



By EARL WATT

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After struggling to score runs in a short field in Derby, the Bee Jays regained their offensive muscle in Hays with a 6-0 win in a weather-shortened game.

Alec Isaac hit Liberal's first home run of the season to start the scoring, and the Bee Jays added three runs in the third inning to take a 4-0 lead.

Zach Hoffman added another home run in the fifth, and Seth Stevens walked with the bases loaded in the seventh to add the final run of the night.

Robert Dugger earned the win on the mound for Liberal with the shutout in six innings before the game was called.

“Dugger did a great job,” Liberal coach Adam Anderson said. “He didn’t allow them to get back-to-back at-bats. If a guy reached base, he executed on the next batter down in the zone. They couldn’t get anything going. He did a good job competing all night long.”

With lightning in the vicinity, the field was cleared in the bottom of the seventh inning, and then a downpour followed for the next two-and-a-half hours resulting in the game being called, and the Bee Jays getting the win.

In an ironic twist, it may have been the short fence in Derby that led to the low scoring output while a more conventional field in Hays helped bring the Bee Jays offense back to life.

“In Derby we got to a point where one guy was pressing, trying to do too much, and then more try to do it,” Anderson said. “That’s what happened in Derby, guys trying to be the hero. Last night, guys trusted the people behind them, and not trying to swing for the fences, we ended up with two home runs.”

Despite the heavy rain, Anderson believed that tonight’s game should be able to be played.

“The infield being turf will help,” Anderson said. “The outfield will be wet and soft, but it should be ok.”

Anderson will send Austin King to the mound tonight, and if Kings can get a quality four to six innings, Anderson believes the deep bullpen can finish the job, especially with a team that came into Hays with confidence despite being swept at Derby.

“They didn’t come out looking like they got swept,” he said. “We had a good practice Tuesday, we came out yesterday and Isaac leads off with a home run. They didn’t play like they got swept, they played like they just swept someone. We played aggressive. We got some big hits when we needed them. They played a solid ball game all around.”

They also played error free.

Tonight, the Bee Jays will look to sweep the two-game set on the road against Hays before returning to Brent Gould Field for a weekend series against El Dorado.

“It will be huge for us to win at Hays tonight,” Anderson said. “It is always tough. Their crowd is fantastic and they play well at home. It would be huge to get a win tonight. If we can have momentum coming home, it would be huge.”