



Alton Post 126 Bounces Back From Six Error Loss To Highland 14-5 To Defeat Washington, Mo. 4-2, Advance To Final Of Firecracker Tournament

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July 6 2021 5:50 AM

FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS - The Alton Post 126 Senior American Legion baseball team committed six errors in a 14-5 loss to Highland on Saturday morning, but in the afternoon, bounced back and got a complete game on the mound from Ted Webb to defeat Washington, Mo. 4-2 and advance to the final of the Firecracker Tournament at Moody Park in Fairview Heights.

The Legionnaires finished the round robin with a 2-1-1 mark and finished second, putting them into the championship game against Highland, who went 3-0 in the round robin, with Ballwin, Mo. and Trenton also competing in the tournament.

"I'm really proud of the kids," said Alton manager Doug Booten. "We had a tough game against Highland, where we committed six errors, but the kids came back and played great against Washington. They showed a lot of resiliency. I'm just super proud of the guys."

Despite the six-error game against Highland, the Legionnaires played much better defense in the win over Washington, and Booten felt that was a big key to the day itself.

"We committed six errors in the first game," Booten said, "but our defense was much better in the second game. We played good, solid baseball, and that was the difference in the games."

In the first game against Highland, Alton took a 1-0 lead in the top of the second, but Highland came back with three in the bottom of the inning to take the lead. Both teams

scored four times in the third to make it 7-5, with Highland scoring four more times in the fourth and three in the sixth to create the 14-5 final.

Caden Laslie had two hits for the Legionnaires in the first game, with Webb having a hit and driving home a pair of runs, both Owen Macias and Preston Schepers had a hit and an RBI each, both Cameron Hailstone and Preston Kaylor had a hit apiece and Brendon Smith also drove home a run.

Andrew Wieneke started on the mound for Alton, and went three-and-a-third innings, allowing 10 runs --- three of them earned --- on eight hits, walking one and striking out three. Hailstone threw the final two-and-two-thirds innings, conceding four runs --- two earned --- on two hits, walking two and fanning three.

The Legionnaires bounced back nicely in the final game against Washington, scoring twice in the third and once in the fourth to take a 3-0 lead, but Washington rallied to score twice in the bottom of the fourth to cut the lead to 3-2. Alton added an insurance run in the visitor's half of the seventh to make the 4-2 final.

C.J. Frensko had two hits for Alton, while Brady Salzman, Schepers and Smith all had a hit and RBI each and Austin Callovini, Laslie and Nick Rayfield all had hits in the game.

Webb pitched very well in getting the complete game win for the Legionnaires, allowing two runs --- both earned --- on five hits while walking two and striking out two to help Alton move on.

The final against Highland will be played Sunday morning at Moody Park, with the first pitch coming at 11 a.m. Booten is confident in his pitching staff to help the Legionnaires win the title.

"I think we have the pitching to do it," Booten said, "so I think we're in good shape. We'll be OK, no matter what."