

By EARL WATT

- Daily Leader

Liberal Bee Jay pitching coach Galen McSpadden doesn't like to lose.

He especially doesn't like to lose when he believes his is the better team.

"Position by position, I felt like we have been better than a lot of these teams," he said.

But being better has not equated into the record McSpadden wants to see — yet.

Liberal lost a Jayhawk Conference game to Dodge City Thursday, 5-4, after having a lead early in the game. It's the second game in a row that the Bee Jays failed to hold a lead.

Logan Odom started for the Bee Jays and left the game after the sixth inning with a 4-2 lead.

Odom had a sore shoulder and was relieved by Camron Collard.

But Collard gave up a two-out two-RBI single in the seventh.

An error at third in the eighth allowed Dodge City to put the winning run on base.

Brett Davis relieved Collard and gave up a single after recording an out.

Mitch Caster came in, and after a bunt allowed the run to score, recorded the final two outs.

But the Bee Jays couldn't score after the fourth inning.

"Non-competitive at-bats are killing us," McSpadden said. "We had three strike-outs by taking a third strike on 3-2 counts. How can you take a fast ball that's close on a 3-2 count?"

McSpadden said the coaching staff will continue to improve the play on the field as the season progresses, and even though the team has not played its best, the Bee Jays are still in the middle of the pack and could be in second place with a win tonight against Derby.

"There's a few spots on the field we have to get better," McSpadden said. "We're still three pitchers short. These guys will be better in a month. We saw that last year. The light just hasn't come on yet."

Liberal will face Derby at 7 p.m. tonight at Brent Gould Field. The game is free courtesy of Larry Koochel's Bumper to Bumper Auto Parts, Liberal's only locally owned auto parts store.