

Kernels clinch spot in MWL playoffs

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The Cedar Rapids Kernels clinched a berth in the Midwest League playoffs while they were riding on a bus from Burlington to Cedar Rapids late Saturday night.

The Kernels did their part Saturday by blanking Burlington, 3-0, but their playoff spot did not become official until Peoria lost to Wisconsin, 11-7, in 11 innings.

The Kernels (39-22) own a nine-game lead over Peoria (30-31) with nine games left in the regular season, but the Kernels own the tiebreaker over Peoria if both teams finish with 39-31 records for the second half of the campaign.

The Kernels and Peoria Chiefs split their six games, 3-3, during the second half of the season, but the Kernels own a plus-8 run differential against the Chiefs in those games to win the second tiebreaker and claim the playoff berth.

Cedar Rapids is still battling Wisconsin (32-29) for the No. 1 seed in the Western Division for the second half of the Midwest League season. The Kernels' magic number against Wisconsin is three.