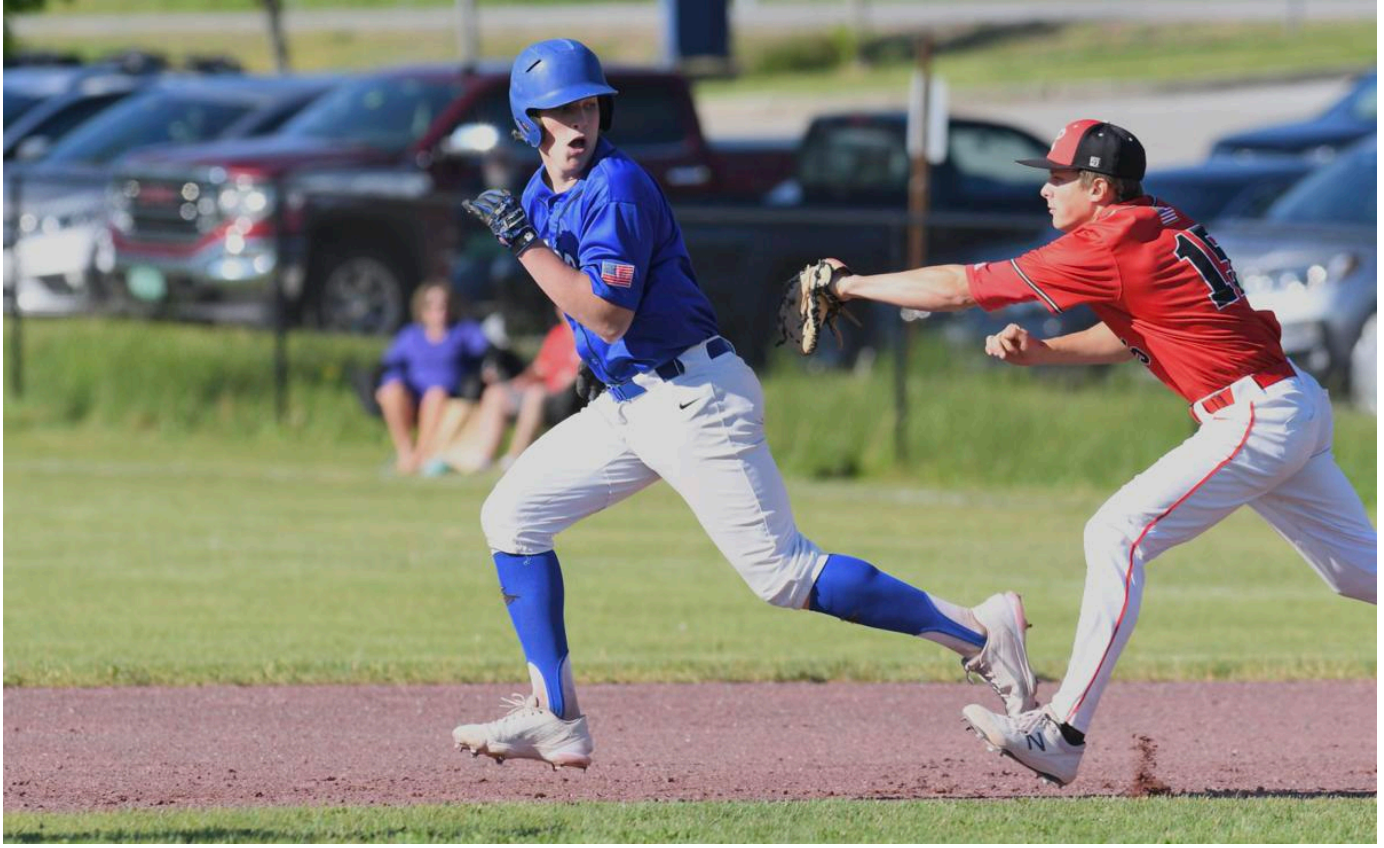


Pierpont settles in, OV bests RHS

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Otter Valley's Ethan Blow (7) gets caught in a rundown as Rutland first baseman Chaska Stannard (15) gets ready to apply the tag during their Thursday matchup at Otter Valley Union High School in Brandon.

Photo by Jon Olender



Otter Valley's Fraser Pierpont (8) tees up a pitch that he hit for a double during their Thursday matchup with Rutland at Otter Valley Union High School in Brandon.

Photo by Jon Olender

BRANDON — They say it's not about how you start, but how you finish. Otter Valley starting pitcher Fraser Pierpont finished quite well in the Otters' 9-3 Senior Day win against rival Rutland Thursday afternoon.

After giving up three runs through as many innings, the OV ace faced just two over the minimum the rest of the way and didn't allow any hits across his last four innings of work in the complete game.

Pierpont finished the day allowing just four hits and striking out five.

"I noticed his tempo wasn't very good to start the game and he fell behind batters," said Otters coach Mike Howe. "Once he got into that groove and his tempo picked up, he threw a lot more strikes and got a lot more outs.

"Typical Fraser fashion, he got a lot better as the game went on. He had his breaking stuff working and he hit spots like he's been doing all season."

Pierpont had a dominant end to his pitching outing, but he didn't neglect his duties to make an offensive impact. He went 3-for-4 at the plate, with two doubles, and he swiped four bases as well.

He was one of the many guys who helped Otter Valley slowly tack on runs as the game progressed. The Otters scored three times in the first inning and added a single run in each of the next three innings.

Otter Valley effectively put the game out reach with a three-run fifth inning.

The scoring was capped by a squeeze bunt by senior Parker Todd that scored Ethan Blow and the ensuing throw was wild, allowing Lucias Sheldrick to score.

“When we have the approach that we’re going hit fastballs early in the count, we’ve been successful,” Howe said. “It gets away from us sometimes and it puts us in tough spots, but when we’re ready to attack, we’ve been really successful.”

Blow, Sheldrick and Jordan Beayon had multiple RBIs in the game.

While the OV bats cranked out 10 hits, the Rutland defense didn’t do itself favors in crucial spots. Whether it was the throwing error on the squeeze bunt or an errant pick-off throw from their catcher, miscues cost the Ravens key runs.

“The pitching has been pretty good lately. We’re just not making enough plays in the field,” said Rutland coach Geoff Bloomer. “It just seems to be the theme of things at the moment.”

Regan Bird, Noah Depoy and Jevan Valente split pitching duties for the Ravens.

Rutland’s bats were strong early on. Valente and Joey Giancola singled in the first inning, with the latter driving in Tyler Weatherhogg, who had reached on an error.

They opened up the third inning with doubles from Ben Spiro and Weatherhogg. Weatherhogg’s two-bagger drove in Spiro and he eventually came around to score on a sacrifice fly by Braeden Carleton.

The start was great, but the Ravens struggled to adjust when Pierpont locked in.

“They were excited because they had already seen (Fraser) once, so they wanted to beat him,” Bloomer said. “They were aggressive knowing he would be around the plate.”

Otter Valley (7-7) is at undefeated Hartford on Saturday. Rutland (1-10) is at Brattleboro on Saturday.