

Dodgers ousted in first round of NDBL playoffs

By Jake Courtepatte

Although the Bolton Dodgers earned their first taste of post-season action this North Dufferin Baseball League season, it was an early and bittersweet ending.

The senior men's team lasted just a little more than a week in their quest for the Strother Cup, eliminated in the first round after making the post-season for the first time in their five-year history.

Drawing the Clearview Orioles in the first round, who boasted the second-highest offensive output in the league in regular season play, the pitching staff was given quite a challenge early on. Clearview combined for 17 runs over the first two games, putting the Dodgers in a deep hole early with 11-3 and 6-3 victories.

Bolton's first-ever playoff win came on the road last Sunday, a pitching battle that they came out on top in by a score of 4-2.

They returned to Clearview two days later, still very much aware of their do-or-die status. The game was a back-and-forth affair, with both teams putting the bats to the ball in what eventually ended an 8-8 tie, keeping Bolton's chances of advancing alive.

The series shifted back to North Hill Park in Bolton for Game 5, with Clearview now needing only a tie to move to the second round. Sending their best to the mound, they held the Dodgers to just one run while notching four of their own to take the series and send the Dodgers packing.

Despite an early exit, the 2015 season was the Dodgers' most successful yet, putting together a 14-12-0 record to finish in fifth-place in league standings. The team's veteran pitchers, like Shawn English and Tysen Hansen, were able to work long into games. Michael Gemmiti once again proved to be one of the heaviest hitters in the league, while newcomer Colin McKeen's 29 hits and three home runs cemented his position as a powerhouse.

Semi-final action is already underway, with the Orioles moving on to face the Ivy Leafs in a best-of-five. The Leafs were the winners of the 2014 post-season. As of press-time, Ivy has taken a one-game lead in the series.

The other series has the New Lowell Knights up 1-0 on the Orangeville Giants.

In the junior division, the Creemore Barons defeated the Ivy Rangers in four games earlier this week to claim the junior championship.

To continue following the road to the Strother Cup, visit www.ndbl.ca