

River Dragons Go 3-4 For The Week, Drops Two Of Three At Cape, Splits With Quincy, Wins Over Danville, Loses At Burlington

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ALTON - The Alton River Dragons went 3-4 this past week in the Prospect League, splitting a pair with the Quincy Gems at home, defeating the Danville Dans in between the games against Quincy, losing on the road at the Burlington, Ia., Bees in their first-

ever extra innings game and losing two of three at the Cape Catfish in Cape Girardeau, Mo., including splitting a Saturday doubleheader.

On June 8, Alton lost a 6-1 lead and fell to the Bees 7-6 in 12 innings. The River Dragons scored three in the first and two more in the second to take an early 5-0 lead before the Bees scored one in the bottom of the second. Alton the scored once in the fifth to take a 6-1 lead, only to see Burlington score four in the eighth, once in the ninth to tie the game and then score the winning run in the 12th to gain the win.

Mike Hampton of Alton and Nick Niebauer both had two hits and an RBI for the River Dragons, while Edwardsville's Blake Burris had two hits, Harry Padden hit a solo home run for his only hit and RBI and Gabe Briones, Zach Carden and Robby Taul of Alton each had a hit and RBI.

Jake Rivers started on the mound for Alton and tossed two innings, allowing one run on one hit while walking two, Justin Needles pitched five innings, allowing one hit while walking one and striking out two, Brandon Hampton of Civic Memorial threw two-thirds of an inning, giving up four runs on four hits, Tyler Bell throw for one-third of an inning, allowing one run without a hit, walking three and fanning one, Bryce Einstein threw three innings, allowing two hits, walking two and striking out two, and Civic Memorial's Geoff Withers pitched two-thirds of an inning, allowing one run on one hit while walking one.

On June 9, the River Dragons returned home to Lloyd Hopkins Field at Gordon Moore Park, and lost to the Gems 16-4 in eight innings, a game terminated by the 10-run rule. Quincy scored three in the first, once in the second and twice in the third, while Alton scored single runs in the first three innings to give the Gems a 6-3 lead. Quincy then scored five times in the fourth, once in the sixth and four in the eighth, while the River Dragons could only score one in the bottom of the eighth to make the 16-4 final.

Josh Johnson had two hits and an RBI for Alton, while Burris had two hits, Padden and David Harris each had a hit and RBI, Carden, Mike Hampton and Brady Mutz each had a hit and Andrew Nigut drove in a run.

Zach Curry was the starting pitcher and threw three innings, allowing six runs on seven hits, walking two and striking out three, Withers threw one-third of an inning, conceding five runs on three hits while walking one, Bryce Hampton pitched two-and-two-thirds innings, allowing a run on three hits, walking two and striking out two and Carden threw for two innings, allowing four runs on four hits, walking one and fanning three.

The Thursday, June 10 game saw Alton bounce back to gain an 8-4 win over the Dans at home. After the River Dragons scored once in the bottom of the second, Danville tied it

up with a run in the top of the third, but Alton scored three in the bottom of the inning to take a 4-1 lead, then came up with two runs each in the sixth and seventh before the Dans scored three times in the top of the eighth, but could come no closer as the River Dragons won.

Burris led the way for Alton with three hits, while Taul had two hits and an RBI, Mutz had two hits, Niebauer had a hit, which was a grand slam home run, and four RBIs, Boston Merila hit a solo homer, Padden also had a hit and RBI and both Johnson and Briones each had a hit.

Matthew Reed started on the mound for the River Dragons, and pitched five-and-two-thirds innings, allowing a run on two hits, walking two and striking out one, Drew Patterson threw for an inning-and-two-thirds, giving up one run on one hit while fanning three, Tyler Bell pitched two-thirds of an inning, allowing two runs on a hit, walking one and striking out two and Peyton Havard threw the final inning, walking one and fanning three.

