

ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

ATHLETICS

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WONDER BOYS DROP GSC SERIES FINALE AT OUACHITA BAPTIST

ARKADELPHIA, Arkansas – Arkansas Tech Wonder Boys Baseball closed out its final road game in Gulf South Conference action here Saturday afternoon by falling 7-6 to Ouachita Baptist at Rab Rodgers Field on the OBU campus.

With the loss, Tech falls to 19-26 overall and 7-8 in the GSC, while OBU improves to 31-14 overall and 8-7 in the GSC. It was the second straight weekend that the Wonder Boys were swept in GSC play and Tech has now lost six straight road games since sweeping its series at Christian Brothers on March 28-29.

Much like yesterday's doubleheader, Tech jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the second inning thanks to a 2-run homer by junior leftfielder **Jeremy Houchin** (Springdale, Ark.) off of OBU starter Jarod Hershberger.

OBU, though, got one of those runs back in the bottom of the second inning thanks to a walk, a single and a sacrifice fly which plated Rudy Jovanovski with a run to drop Tech's lead to 2-1.

The Tigers, who were NCAA Division II National Runners-up last season, tied the game in the bottom of the fourth inning on a solo home run by Drew Maus over the right centerfield wall off of sophomore **Blaine Sims** (Scott, Ark.).

Tech, though, retook the lead in the sixth inning on a two-out, 2-run double by redshirt freshman catcher **Landon Sullins** (Harrison, Ark.), which plated senior designated hitter **Tony Sanchez** (Mesquite, Texas) and junior rightfielder **Clint Stroud** (Bonham, Texas). Sanchez and Stroud each reached base on two-out singles.

In the bottom of the sixth inning, OBU scored three runs, highlighted by a two-run homer over the left field fence by Kevin Bird to push in front 5-4.

Tech, though, answered OBU's run in the top of the seventh on a sacrifice bunt by sophomore centerfielder **Austin Gwatney** (Sherwood, Ark.), which plated Houchin with the tying run. Houchin had walked to lead off the inning and advanced to second on a groundout and moved to third on a single by freshman shortstop **Tyler Shaw** (St. Mary's, Ga.).

The Tigers came right back in the bottom of the seventh and broke the tie on a solo home run by Will Goudy over the right field wall off of senior reliever **Barrett Davis** (North Little Rock, Ark.) and then pushed its lead to 7-5 in the eighth inning thanks to a walk, a stolen base, a passed ball and a throwing error by Sullins.

Tech pulled within 7-6 in the top of the ninth on a homer to left center by Houchin and had the tying run on second base when Sean O'Rourke struck out junior pinch hitter **Sammy Hassen** (Fort Smith, Ark.) to end the game.

Houchin's homer was his fourth of the series and his team-leading 12th of the season. Houchin is one of five Wonder Boys to hit at least 12 home runs in a season in school history.

Davis (2-2) took the loss as he pitched 1.1 innings and allowed two hits and two runs, while walking one and fanning none. Sims earned a no-decision but threw six innings and allowed seven hits and five runs, while walking one and striking out four.

Hershberger (6-0) earned the win for the Tigers as he tossed seven innings and allowed seven hits and five runs, while walking one and fanning four. O'Rourke pitched the final two innings for his third save.

Stroud led the way for Tech, who outhit OBU, 10-9 for the game, as he was 3-for-4 at the plate with two runs scored, while Houchin added two hits, two runs scored and 3 RBIs in the loss.

OBU was paced by three hits and 2 RBIs from Maus, while Bird had two hits and two runs scored in the win.

The Wonder Boys will return to action next weekend when they welcome 20th-ranked Delta State for a three-game GSC series beginning with a doubleheader on Saturday, April 18 at 2 p.m. The series will conclude with a single nine inning game on Sunday, April 19 at 1 p.m.

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