

FEEL THE BUZZ!!



The week that was...

Going 3-3 in your last 6 shouldn't be anything to complain about for a team that — after that horrific start — probably needs to walk before it starts to run. That said, after a solid mound performance by the Biola boys — Nate Coronado and Mike Frisina on Tuesday night — got them a split in their two game road series against the Beavers of Weyburn, the YJs returned home and scored a huge victory against the Regina Red Sox on Friday night. It was one of those nights where the game was secondary as everyone in the park was focused on supporting the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. On a night with that much goodwill in the air you could sense that the boys were determined to get a win for the home fans who were doing their part for a great cause. The starting staff has been solid all year but when the YJs need a win there is clearly no one they'd rather send to the hill right now than the white-hot Jordan Rawlyk. Rawlyk did what he does best, eating some serious innings and giving his team a chance to win — they did as the top of the order (coincidentally, an excellent sounding name for a law firm) —

Robulak, Klassen, Cardinal and Wentz feasted on Red Sox pitching, each getting multiple knocks (Jones and Loard got in on the party as well) pacing the Jackets to 10 runs. Sometimes a team wants it a little too bad and the Jackets looked a little tight in the 9th and needed every one of those 10 runs as the Sox scored 4 in the 9th before succumbing 10-9.



So going into the weekend series against the always tough, reigning WMBL champion Okotoks Dawgs the YJs had won 3 of their last 4 and Zack Wentz — with Ryan Riley heating up at the plate and hitting behind him — seemed to be the final piece to a vastly improved offense. The coaching staff would surely have taken 6 runs on Saturday and 7 on Sunday if given the chance before the series started. A heartbreaking 7-6, 9th inning loss on Saturday, erasing a great performance by John Jones who went 3 for 4 with a dinger, 2 runs and 3 rbi's at the plate, seemed to stall their momentum as they moved on to Sunday's tilt that ended 13-7.

So while a 3-3 week that featured , I would guess from the safety of the stands, felt a little worse than .500.

I'm still willing to put my pseudo-journalistic reputation on the line for this team which is, absolutely, going on a winning streak soon. The only question is will it be too late?

Since I don't want to talk about the weekend anymore and am unencumbered by an editor, I think I'll take this moment to make a public apology to the co-owner of our fantasy baseball team — and prominent YJ executive — who I talked out of picking up Scott Rolen last week. Perhaps its because I'm out of town but he hasn't even issued an I-told-you-so. Since there are no points for staggeringly good D and since Rolen's power numbers in recent years are closer to David Eckstien's than (the artist formerly known as) David Ortiz's, I thought I was on solid footing. Of course Rolen has somehow been hooked up to the juvenation machine and is now crushing the ball and hitting clean-up on a good hitting team while the gum and scotch tape that is holding Mike Lowell's hip together seems to be coming apart. Tough times in fantasyland.





The week that will be...

The Jacket head out to Regina on Tuesday before coming home to what should be an awesome Canada Day at the park against Moose Jaw on Wednesday night. After a couple of days off the YJs host Swift Current 7:05 on Saturday in the first of a home and home series.

The time is here, YJs nation. See you at the park Wednesday and Saturday...this squad is about to kick it into gear. Just watch.

Player(s) of the week...Joel Cardinal and Zack Wentz

Impossible to choose between the two hottest bats on a Jackets squad that is swinging the lumber with authority lately. Joel Cardinal (see profile below) continues to be a stand out in the field and at the plate. He had 11 hits on the week to bring his season total to a team-leading 29. He also leads the squad with 13 runs and is slugging .482 out of the three spot in the order. Hard to ask for more than that.



Late arrival Zack Wentz is off to an auspicious start in the WMBL. In his first 8 games he is hitting .462 with 8 RBIs.

Pitcher of the week...

Jordan Rawlyk went to the mound Friday night in a big home start against the Regina Red Sox and did what he has done all season. He tossed 8 strong innings, striking out 8, leaving the game with a 5 run lead. He would need all of that 5 run cushion as the Red Sox rallied to score 4 in the ninth, but at the end of the day Rawlyk moved to 3-0 on the season, he sports a nifty 2.42 era and has 32ks in his 37 innings.

Honourable Mention: GM Dave Riggs is more than excited to get LHP Josh Marshall is back in the YJ fold. Marshall returns from Canicuis College just as the Jackets enter the dog days of the season. An extra arm at this time of the year should pay huge dividends.

Player Profiles...

Player Profile: Joel Cardinal

Position: Shortstop

College Ball: Congratulations are in order....Joel recently signed with New Mexico State University for next season.

Having played for the hometown Yellow Jackets from the time he was 16, fans are surely familiar with shortstop Joel Cardinal. He's a shining example to any local young ball who has ambitions of player for the Jackets and beyond. Cardinal is a 5 tool player for the Jackets and, anyone who has seen him, on occasion, commit to hitting the ball the other way with that beautiful (strangely-familiar-but-from-the-left-side) inside-out swing should have no trouble guessing his favourite player.



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Hometown?

Saskatoon.

Favourite thing about playing baseball?

I've played it my whole life, it was probably the first sport I ever played at 5 or 6 years old. I don't know if I can really explain it.....I just love playing, love being at the ballpark.

Favourite major leaguer?

Derek Jeter

A shortstop naturally--how come ?

He's a leader, every team that he's on wins, he finds ways to win, good hitter great defensively. He does everything well...he's the whole package.

Advice for Junior Jackets/any young shortstop who want to play at the levels you've played at?

Find a way, find any way to be mentally tough. You're going to get discouraged. You're going to go down to College and be a long way from home. Coaches may be tough on you. It's a mental grind. You have to prepare yourself mentally way more than physically. That's what I've learned along the way. Work on mental toughness.

Walk-up song?

Forget the name but its by Earth Wind and Fire.

Why?

It gets me pumped up.

Come out and see Joel along with the rest of the Yellow Jackets as they' come home, to Cairns field, for a Canada Day classic Wednesday July 1st at 7:05 pm. Kids wearing a Canada flag get in for free!

If you have any suggestions or topics you'd like to see in up-coming editions of the buzz drop us a line at cmsincer@yahoo.ca or michael@in-play.ca

