

## Wolves provide clutch hitting

• Rome rallies in the bottom of the sixth to take a non-region win at Legion Field.

 By Tommy Romanach

Sports Writer

TRomanach@RN-T.com

🕒 02.17.17

**PREP BASEBALL:** Rome 9, Pepperell 6

It might be early in the season, but Rome baseball coach Michael Dougherty already knows what kind of team he's got. The Wolves aren't afraid of swinging the bat, and they're not afraid of responding to an opposing rally either.

The Wolves battled back and forth with Pepperell for most of the night, but a three-run rally in the bottom of the sixth provided Rome with a 9-6 non-region victory Thursday at Legion Field. The win comes only two days after Rome won its season opener against Model.

"Our guys never quit. We not only have senior leadership but just pure leadership on this team," Dougherty said. "Those guys called the meetings themselves after Pepperell rallied, so that tells you something."

Chandler Bridges did plenty of work for Rome, throwing the first four innings of the game while going 3-for-4 at the plate with two doubles and two RBIs. Senior Jakolbi Griffin threw two innings and recorded two hits, while Kade Garrard reached base three times.

Pepperell's Trevor Thomas reached base three times with two singles, while Parker Covington recorded two RBIs and started the game for the Dragons on the mound.

The game came down to the bottom of the sixth, when Garrard's sacrifice fly scored Alden Astin to put Rome ahead 7-6. Big hits from Harrison Pyle and Bridges followed to add two more insurance runs.

The Wolves (2-0) scored a run in every inning, consistently getting help from two-out hits. The steady hitting allowed Rome to take an early 4-1 lead after the first three innings.

But the Dragons (0-2) responded in the fourth, with six consecutive players reaching base, mostly via walks, hit batters and an error. But their plate discipline paid off in the form of four runs and a sudden 5-4 lead halfway through the game.

"I'm proud of our guys' effort, and I think it was an improvement from our first game," Pepperell coach Matt Montgomery said. "And if we keep making that progression, we'll be ready for region play."

Pepperell hosts its first home game of the season Saturday at 1 p.m. against Cedartown, while Rome makes a road trip near Savannah to play Ringgold and Richmond Hill.



Tommy Romanach/Rome News-Tribune

Pepperell's Wesley Wade (right) looks down at Rome's Kade Garrard as he safely slides into second base during Thursday's game at Legion Field. Rome won 9-6.