

By JOHN HENSON

Contributing Writer

Tyler Boggs staked a claim as the 13th Region's top pitcher in 2011 by shutting down the 14th Region's top team from 2010, tossing a three-hitter as Harlan County defeated visiting Perry Central 5-1 Tuesday.

The sophomore right-hander picked up where he left off from a strong freshman season by striking out 13 and walking none. Boggs gave up a single to Connor Hurt and a double to Kevin Smith in the first inning. Shaine Baker followed by reaching on the Bears' only error of the game, bringing in Hurt with the Commodores' only run of the game.

Boggs took over from there, baffling the Commodores with a combination of fastballs and knee-buckling curves that led to 17 straight outs before Derrick Luttrell led off the seventh inning with a single.

Harlan County's offense had grabbed control of the game by that point after being shut out through three innings by Hurt, the Perry Central starters. Errors opened the door for two Harlan County runs in the fourth inning as Braxton Fields, Boggs and Chris Southerland were safe on Perry mistakes. Ryan Cope brought in the tying run with a sacrifice fly, and Stephen Dozier put the Bears ahead to stay with an RBI double.

Consecutive one-out singles by Anthony Jenkins, Fields and Andrew Dozier ignited a three-run uprising in the fifth inning. Jenkins scored on a wild pitch and Fields came home on Dozier's hit. After a single by Southerland, Cope brought home Dozier when he was safe on an error.

Harlan County (2-0) returns to action Friday at home against Williamsburg.

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Five pitchers teamed on a two-hitter as Harlan County opened its season Monday with a 15-1 win in six innings at Lee, Va.

James Bond and Aaron Johnson each pitched one inning for the Bears. Freshman Conner Leisge struck out five in two innings. Anthony Jenkins, also a freshman, struck out three in two innings.

Harlan County blew the game open with an eight-run second inning. Junior shortstop Braxton Fields had a solo homer for the Bears in the third inning. Harlan County added five runs in the sixth inning.

Stephen Dozier had a triple and double for the Bears. Andrew Dozier added a double and single with four RBI. Scotty Bailey singled twice. Tyler Boggs added a double. Bond and Scott Southerland each had one single.