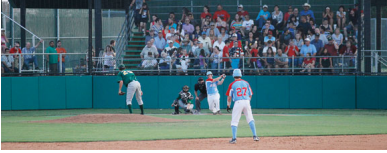


2 grand slams lift Bee Jays over A's, 10-5

Thursday, 18 July 2013 09:48

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By EARL WATT and JEREMIAH WILSON

• Leader & Times

A grand slam is a rarity, but two in one game is almost impossible.

But Sam Pack and Tanner Kirk each heat a bases-loaded home run Wednesday to score eight of the team's 10 runs in a 10-5 win over Dodge City at Cavalier Field.

The win kept the Bee Jays in the hunt for a bid to the NBC World Series and kept the hopes of a winning Jayhawk League season alive.

"It was a well-played ball game," Liberal manager Brandon Kitch said. "Anytime you can score five runs in the first inning it gives your team momentum. Getting two grand slams in the first three innings really demoralizes the other team."

Cody Tillotson had a shaky start in the first, giving up two runs, ut settled in an was able to slow down the A's scoring.

"He was in control the whole game and did a great job for us," Kitch said. "He ate a lot of innings for us to save our bullpen for the weekend."

The game completed the travel schedule for the Bee Jays, and the final seven games will be played at Brent Gould Field.

"It's good to finish up the season at home," Kitch said. "We control our own destiny. If we win the next five ball games, we give ourselves a good shot at making the tournament. We've created this monster, now we just have to go out there and compete."

The two big blasts from Pack and Kirk were a welcome sight for an offense that struggled on a key road trip to Wellington and Hays last week.

When the Bee Jays did score on the road, the pitching could not protect the leads, and the Bee Jays went 1-4 against the Heat and Larks.

With the losses, Liberal found its back against the wall in trying to qualify for the NBC World Series.

Wednesday's win over Dodge City was a much-needed victory in trying to keep the post-season hopes alive.

Liberal trails Wellington by three-and-a-half games for third place and is four games behind El Dorado for second.

The Bee Jays only have five league games remaining, but they can help themselves with a home win tonight against Dodge City and then try to sweep El Dorado at Brent Gould Field over the weekend.

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If the Bee Jays can pull off the sweep and beat Dodge City tonight, that would give them a 17-16 league record with one game remaining against Dodge City Tuesday.

The Bee Jays will need help to reach the top three of the league even if they can end the season winning the final six league games including last night's win over the A's.

Liberal will finish the season with two non-league games against the Denver Red Birds Wednesday and Thursday.

El Dorado and Wellington still have to make up a game against each other, and they also have another game. El Dorado also has a game against the Derby Twins.

If El Dorado drops both games to Wellington, and all three to the Bee Jays, the Bee Jays would have a one-game lead on the Broncos.

That makes tonight's game against Dodge City and the weekend series with the Broncos critical for the Bee Jays chances of earning a bid to the NBC World Series.

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