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Majors waste big lead and lose

Sat, July 15, 2006

By **ERIC BENDER**, FREE PRESS SPORTS REPORTER

Other teams have been helping the London Majors stay close in the Intercounty Baseball League's race for the top.



It was time for the Majors to help themselves last night before 1,500 fans at Labatt Park.

"No, we didn't help ourselves," Majors field boss Roop Chanderdat said after they blew an 8-0 lead to lose 11-10 to the Hamilton Thunderbirds, who linger in second-last place, now with an 11-19 record.

The Thunderbirds took the season series 3-2.

London, now with a 19-10 record, still trails Barrie and Toronto in the standings.

"It's a tough time to go into a little tailspin," Chanderdat said.

The Majors lost 14-9 to the Kitchener (13-16) Thursday, while the second-place Maple Leafs beat league-leading Barrie 12-4.

"We got the hits tonight," Chanderdat said. "The pitching didn't get it done."

Starter Hiarali Garcia and London's bats had the home team rolling through the first four innings and the 8-0 lead when the wheels fell off for Garcia in the top of the fifth.

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Hamilton began singling him to death and then he was tagged for a two-run homer by third baseman Andy Steeds and a solo shot by first baseman Adam Strongman.

Reliever Mike Mitro gave up another Hamilton run in the sixth before Josh Palmer relieved him.

The Majors responded in their sixth with two runs to take a 10-7 lead into the seventh. The Thunderbirds then erupted with four runs, good enough for the win.

Andrew Schwalm got the win for Hamilton in relief of starter Chris Hayes, who was lifted when the Majors scored their two in the sixth.

Majors left-fielder Rudy Vallejos scored four runs on two hits and twice being hit by pitches. Right-fielder Kevin Virtue had three hits and two RBIs and scored a run while centre-fielder Brad McElroy had one hit and two RBIs.

First baseman Simon Galarraga had two hits, one of them a first-inning three-run homer that gave the Majors a 5-0 jump start.

The Majors now play the last-place Stratford Nationals tomorrow at 2 p.m. in Stratford and then go to Barrie for a Monday doubleheader.

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