

Russo's Eighth-Inning RBI Double Gives Hoots 10-9 Win Over River Dragons, Alton Still Leads Division

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ALTON - Ambrose Russo's RBI double to right-center field scored Connor Milton with what proved to be the winning run as the O'Fallon, Mo., Hoots defeated the Alton River Dragons 10-9 in a Prospect League baseball game Friday night at Lloyd Hopkins Field at Gordon Moore Park.

The Hoots' win pulled them to within a game-and-a-half of the Prairie Land Division lead over the River Dragons with three games left in the first half of the league's split season. Alton is now 16-12, while O'Fallon is 15-14, with the first half set to end on the Fourth of July.

The River Dragons took a 2-0 lead after the first two innings on a first-inning RBI single by Marcus Heusohn and a second-inning RBI ground out by Civic Memorial's Bryce Zupan, with the Hoots going ahead 5-2 on a three-run homer by Russo in the third, a fourth-inning RBI single by Patrick Clohisy and a fourth-inning ground out by Ole Arntson that scored another run in the fourth. Alton pulled to within 5-4 in the bottom of the fourth on RBI singles by Blake Stenger and Edwardsville's Blake Burris.

In the fifth, Kurtis Reid hit a three-run homer that scored Heusohn and Gage Mestas ahead of him, then a solo homer by Blake Guerin gave Alton an 8-5 lead. The Hoots tied the game at 8-8 in the sixth on a two-run homer by Clohisy and a solo shot by Arntson, then took a 9-8 lead in the seventh on an RBI single by Cade Hohl. The River Dragons fought back to tie the game 9-9 in the bottom of the seventh on an RBI ground out by Ben Gallaher that scored Mestas, with Russo's RBI double in the eighth scored Milton with the winning run to give O'Fallon the 10-9 win.

Heusohn had three hits and a RBI for the River Dragons, with Guerin collecting two hits and a RBI, Mestas had two hits, Reid's three-run homer was his only hit and RBIs, Stenger and Burris both had a hit and RBI, Eddie King had a hit and both Gallaher and Zupan both had RBIs.

Alec Nigut had four strikeouts on the mound for Alton, while starting pitcher Carson Richardson fanned two and both Hunter Callahan and Guerin both struck out one batter each.