

SPORTS // OAKLAND ATHLETICS

Back problems force A's Matt Joyce onto DL again; Nick Martini recalled

Susan Slusser

July 7, 2018 | Updated: July 7, 2018 7:32 p.m.



Oakland Athletics' Nick Martini looks to the field from the dugout during the seventh inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox, Saturday, June 23, 2018, in Chicago. (AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

Photo: Nam Y. Huh / Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Before Saturday's game against the Indians, Oakland placed outfielder **Matt Joyce** on the disabled list with a recurrence of the back issues that landed him on the DL earlier in the season.

Nick Martini, riding a 65-game on-base streak at Triple-A Nashville, was recalled to fill the outfield spot.

Manager **Bob Melvin** said Joyce will see Dr. **Robert Watkins** in Los Angeles in the next few days.

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“I can see in batting practice he’s having a tough time pulling the ball and driving the ball,” Melvin said. “He wants to be there for his team, but it came to a head (Friday) and we had a conversation. The best thing to do is to try to get him healthy.”

Martini, signed as a minor-league free agent last winter, provided the winning hit in Chicago, his hometown, on June 23. It was his first big-league hit. Martini used that same bat for about 30 games of his on-base streak at Nashville, he said.

“Then they put the authenticated thing on it,” Martini said of the sticker that certified he’d used the bat for his first hit. “I was like, ‘I don’t know if I should stop using it or not.’”

The bat is now with Martini’s dad, Scott, in Crystal Lake, Ill.

Anderson returning: Left-hander **Brett Anderson**, out since May 18 with a shoulder strain, will come off the DL to start the series finale at Cleveland on Sunday and **Frankie Montas** will be pushed to Monday at Houston.

The A’s have not made a corresponding move, but **Chris Bassitt** or **Josh Lucas** could be sent out; Bassitt might move into a long-relief role if Lucas is the odd man out.

Melvin said **Trevor Cahill** (Achilles strain) could rejoin the rotation before the All-Star break. **Daniel Mengden** (foot) will make at least one more rehab start, but he, too, could return before the break.

Briefly: Catcher **Sean Murphy**, named to the Futures Game on Friday, came out of Double-A Midland’s game Saturday with a finger injury incurred on a swing; the A’s are awaiting an

evaluation. ... **Kendall Graveman** (forearm) has not yet begun throwing after being placed on Nashville's DL last month.

Susan Slusser is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer.



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