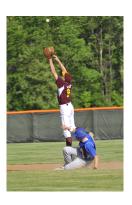
Written by Nancy Spencer Wednesday, May 22, 2013 11:36 PM - Last Updated Wednesday, May 22, 2013 11:40 PM



By JIM METCALFE

Staff Writer

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ELIDA — Kalida baseball mentor Jim McBride knew that his 31-year head coaching career was coming to an end with the finish of the 2013 season but wanted it to last as long as possible.

That end came at the hands of St. John's senior ace Curtis Geise and the Blue Jays as they put out McBride's Wildcats 6-0 in the nightcap of the Division IV Elida District semifinals

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Wednesday, May 22, 2013 11:36 PM - Last Updated Wednesday, May 22, 2013 11:40 PM Wednesday at Ed Sandy Memorial Field. "It's been enjoyable; I enjoyed working with the players — that's who this is about — and the coaches. I wouldn't change anything; I've had a great career," McBride, who ended at 352-262, observed. In the opener, played earlier in the afternoon in occasional rain, Miller City pounded Allen East 14-4. The winners advance to play each other 5 p.m. Friday with a Patrick Henry Regional berth on the line. "Curtis was on again. He had six days of rest between starts and had good velocity," Jays coach Ryan Warnecke said. "We wanted to establish his overpowering fastball early and then hit them with the curve; that got them off-balance. He's had the curve all year; now the fastball is under control." In the nightcap, Geise (7-1) limited the Wildcats to two hits and a walk in his six innings, fanning nine in his 95-pitch effort (64 strikes). T.J. Hoersten mopped up with a 1-hit, 1-hit batter effort. "I think we set a record for the number of foul balls we hit today. That's a tribute to Curtis," McBride continued. "We were right there and had the swings but just couldn't catch up to him; we just couldn't time him up. He's a great pitcher. My freshman (Austin Swift) struggled; he didn't seem to have his control and when you fall behind in the count, it's the batters that have the advantage."

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The Jays (10-14) got on the board in the top of the first against Swift (5 innings, 9 hits, 6 runs, 4 earned, 4 walks — 1 intentional — and 3 Ks; 96 pitches, 56 for strikes). After Geise (2-for-3), led off with a single but was caught stealing by Neil Recker, they compiled a walk (Ryan Buescher), a hit batter (Troy Warnecke), an error and a 2-out run-scoring single to left by Hoersten (2-for-4), plating Buescher. In the process, Warnecke was called out at third for the third out.

Swift was plunked with one down in the home half but was forced out at second on Neil Recker's grounder. The senior then got nailed trying to burgle second by senior catcher Buescher.

The Blue and Gold made it 3-0 in the second on a walk to Drew Wagner, a sacrifice bunt (Craig Klausing), a wild pitch and run-producing knock to center by Ben Wrasman (3-for-4, 2 runs, 2 runs batted in). In turn, he scored on a wild pitch, a groundout by Geise and a single to left center by Buescher (2-for-3).

Trent Gerding singled with two down in the Kalida second but was hit by Randy Zeller's ground ball.

The Maroon and White had their biggest chance in the third, loading the bases — errors on consecutive grounders hit by Austin Horstman and Kyle Vorst and a 1-out ground single to right by Swift. However, Recker forced Horstman at home and Geise retired the next batter for the third out, starting a string of nine straight outs.

The Jays made it 5-0 in the fourth on three safeties, a wild pitch (scoring Wrasman) and a fielder's-choice grounder by Warnecke that plated Geise.

St. John's finished the scoring in the top of the fifth. Three errors set it up and a hit to left by Wrasman got Hoersten home.

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Junior Kyle Kehres came on in relief in the top of the sixth and gave up two hits but got out of the jam with an inning-ending double play.

Kalida threatened with two down in the home half on a walk to junior Kyle Kehres and a dropped fly ball hit by Rob Kleman. However, Geise induced a grounder by Gerding to end the jam.

The Wildcats mounted their final threat of 2013 against Hoersten in the seventh on a 2-out single by Vorst and a hit batter (Brent Hovest) but finished them off with a 9-pitch grounder by Swift.

