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# The London Free Press

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## SPORTS OTHER SPORTS

### Majors face must-win Game 6 tonight

Mon, August 10, 2009

**BASEBALL: London is 3-2 down in the series after yesterday's loss**

By **RYAN PYETTE**

The London Majors can force another trip to Toronto tomorrow with a Game 6 win tonight at Labatt Park.

Oh, the joy.

The Majors are down 3-2 in their best-of-seven Intercounty Baseball League quarterfinal series with the Maple Leafs after spending most of the rainy weekend trying to fit in Game 5 at Toronto's Christie Pits.

London finally lost 3-1 late yesterday afternoon in the lowest-scoring game of the series. That was on the heels of travelling to Hogtown on Saturday anticipating a 2 p.m. start, only to have the bus forced to turn around after the game was postponed and an already busy schedule pushed back a day.

"We were 15 minutes away from the park and it was called," Majors manager Roop Chanderdat. "I don't know (if they could've waited out the storm). That's their call (the Maple Leafs). It's not up to us."

This has been an inconvenient series. Both teams have battled traffic and weather woes almost the whole way.

Game 2 in London was delayed because Maple Leafs starters had yet to arrive because of rain and gridlock. It's been a common theme.

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"(Saturday), it took eight hours from home to go there on the bus and then back again," Chanderdat said. "Then yesterday, you're back on the bus again at eight, nine in the morning. It takes something out of you. The traffic always seems to be bad (on Hwy. 401).

"We're sitting here in it right now."

Toronto lefty Darryl Craig threw a complete-game seven hitter to push the Majors to the brink of elimination.

London's Will Richards broke the shutout with a leadoff homer in the ninth.

"We had our opportunities," Chanderdat said. "We just couldn't put back-to-back hits together, but we're still a confident bunch."

Pierre Miville Deschenes threw 7 1/3 strong innings with eight strikeouts. He surrendered a Jeremy Walker RBI single in the first and didn't allow another run across until the eighth.

Toronto's Brian Ivan added one in that inning with an RBI double to make it 2-0.

With runners in scoring position, former London ace starter Josh Palmer came in to record the final two outs, allowing just a sacrifice fly to Leafs catcher Damon Topolie.

Toronto only managed seven hits, too.

The Leafs will likely look to close it out on the road with starter Marek Deska, who beat London 6-2 in Game 2. The Majors are expected to counter with big Mike DeLong, as dangerous with the bat as he is on the mound.

The LaSalle youngster gives the Leafs a different look.

"We just want the guys to take a good approach," Chanderdat said. "It's always the same with Toronto. We've proven when we can get into their bullpen, we've had success at the plate. It's no different now (for Game 6)."

The rainout on Saturday gave London ace Craig Bate another day to recover from his seven inning gem on Friday night in Game 4. The 22-year-old from St. Thomas has both of the Majors' wins in this series and is still a question mark for Game 7 if London forces it tonight.

By tomorrow, he'll have had three days rest.

"We'll talk to him and he'll throw but we don't know what we'll do yet," Chanderdat said. "Right now, Mike Mitro (Game 2 loser) is the scheduled Game 7 starter.

"We have to get there first and then we'll decide."

The series victor will take on the pennant-winning Barrie Baycats, who are lead by former big league pitcher Paul Spoljaric.

Brantford and Guelph meet in the other semifinal, which is slated to start tomorrow night.

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London vs. Toronto

(Maple Leafs lead best-of-seven quarterfinal 3-2)

Yesterday: Toronto 3, London 1

Game 6: Tonight, 7:30 p.m. at Labatt Park

Game 7 (if necessary): Tomorrow, 7:30 p.m. at Christie Pits

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Cherepanov probe reopens


Prosecutors will reopen the investigation into the death of New York Rangers draft pick Alexei Cherepanov, who collapsed during a Continental Hockey League game last year in Russia.

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