

Clutch Hero Kenny Lewis Hits Big Blow for Blues

By STURGIS HEDRICK

YOU CAN best the Eastern Blues, but it sure takes some doing.

And no Seashore League rival has been able to turn the trick in the two-year history of one of the fastest amateur baseball circuits in the United States.

THE SALTER Path Braves came close to turning the trick yesterday afternoon. Then they discovered, as have all the other teams in the league, that the Blues pack just too many weapons in their arsenal.

And that's the way Manager Wilson Davis' defending champions came roaring from behind to win their sixth straight this season and their 20th in a row in two years, 9-3, over Skipper Otis Pittman's fired-up Braves in Smyrna.

RIGHT-HANDER Neal Smith pitched the best game the Blues have seen this year. He permitted nine hits, walked two and carried a 3-2 lead into the home half of the sixth. Then the pressure got to him and the Downeasters exploded for the four big runs that meant the ball game.

paw Dallas Wayne Arthur, his cousin, to quell the Braves with six scattered hits. Richard whiffed eight in his six innings, but needed Dallas' rescue. And the No. 1 pitcher in the league fanned five and shut out Salter Path without a hit in his critical three innings of relief.

Ronnie Fulcher led the Blues at bat with two singles and a triple in five times at bat. Manley Gaskill smote a key double and scored twice in his two trips. Ronnie Willis rattled Richard Arthur with a single and double at four at-bats. Craig Weber stole two bases and made the finest fielding play of the afternoon when he climbed a tree in left to rob Fulcher of a home run.

BUT THE 500-plus Down East baseball fanatics were singing today: In awesome praise of Kenny Lewis' ferocious blast that settled the issue and a special kind of Eastern Blues' music for stout-hearted Neal Smith, the bravest of the Braves.

Manager Donnie Aycock's Newport powerhouse outlasted Joey Lawrence's Beaufort Sea Dogs, 10-8, in the home of the Red Sox. But it took Bruce Maness to rescue 18-year-old Jay Garner after the salty Dogs staged a seven-run uprising in the eighth.

MANESS ALSO clouted a home run and two singles in five at-bats. Mac McIntosh walloped a home run in his 3-for-4 afternoon. Tom Mann went 3 for 4 with a double. But speedboy Richard Collins unloaded perhaps the heftiest blow of the season with a 420-foot home run over the center-field fence. Beaufort handled Alex (The Big) Fox with finesse. The Dogs gave him two intentional walks. But even then he collected two singles and stole two bases.

John Turnage pitched a four-hitter to give the Carteret Tides a 19-2 win over the Western Blues on the West Carteret High School diamond. Reggie Henderson struck the main blow for the Blues, who were missing four of their best players, with a vicious home run. Phil Moran homered for the now 5-1 second-place Tides. And there was a perfect day in four at-bats for Donald Leatherman and four-for-five for Chuck Lewis.

Ronnie Fulcher opened the fatal sixth with a rifle-shot single to center and moved to second on a wild pitch. Smith struck out Dale Lewis, but Dale alertly made it to first anyway when catcher Bub Paulson dropped the third strike. Dangerous Dallas' Wayne Arthur drew an intentional base on balls after Dale Lewis stole second.

AND THERE was your ball game for Smith or the Blues to win or lose: The bases jam-packed to capacity with one out. Nothing daunted Neal Smith, however, and he just kept firing away. He handled pinch-hitter Crawford Pigott on a pop foul to third. Randy Grady drove in Fulcher with the tying run on the fielder's choice.

Then Kenny Lewis came through with the clutch blast that has characterized the Blues whenever they need the big hit. Kenny hammered a fast ball far away into the pines in left. He only gained credit for a triple, because plate umpire Wayne Bender ruled he failed to touch home plate. But now it was 6-3 Blues and that's all she wrote.

IT TOOK both right-handed Richard Arthur and south-

(See SEASHORE Pg. 4)

