

Burlington homers end J-Hawks' win streak

Written by Mike Koolbeck

Sunday, 10 July 2011 02:31 - Last Updated Sunday, 10 July 2011 02:34



BURLINGTON - Devin Pflum's three-run home run highlighted Burlington's four-run fifth inning and carried the Grayhounds past Jefferson, 7-3, Saturday night in a non-conference baseball game at Wayne Duke Field.

The loss snapped Jefferson's four-game winning streak and dropped the J-Hawks to 13-22.

Burlington (16-14) took a 2-0 lead in the first inning on Kody Massner's two-run home run.

Jordan McCormick's home run leading off the top of the fourth inning cut the J-Hawks' deficit to 2-1.

McCormick's RBI single in the fifth inning tied the game and the J-Hawks took a 3-2 lead when Drew Striegel drew a bases-loaded walk. Striegel had four plate appearances but no official at-bats. He laid down two sacrifice bunts and walked twice.

The play of the game happened in the Burlington fifth.

Burlington had runners at first and third base when Massner bounced a grounder down the third-base line. The ball struck runner Brian Pflum, who was standing in fair territory on third base, then bounced past Jefferson third baseman Sam Techau, who was playing behind him.

The umpires allowed the ball to stay live and Pflum scored. Jefferson assistant coach Gordy Nordgren, filling in for Coach Mike Kuba who is away from the team for a few days while his daughter plays in an AAU basketball tournament, protested vehemently that the runner at third base should have been called out for interference. The umpires disagreed and allowed the run to stand.

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Nordgren had a legitimate argument.

According to the Case Book, a publication that complements the rule book with rulings from game situations, the ruling in 8.4.2 situation K appears to cover the play. That ruling states that a runner is out, even if in contact with the base, if the runner interferes with a fielder's chance to make a play on a batted ball. Had the ball gone past a fielder before contacting the runner and no other fielder had a play on it, and the contact was deemed unintentional, the ball would have remained live.

The play was rendered irrelevant when the next batter, Devin Pflum, rocketed a three-run home run over the left-field wall for a 6-3 Burlington lead.

"The balls that went over the fence beat us," Nordgren said. "There's no excuses. They hit two home runs and that's what beat us.

"We were capable of coming back and we rallied. That's the positive. We didn't close the rally, but we didn't lay down."

The J-Hawks loaded the bases with two outs in the top of the seventh inning and had red-hot junior Sam Techau at the plate as the possible tying run. Burlington brought on sophomore southpaw Chanel Cordero, who struck out Techau swinging on a 3-2 fastball to end the game.

McCormick and Bailey Hollingsworth had two hits apiece for Jefferson. Tanner Unkel had the J-Hawks' only other hit. Unkel also recorded his 24th stolen base of the season.

Hollingsworth started at pitcher and limited Burlington to three hits over four innings. He walked three and struck out three. Alex Larson pitched the final two innings and was tagged with the loss.

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Jefferson hosts Western Dubuque on Monday and Davenport North on Wednesday to close out the regular season. They play at Kennedy in a substate first-round game Friday.

JEFFERSON (3)

Tanner Unkel, 2b, 3 1 1 0, Michael Rooney, cf, 2 1 0 0, Alex Larson, dh-p, 4 0 0 0, Ky Kramer, ss, 0 0 0 0, Jordan McCormick, 1b, 3 1 2 2, Bailey Hollingsworth, p-lf, 2 0 2 0, Aaron Gruwell, cr, 0 0 0 0, Drew Striegel, c, 0 0 0 1, Drake Vanous, cr, 0 0 0 0, Sam Techau, 3b, 4 0 0 0, Jake Schmidt, rf, 3 0 0 0, Christian Knox, lf, 2 0 0 0, Chance Tiedtke, ss, 1 0 0 0. Totals 24 3 5 3.

BURLINGTON (7)

Chad Hatch, 2b, 4 0 0 0, Brian Pflum, p-ss, 4 1 2 0, Austin Shaver, 1b, 2 1 0 0, Jacob Falls, 1b, 1 1 1 0, Tanner Hartsock, p, 0 0 0 0, Chanel Cordero, p, 0 0 0 0, Kody Massner, ss-1b, 2 2 2 3, Devin Pflum, c, 3 1 2 3, Dylan Bouge, rf, 3 0 0 0, J.T. Vogel, 3b, 3 0 0 0, Austin Wagenhauser, lf, 2 1 2 0, Matt Patton, cf, 2 0 0 0. Totals 26 7 9 6.

Jefferson 000 120 0 - 3 5 0

Burlington 200 041 x - 7 9 0

Hollingsworth, Larson (5) and Striegel. B.Pflum, Hartsock (6), Cordero (7) and D.Pflum. W - B.Pflum. L-Larson. Sv-Cordero. 2B - B.Pflum, Wagenhauser. HR - McCormick, Massner, D.Pflum. SB - Unkel.