

Mountaineers Top Rider, 6-3, In Home Opener

Written by Mike Flynn
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Jeremy Dowdy (Raleigh, N.C./Wakefield) drove in three runs and Ryan Arrowood (Rutherfordton, N.C./R-S Central) struck out seven in 5.2 innings to help lead Appalachian State University baseball to a 6-3 win over Rider in the Mountaineers' 2012 home opener

on Friday at Beaver Field at Jim and Bettie Smith Stadium. With the victory, Appalachian (6-2) extended its winning streak to four in a row while Rider (3-2) had its winning streak snapped at three.

ASU jumped out to a 3-0 lead on Dowdy's RBI groundout in the second and Tyler Zupcic's (Charlotte, N.C./Providence) two-out, two-run single in the fourth but Rider sliced the Appalachian advantage to 3-2 with two runs in the top of the fifth. Rider snapped Arrowood's consecutive-scoreless-innings streak at 12 with the two-run fifth but the damage could have been even worse for the Mountaineers had Arrowood not wiggled his way out of a one-out, bases-loaded jam by getting a strikeout and inducing a groundout to end the threat.

Appalachian stretched its lead to 4-2 with a run in the bottom of the fifth but the pesky Broncs pulled back within one with a single tally in the top of the eighth. However, Dowdy gave the Apps some breathing room in the bottom of the frame, pulling a full-count pitch through the left side of Rider's drawn-in infield for a two-run single that extended the Mountaineer advantage to 6-3.

That would be more than enough for ASU closer Nathan Hyatt (Brevard, N.C./Brevard), who worked a hitless ninth for his fourth save of the young campaign.

Daniel Kassouf (Lexington, N.C./North Davidson) led the Mountaineers' eight-hit attack by going 3-for-3 with a double and two runs while Will Callaway (Greenville, S.C./Eastside) added two hits, a double and two runs of his own.

Arrowood, the defending Southern Conference and national Pitcher of the Week, was not as sharp as he was in last Saturday's 1-0 win over No. 7 LSU but worked around five hits and three walks to limit the Broncs to two runs before coming out of the game after 105 pitches. The right-handed senior moved to 2-0 on the season with the victory.

Greg Fazio and Ryan Murphy had two hits apiece to pace Rider. Starting pitcher Mike Murphy (0-1) allowed four runs over seven innings to suffer the loss.

The teams continue their four-game weekend series with a doubleheader on Saturday at Smith Stadium. First pitch for the twinbill is set for 1 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Jeremy Dowdy, SUBMITTED