

Legion's Chamberland finds his way back from tough road

By MICHAEL LETENDRE
STAFF WRITER

Bristol Legion baseball pitcher Steve Chamberland is certainly no stranger to adversity.

A couple seasons ago, Chamberland underwent major surgery to repair his arm and faced a tough road back to the mound.

But he's been one of Bristol Eastern's top pitchers over the past two seasons and after last Tuesday night's complete inning shutout, the crafty Chamberland grabbed his first Legion victory of his career.

The southpaw gave the locals plenty to cheer about as Bristol defeated Wolcott 2-0 in a Zone 1 game played at Muzzy Field.

Chamberland was on top of his game from batter one as he collected eight strikeouts and did not yield a walk or extra-base hit. In all, Wolcott (4-4 in Zone 1) managed to scratch off only three hits.

Wolcott batters five-through-nine combined to hit 0-for-11 against Chamberland.

"Steve had an excellent performance tonight," said Bristol coach Spec Monico

of his pitcher. "He showed a lot of composure, a lot of command. He got ahead early on most of the counts and he really just did a nice job."

At one point in the contest, Chamberland retired 11 straight batters over the middle frames of the game while no Wolcott player reached second base.

"It felt great, everything finally clicked tonight," said Chamberland. "All the conditioning, all the rehab has made everything a lot stronger and everything is great."

On the other side of the ball, Bristol belted out five hits but the biggest swing of all came from the bat of third basemen Tyler McIntyre.

After Tim Georgen hit a bloop single to center-field to start the contest, Steve Clout was hit by a pitch giving Post 2 two runners on with only one out.

Monico played his usual small ball as Georgen and Clout reached third and second base, respectively, via a double-steal, setting up McIntyre's at-bat.

"T-Mac" wasted no time at the plate - smacking a shot down to right field - which cleared the bases as

Baseball

Bristol went up a quick 2-0.

"Georgen and the top of the order have been setting the table," said Monico. "After Clout got hit by a pitch, and again (playing) small ball (advanced the runners), McIntyre has been delivering big time for us all year. It's nice to see that he's hitting well and we're getting a lot of production from our No. 4 hitter."

It was all the offense Chamberland would need as his command of the plate gave Wolcott continuing fits.

Wolcott's Tom Jannetty got a swinging bunt down for a hit in the third inning to start a two-out rally but a grounder came right to McIntyre over the next at bat and a quick throw to Eric Lemke at second ended the inning.

"I was very proud of Steve just to come out here and give us a lift with a lot of games ahead and we need his arm," said Monico. "He's going to be a very valuable part of this team."

Clout drilled a shot to right field during the Bristol side of the third inning for his only hit of the day and McIntyre came back in the

| Wolcott | | | | | Bristol | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | ab | r | h | bi | | ab | r | h | bi |
| Jannetty 2b | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | Georgen lf | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Price p | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Lemke 2b | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Bouchard lf | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | Clout rf | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Vacarelli ss | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | McIntyre 3b | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Finkerzello 3b | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Owsianko dh | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Proctor cf | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Palmisano ss | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Nicol c | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Ross 1b | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Irizarry rf | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Spatkowski c | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Griffin rf | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Casanova cf | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Monroe 1b | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| TOTALS: | 23 | 0 | 3 | 0 | TOTALS: | 23 | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| Wolcott (4-4) | 000 000 0 - 0 | | | | | | | | |
| Bristol (8-1) | 200 000 x - 2 | | | | | | | | |

E—Price. LOB—Wolcott 2, Bristol 5. SB—Georgen, Clout (2), Casanova. HBP—Clout (by Price).

| WOLCOTT | | BRISTOL | | | | |
|----------------------|----|---------|----|----|----|----|
| IP | H | R | ER | BB | SO | |
| Price | 6 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | |
| BRISTOL | IP | H | R | ER | BB | SO |
| Chamberland (W, 1-0) | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 |

sixth to drill a base-hit to right for his second dinger of the contest.

Even Dave Casanova got into the act during the fifth frame and connected on a shot to left for a base-hit. The speedy Casanova almost stretched his jaunt into a double but held up at first.

Casanova is another veteran who returned from Trinity College for another season of Legion ball and is another viable weapon who can generate offense at the bottom of Monico's line-up.

"Casanova has to be one of the best No. 9 hitters in the country but once he gets on base, he's going to

make things happen," said Monico. "You don't even have to waste an out with him on the bases. Whatever he can give me offensively in the ninth spot, we'll certainly take."

