

Kernels win 5th straight opener, 7-2

Written by Metro Sports Report

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GENEVA, Ill. - The Cedar Rapids Kernels know how to begin a season in style.

The Kernels won their fifth straight opener Thursday night with a 7-2 victory over Kane County in a rain-delayed Midwest League game before 4,657 fans at Fifth Third Bank Ballpark.

The start of the game was delayed 70 minutes by rain, but it was worth waiting as the Kernels got strong pitching and timely hitting.

Starter Mat Batts allowed one run in 5 ²/₃ inning and left the mound with a 3-1 lead. He was touched for just two hits with seven strikeouts and no walks. Batts retired 14 straight batters at one point and had 1-2-3 innings in the second, third, fourth and fifth innings. He struck out the side in the fifth.

Jared Wilson pitched 1 ¹/₃ innings of scoreless relief and got a hold. Cam Booser tossed the final two innings for the save.

Kane County had only four hits in the game. They were all doubles.

Nick Gordon, Zack Larson, Trey Vavra, Jonatan Hinojosa and Brian Navarreto had two hits for Cedar Rapids. Gordon had a triple and scored two runs.

Larson had two stolen bases. Gordon, Larson, Hinojosa, T.J. White and Navarreto had RBIs.

The Kernels scored three runs in the sixth inning for a 3-0 lead. They added another tally in the seventh inning for a 4-1 margin and broke the

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game open with three runs in the ninth for a 7-1 lead.

Cedar Rapids and Kane County are scheduled to meet again in Game 2 of the three-game series Friday night at 6:30. John Curtiss is scheduled to pitch for the Kernels.

KERNELS (7): Granite, lf, 5 1 1 0, Gordon, ss, 4 2 2 1, Larson, rf, 4 1 2 1, Murphy, dh, 5 0 0 0, Vavra, 1b, 4 1 2 0, Hinojosa, 2b, 4 1 2 1, White, 3b, 3 0 0 1, Navarreto, c, 4 0 2 1, English, cf, 4 1 1 0. Totals 37 7 12 5.

KANE COUNTY (2): Taylor, rf, 4 1 0 0, Bray, cf, 4 0 2 1, Munoz, 3b, 4 0 0 0, McQuail, dh, 1 0 0 0, Heyman, lf, 3 0 0 0, Herum, 1b, 4 0 0 0, Trahan, c, 4 1 1 0, Ozuma, 2b, 4 0 1 1, Alcantara, ss, 4 0 0 0. Totals 32 2 4 2.

Kernels ▯ ▯ ▯ ▯ ▯ 000 003 103 - 7 12 0
Kane County ▯ 000 001 001 - 2 ▯ 4 2

Batts, Wilson (6), Booser (8) and Navarreto. Jones, Solis (6), Geyer (8), Jameson (9) and Trahan. W - Batts (1-0). L - Jones (0-1). H - Wilson (1). S - Booser (1). 2B - Bray 2, Ozuna, Trahan. 3B - Gordon. SB - Larson 2. E - Alcantara, Munoz. A - 4,657. T - 2:41 (1:10 delay).