

Aurora Jays hit second in league standings after winning streak



By Jeff Doner

The Aurora Jays senior men's baseball team is back to its winning ways.

After a slow start to the season, the Jays have shot back with five straight wins dating back to May 8, giving them a sparkling 5 ? 1 record and putting them in a three-way tie for second place in the North Dufferin Baseball League (NDBL) standings.

As in previous seasons, the Jays have been supported by a mixture of outstanding offence, solid defence and stable pitching, which were all evident in their three wins last week.

It started with a home tilt on Tuesday night against the Barrie Angels.

Things got off to a rough start in this one, with the Angels' bats taking pitcher Ian Milne to task.

But Milne dug deep and limited the damage, keeping the Angels to four runs in the first three innings putting the score at 4 ? 1.

It was at that point that the Jays provided their pitcher with some offensive support with four runs in the bottom of the third.

Dan Lehmkuhl led off with a double and the Jays continued to pressure the Angels pitching, with Ryan Lewis driving in Lehmkuhl and then loading the bases.

Chris Rettie took advantage by bringing in two runs with a single up the middle and then Chris Fafalios scored from third on a sacrifice fly by Brad Crosby to make it 5 ? 4 for the Jays.

Ian Rettie was then put in to pitch the remainder of the game and completely shut down the Angels through the next four innings including four strikeouts.

The Jays, however, kept adding to their totals, scoring another three runs in the fifth inning thanks to solid base running and another run in the sixth for a 9 ? 4 win.

?'We dug ourselves a hole at the beginning,' said Fafalios, who has returned from a baseball scholarship at the College of Wooster in Ohio to play with the Jays this summer. 'We definitely could have started better, but the pitching didn't start out the way it normally does. He battled and minimized the amount of runs to three or four. That helped us come around, then we started hitting and just got things rolling and running the bases.'

The Jays then took to the road to face a revamped Ivy Leafs squad on Friday night and came home with a 12 ? 6 win.

The bats came alive early in this one, taking a 5 ? 1 lead over the home team, while Lehmkuhl was the starting pitcher for the Jays. Ivy started to get on him and began picking away at the Jays' lead to make it 6 ? 5 after four innings.

Brad Crosby was then put in to pitch and he successfully kept Ivy at bay until the Jays broke out in the top of the seventh inning to score another six runs.

Player/coach Mike Keon said that it was a good statement game for the Jays to make as Ivy made a number of personnel pickups and are positioned to be one of the top teams this year.

On Monday night the Jays headed to Stewart Burnett Park for a matchup against the Bolton Dodgers and squeaked out a 7 ? 6 win.

The win was thanks to a two-run home run blast by Fafalios to get them back in the game after the Dodgers took a 5 ? 2 lead in the previous inning.

Both fought battled the high winds and difficult weather conditions but battled through. However, weather didn't seem to bother Owen, who threw a complete game for the Jays.

The Jays have played fewer games than most of the teams in the NDBL, but are poised to make another strong run this season.

They will now look to keep their winning streak alive against the Clearview Orioles on this week at Lambert Willson Park, and then on Sunday for two road games against the Creemore Braves and the Mansfield Cubs.