

## Blog Export: Beaneball, <http://beaneball.org/>

Saturday, April 16, 2005

### A's 1, Angels 0

I have a cold. The A's are hitting like they have one big collective cold. Luckily enough, Billy Beane built the team around pitching and defense, so Rich Harden and Kiko Calero saved the offense's bacon today, throwing ten shutout innings to give Oakland a 1-0 win over the Angels. You could also say that Scot Shields saved the A's bacon by giving them the winning run with his error in the tenth, especially since that error came on a sacrifice bunt. Ken Macha's really going for the gold with the sacrificing this year. Given that Billy Beane is apparently watching the games again, you have to wonder what's going on. Do they really think the A's hitters are that bad?

Anyway, the A's have faced some pretty good pitching the last two days: Bartolo Colon used to be an ace, and even last year, in his worst full season in the bigs, he wasn't atrocious: his 92 ERA+ made him like a decent fifth starter. The Angels's starter today was Jarrod Washburn, who put up ERA+'s of 133, 126, and 138 from ages 25 to 27, then 96 and 99 in his last two years. Before getting smacked around a little bit in Arlington in his last start, he shut the Rangers out for six innings in his first start.

None of this excuses such pitiful showings as Bobby Kielty's 0-13 start to the year and Erubiel Durazo's six singles in 32 at-bats. I think Kielty's done, personally. We're working on his third straight year of not hitting, after all. Durazo should bounce back, though, and guys like Jason Kendall and Eric Chavez and Byrnes are well within normal deviation of what we expect from them over a full season.

I'm not sure any of that makes the Oakland pitchers feel any better about this whole thing, though.

Still, all whining aside, the A's won, so for the moment, they've got a better record than the Yankees. What more can you ask for?

ARC

MVOP for 4/16: Erubiel Durazo, 0.388, for his pinch-hit single in the ninth inning. He was the only player with a positive ARC.

LVOP for 4/16: Scott Hatteberg, -1.4881, mostly because of a double play with no one out late in the game, but he was 0-4 overall anyway.

MVP for 4/16: Rich Harden, 3.8671, for eight shutout innings. Let's note, also, that Harden got through those innings with 105 pitches, which is something less than Halladay-like, but still economical enough for Oakland's purposes. Despite that economy, he managed eight strikeouts against a team that, while the makeup of the offense has changed a little, probably won't strike out all that much this year. ESPN.com's front baseball page right now has a picture of Harden with this caption: "It's not a question of if, but when Rich Harden will win a Cy Young." How about this year? Ok, ok, so I'm getting all excited about two measly starts, but maybe that excusable in Harden's case.

LVP for 4/16: None.

Standings

Most Valuable Offensive Player:

Mark Ellis, Nick Swisher, Erubiel Durazo -- 2  
Marco Scutaro, Jason Kendall, Eric Byrnes, Mark Kotsay, Scott Hatteberg -- 1

Least Valuable Offensive Player:

Erubiel Durazo -- 4  
Jason Kendall -- 2  
Mark Ellis, Bobby Kielty, Marco Scutaro, Nick Swisher, Scott Hatteberg -- 1

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### Most Valuable Pitcher:

Huston Street, Dan Haren, Rich Harden -- 2

Kiko Calero, Kirk Saarloos, Joe Blanton, Justin Duchscherer, Barry Zito -- 1

### Least Valuable Pitcher:

Barry Zito, Huston Street -- 2

Ricardo Rincon, Kirk Saarloos -- 1

### Relievers

I've introduced a bunch of new stuff to the reliever report, including a number on a 0-24 (0 is good) scale that indicates how well, at least by this method, the bullpen is being used. Ken Macha scores a 15 right now.

Posted by jason in Baseball, Oakland A's at 20:05