

07.14.08 **Big Train Rolls Past Braves**

by Matt Tymann

HERNDON—Luke Adkins hit a three-run home run to cap off a four-run fifth, and the Bethesda Big Train defeated the Herndon Braves 8-4 on Monday evening.

The big fifth inning keyed Bethesda's 23rd win of the season, and sent Herndon to its third consecutive loss. The Braves are now 11-20 on the year.

Ben Jones singled to lead off the fifth for the Big Train (23-7), and would come around to score on an RBI single by Jordan King. Adkins then homered, scoring King as well as Drew Lee, who had also singled. Bethesda led after the fifth inning, 5-1.

The Big Train had taken the early lead in the second inning, converting a leadoff walk by Danny Stienstra into a run. Zach Kim earned the RBI, by grounding into a fielder's choice.

John Lynch and Michael Cheatham combined to tie the game at one in the bottom of the third, as Lynch doubled to lead off the inning, and Cheatham grounded out to score him. Lynch had advanced to third on a wild pitch by Bethesda starter Andrew Smith.

Lee knocked in Kim in the top of the sixth to make it 6-1, and then Brett Garner scored on a Shane Davis single in the bottom of the sixth to cut the deficit back to four.

Herndon had two great opportunities to come back in the seventh and eighth innings. Mike Jones, Alex Ferrera, and Connor Mullee each walked to load the bases in the seventh, with just one out. Jones would score on a wild pitch, but reliever Kris Brown struck out both Garner and Sean Lamont to end the inning without any further damage.

Then, in the eighth, after a Seth Williams two-run home run had extended Bethesda's lead back to five, Herndon once again put three runners on after only one out. After Jones flied out to second base, Alex Ferrera walked to score Davis, and Mullee singled to plate Lynch. That made the score 8-5, and brought up Lamont, with the bases still loaded. He hit the ball sharply, but directly to Adkins in left field to end the inning.

Jones and Davis were the only Braves to reach base three times, with Jones earning three walks and Davis singling twice, and getting hit by a pitch. Lynch added a single to his third-inning double, and scored two runs in the game.

Derek Anderson started the game on the mound for the Braves, and took the loss to fall to 0-3. He pitched four and a third innings, giving up five runs on six

hits and two walks. Smith earned the win for Bethesda, improving to 5-0 and tying teammate Scott Schneider for the league lead in wins.

The Braves will now have two days off, before playing another home game on Thursday night, against the College Park Bombers. The Bombers have won eight straight games, including three straight doubleheader sweeps, and are now solidly in third place in the Cal Ripken Sr. League with a 17-11 record. Herndon does hold a 2-1 lead in the season series, however, and has won both previous home games against the Bombers. Keith Hessler (0-3, 6.30 ERA) is the probable Braves' starter.