

Chiefs get 15 hits in 10-8 win over Byrd

SHREVEPORT, La. - The Natchitoches Central Chiefs' baseball team had 15 hits in a 10-8 win over the Byrd Yellowjackets Saturday afternoon on the road as every player in the starting lineup had at least one hit to hold off the late rally.

The Chiefs (22-7, 9-5 in 1-5A) scored a run in the first inning as they loaded the bases with nobody out. Owen Smith walked, Yancy Spillman singled to center and Dillon Braxton reached on a bunt single and Brock Laird grounded into a double play that scored Smith. NCHS reloaded the bases with back-to-back walks to Titus Williams and Adam Guillet, but a ground out ended the inning.

The Yellowjackets (9-20, 4-9 in 1-5A) responded in their half of the first putting runners at second and third and nobody out against Spillman, the Chiefs' starter. Moments later, Byrd tied the game on a sacrifice fly and took the lead on the same play on an NCHS throwing error. Spillman retired the next two hitters on a strikeout and groundout to limit the damage.

Natchitoches Central retook the lead in the third. They loaded the bases for the third time in the game as Laird, Williams and Laden Rawls reached with two outs. Lannon Collum came through in the clutch as the Chiefs' DH drilled a three-run triple to the right-center gap scoring Laird, Williams and Rawls. Moments later, Kyron Payne singled to left to score Collum before the inning ended giving NCHS a 5-2 lead.

The Chiefs added to their lead in the fourth inning with a pair of RBI singles by Laird and Rawls and a pass ball to score Williams making it 8-2.

The Natchitoches Central onslaught continued in the fifth inning as Braxton doubled to right to score Smith and RBI single by pinch-hitter Rees Williams as the Chiefs' lead ballooned to 10-2.

Spillman began to settle in after a shaky first inning as he allowed just one earned run, five hits, two walks and struck out four in 4 1/3 innings. Benji Kilgore came in relief for Spillman and allowed just one hit in 1 2/3 innings.

The Yellowjackets scored three in the fifth to get within striking distance as the Chiefs led 10-5 going to the sixth inning.

Byrd mounted a rally in the bottom of the seventh as they loaded the bases with nobody out on three straight singles then scored on RBI walk to bringing the tying run to the plate. Harper Marcotte, who relieved Kilgore earlier in the inning, got a strikeout.

However, a two-run single by Byrd cut the lead to 10-8 as the winning run was in the box with only one out and runners at first and third. But Marcotte got the next two hitters to strike out ending the game as the Chiefs held on for a hard-fought win.

The Chiefs' 15-hit attack was led by Braxton with three while Laird, Spillman and Payne each had two.

Next up, the Chiefs will wrap up the regular season Monday at home against Delhi Charter (19-6) at 5 p.m.