

Six-run inning highlights Aurora Jays win over Barrie



By Jake Courtepatte

It may be just two games into the North Dufferin Baseball League season, but it seems the heavy bats of the 2015 Aurora Jays will once again be a trend in 2016.

The Jays are off to a 2 ? 0 start after the first week of play in the senior AA league, besting the Clearview Orioles on the road and the Barrie Angels at home in high-scoring affairs.

Both Stephen Vallee and Daniel Lehmkuhl crossed the plate for the Jays in the top of the first inning last Sunday in New Lowell, with the Orioles tying the score in the bottom half. Aurora put up five more runs in the second inning and another in the third, taking a commanding 8 ? 2 lead after three innings.

Opening day starter Rob Spencer left the mound after the third inning, cruising to five hits and three earned runs while striking out two.

Zach Wiseman came into the game in relief, getting into some trouble in allowing Clearview to bring the game within three runs. Devon Wu took the mound for the final two innings, however, and promptly shut down the Orioles' comeback giving the Jays an 11 ? 7 win.

All in all, seven Jays combined for 15 hits in the game, with multi-hit efforts by six different players. It should come as no surprise that reigning league batting champion Ian Rettie sent one over the fence, as did veteran Brad Crosby.

Aurora's home opener came Tuesday at Lambert Willson Park, hosting the Barrie Angels and needing a comeback of their own.

The Angels came out swinging, crossing the plate three times in the first two innings off veteran Jay Andrew Bukovec. Ian Milne gave up five runs over the next two innings in relief, the Jays now on the other end of an 8 ? 2 score.

Cue Aurora's offensive power.

Six runs in the bottom of the fourth inning were followed by three in the bottom of the fifth, with the Jays quickly taking an 11 ? 8 lead. Chris Rettie came in to close the final three innings of the game for the Jays, giving up two runs with one K to squeak out the 11 ? 10 victory.

It was a game of small ball for the Jays, with singles off the bats of Vallee, Lehmkuhl, Crosby, Ted Beadle, Nathan Robinson, Rob

Wilson, and Kyle Picken. Crosby and Robinson both went two-for-three at the plate in the game, Crosby with the Jays' only extra-base hit.

Aurora's 2 ? 0 start trails only the 3 ? 0 Midland Indians in the thirteen-team senior league. The Indians have given up only two runs so far this season.

A back-to-back series with the Creemore Braves and Creemore Barons was washed out Sunday due to field conditions. Both games were rescheduled to be played in June.

The Jays continued their four-game homestand at Lambert Willson Park Tuesday evening following press time, hosting the Mansfield Cubs. A week's break will follow before hosting the Lisle Astros on May 24.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.ndbl.ca.