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## Defiance downs Wauseon 2-1 in pitcher's duel

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April 7, 2011

By TIM McDONOUGH

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WAUSEON — There's a reason why the "experts" say that baseball is a game of inches. Wauseon found that out on Thursday afternoon at home against Defiance.

Wauseon ace Austin Bueter pitched well enough to defeat the Bulldogs (5-0), but a missed catch of a foul ball here, a passed ball there and a solid pitching performance by Ryan Cordray of Defiance found the Indians (6-2) on the losing end of a 2-1 setback.

"I thought both pitchers did a great job today, you know Defiance is always going to bring over a good stock of pitchers, but I thought our guy (Bueter) pitched a good one today too," said Wauseon mentor Trent Thomas. "Austin did a great job, we just came out on the short end of the stick. It's very disappointing we lost."

Wauseon took the early lead against Cordray and the Bulldogs in the bottom of the second inning when Bueter drove home Josh Cales with two outs to move in front 1-0.

Bueter, who hit 89 on the radar gun in the second inning on a very cold day, looked like he might make that lead stand up. The righty struck out 10 Bulldogs, but little mistakes came back to hurt the Indians late in the contest. Cordray didn't make it easy on Wauseon either, as he kept the Indians in check through his six innings on the bump.

"All I wanted to do today was try and get ahead of the hitters," Cordray said. "It was really difficult throwing out there today because it was so cold, by the end of the game my fingers were numb. We just hung in there as a team and that was the difference."

In the top of the fifth inning, Defiance struck back with two outs already in the books.

No. 9 hitter Jake Thomas lined a single just past shortstop Ty Suntken, before quickly stealing second without a throw. Bueter then got Anthony Kidston to hit a high foul ball behind the plate, but catcher Jake Trejo just missed making the catch to end the threat. That came back to bite the Indians when Kidston singled to left to score Thomas and tie the contest at 1-1.

"That was just Anthony taking advantage of a second chance," said Held. "Jake Thomas got on with two outs and got himself into scoring position for AK (Kidston), and Anthony came through with the big hit."

The game remained tied until the top of the seventh inning when Defiance found a way to scratch and claw it's way into the lead.

Kurt Belau fought a Bueter offering into right field for a bloop single to start the frame, before being lifted for pinch-runner Zach Jimenez. The Defiance senior had designs on second base with a steal attempt, but it appeared that he was dead-to-rights on the throw from Trejo. Jimenez reached safely, however, when the ball just hit off the glove of Suntken, keeping the DHS hopes alive.

Mike Ramirez followed for Defiance, and it looked as though his bunt attempt up third was good for a hit. In fact, in the confusion of who should be covering where for Wauseon, Ramirez raced all the way to second with nobody covering the bag. It turned out, that the ball had hit Ramirez in the leg before he got out of the batter's box, bringing him back to the plate and sending Jimenez to second.

Just one pitch later, a Bueter offering in the dirt sent Jimenez off the races again. In another close play, Jimenez reached just under the tag of Chase Rodriguez to put the go-ahead run just 90 feet away. Ramirez then

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fought his way to a walk, and with pinch-hitter Cody Barratt at the dish, Ramirez took second without a throw.

With Barratt still up to bat, a Bueter pitch hit off the glove of Trejo and went all the way to the backstop. Jimenez then raced home to score and give Defiance a 2-1 lead. Bueter was able to get out of the jam with a double play on a squeeze bunt two batters later, but the damage had been done.

“The beautiful thing about this game is that it is a game of inches,” Held said. “Kurt Belau went up there and got his bat on the ball, Michael Ramirez had an at-bat as good as any I’ve seen and Zach Jimenez came in and found a way to get to that run home. When the ball bounced our way by inches today, we found a way to take advantage.”

Jimenez admitted the only thing he was thinking about was trying to score.

“All I wanted to do was try and score anyway I could,” said Jimenez. “It was scary on the play at second, and it was close on the play at third. When I got to third and I saw the ball get away from the catcher, all I thought about was touching that plate.”

In the seventh, Held turned to Kidston to close out the Indians. The junior righty did just that, striking out the side to close out the narrow victory in touching 90 on the radar gun.

Following the contest, Thomas gave credit to Defiance for finding a way to win.

“A close play, a missed pop-up ... when things like that happen Defiance just always seems to find a way to beat you,” concluded the Wauseon mentor. “If you make mistakes they will make you pay, that’s just what they did today.”

Concluded Held: “Every base today was important, especially when you face a pitcher like Austin Bueter. You just have to take every base you can get. We didn’t get a lot of hits, but our guys hung in there and some big hits when we needed them. All we did was find a way to get it done.”

Defiance is back in action Friday when it hits the road to take on Lima Bath in WBL play.

Linescore

Defiance 000 010 1 - 2 5 0

Wauseon 010 000 0 - 1 3 0

Records: Defiance 5-0, Wauseon 6-2.

Winning pitcher: Ryan Cordray (6 innings, 1 run, 3 hits, 3 strikeouts, 1 walk). Other: Anthony Kidston.

Losing pitcher: Austin Bueter (7 innings, 2 runs, 5 hits, 10 strikeouts, 3 walks).

Leading hitters: (Defiance, 5 hits) - Anthony Kidston 2 singles.  
(Wauseon, 3 hits) - Josh Cales 2 singles.

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