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For Majors' machine, no sleep till London

Mon, July 6, 2009

BASEBALL

By **RYAN PYETTE**

There's no other explanation for it -- Alan Cattrysse must be a baseball machine.

Consider this long weekend.

The London Majors outfielder arrived back at his University of Western Ontario dorm around 4 a.m. Saturday after playing all 20 innings of a marathon victory in Brantford.

"But who could sleep after that?" the 23-year-old from Chatham said with a grin. "You're too pumped up. We all stayed up to talk about it for an hour and a half. I knew it would end up being a rough morning but to be part of something like that, you never know if it'll happen again.

"The game was so long (it ended at 2:15 a.m. and took six hours and 15 minutes to complete) and so many things happened.

"You couldn't go to bed right away."

Still, Cattrysse had to be up and back in Brantford by noon for the Intercounty Baseball League all-star game Saturday. The former Michigan State Spartan stole the show, finishing two-for-two with two runs scored and three RBI.

Cattrysse was named MVP of an all-star gala that finished in a 7-7 tie after seven innings.

Who needs shut-eye? Just add some motor oil to Cattrysse, send him out there and he'll perform.

"I told the guys whoever did well early would play the whole game and it ended up being Alan," said London manager Roop Chanderdat, who ran the league all-star team against the defending champion Red Sox in the IBL's midseason showcase.

"In his first at bat, he hit the top of the fence with a ball that really should've been out" of the park.

This time, Cattrysse returned to a hero's welcome in London.

"The guys on the team are so supportive and they had been watching the game on TV," he said. "When I got back to my room, they were all chanting, 'MVP, MVP.' I had a great time playing in the all-star game.

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"Jordan (Dreiling) and I went down together (Majors hurler Pierre Miville-Deschenes started for the all-stars and pitcher/hitter Mike DeLong also participated) and we really wanted to represent London well."

He did. And after a wild 24 hours, shouldn't he have spent Sunday recharging his batteries?

Nope. He had a doubleheader at Labatt Park against the Oshawa Dodgers played before 550 on oldtimers' day yesterday.

Cattrysse, somehow appearing daisy fresh, reached in his first two at bats and stole second each time.

"When you love something, you don't feel like resting," he said. "You want to keep playing. I know we have a couple days off coming up. I've had a great time so far this summer. After everything with school, it's refreshing to come out here, play and have fun. And I get to play with my brother (Ryan, also a Majors outfielder). How good is that?"

"We've played together last summer, but never at this level."

London was whacked 14-4 by Oshawa in the opener to halt a three-game win streak. The Dodgers pounded starter Adam Echlin for six runs in the second inning, added a Kofi Osei-Aning three-run shot off Josh Palmer in the fifth and piled on five more in the sixth off Ted Kalnins.

"We've been playing pretty well lately except for this game," Cattrysse said. "It's been starting to come together."

But the Majors returned the favour with a 15-3 win in Game 2. Craig Bate went the distance and scattered nine hits for the victory. James Lavinskas had four hits and four RBI. Mason Reilly belted a solo homer.

If the Majors finish strong and make some noise in the playoffs, they could look back to that 20-inning win over Brantford as the catalyst. It's their only victory this season against the team that beat them in Game 7 of the 2008 IBL championship series.

"We played them pretty tough but hadn't beaten them," Chanderdat said. "It was a surreal game. You could tell as it went on from the 16th to the 18th, everyone was trying to hit a home run to end it. We gathered the guys in the 19th and said let's get back to manufacturing a run and that's what we did."

The Majors scored twice in the 20th and Brantford one. It's believed to be the longest game in the modern-day IBL record book.

"You can't say enough about a guy like Matt Brennan, who pitched eight innings for us," Chanderdat said. "Everyone asks did he go one-to-eight? No, he went from the 12th to the 20th. That's unbelievable."

In extras, Cattrysse threw out a base runner from right field at first base to complete a double play.

It was that kind of summer weekend for Cattrysse.

And if they were all this busy, the baseball machine could handle it.

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