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## Belau shines as Defiance rolls

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April 17, 2011



By TIM McDONOUGH

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Cold, windy, the threat of rain? No problem for Kurt Belau.

The Defiance senior right-hander handled the weather conditions without a hiccup on Friday to lead the Bulldogs to a 10-0, five-inning, victory over Ottawa-Glandorf at Defiance's Booster Field.

Belau allowed just four hits and no runs, while striking out 10 and walking three in the 44th-straight Western Buckeye League victory for Defiance (8-1, 3-0 WBL). In fact, Belau's two-run blast in the bottom of the fifth inning closed out the Titans (4-5, 1-2 WBL) to end the game after five frames.

"O-G had runners in scoring position early in the game and had chances to score, but Kurt found a way to keep them off the scoreboard," stated Defiance mentor Tom Held. "He got some pretty good hitters out there in some of those situations. He got (junior) Casey Schroeder (verbal commitment to Tennessee) out once there in one of those situations, and that was big."

Belau felt his command was the biggest factor in his success on a very windy day at DHS.

"I competed, I just kept battling and the defense did a great job today," said Belau, who is now 4-0 on the year. "My location was very good, that was what got me through this game today."

Ottawa-Glandorf had early chances to get on the scoreboard against Belau, advancing runners to second base in each of the first four innings. But, every time the Titans had a chance to put a run on the board, Belau and the Defiance defense came through.

"The first three or four innings we had guys in scoring position every inning, but nobody could step up and get a big hit," said O-G coach Nick Miller. "Belau bore down every time we had a chance to score and that's a credit to him."

While the Titans wasted scoring chances, the Bulldogs did nothing of the sort.

In all five innings Defiance got its lead-off runner on, and in all five innings Defiance scored at least one run.

The Bulldogs scored a run in the first on a sacrifice fly by Anthony Kidston, two runs in the second on a passed ball and a sacrifice fly by Jacob Moore, and another run in the third on a hit-and-run single by Joe Gentile. After three innings Defiance was in front 4-0 with the threat of rain still a real possibility.

"We talked before the contest about working on our small-ball game," Held said. "We know when it comes tournament time every game in our sectional and district is going to be a one-run game because of the competition this year. We want to find out who can get it done and who can't ... the guys who can get it done will be in the lineup."

"Also, whenever you get your lead-off guy on, you have a chance to score," continued Held. "The bottom of our lineup did a good job today. A guy like (freshman) Austin Hancock got a couple of hits, scored twice and stole two bases. That's what we need from the bottom of the lineup and it was good to see that today."

In the bottom of the fourth, Defiance tacked on four more runs to move in front 8-0. A Gabe Vittorio two-run blast to right made it a 6-0 game, a ground out by Ryan Cordray scored another run, and a squeeze bunt by



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Jake Thomas added another.

"Defiance did a nice job of putting the ball in play and making things happen," said Miller. "They got big hits today and we didn't. That's what we talked about after the game and that's the difference in the game."

With the sky getting darker and starting to spit rain in the bottom of the fifth, Defiance didn't waste any time closing out the victory. A lead-off double by Gentile got the Bulldogs going with Belau coming to the dish. The senior capped off a great day with a two-run blast to left-center to finish off the 10-0 run ruling.

"It was a nice low and inside pitch and I just went with it," Belau said. "I knew I got it the second it hit the bat."

Gentile finished with a single and double for Defiance, Hancock had a pair of singles, Belau and Vittorio homered and Thomas added a double. Cory Imm singled and doubled to lead O-G, with Schroeder adding a pair of singles.

Defiance is back in action Saturday (weather permitting) in twinbill action against Fremont Ross and Tiffin Columbian at Fremont beginning at 11 a.m.

Linescore

Ottawa-Glandorf 000 00 - 0 4 2

Defiance 121 42 - 10 9 0

Records: Defiance 8-1 (3-0 WBL), Ottawa-Glandorf 4-5 (1-2 WBL).

Winning pitcher: Kurt Belau (5 innings, 0 runs, 4 hits 10 strikeouts, 3 walks).

Losing pitcher: Drew Ellerbrock (4 innings, 8 runs, 7 hits, 5 strikeouts, 1 walk). Other: Andy Ellerbrock.

Leading hitters: (Ottawa-Glandorf, 4 hits) - Cory Imm single, double; Casey Schroeder 2 singles. (Defiance, 9 hits) - Jake Thomas double; Joe Gentile single, double; Kurt Belau home run; Austin Hancock 2 singles; Gabe Vittorio home run.

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