

Sentinel Sports

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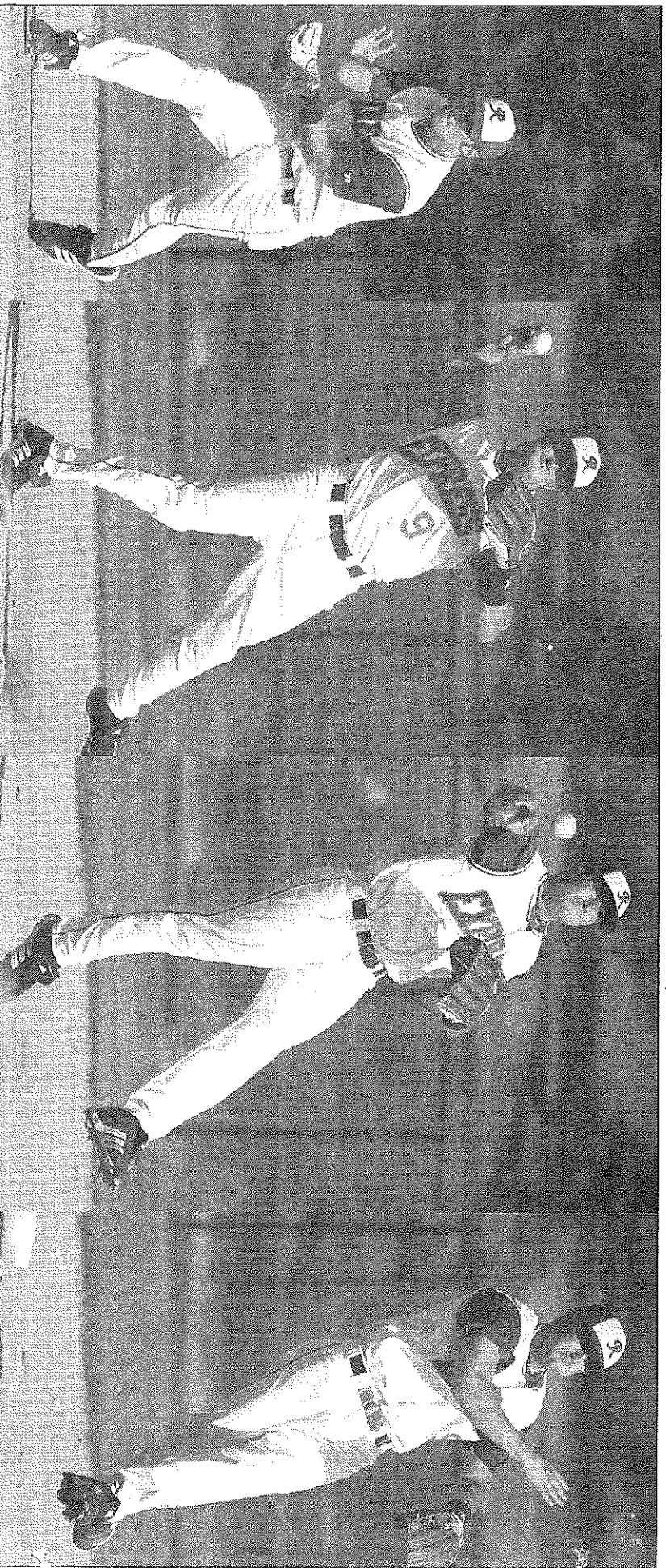


PHOTO BY BILL WYCKOFF

Rockville Express third baseman Gary Helmick fields a grounder and fires to first as part of a tight defense that helped shutdown the Thunderbolts offense.

Express Blanks the Bolts

Jennings throws two-hit shutout in convincing pitchers' duel

By Michael Brooks
Special to the Sentinel

After suffering a loss in a make-up game, the Rockville Express bounced back, defeating the Thunderbolts 2-0 Sunday.

Express pitcher Doug Jennings pitched an outstanding nine innings, striking out 10 and allowing only two hits, one in the first and one in the eighth. Both coaches lavished praise on Jennings.

