



By EARL WATT

- Leader & Times

After handing the Hays Larks their first loss of the season, the Bee Jays suffered the same fate in the second game of a double header with the Larks Tuesday at Brent Gould Field.

Liberal fell behind 2-0 early in Game 1 and trailed 6-1 in the fifth before the Bee Jays broke through for five runs to tie the game, and may have had a chance for more.

Liberal loaded the bases and scored three runs before the Larks were able to record an out. Drew Umbro walked with the bases loaded to force home a run and cut the Larks lead to 6-5. The tying run scored with one out when a wild pitch reached the backstop. But the Larks were able to get two outs and strand Bee Jays at second and third in a 6-6 tie.

Tanner Rainey broke the tie in the bottom of the seventh when Umbro scored from third base on a walk-off single that a diving right fielder caught on a trap. The umpire ruled no catch, and the Bee Jays won 7-6.

As the storm clouds rolled over Brent Gould Field in the fourth inning during a 2-1 game in favor of Hays, a flurry of walks came back to haunt Liberal. Four walks in the fourth inning allowed Hays to score four runs and take a commanding 5-1 lead.

Hays added one more run while the Bee Jays struggled to get a timely hit with runners in scoring position, and Liberal lost the nightcap, 6-1.

“I liked the fact we didn’t give up in first game,” Liberal coach Brandon Kitch said. “Our guys schedule was thrown off yesterday, and it gets you out of the routine. It is early enough not to affect us. We still have to show up and play.”

With the attention shifting from the field to the sky, the energy for a comeback never formed.

“We didn’t have fire,” Kitch said. “We walked guys, gave up four runs on four walks, that will kill you all the time.”

Liberal (4-1, 1-1) will travel to Dodge City tonight to face the A’s (2-0, 0-0).

The Bee Jays will return to Brent Gould Field Friday for a three-game series with Derby (1-2, 0-2).