

Recap: Bees best the Suns behind pitching, big seventh inning



This Monday, May 31, the Bees finally returned to the field as they hosted the Pittsfield Suns in New Britain after three straight postponed games. Though the offense struggled early, the Bees eventually got going at the plate and toppled the Suns 6-1.

Bees' starter Kevin Seitter got off to a rocky start but recovered nicely. After having his start delayed three times due to weather-postponements, he struggled with control at first, walking leadoff hitter Jake Blinstrub. A stolen base and an RBI-single scored a run, but Seitter bounced back and got two straight strikeouts with the bases loaded to escape the inning down only 1-0. From there, the Bees shut the door on the Pittsfield offense.

With a slim lead in the seventh inning, Suns manager Matt Gedman turned to reliever Tyghe Healy. The 6-foot-2 lefty walked the leadoff man Andrew Cain, who quickly reached third base on an infield error. With men on the corners, second-baseman Michael Hernandez laced a single into the outfield to tie the game at 1-1. Then, the floodgates opened. Healy proceeded to allow two more runs to score before right-fielder Jake Hyde cleared the bases with a double off the wall. The Bees left the inning with a 6-1 lead that would be all they needed to earn the victory.

For the third straight game, the Bees overcame an early deficit, but unlike what happened in Pittsfield on Thursday, they were able to nail down the win. What appeared to be a one-off occurrence as the team erased a 5-run hole on opening day has now become part of New Britain's identity.

“I said to the guys ‘it is legal to take the lead early,’” Head coach Donnie McKillop quipped. “There’s a good resilience to us... These guys just stay poised and are ready to go.”

Since the Bees allowed one rough inning on Opening Day, New Britain’s pitching has been spectacular. In their past two games, the Bees have allowed 3 total runs with only 2 being earned. Meanwhile, the Bees’ bullpen has not allowed a run this season. Coming on in relief of Seitter, Ben Talbot and Ryan Doherty combined for six scoreless innings. Doherty was awarded the win. For McKillop, the pitching staff’s simple approach and competitive spirit has been the key to their success. “We’re throwing strikes, we’re competing in at-bats, we’re not giving up free bases... [they] are keeping us in games,” he said.

Now sitting at 2-1, the Bees will get back on the bus and head to Nashua to face the 0-2 Silver Knights tomorrow. Right-hander Colin Blake is expected to make the start tomorrow for New Britain at 6:00 p.m. Eastern.