

Kluber helps Indians beat Royals 3-0

Written by Associated Press
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CLEVELAND (AP) — Corey Kluber pitched into the eighth inning and pinch hitter Michael Bourn had a big two-run single, leading the Cleveland Indians to a 3-0 win over the Kansas City Royals on Friday night.

Kluber (7-5) allowed three hits and struck out eight in 7 2-3 innings. The right-hander worked out of a bases-loaded, one-out jam in the fifth.

Joe Smith recorded the final out in the eighth and Cody Allen struck out Jarrod Dyson with the bases loaded for his second save. The five-hitter was Cleveland's American League-leading 12th shutout.

Allen was subbing for regular closer Chris Perez, who had appeared in five of the previous six games. Perez was on the disabled list from May 27 to June 26 with a sore right shoulder and missed time in spring training because of the injury.

Royals left-hander Bruce Chen pitched six innings of one-hit ball in his first start of the season. Carlos Santana's leadoff double in the fifth was Cleveland's only hit off Chen, who struck out four and walked one while throwing 97 pitches.

Cleveland's lineup seemed to wake up after Chen was pulled. Tim Collins (2-4) gave up singles to Jason Kipnis and Nick Swisher to begin the seventh before being relieved by Aaron Crow.

Santana then lined a single up the middle. Center fielder Jarrod Dyson charged the ball and made a strong throw home but Kipnis slid around catcher Salvador Perez's tag and touched the plate with his left hand.

Mark Reynolds, mired in a 2-for-31 slump this month, reached on a bunt hit to the left of the mound to load the bases. Bourn, batting for Ryan Raburn, then singled to right-center to give Cleveland a 3-0 lead.

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Kluber got out of big trouble in the fifth. David Lough started the inning with a triple but held at third when Alcides Escobar grounded out to second. Elliot Johnson walked and stole second before Dyson walked.

Alex Gordon, who hit a grand slam off Kluber in Kansas City on July 2, struck out. Kluber fielded Eric Hosmer's slow roller to the left of the mound and ran to first for the putout.

Gordon drew a one-out walk in the eighth. Kluber, who won for the fourth time in his last five decisions, was removed after striking out Hosmer and received a loud ovation from the crowd of 24,077.

Chen replaced struggling right-hander Luis Mendoza in the rotation. Chen was 3-0 with a 2.41 ERA in 19 relief appearances before being moved to the rotation.

NOTES: The Indians optioned RHP Danny Salazar to Triple-A Columbus a day after he won his major league debut by allowing one run in six innings against Toronto on Thursday. RHP Chen-Chang Lee was called up from the Clippers. ... Royals SS Alcides Escobar batted seventh for the first time this season. He has hit second 67 times, ninth 13 times, and atop the order four times. "He'll be back in the two-spot tomorrow with a lefty starting, but he struggles against right-handed pitchers, so we're going to vary where he bats from day to day," Royals manager Ned Yost said. Escobar is hitting .302 against left-handed pitchers and .222 against righties. ... Bourn wasn't in the lineup against Chen. Michael Brantley batted leadoff. ... Johnson, who made his first start since Sunday, is 1 for 27 (.037) since June 20. ... Royals RHP Jeremy Guthrie (8-6) takes on Indians LHP Scott Kazmir (4-4) in the second game of the three-game series Saturday.