By EARL WATT

• Leader & Times

The last two times Justin Schnedler has taken the mound have not been good outings for the Liberal Bee Jays. Schnedler gave up five runs in three innings to El Dorado Friday, and the Bee Jays lost 5-4.

When Schnedler came off the mound after getting no outs in the third and giving up two of the five runs, the Bee jays faced a 5-0 deficit.

But Tyler Buss did not surrender a run in six innings, and the Bee Jays rallied by scoring four late, but could not tie the game.

“We did show a lot of character,” Liberal manager Brandon Kitch said. “I explained to the guys that we have the offense to score an abundance of runs — six, seven runs a game, eight to 10 hits a game. You have to give credit to their guy. He kept us off balance, and we didn’t make adjustments until late.”

But the hole was too deep, and that is something Kitch said he would have to address as the coach.

“We have to get quality starts — Bottom line,” he said. “I have to make some decisions on who will start. We will have to make some changes. It’s the nature of the beast.”

Without a quality start, Kitch had to rely on Buss to provide relief. Buss struck out seven including three in the third.

“Tyler came in and saved us,” Kitch said. “He did a great job of shutting them down.”

The Bee Jays are 4-4 in the first eight games of a 34-game league season and 12 games into a 45-game regular season, and Kitch is still getting a feel for his roster.

“We are still finding out who is good out of the pen, and who could start,” he said. “Schnedler had some good quality starts for us last year. I thought he would be even better this year. Has some mechanical flaws, but when he gets those worked out he will be a good pitcher.”

Buss is creating a place for himself as a long reliever.

“We were trying to find where he would fit in,” Kitch said. “He will be long relief, a guy who can get some lefties out. (El Dorado) has a lot of lefties like we do.”

The Bee Jays (8-4, 4-4) faced the Broncos (6-4, 4-4) late Saturday and will finish the series Sunday before returning home for a day off Monday.