

NC State Eliminates Eagles

Written by SoCon Sports Information
Saturday, 04 June 2011 21:40

A two-run six-inning and a two-run ninth surged North Carolina State (35-26) past the Georgia Southern Baseball team (36-26) 5-2 in the first elimination game of the Columbia Regional.

The loss ended the Eagles' fine season that saw their fifth Southern Conference Tournament Championship and 13th trip to a NCAA Regional site.

"We ran into another pretty tough pitcher today in Cory Mazzoni. We knew we were going to have our hands full with him today," said Head Coach Rodney Hennon. "I think that Chris (Beck) really went out and competed and gave us a great effort. When you are facing a guy like that there is not a whole lot of room for error."

The Wolfpack's staff ace Cory Mazzoni struck out 12 batters and evened his record at 6-6 after holding the Georgia Southern offense to four hits and two runs over eight innings. Chris Overman threw a scoreless ninth inning for his seventh save of the season.

Sophomore Chris Beck (Jefferson, Ga.) threw a solid five innings, allowing two runs on two hits. Beck (L, 9-5) struck out three batters and allowed only three base runners in his 19th start on the mound this season. Junior Matt Murray (Spring City, Pa.) tossed three solid innings in relief and allowed one run on three hits.

GSU led 1-0 after a first inning run. N.C. State's Danny Canela tied the game at 1-1 in the fourth inning on his second home run of the regional, a solo shot over the fence and onto the berm in right field. The Wolfpack outscored the Eagles 4-1 over the final four innings to advance to Sunday.

North Carolina State scored two runs in the ninth inning to break open a one-run ballgame with both runs coming on a pair of RBI base hits. A fielder's choice erased their first hit of the inning but scored on a Cameron Conner double in the left-center gap. Conner crossed the plate in the next at-bat on a Matt Bergquist single.

"I'm proud of our team, they have worked awful hard to get to this point and I feel good about the future for next year with the core that we have coming back," coach Hennon.

Georgia Southern got an early run in the first inning in spite of Cory Mazzoni striking out six of the first 11 batters he faced. Shawn Payne (Stone Mountain, Ga.) was hit by a pitch on a 1-2 count and later scored the opening run of the ballgame on a Victor Roache (Ypsilanti, Mich.) double that hit off the wall by the left-field bullpen. Payne stole second base, moving him into a tie for 6th all-time with 76 career steals, and was moved to third on a sacrifice bunt from Eric Phillips (Carrollton, Ga.).

Roache finished the season one RBI short of tying for second place in the single-season GSU record book. The sophomore ended his stellar year that netted him SoCon Player of the Year honors with 30 home runs and 84 RBI.

A leadoff walk of Brett Williams in the sixth inning turned into a Wolfpack 2-1 lead. Williams stole second base and later scored on a bouncing-ball single up through the middle of the infield. Two more hits loaded the bases and a rundown play at second base got the second out of the inning, but put N.C. State up 3-1.

The Eagles got a run back in the bottom of the sixth inning after a wild pitch skipped away from the catcher allowing Phillips to score from third base with two outs. The junior shortstop led off the inning with a base hit, stole second and reached third on a fly ball to the wall in right field.

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Scooter Williams' (Detroit, Mich.) two-out single in the fifth inning, his second hit of the regional, extended his reached base streak to nine games.

SATURDAY'S RESULTS

EAST CAROLINA 6, NAVY 1
NORTH CAROLINA STATE 5, GEORGIA SOUTHERN 2
GEORGIA TECH 6, SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI 2
FLORIDA 5, MIAMI 4
VIRGINIA 10, ST. JOHN'S 2
NORTH CAROLINA 14, JAMES MADISON 0
CLEMSON 12, COASTAL CAROLINA 7
SOUTH CAROLINA 11, STETSON 5
FLORIDA STATE 9, ALABAMA 5