

SPORTS

Express survives off a Pettus triple

By Mike Brody
Special to The Sentinel

Bart Pettus' triple in the bottom of the fourth inning may have been an unexpected contribution from the bottom of the Rockville Express' lineup, but it did provide a necessary boost for the Express in what was a back and forth game.

No lead was safe in Sunday's contest between the Express and the Silver Spring-Takoma Thunderbolts. Although at the end of the game, the Express wrapped up the ballgame 7-6 in front of 157 people at Knights Field.

"I had one lucky hit. I hit a triple," Pettus said. "Other than that, the other guys really picked us up. Pete [Fatsé] had the squeeze there in the fourth to make us go ahead and then we had an execution in the last inning to get another insurance run by Petey again, so that was really crucial."

Fatsé picked up his first RBI as a result of some small ball by the Express. In the fourth inning, Fatsé laid down a successful suicide squeeze bunt that scored Pettus and gave the Express a 4-3 lead. He also drove in what proved to be a valuable insurance run in the bottom of the eighth inning, when his RBI single scored Travis Babin and gave the Express a 7-5 lead.

The Express scored twice in the bottom of the seventh inning, taking the lead for good. An Adam Baker sacrifice fly tied the game up at 5-5, and a Steve Domecus single scored Eric Allen to give the Express a 6-5 lead.

The Express used four pitchers in Sunday's game. Starter JR McAllister pitched six innings, giving up nine hits and five runs (all earned). "It was fair," McAllister said of his pitching performance. "I mean I left I think it was like the sixth, they came up and got a couple runs. I was leaving the ball over the middle, and they were just hitting my mistakes."

Chris Notti pitched a scoreless

seventh inning and struck out the Thunderbolts' Jeffrey Jones with the bases loaded. Jones finished the day with three hits, including a double and a triple.

Jimmy Duggan came on to get the next five outs and gave up one run in the top of the ninth inning, as the Thunderbolts cut the Express lead to 7-6. After Duggan gave up a walk to Ivan Rodriguez, Ryan Juran was called on to get the final out. Juran then got Jeffrey Jones to ground into a force-out to end the game and picked up a save in the process.

Express head coach Tom Shaffer was not happy with giving up leads in the game but sees good things down the road for his team. "It was more of our constant problem that we've been having is that we get a lead and, kind of like our Bethesda game last night where we got a big lead, we went out and scored. I think we put up a seven-spot in the sixth inning or fifth inning, and then we come back out and Bethesda comes back and ties the game," Shaffer said. "Same thing today. We take the lead, score three runs. Next inning, we go out, give up three, four runs where they can tie the score again. So I mean for us, it's early in the season still. We'll be OK. We're starting to compete on the mound a lot more and a lot better. Timely hitting is there, starting to get there. So we'll be OK. It's a long summer."

McAllister noted that the Express is playing more like a cohesive unit now. "We're doing everything as a team, and we're going to click soon. Everything's going to be going our way," McAllister said.

The Express is now 7-9 and faces Youse's Maryland Orioles in a double-header on Tuesday (July 3). The Express come back home for a double-header against the Maryland Redbirds starting at 2 p.m. on Saturday. You can visit the Express' Web site at www.rockvilleexpress.org.

SST Thunderbolts 6 (3-4)

