



# **CornBelters Score Once In Sixth, Twice In Eighth, Nip River Dragons 6-5 In Prospect League Game**

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ALTON - The Alton River Dragons held a 5-3 lead through five innings, but the Normal CornBelters cut the lead to 5-4 with a run in the sixth, then scored twice in the top of the eighth to take a 6-5 win over the River Dragons in a Prospect League baseball game played Tuesday evening at Lloyd Hopkins Field at Gordon Moore Park.

The game was a close, nick-and-tuck affair where Normal was able to pull out in the end with their two-run eighth.

The two teams traded three runs each in the first inning, then Alton scored twice in the fifth to take a 5-3 lead, only to see the CornBelters score once in the top of the sixth to cut the lead, then score twice in the eighth to take the 6-5 win.

Thomas Ayers led the Dragons with two hits and an RBI, while Edwardsville's Blake Burris also had a pair of hits, Brady Mutz and Josh Johnson both had a hit and drove in a run each and Boston Merila, David Harris and Zach Carden all had hits on the evening.

Matthew Reed was Alton's starting pitcher, and he went five-and-a-third innings, allowing four runs on six hits, walking one and striking out two, with Bryce Einstein taking over and going an inning-and-two-thirds, giving up a hit while fanning two, Drew Patterson then pitched the eighth, conceding two runs on one hit, walking one and striking out one, and Tyler Bell threw in the ninth inning, not allowing a run or hit while fanning one.

The River Dragons are now 20-26 and play a pair of games at the Quincy Gems on Wednesday, with the first game staring at 5 p.m. at Quincy University Stadium, and is a completion of a suspended game from June, with the regularly scheduled game set for 6:35 p.m. Alton then host the Springfield Sliders on Thursday in a 6:35 p.m. start, and the O'Fallon, Mo., Hoots Friday night, also starting at 6:35 p.m. The River Dragons return to Quincy on Saturday night in a 6:35 p.m. start at QU Stadium, then play at CarShield Field in O'Fallon against the Hoots Sunday night, starting at 6:35 p.m.