

Recap: Bees avoid injury disaster in tough loss to Worcester Bravehearts



The 12-13 New Britain Bees have done most of their winning at New Britain Stadium this season, so the two-game home losing streak they now find themselves on is certainly surprising. That being said, they were able to avoid the worst case scenario Saturday as right-fielder Alec Ritch appears to be okay after a scary in-game collision took him out of the 8-6 loss to the Worcester Bravehearts.

For the fifth straight game, New Britain allowed their opponent to score in the first inning. This time it was starter Kevin Seitter (who was otherwise very solid) that allowed Worcester to get on the board first on a trio of first-inning singles for the 1-0 lead. It wasn't until the third inning that New Britain's offense answered back, and they did so in a big way. Second baseman Michael Hernandez reached second base on a double before Christian Fagnant brought him home with a single to tie the game. Then, with Fagnant and Jack Scher on base, leadoff man Alec Ritch blasted a three-run home run to give his team the 4-1 lead. Only an inning later Fagnant scored another two runners with his second single of the game.

Though the 6-1 lead seemed more than safe, the momentum switched teams on a fluke play in right field. Seitter, in his sixth inning of work, gave up a two-run inside-the-park home run to Zach DeMattio when Alec Ritch collided with the outfield wall chasing the ball and appeared hurt. Ritch did leave the game, but head coach Donnie McKillop said it was mostly out of an abundance of precaution.

Tim Pfaffenbichler entered the game with a 6-3 lead in the sixth inning and struggled to hold it. The righty reliever was bitten by a walk and a single before Rico Riley tied the game on a three-run home run. McKillop, trusting Pfaffenbichler's strong pitching ability, brought him back out for the seventh inning, but DeMattio bested him as well with a two-run home run. The 8-6 lead would be all Worcester needed to close out the road victory.

Until Ritch's injury, everything had been going well for the Bees. McKillop said he believed the fluke play was the turning point of the evening, one which was hard to recover from mentally. "He's a clubhouse leader," he said. "I think it was just a shock to everyone."

Now New Britain has the tall task of travelling to Brockton to face the 16-9 Rox, possibly without Ritch should he need another day of rest before the off day Monday. Ryan Doherty will likely get the start for the Bees. The game will begin at 1:30 p.m. Eastern.