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Majors beaten by Sox

Tue, August 22, 2006

By **RYAN PYETTE**, FREE PRESS SPORTS REPORTER

BRANTFORD -- The London Majors know they have to win at least one game here to be Intercounty Baseball League champions.

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They better figure out a way to score a run here first.

Brantford third baseman Hyung Cho led off the fourth inning with a solo home run off stellar London pitcher Josh Palmer for the game's only run and the Majors were shut out for their second straight road game in a 1-0 defeat before a crowd of about 1,000 last night at Arnold Anderson Stadium.

The Red Sox, who won Game 1 last Friday with a 14-0 blowout, took a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven final that resumes tomorrow night at Labatt Park at 7:30 p.m.

"We'll be all right. We go back to our place and they have to beat us there or we have two more chances to get one win here," London manager Roop Chanderdat said.

The lack of offence by London ruined a terrific effort by Palmer, 21, who threw a complete-game three-hitter after Majors pitchers had been touched up for 23 runs the first two games.

Palmer, who pitched a complete-game seven-hitter to eliminate the defending champion Barrie Baycats last week, only made one mistake -- to Cho, who made him pay with a shot over the 375-foot sign in the left-field power alley.

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Brantford starter Brad Hogeterp, a tough, speed-changing left-hander, pitched like he was the reincarnation of Red Sox legend and Chatham native Ron Stead -- striking out the side in the ninth inning to complete a four-hit gem.

Hogeterp, who climbed onto the Red Sox' top-10 list last year with his 20th career victory, breezed through the game and didn't allow an extra-base hit.

A 28-year-old former Londoner who pitched briefly for the Werewolves in 1999, Hogeterp worked for UPS sales office for a couple of years while pitching in Brantford.

"Palmer is a heck of a pitcher and he got in a groove there," the Brantford hurler said. "We beat London 14-0 in Game 1 but you can throw that one out. That's not like their team. The games will be more like this."

The veteran hurler, who has pitched parts of seven seasons in Brantford, has a long way to go to catch the team's all-time win leader -- Stead, the recent Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame inductee Stead who racked up 104 victories and delivered a bunch of championship titles in his heyday with the Sox.

Chanderdat argued with the second base umpire when Majors designated hitter Chuck Roberts was thrown out by Brantford leftfielder Josh McCurdy while trying to stretch a second-inning hit into extra bases. The Majors could've used that hit -- and any other kind of offence against Hogeterp.

"He's the kind of guy who gets in a groove and he's hard to hit because he's an ace," Chanderdat said. "You have to get to him early and we didn't do that."

Brantford finished the regular season three games ahead of London in the standings and that earned them the extra home game. That extra home game for the Red Sox could come back to haunt the Majors.

London is playing the final series without regular short stop Mike Ambrose and outfielder Brad McElroy, the league's leading hitter, who have both left to their U.S. college teams. But the Majors were able to work out a deal to pull back starting pitcher Hiarali Garcia from school in Oklahoma for the remainder of the series.

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"He's our No. 2 pitcher so that was huge," Chanderdat said. "It ends up being about seven days that he misses so had to bring back school work with him to do while he's here."

RED SOX 1 MAJORS 0

Brantford leads 2-1.

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Stangs up and running

Majors beaten by Sox

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Verlander masters Chisox

Jays lose wild one

Yesterday's highlights

Lehman has no Love on Ryder Cup squad

Navratilova, Petrova win doubles

Teen Ivanovic serves notice

SPORTS NEWS

Shivers shown the exit

Dismissed after seven years as the extremely average architect of the Saskatchewan Roughriders, Roy Shivers' departure sparked cheers and prompted office pools from Moose Jaw to Melfort as to when coach Danny Barrett will meet a similar fate.

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