

Bolton Dodgers hit late-season rough patch



Dodger Sam Totty is tagged out at first base in Sunday's 3-1 loss to the Lisle Astros on Sunday.

By Jake Courtepatte

In a season of ups-and-downs for the Bolton Dodgers, the men's AA team has had trouble finding its rhythm for very long. After a strong showing in the latter half of June in which the Dodgers won five of six games, they struggled offensively last week, putting up only six runs over three straight losses.

They were in a hole early visiting the New Lowell Knights last Thursday, as both Chris Greer and Sean Connor of the Knights landed on base with the first two at-bats of the game. Both would come around to score, after a single by Todd Patton.

Dodger starting pitcher Tysen Hansen then settled in nicely, giving up only one run through the next three innings. In the top half of the innings, however, the Dodgers struggled. Perennial long-ball hitter Michael Gemmiti had Bolton's only multi-base hit of the game, with the Dodgers recording their first and only run of the game in the fifth when Nick Taconga came in to score.

Hansen was pulled after one out in the bottom of the fourth, after giving up five runs on seven hits. Ron Dipalma took control the rest of the way pitching shutout ball for a final score of 5-1 for New Lowell.

A certainly excusable defeat at the hands of the league's top team, it was back-to-back losses in Sunday's doubleheader with the Lisle Astros that was the true upset of the week. The Astros entered Sunday with only one win on the season, which they earned all the way back in May.

They tripled their point production on the season in one day, holding the Dodgers to five runs in 3-1 and 7-4 victories. The pitching was certainly not to blame in the first game, as Dodgers veteran Shawn English went the distance giving up only three runs and six hits, striking out three. At the plate, the Dodgers were held off the scoresheet until the sixth inning, failing to rally for a comeback when Hansen scored their only run of the game.

With six innings of work already under his belt that day, it was English's tired arm that gave way for the Astros to also take the second game. After six strong innings by Damien Allison, giving up only three hits, the teams were deadlocked at 4-4 heading into the final inning.

English entered the game in relief for the seventh, giving up three runs for a 7-4 loss.

Colin McKeen had perhaps the only solid day at the plate for the Dodgers, going two-for-three and crossing the plate twice in the final game. He had also hit a single the day before, in the NDBL's annual All-Star game.

The losses have knocked the Dodgers back to seventh place in NDBL standings, two games under .500 with an 8-10-0 record. Three crucial games are on the docket this week, facing the Barrie Angels after press-time yesterday (Wednesday), and a double-header against the Clearview Orioles Sunday. Both teams are ahead of the Dodgers in league standings.

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