"Our offense has gotten steadily better; we put the ball in play and didn't strike out much. That has been a focus all spring; make the opponent play defense," Coach Warnecke added. "Defensively, it's become our identity. We make plays but we also make mistakes. I think where we have gotten much better at is not letting those mistakes compound; we come back quicker mentally and don't give up the big inning."

"To get to the District level with all the players we lost to graduation — we only had one starter back and one letterman — was a tribute to the seniors. They put in a lot of work to get us this far," McBride added. "We played a lot of freshmen and sophomores this year and I wish them the best of the luck for the future. I wish St. John's the same, as I do Miller City."

In the opener, Miller City (17-7) fell behind 3-0 and then rallied, scoring five times in both the sixth and seventh innings to put the contest away.

Jackson Lammers (2 runs, 3 RBIs) and Hunter Berner (2 doubles, 3 runs) went 3-for-5 to pace a 16-hit attack for the victors; Adam Niese, Jeremy Balbaugh and Logan Dukes each went 2-). for-4 (2 runs scored each). Leadoff man Ross Kaufman scored three times.

Ross Lehman pitched six innings to get the win.

Written by Nancy Spencer Wednesday, May 22, 2013 11:36 PM - Last Updated Wednesday, May 22, 2013 11:40 PM Derek Ketchum went 2-for-3 and Erik Neeley was 2-for-4 for the Mustangs. ST. JOHN'S 6, KALIDA 0 **ST. JOHN'S (6)** ab-r-h-rbi

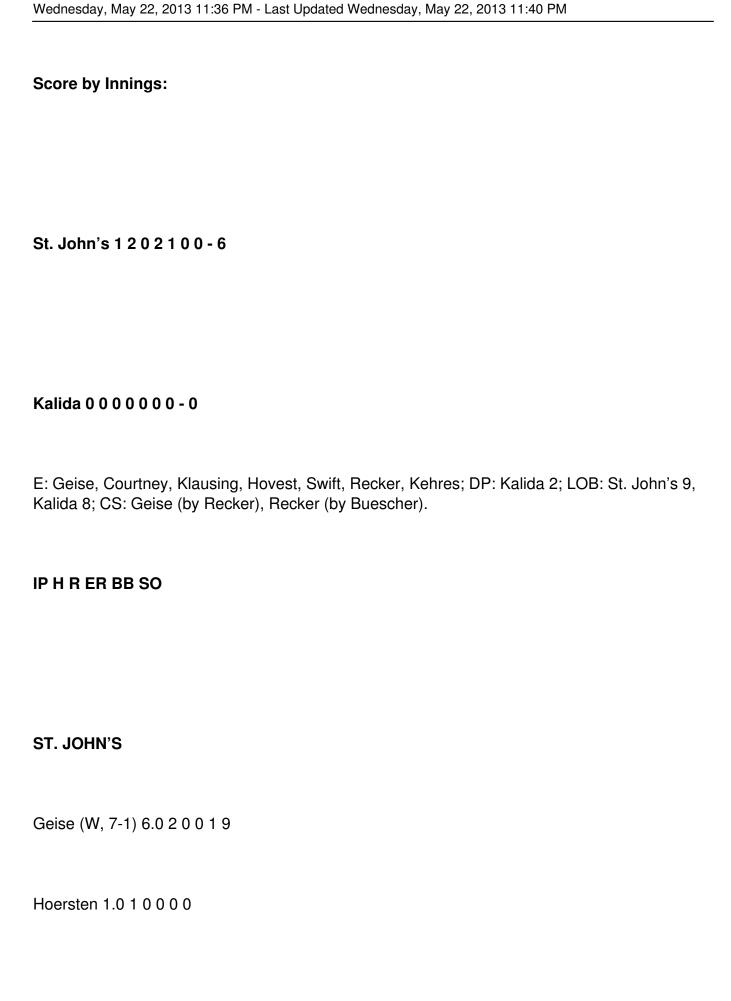
Curtis Geise p/ss 3-1-2-0, Ryan Buescher c 3-1-2-1, Troy Warnecke ss/2b 3-0-0-1, Andrew Metzger cf 4-0-1-0, Clay Courtney rf 4-0-1-0, T.J. Hoersten 2b/p 4-1-2-1, Drew Wagner 1b 3-1-0-0, Craig Klausing 3b 2-0-0-0, Ben Wrasman If 4-2-3-2. Totals 30-6-11-5.

