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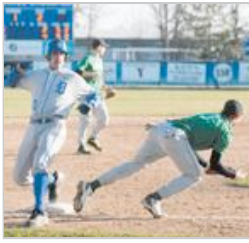
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## Defiance's WBL winning streak now at 43 after slipping by Celina

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Tim McDonough  
April 13, 2011





By TIM McDONOUGH

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It's never easy winning games in the Western Buckeye League, yet Defiance continues to find a way to do just that.

Ryan Cordray's solo homer in the bottom of the fifth inning broke a 2-2 tie against Celina, Defiance tacked on an insurance run in the bottom of the sixth, and the Bulldogs held on to just get past Celina 4-3 on Tuesday at Defiance's Booster Field to run their WBL win streak to 43 games.

When asked how his team continues to rack up wins in the WBL, Defiance mentor Tom Held gave credit to his kids, and to other factors.

"It's a lot of luck ... a lot of luck," stated Held. "Looking back, there's been at least 15 games we could have lost, we've just gotten some breaks. Not taking away anything from our kids who have been a part of this, they've played very good baseball, but there's too many good teams to win that many in a row."

On the other side of the field, Celina mentor Drew Braun saw his team play Defiance down to the wire, but come up short. Braun admitted that he is impressed with what Defiance has been able to do in the WBL.

"I'd like to win one WBL game," said Braun, who saw his team fall to 0-3 in the league. "Right now we're struggling league-wise, and it's not going to get easier. I'd love to put together a couple of WBL wins in a row, let alone, what 43? That's just unbelievable that anyone could win that many league games in a row. You've got to take your hat off to them because they've got a great program here."

Celina (6-5) gave Defiance (7-1, 2-0 WBL) all it could handle for seven innings, but a pair of late runs proved to be the difference for the home team.

With the game tied 2-2 heading into the bottom of the fifth, Cordray led-off the inning by blasting a Mike Siefker curveball around 340 feet over the wall in left-center field to untie the game and put Defiance in front, 3-2. After Defiance struggled somewhat against Celina's crafty left-hander, Cordray went up to the plate looking for the curve.

"Before we went up to bat that inning, coach Held told me if Siefker threw the curve I could sit on it and that's what I did," said Cordray, who moved up to first in the batting order for the first time this season. "He threw a fastball on the outside corner for a strike, but then he threw the curveball down the middle and I jumped on it."

Said Held: "I thought in the first inning we could have broken the game

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open with a big hit. We got two runs, but Siefker kept us off-balance really to the later innings. I told the kids before the bottom of the fifth to sit on the curveball and just start whaling at it. Ryan's blast was huge, he sat on the curveball there and he gave us the lead."

In the bottom of the sixth, freshman Austin Hancock doubled off Siefker to start the frame, before moving to third on a single to center by Kurt Belau. A Gabe Vittorio groundout scored Hancock, with what proved to be a very big insurance run.

"I thought Mike pitched really well today. He's not going to blow it by anybody, but he does throw three pitches consistently for strikes," said Braun. "Mike got a couple of pitches up there late, and Defiance took advantage of that. Cordray is a good hitter, and he did what good hitters do."

Defiance starter Anthony Kidston struck out 12 and walked only one in the earning the victory, but Celina made it tough on him. In fact, Celina scratched its way to a run in the top of the seventh by taking advantage of Defiance's only error and a groundout that scored Siefker. Kidston was able to shut the door, however, as Defiance held on, 4-3.

"Give a lot of credit to Celina, there weren't a lot of easy outs in their lineup at all," Kidston said. "It was a good win, it was a hard win. For us, it's just all about coming out and competing and playing our best. That's all we can do."

Cordray finished with a single and home run to lead Defiance, Belau had a pair of singles and Hancock and Robert Zeigler both doubled. Kahl Knapke, who scored two of Celina's runs, and Cody Vogel each singled twice in the loss.

Defiance returns to action on Friday when it hosts Ottawa-Glandorf in WBL play.

Linescore

Celina 101 000 1 - 3 6 2

Defiance 200 011 x - 4 9 1

Records: Defiance 7-1 (2-0 WBL), Celina 6-5 (0-3 WBL).

Winning pitcher: Anthony Kidston (7 innings, 3 runs, 6 hits, 12 strikeouts, 1 walk).

Losing pitcher: Mike Siefker (6 innings, 4 runs, 9 hits, 5 strikeouts, 1 walk).

Leading hitters: (Celina, 6 hits) - Kahl Knapke 2 singles; Cody Vogel 2 singles. (Defiance, 9 hits) - Ryan Cordray single, home run; Austin Hancock double; Kurt Belau 2 singles; Robert Zeigler double.

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