

Stroud Pitches Gem, but Dragons Still Fall

For the better part of this season, the DuPage Dragons pitching has been lights out. That was the case again Sunday night when Brian Stroud (Western Michigan) took the mound and pitched the first complete game for the Dragons this season. But it wasn't enough, as the road team fell to the Dubois Bombers by a score of 1-0.

League Stadium in Huntinburg, IN played host to another pitcher's duel, this one a masterpiece throughout. Through five innings, both squads had zeros in the run column, with both pitchers barely giving up an inch. Dragons rightfielder Dave Reynolds (Northern Illinois) started off the game with a single, but Bombers starter Jarrett Casey was able to get the next hitter to fly out before inducing a double play to escape the inning. It would prove to be the theme for the evening. Through five innings, Casey scattered five Dragons hits, squashing the biggest of the rallies in the third. The Dragons were able to get runners on first and second with one out in the inning, but Casey induced a groundball out and a fly out to end the inning.

DuPage starter Brian Stroud was even more impressive in his first five innings. After giving up a double with two outs in the first inning, Stroud retired ten of the next thirteen hitters he faced, including a double play in the second inning. Collectively through five, the two pitchers combined to give up zero runs, six hits, while stranding five men on base.

The game intensified in the sixth. In the top half of the inning, the Dragons were able to get the first two hitters on base with no outs. Reynolds led off the inning with a walk, followed by a single by second baseman Kevin Tokarski (Illinois State). But with runners on first and second, Casey again stepped up his game to retire the next three batters. He got the next hitter to strikeout, and after a groundout advanced the runners to second and third, he produced another groundout to escape the threat.

Stroud wasn't as lucky in his half of the sixth. Pitching beautifully through five, giving up only one hit, Stroud retired the first hitter in the inning with a ground out. Zach Rowles was able to reach base on an error, and that would spell doom for the Dragons. Eric Hanlon ripped a double, bringing Rowles all the way from first to score the lone run of the game.

Although the Dragons have put on a few late game rallies this week, they didn't have another one left in them. Casey left the game after the eighth, and Bombers reliever Chase Joiner was able to close the game out for the Bombers' first victory against the Dragons. The Dragons dropped to 5-4 on the season, while the Bombers improved to 2-6. Jarrett Casey has pitched both victories for the Bombers.

The Dragons wrap up their four-game road trip Monday night, June 16th, when they take on the Springfield Sliders at 7:05 pm. The Dragons return home Wednesday night, June 18th, when they face the Springfield Sliders at 7:05 pm at the Lisle Sports Complex at Benedictine University. Tickets start at \$6 with kids five and under admitted free. Group rates are available by calling the Dragons' ticket office at [630-241-2255](tel:630-241-2255).