

Seminoles Eliminate Bulldogs

Written by SoCon Sports
Monday, 04 June 2012 08:51

The Samford baseball team was eliminated from the NCAA Tallahassee Regional with a 5-2 loss to top-seeded and third-ranked Florida State in the championship round of the regional Sunday evening at Dick Howser Stadium. With the loss, Samford ends the most successful season in program history.

The Bulldogs earned their first Southern Conference title and NCAA Tournament bid this season. The team's final record of 41-23 gives the program its first-ever 40-win season as well. "To begin with if you told us at the beginning of the season it would end in a regional final in Tallahassee in front of a packed house, we would've all been pretty happy," Samford head coach Casey Dunn said. "Obviously, when you end the season on a loss, it's pretty tough. These guys played their hearts out. I couldn't be any prouder of the way we competed." Samford advanced to the championship round with a 3-2 win over second-seeded and 17th-ranked Mississippi State earlier in the day. Samford was led at the plate against FSU by Tommy Corbin, driving in two runs in a 1-for-3 performance. Brad Moss, Brandon Miller, C.K. Irby and Christiaan Durdaller also had one hit each for Samford.

C.K. Irby (5-2) pitched 2.0 innings, giving up three runs on three hits to take the loss on the mound for Samford. Michael Gunter pitched the final 5.2 innings, allowing no hits and striking out six batters.

"Michael Gunter did a phenomenal job out of the bullpen to give us a shot," Dunn said. "In the end we just couldn't do enough."

For Florida State, Mike Compton (11-2) pitched 6.0 innings, giving up two runs on five hits and striking out five batters to earn the win. Robert Benincasa tossed the final inning to pick up his 15th save of the season. Florida State was led at the plate by Josh Delph, going 2-for-3 with two RBI. Stephen McGee also drove in two runs, going 1-for-3 at the plate.

Florida State jumped on top with three runs in the bottom of the second inning. Jayce Boyd led the inning off with a single. McGee then walked, moving Boyd to second base. The runners moved to second and third base on a sacrifice bunt by Justin Gonzalez. Delph then singled to drive in Boyd and McGee for the first two runs of the game. After Delph moved to third base on a single by John Holland, he scored on a sacrifice fly by Jose Brizuela for a 3-0 FSU lead. The Seminoles added two more runs in the bottom of the third inning to push their lead to 5-0. Devon Travis led the inning off with a single. James Ramsey then walked and Boyd was hit by a pitch to load the bases with no outs. McGee then singled to drive in Travis and Ramsey for a five-run Seminole lead.

Samford put its two runs on the scoreboard in the top of the fifth inning to cut the Florida State lead to 5-2.

Irby reached base on an FSU error to lead off the inning. Durdaller then doubled, moving Irby to third base. With one out in the inning, Corbin singled to drive in Irby and Durdaller to pull Samford to within three runs.

With the win, Florida State (46-15) advances to next week's Super Regional, which the Seminoles will host, taking on the winner of the Palo Alto Regional.

At the conclusion of the game, the All-Regional Team was selected. Starting pitcher Charles Basford, outfielder Miller and designated hitter Irby were Samford's representatives on the

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team. The complete All-Regional team is listed below.

2012 NCAA DIVISION I BASEBALL TALLAHASSEE REGIONAL/ALL-REGIONAL TEAM

POS. NAME SCHOOL

C Mitch Slauter Mississippi State

1B Wes Rea Mississippi State

2B Matthew Britton Mississippi State

3B Sherman Johnson Florida State

SS Adam Frazier Mississippi State

OF James Ramsey Florida State

OF Brandon Miller Samford

OF Josh Delph Florida State

P Brandon Leibrandt Florida State

P Charles Basford Samford

DH C.K. Irby Samford

MOST OUTSTANDING PLAYER: James Ramsey - Florida State

BULLDOGS ADVANCE TO REGIONAL FINALS

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#3 Samford 3, #2 Mississippi State 2 (Mississippi State eliminated) Tallahassee Regional

The third-seeded Samford baseball team plated two runs in the bottom of the seventh inning to come from behind for a 3-2 win over second-seeded and 17th-ranked Mississippi State in an elimination game in the NCAA Tallahassee Regional Sunday afternoon at Dick Howser Stadium.

