



# STANFORD ATHLETICS

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## BASEBALL RECAP

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**URL:** <http://gostanford.collegesports.com/sports/m-basebl/recaps/021206aaa.html>

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\*Cardinal breaks out of slump at plate with 10 hits

### No. 19 Stanford Avoids Sweep With 8-3 Win Over Kansas

**Stanford, Calif.** – No. 19 Stanford (4-2) avoided being swept in a regular season three-game home series for the first time since 1997 with an 8-3 non-conference victory over Kansas (6-2) at Sunken Diamond on Sunday. Matt Leva (1-0) earned the victory by spacing out three runs (two earned) and four hits with a walk and two strikeouts over the first 5.2 innings, while freshman Jeremy Bleich picked up his second save of the season by allowing just two hits and striking out a career-high five in 3.1 frames of scoreless relief.

Another pair of freshmen – Joey August and Austin Yount – led the Cardinal offense. August was 3-for-4 with a double in his first game as the team's leadoff hitter, while Yount doubled and drove in three runs. Jim Rapoport (2-3) and John Hester (2-4, RBI, SB) also had a pair of hits each for a Cardinal offense that broke out of a slump with 10 hits after coming into the contest with a team batting average of just .199. Chris Lewis added a solo homer for Stanford, while Michael Taylor drove in a pair of runs on sacrifice flies despite not being credited with an official at bat. Taylor walked and was hit by a pitch in his other two plate appearances.

"We really haven't hit the ball very well this season," said Stanford head coach Mark Marquess. "We swung the bats well today, but you wouldn't have to do much to swing them better than we did the first two days [of this series]. We've been fortunate to win four of our first six games. Offensively, we really need to pick it up because you can't always just outpitch them and play spotless defense."

Gus Milner (3-4, 3B, HR, 3 RBI) continued his hot hitting for Kansas with half of the Jayhawks' six hits and both of their extra-baggers.

Former Stanford righty Kodiak Quick (5.0 IP, 7 H, 5 R, 3 ER, 2 BB, 3 SO) took the loss for Kansas.

Kansas jumped on the board in the top of the first inning when leadoff hitter Matt Baty drew a walk, moved to second on a groundout by Ritch Price and scored two batters later on Milner's RBI single.

The Cardinal answered right back with a run in the bottom of the first. August and Rapoport led off the frame with back-to-back singles and August moved to third on a key passed ball by Kansas catcher Buck Afenir, before scoring on Taylor's first sacrifice fly.

Kansas went back in front 2-1, scoring an unearned run in the third when Milner tripled home Price, who had reached on a one-out fielding error by Lewis at second base.

Stanford went ahead to stay with three runs in a fourth inning rally that featured a little bit of everything. Taylor walked to start the frame before going to second on a Quick balk. Jason Castro then singled home Quick, stole second and scored on an RBI single from Hester, who advanced to second on the play when Baty committed an error by failing to field the ball cleanly in center field. Hester then stole third base and scored on an RBI groundout from Yount.

"When we started getting some hits and finding a couple of holes it gave us a lot of confidence," said August.

The Cardinal got another run in the fifth when August and Rapoport once again led off the inning with back-to-back singles. August then moved to third on a fielders' choice from Chris Minaker and hustled home on Taylor's foul out down the left field line that was caught going away from the infield by Jayhawk third baseman Erik Morrison.

Kansas cut the lead to 5-3 on a solo homer by Milner off Leva with one out in the sixth, snapping a string of eight consecutive hitters retired by the Cardinal starter since Milner's triple in the third.

Stanford got the run back in the seventh inning when Lewis blasted a one-out solo shot to left, before the Cardinal added two more runs in the bottom of the eighth on a two-out double by Yount down the right field line that scored Castro and Hester, who had started a two-out rally with a hit by pitch and single.

Bleich, who came into the game with two outs in the sixth and the Cardinal holding a 5-3 lead, would not need any of the insurance runs the Cardinal scored. Bleich retired 10 of the 12 batters he faced with half of them going down via the strikeout.

"It's a great honor to have gotten into several games early in my career," said Bleich, who has pitched in four of the first six games in his collegiate career.

Stanford will return to action by hosting defending national champion and seventh-ranked Texas in a three-game series at Sunken Diamond next Friday-Sunday, February 17-19 (5 pm, 1 pm, 1 pm, PT).

"It will be a good series," said Marquess. "Hopefully the weather will stay nice, and we'll have some good crowds."

## NOTES

- Stanford's victory in Sunday's series finale helped the Cardinal avoid being swept in a regular season three-game series at Sunken Diamond for the first time since Arizona State took three in a row from April 11-13, 1997 (a span of 63 consecutive regular season three-game home series)
- Four Stanford freshmen pitchers (Jeremy Bleich, Max Fearnow, Sean Ratliff, Austin Yount) have combined for an 0.68 ERA, allowing just one run and six hits in 13.1 innings
- Stanford's pitching staff has allowed an ERA of just 3.44 in its first six games, which would be the team's lowest ERA since the 1973 club posted a 2.64 mark
- Michael Taylor had a busy day in right field with a career-high seven putouts
- Both of Jim Rapoport's hits were bunt singles
- Joey August hit in the leadoff spot for the first time in his career
- Stanford outhit an opponent for the first time this season (the Cardinal had been outhit in four previous games and equaled its opponents hit total once)
- Stanford's 10 hits tied a season-high
- Jeremy Bleich has pitched in four of the team's first six games, recording a win and a pair of saves without giving up a run and allowing just three hits for an opponents' batting average of just .120 with six strikeouts in 7.1 innings
- Jeremy Bleich had a career-high five strikeouts on Sunday
- Jason Castro has now hit safely in a team-high four consecutive games after singling in his final at bat in the eighth inning
- The game time of 2:39 tied for the team's shortest game of the season