

Heaps up to Task

When you look at Borleske Stadium it looks beautiful and makes you wish you could play there. When you step into the box as a left-handed batter, your view of the field becomes a bit more cynical.



Lefties, like Austin Heaps (left), stroll to the plate and look out and see a 330' sign down the right field line and a 372' sign in the right-center field power alley; not very welcoming sights. On Friday night, Heaps got himself acquainted quite nicely with the big gaps, drilling the first pitch he

saw in his second at-bat all the way to the wall in right-center. Well aware of the amount of area out there, Heaps hustled out of the box and ended up at third with a two-run standup triple.

“I saw that I had a chance to go three and a big guy like me im willing for third right there,” Heaps said. “Got to go in there thinking ‘first pitch get a pitch you can drive somewhere’ and if not, leave it alone and try to get a pitch you can hit.”

That was the thought process Heaps displayed in his first game as a Sweet, swinging at the first pitch in each of his first two at-bats. Utah Valley’s team leader with 25 doubles, Borleske’s dimensions should give Heaps a chance to stretch a few more doubles into triples this summer.

The Return of Richardson

The fact that Ryan Richardson walked off the mound healthy on Friday night is a great relief to Sweets fans. The fact that he pitched five scoreless innings and earned the Opening Night win is even more gratifying.

Richardson allowed four hits over five innings but had to be on his toes on three different occasions. In the second inning, Griffin Boyd's ripped a liner right back to Richardson that went in and out of his glove and bounced out to shortstop Alex Stanford who completed the play to first. The fifth was particularly scary for the right-hander as he dodged out of the way of a comebacker that went for a single. That same inning, his last pitch of the night was smoked right back to him and he reacted fast enough to catch the ball right in front of his face and then had the wherewithal to complete the play by doubling off the runner at first.

When he wasn't dodging the baseball, Richardson was using it to mow down the Corvallis hitters. Using mostly a fastball and good placement, the Campbellsville University product induced nine ground ball outs in five innings.

"My fastball was my pitch tonight," Richardson said. "I didn't throw many offspeed, just let them hit it, pound it into the ground and let my defense do the work."

It was also a special night for Richardson because he got the nod on Opening Night in front of 1,742 fans.

"That was pretty special to have the whole crowd roar when they called my name," Richardson said.