

## Five-Run First Propels App State Over Bulldogs

Written by Mike Flynn  
Sunday, 13 April 2014 17:32

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Highlighted by a three-run home run by Matt Brill (Coal Valley, Ill./Moline), Appalachian State University baseball scored five runs in the first inning and cruised to a 10-6 victory over The Citadel on Sunday afternoon at Beaver Field at Jim and Bettie Smith Stadium.

With the victory, Appalachian State (13-20, 7-4 SoCon) took a three-game Southern Conference series from The Citadel (14-23, 2-13 SoCon), two games to one. Appalachian has won three-straight SoCon series and trails first-place Davidson by just one game in the loss column.

The Citadel jumped out a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning of Sunday's finale but App State responded with the five-spot in the bottom of the stanza to take an advantage that it would never relinquish. The Mountaineers opened the bottom of the first with three-straight hits, including an RBI triple by Preston Troutman (Rockwell, N.C./East Rowan) and a run-scoring single by Tyler Zupcic (Charlotte, N.C./Providence) that gave the Apps a 2-1 lead.

Four batters later, Brill delivered the biggest hit of the day when he launched the first pitch he saw from The Citadel starter Brett Tompkins (1-3) over the right-field wall for a two-out, opposite-field, three-run homer that extended the Mountaineers' advantage to 5-1.

A two-run blast by Jaylin Davis (McLeansville, N.C./Northeast Guilford) stretched Appalachian's

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lead to 7-1 in the fourth and the Mountaineers maintained a six-run advantage at 8-2 going into the seventh. However, helped by two Appalachian State errors, The Citadel plated four unearned runs in the top of the seventh to cut the Mountaineers' lead to 8-6.

The Bulldogs' momentum was short-lived though, as Dillon Dobson (Hamptonville, N.C./Starmount) and Brill drove in runs in the bottom of the seventh to push Appalachian's lead back to four runs at 10-6.

Taylor Thurber (Mooresville, N.C./Lake Norman) pitched a scoreless eighth and Robert Whaley (Hickory, N.C./Hickory) faced just three batters in the ninth to close out the victory.

Red-hot Brill paced the Mountaineers' 10-run, 10-hit attack by going 2-for-3 with a career-high four RBI, a walk and a run. In the process, the true freshman extended Appalachian's longest hitting streak of the season to 15 games and raised his team-best batting average to .412. Davis and Zupcic added two hits apiece for App State.

Starting pitcher Jeffrey Springs (Belmont, N.C./South Point) grinded his way through six innings, throwing 128 pitches but limiting The Citadel to just two runs to earn the win and move to 2-1 on the season.

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Tyler Griffin went 3-for-4 with two RBI to lead The Citadel.

Appalachian State begins a five-game road stint on Tuesday when it travels to face longtime Atlantic Coast Conference rival Wake Forest. First pitch is set for 6 p.m. at Wake Forest Baseball Park in Winston-Salem, N.C.

**NOTES:** Appalachian State moved to 5-1 in its last six home games versus The Citadel ... Appalachian is 8-3 this season and 45-15 since the beginning of 2012 at Smith Stadium ... the Mountaineers' five-run first inning marked the most runs it has scored in an opening frame and only the eighth time that it has scored five runs in any stanza this season ... Brill is hitting .473 (26-for-55) during his 15-game hitting streak ... Appalachian has recorded double-digit hits in eight-straight and nine of its last 10 games ... the Mountaineers' five errors matched a season high (App State also had five miscues at No. 6 NC State on Feb. 22) ... for the first time at home this season, the Apps sported their new gold caps.

**Photo Courtesy: Matt Brill, App State Athletics**