Walker's 25th homer leads Kernels

Written by Metro Sports Report
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BELOIT, Wis. - Adam Brett Walker belted his 25th home run and Max Kepler also homered to power the Cedar Rapids Kernels past the Beloit Snappers, 7-4, Friday night in a Midwest League baseball game at Pohlman Field.

The Kernels swept the three-game series from the Snappers and held onto their half-game lead over Quad Cities in the Western Division second-half pennant race.

Five Kernels pitchers combined to strike out 13 Snappers. Mason Melotakis (10-4) pitched 2-1/3 innings of one-hit ball in relief of spot starter Tim Shibuya to pick up the win. Madison Boer pitched a perfect ninth inning for his fourth save.

The Kernels collected 14 hits. Walker, Kepler and Travis Harrison drove in two runs apiece.

Harrison's two-run double staked the Kernels to a 2-0 lead in the first inning.

Beloit tallied twice in the third inning to tie the game. The second run scored on a two-out, bases-load walk that chased Shibuya and brought in Melotakis, who got out of the jam with a fly out.

Michael Quesada's RBI single in the sixth inning put the Kernels back on top, 3-2.

Walker belted a two-run home run in the seventh, and Kepler added a two-run shot in the eighth that gave the Kernels a 7-2 lead. It was Kepler's sixth home run.

The Kernels open a three-game series at Kane County on Saturday night at 6:30.

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KERNELS (7): Murphy, cf, 5 0 0 0, Goodrum, ss, 5 2 2 0, Kepler, 1b, 4 3 2 2, Walker, rf, 5 1 2 2, Harrison, 3b, 5 0 2 2, Grimes, dh, 2 1 1 0, Licon, 2b, 5 0 2 0, Quesada, c, 4 0 1 1, Pineda, lf, 4 0 2 0. Totals 39 7 14 7.

BELOIT (4): Shipman, dh, 5 1 0 0, Vertigan, cf, 5 1 1 0, Robertson, ss, 5 0 1 1, Nunez, 3b, 3 1 1 0, Olson, 1b, 3 0 0 1, Mathews, lf, 4 0 2 0, Roberts, 2b, 4 1 2 0, Delgado, c, 3 0 2 1, Alexander, rf, 4 0 0 0. Totals 36 4 9 3.

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Kernels   200 001 220 - 7 14 1
Beloit    002 000 020 - 4  9 0
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Shibuya, Melotakis (3), Gallant (6), Bixler (8), Boer (9) and Quesada. Covey, Lamb (6), Hall (7), Bayless (8) and Delgado. W-Melotakis (10-4). L-Lamb (2-4). Sv-Boer (4). 2B-Harrison (27), Mathews 2 (24), Nunez (24), Delgado (5). HR-Walker (25), Kepler (6). SB-Goodrum (16), Pineda (14), Nunez (2). E-Quesada (4). T-3:20. A-1,798.