



NEWS RELEASE

EASTERN LEAGUE AFFILIATE OF THE NEW YORK METS SINCE 1992

Rodriguez Streaks to the Record Books

It is the bottom of the first inning on a cold, quiet evening in Binghamton, NY when it all starts. It is Monday, May 13 and some late-arriving fans, bundled up to protect from the elements, are still finding their seats when Josh Rodriguez weakly bounces a 1-1 breaking ball from Akron Aeros starter Matt Packer down the third-base line.

Giovanny Urshela charges and ultimately holds the ball, allowing Rodriguez to reach on what becomes an innocuous infield single.

At the time, Rodriguez is mired in a slump that has sunk his average to .231. Playing in the Eastern League for the sixth straight season, he is simply happy to collect a hit.

Fast forward one month.

It is the top of the eighth inning on a warm, beautiful evening in Trenton, New Jersey. It is Wednesday, June 12 and Rodriguez is likely making his final plate appearance of the game.

He has gone 0-for-3 with a pair of strikeouts. He has been visibly anxious at the plate, chasing multiple pitches in the dirt in his four previous plate appearances. Pitches the eight-year veteran would normally lay off.

Rodriguez knows exactly what is at stake. He is well aware he has hit safely in every game he has played in for nearly a month. He knows this will be his last chance.

Trenton Thunder reliever Francisco Rondon falls behind in the count 3-1. Rodriguez does not want a walk. He wants a pitch to hit.

He gets one.

Rondon leaves a fastball up and on the outside of the plate and Rodriguez goes with it, shooting it through the hole on the right side. As the ball rolls into right field, Rodriguez races for first and claps his hands together.

Another hit to include in the tally. Another notch added to the hitting streak. Another sigh of relief.

"I was pretty relieved going up the first-base line," Rodriguez said after the game.

From his dribbled single in the middle of May to his line drive single in the middle of June, Rodriguez hit safely in 23 straight games, the longest hitting streak in the Eastern League in more than six seasons.



PO BOX 598 * BINGHAMTON * NY * 13902 * P: 607 723 6387
WWW.BMETS.COM * E-MAIL: BMETS@BMETS.COM * F: 607 723 7779





NEWS RELEASE

EASTERN LEAGUE AFFILIATE OF THE NEW YORK METS SINCE 1992

Rodriguez finished just two games shy of the franchise record set by Jay Payton when he hit safely in 25 straight games in June 1995.

It was the longest hitting streak in the Eastern League since Nate Schierholtz hit in 25 games in a row as a Connecticut Tiger in August 2006.

No Eastern League pitching staff could cage the former Indians and Pirates farmhand during the stretch. He hit .427, put together ten multiple-hit games and compiled a .523 on-base percentage. He raised his batting average by 89 percentage points and put his name all over the league leader board.

"Once you get past ten games, it seems like that's all you think about. It was tough," said Rodriguez after the streak came to an end with a hitless performance against the Bowie Baysox two days later on June 14. A game in which he was left on deck to watch the final out.

Rodriguez admitted, "I started thinking about it a lot, but my whole approach stayed the same. I had the same mindset and still stuck to my gameplan. As the games got higher and higher, the nerves started getting to me more and more."

Baseball players are a superstitious breed. Active lengthy hitting streaks, similar to in-progress no-hitters and perfect games, are not to be recognized by anyone on the team until they are completed or eventually broken up.

Contrary to tradition, Rodriguez made sure he was the first one to talk about the streak. The B-Mets third baseman jokingly reminded the team how many games he was up to every night. His intention was not to brag, but dissipate the pressure.

"The more I kept it to myself the more I would probably think about it. The more I got it out in the open and joked about it the more relaxed I seemed to be. It didn't make it seem like a big deal. It helped calm my nerves and not really think about it too much," said Rodriguez.

While Rodriguez did not credit any specific mechanical adjustment for his success, he did acknowledge one greater force than himself, Mother Nature.

He said, "It's tough to hit in this league in April and especially this year in the beginning of May. It was cold. You have to fight through that. But once you get to later days in May it starts warming up. You start to loosen up. That was the key for me. Once it did start warming up, I felt more comfortable at the plate and felt more relaxed."

Like all Minor Leaguers, he is working to get to the Big Leagues. Or in Rodriguez's case, working to get back to the Big Leagues. He played in seven games for the Pittsburgh Pirates in 2011.



PO BOX 598 * BINGHAMTON * NY * 13902 * P: 607 723 6387
WWW.BMETS.COM * E-MAIL: BMETS@BMETS.COM * F: 607 723 7779





NEWS RELEASE

EASTERN LEAGUE AFFILIATE OF THE NEW YORK METS SINCE 1992

While he would love to move up from Double-A, he has enjoyed his time with the youthful Binghamton Mets.

"It's been fun. This is a very young club. These guys come out and have fun and play hard and joke around, so it's baseball," Rodriguez said. "They get that aspect, it's just a game. Not too serious, everyone is pretty close. It shows in our play. We started off up and down, but as it's warmed up, these kids have shown their ability."

Thankfully, Rodriguez has been there to show them how it's done.



PO BOX 598 * BINGHAMTON * NY * 13902 * P: 607 723 6387
WWW.BMETS.COM * E-MAIL: BMETS@BMETS.COM * F: 607 723 7779

