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Defiance baseballers top Fairview, 10-3

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Tim McDonough
May 6, 2011

By TIM McDONOUGH
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Defiance escaped a bases-loaded jam in the top of the fifth inning, while also taking advantage of walks and aggressive base running, to defeat Fairview 10-3 in a battle of state-ranked teams on Friday night at Defiance's Booster Field.

Jake Sanchez of Defiance (16-3, No. 7 in the state in Division II), came on in relief of Ryan Cordray in the fifth inning with the bases juiced, one out and with the home team in front, 8-3. Sanchez was able to hold Fairview (13-4, No. 9 in the state in Division IV) without a run to escape the jam and keep the Bulldogs comfortably in front.

"Without a doubt that was a big situation for Jake," stated Defiance

mentor Tom Held. "Less than a week ago we blew a 7-0 lead against Tinora, and tonight we were only up five against a good Fairview team. They had a guy at the plate who could have made it a one-run game with one swing of the bat, so give Jake credit. This was probably his biggest save of the year."

Fairview coach Andy Singer knew his team had missed out on a big opportunity to get back in the game against Defiance in that inning. "We had the guy we wanted with Luke (Kuhn) up there in the fifth, Sanchez threw a good pitch and just sawed him off," Singer said. "That's the way baseball goes. Sanchez was able to pitch out of it so give him credit. We have to take advantage there, and in most cases I think we will, so hopefully we can learn from that."

In the fifth with the home team in front 8-3, Kalieb Crites singled off Cordray to start the inning, before Willy Flanary coaxed a full-count walk. A sacrifice bunt attempt by Tony Meyer bounced straight to Cordray who turned and fired to third to get Crites, but a walk to Blaine Murray loaded the bases and ended Cordray's day on the hill.

On came Sanchez, who quickly fell behind 3-0 to Luke Kuhn. After getting a called strike, Sanchez went inside on Kuhn who popped up the pitch to first baseman Kurt Belau for the second out of the frame. Sanchez then struck out Brandon Mosier to end the threat and leave the bases loaded.

"Coach Held has faith in me, I went out there trying to throw strikes and just do my best," said Sanchez. "After Kuhn popped it up to Kurt, there was definitely a sigh of relief. That helped me settle down even more so I could go after the next guy."

Said Held: "Jake has done a good job for us all year and we have confidence in him. I don't think Jake had his good stuff today, but he battled out there and got it done."

Defiance broke in front 4-0 in first inning, taking advantage of walks by Fairview starter Brock Mosier and aggressive base running. Cordray scored the first run of the inning on a Fairview miscue, before Anthony Kidston drove home Shea Murray with a RBI single.

Kidston came home to score on a sacrifice fly off the bat of Belau, and a RBI ground-out by Austin Hancock scored Joe Gentile. In all, Defiance stole four bases in the inning in taking the early lead.

"The biggest thing that was to our disadvantage was that Brock got behind and had a handful of walks that proved to be costly," Singer said. "We battled right to the end, but giving up walks against a good team like Defiance is not how you win."

Fairview cut the lead in half in the second when Brock Mosier ripped a two-run homer to left that also scored Kuhn, but the Bulldogs added two more in the third to go in front, 6-2.

Fairview pushed a run across in the fourth on a RBI double by Quenton Yoder, but Defiance scored two runs in the bottom of the fourth without the benefit of a hit, as four walks and a RBI ground out did the damage. That set the stage for the fifth inning, where Sanchez and Defiance were able to escape the jam, before taking on a pair of runs in the sixth to make the final 10-3. The win allowed Defiance to bounce back from a 3-2 loss Thursday to Anthony Wayne, while the defeat was the second straight for the Apaches, who fell to Tinora on Thursday.

"It was a pretty important win for us because we didn't want to have another loss going into the game against Wapakoneta (for the outright league title)," said Defiance third baseman Joe Gentile, who had three hits and scored three runs in the win. "Hopefully we can stay in the swing of things down the stretch."

Concluded Held: "This was a big game ... it definitely was from the standpoint that we didn't want to go down to Wapakoneta with two losses in a row and having to think about that. We beat a good Fairview team today and while we didn't play great, we got the job done. Winning

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this game today was really important for us.”

Brock Mosier led Fairview with the two-run shot, while Yoder added the double. Gentile had three singles and three runs scored to lead the Bulldogs, Anthony Kidston singled, doubled and scored three runs and Belau drove in three in the win.

Defiance is back in action Saturday at noon with a chance to clinch the outright WBL title on the road at Wapakoneta.

Linescore

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Records: Defiance 16-3, Fairview 13-4.

Winning pitcher: Ryan Cordray (4 1/3 innings, 3 runs, 6 hits, 5 strikeouts, 3 walks). Other: Jake Sanchez.

Losing pitcher: Brock Mosier (3 1/3 innings, 8 runs, 5 hits, 6 strikeouts, 8 walks). Other: Willy Flanary.

Leading hitters: (Fairview, 6 hits) - Quenton Yoder double; Brock Mosier home run. (Defiance, 7 hits) - Anthony Kidston single, double, 3 runs; Joe Gentile 3 singles, 3 runs; Kurt Belau single, 3 RBI; Ryan Cordray 3 steals.

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