

NEWPORT GULLS BASEBALL

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"RAISING THE BAR IN SUMMER COLLEGIATE BASEBALL"

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For Immediate Release

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Gulls Fall to Laconia, Face Elimination Thursday

NEWPORT, R.I. — Despite holding a two-run lead with four outs to play, the Newport Gulls fell to the Laconia Muskrats, 4-3, in Game 1 of the NECBL Eastern Division Semifinals before nearly 2,500 fans Wednesday at Cardines Field.

With Laconia leading the series, 1-0, Newport faces an elimination game in the best-of-three series Thursday at Robbie Mills Park in Laconia. The Gulls will send Brandon Sinnery (Franklin, Mass.) to the mound to square off with the Muskrats' Chris Costantino.

Newport held a 3-1 lead in the eighth inning with ace Jacob Lee (Arkansas State; Jonesboro, Ark.) spinning a gem. After allowing consecutive hits to lead off the inning, he retired the next two hitters. But three consecutive RBI singles put the Muskrats ahead, 4-3.

The Gulls threatened to rally in the ninth as Eric Johnson (UC Davis; Los Altos, Calif.) hit a two-out double and Jeff Melillo (Rutgers; Annandale, N.J.) reached on an error to give Newport runners on first and second with two outs and Conrad Gregor (Vanderbilt; Carmel, Ind.). Gregor worked a full count but was struck out by William Prince to preserve the win for Laconia.

Most of the game's offense came in the first as the Muskrats scored a run on three hits in the top of the first before the Gulls rallied for two runs in the bottom half. Kyle Johnson (Washington State; Coeur D'Alene, Idaho) and Rand Ravnaas (Georgetown; Fort Worth, Texas) both reached on hits to start the inning before Gregor knocked a two-run single to score both and give Newport a 2-1 lead.

The Gulls added an insurance run in the sixth when Kyle Johnson stroked a two-out double and scored on a single by Robby Ort (Indiana State; Newburgh, Ind.) to make it a 3-1 advantage.

Lee pitched eight innings and allowed four runs on 10 hits while striking out nine. Eddie Campbell (Virginia Tech; Bridgewater, Mass.) hurled a scoreless ninth with two strikeouts. Laconia starter Justin Wiley pitched six innings and allowed three runs on nine hits and one walk while striking out four. Relievers Harry Glynne, Zach LeBarron, Brad Zambron, and Prince combined to pitch three scoreless innings from the bullpen.

In the 10 prior trips to the postseason for the Gulls, they have lost Game 1 of a postseason series nine times and have come back to win the series five times and are 5-2 in series when losing the first game at home. Newport takes on Laconia in Game 2 Thursday night at 6:05 p.m. If the Gulls win, Game 3 would be Friday at 6:35 p.m. at Cardines Field. For more, visit Newport's website at newportgulls.com.

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