

HUGE INNING LEADS KERNELS TO WIN OVER BANDITS

Written by Marco LaNave
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Byron Buxton has hits in each of his first five at-bats to lead 21-hit attack by Western Division leaders

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa (JUNE 5, 2013) – Every hitter in the Cedar Rapids Kernels starting lineup had a hit and scored a run in order to start a 10-run, 12-hit fourth inning against the Quad Cities River Bandits, and the home team rallied from a 5-2 deficit to take a 14-5 victory Wednesday night at Perfect Game Field at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

Center fielder Byron Buxton finished 5-for-6 with two triples, a double and three runs scored to lead the Kernels (37-20), who moved five games ahead of the River Bandits (32-25) in the Midwest League Western Division first-half race. Shortstop Jorge Polanco went 4-for-6 with two doubles, two runs, and two RBIs, and first baseman Dalton Hicks had a game-high 4 RBIs with two doubles. In all, the Kernels had 21 hits, including six doubles and three triples.

Buxton started the Kernels offense with a leadoff single in the first inning against right-hander Jordan Jankowski, who allowed consecutive doubles by Polanco and Hicks for a 2-0 deficit. Quad Cities began its answer in the top of the second inning, as third baseman Rio Ruiz doubled, went to third base on a single by catcher Roberto Pena and scored on a groundout by designated hitter Brian Blasik. In the third inning, Ruiz added a game-tying RBI single, and Pena followed with a go-ahead double for a 3-2 lead. The River Bandits added two more runs in the fourth inning on shortstop Carlos Correa's RBI single and an RBI groundout from right fielder Terrell Joyce, against right-hander Alex Muren (4-0), who rebounded to pitch 3 2/3 scoreless innings for the Kernels.

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With a 5-2 lead in the bottom of the fourth, Jankowski allowed singles by catcher Michael Quesada and second baseman Candido Pimentel before Buxton bounced a ball over Ruiz's leap at third base to bring in a run and make it 5-3. Left-hander Mitchell Lambson (2-2) then entered and allowed six straight hits to each batter he faced, including Polanco's game-tying single, and Hicks' go-ahead double. After every Kernel had a hit with no outs, Lambson left with the River Bandits down 9-5. Right-hander Richard Rodriguez came on to get the three outs in the fourth inning but also allowed a two-run single by second baseman Candido Pimentel and another RBI single by Polanco. A total of 15 Kernels batted, with 12 recording hits to build a 12-5 lead.

Cedar Rapids added a run against Rodriguez in the fifth inning as Quesada hit an RBI single to bring in designated hitter Tyler Grimes following the latter's two-out triple. Right-hander Juan Minaya made his Midwest League debut by pitching the sixth through eighth innings and allowing a sixth-inning run, as Buxton tripled and scored on Hicks' sacrifice fly to make it 14-5.

Kernels pitchers faced one over the minimum for the final 5 2/3 innings, as right-handers Caleb Brewer and Tim Atherton each pitched a scoreless inning. Quad Cities had two hits against the Cedar Rapids bullpen after reaching starter Hein Robb for five runs on four hits in the first 3 1/3 innings.

The River Bandits will send right-hander Vincent Velasquez (4-2) against Kernels right-hander Jose Berrios (4-2) in Game 2 of the series at 6:35 p.m. Thursday in Cedar Rapids.

UP NEXT: Reservations can be made from now until June 10 for the River Bandits Father's Day Cookout and pre-game catch scheduled for Sunday, June 16. Check out www.riverbandits.com for details or call

[563-324-3000](tel:563-324-3000)

. Single-game tickets are on sale at the River Bandits box office at Modern Woodmen Park, by phone at

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. Season ticket and mini-plan packages start at just seven games and begin at less than \$50. Call a River Bandits account representative today to choose your seats and get the details of our various mini-plan packages.