

Spectrums have Sound trouble

The Midland Colour Works Spectrums pitching staff was picked apart for 22 hits in two games as Owen Sound coasted to 10-0 and 16-5 victories in a South-Simcoe Baseball League doubleheader Sunday at Tiffin Park.

The losses gave Midland a 5-5-1 record. Owen Sound has now won seven and lost once.

Owen Sound bumped off starter Ernie Desroches (now 3-1) and Dan Lethbridge in the opening game, blasting 12 hits, and nailed first-time starter Wilson Cowan, Randy Lalonde, Lethbridge and Desroches for a total of 10 hits in the second half of the twinbill.

Pete Myatt started both games for Owen Sound, fanning eight Midland batters en route to a three-hitter in the opener and holding the home side scoreless for two innings in the return clash.

The Spectrums' John Roi counted for two of Midland's four hits in the first game, coming up with a single and a double in four trips to the plate.

Midland managed to advance runners to third base twice in the shutout.

Owen Sound picked up four runs off Desroches in the first five innings, including two doubles. They loaded the bases in the fourth as well, but Desroches got out of that predicament.

Owen Sound then continued their assault on reliever Lethbridge, who came in with one out in the sixth. They scored six runs in the final two innings, helped along in the seventh by two of Midland's game total of three errors.

Owen Sound had no errors in the first game (but they stranded eight batters).

Midland committed only one error in the second game and Owen Sound had four -- but all the visitors' errors occurred in the final inning, too late to put much more of a dent in their huge lead.

The Spectrums also came close at the plate, knocking out eight hits to Owen Sound's 10.

The big difference, though, came in the pitchers' control department: the four Midland pitchers walked 13 batters and sent two others to first after bouncing the ball off their bodies. It was all the opportunity Owen Sound needed to run away with the whole affair.

Wilson Cowan, pitching in his first game, started and startled the Owen Sound batters with a blazing fastball. But the speed didn't count for much when Cowan's control slipped and he began scorching everything but the strike zone.

Cowan cut through one scoreless inning and walked three batters in the second before manager Dick Thompson sent in Lethbridge for relief.

As it turned out, though, the Owen Sound hitters felt the relief more than anybody. Now safe from Cowan's menacing speed, they teed off on Lethbridge and racked up ten runs in the second inning.

Lethbridge, Randy Lalonde (whose only previous mound experience came in Barrie a couple of weeks ago when he was called on to wind up another massacre) and Desroches divided up the rest of the exercise.

Midland scored two runs in the fourth with three singles and a walk and wound things up with a good effort in the seventh by scoring three times on two hits.

The Midland club's weekend pitching woes were compounded

by the absence of Craig Pender, who was called on to join the Barrie Juveniles for a tournament.

Midland was scheduled to play the Barrie team Friday at Tiffin Park, but the game was cancelled due to Barrie's tournament commitment.

Pender will join Barrie, unquestionably the league powerhouse so far this season, in more tournaments as well as in post-season Ontario Baseball Association Juvenile play-off rounds under an agreement he made with the Spectrums before the season started.

Not only will Pender's absence hurt the Midland club in future dates, but the moonlighting could render him out-of-form when called on for Midland games that may run close to his Barrie commitments -- like last night, when the Spectrums were scheduled for a game in Orillia. Thompson, however, has resigned himself to the fact that he'll just have to work each game with what he has whenever the umpire signals for the orders.

If Cowan can get his fastball on track, he could be dangerous, and Thompson has a new hurling hopeful in Dean Proulx. And, as the ebb and flow continues while the club works itself into some kind of identity, new faces appear: Carl Cowan and Brian Garner have been out, and overall, Thompson is somewhat heartened by the observation that the club seems to be improving.

"The infield's not as tight as I'd like to see it and we've got to do something to try to solve our pitching problems, but they are improving," Thompson said.

Next outing is scheduled for Sunday in Collingwood.



Forces get a Spectrum

Gary Wenker won't have to worry a whole lot anymore about the state of disrepair of his glove or the state of disrepair of the Midland Color Works Spectrums Junior baseball club. Wenker played the first five games of the season with the Spectrums and will be taking those fond memories

with him when he sets out for Cornwallis July 9 to begin basic training in the Canadian Armed Forces. The 19-year-old will pursue a career in the electronics trades in the forces -- and, perhaps, pick up some pointers on repairing a catcher's mitt.

Phelpston on track with pitcher's return

Phelpston Hotel has served notice to their Simcoe Rural Fastball League foes that they're not going to take it anymore.

And one Frank Minnings has been doing the serving.

Phelpston, poor sisters in the nine-team loop last year, won their fourth game in five starts with a 2-1 decision over last year's regular-season champion Vasey Twin Lakers Monday in Vasey.

In other games Monday, the Midland Athenian Raiders maintained their iron grip on the league lead with a 9-3 drubbing of the host Perkinsfield Bantus, the Elmvale Mets blanked the Wyevale Hawks 3-0 in Wyevale, and the Wyebridge Warriors doubled the visiting Vasey Royals 6-3.

Last Thursday's games were rained out. Minnings, who has returned to Phelpston this year after spending four seasons out west, allowed the Twin Lakers only four hits.

Bob Widde collected one of those hits in the

opening inning, driving in Bob Moore for what proved to be Vasey's only run of the ball game.

Minnings then held up his end of the deal for the rest of the game, but it wasn't until the final at-bat that his backers rallied to support him with a three-hit flurry that sent a pair and gave Phelpston the win.

As Vasey pitcher Widde describes it, it was "three hits -- and bingo."

There may be many more binges in store for the Phelpston club as the season progresses and Minnings continues to dish out his much-improved product to other SRFL batters.

"We're really starting to put things together now," says Phelpston coach Keith French. "I think Frank picked up a few pointers when he was out west, and with a pitcher like that,

everybody plays that much better."

French says the club has a new-found bench strength as well (there are four new players on the roster) "and everybody knows that when they're not up to it, there's somebody waiting to take their spot."

Phelpston's eight points in five games equal their season total from last season, when

● Cont'd pg. 23

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