

Brockton Offense Propels Over Lake Erie to Earn Series Victory

BROCKTON, MA. – Brockton scored five runs apiece in the fifth, seventh, and eighth innings to give Brockton a 16-5 victory over Lake Erie on Sunday afternoon at Campanelli Stadium.

“Unbelievable job by the guys facing one of the best pitchers in the league, and the guy’s done awesome against everybody, all year,” said Jerod Edmondson. “... If we stick to our plan and what we do best, we can compete with anybody and battle through some adversity, got some huge hits in big spots and just a great day for the boys.”

Brockton Rox starting pitcher Joe Kemplage pitched four innings, allowing seven hits, five earned runs, giving up three walks, and one strikeout. It wasn’t Kemplage’s best outing of the season, but the relievers picked up the slack. Mathew Maloney came in relief and pitched a scoreless fifth inning after he walked the leadoff batter, picking up his first win of the season.

Lake Erie starting pitcher Anthony Escobar suffered his first loss of the season as he dropped to 5-1. He pitched five innings, allowing six runs, five earned, five hits, and he gave up two walks and seven strikeouts. Escobar entered this game with a 0.82 ERA and finished his outing with a 1.66 ERA. He gave up more earned runs today than he had in all seven appearances this season combined.

Lake Erie started the game strong with 3 runs in the first. Alfredo Gonzalez hit an RBI single, then sacrifice plays from Scout Knotts and Burle Dixon ended the top of the first with a 3-0 advantage.

Kemplage settled in nicely after the first, as he didn’t give up a run in the next three innings. However, in the fourth inning, the Crushers had runners on the corners with nobody out for Derek Vegas when he delivered a base hit past the diving J.R. DiSarcina at shortstop to give Lake Erie a 4-0 lead. Dario Gomez then delivered a base hit to center field to extend their lead before striking out Jerrod Watkins as Lake Erie left two men on base.

Escobar retired 9 of the 10 batters he faced. Before he issued a lead-off walk to Kegan Calero in the fourth inning. A few batters later, Brockton had runners on the corners. Evan Giordano then reached base on a fielder’s choice, allowing Brockton to get on the board as they now trailed 5-1.

Brockton staged a rally in the fifth inning, scoring five runs to take the lead. The action began when Eldred doubled to left field after the left fielder, Burle Dixon, lost the ball in the sun. Trey Ciulla-Hall capitalized on the opportunity, hitting a two-run home run to left field, which cut the deficit to two. The homer traveled 347 feet. Following this, Austin White walked and then stole both second and third base, while Hemmanuel Rosario was hit by a pitch. Derek Bender then stepped up and hit a three-run home run to left field, giving the Rox a 6-5 lead. The home run traveled 381 feet and came off the bat at 102 MPH. It was his fifth home run of the season.

“That was a pretty electric feeling, man. We were facing a really good arm today, and he has really limited damage for the most part this year. So we knew we had a tough task ahead of us,” said Bender. “I knew I was probably going to get some sort of off-speed pitch, having handled his heater, having seen a couple at bat before me, and just got the right pitch and I hit it.”

The Rox had the bases loaded with one out when Giordano was hit by a pitch, extending Brockton’s lead to two runs. Tommy Ketzler, who entered the at-bat with three strikeouts, then hit a grand slam to left field, traveling 368 feet and coming off 97 MPH of the bat. It was his seventh home run of the season to extend Brockton’s lead to 11-5.

“It was a huge relief, huge weight off the shoulders,” said Kretzler. “It’s always tough going into that fourth AB when the day hasn’t been so great, but you know that’s baseball for you. It’s always up and down, never know what’s gonna happen next.”

Brockton scored five more runs on six walks in the eighth inning. For the Rox, this was the third time during the game that they had a five-run inning.

Brockton will stay at Campanelli Stadium for its nine-game homestand. They will take on the NY Boulders this Tuesday night. First pitch is scheduled for 7:00 p.m.