

## Corcino turns career around with Kernels

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 22 July 2015 15:54 - Last Updated Wednesday, 22 July 2015 16:03

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Edgar Corcino spent two years in Independent League baseball after being released by the Detroit Tigers organization in 2013, enduring long bus rides and tardy paychecks for the love of the game.

Now it appears to be paying off.

Corcino belted a bases-clearing triple in the third inning Wednesday afternoon to help the Cedar Rapids Kernels nip Wisconsin, 5-4, in a Midwest League game before 3,017 fans at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

The switch-hitting outfielder is hitting .330 with two home runs and 27 RBIs in 46 games since joining the Kernels from Extended Spring Training on May 30.

There are some long bus rides in the Midwest League, but nothing like one of the trips he took while playing for El Paso in the independent American Association.

"My first year in El Paso, I remember a 29-hour road trip from El Paso to St. Paul/Minneapolis," he said Wednesday after happily signing autographs for Kernels fans. "It was a long drive. It was hard, but it was fun, too."

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"I got used to it. You've got to get used to it. It's part of the game, so you have to get used to it. You get some Ny-Quil and go ahead."

The bus rides were not as bad when he played for Rockford (Ill.) in the Frontier League, but independent baseball is still a long way from the organized minor leagues where all of the teams are connected to Major League clubs.

On occasion, your paycheck with an independent team can arrive a little later than expected as clubs scramble to pay their bills.

"A couple of times I didn't get the check on the right day, but finally I got it," said Corcino. "But I wasn't there for the money. I just wanted to play."

Corcino, who turned 23 last month, was born in the Dominican Republic and moved to Puerto Rico with his family when he was 8 years old. The Detroit Tigers selected him in the 26th round of the 2009 draft when he was barely 17, but the Tigers released him on March 28, 2013 on the eve of the minor league season that year.

"One of the Detroit guys, when we were up there in West Michigan (a Tigers minor league team), said they gave up on him too fast," Kernels Manager Jake Mauer said Wednesday after the game.

The Twins signed Corcino as a free agent on Jan. 16 this year and eventually assigned him to the Kernels.

"He's put together great at-bats ever since he's been here," said Mauer. "He's been as steady as it comes. We were pretty lucky to sign him, because we'd really have a hard time scoring runs if we didn't have him."

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Corcino said his family and his love for baseball kept him going through the lean times.

"My family, every time I think about it, I do the best for them," he said. "That's how I got through that. It was hard.

"Yeah, I love the game. I really love the game. I love coming out every game, hanging out with the boys. These are fun times. I love it."

Corcino thinks his career is finally headed in the right direction.

"I feel right now I'm pretty much here," he said. "I've been learning a lot. It feels like things will go good from here.

"When I was in independent ball, the manager there said I was a really good player but I didn't trust myself. I just started trusting myself and letting it happen. It's been working well for me."

The Kernels took a 5-0 lead in the third inning Wednesday, but Wisconsin crept back and pulled within 5-4 in the ninth when relief pitcher Cam Booser had control problems, walking two batters and throwing two wild pitches. Booser bore down, however, and ended the game with a strikeout on a 97 mph fastball.

Corcino and Sean Miller had two hits for Cedar Rapids. Ethan Mildren (3-1) pitched 5.1 innings for the victory. Yorman Landa tossed 2.2 hitless innings in relief. Booser was credited with his ninth save.

The Kernels (56-41) host Wisconsin (31-65) again at 6:35 p.m. Thursday.

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**WISCONSIN (4):** Allemand, ss, 2 1 1 0, Sharkey, 1b, 5 1 1 0, Leal, c, 5 0 2 1, Rubio, rf, 4 0 0 1, Neuhaus, dh, 3 0 0 0, Matos, lf, 2 0 0 0, Meyer, cf, 4 0 0 0, Aviles, 3b, 4 1 1 1, Munoz, 2b, 3 1 0 0. Totals 32 4 5 3.

**KERNELS (5):** English, cf, 4 1 1 0, Gordon, ss, 3 1 0 0, Corcino, rf, 4 1 2 3, Larson, dh, 4 0 1 0, Kuresa, 1b, 4 1 1 1, Kelly, 3b, 4 0 1 0, Real, c, 4 0 1 1, Diemer, lf, 4 0 0 0, Miller, 2b, 3 1 2 0. Totals 34 5 9 5.

**Wisconsin** □ 000 012 001 - 4 5 1

**Kernels** □ □ □ 005 000 00x - 5 9 1

Burkhalter, Linehan (4), Rizzo (6), Ponce (8) and Leal. Mildren, Landa (6), Booser (9) and Real. W - Mildren (3-1). L - Burkhalter (3-6). S - Booser (9). 2B - Kelly (9). 3B - Corcino (3). HR - Aviles (1). SB - Miller (1). E - Aviles (7), Miller (3). T - 2:35. A - 3,017.

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