Going scoreless into the final inning, Wolcott made some noise with one out as shortstop Mike Vacarelli hit a single to left-field to get the tying run at the plate.

But CJ Monroe hit into a 6-4-3 double-play and ended the game as Bristol kept its perfect 7-0 Zone 1 ledger intact.

Even though the season is quickly nearing its mid-way point, Monico would love to gather his veteran

bunch for a quick practice or two.

"There's so much ahead that we have to do because we didn't really have a lot of time to practice and go over a lot of situations," said Monico. "We were really just thrown into the fire and with high school (baseball) going as late as it has gone and the Legion season cut short a week, we're being kind of crunched. We just need some practice days to go over a lot of things. But the guys have been playing well because they come from three quality programs."

Greeners: Solid defense helps out

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ing some hustle put-outs by Beaudoin, McDonnell and Zammett - kept Spoiler runners off the base-paths.

"Our defense has been solid all year," said Mirmina. "We have Doug (Beaudoin) at third base and he makes every play. Ryan McDonnell fits in nicely at shortstop. These guys know how to play."

An error along with an RBI single by Beaudoin led to two additional runs in for Bristol in the third to give the Greeners a commanding 5-0 cushion.

A sacrifice fly by Thomaston's Tim Hamel got

the visitors on the board in the fourth inning but an error and a wild pitch allowed Matt Divenere and Zammett to score in the bottom of the frame to give Bristol a 7-1 push.

Pierce allowed two runs in the fifth off a two-RBI single by Thomaston's Rob McHugh with two outs in the inning. But a big strike-out of Matt Gasperini by the crafty Pierce still left the visitors trailing 7-3.

Bristol got one more run back in the bottom of the fifth as Steve Ziogas scored off a bases-loaded walk to end the offense at 8-3.

Rosa came in for the

final two innings and only allowed a Romano single to left field.

"Our defense has been there all year, our pitching has been there all year and our bats are coming around now," said Mirmina. "We're 8-3...we're in a very good spot right now."

The Greeners play five road games to end the 2009 campaign but Mirmina is hopeful in his team's chances of getting a home playoff berth at Muzzy Field for the upcoming tournament.

Comments? Email mle-tendre@BristolObserver.com

Peters: Fixture of Twilight League

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long, not just here.

Q: Bunty Ray has been your coach for several years now. How has he been as your coach?

A: He's awesome. We have a lot of people here but he does a good job (managing). Everybody is happy and no one really gets (mad). Plus he has to mix himself up in there too.

Q: You're a Bristol Eastern and Central Connecticut baseball guy and you've played numerous games here at Muzzy. Does any one memory stick out here?

A: Probably playing

college baseball here. All my games here were awesome in college.

Q: You've really had some good coaches along the way throughout your baseball career. Which one of those mentors has made the biggest impact on you over the years?

A: I learned everything from coach (Mike) Giovinazzo. Everything I know now is from Giovinazzo. I didn't learn anything after. Everything I know is what Giovinazzo taught me in high school.

Q: Tonight you started the game at second base. Is that your normal position?

A: I've been a short-

stop forever. (I'm) second basemen in the Twilight League because I grew out of the position.

Q: You've been such a mainstay here for the Bristol club. How much longer do you think you'll play in the Twilight League?

A: Not much longer. I can probably keep doing it...it's a lot of time. It's four nights a weeks, five nights a week sometimes. Maybe I'll concentrate on selling the (wooden) bats rather than using them.

Q: Is there a next baseball step for you after this?

A: No, this is it. When I'm done (here), I'm done.



Lacey Furey and Ethan Talbot from Bristol Central High School are pictured here with State Education Commissioner, Dr. Mark K. McQuillan, President of the University of Hartford, Dr. Walter Harrison, President of Bob Picozzi Communications, Bob Picozzi and McDonald's representative, Patrick Kelleher.

Bristol Central athletes honored at banquet

Local students Lacey Furey and Ethan Talbot from Bristol Central High School were two of 344 top Connecticut senior scholar-athletes honored at a banquet on May 3 at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington.

The banquet, with over

1,700 in attendance, was made possible through the generosity of the McDonald's Owner Operators of Connecticut and Western Massachusetts.

To qualify for the award, each student must have accumulated a 3.5

grade average, participated in at least two years in a CIAC varsity sport, have exhibited service, character and self-discipline. The high schools were allowed to choose one male and one female senior student-athlete for the award.

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