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SPORTS **OTHER SPORTS**

Red Sox battle back to tie final

Fri, August 22, 2008

By [MORRIS DALLA COSTA](#)

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BRANTFORD -- Nothing is going to be easy in this Intercounty Baseball League final.

The London Majors and Brantford Red Sox went into extra innings for the second game in succession last night.

This time it was the Red Sox who came away with the win.

The Red Sox got an RBI single in the bottom of the 11th from Tyler Brunell, scoring Wayne Forman in a slide for the 5-4 win .

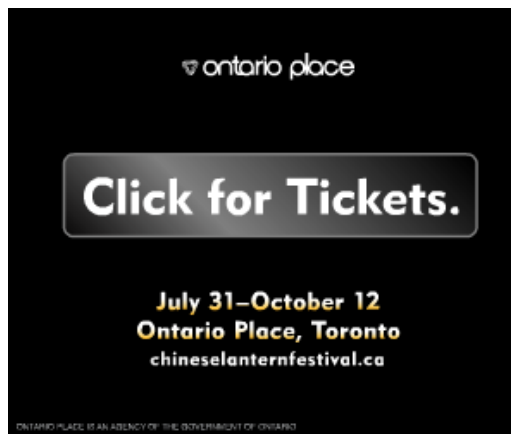
The best-of-seven final is tied 1-1. Game 3 is tonight at 7.30 p.m. at Labatt Park.

Gabe Ribas went the full 11 innings for the win for the Red Sox. He put in a gutsy performance.

Mehdi Djebbar, in relief of Majors starter Adam Echlin, went 3 2/3 innings and took the loss.

It was another entertaining contest with plenty of heat and controversy. By the end of night, the Majors had had coaches Casey Pulham and James Sinfield both tossed from the game, forcing manager Roop Chanderdar to coach at third in the 11th inning.

Al Stephens of the Red Sox was tossed in the bottom of the 11th.



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It was a heated scene at the end of the game as both teams were displeased with what they considered inconsistent umpiring.

Chanderdat bit back some harsh words.

"All I can say is that I'm proud of our guys," he said. "We played hard and hung in against a good team."

The Majors played without shortstop David Narodowski and third baseman Kyle Piwowarczyk. Piwowarczyk has gone to Germany to play pro hockey and won't be back. There was some hope that Narodowski, who was named a first-team IBL all-star yesterday, would be able to register at University of Kansas and then make it back for some of the games.

However, Chanderdat got the word before yesterday's game that Narodowski wouldn't be back this year.

But the absence of Piwowarczyk and Narodowski has given the Majors' Vince Burke a chance to play regularly and he's made the most of it.

Burke has been one of the best London hitters since getting regular at-bats. He got it going again in the top of the second last night.

With two out, Kevin Virtue ripped a double to left field. Burke followed by delivering a double to the same spot, scoring Virtue.

The Majors took a two-run lead in the top of the fourth. Jess Bechard, moving over to play third, hammered the first pitch of the inning out of the park.

It was a bomb off Ribas, who came into the game with a 4-0 playoff record and an ERA of 2.57.

Echlin started for the Majors and, as usual, worked quickly. Brantford didn't take a lot of pitches and Echlin was breezing until the fourth inning.

Hyung Cho reached on a infield single and stole second. With two out, designated hitter Justin Wendt drove a ball up the middle to score Cho.

Echlin took a miniscule 0.60 earned-run average into the game along with a 2-1 record. He only threw 58 pitches over the first five innings.

Starting pitching has been the order of the day in this series so far. In the opener, the Majors' Josh Palmer and Brantford's Brad Hogeterp engaged in a pitchers' duel. Palmer made one bad pitch and it cost him a tying three-run homer in the top of the ninth.

But the Majors got into what's been a shaky Brantford bullpen and they won it on three walks and a single in the 10th.

It's been the pitching that's held the Majors in the playoffs. They don't hit the ball hard, but they put it in play and force the opposition to make good defensive plays.



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Once they get ahead, they let the pitching carry them.

The Majors added two more big runs in the seventh with Virtue and Burke in the middle of it again.

Virtue led the inning off with a single and stole second. Burke wanted to sacrifice him to second but the Red Sox defence messed up the play, allowing Virtue to get to third and Burke to first.

Christian Ruiz then hit a bouncer to second base that should have been an out, but Tyler Burnell pulled shortstop Lee Delfino off the bag with his throw.

Fundamental mistakes have been a problem for the Red Sox so far this series.

A Jeff Helps single scored Burke to make it 4-1.

The inning must have awoken the Red Sox as they got to Echlin in their half of the inning. They scored three runs to tie the game, the tying run coming when Chanderdat brought in Djebbar.

Djebbar's first pitch was a passed ball, scoring Al Stephens from third.

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