

Jays lose two of three in late-season falter



By Jake Courtepatte

The hardest-hitting team in the North Dufferin Baseball League was silenced over a busy weekend of make-up games.

With three games on the Aurora Jays schedule over the span of two days, fatigue seemed to be the cause of two losses, the first time this season the team has lost two-of-three.

It was a tough one from the get-go in facing the league-leading New Lowell Knights early Sunday afternoon. Andrew Bukovec, a veteran on the mound for the Jays, was given the challenge and could never get a handle on the offensively gifted team.

Doubles from Chris Greer and Todd Gowan in the first inning put the Knights up 3 ? 0 after one, a lead they built to 6 ? 0 before Bukovec was chased to the dugout after three innings. Zach Wiseman came in and closed well, giving up only one more run for the remainder of the contest.

At the other end, it was a surprisingly slow day for the Jays' bats. All-star and league-leading hitter Ian Rettie was good for two hits, but both going only for singles. His all-star teammate Stephen Vallee went 0/4, while Chris Fafalios and Michael Keon scored the only runs for the Jays in a 7 ? 2 loss.

New Lowell swept the season series 2 ? 0.

They got back on track that afternoon with a road win against the Angus Black Sox, but entered Monday's contest with a core roster of fatigued and drained players.

?Sunday we were really shorthanded,? said coach Rob Wilson. ?We had to ask guys to play out of position. And (Monday) night we simply didn't have it.?

The Jays were held to only four hits against the Clearview Orioles, their lowest total over the entire regular season. Three came off the bat of Fafalios, who actually had himself quite the game going 3/3 with a triple of his own. The fourth hit was a double off the bat of Rettie.

Nathan Robinson was the culprit on the mound who stayed the powerful Jays, pitching a complete game while striking out three. He gave up runs to Chris Bloom and Keon in a 5 ? 2 win for the Orioles.

It was back to business after press-time on Tuesday, hosting the Creemore Barons and Lambert Wilson Park. Heavy rain this season has caused a number of rescheduled games, leading to another three-game weekend this Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday they

head to Orangeville to take on the Giants, and a double-header is scheduled for Sunday in Mansfield with the Cubs.

Only five games remain on the regular season schedule, with the Jays' season set to wrap up on Thursday. They currently sit second in NBDL standings, seven points behind the Knights.

?Any way you look at it, it'll be a busy couple of weeks,? said Wilson.

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