

Seventh inning win keeps Bolton team in contention for playoff position



Bolton Dodgers pitcher Kyler Orvis goes into the wind-up in last Wednesday night's game against the Mansfield Cubs at North Hill Park in Bolton. The Dodgers pulled off a seventh-inning rally to leave with a 3-2 victory. Photo by Brian Lockhart

By Brian Lockhart

You couldn't have scripted a better ending for last Wednesday night's game between the Bolton Dodgers and the Mansfield Cubs ? at least for the Dodgers.

This was an important game for both teams, who are vying for the number eight spot in the North Dufferin Baseball League (NDBL) and a berth in the playoffs.

Only the top eight teams make it into the playoff in the 14 team NDBL senior division.

The Dodgers came to Wednesday's game with an 8-11 record and were two points behind the Midland Indians. The Bolton squad needed the win to advance and get a chance of moving into eighth spot.

The Mansfield squad came to Bolton looking to take the two points and move up, after scoring 13 for the season.

?'It's one of those things where it's all in your head,?' said Dodgers coach Andrew English. ?'When the guys are down, when you get the first out and you see the guys drop their heads, it's really important to get those heads up, get motivated and get the guys backing each other and get them excited.?'

The first six innings of the game turned into a pitchers' battle, with neither side doing much to get on base.

Mansfield scored in the top of the third inning with two outs on a drive deep to the field that brought in a run and placed a man on second base.

A second Cubs' run in the sixth inning on a sacrifice bunt gave the Mansfield squad a two-run lead and it looked like the visitors were going to leave with a narrow win and the two points they needed to move up the ranks.

With the entire game coming down to the Dodgers' final at-bat, the unthinkable happened in the Mansfield camp.

With two Bolton men on base and one out, a relatively easy out fell completely apart on an in-field hit when a Cubs' player hesitated on a throw to third base, then wheeled around to make a throw to first instead.

The delay resulted in three Dodgers players on base with one out in the bottom of the seventh.

The next batter hit deep to left field, and with the entire game on the line, the three Bolton base runners probably managed their best ever personal sprint times when all three crossed the plate on the single to end the game 3-2.

It was a huge win for the Bolton squad and it keeps them alive in their quest for a spot in the playoffs.

?'Both pitchers had a great game,?' English said. ?'They capitalized on a couple of errors we made. All in all, we dug deep and fought through it and managed to get the hits we need in the last inning. It takes a lot when you're down with one out in the last inning. We had to play aggressively.?'

?'We've had a couple of issues this year with offence, so it's one of those things where when we had the opportunity we had to capitalize,?' he added. ?'We're tied for eighth place right now so that was a huge win for us. We've only got six games remaining and two of those games are with teams we are competing with (for the playoff spot.)'

The Dodgers were to play their final regular season home game at North Hill Park last night (Wednesday), with results coming in after press time.

They end the regular season on the road with a game in Creemore tomorrow (Friday) and the final game in Angus Sunday.