

Sterling pitching performance by Stothers ends Brewers' 4-game losing streak in 11-1 win over Angels

By Jim Stewart

The Bolton Brewers got the right combination of quality starting pitching and timely offensive production on Thursday night to snap their worrisome four-game losing streak.

Matteo Stothers's masterful mound effort was supported by a 12-hit attack as the Brewers coasted to an emphatic 11-1 win over the Barrie Angels at North Hill Park.

Stothers struck out eight Angels, issued no walks, and scattered six hits over six innings of work. The reliable hurler expressed relief that his club's four-game slide was over.

?'It's a huge win for us, especially coming back tonight from a tough walk-off loss on Tuesday in Orillia. We've slipped down to the middle of the standings and we don't want to be playing the league's top teams in the opening round of the playoffs. It was great to see all our hits tonight. We haven't scored many runs lately. Nick Fiorucci pitched a great game last week against New Lowell, but we only scored one run for him.?'

The crafty starter received lots of support from the Brewers' offense on Thursday night, but Stothers did his part by slicing and dicing the youthful Angels' batting lineup.

The righthander mixed his pitches expertly, changed speeds, and moved the ball up and down in the strike zone to frustrate the Barrie batters.

Stothers attributed his success to two pitches that were working on a warm Summer night at North Hill.

?'My slider was working well tonight. It was dropping in the zone and missing bats. After getting some rest between starts, my fastball had more life tonight. I thought Carter [Burnside] called a great game, too.?'

Stothers was particularly dominant at the top of the fifth and sixth innings.

After surrendering a lead-off single in the fifth, Stothers induced a flyball to centerfield and struck out the next two Angels swinging to freeze the lead-off runner at third and preserve his club's 9-1 lead. In the sixth, Stothers's slider did its job in a 1-2-3 inning by inducing two ground balls and a strikeout-looking as an exclamation point.

The Brewers provided plenty of early support for their starter by plating three runs at the bottom of the first inning. Brett Chater belted a leadoff double down the left field line, Jack Larmer drew a walk, and Ben Sterritt ripped a ball into leftfield over the Angels' third baseman Hayden Irwin to score Chater.

Carter Burnside drew a walk and Mike Wallace lifted a deep fly ball to right field to score Larmer on the sacrifice fly.

Reid Deibert cashed in Sterritt on an infield lineout that was subsequently thrown away into left field.

Barrie pulled to within two at the top of the second when Ken Chapman smacked a first-pitch double along the third baseline?'the only extra base hit that Stothers would surrender?'and Dylan Osmond's single plated Chapman.

However, Bolton did most of its damage at the bottom of three when the home side plated five runs on three straight singles and a particularly productive triple.

Sterritt led off the bottom of the inning by drawing a walk, Burnside followed with a single, and Wallace picked up two RBIs when the Brewers' player-coach bashed a ball up the middle over the bag.

After Reid Diebert followed suit with a single and Mike Blackwood drew a two-out walk, Chater delivered the decisive clout with a bases-clearing triple down the left field line to rack up three RBIs and give his club a comfortable 9-1 lead.

After Burnside plated Sterritt's lead-off double at the bottom of the fourth, the Brewers put the mercy-shortened game away at the bottom of the sixth when Sterritt smacked another leadoff double that bounced over the centre field fence and Deibert lashed a single to cash Sterritt.

With the bases loaded and the Angels' infield playing in to thwart being mercied, Logan Hart shot a ball up the middle to plate Burnside to create a ten-run lead and get the game called.

With the six-inning win versus the Angels, Coach Wallace's squad improved their record to 9-7-1 and pulled into a three-way tie for third place with the Lisle Astros and Ivy Rangers.

The Brewers will head to Moreau Park in Thornbury on Saturday, July 19, for a doubleheader versus the 10th-place Clarksburg Blues (5-11-0).

The Battle of Caledon? pitting the Brewers against the 12th-place Cardinals (3-11-0)? will take place on Monday, July 21 at 7:30 p.m. at North Hill Park.

Bolton closes its regular season by hosting the Ivy Rangers (9-5-1) on Thursday, July 24, at North Hill Park.

Four games in six days will serve as a pre-playoff test for the Brewers' pitching staff.