

Gibbons mows down Bowling Green

Written by Mike Condon

Saturday, 08 August 2015 20:39 -



At first glance, Sam Gibbons isn't all that impressive.

The Cedar Rapids Kernels right-hander isn't overpowering on the mound but all he has done recently is win.

Gibbons had his scoreless innings streak snapped at 28 1/3 on Saturday night. However, those runs came in his final inning of work as he went seven, allowing six hits and one earned run as the Kernels downed Bowling Green, 8-2, before a crowd of 5,391 at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

The solid work turned in by Gibbons hasn't gone unnoticed by his manager.

"For me, it's just his aggressiveness," said Kernels skipper Jake Mauer of Gibbons' scoreless streak. "He is locating his fast ball, moving it around, sinking it. He has got a lot of ground ball outs."

Of the 21 outs the Kernels recorded with Gibbons (6-2) on the mound, 11 of them were on the ground.

"Sam got a lot of outs early in the count," continued Mauer. "That's just huge. It been fun watching him the last four or five outings."

After making a spirited rally in Friday's game, only to fall short, losing 7-5 to the Hot Rods, Cedar Rapids took control from the beginning in Saturday's game.

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Tanner English led off the bottom of the first with a triple to the gap in left center and scored on Nick Gordon's ground out to short. The lead grew to 2-0 in the second when T.J. White led off with a double, moved to third on an error and scored on a double play ground out.

English and Gordon teamed up again in the third. English belted a one-out double to right, took third on a balk and came home as Gordon reached on an error.

"(Bowling Green) made some nice defensive plays to limit some damage," Mauer said. "We stuck with it and had a throwing error that kind of let a free run score, but we were able to throw out the guy trying to score the tying run."

That came in the seventh. After retiring the first two hitters, Gibbons surrendered a single, followed by a walk. A wild pitch moved the runners into scoring position for No. 9 hitter Cristian Toribio, who singled to right, bringing home the first run.

Thomas Malone followed with a grounder to White at third who overshot Brett Doe at first, allowing one run to score. Toribio tried to score all the way from first but a hustling Doe fired a strike to the plate to easily cut down Toribio.

The Kernels took control in the bottom of the inning. The highlight was a three-run homer from catcher Brian Navarreto.

"That was a huge at-bat from Navarreto," Mauer said. "Then we were able to tack on a couple more in the eighth."

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"You know, these guys really compete," continued the Kernels' manager. "They are never really out of a game. Just about every game we've played, we've been in. It was nice to see them running around the bases today."

The team conclude the series and the homestand for Cedar Rapids tomorrow with a 2:05 p.m. game. Randy LeBlanc will start on the mound for the Kernels.

BOWLING GREEN (2): Milone, cf, 4 0 0 0, Jackson, lf, 4 0 1 0, Kay, 3b, 3 0 1 0, Williams, rf, 4 0 0 0, Lockwood, dh, 4 0 0 0, Ciuffo, c, 4 0 2 0, Blanchard, 1b, 4 1 2 0, Sole, 2b, 3 1 1 0. Toribilo 4 0 2 1. Totals 34 2 9 1.

KERNELS (8): English, cf, 4 2 2 0, Gordon, ss, 4 0 0 2, Corcino, rf, 4 0 0 0, Larson, lf, 4 1 0 0, White, 3b, 3 3 2 0, Doe, 1b, 4 1 1 0, Real, dh, 3 0 1 2, Navarreto, c, 4 1 1 3, Valera, 2b, 2 0 1 0. Totals 32 8 8 7.

Bowling Green 000 000 100 - 2 9 3
Kernels 111 000 32x - 8 8 1

Mujica, Gomez (7) and Ciuffo. Gibbons, Anderson (8), Bard (9) and Navarreto. W - Gibbons (6-2). L - Mujica (0-2). 2B - Kay (22), White 2 (14), English (21). 3B - English (8). HR - Navarreto (2). E - Torobio 2 (25) Sole (2), White (14). T - 2:13. A - 5,391.