



Game #05

Wednesday, June 8, 2011

7:05 p.m. - Borleske Stadium - Walla Walla, WA
vs. Portland Toros

Tonight's Pitching Matchup:
WW- **Tyler Billen**: 1-0, 7.36 ERA
POR- **Vince Schuetz**

Next Three:

Fri. June 10 at Cowlitz 6:35

Probables

WW- TBD

COW- TBD

Sat. June 11 at Cowlitz 6:35

Probables

WW- TBD

COW- TBD

Sun. June 12 at Cowlitz 5:05

WW- TBD

COW- TBD

Tonight at Borleske

- Walla Walla closes out their mini two-game non-league series with the Portland Toros and ends their season-opening five-game homestand tonight.

Last Night at Borleske

- The Sweets rallied from a 4-2 deficit with three runs in the eighth inning and defeated the Toros 6-4.
- Kalani Brackenridge broke a 4-4 tie with an RBI single to center in the eighth, his second straight game-winning hit.
- Geoff Soja was superb in relief, tossing 4.2 scoreless innings. He did not walk a batter, struck out two and earned the win.

Bullpen Pitching In

- Soja's 4.2 scoreless innings on Tuesday were just the latest in an early season trend from Sweets relievers; don't give up runs.
- Walla Walla's bullpen has yet to allow a run in 15.1 innings and has racked up 13 strikeouts and only four walks.

Kopacz finding a groove

- Rightfielder Chance Kopacz can't use adjusting to wooden bats as an excuse. He uses wood bats all spring at Walla Walla CC.
- That's why it's no surprise he's off to a

5-14 start this summer with the Sweets.

- He had two hits on Opening Night and picked up two more last night against Portland.

Late-Game Excitement

- Three of the first four games of the season have been decided in the eighth inning or later.
- Friday's 8-0 win is the only game that has not come down to the wire.
- The Sweets left the bases loaded in the ninth on Saturday, won the game in the ninth on Sunday and won it in the eighth on Tuesday.

Billen throwing tonight

- Tyler Billen will get the ball tonight as the Sweets look to sweep the two-game series from the Toros.
- Billen was a first team All-Gulf Coast South Conference pitcher in 2010 at Harding University, becoming the first reliever to accomplish that feat.
- He made 15 appearances out of the bullpen and had a 4-1 record with a 2.53 ERA over 32 innings. He struck out 16 and walked on two.
- This spring he only made four appearances, throwing a total of 3.2 innings.

Looking for three straight at home

- The Sweets look for their third-straight home win on Wednesday night, a feat that would match last year's longest home winning streak.
- Walla Walla swept a three-game series from Bend in late July to accomplish the feat. That began a stretch of five wins in games at home.
- A win tonight would put the Sweets one win away from tying that mark when they return home next Tuesday.
- The three wins also have the Sweets nearly a third of the way to their total of 10 from last year.

Brackenridge clutch early on

- Clearly not shunning the tough situations, Brackenridge has fully accepted them.
- He calmly stroked a 1-0 fastball to right with the bases loaded on Sunday and after injuring his shin two innings prior, delivered a single to center that ended up being the game-winning hit.

Sunday against Corvallis

- Kalani Brackenridge ripped a bases loaded walk-off single down the right field line to give the Sweets a 1-0 victory on Sunday.
- Walla Walla took two-of-three games from the Knights with both wins being shutouts.
- Trent Allianic, Sean Santschi and Tim Culligan combined for the seven-hit shutout.

Staff Dominance

- After posting a league-worst 4.48 team ERA last year, the Sweets have gotten off on a better foot this season.

- Over 27 innings this weekend, eight pitchers combined to allow just one earned run on 18 hits. They struck out 19 and walked five.
- Only three of the 18 hits went for extra bases.

