

Mountaineers Roll to 8-2 Win Over Charleston

Written by Mike Flynn
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Tyler Zupcic (Charlotte, N.C./Providence) went 3-for-3, Will Callaway (Greenville, S.C./Eastside) hit a three-run home run and Seth Grant (Etowah, N.C./West Henderson) pitched eight strong innings to lead No. 30 Appalachian State University to a convincing 8-2 victory over College of Charleston on Saturday afternoon

at Beaver Field at Jim and Bettie Smith Stadium. With the win, Appalachian (24-5, 9-2 SoCon) put even more distance between itself and second-place College of Charleston (21-11, 11-6) in the Southern Conference standings and clinched just its second-ever three-game series victory over CofC. The Mountaineers go for the series sweep on Sunday afternoon at 1 p.m. at Smith Stadium.

A five-run ASU fourth inning was the difference in Saturday's ballgame. Trailing 1-0, the Mountaineers tied the game on back-to-back doubles from Tyler Tewell (Charlotte, N.C./Butler) and Jeremy Dowdy (Raleigh, N.C./Wakefield) to lead off the inning and took their first lead on an RBI single by Trey Holmes (Rockwell, N.C./East Rowan). Appalachian extended its advantage to 3-1 on a two-out RBI single by Hector Crespo (Miami, Fla./Florida Christian) and capped the five-run stanza when Zupcic tripled to left center and came home on an error by CofC shortstop Bradley Goodson, who misplayed the throw from the warning track on Zupcic's team-leading fourth triple of the season.

Callaway stretched the lead to 8-1 with his two-out, three-run blast to left field in the sixth. Callaway's third homer of the season extended his hitting streak to 20 games, Appalachian's longest of the season and just seven games shy of the school record of 27, set by Rand Smith in 2009.

The eight-run outburst was more than enough for Grant (6-1), who cruised through eight innings en route to his sixth-straight win. The right-handed senior limited the Cougars to two runs (one earned) on four hits and struck out six. After a solo home run by Charleston's Tyler Jackson in the second inning, Grant did not allow another hit until the eighth and needed just 100 pitches to glide through the eight innings of work.

In addition to Zupcic, Crespo (2-for-5) and Tewell (2-for-3) also had multiple hits to help pace the Apps' 11-hit attack. Jackson finished with two of Charleston's four hits.

NOTES: Appalachian's 24-5 record is tied for the best 29-game start in ASU's 109-year baseball history (the Mountaineers were also 24-5 in 1969 and '84) ... Appalachian moved to 17-0 at home this season ... thanks to Kentucky's 9-3 loss to Mississippi on Saturday, the Apps' 17-game home winning streak is now the second-longest active streak in NCAA Division I, behind only Dartmouth's 28-straight home wins ... the Mountaineers' only previous series victory over College of Charleston came in 2009, when ASU took 2-of-3 games in Charleston, S.C. ... Callaway is hitting .456 (36-for-79) during his 20-game hitting streak ... Callaway and Zupcic have both reached base in 24-consecutive games ... Dowdy has reached safely in 12-straight games and 27 of his 28 contests this season.

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Photo courtesy: Seth Grant, ASU Athletics