

Dragons Sweep Bombers

For the last time this season, the DuPage Dragons played host to the Dubois Bombers on Saturday night. The Dragons did away with the Bombers by a final score of 6-3 to complete a two-game series sweep. The win was also the fifth straight for the Dragons over Dubois, who improved their record to 16-12, the first time they have been four games above .500 all year.

For the fifth time this week, the Dragons scored in the opening frame. With two outs in the bottom of the first, the Dragons reeled off four consecutive hits, with designated hitter Matt Behren (Northern Illinois) ripping a single to left to start the rally. Catcher Justin Behm (Northern Illinois) followed up with an RBI double to left-center, scoring Behren all the way from first. Behm was then knocked in on another double by third baseman Phil Wunderlich (Louisville), who was brought in on a single by rightfielder Nick Popescu (Bradley) that made the score 3-0.

The Dragons continued their scoring ways in the second and third innings. Leftfielder Mark Noth (Belmont) drew a walk with one out in the second. After a ground out advanced him to second base, Behren smacked a double to deep centerfield to score Noth. In the third, back-to-back two-out doubles off the bats of shortstop Jordan Tokarz (Eastern Illinois) and second baseman Pete Capetta (Illinois) resulted in the fifth Dragons run, giving DuPage a commanding 5-0 lead.

Starter Tony Manville (Iowa) picked up right where Dragons pitching left off last night, blanking the Bombers through the first five innings of play. But after being shutout for the first fourteen innings of this two-game set, Dubois finally put a run on the board as they were able to push one across in the top of the sixth. Eric Hanlon led off the inning with a single to left, followed by another single from Jared Baehl. After Manville struck out the next hitter, Ronnie Calvird loaded the bases with the third single in the inning. With the infielder playing back for a shot at a double play, Kevin Gillespie hit a bouncer over to short for a fielder's choice. Gillespie beat out the turn and Hanlon crossed the plate for the first Bombers run.

Ryan Copeland (Illinois State) came on in relief for Manville in the eighth. He allowed the first four hitters to reach base as the Bombers were able to put up two more runs. Baehl reached base for the third consecutive time on an error, followed by TJ Dailey getting hit by a pitch. With runners on first and second, Calvird poked a single to left that scored Baehl. Gillespie hit a single to load the bases, and then Wes Fink reached on a fielder's choice that allowed Dailey to score. Copeland finally retired the next two hitters on a strikeout and a pop out to end the inning with the Dragons holding on to a 5-3 lead.

DuPage would add another insurance run in the bottom of the inning. Noth led off the inning with a double that went to deep left-centerfield, ending the night for Bombers reliever Joe Ochs. First baseman Dave Reynolds (Northern Illinois), last night's winning pitcher, dropped a perfect bunt down the third base line to reach base and put runners on the corners. With the infield drawn in, Reynolds was able to advance on a ground ball to second that put both runners in scoring position. That's when Behm picked up his second RBI on the night on a sacrifice fly to centerfield that scored Noth.

With the Dragons leading 6-3, Brad Riegler (Illinois-Chicago) came in to close the game out. He struck out the first and third hitters in the inning, but singles by the second and fourth hitters put runners on the corner and brought the tying run to the plate. With two away, Riegler was able to induce a ground ball out to pick up the save and give the Dragons their third consecutive win. Tony Manville got the win as he went seven innings, giving up only one run on five hits while striking out eight. All six of the Dragons' runs came across with two outs.

The Dragons will close out their weekend homestand Sunday, July 13th, when they take on the Danville Dans at 5:05 pm at the Lisle Sports Complex at Benedictine University. Tickets start at \$6 with children five and under admitted free. Group rates are available by calling the Dragons' ticket office at 630-241-2255.