

The Metroplex Score

August 17, 2014

The young guys – and wins – keep coming for Frisco

It's beginning to sound like a broken record as to the number of new faces arriving at Frisco only to start immediately contributing. But they just keep coming.

Nomar Mazara is the latest to start making an impact, as he stepped up in Saturday's game in Tulsa by driving in four runs on two hits, including a home run. In 11 games since being moved up from Myrtle Beach, the 19-year-old already has 11 RB and two homers; eight of his 13 hits have been for extra bases.

Jorge Alfaro, who may be the Rangers' second most-talked about prospect, has not been a slouch either. In 11 games of his own, the catcher has driven in eight with three home runs.

And both of those guys are still paling in comparison to Joey Gallo, who is quickly becoming almost an elder statesman but has not tapered off at all. Gallo's home run total with Frisco alone now stands at 21 after hitting another one in the series finale in Tulsa on Sunday, allowing Frisco to complete the sweep of the Drillers.

All of this, which has made the club one of the most powerful lineups in the minor leagues, has the RoughRiders back in first place in the Texas League South – a place they don't even need to be, having won the first half of the season. Frisco has won six of its last eight games.

That's not to say all of the spectacular performances have been at the plate. Alex Gonzalez has continued to dominate on the mound, posting a 2.02 ERA now since coming to Frisco. The 22-year-old had his longest outing with Frisco on Saturday, allowing one run in seven innings; he has allowed just four earned runs in his last seven starts.

It may put Jason Wood in an odd situation as to who will start that first postseason game. Will he go with the live arm of Gonzalez, over the Alec Asher, who has been a staple of the rotation all season but has been up and down for most of it? Asher did have an impressive performance in the finale against Tulsa, throwing six shutout innings.

The infusion of new talent could very well be a benefit to the Riders when the Texas League playoffs begin in September. Opposing teams, including their likely Division Series opponent in Midland, will have little footage on the likes of Alfaro and at the AA level and thus may not be able to scout them efficiently adding an element of surprise.

For the moment, all that seems to remain for the regular season is making a statement to the division. The Riders play their final 14 games against the Texas League South, with six of them coming against the RockHounds team that likely awaits them when the playoffs begin Sep. 3.

With none of his major players currently on the Rangers' 40-man roster as of yet, Wood can expect to have all his best weapons available when that series starts. Only then may he and the Frisco faithful know if the mix of new arrivals like Gonzalez, Mazara and Alfaro with those who have been here from the start like Trever Adams and Odubel Herrera will be enough to take that elusive Texas League Championship.

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COMING SOON: BEING A WOMAN IN DFW SPORTS

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Published by Rowdy C
Productions

P.O. Box 173160
Arlington, TX, 76003
Volume 1, Issue 83
rowdytimedfw.com
rowdyc.com

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RANGERS/RIDERS RECAP

RANGERS 0 TAMPA 3 The Rangers allowed as many unearned runs (3) to the Rays as they got hits in the game.

RANGERS 3 TAMPA 2 (14) A bases-loaded walk in the bottom of the 14th inning finally ended the marathon game, rewarding the Rangers' pitchers for eight straight shutout innings to finish it off.

RANGERS 1 TAMPA 10 On the same day that Miles Mikolas was hit for five runs in the first two innings, the Rangers had to put Yu Darvish on the disabled list with elbow inflammation.

RANGERS 3 TAMPA 6 Another early deficit doomed the Rangers, as Robbie Ross returned to the rotation but was hit for six runs in just over four innings.

RANGERS 4 ANGELS 5 A three-run eighth inning cut Texas' deficit to one, but the Rangers could ultimately not overcome a 5-1 deficit from a three-run homer from Kole Calhoun.

RANGERS 4 ANGELS 5 It was deja vu all over again as the Rangers got to within one run late but could not get over the top, coming up short to the Angels for a second straight night. The Angels got to Colby Lewis for 10 hits and built a 5-0 lead that they barely held on to.

RANGERS 3 ANGELS 2 For the third straight game, the Rangers trailed by one in the ninth, but Mike Carp and Adam Rosales came through to complete the turnaround win this time.

RIDERS 6 @ SPRINGFIELD 1 Frisco broke a 1-1 tie with five runs in the last three innings, capped off with three in the ninth scored on a wild pitch and two-bases-loaded walks.

RIDERS 1 @ SPRINGFIELD 2 (11) Frisco managed to tie the game in the eighth inning on a bases-loaded wild pitch. but could only get the one run and saw a leadoff homer by Curt Smith in the 11th win it.

