

SPORTS BRIEF

Kansas City stops Boston

BOSTON — Carlos Beltran beat the percentages Sunday afternoon, and so did the Kansas City Royals. Finally.

Beltran drove in four runs from the right side, statistically his weaker side, and helped the Royals produce an upbeat finish to a disappointing nine-game road trip with an 8-4 victory over the Boston Red Sox at Fenway Park.

"Today, when I came to the field, I was feeling kind of lost from the left side," Beltran said. "But I took good batting practice from the right side. When you're a switch hitter, that happens a lot. It's difficult to keep the same swing from both sides of the plate."

"I face so many more right-handed pitchers that normally my swing from the left side will be better. Today, it was backward, and I was glad when they switched me around."

The Royals know all about backward after losing 18 of their previous 22 games. Only this time, backward was perfect.

Beltran provided a three-run double in a four-run sixth inning that boosted the Royals to a 6-2 lead. He added another RBI double while batting right-handed in the eighth inning after getting a left-handed single earlier in the game against Boston starter Derek Lowe.

Mike Sweeney added two hits, including a two-run double in the third that erased a 2-0 deficit. Kelly Stinnett contributed a booming homer in the ninth that caromed high off a light tower above the Green Monster in left field.

The Royals also got a huge boost from their beleaguered bullpen when lefty Jaime Cerda retired Bill Mueller, the American League's reigning batting champion, in a 13-pitch battle with the bases loaded and two outs in the Boston sixth.

"Our bullpen came in and did a great job," Darrell May said. "We played great defense. We hit the ball well. And we pitched well. Maybe we're finally figuring it out."

— Bob Dutton
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)



Third baseman Ashley Richards — Oregon's leading hitter going into Friday's game with a .320 batting average — went 2 for 7 in the Ducks' 0-3 weekend in Arizona. She is seen here earlier this season against UCLA.

Tim Bobosky
Photographer

SCORELESS

continued from page 7

allowed five runs on three home runs and an RBI double.

"I thought we could have made better adjustments offensively," Arendsen said Friday. "We gave ourselves opportunities to score and again didn't come up with timely hits."

The Ducks left eight runners on base in front of 1,411 fans at Rita Hillenbrand Memorial Stadium. They came closest to scoring in the seventh when catcher Jenn Poore singled to left field, nearly scoring second baseman Erin Goodell. Goodell was thrown out at the plate by left fielder Autumn Champion for the second out of the inning.

Sophomore Amy Harris got the start, her third during the Pac-10

season, and the Wildcats scored off her in the third inning with a home run to left field by third baseman Jackie Coburn. In the fifth inning, Arizona padded its lead to 4-0 with a two-run shot by second baseman Samantha Quintero and a solo home run by center fielder Caitlin Lowe. Later that inning, catcher Mackenzie Vandergeest drove a double to left field, scoring Champion for the Wildcats' final run of the game.

The Ducks wanted to bounce back in two games against Arizona State, but they lost both — coming closest to a win in Saturday's nine-inning 1-0 decision.

In the bottom of the ninth, catcher Katie Cobos singled to left field to score shortstop Kristin Crenshaw for the win. Cobos' hit fell just in front of Crenshaw as she was running the bases, giving Arendsen an

argument for a runner interference call. The call from the umpires stood, leaving Oregon on the losing side of the debate.

"We battled for nine innings and I didn't think it should have ended this way," Arendsen said Saturday. "But we've got to start putting runs on the board to avoid this situation."

The Ducks had nine hits and left five runners on base as Arizona State's Desiree Serrano bumped her record to 1-9.

Junior transfer Ani Nyhus threw five innings of shutout ball before senior Anissa Meashintubby relieved her in the sixth. Meashintubby struck out seven batters before allowing the run.

Oregon still had a chance to win the series against Arizona State with a win Sunday.

Instead, the Ducks were held

scoreless in three consecutive games for the first time this season, losing Sunday's game to the Sun Devils, 3-0.

"Again, we left runners on base and didn't get hits with runners in scoring position," Arendsen said Sunday.

In the third inning, Arizona State took the lead when center fielder Kristin Farber scored on a double off the left field wall by third baseman Phelan Wright. Nyhus then loaded the bases when she intentionally walked left fielder Val Sevilla. Designated player Kari Pulcifer pulled out a successful squeeze play to put the sun Devils ahead, 2-0.

Sevilla hit a home run off Harris in the fifth inning for Arizona State's final run of the game.

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