

Outlaws baseball take three straight

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

Sisters' defense this past week was stellar, and was a big factor in three straight victories. The Outlaws have now gone 21 consecutive innings without an error, and have improved their league record to 8-5.

On Monday, April 2, the Outlaws beat the No. 5-ranked Elmira Falcons 7-5. Wednesday's home game against Junction City (JC) was moved to Thursday due to rain, and the Outlaws came out on top 1-0 in nine innings. A day later, Sisters shut out the Tigers at JC with an astounding 23-0 win.

In Monday's game against Elmira, Sisters recorded seven runs on 10 hits and were perfect on defense with zero errors. The Falcons had five runs on five hits and committed two errors in the contest.

Zach Morgan went the distance on the mound, and recorded eight strike-outs. His curve ball worked very well for him in the later innings.

"Zach really did a great job for us," said Hodges. "He pitched a complete game and

competed hard.

"This was a very pivotal game for us," Hodges added. "This win put us in a place to earn the second spot in league."

Elmira got three runs in the first and took a quick 3-0 lead. The Outlaws answered with two runs in the second. Alec Gannon got on base via an error, and Jake Larson (RBI), JW Bertagna, and Ryan Funk (RBI) all followed with singles, which closed the gap to 3-2.

Sisters racked up five additional runs in the third. Funk's RBI single, Ryan Cook's two-RBI double to right center field, and Will Werts' two-RBI double on the chalk line down left field highlighted the inning.

Three players really stepped up at the plate. Cook went three-for-four with two doubles, Funk went three-for-four, and TJ Lawrence, who was brought up from JV to be a DH (designated hitter) for Morgan, went two-for-three.

The game at home against the Tigers on Thursday was a pitcher's game that went nine innings before the Outlaws secured the 1-0 win.

In the bottom of the ninth, Jake Stevens reached

first base on an error, and Christopher Luz hit a sacrifice fly to advance him to second. Stevens got to third on a fielder's choice by Alec Gannon and finally scored on a wild pitch.

Ryan Cook pitched shut-out baseball with only two walks to go into extra innings, and then Zach Morgan came in and pitched the last two-and-a-third innings for the win.

"Both these guys competed well, and pitched us to a victory," said Hodges. "Our defense also did a great job."

A day later, the Outlaws' bats were on fire. The Outlaws scored 23 runs on 14 hits and were once again perfect on defense.

Sisters got two runs in the first inning, and then scored 11 in the second to blow the game wide open to take a 13-0 lead. The Outlaws added five in the fourth and five in the fifth to bring the game to an end.

Alec Gannon threw 47 pitches to go the distance for the Outlaws on the mound. Gannon started almost every batter with two strikes, and then got them to put the ball in play, and let the defense do the rest.

Three players had big hits

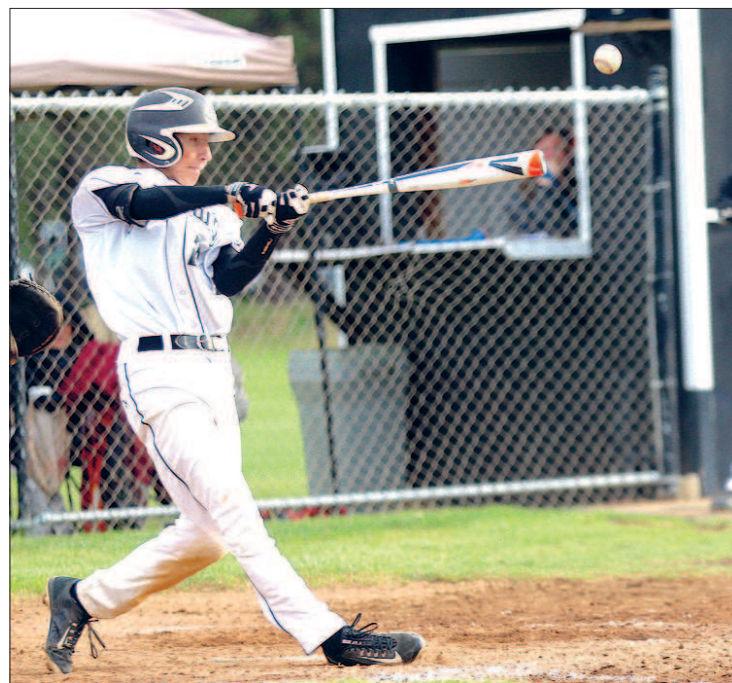


PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Alex Gannon connects vs. Junction City.

in the game. Ryan Cook hit a two-RBI homer in the third about 340 feet over the left field fence. Jake Stevens had three doubles and four RBI. Zach Morgan went four-for-five with two singles, a double, and a grand slam in the fifth. The home-run hit was a beautiful straight-away line drive over the left field fence. Morgan led the team with seven RBI.

"This just shows what can happen when we go up

to the plate with aggressiveness and confidence," said Hodges. "And, the pitching we faced wasn't that much different than what we've faced before. We just had a good mental approach with a lot of confidence and hit the ball hard. It really opened the door and was contagious. It was fun to watch."

The Outlaws will wrap up league play on Friday, May 13, with a double-header at Sutherlin.

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