

Hudson begins defense of District 15 crown with win

By Paul Curcio

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If you were looking for a baseball game full of big hits, strong pitching and solid defense, last night's match between Hudson and Northern Columbia in the District 15 Senior League All-star Tournament was just the game for you.

Unfortunately all the hitting, pitching, and fielding was for just one side.

Northern Columbia suffered a crushing blow as Dan Maloy held them to five hits and two runs over five innings in a 13-2 setback that was called under the 10-run rule.

With a few lightning flashes and storm clouds threatening at game-time, all the thunder was in Hudson's bats as they plated three runs in the bottom of the first to start the scoring for the game.

NoCol starter Adam Wester walked the first two batters he faced, both of whom came around to score on singles by Shane Griffin and Maloy.

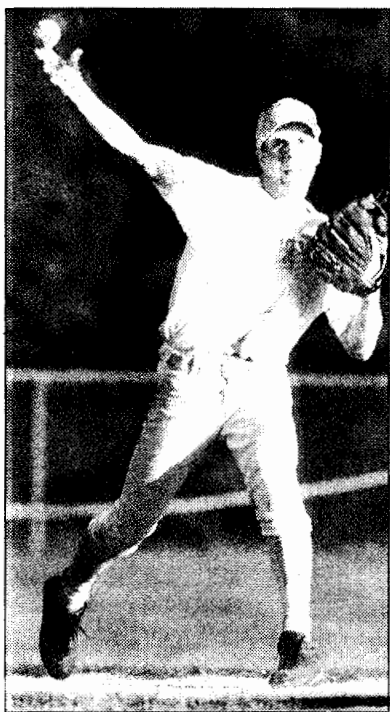
Peter Rigos knocked in the third run before Wester settled down and struck out Steve Keyser, and then induced Nick Hodges and Jonathan Turen to pop up to third.

NoCol threatened in the top of the second, scoring a run on Todd Ferguson's double, but a strong defensive play by Hudson snuffed out any hope of NoCol getting back into the game.

Ferguson tried to advance to third on Dan Peter's grounder to second, but Steve Keyser made a great throw from first base to nail Ferguson for the final out of the inning.

With the score still close at three to one in the bottom of the second, Hudson erupted for five runs, knocking Wester out of the box.

Tom Call came on in relief and Wester moved over to shortstop after 1 2/3 innings of struggling against the big-hitting Hudson team.



Stewart Cairns/Hudson Valley Newspapers

Hudson shortstop Steve Barrett fires the ball to first base during Tuesday's District 15 Senior League Tournament game against Northern Columbia.

"The pressure got to us a little," said NoCol coach Ted Call of his team's effort against the reigning District 15 Senior League champs. "We hit a little, but really couldn't get a rally going."

Blame Maloy, who was impressive and poised in his five innings of work.

Though he did not display overpowering stuff, he kept the hitters off-balance by working quickly and throwing strikes.

He limited NoCol to five hits — two of them infield singles — while striking out three and walking only one.

Maloy contributed with the bat as well, going three for four with

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three runs batted in.

The other big Hudson hitter last night was Griffin, who went three for three with three runs batted in. Griffin is on fire, going eight for eight with six RBI in his last two games.

Rigos went three for four with three RBI, including a two-run homer and a double.

Shortstop Steve Barrett walked twice and scored twice, and center-fielder Frank Vitale scored three times, twice as a result of reaching base on an error.

First baseman Steve Keyser went one for three with one RBI, second baseman Nick Hodges was two for three with one RBI, and pinch-hitter Bob Banks was one for one.

The Hudson attack was unrelenting, sending eight batters to the plate in the first, nine batters in the second, and ten in the third.

By the fourth inning, Hudson had opened up an eleven-run lead and had amassed fifteen hits, leaving it a certainty that the game would be called after the top of the fifth unless NoCol could mount a two-run offensive to avoid the automatic ending of the game.

But once again, Maloy handled the NoCol batters easily, holding them to Greg Leone's infield single before retiring Call on a freak play that reflected the frustration of NoCol's night.

Call dove to the dirt to avoid a high pitch by Maloy, but the ball struck his bat and landed in fair territory.

Call, unaware of where the ball was, stayed down and was thrown out at first base by Hudson's catcher Peter Rigos.

But NoCol was not without their chances to get their game going.

Tyler Haberkern led-off the top of the fourth with a single and advanced to second on a wayward pick-off throw from Maloy moments later.

The next batter, Wester, drove him in with a double and a rally seemed to be underway.

But Maloy bore down on Jared Williams and struck him out after the first baseman dropped an easy pop-up. Brandon Brittain and Dan Losowski followed with easy ground outs and NoCol watched their chances slip away yet again.

NoCol only mustered one other hit in the game — an infield single in the first inning by Call which did not result in a run.

Hudson advances to the next round and will host Southern Columbia on Thursday.