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'Cats Fall To Ste. Gen In Extra Innings

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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

CAPE GIRARDEAU - Early errors cost the Dexter Bearcats in an extra-innings contest against Class 3, District 1 foe Ste. Genevive on Saturday afternoon.

Three errors in the first three innings allowed the Dragons to take a 2-0 lead early in the game; the 'Cats uncharacteristically committed five errors in the contest. Starting pitcher Owen Flowers went the distance for the Bearcats, throwing 94 pitches in eight innings of work.

"Their pitchers did a good job against us, but on the flip side I thought Owen Flowers threw a heck of a game," head coach Brian Becker said. "He deserved a better fate than what he got; we had five errors, and that cost us."

"We've been fielding the ball well all year long, but today with the different surface we were on, I don't know if that was the difference or if it was just one of those days," he continued. "We'll be all right; I know we're a much better defensive team than what we showed today."

Despite their early struggles on the grass infield, the Bearcats worked out the kinks and turned three double plays in the last five innings of play.

"We struggled defensively early, and that spelled trouble for us in the early innings," Becker noted. "I thought after we regrouped, we played some really solid defense, but you have to give Ste. Gen. credit; they're a really good ball club and they played a good game today."

The Bearcats were held scoreless until the top of the fifth inning; after a leadoff single by Josh Overall and a hit-by-pitch to Cody Neldon, Daniel Fitts smacked a line drive into left-center to drive in Overall and advance Neldon to third. Neldon crossed home plate midway through Brad Potts' at-bat on a wild pitch to tie the game at 2-all.

The Dragons were three up, three down in the bottom of the fifth thanks to Flowers' outstanding command of his two-seam fastball; both teams were retired with three batters in the sixth, and the 'Cats were short-lived in the top of the seventh, where they faced lefty reliever Derek Brown.

The
Dragons

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were unable to score in the bottom of the seventh, forcing extra innings. Fitts and Potts both recorded outs, and Chase Young took a pitch to the head to reach first base. First baseman Alex Cliff stepped to the plate and forced a 2-2 count, but ultimately popped out to third to end the inning.

Al Gunter led off for the Dragons in the bottom of the eighth, and hit a hard shot to left field for a single. Tyler Greminger stepped to the plate and worked into a full count before firing a deep line drive to left-center to plate the game winning run and seal a 3-2 victory.

Fitts had a solid effort at the plate after being moved into the leadoff slot; the senior only recorded one hit in four at-bats, but made great contact on the ball all day long.

"He's down on himself because he only had one hit," Becker said of his left fielder, "but he knocked the cover off the ball all day long. That's the way it is in baseball; you can hit rocket shots and them be right at somebody, and the next time up, you'll hit a 45-foot dribbler and wind up on first base. I moved him into the leadoff spot today, and he did a good job for me."

The Bearcats stand at 4-2 (1-2 in District play) on the season after the tough loss, and will be back in action on Monday (April 2) afternoon when they host Campbell. Logan Northern (1-0) is expected to be the starter in the 4:00 p.m. contest.

Photos Above:

Top: Owen Flowers pitched a complete game in Saturday afternoon's 3-2, extra-innings loss. The senior struck out one batter in the 94 pitch outing.

Bottom: Josh Overall lays down the tag and fires the ball to first base to complete a 6-4-3 double play in the fourth inning. Overall was 1-3 at the plate with one run in the loss.

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