

Gonsalves gem lifts Kernels

Written by Morgan Hawk

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GRAND CHUTE, Wis. - Stephen Gonsalves allowed just one hit and struck out 11 in seven innings on Thursday afternoon as the Cedar Rapids Kernels completed the three-game sweep with a 3-0 win over the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers before 476 fans at Fox Cities Stadium.

The lone hit Wisconsin hit was a bunt single in the fourth inning. Trevor Hildenberger tossed two perfect innings for his first save. The Kernels have won four games in a row. Gonsalves (2-0) has now struck out at least nine in all three of his starts, totaling 30 strikeouts and 11 hits allowed in 20 innings Wisconsin had three base runners on Thursday.

Gonsalves retired the first 10 hitters before Brandon Diaz reached with a bunt single that rolled up the first base line in the fourth inning. He then hit Dustin DeMuth with a pitch. Following the hit batter, Gonsalves retired the next 10 Timber Rattlers before walking Elvis Rubio in the seventh inning. That was the final Wisconsin hitter to reach base.

Hildenberger recorded two strikeouts in his two perfect innings out of the bullpen as the duo combined for 13 strikeouts and one walk.

The game was scoreless through five innings until the Kernels took a 2-0 lead in the sixth. Jonatan Hinojosa and Zack Granite began the frame with consecutive singles, and Zack Larson's walk loaded the bases. Max Murphy's RBI sacrifice fly to right field brought in Hinojosa for the game's first run and sent Granite to third.

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Granite scored on Trey Vavra's strikeout to make the score 2-0. The dropped third strike forced catcher Carlos Leal to throw to first base. During the throw, Granite scampered home to put the Kernels up by a pair.

Cedar Rapids (11-4) added another run in the eighth inning, extending their lead to 3-0. Granite and Larson began the inning with base on balls. Granite scored on a RBI single by Vavra, finished the three-game series with seven RBIs, going 8-for-13.

Luis Ortega (0-2) suffered the loss for Wisconsin (3-12). The left-hander went 5 2/3 innings and allowed two runs on four hits while striking out five and walking two. Josh Uhen tossed 1 1/3 scoreless innings while Milton Gomez allowed one run over two innings in relief.

KERNELS (5): Granite, cf, 3 2 1 0, Larson, rf, 2 0 0 0, Murphy, lf, 3 0 0 1, Vavra, dh, 4 0 1 1, Kuresa, 1b, 3 0 1 0, White, 3b, 4 0 0 0, Kelly, 2b, 4 0 0 0, Navarreto, c, 4 0 0 0, Hinojosa, ss, 3 1 2 0. Totals 30 3 6 2.

WISCONSIN (4): Harrison, cf, 4 0 0 0, Diaz, lf, 4 0 1 0, DeMuth, dh, 3 0 0 0, Matos, 3b, 2 0 0 0, Rubio, rf, 3 0 0 0, Denson, 1b, 3 0 0 0, Gatewood, ss, 3 0 0 0, Leal, c, 3 0 0 0, Aviles, 2b, 3 0 0 0. Totals 28 0 1 0.

Kernels ▯ ▯ ▯ 000 002 010 - 3 6 0

Wisconsin ▯ 000 000 000 - 0 1 1

Gonsalves, Hildenberger (8) and Navarreto. Ortega, Uhen (6), M. Gomez (8) and Leal. W - Gonsalves (2-0). L - Ortega (0-2). S - Hildenberger (1). 2B - Navarreto (1). E - Rubio (2). T - 2:07. A - 476.