"He was outstanding. He's a bulldog," Express Coach James Periera said. "He'll throw all day."

"You really have to take your hats off to their pitcher," said Thunderbolts Coach John Duffy. "He threw a really good game."

The first four innings were slow in terms of offense. There were only two hits between the two teams. The real action was at the mound. "It was a pitcher's duel,"

said Periera.

But while Thunderbolts pitcher Wade Newman pitched great, he started to lose steam in the fifth. Shortstop Jose Cardoso started the Express off with a slicer through first and second base. Catcher Wynton Weather brought Cardoso to third with a single of his own, while third baseman Gary Helmick brought Cardoso for the Express' first run with a sharp, tough-to-handle single.

The Thunderbolts switched Newman out between the sixth and seventh innings. The George Mason sophomore struck out six and let by four hits.

While Jennings fully earned his win Sunday, he was backed up by some solid defense. Helmick and Cardoso both made some outstanding plays on tough hits, which garnered praise from Duffy.

"They made some great plays defensively," Duffy said. "Their

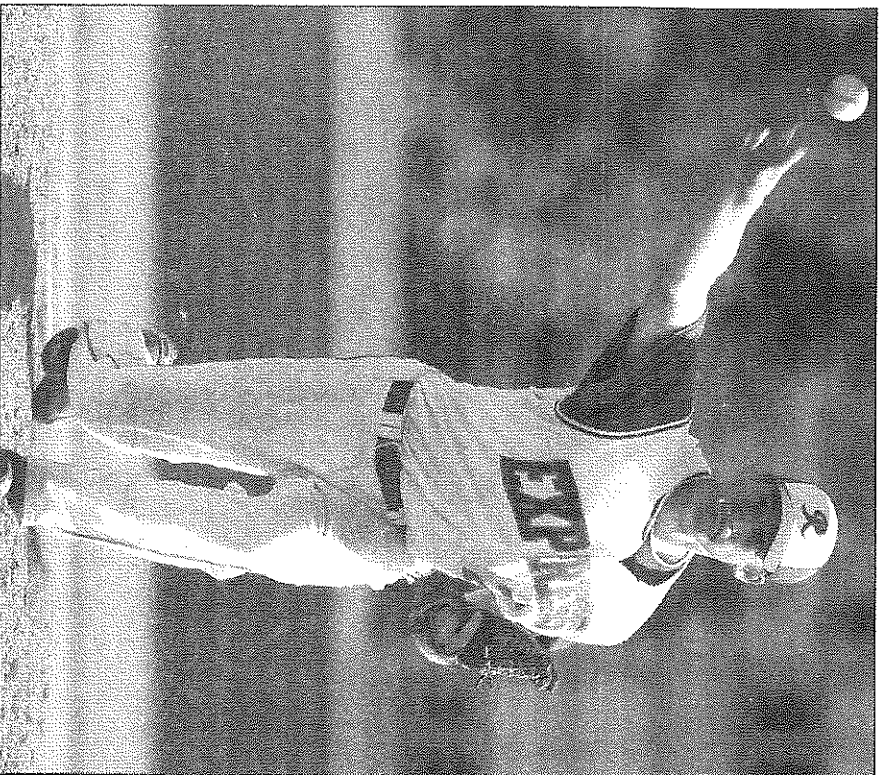
shortstop played really well."

On the other hand, the Thunderbolts defense did not fair as well. The team committed four errors in the game, all of which were due to their inability to stop difficult hits from getting past the infield.

"They just flat out beat us tonight," Duffy said. "I would have liked to see us make better adjustments offensively. Their kid, although he did pitch very well, he was just throwing two pitches for strikes. But again you have to take your hat and tip it to their pitcher, he did a really nice job."

The teams finished up a June 11 game that went into extra innings and was postponed due to darkness. The Thunderbolts won 3-

"I thought some of that energy [from the first game] would carry out over to the second game and it didn't seem to," said Duffy.



Rockville Express starting pitcher Doug Jennings, a junior from the University of Connecticut, pitched a nine-inning shutout against the Thunderbolts.