

Mountaineers Slip at Gardner-Webb

Written by Mike Flynn

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Appalachian State University baseball committed a season-high five errors and managed just seven hits in a 6-3 defeat at Gardner-Webb on Tuesday evening. The setback gave Appalachian (24-7) back-to-back losses for the first time this season. Gardner-Webb (18-16) added to its impressive

ledger of victories with the triumph over the 27th-ranked Mountaineers. Despite struggling throughout the evening both in the field and at the plate, Appalachian managed to take a 3-2 lead in the top of the seventh inning on a two-run double by Trey Holmes (Rockwell, N.C./East Rowan).

The lead stood until the bottom of the eighth when Gardner-Webb strung together six-straight hits and the Mountaineers committed their fourth and fifth errors of the evening to allow the Bulldogs to score four runs and take a 6-3 lead. ASU loaded the bases with one out in the top of the ninth but GWU closer Adam Izokovic induced a pair of fly balls to end the Apps' hopes of a comeback.

Besides Holmes' two-run double in the seventh inning, Appalachian's only other run came on a two-out RBI double by freshman Brandon Burris (Concord, N.C./Mount Pleasant) in the fifth. The Mountaineers' usually potent lineup produced just seven hits against three Gardner-Webb pitchers with the first three hitters in the lineup combining to go 0-for-11 with seven strikeouts. Will Callaway (Greenville, S.C./Eastside) had his 21-game hitting streak snapped with an 0-for-3 evening.

ASU freshman Jamie Nunn (Winston-Salem, N.C./Mount Tabor) surrendered just one earned run but issued three walks and lasted just 4.2 innings in his fourth-career start. Tyler Moore (Banner Elk, N.C./Watauga) was tagged for four earned runs in just one-third of an inning to suffer the first loss of his career and fall to 2-1 on the season.

The loss was Appalachian's first of the year to a team ranked outside the top 50 in this week's official NCAA Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) rankings. Despite being just two games above .500, Gardner-Webb now boasts impressive wins over ASU, North Carolina (23-9), Liberty (28-8), USC Upstate (22-11) and Coastal Carolina (20-11).

First-place Appalachian (9-3 in Southern Conference play) returns to action this weekend with a challenging three-game SoCon series at Georgia Southern (19-15, 8-7 SoCon). The three-game set begins on Friday at 6 p.m. at J.I. Clements Stadium in Statesboro, Ga.

Photo Courtesy: Trey Holmes, ASU Athletics