

## One more inning

**FORGET PITCH COUNT: East pitcher makes 95 pitches count in 5-1 victory.**

By J.R. Rardon  
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It just seemed like East pitcher Anton Maxwell won Friday's baseball season opener against Dimond with his arm.

In reality, he probably won it with his legs.

Maxwell, who coaxed an extra inning from East manager Tony Wylie after reaching his 80-pitch count, struck out seven batters and scattered three hits to lead the Thunderbirds to a 5-1 victory at breezy but mostly sunny Kosinski Fields.

Maxwell walked just one and allowed only an unearned run while throwing 95 pitches in six innings. He was scheduled to leave the game after throwing 81 pitches through five innings, but after mowing down the Lynx 1-2-3 in the fifth, he convinced Wylie to go another inning.

"I could've gone the whole game," said Maxwell, a junior left-hander. "I wanted to finish."

Wylie was willing to extend Maxwell the one extra inning because Maxwell's legs are stronger from lots of running this spring.

Which is both good news and bad news.

"Before, his legs would tire in the fifth or sixth inning," Wylie said. "(But) we have a system of running for disciplinary violations, and he's gotten in a lot of miles for tardies."

Maxwell came through with a clutch effort with East clinging to a 2-1 lead in the fourth inning. After Shane Lovdahl cracked a leadoff double and Jonathan Stralka coaxed a walk, Maxwell struck out the next three batters to end the threat.

He was matched for much of the game by Dimond southpaw Ty Clapper, who surrendered just two hits and two unearned runs through five innings. East put the game away in the sixth against the Dimond bullpen, scoring three runs on a single, a hit batter, three walks and a suicide squeeze bunt by Howard Gregg.

"I just relaxed after that," said Maxwell.

Before that, all the runs were unearned, with Dimond scoring in the top of the third on a pair of errors and Maxwell's wild pitch, and East answering in the bottom half when a walk to Jordan Farkas and a single by Jimmy Obermeyer were followed by an infield throwing error and a passed ball.



East pitcher Anton Maxwell delivers his pitch during Friday's 5-1 victory over Dimond. *(Photo by Bob Hallinen / Anchorage Daily News)*

Still, there were some sparkling plays on defense.

Dimond outfielder Joe Chirhart made a diving catch to rob East catcher Chris Tuck with a runner aboard in the fourth, and the Lynx turned a 1-6-3 double play to end the inning.

For East, Gregg raced to the wall in deep left field to track down a drive by Dimond's Taylor Reed with two out and a runner on second, and Tuck made a catch for an out while crashing into the fence behind the plate in the fifth.

And shortstop Corey Madden relayed a throw from Andrew Marchant to end the sixth inning when Stralka tried to advance to third base on Clapper's two-out single off Maxwell.

"We just didn't execute," said Bob Maxwell, in his first year as Dimond's head coach after four years as an assistant. "Our bats didn't create any pressure on the defense. And their little lefty did a good job of keeping us in check."

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Dimond -- Clapper, Stralka (6), Foy (6) and Bell. East -- Maxwell, Farkas (7) and Tuck. W -- Maxwell (1-0). L -- Clapper (1-0). 2B -- Dimond: Lovdahl.



Howard Gregg of East is tagged out while sliding under second baseman Taylor Reed. *(Photo by Bob Hallinen / Anchorage Daily News)*

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