The Friday night game against the Gems saw Alton jump out to an 8-1 lead after three innings as the Dragons went on to an 11-6 win. Quincy scored first with a single run in the top of the second, but Alton scored six runs in the home half, then added two more in the third to take their 8-1 lead. The Gems scored a single run in the top of the seventh, but the River Dragons countered with two in the bottom of the frame, only to see Quincy come up with two more runs of their own in the top of the eighth to make it 10-4. Alton scored once more in the bottom of the eighth, while the Gems scored twice in the top of the ninth to make the final 11-6 for Alton.

Carden led the way for the River Dragons with two hits and three RBIs, with Harris having two hits and an RBI, Briones had a hit and three RBIs, Merila had a hit and drove in a pair of runs, Burris and Rivers each had a hit and Johnson also drove in a run.

Alton's Adam Stilts had an excellent game on the mound, pitching seven innings, giving up two runs on six hits while striking out four, Einstein tossed two-thirds on an inning, conceding two runs on three hits, walking one and striking out one and Bell pitched the final inning-and-a-third, giving up two runs on two hits, walking two and fanning three.

Saturday saw the River Dragons split a doubleheader, winning the first game 8-0, then dropping the nightcap 9-7. In the first game, Alton manager Darrell Handlesman got his 700th career win in the River Dragons' shutout.

Alton scored three times in the third inning, once in the sixth and four more times in the seventh in taking the win.

Merila had two hits and two RBIs for the River Dragons, while Mike Hampton had two hits and also drove in a run, Padden, Briones and Mutz each had a hit and RBI and Burris, Carden, Harris and Rivers all had hits.

Havard pitched six innings for Alton to get the win, scattering six hits while walking two and striking out one, while Patterson threw the final inning, allowing one hit and fanning one.

The second game saw Alton hit Cape for five runs in the top of the first, while the Catfish scored once in the bottom of the frame, with both teams trading runs in the third to make it 6-2. Cape scored three times in the fourth and four times in the sixth to give the Catfish a 9-7 win.

Mutz led the River Dragons with three hits and two RBIs, while Carden had two hits and drove in two runs, Merila and Clayton Dean both had a hit and an RBI, with Troy Johnson, Nigut, Civic Memorial's Bryce Zupan and Rivers all having hits in the game.

Parker Johnson of Breese started on the mound, allowing five runs on four hits, walking three and striking out three, Einstein tossed two innings, walking three and fanning one and Bryce Hampton pitched the final two-thirds of an inning, giving up four runs on two hits, walking two and striking out one.

In the Sunday night game, the Dragons scored twice in the third and once in the fourth to take a 3-0 lead, with the Catfish countering with single runs in the fifth and sixth to cut the Alton advantage to 3-2. Cape then scored four times in the eighth to take a 6-3 win and two of three in the series.

Josh Johnson and Harris both had two hits for the River Dragons, while Carden had a hit and the only RBI on the night, while Nigut, Burris, Merila, Mike Hampton and Carden also had hits.

Rivers was the starting pitcher for Alton and threw for two-and-two-thirds innings, walking four and striking out three, then Needles pitched four-and-two-thirds innings, giving up five runs on five hits, walking three and fanning three, and Patterson threw the final two-thirds on an inning, allowing one run on one hit, walking one and striking out two.

The River Dragons are now 7-8 on the season, and have their regular Monday off, then start the week Tuesday at Danville in a game that starts at 6:30 p.m., then host the Terre Haute, Ind., REX at Lloyd Hopkins Field on Wednesday, starting at 6:35 p.m., host Cape in a doubleheader on Thursday, with games starting at 3:05 p.m. and 6:05 p.m., then the two teams meet again in Cape Girardeau on Friday night at 7:05 p.m., with the

River Dragons then playing at the Springfield Sliders Saturday night at 6:35 p.m., and wind up the week next Sunday with a return game against the Sliders at Lloyd Hopkins Field at 4:35 p.m.