

Carolina Falls To UCLA, 4-1

Written by Dave Schmidt
Saturday, 22 June 2013 10:43

Pat Valaika's two-run double gave UCLA some cushion, record-setting closer David Berg survived a rocky ninth inning and UCLA defeated top-seeded North Carolina 4-1 Friday night to move to the championship round of the College World Series.

The Bruins (47-17) will begin the best-of-three finals Monday against Mississippi State, which eliminated Oregon State with a 4-1 win in the afternoon.

"I'm proud of our team, but we still haven't accomplished what we came to do," UCLA coach John Savage said. "On to the next round."

The Tar Heels (59-12) twice loaded the bases in the ninth against Berg but came away with only one run, with the game ending on Landon Lassiter's flyout to center.

"The end of the year, it always stinks," Carolina coach Mike Fox said. "What we did in the ninth inning is just indicative of our kids and how we played all year. Just fighting until the very end." Both starters went six innings, with the Bruins' Grant Watson (9-3) allowing four hits and Kent Emanuel (11-5) giving up five singles and striking out seven. UCLA opened the CWS with 2-1 victories over LSU and North Carolina State. The Bruins, with eight total runs, matched 1976 Eastern Michigan for fewest by a team in the metal-bat era that won its first three CWS games. The Bruins scored single runs in the second and sixth innings and made it 4-0 in the seventh on Valaika's double.

North Carolina threatened in the fourth and seventh innings but couldn't push across any runs until Berg, the National Stopper of the Year, came on to start the ninth.

Cody Stubbs and SkyE Bolt singled, and Berg walked Michael Russell to load the bases. Savage made a mound visit after Berg went 1-0 to Mike Zolk, whose groundout scored Stubbs. Berg struck out Parks Jordan, and the bases were loaded again when he walked Chaz Frank. When Lassiter's fly landed in Brian Carroll's glove, the Bruins' dugout emptied in celebration. "I have the same approach every game-go there and try to get a pitch you can hit and see what happens," Lassiter said, "and we just fell short."

UCLA has held its opponents to two runs or fewer in 31 of 64 games and is 30-1 in those games. Watson followed strong starts by Adam Plutko and Nick Vander Tuig with one of his own to help send the Bruins to the finals for the second time, and first since they were swept by South Carolina in 2010.

UCLA opened the scoring when Cody Regis's two-out chopper drove in Gallagher in the second. The Bruins added their unearned run in the sixth. Eric Folia's grounder got past the glove of Carolina first baseman Stubbs, and he scored on Kevin Williams' base hit up the middle.

Valaika produced some big insurance runs in the seventh, hammering the ball into the left-field corner off Trevor Kelley to drive in Carroll and Folia.

NOTES: Carolina ends its season with a school-record 59 wins. UNC's winning percentage of .831(59-12) is the best for the program since the 1934 team went 21-2 (.913). The previous school mark for wins was set by the 2007 team that finished 57-16.....The Tar Heels are now 17-21 all-time in the CWS and 15-13 since 2006.....With its one run Friday, Carolina established a new school record for runs in a season with 542. The previous record was 541 in 2002.....1B Cody Stubbs went 3 for 3 with a run scored on the night and became the eighth player in

Carolina Falls To UCLA, 4-1

Written by Dave Schmidt
Saturday, 22 June 2013 10:43

Carolina history to record at least 100 hits in a season. His senior year total of 101 hits is the 10th-most for a Tar Heel and the most since Dustin Ackley (111) and Kyle Seager (103) in 2009.....DH Landon Lassiter went 3 for 5 against UCLA and finished his freshman season with 92 hits in 257 ABs (.358). His 92 hits are the fourth-most by a Tar Heel freshman, trailing only Ackley (119 in 2007), Brian Roberts (102 in 1997) and Adam Greenberg (98 in 2000).....Lassiter reached base safely in 62 of his 69 appearances this season and finished the year with an on-base percentage of .491. He recorded multiple hits in seven of 11 postseason games and hit .400 (20 for 50) in the NCAA tournament. For the season, Lassiter had 29 multi-hit games.

Photo Courtesy: Cody Stubbs, UNC Athletics