

Westcott Delivers Key Two-Run Double, Parrill Goes Five Innings To Get Win, River Dragons Take 4-2 Decision

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SPRINGFIELD - Drake Westcott of Edwardsville delivered a key two-run single in a three-run fifth inning, while Collinsville's Jackson Parrill went five innings to get the win as the Alton River Dragons took a close 4-2 decision over the Springfield Lucky Horseshoes in a Prospect League baseball game played Tuesday night at Robin Roberts Stadium in Springfield's Lanphier Park.

The win, which also had a 42-minute rain delay, was the second straight for the River Dragons, who improved their second-half record in the Western Conference's Prairie Land Division to 8-14, remaining in fourth place in the second half of the league's split season, and to 17-31 overall.

The league also announced the passing of Thrillville Thrillbillies' player Ashton Smith, who died on Monday. The native of DuQuoin was 23 and appeared in 19 games with the Marion-based Thrillbillies after his league debut in 2022 with the Terre Haute, Ind., REX. The game between the River Dragons and Thrillbillies, scheduled for Monday, was cancelled.

"We are deeply saddened to hear of the sudden passing of Ashton Smith, a two-year player in the Prospect League and member of the Thrillville Thrillbillies," the league announced in a statement. "The Prospect League family sends its deepest, most heartfelt condolences to his family, teammates and loved ones."

In Tuesday's game, the River Dragons got on the board first in the opening inning when Erik Broekemeier of Metro-East Lutheran grounded out to third, scoring Eli Hoerner to put Alton ahead 1-0. The Horseshoes tied the game in the bottom of the second when Charles McCaleb homered over the right field fence to bring Springfield level to 1-1, but in the fateful fifth inning, Tyler Imbach put the River Dragons back on top when he scored on a passed ball to make it 2-1, with Westcott stroking his two-run single to right, scoring Hoerner and Victor Heredia to put Alton further ahead at 4-1. Springfield got a run back in the seventh when Connor Milton scored on an error by the right fielder to make it 4-2, but that would be all the scoring as the River Dragons' pitching shut down the Horseshoes the rest of the way to preserve the win.

Westcott had a hit and two RBIs for Alton, while Hoerner, Kaden Byrne, Heredia and Chase Bloomer also had hits and Broekemeier drove in a run. Parrill started on the mound and went the needed five innings to get the win, allowing a run on five hits while walking three and striking out eight, Aiden Joaquin went one inning, allowing only a hit while fanning three, Lucas Johns pitched in the seventh and allowed an unearned run on two hits while walking one and striking out one and Dimitri Ivetic went the final two innings to earn his third save of the year, not allowing a run or hit while walking two and fanning three.

The River Dragons return home to Lloyd Hopkins Field at Gordon Moore Park with a game against the O'Fallon, Mo., Hoots at 6:35 p.m., then go on the back on the road for a two-game series at the Burlington, Ia., Bees, with both games starting at 6:30 p.m., then come back home for a pair of weekend games against the Danville Dans Saturday at 6:35 p.m, and a Sunday night game against the Hoots at 5:35 p.m. Alton then concludes the season with a game at the Quincy Gems Monday night at 6:35 p.m., then

after an off-day on Tuesday, plays at O'Fallon Aug. 2 at 6:35 p.m., then after another off-day on Aug. 3, winds up the season with a home-and-home series against the Cape Catfish of Cape Girardeau, Mo., playing the home finale Aug. 4 and the final game of the season at Capaha Park in Cape Girardeau Aug. 5, both games at 6:35 p.m.