RIDERS 2 @ SPRINGFIELD 6 It was another tough night for Andrew Faulkner, though the defense did not help, as he was hit for five runs, including four in the first two innings, while Kyle Hald and the Cardinals shut down Frisco for the first eight.

RIDERS 8 @ TULSA 2 Jorge Alfaro, Joey Gallo and Nomar Mazara all had doubles in a four-run third inning that helped power Frisco to a series-opening win over the Drillers.

RIDERS 8 @ TULSA 2 Nomar Mazara continues to be yet another player making an immediate impact for Frisco, driving in four runs with a homer.

RIDERS 6 @ TULSA 1 Joey Gallo's two-run homer in the ninth punctuated Frisco's dominating series, as Alec Asher struck out six in six innings.

RANGERS UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Mon 8/11	Tampa	7:05 pm
Tue 8/12	Tampa	7:05 pm
Wed 8/13	Tampa	7:05 pm
Thu 8/14	Tampa	7:05 pm
Fri 8/15	Angels	7:05 pm
Sat 8/16	Angels	7:05 pm
Sun 8/17	Angels	2:05 pm

AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST

Oakland	73	51
Angels	72	50
Seattle	67	56
Houston	52	73
RANGERS	48	76

RIDERS UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Tue 8/12	@ Springfield	7:10 pm
Wed 8/13	@ Springfield	7:10 pm
Thu 8/14	@ Springfield	7:10 pm
Fri 8/15	@ Tulsa	7:05 pm
Sat 8/16	@ Tulsa	7:05 pm
Sun 8/17	@ Tulsa	7:05 pm

TEXAS LEAGUE SOUTH (Second Half)

RIDERS	33	23
Midland	31	25
Corpus Christi	26	30
San Antonio	26	30

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FCD shakes off Open Cup elimination with dominant win

Fabian Castillo is already looking like one of the most dazzling future stars of MLS, with ball-handling ability that can make defenders look absolutely foolish combined with the ability to finish a strike afterward.

He was able to use that ability to get the winning goal against Colorado in the game that ended FC Dallas' long winless streak back on June 7. And he did it once more on one of his two goals that helped FCD extend its current unbeaten streak in league play to nine games.

Castillo's mastery in his 100th game with the club almost overshadowed Tesho Akindele's first career hat trick, scoring the other three goals in FCD's 5-0 win in San Jose on Saturday night. Castillo assisted on one of those goals while giving Dallas the lead in the 30th minute, while Akindele finished off the Earthquakes with his third shot in the net in the 86th minute.

FCD remains in third place in the Western Conference, but the club has a big opportunity to move forward at last. Dallas faces Real Salt Lake, who just moved into first in the West, Saturday at Toyota Stadium and will face RSL twice in the next three games. Dallas currently trails Salt lake by three points.

Saturday's win also means FCD was able to bounce back from a heartbreaking elimination in the U.S. Open Cup on Tuesday, losing on penalty kicks to the Philadelphia Union.

Some fans fear injury risk as Parsons tries for Team USA

At one time, when championships may have seemed like just a pipe dream for the Mavericks, the fans in Dallas may have been enthralled to have one of their own on the United States national team.

Now, with one banner already raised, the desire for another growing and the team owner constantly criticizing the IOC and other organizations for taking advantage of NBA players, it's a bit more divided as to the supposed risk they are taking.

So a large number of Mavs fans are currently on pins and needles as new addition Chandler Parsons suits up for Team USA at the FIBA Basketball World Cup in Spain.

The tension has been especially high since two other members of the American team, Paul George and Demarcus Cousins, have suffered injuries – in George's case, a quite gruesome broken leg.

"I just wish parsons would remove himself from the team" one fan wrote on the Dallas Mavericks Daily Hoop Scoop Facebook page. Shortly after Cousins' injury was reported.

It should be noted that NBA players playing in international tournaments has not always been doom and gloom and has at times been beneficial to the players, like Charles Barkley. The Hall of Famer was known for not keeping in shape well during the off season; after playing on the original Dream Team in the 1992 Olympics, he arrived at training camp in his best condition ever and proceeded to have an MVP season.

For now, Mavs fans can at least breathe easy in knowing Parsons might not get a ton of minutes in these games, if he makes the final cut – though with the injuries and other departures, coach Mike Krzyzewski is still not sure what he has yet. Parsons did play in Team USA's tune-up game with Brazil Sunday in Chicago; Krzyzewski currently has to cut four more players to make the final roster of 12.



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