

Chiefs' season comes to heartbreaking end in 3-2 loss to Wildcats

NATCHITOCHES, La – The seventh-ranked Natchitoches Central Chiefs baseball team's season came to a heartbreaking finish as the 10th-ranked Central-Baton Rouge Wildcats scored three runs in the bottom of the seventh to defeat the Chiefs, 3-2, in Game 2 of the best-of-three playoff series Friday at NCHS.

The Chiefs (23-9) seemed to be in control as they led 2-0 going into the bottom of the seventh thanks to a dominant pitching performance from Ross Lindsey. The Chiefs' junior left hander pitched six plus innings allowing just two hits, one unearned run, five walks and struck out 10.

NCHS scored the first run of the game in the top of the fourth inning. Titus Williams led the inning with a missile to the right center gap for a triple. Later in the inning, Yancy Spillman hit an RBI groundout to score Williams.

Natchitoches Central added another run in the fifth inning as Owen Smith led off by reaching on an error and advancing to second base. He later scored on an RBI infield single by Dillon Braxton to give the Chiefs a 2-0 lead.

The Wildcats (26-8) were finally able to chase Lindsey from the game after a lead-off walk in the seventh which led to his 112th pitch of the game. NCHS head coach Regan Kaufman brought in closer Harper Marcotte who has been spectacular for the Chiefs this year.

Marcotte, the junior left hander, had a 1.18 ERA and nine saves this season while opponents were hitting just .161 off him.

The first batter Marcotte faced lined a single to left putting runners at first and second and nobody out. Moments later, the Wildcats laid down a bunt that was misplayed by NCHS resulting in a bad throw into the left field corner. Central-Baton Rouge trailed 2-1 with runners and second and third and nobody out. Moments later, the Wildcats scored two runs on a two-run single to win the game and end the Chiefs' season.

NCHS finished with five hits led by Williams with a double and a triple. The Wildcats had five four hits with two of them coming in the seventh inning.

Central-Baton Rouge advances to the quarterfinals where they will face second-ranked West Monroe at a date and time TBA next week.