

Take the the Strother Cup ? Knights defend their North Dufferin Baseball title

A 4-1 win over the Orangeville Giants have crowned the New Lowell Knights as North Dufferin Baseball League champions for a second straight year.

The champions hoisted the Strother Cup, needing all seven games in the series to bring down their opponents from Orangeville. But before the Knights were able to claim the title, they had to defeat Orangeville, who had the series lead going into game six. The Knights downed the Giants 8-2, scoring two runs early in the first inning, adding one in the second, two in the fourth and one each in the fifth, sixth and seventh.

Orangeville was able to tie the game after the first frame with two runs of their own, but were unable to capitalize, leaving eight runners stranded on base during the game.

Home runs were the highlight of the Knights' offense. Brandon Norrie homered twice, including a two-run shot. Steve Baldry hit one out of the park to score two and Todd Patton connected with a pitch in the seventh to the score the final run.

Sean Thompson doubled while Allan Brownridge, Sean Connor and Patton hit singles for the Knights.

Mitchell Pike doubled while Brett Chater and Drew Huerter each singled twice for the Giants. Ian MacIver and Daryl Bond recorded singles.

Brownridge pitched seven innings for the Knights, allowing two runs on seven hits. He walked two, hit two Orangeville batters and fanned six.

Nick Hodgson was on the Orangeville hill for five innings, giving up six runs on seven hits, walked one, hit one batter and struck out three.

Matt Drury came in for the sixth and seventh innings, allowing two runs on three hits and walked two Knights.

Action for the final game was a closer affair for the first two innings.

In the third, New Lowell manufactured a run executing a suicide squeeze from Chris Greer to bring in Jake Nicholson to score the first run. Greer was able to beat the throw to first base as well.

Orangeville tied the game in the fifth when Bond scored on a Chater double, but the Knights quickly answered in their half of the inning, scoring three on two home runs. With a runner on base Todd Gowan hit a two-run shot, with the next batter Patton hitting a solo shot to make the game 4-1.

The Knights had six hits, including the two home runs, a double from Thompson and Nicholson and singles from Greer and Norrie. The Giants were limited to four hits with Bond connecting for two singles, Chater a double and Hodgson a single.

Baldry commanded the Knights' hill and pitched a complete game, allowing one run on four hits, walked two Giants and struck out three.

Chater pitched for Orangeville for five innings, giving up four runs on six hits, walked two and hit three Knights while striking out two.

Hodgson pitched the sixth inning unscathed.

In a post game presentation New Lowell's Gowan was named the most valuable player for the playoffs and received the Paul Carruthers Memorial Award from league president Chris Esson.

Pete Kinghan and Dale Lighthead accepted the Strother Cup from league secretary and series convenor Scott Anderson.

The Giants had moved into the lead of the series, winning two games against the defending champions New Lowell Knights the previous week 3-2 and 6-4.

A doubleheader was set up after rain the day before forced a second game in the series to be postponed. The two games were played at New Lowell's park with the Knights as home team in both.

The Knights scored first in game four with a run in the second inning. They would add their second in the fourth frame.

Orangeville plated two runs in the fourth and added the winning run in the fifth to take the game 3-2.

For Orangeville Chater and Huerter both singled twice with Mike Wallace, Drury and Hodgson contributing singles.

Thompson, Gowan, Norrie and Brownridge singled for the Knights with Dale Lighthead and Greer hitting two singles in the losing cause. Norrie also chipped in with a double.

Hodgson pitched a complete game, giving up two runs on nine hits, walking one Knight while hitting two.

Brownridge was on the mound for the Knights, allowing three runs on six hits, walking two with four strikeouts. Norrie relieved him in the seventh inning, giving up one hit while striking out one Giant.

In game five, the Giants opened the first inning with a run, which was quickly answered by New Lowell in their half scoring three.

In the third, Orangeville plated another run to bring the game within one. New Lowell's Connor hit a solo home run to maintain the

two run lead in the bottom of the third.

The game was tied in the fourth inning after Chater hit a two-run home run, and the Giants added two more runs in the fifth to take the lead.

New Lowell was shut down for the last three innings losing 6-4.

Hits were recorded by Kevin Buck, Huerter, Derek Gordon, Bond, two from Pike and Wallace, and the home run from Chater. Greer and Thompson both singled for the Knights with Thompson hitting a double. Patton and Norrie each hit two doubles and Connor homered.

Jesse Edmunds pitched one inning for the Giants, allowing three runs on three hits, walking three and striking out two. He was quickly replaced by Hodgson, who after throwing seven innings in the first game of the day, pitched another six innings giving up one run on five hits, two walks with one strikeout.

The Knights started Norrie on the rubber for four innings of play. He allowed four runs on six hits, walked five and struck out two. Gowan pitched the remaining three frames, giving up two runs on three hits, walked one and hit one batter, while striking out five Giants.

The previous week saw the Knights take a 2-1 series lead in the series after a 15-1 victory over the Giants.

Only one game of the senior division championship series was played over that weekend after the New Lowell diamond was unplayable for the scheduled game due to rainy weather.

The contest was a one-sided affair, with the Knights scoring five runs in the first inning, including a three-run home run from Gowan. Another run was added in the second, two in the third and three in the fourth.

In the fifth frame, Patton brought three runs home on a shot that cleared the right-centre fence and the Knights added one more run in the sixth.

Orangeville scored their only run in the first inning.

The Knights pounded out 18 hits in the mercy ending six-inning game. In addition to the home runs from Gowan and Patton, Greer, Thompson and Connor all doubled in the game.

Singles went to Greer, Gowan, Connor, Trevor Martin, Brownridge and two each from Thompson, Norrie, Dan Holwell and Baldry. Orangeville managed three hits, including a double by Gordon and singles from Huerter and Drury.

Baldry pitched all six innings for the Knights, allowing one run on three hits, walking two and hitting one batter. He recorded nine strikeouts.

The Giants used three pitchers during the contest, including starter Hodgson, who allowed eight runs on 11 hits, walked two and struck out two over his three innings. Edmunds pitched the fourth inning giving up three runs on three hits and striking out one Knight. Gordon finished the game allowing four runs on four hits, walking four and fanning one.