

Jays hoping for a victory after championship series tied up at 2

By Jake Courtepatte

The North Dufferin Baseball League Championship is shaping up to be a marathon, with the Aurora Jays and Ivy Leafs tied at two wins apiece through four games in the best-of-seven series.

After falling into a hole early in the series by dropping game one in Ivy, the Jays were ready to host the Leafs for the next two at Lambert Willson Park in Aurora.

The Jays evened the series with a 5 ? 3 win on Tuesday, backed by a strong offensive outing. Dan Lehmkuhl, Ted Beadle and Jake Pinnegar each picked up two hits in the game as the Jays logged ten in total.

Andrew Bukovec picked up the win, pitching a complete game for the Jays, giving up three runs over five hits.

Brent Owen took the mound for the Jays two days later, having gone 5 ? 0 on the season for the Jays.

Owen quickly sat down the first two batters he faced, bringing up Ivy slugger Todd Gowan after a couple of easy fly outs. Gowan, who led the NDBL in home runs over the regular season, sent the first pitch he saw over the wall to give the Leafs an early 1 ? 0 lead.

Centre fielder Ryan Lewis was inches from making a spectacular highlight grab on the home run, which barely cleared the fence. ?I put my foot on the fence, it was just at the wrong angle,? said Lewis. ?But I was right there.?

Some hard work by Chris Bloom in the bottom of the first quickly tied the game, as he came in to score on an Ian Rettie single after having stolen second base.

Owen came back out in the second inning determined, giving the Jays a three up, three down inning including two strikeouts. He would cruise the rest of the match, giving up only one more run and three more hits while fanning eight.

Meanwhile, the Jays' bats continued to light up, picking up twelve hits in what would be a 3 ? 2 victory.

In a series overrun with scheduling conflicts, last Saturday's game four was moved to Sunday due to wet conditions at the Ivy park.

The change caused a number of key players to miss the game for the Jays, and it showed in the first inning as the Leafs lit up starting pitcher Ian Milne for five runs. Jeremy Uylenbroek hit a three-run home run in the first-inning drubbing.

Brad Crosby gave the Jays some life in the second inning, bringing in two runs on his first home run of the season to cut the deficit to three.

However, Gowan would come to the plate in the bottom half of the inning to hit his own two-run shot for his third home run of the series.

Milne allowed seven runs on five hits through five innings in the loss.

At press time, the next game of the series will be Saturday at 2 p.m. in Ivy, with game seven to follow the next day at 2 p.m. in Aurora, if necessary.

For playoff schedules and stats, visit www.ndbl.com.