



(NCHS celebrates following Titus Williams game-winning RBI double in the bottom of the 8th inning)

Chiefs get 1-0 win in extra innings over Benton

Titus Williams drilled an RBI double down the left field with one out in the eighth inning to propel the Natchitoches Central Chiefs' baseball team to a 1-0 win over the Benton Tigers Saturday afternoon at the PARC Natchitoches Baseball Complex.

The Chiefs (12-2, 1-1 in 1-5A) got a terrific starting pitching performance from Alabama commit Ross Lindsey. The NCHS left hander threw five innings, allowed just two hits, one walk and struck out 10 while picking up a no decision.

NCHS's Harper Marcotte came in relief and pitched three innings to pick up the win. The Chiefs' left hander allowed just one hit and struck out one.

The Chiefs finished the game with seven hits led by Dillon Braxton who was 2-for-4.

Both teams had opportunities throughout the game to cash in but the pitching for Benton (13-4, 1-1 in 1-5A) and NCHS was impeccable.

The Chiefs put two men on in the bottom of the first but a flyout in the inning. Benton then threatened in the third inning with runners at first and third and two outs, but Lindsey got a strikeout to end the threat.

NCHS's just missed taking the lead in the fourth. With the bases load and two out, Brock Laird tried to steal home but was out by inches at the plate ending the threat.

The Chiefs, again, threatened, in the bottom of the seventh as they put two runners on with two out. But a strikeout ended the inning sending the game to extra innings.

After Marcotte retired the Tigers relatively easily in the eighth inning, the stage was set for a thrilling bottom of the eighth.

Laird singled on a two-strike breaking ball with one bringing Williams to the plate. The junior swung at the first pitch he saw and lined it down the left field line as Laird was steaming towards third. The Benton leftfielder bobbled the ball allowing NCHS head coach Regan Kaufman to send Laird to the plate as he dove in for the game-winning run.

“It was a two-seam fastball and Dillon (Braxton) told me it was going to run in a little,” said Williams. So, I kind of got the head of the bat out sooner and was able to put a good swing on it.”

Kaufman praised his team’s resilience following the game.

“I give all the credit to those guys (Benton),” said Kaufman. “But I’m proud of everyone on this team for fighting all game long. It just shows that we can do it and that we can play with the best. Benton is back-to-back district champs for a reason, so this is a big win for us.”

Next up, NCHS will host Parkway (10-4) Tuesday at 6 p.m.