

Bolton Brewers walk off Owen Sound Baysox 5-4 in Battle for NDBL Pennant

By **Jim Stewart**

In an epic battle for the NDBL's regular season pennant, the first-place Bolton Brewers walked off the second-place Owen Sound Baysox on Thursday night at North Hill Park.

The Brewers' dramatic 5-4 win was keyed by veteran John Hutchinson whose game-winning hit off Baysox starter Kevin Zettler plated Chris Fafalios and set off a celebration by the 19-4 Brewers.

It was Hutchinson's second game-winning, walk-off hit in two weeks and Head Coach Mike Wallace was taken by the moment.

?It was exciting. We haven't been playing our best baseball of late, but we've been pulling out these types of games. A win is a win. We've been getting a full-team effort and we're using the bulk of our roster to find the right combinations. Hutch has come up with two huge hits for us in the last few games. Faf scored the big run. This gives us momentum heading into our final two games of the regular season. We have a chance to clinch a pennant in Creemore on Sunday afternoon.?

The bottom of the seventh outburst by the Brewers made a winner of relief pitcher Carson Burns who struck out five Baysox in his four innings of work. Burns relieved starter Victor Moguel who went three scoreless innings and yielded only one hit to Owen Sound.

Moguel pitched masterfully, throwing only 34 pitches to get nine outs.

However, with the playoffs imminent, Coach Wallace was taking no chances with his Game 1 starter.

?We erred on the side of caution. Victor felt a little tightness so we pulled him earlier than usual. His arm was fine after. Carson and Victor combined on a good team win.?

Carter Burnside, Logan Hart, and Brett Chater had two hits each to lead the Brewers' offence. Burnside also chipped in two RBI and Fafalios scored two runs, including the game winner. Coach Wallace was pleased about the timely win, but felt that the offence needs to turn it up a notch with the playoffs just around the corner.

?It's going to come down to hitting the way we should. We only had five runs tonight. We're capable of more. We have to drive in runs when we have our opportunities against Creemore and Owen Sound to finish off the regular season.?

With 194 runs scored in 23 games, the Brewers have done their Head Coach's bidding almost without exception in 2024. Bolton has averaged 8.43 runs per game versus their ten NDBL opponents and hold a four-point lead over the second-place Baysox heading into the final week of the regular season.