"What a gutsy effort by a group of kids that haven't been here before," Samford head coach Casey Dunn said. "In this environment, in regional play, in an elimination game, for them to hold their composure is really impressive."

With the win, Samford advances to take on top-seeded and third-ranked Florida State Sunday evening at 5 p.m. (CT). The game will be broadcast live on ESPN3.com.

Samford trailed, 2-1 entering the bottom of the seventh inning. With two outs in the inning, Phillip Ervin singled up the middle and then stole second base. Brandon Miller then doubled to left field to drive in Ervin to tie the score at 2-2. Miller then scored when C.K. Irby reached base on a Mississippi State error to give Samford the lead for good.

Samford relief pitcher Joseph Burns (4-1) pitched 1.2 innings, allowing no hits and striking out two batters to earn the win. Starting pitcher Kyle Putkonen pitched 6.1 innings, giving up two runs on eight hits and striking out five batters. Irby came in to pitch the final inning, giving up just one hit to earn his 10th save of the season.

Samford was led at the plate by Miller, going 2-for-3 with a double and an RBI. Zeth Stone, Brad Moss and Irby also had two hits each for Samford.

Mississippi State's Jonathan Holder (2-1) pitched an inning, giving up two runs, just one earned, on three hits to take the loss. Matthew Britton led MSU at the plate, going 2-for-4 with an RBI. Adam Frazier and Wes Rea also had two hits each for Mississippi State.

Mississippi State jumped on top first with a run in the top of the first inning. Frazier led the inning off with a single. Demarcus Henderson then walked, moving Frazier to second base. After both runners advanced one base on a sacrifice bunt, Frazier scored when Hunter Renfroe reached base on a fielder's choice for a 1-0 MSU lead.

In the top of the fourth inning, Mississippi State added another run to push its lead to 2-0. Luis Pollorena and Rea led the inning off with back-to-back singles. Britton then singled to drive in Pollorena for MSU's second run of the game.

Samford came back with a run of its own in the bottom of the fourth inning. Miller and Irby led the inning off with back-to-back singles. With one out, the runners moved to second and third base on a ground out by Austin Allison. Tommy Corbin then singled to center field to drive in Miller, but Irby was thrown out trying to score to keep the score at 2-1.

With the win, Samford improves to 41-22. Mississippi State ends its season with a record of 40-24.

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TECH ELIMINATES COUGARS

#2 Georgia Tech 3, #3 College of Charleston 0 (College of Charleston eliminated) Gainesville Regional

College of Charleston pitcher Josh Renfro performed admirably in his final start for the Cougars, but Georgia Tech reliever Alex Cruz quieted the CofC bats in a 3-0 pitcher's duel in a nationally-televised elimination game of the NCAA Gainesville Regional. The Cougars end the season with a 38-22 record and the program's fifth NCAA appearance with the fourth SoCon Regular Season championship.

Renfro and Cruz were locked in a defensive struggle until a fluke play in the sixth inning allowed the Yellow Jackets to get on the board. Designated hitter Zane Evans lifted a high fly ball to left center field that CofC's Marty Gantt lost in the sun. The ball fell and Brandon Thomas came around to score and give Tech a 1-0 lead.

That was the only scoring of the game until the ninth inning when Connor Lynch lifted a two-run homer to the left field corner off of Kyle Owings to put the game out of reach. Cruz (8-3) and Zane Evans held College of Charleston to just three hits in the entire game, as Cruz struck out three in six innings of work.

Renfro (6-8) pitched 7.1 innings, scattering six hits and allowing just one run while striking out five Yellow Jackets.

"This was a tough one. We pitched really well and played well defensively," head coach Monte Lee said. "Josh Renfro was outstanding and battled the entire game. We just couldn't find a way to score runs. Their pitching staff did a great job of getting ahead in the count and putting the ball down in the zone. Overall, I'm so proud of our seniors and the way that this team competed this season."

Rob Harding, Brandon Murray and Jimmy Holton picked up the only hits for the Cougars.

Harding continued his stellar defensive play during the Regional, leaping to snag one potential double and charging a bunt attempt and throwing out a GT batter off-balance.

The Cougars move their record to 9-10 in five NCAA Regional appearances since 2004.

College of Charleston has won at least one game in every Regional. Florida eliminated Georgia

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Tech 15-3 Sunday night.