RISP Woes

- Brackenridge's walk-off single helped mask the fact that the Sweets finished Sunday 1-8 with runners in scoring position.
- They struck out looking twice in a row to leave the bases loaded in the sixth and failed to score Zach Wentz from third with less than two outs in the fifth.
- On Saturday, they were 2-6, including failing twice in the ninth inning to score a run with the bases loaded and one out.

Santschi and Culligan bring "Game"

- Entering in the sixth with two on and one out, Sean Santschi didn't let the pressure get to him, getting a strikeout and a ground out to end the threat.
- He didn't let it get to him in the seventh either when he put runners on the corners with no outs and eventually worked out of it.
- Culligan was equally as impressive in his two innings and gave the Sweets a chance to win the game in the ninth with a punch-out that left two Knights on base in the top of the inning.

Sweets set a new Franchise Record

- It's not much, but the 1-0 shutout on Sunday gave the Sweets two on the season and surpassed their mark of one they set last season.

UC-Irvine Advance to Super Regionals

- The Anteaters are going to the Super Regionals and Scott Gottschling brought them there.
- The reserve outfielder pinch-ran in the bottom of the ninth and scored the winning run on a single to give Irvine a 4-3 win over UCLA.
- UC-Irvine will face top-ranked Virginia in the Super Regionals, needing to win two-of-three to advance to the College World Series in Omaha, NE.

Saturday at Borleske

- Knight starter Max Beatty went eight strong and the Knights built a 3-0 lead and held off a Sweets rally to win 3-2.
- Beatty took a perfect game into the 7th and lost it on a two-out single. He gave up three hits and one run while striking out seven.
- Corvallis scored two runs in the third and one in the seventh and were helped by three Sweet errors.
- Walla Walla loaded the bases in the ninth with one out but could not score the tying run.
- Alex Stanford homered and Austin Heaps had two hits.

Rally Falls Short

- Trailing 3-1 in the ninth, Alex Bonczyk and Kalani Brackenridge drew back-to-back walks to start the inning.
- Austin Heaps' single loaded the bases with one out and Goose Kallunki made it 3-2 with an RBI single to right.
- A pop out to second was out #2 and the final out was made by Corey Moore at second as he knocked down a hard grounder and his strong throw just beat a diving Stanford at first.

Watson strong in first start

- Making his first start, Brett Watson pitched well enough to win but Beatty was just a bit better.
- Watson went six-plus and gave up three runs on four hits and struck out four.
- After giving up the 2-0 lead in the third, he allowed just two hits the rest of the way.

Peterson Makes Pitch

- Derek Peterson threw his first three innings of baseball on Saturday and they were all scoreless.
- Peterson redshirted this spring as a freshman at Gonzaga and had not thrown in live game action since last summer.
- He entered with a runner on and no outs in the seventh and despite the runner eventually scoring, he kept the Sweets close over the closing innings.

Friday

- The Sweets scored six runs in the third inning and went on to an 8-0 victory.
- Ryan Richardson, Daniel Jewett and Drew Fittry combined on a five-hit shutout.
- Richardson started and tossed five scoreless to earn the win.
- Alex Bonczyk had three hits and two RBI and Austin Heaps and Goose Kallunki each drove in two.

Opening Night Shutout

- The Sweets 8-0 shutout matches their total from last year and comes one game earlier than last year.
- Walla Walla shutout Wenatchee 2-0 in game two of 2010.
- The Sweets, however, were shutout seven times last season.

Bonczyk Thrives on Opening Night

- Graced with blazing speed, Bonczyk used it to his advantage Friday, beating out two infield hits and chasing down a gaper and making a sliding catch.
- Signed to a 10-day contract earlier in the week, Bonczyk had three hits in total and provided the Sweets with a presence at the top of the lineup.

Richardson Turns the Tables

- After giving up seven runs in 11 innigs against the Knights last season, Richardson twirled a gem on Opening Night.
- He scattered four hits over his five inning outing, throwing 61 pitches (40 strikes).

Hoverson's Title Dreams Fall Short

- Aaron Hoverson and Winona St.'s season did not end the way they had hoped.
- Playing in the National Championship for the first time in school history, the Warriors fell to West Florida 12-2 yesterday.

