

ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

ATHLETICS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 24 2009

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WONDER BOYS BASEBALL SPLITS ROAD DOUBLEHEADER AT WEST FLORIDA

PENSACOLA, Florida – Arkansas Tech Wonder Boys Baseball opened its Spring Break trip to the Sunshine State by splitting a doubleheader here Tuesday with West Florida at Jim Spooner Field in Pelican Park.

Tech dropped the opener, 3-0, but came back to post a 2-0 shutout in the nightcap to earn the split. The shutout in the second game was just the second of the season for the Wonder Boys.

With the doubleheader split, Tech moves its record to 16-19 on the season, while UWF is now 20-14 on the year.

In the first game, the Argonauts broke open a scoreless game in the bottom of the third inning as they plated three runs on two hits against senior **Tyler Mattox** (Conway, Ark.). UWF drove in its runs with a double, a triple and a groundout.

The three runs would be more than enough for Dustin Brenton (3-1) tossed a complete game shutout as he scattered six hits over his seven innings of action. He also finished the game with one walk and five strikeouts.

Tech had chances to score in both the fourth and fifth innings.

In the fourth inning, the Wonder Boys put runners in scoring position on a walk to senior designated hitter Tony Sanchez (Mesquite, Texas) and singles by junior rightfielder **Clint Stroud** (Bonham, Texas) and senior first baseman **Robbie Hohler** (Searcy, Ark.), but UWF got out of the jam as Sanchez was thrown out at the plate trying to score on Hohler's single.

Tech had another opportunity to score in the fifth inning as they put runners on first and third with two outs, before Brenton got out of the jam by inducing senior second baseman **Josh Holloway** (Booneville, Ark.) to ground out to end the inning.

Mattox (2-6) took the loss on the mound for the Wonder Boys as he pitched three innings and allowed three hits and three runs, while walking two and striking out two. Sophomore lefthander **Blaine Sims** (Scott, Ark.) pitched the final three innings, allowing no hits and no runs, while walking one and striking out two.

For the game, Tech outhit the Argos, 6-2, but left six runners stranded. UWF left two runners on base in the win.

Junior leftfielder **Jeremy Houchin** (Springdale, Ark.) led Tech's offense with two hits, while Hohler, Stroud, Holloway and junior centerfielder **Chad Wynn** (Bono, Ark.) each had a hit.

In the nightcap, the Wonder Boys broke a nine inning scoreless drought in the second inning as they plated a run on a sacrifice fly by junior designated hitter

Matt Presson (Sherwood, Ark.). Presson's sacrifice fly scored junior first baseman **Nick Shoptaw** (Benton, Ark.), who reached on a one-out single.

Tech added to its run total in the fifth inning as they took advantage of a UWF error to score an unearned run to push in front, 2-0.

The two run cushion would be enough for redshirt freshman **Cody Hatman** (Roland, Okla.) to pick up his second win this season.

Hatman (2-0) pitched four innings and allowed four hits and no runs, while walking two and striking out four. Tech's bullpen contingent of senior **Barrett Davis** (North Little Rock) and junior **Josh Floriani** (Malvern, Ark.), who earned his fifth save of the season, pitched the final three innings and allowed just one hit combined.

UWF had several chances to score in the nightcap as they had runners on third base in the second, fourth and fifth innings, but failed to advance any of them home. For the game, UWF, who outhit Tech, 5-3, left eight runners stranded on base. Tech stranded four runners on base in the win.

Eric Nixol (0-1) took the loss for the Argos as he pitched 4.1 innings and allowed three hits and two runs (one earned run), while walking three and striking out four.

In addition to Shoptaw's single, the other two Tech hits were picked up by Holloway and junior leftfielder **Joe Walton** (Inola, Okla.). UWF was paced offensively by two hits apiece from Lee Huggins and Jack Materne.

The teams will conclude the three-game series with a single nine inning game on Wednesday. First pitch is scheduled for 6 p.m. at Jim Spooner Field in Pelican Park.

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