

Recap: Bees drop nail-biter against Pittsfield Suns in home run derby



This Friday, June 25 the 12-12 New Britain Bees hosted the 14-10 Pittsfield Suns at New Britain Stadium looking for their third win in as many games. Instead, the Bees came up just shy of victory and ultimately lost the game in a post-extra-inning home run derby.

The Suns earned an early 1-0 lead off of Bees' starter Joe Nemchek thanks to a double and a single in the first inning. However, Nemchek and the Bees found a way to bounce back in short order. New Britain scored four runs in the third inning on two singles, two walks, a hit-batter and a wild pitch.

On the mound, Nemchek began coasting through Pittsfield's lineup with relative ease, until the sixth inning, when starters often run out of gas. Nemchek was chased from the game after a solo home run by Trent Taylor made it 4-2, and a single and a walk put men on the bases. New Britain went to reliever Brendan Kirck, who got the final two outs in the inning, but both runners scored on a pair of wild pitches and were charged to Nemchek.

In the bottom of the ninth inning, New Britain had the bases loaded with one out and Luke Broadhurst at the plate. It was an ideal situation for them, but they came up just shy of a walk-off victory as Broadhurst popped out to center-fielder Joe Lara, who made a perfect throw to home plate to catch Davis Cop before he could score the winning run.

The game went to extra-innings, but was still tied 4-4 after the 10th. FCBL rules dictate that any game tied after 10 innings will be settled in a home run

derby where each team gets ten chances to hit as many home runs as possible. Strangely, the only other time New Britain had gone to a home run derby was against Pittsfield on a night when Nemchek also pitched. Even more bizarre, that game, like Friday's, ended in a 1-0 home run derby victory for the Suns as New Britain failed to send one over the fences.

Despite the result, the Bees felt Friday's affair could have gone either way. New Britain was out-hit 7-4, but struck out only 10 times compared to Pittsfield's 15. Nemchek himself collected 9 of those strikeouts, and was optimistic about the team's recent play and direction. "It's definitely a sour taste, but I still believe in my guys and I think if we play real baseball the Bees [will] come out on top."

Head coach Donnie McKillop also expressed optimism with the season as a whole despite falling back below .500. "It happens," he said. "We'll be back. We'll be fine. We've got another [game] tomorrow."

The Bees are once again at home Saturday as they host the Worcester Bravehearts at 6:35 p.m. Eastern. Kevin Seitter will get the start for New Britain.