

By EARL WATT

• Daily Leader

With weather threatening, the Liberal Bulldogs faced the Hooker, Okla., Horny Toads Monday.

The Bulldogs brought an early end to the contest, knocking off the Horny Toads in five innings, 14-3.

Brandon Granger pitched all five innings and held toe Bulldogs to three runs, all scored in the fourth.

The Bulldogs, on the other hand, scored all four times they came up to bat.

Mario Armindarez sparked the Bulldogs with a two-run home run in the second.

Chuy Torres had a double and a triple to lead the Bulldogs at the plate.

In the non-league game, the Bulldogs knocked off the Horny Toads 8-0 in five innings.

Tyson Deaton pitched for the Bulldogs and was a bad hop away from a perfect game.

“It was unfortunate,” Liberal coach Eric Olmstead said. “We played flawless on the field. We didn’t have an error on the night, and we had outstanding pitching.”

The Bulldogs took advantage of every opportunity, advancing runners and scoring when Hooker provided a base runner.

“Timely hitting was the key for us,” Olmstead said. “They had a few walks and beamed a kid here or there. We drove them in with doubles, triples and home runs. We ran the bases pretty well. It was probably the best we played in some time.”

The win advanced the Bulldogs to 11-2 on the season and 5-0 in league play.

The Bulldogs attempted to play a tournament in Dodge City over the weekend, but rain prevented the Sunday games. The Bulldogs went 1-2 in pool play, but Olmstead kept his three top pitchers out of the action in preparation for bracket games Sunday.

“We were sitting good going into Sunday, but the rain didn’t allow us to play,” Olmstead said. “It backfired to hold out our pitchers I guess. But we were able to get some kids on the mound that don’t throw a lot.”

The additional games in the summer has helped Olmstead get some playing time for his younger players which will benefit him when the Redskins take the field next season.

“We are getting the opportunity to play younger kids,” he said. “They have really stepped up.”

Two in particular were Jared Hall and Matt Morris. The two batted in the eight and nine positions and combined to hit a triple, two doubles and a walk for a three-for-four performance.

“We are trying to develop players and have a good summer,” Olmstead said. “Our ultimate goal is to win the state tournament.”

Bulldogs remain perfect in league

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The Bulldogs will travel to Ulysses Wednesday before returning to Dodge City for a 19-and-under Legion tournament.

“We’re going to be shorthanded this weekend at Dodge,” Olmstead said.

“We’ll be missing five of our starters. It may be a struggle, but it will be a great opportunity for the younger players.”

The Bulldogs return to Liberal Monday for a conference contest against the Garden City Blues. First game is scheduled for 6 p.m.