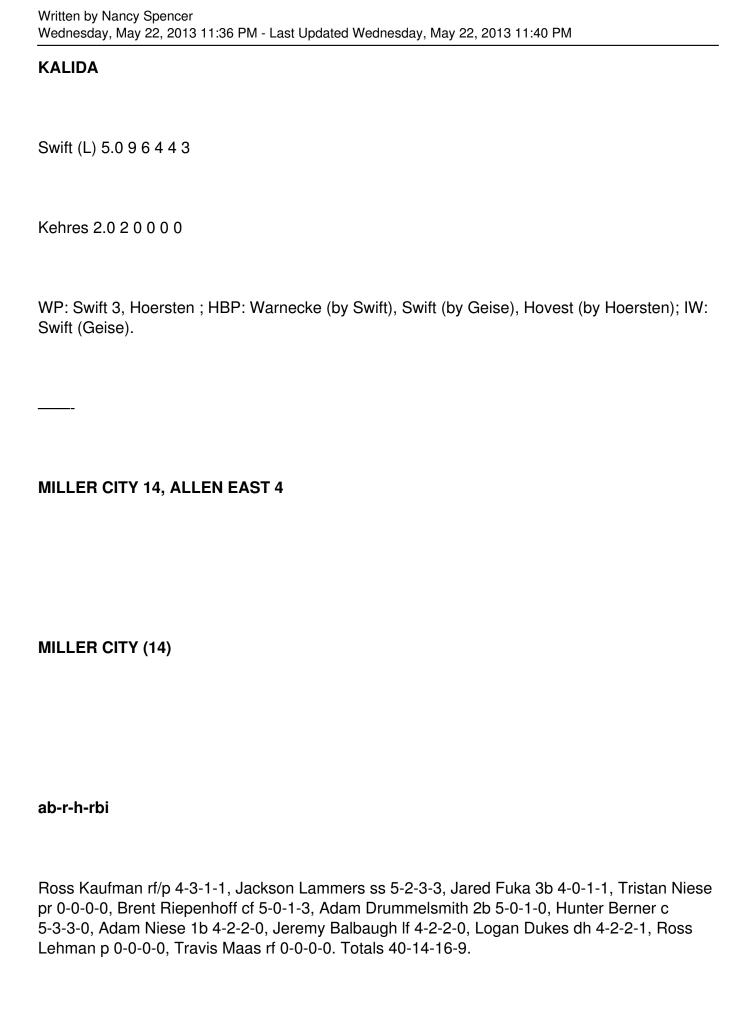
KALIDA (0)

ab-r-h-rbi

Brent Hovest 3b 3-0-0-0, Austin Swift p/cf 3-0-1-0, Neil Recker c 3-0-0-0, Kyle Kehres If/p 2-0-0-0, Rob Kleman 1b 3-0-0-0, Andrew Krouse pr 0-0-0-0, Trent Gerding ss 3-0-1-0, Randy Zeller 2b 3-0-0-0, Austin Horstman rf 2-0-0-0, Adam Knueve rf 1-0-0-0, Kyle Vorst lf 3-0-1-0. Totals 26-0-3-0.

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E: Wireman 2, Kaufman, Lammers, Crow, Robinson; LOB: Miller City 7, Allen East 7; 2B:

Keller (by Lehman).

Berner 2, Stippich; SB: A. Niese, Stippich; CS: Neeley (by Berner), Robinson (by Berner); POB:

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MILLER CITY

Lehman (W) 6.0 6 4 3 6 4

Kaufman 1.0 1 0 0 1 2

ALLEN EAST

Goodwin (L) 5.2 8 9 4 1 5

Crow 1.1 8 5 4 1 0

Lehman pitched to 1 batter in 7th

WP: Lehman 3, Goodwin 2; PB: Berner; IW: Crow (Fuka