of 1,054 fans at Community Field. A fair number of those fans had headed home by the time the two teams sat through a one hour, six minute rain delay during the middle of the fourth inning.

The Bees got all the runs they needed in the home half of the second inning when they struck for six runs on five hits off Kernels starting pitcher Tim Atherton (5-4). They also were aided by one of the Kernels' two errors.

Cedar Rapids put up one run in the eighth inning, thanks to singles by Joel Licon, Jonathan Murphy and Niko Goodrum.

Adam Brett Walker connected for his 23rd home run of the season in the Kernels' ninth frame to end the scoring.

The Kernels will need strong performances this weekend from starting pitchers Mason Melotakis and Jose Berrios after their bullpen was forced to throw 15 1/3 innings during the four-game series with the Bees.

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“(Melotakis and Berrios are) going to have to throw all their (allotted) pitches,” said Manager Jake Mauer. “If it gets ugly fast, (they’re) going to have to go deep. Hopefully, it won’t come to that.”

Atherton, who had settled in and was pitching well after the Bees’ big second inning, was unable to return to the mound after the lengthy rain delay.

After play resumed the Kernels bullpen held the Bees without a hit. That was a silver lining, of sorts, for the Kernels skipper.

“(Alex) Muren was excellent tonight,” said Mauer, adding “Hudson (Boyd) did a nice job.”

Muren threw three hitless innings, striking out four hitters, and Boyd added two hitless innings of his own.

Burlington starting pitcher Reid Scoggins struck out seven Kernels hitters in four innings of shutout work, but also was unable to return after the rain delay. Joseph Krehbiel (5-5) struck out five in his four innings for the win and Chris O’Grady worked the ninth inning for the Bees.

The Kernels start a series with Quad Cities Saturday night at Veterans Memorial Stadium in Cedar Rapids. It’s “Jimmy Buffet Night” at Perfect Game Field with fireworks after the game. Game time is 5:05.

Quad Cities has crept within 1.5 games of the Kernels in the Midwest League's Western Division.

KERNELS (2): Murphy, cf, 4 0 1 0, Goodrum, ss, 4 0 1 1, Gonzales, 1b, 4 0 0 0, Walker, rf, 4 1 2 1, Kepler, dh, 4 0 0 0, Harrison, 3b, 4 0 1 0, Grimes, c, 3 0 0 0, Licon, 2b, 3 0 1 0, Pineda, cf,

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3 1 0 0. Totals 33 2 6 2.

BURLINGTON (6): Johnson, 3b, 4 1 1 0, Cannizaro, 2b, 4 0 0 0, Cayones, lf, 3 0 0 1, Hinkle, dh, 3 1 0 0, Martinez, c, 4 1 1 0, Scioscia, 1b, 3 1 1 1, Clarke, rf, 3 1 1 0, Good, cf, 3 0 0 1, Rosa, ss, 3 1 1 2. Totals 30 6 5 5.

Kernels 000 000 011 - 2 6 2

Burlington 060 000 00x - 6 5 1

Atherton, Muren (4), Boyd (7) and Grimes. Scoggins, Krehbiel (5), O'Grady (9) and Martinez. W-Krehbiel (5-5). L-Atherton (5-4). 2B-Johnson (16). HR-Walker (23). E-Licon (6), Pineda (5), Rosa (7). T-2:18. A-1,054.