

## Junior Legion Suffers DH Sweep

Written by Mike Kelly  
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It was a tough day all the way around for the Watauga Junior American Legion team on Saturday. Watauga (2-4 in Area 4 play; 2-5-1 overall) suffered a double-header loss against South Caldwell in Sawmills, N.C. Watauga went up against a tough pitcher in the opener and was victimized 5-0; in game two, Watauga played one of its worst games of the

year defensively and lost, 9-2.

Gage Parham, who had a no-hitter going into the fifth inning in the opener, coughed up a controversial hit in the fifth. Trevor Eggers reached when his line drive up the middle was knocked down and misplayed.

"They called it a no-hitter, but that was a clean line drive," said Watauga coach Bradley Rudisill. "Trevor hit it hard up the middle. It would have taken a great play to throw him out, if it isn't mishandled. I consider it a hit."

But that was about all the Junior Legion team could smile about. Losing pitcher Andy Gilliam suffered the loss. He coughed up five earned runs in three innings. Nick Shields belted a three-run, inside-the-park home run in the first inning that gave South Caldwell a 3-0 lead; Ethan James belted a solo shot in the third. Parham went the distance and, despite that controversial hit in the fifth, struck out five and picked up the complete-game win.

In game two, Watauga made four errors in the first inning and handed South Caldwell seven runs. And all those runs scored with two outs in the inning. Losing pitcher Hunter Isaacs walked three and lasted just one-third of an inning. Offensively, Watauga only made four hits. Tyler Strugill and Carson Isaacs had two hits apiece. Sturgill had a single, a double, scored a run and drove in a run; Isaacs had two hits, including a triple, and scored a run; Adam Greene had an sacrifice fly that drogve in a run.

"We gave the game away in the first inning," Rudisill said. "Take that inning away and it's a tie game. But we walked too many guys, and we didn't make the plays when we had to. It wasn't pretty to watch."

A huge bright spot was Tyler Nigro, who threw 4 2/3 innings in relief on Saturday. He gave up three runs, two earned with a walk and three strikeouts.

"Tyler doesn't throw that hard, but he is a very strong fundamental player," Rudisill said. "He did a good job for us."

Watauga will play three games in three days beginning Monday night at Pioneer Field. Watauga takes on Hibriten Monday night' West Caldwell comes to town Tuesday night; South Caldwell invades Pioneer Field on Wednesday. All those games begin at 6 p.m.