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# Scouts hit 245 homers, lose finale 1-0 in 10

BY **CORBIN DIETRICH** · KANSAS CITY STAR-JOURNAL

The season came down to one game, here, on October 5. Kansas City, Huron and Mexico City all woke up at 80-81 with one playoff spot left in the Fire. The Scouts had beaten Huron the two nights before, 3-2 and 3-1. Nate Peterson pitched seven and two-thirds innings and struck out eight. It was 0-0 after nine. In the 10th Danny Perez singled, stole second and scored on a single by Dan Boyd. J.J. Saxton struck out to end it. Huron is in. Kansas City finished 80-82.

On August 1 this club was 58-47, three games clear of the last playoff spot. It went 22-35 the rest of the way. In September I asked Brad what went wrong. Here is what the numbers say. After the deadline the Scouts hit .211 as a club in those 57 games, and the lineup that led baseball in home runs all summer could not get a man home often enough to cover what it was not doing. Kansas City hit 245 home runs this year, the most in baseball. It also batted .223, the lowest in baseball, got on base at .292, 31st, and struck out 1,695 times, the most. It scored 635 runs, 21st. You get used to it, I wrote in August. You also lose games to it.

Saxton was hitting 44 home runs and leading the league when I asked Brad in September whether he was still his MVP. He finished with 46, second in the league, one behind Rochester's Jeff Williams. After the deadline Saxton hit .230 with eight. Jared Mettler finished with 45 home runs and 71 stolen bases, the most steals in baseball, and he is only the second player in league history with three seasons of 30 home runs and 50 steals. Nate McCarthy is the other. He is 25 and makes the minimum. Nick Peeks hit 32 home runs and .187.

The pitching held its end until September. Frank Smith, the man I left out of my March rotation, finished 15-7 with a 2.42, the second-best earned run average among qualified starters in the league, and 232 strikeouts. After the deadline he had a 2.07. Peterson threw 233 and a third innings, more than any pitcher in baseball, and went 15-9 with a 3.12. He had a 4.35 after the deadline, and I would guess some of that was the

innings. Oscar Almaraz struck out 210 and went 1-8 after August 1. Chris Williams was 7-0 on August 1, and I wondered in print how long a reliever could go without losing. He finished 11-0. Ben Taylor saved 38.

Freddy Echeverria is the number nobody here wants to look at. He went 3-8 with a 5.21 on $35.2 million this year, and he is owed $129.2 million over the next three.

Brad did not make a deadline trade, and the club stood where it was. I would not call that the mistake. The mistake, if there was one, was the same one I have written about since March: this lineup does not get on base, and good pitching cannot pay for that every night.

Below the big club, Jimmy Glover is still first on the game's Top 100 at the end of the season, and he spent the summer with the Kansas Outlaws. Jon Crawford is 28th, Pedro Huante 56th and Ryan Patton 96th. Glover is the one who matters, and he is getting close.

In August Dana Whitcomb reported on TBL Tonight that the league is talking about four new clubs, as soon as 2036. I covered the 2012 expansion draft from the other side of the table, as the writer for one of the new clubs. If it happens again, Kansas City will be sitting on the other side of that table this time, with Glover, Crawford and Huante in the building.

The Scouts were 50-31 at home and 30-51 on the road. They finished one game short. You can find that game anywhere in the schedule. I keep finding it in the 10th inning on the last day.