

# **Reid Steal For Run, Gallaher's Bases-Clearing Double Sets Tone For River Dragons In 11-5 Win**

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ALTON - Kurtis Reid set the tone for the game by stealing home plate for the first run of the game, and Ben Gallaher's bases-clearing double to right-center scored Eddie King, Marcus Heusohn and Noah Bush to give the Alton River Dragons an early lead en route to an 11-5 win over the O'Fallon, Mo., Hoots, a win that clinched the first half Prairie Land Division title in the Prospect League's split-season at Lloyd Hopkins Field at Gordon Moore Park Saturday night.

The River Dragons are 17-12 on the season, two-and-a-half games ahead of O'Fallon with two games to play in the league's first half, which ends on Monday, the Fourth of July. It also assures Alton of a spot in the league playoffs in August and a home game against the team who wins the second half title in a one-game playoff, where the winner meets the winner of the Great River Division in the Western Conference final. The league final will be a best-of-three set against the Eastern Conference champion Aug. 11, 13 and 14.

The Dragons started off with their four-run first inning on Reid's steal and Gallaher's double, then extended the lead to 6-0 in the next two innings on a RBI single by Edwardsville's Blake Burris in the second and a Gallaher RBI single in the third. The Hoots cut the lead to 6-4 in the fourth and fifth on a RBI ground out by Jack Dunn and a RBI single by Kaden Byrne in the fourth and a two-run homer by Patrick Clohisy in the fifth, then Alton got a RBI single in the sixth from Reid that scored Mike Hampton of Alton that made the score 7-4. O'Fallon got a RBI single from Noah Fisher in the seventh, but a RBI grounder by Gage Mestas got the run back in the bottom of the inning and the River Dragons put the icing on the cake with three runs in the eighth as Reid scored on an error and King hit a two-run homer over the fence in right to give Alton the division-clinching 11-5 win.

Gallaher ended up with three hits and four RBIs on the night, while Reid had three hits and drove home a run, King had two hits and two RBIs on his homer, Burris had two hits and a RBI, Heusohn, Blake Guerin and Blake Stenger all had hits in the game and Mestas also had a RBI.

Colton Huntt started on the mound and was the winning pitcher for Alton, going five innings and giving up four runs on six hits, all earned, while walking two and striking out three. Justin Needles fanned two for the River Dragons, while Matthew Romero and Bush both struck out one batter each.

The River Dragons, their first-half title secured, meet the Cape Catfish of Cape Girardeau, Mo., in the final two games of the first half Sunday and Monday at home, with Sunday's game starting at 5:35 p.m. and the Fourth of July holiday game starting at 6:35 p.m. Alton starts the second half of the season on Tuesday with a three-game road trip, playing at the Terre Haute, Ind., REX Tuesday at 6:30 p.m., St. Louis time, then playing a two-game set at Cape Wednesday and Thursday, both games beginning at 6:35 p.m.

Alton then plays the Hoots in a home-and-home series, with the first game July 8 at Lloyd Hopkins Field at 6:35 p.m., then playing the return game July 9 at CarShield

Field in a 6:35 p.m. start. The River Dragons then play at the Normal Cornbelters July 10 in a 1 p.m. first pitch, have July 11 off and play another two-game set at Cape July 12-13, both games starting at 6:35 p.m.