

Eagles Muscle Their Way To SoCon Semifinals

Written by SoCon Sports
Friday, 25 May 2012 11:12

Behind T.D. Davis' grand slam in the fifth inning and a strong outing from starting pitcher Justin Hess, No. 6 seed Georgia Southern (32-26) defeated No. 7 seed The Citadel (25-32), 8-1, in game seven of the 2012 Southern

Conference Baseball Tournament Thursday evening at Fluor Field. Georgia Southern has now outscored opponents 27-3 during its two games in the tournament. Justin Hess improves to 5-3 on the season after earning the win on the mound. In six innings of work, he allowed four hits and gave up one run to the Bulldogs while striking out seven.

Brent Pugh grounded out to the pitcher to lead off the bottom of the third before Zac Lenns and Scooter Williams both walked. Eric Phillips flied out to left field before Chase Griffin and Garren Palmer drew walks to load the bases and score Lenns.

T.D. Davis blasted a grand slam over the left field wall on a 2-1 pitch giving the Eagles a 5-0 lead over The Citadel. Tyler Griffin singled up the middle to bring home Joe Jackson, who reached on a single, to give the Bulldogs their first run of the night in the sixth.

The Eagles responded as Lenns scored when Griffin flied out to right field to give Georgia Southern a 6-1 lead. Davis reached base in the bottom of the seventh after being hit by a pitch. He stole second then advanced to third on a throwing error before Tyler Avera singled up the middle to add another run.

Williams doubled down the left field line to begin the eighth before Eric Phillips singled out to right extending Georgia Southern's lead 8-1.

The Citadel's Kevin Connell falls to 1-5 on the season. Connell gave up three hits and five runs during his three innings on the hill. The Eagles will play the winner of The Citadel and Elon game Saturday at 10 a.m. The game between the Bulldogs and Elon will be today at 3 p.m.

PALADINS ELIMINATE CATAMOUNTS

Alex Abrams chopped a 1-1 pitch through the middle of the infield to score Will Muzika from second and give No. 8 seed Furman a 9-8, walk-off win over No. 5 seed Western Carolina in

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game six of the 2012 Southern Conference Baseball Championship at Fluor Field. With its victory, Furman (27-30) moves on to Friday's action where it will face the loser of the Appalachian State-Samford matchup at 7 p.m. Western Carolina (32-24) has been eliminated from the tournament.

Muzika opened the bottom of the ninth with a single down the left field line and was advanced to second on Hunter Burton's sacrifice bunt. Western Carolina turned to left-hander Vance Chavis to face the left-handed hitting Abrams, who then delivered the game-winning hit.

Will Miller reached base in all five plate appearances for the Paladins, going 3-for-3 with a pair of walks and two runs scored. The senior was also a perfect 3-for-3 on stolen base attempts. Furman responded to Ross Heffley's first-inning solo home run with five scores in the bottom of the first. WCU tallied three more in the second to cut the deficit to one at 5-4 before the respective pitchers settled in.

Matt Solter, who pitched a perfect top of the ninth for Furman, earned the win to more to 2-2 on the season. Hatcher took the loss for the Catamounts to fall to 6-2.

Julian Ridings went 3-for-4 to pace the Catamounts while Aaron Attaway led the way with three runs batted in.

PHOENIX RISES FOR 14-12 WIN

No. 3 seed Elon withstood a ninth-inning rally and powered its way to a 14-12 victory over No. 2 seed College of Charleston in an elimination game Thursday at the 2012 Southern Conference Baseball Championship at Fluor Field.

Elon (32-25) stays alive in the tournament and will face the loser of tonight's Georgia Southern-The Citadel game at 3 p.m. Friday. With the loss, College of Charleston (37-20) is eliminated from the tournament.

Trailing 14-9 entering the bottom of the ninth, College of Charleston's first five batters of the frame reached, including an RBI single by Marty Gantt and a two-run, bases loaded single from Brandon Murray that made the score 14-12. After Nate Young induced a Daniel Aldrich pop up for the first out, he gave Rob Harding a free pass to load the bases once again. However, the

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Elon closer was able to shut the door by striking out Bradley Goodson and ending the contest with a Tyler Jackson ground out to second. The teams combined to set a new tournament record with 39 hits on the day.

A day after suffering the largest defeat in SoCon Tournament history, Elon wasted little time in trying to erase that memory by scoring six runs on eight hits through the first two innings. The Phoenix took advantage of costly College of Charleston errors in each frame that made all six runs unearned. Ryan Kinsella notched an RBI-single in the first and a two-run double in the second, while Joey Tomko followed with run-scoring singles in each frame.

The damage could have been even greater if not for Brandon Murray's two outfield assists in the first, as he gunned down Blaine Bower and Tomko from left field. Elon's offensive onslaught was sustained with four more runs in the fifth and single scores in the sixth, seventh, and ninth. The Phoenix had a season-high with 21 hits and were the recipients of eight walks from Cougar pitchers.

Kinsella, Elon's first baseman, was 4-for-6 with a season-high 5 RBIs in the contest. Chris Bresnahan, Sebastian Gomez, and Jake Luce each had three hits on the afternoon. Murray and Gantt were each 4-for-6 at the plate with 3 RBIs. Murray launched his 12th home run of the season in the eighth inning.

Charleston catcher Jimmy Holton tallied a career-high three hits, including his first collegiate home run. Charleston starting pitcher Josh Renfro lasted just two innings after surrendering six runs on eight hits, although all six runs were unearned due to untimely errors. He was saddled with the loss to fall to 6-7 on the year.

Spencer Medick, who started on the mound for Elon, was lifted early as well, leaving the game after three innings. He gave up four runs on eight hits. Elon reliever Andrew MacDonald was credited with the victory to improve to 5-3 while Young earned his 11th save by recording the final three outs.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25

APPALACHIAN STATE 7, FURMAN 5

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GEORGIA SOUTHERN 19, ELON 2
THE CITADEL 8, COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON 6 (11 INNINGS)
SAMFORD 7, WESTERN CAROLINA 0

THURSDAY, MAY 26

SAMFORD 12, APPALACHAN STATE 7
GEORGIA SOUTHERN 8, THE CITADEL 1
FURMAN 9, WESTERN CAROLINA 8
ELON 14, COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON 12

FRIDAY, MAY 27

ELON v. THE CITADEL, 3 P.M.
APPLACHIAN STATE v. FURMAN, 7 P.M.□