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Bobcats rally, beat Little Giants

BY JEFF ARENZ
Sports writer

FREMONT -- Bowling Green hitters blasted Fremont Ross relievers Cory Rohrbacher and Derek Aldrich during the sixth and seventh innings of a 12-4 non-conference victory Thursday at Alumni Fields.

The Bobcats (4-1 overall) broke a 4-all tie in the sixth by plating eight runs on nine hits in the final two innings. Bowling Green's rally came as Fremont Ross (2-4 overall) appeared to have the momentum after Derek Waggoner hit a two-run home run in the fifth to knot the game at four.

"Our last two pitchers got the ball down the middle of the plate flat," Fremont Ross coach Mark King said. "You have to credit Bowling Green for turning on the ball and putting it all over the field."

Kendrick Hemle and Nick Rodesky did most of the damage against the Little Giants. They combined for six of the Bobcats' 16 hits, including a pair of home runs -- in the fifth (a two-run shot by Hemle off Rohrbacher) and seventh (a three-run bomb by Rodesky off Aldrich).

"In those earlier innings, I knew that our hitters were just missing and were hitting the ball right at some guys. We just couldn't seem to find the open areas," Bowling Green coach Doug Merrill said. "What changed in the last half of the game is we started to find the gaps."

Ross starting pitcher Dexter Foos threw four solid innings and left with a 2-1 lead after pitching to a pair of Bowling Green hitters in the fifth. King decided to bring in Rohrbacher after Foos allowed a double to Rodesky and walked Tony Dible.

Hemle's shot capped a three-run fifth that handed Bowling Green a 4-2 lead. It came one hitter after the Little Giants failed to turn a possible inning-ending double play, which allowed Derek Batt to reach on a throwing error and Rodesky to tie the contest at 2.

Waggoner's two-run blast to left field also plated Brad Woleslagel as Ross rallied with out in its fifth, when the Little Giants forced a 4-all deadlock.

But Matt Milligan and Caleb Roe hit back-to-back RBI-doubles in the Bowling Green sixth and Roe scored on Rohrbacher's wild pitch as the Bobcats grabbed a 7-4 lead.

Aldrich relieved Rohrbacher in the seventh, but served up a Rodesky's three-run blast that cleared the wall in deep left-center field. Batt and Hemle added RBI-singles for Bowling Green, which took an eight-run cushion after 6 1/2 innings.

"I need to take away some positives every night," King said. "Defensively, we're improving every night and we swung the bats better than we did yesterday. And Dexter through a great game for four innings. He's earned the right to be our No. 1 pitcher and I needed to save him for the conference game against Findlay on Tuesday."

Foos, who gave up 2 runs (one earned) in four innings, pitched himself into and out of trouble.

Matt Ruehl led off the game with a first-inning triple and scored on Joe Sickler's infield groundout. But Foos had a 1-2-3 second frame and struck out Batt on a changeup with the bases loaded in the third.

Lead-off hitter Stephen Stout electrified the Little Giants in the first by driving a solo home run to left field. Ross broke a 1-all tie in the fourth, when a sacrifice fly off the bat of T.J. Harkness plated Tyler Hasselbach.

Milligan, who relieved Bobcats' starter Tony Dible, earned the victory by pitching scoreless frames in the sixth and seventh innings.

E-mail Jeff Arenz at jarenz@gannett.com.



Fremont Ross's Derek Waggoner covers first base during a game against Bowling Green on Thursday at Alumni Fields. (Jennifer Young-Bower | News-Messenger correspondent)