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Majors routed in IBL opener

Sat, August 19, 2006

By **MORRIS DALLA COSTA**, FREE PRESS SPORTS COLUMNIST

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BRANTFORD -- If there's anything positive about the London Majors' horror show, it's that the odds say there's no way they can repeat the performance.

It isn't possible to play as badly as they did last night. Sort of like lightning striking the same place twice.

The Brantford Red Sox lit up the Majors 14-0 in the opening game of the Intercounty Baseball League final. Game 2 is tomorrow at Labatt Park at 5 p.m.

The Majors will be using all sorts of sports cliches to help forget about this one.

Cliches such as "We were due for a bad game."

"Lose by one, lose by 14, it's still a loss."

"It's only one game. That's why it's a seven-game series."

If you're a Major or one of their fans, you'd better hope they're able to forget.

"We have a fighter here," manager Roop Chanderdat said.

"We've done it all year. We're resilient. We'll be a lot better the next game."

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The Red Sox got to Majors starter Erik Perez in the second inning. He has a slow curve and the Red Sox showed great patience. It started with an Al Stevens' single. Perez balked him to second and Jason Gotwalt singled him to third. An Adam Vella sacrifice fly scored Stevens. After a force play, Tyler Burnell waited on a Perez curve and hammered it into the gap for a triple, scoring a run.

The third inning was a nightmare. The Red Sox sent 12 batters to the plate and had eight hits, with six in succession. Shortstop Kyle Piwowarczyk made two errors and there was a passed ball. Coach Harry Muir was ejected. Perez was pulled for Adam Arnold. The Red Sox scored eight runs.

It was 10-0 after three, but unfortunately the Majors had to play the rest of the game and it didn't get any prettier.

How ugly was it? In the fourth, the Red Sox scored four more on a couple of passed balls and some sloppy defence. Even usually sure-handed Simon Galarraga got into the act when he lost a popup in the lights and it hit him on the head.

How ugly was it? In the seventh, Chanderdat brought in pinch-hitter Mark Voakes for Rudy Vallejos but Voakes wasn't on the lineup card and couldn't play.

Red Sox starter Jon Ogiltee went seven innings, giving up two hits while striking out five.

"We're missing four starters, three position players," Chanderdat said. "I hate to make excuses. The truth is we just didn't have it. We didn't play well, but we'll forget it and come back."

Neither team has won an IBL championship in years. The Majors are looking for their first title since 1975. The Red Sox are looking to win for the first time since 1981.

Brantford finished third and London fourth in the regular season, but they had little trouble knocking off teams in the semifinals that finished ahead of them.

The Red Sox beat out Toronto and London beat Barrie. Both series went five.

This could be an interesting series. Moments before the

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scheduled start, a flash darkened the stadium and surrounding area. The start was delayed a half-hour.

The Majors were hoping for a blackout that would have lasted at least overnight.

They didn't want to start this series until tomorrow because they were short several players.

Not in last night's opener was third-baseman Pete Babcock, who missed the game because of personal reasons.

RED SOX 14

MAJORS 0

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