

Three-run inning costs baseball team against MIT

by Matt Couture / Beacon Staff • April 21, 2017



Emerson struck first, but was unable to overcome a three-run MIT fifth, and dropped Thursday's matinee game to the Engineers, 5-2.

Lions pitcher Jake Mitchell showed up to MIT's Fran O'Brien Field not expecting to get the ball, but turned in a workmanlike effort, allowing four runs on six hits in five innings. Expected starter Henry Schwartz was scratched with an injury.

Mitchell showed improved command—he came into the game having struck out eight and walked 15 batters this season, but only walked three (one intentional) while striking out five on the afternoon.

"Jake was able to control both sides of the plate," Lions head coach Nick Vennochi said. "His slider was working really, really well today. That was effective—he was able to keep people off balance. Jake throws hard enough to control guys, and when he throws strikes, he can be dominant."

Emerson opened the scoring in the top of the third inning against Engineers starter Jared Tramontano. Joe Paladino hit a liner up the middle for a one-out single, and advanced to second on a wild pitch. Paladino tagged up and moved to third on a flyout to right by Connor Damiano, and with two outs, a soft Tim Quitadamo chopper rolled up the third base line and just managed to stay fair as it reached the bag. Paladino scored to give the Lions a 1-0 lead.

"We talk all about getting good jumps on balls, and then moving guy[s] over," Vennochi said. "Damiano does a great job, hits a fly ball to right field, moves Joe over, and we're able to manufacture a run. That's huge—those are the things that if you start doing over and over, you start beating a team like this."

MIT quickly matched the Lions on an Austin Filiere home run to right field in the bottom half. It was his eighth homer of the season. Mitchell allowed nothing further in the inning though, getting Garrett Greenwood to fly out to deep center and Tyler Kocher to ground out to third.

Emerson threatened in its half of the fourth, but failed to capitalize on a leadoff single by Neil Perry, who stole second and advanced to third on a Danny Johnson infield hit. Johnson was thrown out stealing second before Clint Fontanella struck out and C.J. Rogers grounded to short.

An RBI groundout from Mitch Moorman made it 2-1 Emerson in the fifth. Damiano came around to score after a one-out single. He had advanced to third on a Quitadamo double that got over the right fielder's head.

"His fastball was getting on me a little quick; he had some good velocity," Quitadamo said of Tramontano. "I was down in the count, I had two strikes, so I was just shortening up. I was trying to think the other way. He missed a fastball kind of up around my letters and on the outside half, so it just made for a good power alley to right."

MIT again answered right back, scoring three times in the bottom of the fifth. Mitchell issued a leadoff walk to Jared Schwait, and then intentionally walked Filiere, who had homered in the third. Schwait stole third with third baseman Moorman playing on the grass anticipating a bunt, and scored on a wild pitch with Kocher batting.

Filiere advanced to second on the wild pitch, and later scored on a single by Alec Kushner. John Drago's double off the center field wall scored Kushner to make it 4-2 Engineers.

Ethan Young relieved Mitchell in the sixth, and faced only four men in a scoreless frame. MIT got to Young in the seventh though, as Greenwood led off the inning with a single, and scored on a wall-ball double by Kocher. The insurance run widened the Engineers' lead to 5-2. Kocher came into the afternoon hitting .388, and had grounded out in each of his first three plate appearances.

Tramontano lowered his ERA to 3.19 in the win, allowing two runs in 6 2-3 innings pitched. Jack Murphy relieved Tramontano after the starter walked Damiano with two outs in the seventh, and Murphy proceeded to shut down Emerson, retiring each of the seven batters he faced. The 6-foot-5 righty picked up his third save of the season.

"He was coming way over the top, so he had a lot of downward angle on his pitches," Quitadamo said.

The two teams previously met in a doubleheader at Campanelli Stadium on April 8, and MIT defeated Emerson, 21-1 and 6-4. Thursday's game was originally scheduled for April 7 in Cambridge, but was pushed back due to weather.

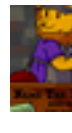
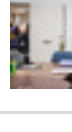

MIT (15-9-1) came into the day third in the East division of NEWMAC baseball, fighting with Babson for the second spot. Emerson (8-18) sits last in the division.

The win pushes MIT to 13-0 all time against the Lions. The teams first matched up in 1999, and now play three times a season as NEWMAC foes.

Emerson travels to Babson for a doubleheader on Saturday.

Emerson catcher Pablo Feldman bats against MIT pitcher Jared Tramontano at MIT's Fran O'Brien Field on Thursday.
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