

COMER HAS CAREER NIGHT AS BANDITS WIN ROUT

Written by Marco LaNave
Thursday, 28 August 2014 15:13

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Quad Cities moves within two games of Wisconsin for a second-half playoff spot with five to play

DAVENPORT, Iowa (August 27, 2014) – Quad Cities right-hander Kevin Comer posted career highs with six innings and 10 strikeouts Wednesday night, and second baseman Marc Wik had three of his team's eight hits, while third baseman J.D. Davis had a three-run home run and four RBIs in the River Bandits' 11-2 win over the Clinton LumberKings in front of 2,291 at Modern Woodmen Park.

With their sixth win in eight games, the River Bandits (32-33 second half, 67-67 overall) put themselves two games behind Wisconsin (34-31) for the final second half playoff spot with five games remaining. Peoria (32-33) also won Wednesday to tie Quad Cities.

After Comer (2-5) worked a perfect first inning, Quad Cities wasted no time against right-hander Carlos Misell (8-11). Wik hit a leadoff infield single. Left fielder Jose Fernandez grounded to third baseman Joe DeCarlo, who overthrew first base, allowing Wik to score and Fernandez to reach second. A wild pitch and throwing error by catcher Christian Carmichael allowed Fernandez to score for a 2-0 lead.

Clinton (28-37, 58-75) came back in the top of the second inning, as first baseman Jeff Zimmerman hit a leadoff double down the first-base line and scored after Carmichael's single

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and a fielder's choice. In the top of the third inning, LumberKings center fielder Aaron Barbosa hit a leadoff single to right field and went to second base on an error by first baseman Chase McDonald. With Barbosa stealing third base, Comer struck out right fielder Tyler O'Neill, and catcher Brian Holberton threw past third base, allowing Barbosa to score the tying run.

With the third-inning strikeout of O'Neill, Comer began a stretch in which he retired 11 batters in order – including seven on strikeouts. He allowed a two-out walk to DeCarlo in the sixth inning before retiring pinch hitter Martin Peguero on a groundout. In his first career six-inning outing, Comer earned his first home win by allowing two runs – one earned – on three hits that all came in the first three innings and two walks with 10 strikeouts to match the most by a River Bandits pitcher this season.

Meanwhile, the home team took the lead for good in the bottom of the third inning. Misell issued a leadoff walk to shortstop Thomas Lindauer before a Wik put a bunt single between the pitcher's mound and the third-base line. After a wild pitch, Fernandez then lined a double down the first-base line to score both runners and extend his season-high eight-game hitting streak. Designated hitter A.J. Reed extended a five-game hitting streak with a single to right field, and Davis hit a pop fly to left field, but Brett Thomas could not find it, allowing a single to drop safely and Fernandez to score. After Misell's third wild pitch put Reed at third base, center fielder Ryan Bottger hit a sacrifice fly to make it 6-2. In the fifth inning, Misell walked McDonald and Davis, and after a fielder's choice, Holberton hit an RBI single to center field for a 7-2 lead. Misell allowed seven runs – five earned – on six hits and four walks with one strikeout in five innings.

After Misell, left-hander Cruz Pereira allowed a four-run sixth inning. Lindauer drew a leadoff walk, Wik doubled to left field and pinch hitter Brauly Mejia hit an RBI groundout. McDonald walked, and with two outs, Davis drove his fifth Midwest League home run – and fourth in 10 games – to right field for an 11-2 Quad Cities lead. The 11 runs were the team's most since June 29. Clinton went hitless after the third inning, as Comer was followed by left-hander Jordan Mills for two innings and right-hander Frederick Tiburcio for one inning.

Quad Cities continues its final home series with Clinton at 7 p.m. Thursday, when River Bandits right-hander Adrian Houser (5-5) is scheduled to face LumberKings right-hander Edwin Diaz (5-8). Quad Cities' final regular season home game is Friday.

UP NEXT: Fan Appreciation Week continues Thursday with all regular individual tickets being half-price on Modern Woodmen Half-Price Night with a River Bandits hat giveaway for the first

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1,500 fans. Thirst-Day Thursday presented by the River Cities' Reader means \$2 drink specials. Friday is Fan Appreciation Night with giveaways galore and postgame Friday Fireworks presented by Smart Toyota of the Quad Cities, WLLR and WQAD. Regular tickets are available at www.riverbandits.com .

ABOUT THE BANDITS: Having just been named Ballpark Digest's winner of Best Ballpark Improvement in America under \$1 million, the River Bandits ownership recently made one of the biggest improvements to Modern Woodmen Park since the ballpark was first built back in 1931! A new Ferris wheel, standing 105 feet over the playing field, opened May 24, Space Camp opened June 20; the new Drop-N-Twist debuted in July; and the newly expanded 300-foot long zip line also reopened. In 2013, the team unveiled a new 220-foot long dual zip line, a rock climbing wall, and a number of new bounce houses. Last season, the team's major league affiliate, the Houston Astros, saw all six of its affiliates reach the playoffs - the first time in a decade any MLB team can claim such success. The River Bandits were one of three affiliates to reach the championship round and one of two to win their league championship.