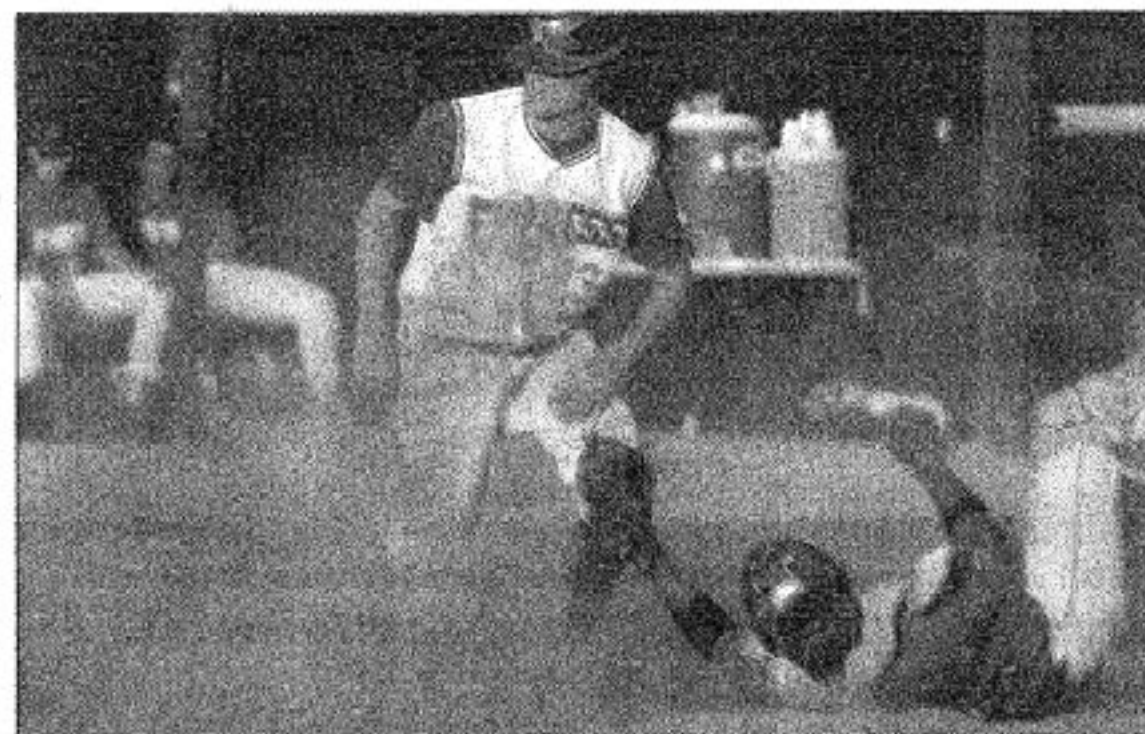
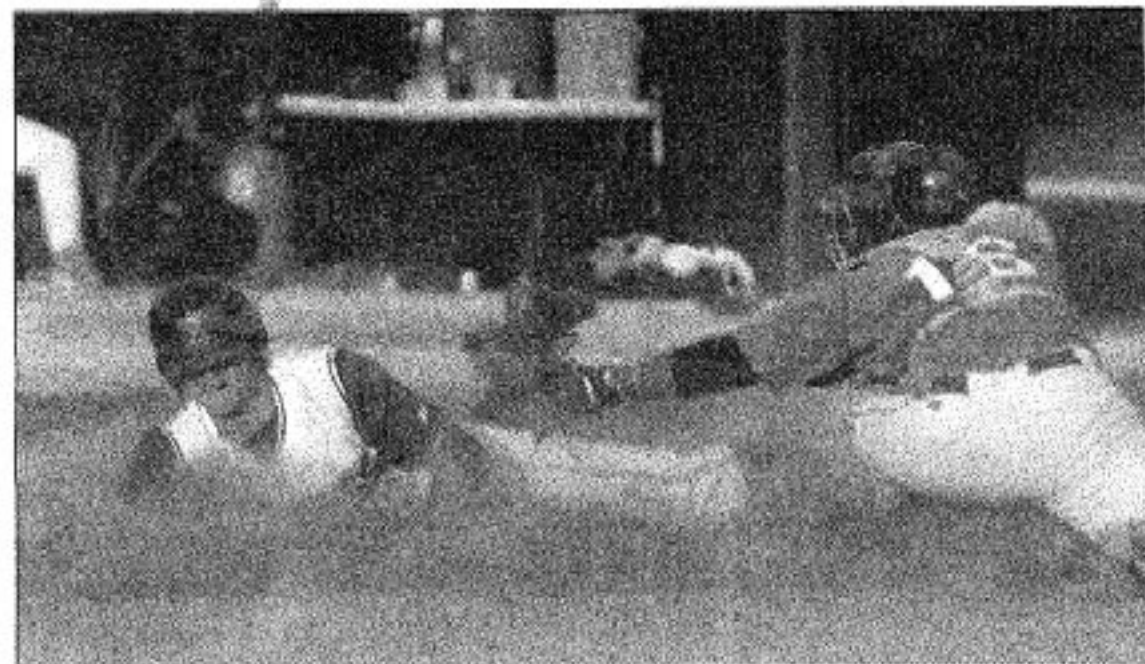
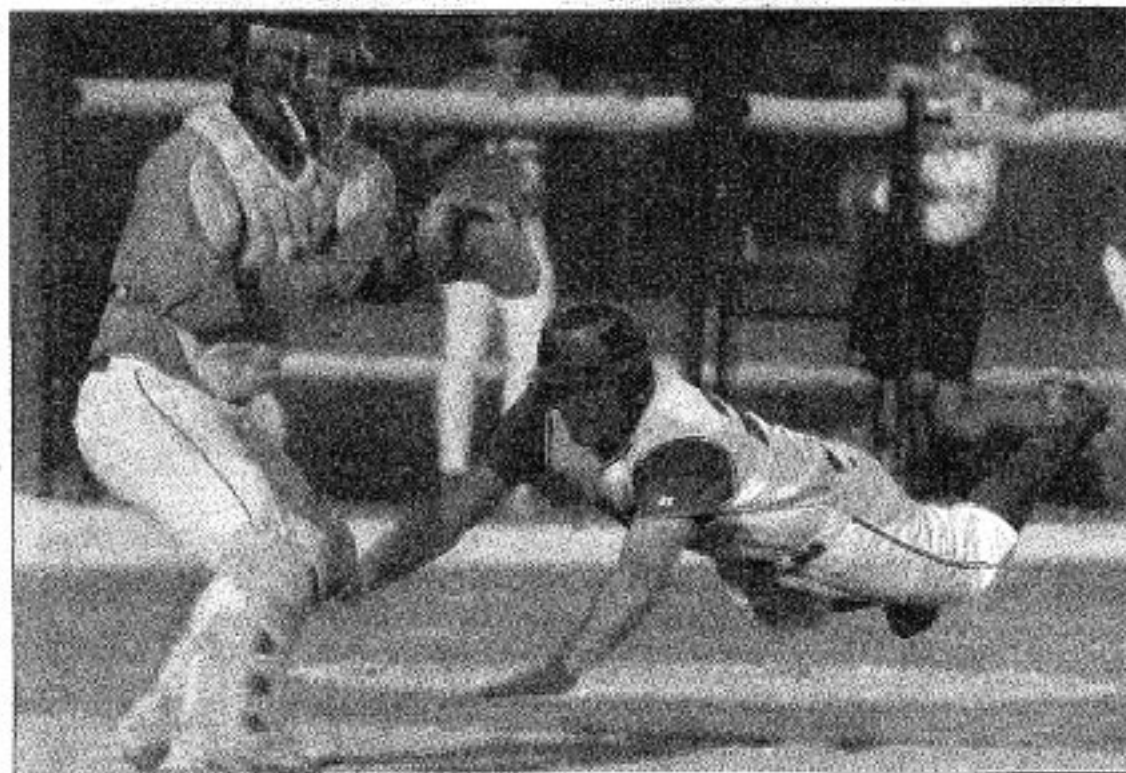
Player	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO	PO	A	LOB
Jon Troutman	3	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2
Michael Peltuch	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Marisa Pate	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Mark Sigafoos	3	0	1	0	2	1	2	0	0
Tim Pate	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
Joe Foster	5	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	0
Joe Ferguson	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	2
Joe Vachon	5	1	2	1	0	0	1	1	0
Headline	4	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	1
David Bennett	3	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
Jeffrey Jones	4	1	2	2	0	1	1	0	0
Tom Tarkenton	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Joe Duggan	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Chris Notti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jeffrey Jones	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Totals	28	6	10	6	4	7	20	11	11

Rockville Express 7 (9)

Player	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO	PO	A	LOB
Paul Foster	4	1	3	2	1	0	2	4	0
Steve Domecus	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0
Eric Allen	4	1	0	0	1	3	4	0	2
Steve Domecus	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Adam Baker	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Steve Domecus	4	1	2	1	0	1	0	1	0
Mark Sigafoos	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Kevin Ketch	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paul Foster	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Joe Foster	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kevin Ketch	4	1	0	1	0	2	3	0	0
Jeffrey Jones	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Paul Foster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jeffrey Jones	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Chris Notti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jimmy Duggan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	20	7	9	6	4	7	8	27	8

Score by Inning

R H E



PHOTOS BY MARIKITA EBERT

Travis Babin slides safely home in this time sequence during the eighth inning.