

Tar Heels Advance CWS

Written by Mike Kelly
Sunday, 12 June 2011 08:09

The University of North Carolina baseball team advanced to the College World Series Saturday night.

The Tar Heels (50-14), who completed the two-game sweep against Stanford, became the first team to reach Omaha by knocking off the Cardinal 7-5 at Boshamer Stadium in Chapel Hill, despite a 3 1/2 hour rain delay. It's also their fifth trip in six years to the CWS, and their tenth in school history.

The Tar Heels will play Vanderbilt in the opening round of the CWS, which begins June 18. The Commodores advanced by defeating Oregon State 9-3 Saturday night in Nashville and sweeping that best of three Super Regional in two games.

Keep in mind, an Atlantic Coast Conference team hasn't won a national championship in baseball since Wake Forest did it way back in 1955. The University of Miami has won the CWS four times, the last one coming in 2001, but the Hurricanes were either an independent or a member of the Big East Conference when they won those titles (the last one in 2001).

The Tar Heels jumped out to a 6-1 lead by the sixth inning on Saturday and had it on cruise control before the Cardinal (35-22) scored four times in the bottom of the eighth, narrowing the gap at 6-5. But North Carolina picked up an insurance run in the top of the ninth on Jacob Stallings RBI single.

Stallings was 3-5 with three RBI to pace the offense; Brian Holbertson drove in two runs. Kent Emanuel went six innings and gave up an earned run on five hits, picking up his eighth win of the year. He also walked one and struck out six. The Cardinal staged its rally against relief pitcher Greg Holt, who coughed up four earned runs on three hits in an inning and a third. But Michael Morin came on to squelch the comeback bid, earning his tenth save.

The Tar Heels last reached the CWS in 2009. They were national runner ups in 2006 and in 2007, losing in the finals both times to Oregon State.

SATURDAY'S GAMES

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VIRGINIA 6, CAL-IRVINE 0 (VIRGINIA 1-0)
NORTH CAROLINA 7, STANFORD 5 (NORTH CAROLINA WINS 2-0)
VANDERBILT 9, OREGON STATE 3 (VANDERBILT WINS 2-0)
CALIFORNIA 7, DALLAS BAPTIST 0 (CAL LEADS 1-0)
TEXAS A&M 6, FLORIDA STATE 2 (TEXAS A&M LEADS 1-0)
SOUTH CAROLINA 5, CONNECTICUT 1 (SOUTH CAROLINA LEADS 1-0)
MISSISSIPPI STATE 4, FLORIDA 3 (SERIES TIED 1-1)
TEXAS 5, ARIZONA STATE 1 (SERIES TIED 1-1)

SUNDAY'S GAMES

MISSISSIPPI STATE v. FLORIDA
SOUTH CAROLINA v. CONNECTICUT
CALIFORNIA v. DALLAS BAPTIST
VIRGINIA v. CAL-IRVINE
FLORIDA STATE v. TEXAS A&M
ARIZONA STATE v. TEXAS