Eight is Great

- The Sweets eight-run outburst on Opening Night is a great start for the Sweets.
- In 2010, the Sweets managed to score eight or more runs on just four occasions.
- W2 erupted for a season-high 11 runs in an 11-8 victory over Kitsap on July 29.

Last Season at Borleske

- The Sweets were 10-15 in the shadow of Borleske Blue last summer.
- During a stretch in late July, W2 won 5 of 6 at home as they began their playoff push.
- Attendance-wise, the Sweets led the WCL with an average of 1,451.

Returning Sweets

- Seven players return from last year's inaugural season (Stewart, Chavez, Williams, Gottschling, Overbay, Richardson, Watson)
- Stewart was a 2nd team All-WCL and Richardson was third in innings pitched.

College Success

- Utah Valley teammates Goose Kallunki and Austin Heaps both had outstanding seasons for the Wolverines.
- Kallunki drove in a team-high 60 runs and Heaps hit .339 with a team-high 25 doubles.
- Chance Kopacz (WWCC) led the NWAACC with 21 doubles and 54 RBI. He finished fifth with 8 home runs.
- Sweets returnee and Campbellsville University right-hander Ryan Richardson was 4-0 with a 3.95 ERA.
- He threw a no-hitter against Kentucky State on March 23.

Wentz Academic All-District

- Zach Wentz (North Dakota St.) was named to the COSIDA Capitol One Academic All-District 7 University Division First Team.
- Wentz carries a 3.92 GPA in physical education and health education.
- He was a 2nd team selection in 2010

Sweets in NCAA Tournament

- Five Sweets players are currently involved in the NCAA tournament.
- Aaron Hoverson (Winona St.) is playing in the D2 National Championships.
- Jimmy Litchfield (UC-Irvine), Scott Gottschling (UC-Irvine), Brenton Allen (UCLA) and Kevin Williams (UCLA) are all competing in the Los Angeles Regional of the NCAA D1 tournament.
- UCLA is the #1 seed and UC-Irvine the #3 seed in the four-team regional that begins Friday.
- Winona St. lost in the National Championship to West Florida.

Litchfield making an appearance

- Left-handed reliever Jimmy Litchfield is now in sole possession of third all-time at UC-Irvine in single-season appearances with 33.
- He surpassed Eric Pettis with two hitless innings of relief in the Anteaters first round win over Fresno St. in the NCAA Regional.
- Litchfield has worked 39.1 innings and is 2-1 with three saves and a 2.97 ERA.
- He needs two appearances to tie the record of 35 set by Gary Wheelock in 1972.

Richardson Returns

- Second-year Sweet Ryan Richardson gets the ball on opening night.
- Last summer, Richardson was 1-3 with one save and a 3.39 ERA.
- He threw 63.2 innings, good enough for third in the West Coast League.

Heaps doesn't miss a beat

- Austin Heaps was a freshman at Utah Valley in 2007 and a sophomore in 2010. In between he served an LDS mission in Honduras.
- He hit .348 with 16 doubles, seven home runs and 54 RBI as a freshman before taking two years off.
- Shaking off the rust last spring, he hit .338 with 35 RBI.
- This spring he was even better, hitting .339 with 25 doubles, 35 RBI and 50 runs scored.
- In two games this summer, he's collected three hits and two RBI.

Home Sweet Home

- The Sweets will have a chance to get comfortable at Borleske Stadium early on, playing 13 of their first 16 games at home.
- The season starts with a five-game homestand before the Sweets travel to Cowlitz for three games.
- The Sweets then return home on the 14th to start an eight-game homestand.

What's Next

- Tonight ends a five-game homestand for Walla Walla and they will hit the road for the first time this season on Friday when they travel to Cowlitz.
- The Sweets will play a three-game weekend series in Longview and get a day off on Monday before beginning an eight-game homestand on Tuesday.