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### Majors a win from Intercounty final

Mon, August 14, 2006

By [STEVE COAD](#), FREE PRESS SPORTS REPORTER

Little did the Barrie Baycats know that when the transmission on the bus carrying them to London yesterday went kaput, their troubles were just beginning.

London Majors ace pitcher Erick Perez made sure the defending champion Baycats never got their offensive engine purring either, handcuffing the Baycats on six hits through eight innings in a 6-1 Majors' victory in front of about 500 spectators at sun-splashed Labatt Park.

The win gives London a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven Intercounty Baseball League semifinal and a chance to wrap up a berth in the final tomorrow in Barrie. Game 5, if necessary, would go Wednesday at Labatt Park.

Barrie's tranny troubles, which required a second bus to pick up the team along Highway 401 and finish the trip, caused the start of the game to be delayed by an hour.

Once it got going, however, the innings flew by and the whole thing wrapped up in two hours -- thanks in no small part to Perez, a Venezuelan lefty that Majors manager Roop Chanderdat referred in the aftermath to as "a pro. When you mention Erick, that's the word that comes to mind. He's our ace.

"The guys are so confident when he's on the mound."

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Yesterday's winning pitcher, Perez, improved to 4-0 in the postseason, a span in which the Majors are 7-1, including a four-game brooming of the Kitchener Panthers in the quarter-finals.

Perez made only one mistake against the Baycats, serving up a pitch that Alex Borgo crushed into the trees along the Thames River beyond the fence in left field.

The hurler, who will never overpower hitters, was pleased with his day.

"It was good -- good regular season (when he went 7-2 with a 3.29 ERA), good playoffs," Perez said.

Adam Arnold of St. Thomas pitched the ninth for London, allowing one hit and whiffing two on the strength of a fastball that zips to the plate at more than 90 miles an hour.

Up 2-1 through five innings, the Majors' attack took a can opener to the tilt with four runs in the sixth.

Catcher Chad McKellar delivered the big blow in the sixth, a two-out single that cashed both designated hitter Chuck Roberts from third base (after his second double of the day) and shortstop Mike Ambrose, who singled and stole second. Ryan Gauthier, a designated runner for McKellar, scampered home a bit later when outstanding rookie outfielder Rudy Vallejos cracked a double and Vallejos finished the blitz by scoring when Barrie catcher Jordan Lundberg threw the ball into left field when he attempted to catch the London runner stealing third.

The Majors, meanwhile, had to say goodbye to three important cogs following yesterday's game as Ambrose, centre-fielder Brad McElroy and pitcher Hiarali Garcia head off to school -- Ambrose and McElroy to North Carolina-Charlotte and Garcia to East Oklahoma State.

It's a blow for sure, Chanderdat said.

The Majors will start Josh Palmer on the mound in tomorrow's game, which starts at 8 p.m.

MAJORS 6

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