

Rahmatulla makes splash with Red Top

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 29 May 2016 21:19 - Last Updated Tuesday, 31 May 2016 04:53



SOLON - Tyler Rahmatulla looks good in a red-and-white baseball uniform again.

Rahmatulla wore those colors as a minor leaguer for the St. Louis Cardinals for three years and he's wearing them again for Red Top in the Iowa Valley League this season.

"I had all red stuff, so that worked out," he said with a smile Sunday.

Rahmatulla made a big splash in his IVL debut when he went 4-for-6 with a double, two home runs and four RBIs as Red Top swept a doubleheader from Norway, 7-6 and 13-2, at the Solon field.

Rahmatulla hit .322 for the Quad City River Bandits in the Midwest League in 2012, but he retired from pro ball in 2013 after struggling in Double-A for the Cardinals.

He met his fiancée, Clarissa Pauli, while playing for the River Bandits. Clarissa's cousin, Casey Pauli, is one of the players and coaches for Red Top, and that led to Rahmatulla joining the Iowa Valley League power this year.

He had not appeared in an organized game since 2013, but he played a flawless doubleheader at shortstop and swung a big bat in the No. 2 spot in the lineup for Red Top.

"It felt good to get back out there," he said. "I haven't played for awhile."

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Rahmatulla, 26, is from Mission Viejo, Calif., and played for UCLA from 2009 to 2011, helping the Bruins reach the championship game of the 2010 College World Series against South Carolina, although he did not play in the CWS due to a broken wrist.

The Cardinals drafted Rahmatulla in the 34th round in 2011 and he climbed to Double-A in the Texas League in three years, but he struggled at the Double-A level and elected to retire.



"I could have kept playing, but I decided to give it up and pursue another career," he said.

Rahmatulla and Clarissa Pauli, who is from Bettendorf, have a young son and another baby on the way. They plan to marry in the fall of 2017 and he'd like to stay involved in the game after coaching in the summer collegiate Northwoods League last year.

"I really enjoyed coaching in the Northwoods League and working with the players and helping them out with their careers, using the knowledge I have," he remarked.

He's currently working for Planet Fitness in Davenport and plans to play for Red Top as much as possible this season.

Rahmatulla belted a solo home run in the first game Sunday. The game was tied, 6-6, heading into the bottom of the seventh inning before Red Top prevailed with a two-out rally.

Tyler Howe drew a walk and Billy Kass entered the game as a pinch-runner. Ben Weeks collected his fourth straight hit to put runners at first and second, and Kass scored the winning

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run when Jordan Howe ripped a shot over the right fielder's head for an RBI single.

Ben Rettenmeier got the win in relief for Red Top.

Rahmatulla, 26, went 3-for-3 with a two-run double and solo homer in the nightcap. Trey Beckman belted a walk-off grand slam homer in the bottom of the sixth to finish the 13-2 victory.

Beckman drove in six runs in the game. Corbin Day went 3-for-4 with a double, Aaron Sauegling had two hits and Kass scored three runs. Anthony Gagliardi pitched four innings for the victory and Sauegling tossed two innings for a save.

JT Sole went 2-for-4 in the first game for Norway with a three-run homer. Christian Stekl and Mitch Walser had two hits for the Bandits in the opener. Sole had two more hits for Norway in the second game.

GAME ONE

NORWAY (6): Benich, 2b, 3 1 1 1, Stekl, ss, 4 2 2 0, Mueller, 1b, 4 1 1 1, Walser, rf, 3 0 2 1, Sole, c, 4 1 2 3, Solato, 3b, 3 0 0 0, Primrose, lf, 2 1 0 0, Brecht, cf, 1 0 0 0, Corson, p, 2 0 0 0, Stimson, p, 0 0 0 0. Totals 26 6 8 6.

RED TOP (7): Beckman, cf, 4 0 0 0, Rahmatulla, ss, 3 1 1 1, Krieter, lf, 4 0 0 0, Sauegling, 1b, 3 1 0 0, Madsen, dh, 2 1 0 0, T. Howe, c, 2 1 1 0, Kass, pr, 0 1 0 0, Weeks, 3b, 4 1 4 2, J. Howe, 2b, 3 1 1 1, Bonner, rf, 2 0 1 2. Totals 27 7 8 6.

Norway 302 100 0 - 6 8 1

Red Top 010 032 1 - 7 8 1

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Corson, Stimson (5) and Sole. Henke, Yanecek (4), Rettenmeier (6) and T. Howe. W - Rettenmeier. L - Stimson.

GAME TWO

NORWAY (2): Brecht, cf, 3 1 1 0, Stekl, ss, 3 0 1 0, Benich, 2b/3b, 3 0 0 0, Mueller, 1b, 3 0 1 0, Sole, c/2b, 3 1 2 0, Solato, 3b/c, 3 0 1 0, Primrose, p/rf, 3 0 0 1, Corson, rf/lf, 2 0 0 0, Stimson, lf, 2 0 0 0, S. Keeney, p, 0 0 0 0. Totals 25 2 6 1.

RED TOP (13): Beckman, rf, 3 2 1 6, Rahmatulla, ss, 3 2 3 3, Krieter, lf, 2 1 1 0, Pauli, ph, 1 0 0 0, Bonner, lf, 0 0 0 1, Sauegling, dh/p, 3 0 2 0, T. Howe, 1b, 3 0 1 1, Yanecek, pr, 0 0 0 0, Madsen, 1b, 0 0 0 0, Weeks, 3b, 4 1 1 0, Kass, cf, 2 3 1 0, J. Howe, 2b, 1 1 0 0, Rettenmeier, ph, 0 1 0 0, C. Day, c, 4 2 3 1. Totals 26 13 13 12.

Norway □ □ 000 110 - 2 6 1

Red Top □ □ 012 154 - 13 13 1

Primrose, S. Keeney (5) and Sole, Solato (5). Gagliardi, Sauegling (5) and C.Day. W - Gagliardi. L - Primrose. S - Sauegling.