



STANFORD ATHLETICS

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BASEBALL RECAP

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*Michael Taylor (4-5, 2B, 5 RBI) drives in a career five runs, while Joey August plates three

Stanford Comes From Behind For 14-9 Win No. 20 Over USC To Avoid Sweep

Stanford, Calif. – Stanford (11-8) scored 10 runs in its final two trips to the plate and hit around the order in both innings in a 14-9 comeback win over No. 20 USC (15-9) on Sunday. The victory in front of a home season-high crowd of 2116 on a sun-splashed afternoon at Sunken Diamond prevented Stanford from being swept in a regular season three-game home series for the first time since 1997. Michael Taylor (4-5, 2B, 5 RBI) drove in a career-high five runs, including a game-tying RBI single in a six-run Cardinal eighth that erased a 9-8 USC lead. Taylor also had a season-high four hits, a career-high-tying three runs scored and extended his hit streak to a new career-high 10 games.

"It's just the way the game goes," said Taylor about his big day. "I've been working on a lot of things to try to get better and get in a rhythm. It felt good today, and I was able to get some big hits for the team in some good situations. That's really what it's all about. I was glad I able to come through for the team today."

Joey August also drove in a career-high three runs with two coming on a key two-run single in Stanford's eighth, while Grant Escue and Brian Juhl added two RBI each with Escue equaling a career-best. Sean Ratliff also scored three runs.

Stanford's six-run eighth started with two outs and no runners on base after reliever and losing pitcher Kevin Couture (2-1) had struck out Cord Phelps and Austin Yount to begin the frame. Randy Molina and Ratliff got the inning going with back-to-back singles to end the outing for losing pitcher Couture (1.1 IP, 3 H, 2 R, 2 ER, 1 BB, 2 SO) and Taylor welcomed reliever Hector Rabago (0.1 IP, 3 H, 4 R, 4 ER, 1 BB, 1 SO) with his game-tying RBI single. Rabago then walked Jason Castro before hitting Juhl to force in Ratliff with what proved to be the winning run. August followed with his two-RBI single and Escue chipped in with a two-run triple to cap the rally.

"We really didn't want to lose," added Taylor. "In the eighth, we had two outs for the whole rally and nobody wanted to be the last out."

Stanford trailed 8-4 until scoring four runs in the bottom of the seventh to tie the game at 8-8 as Taylor contributed a two-run single in the frame that cut the USC advantage to 8-6. The inning started when Phelps drew a leadoff walk from reliever Shawn Olsen (0.1 IP, 2 H, 4 R, 4 ER, 2 BB, 1 SO). Yount followed with a pinch-hit single and Ratliff walked two batters later to load the bases for Taylor. Castro greeted Couture with a pinch-hit RBI single to score Ratliff and pull the Cardinal to within 8-7 before August's sacrifice fly two batters later scored Taylor to tie the contest.

"It's huge especially because we were down by so much," said Stanford head coach Mark Marquess about the victory. "It was a good win for us. We didn't do much to stop them, but we hung in there and got a couple of big hits late."

Max Fearnow (2-1) picked up the victory despite allowing an inherited runner to score when Robert Stock singled home Grant Green in the USC eighth to snap the 8-8 tie. Green had reached when he drew a walk off Erik Davis (0.0 IP, 1 R, 1 ER, 1 BB) to lead off the inning before Fearnow came on and balked him to second. Fearnow (2.0 IP, 2 H, 1 SO) recovered to hold the Trojans scoreless for the remainder of the game.

"You don't have any margin of error when you come into a tight game, so that's your goal," said Fearnow. "But, when you get a five run lead you don't want to walk guys. You want to make them earn every run."

Hector Estrella (2-4, 4 RBI) drove in four runs for the Trojans and was one of five USC players with two hits each. Stock (2-3, 2B, RBI), J.J. Owen (2-2, RBI), Derek Perren (2-2, 2B) and Nick Buss (2-6, 2B) also had a pair of hits for the Trojans, while Robert Vasquez drove in a pair with a key two-out double in a three-run Trojan seventh.

Stanford jumped out to an early 3-0 lead with three runs in the bottom of the first. USC starter Tommy Milone (6.0 IP, 5 H, 4 R, 4 ER, 4 SO) retired leadoff hitter Ryan Seawell but then hit Ratliff and gave up three consecutive hits to plate three Cardinal runners. Taylor's RBI double scored Ratliff before Brent Milleville followed with an RBI single to score Taylor and came around to score on an RBI double by Juhl.

USC would score in each of the next four innings to take a 5-3 advantage.

Perren started the Trojan second inning rally with a one-out double and scored on Estrella's bouncing ball single up the middle.

The Trojans tied the game at 3-3 with two runs in the third on Estrella's two-out two-RBI single. Stock had walked with one out to get the rally going before Lucas Duda followed with an infield hit. Michael Torres moved the runners to second and third with a sacrifice bunt and Perren walked to load the bases for Estrella.

USC took its first lead of the game with a single run in the fourth. Buss ended the day for Stanford starter Nolan Gallagher (3.0 IP, 6 H, 4 R, 4 ER, 4 BB, 3 SO) with a leadoff double, moved to third on Green's sacrifice bunt and scored when Matt Cusick managed a sacrifice fly off the first of six Stanford relievers David Stringer (1.2 IP, 1 H, 1 R, 1 ER, 1 BB).

The Trojans added another run to their lead in the fifth when Torres drew a one-out walk from Stringer, moved to third on a Perren single and scored on sacrifice fly from Estrella.

Milone had kept the Stanford bats quiet following their initial outburst, retiring 11 in a row after Juhl's double in the first before Phelps led off the Cardinal fifth with a double. Milone then hit Adam Gaylord to put runners on first and second with no outs before recovering to strike out Seawell and Ratliff, but Taylor came through with a clutch two-out RBI single to cut the USC lead to 5-4.

USC padded its margin with its three-run seventh. Stock started the uprising again with a leadoff double and moved to third on a single that ended a relief outing for Tom Stilson (1.2 IP, 2 H, 2 R, 2 ER). Owen greeted Andrew Clauson (0.1 IP, 2 H, 1 R, 1 ER) with a pinch-hit single to score Stock before Vasquez came through with his two-run double two batters later.

Stanford will be out of action for 12 days before returning to host Sacramento State at Sunken Diamond in the first of a two-game home-and-home series on Saturday, March 24 (1 pm, PT). Stanford will travel to Sacramento State to complete the short series on Sunday, March 25 (2 pm, PT).

Tickets for the Sacramento State contest at Sunken Diamond and all regular season Stanford Baseball home games are available online at gostanford.com or by calling 1-800-STANFORD. On game days, tickets may be purchased at the Sunken Diamond Ticket Office window beginning one hour before first pitch. For group ticket information (groups of 10 or more), call 650-725-2876.

NOTES

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- Stanford's victory helped the Cardinal avoid being swept in a three-game regular season home series for the first time since 1997 and extend its run of not being swept in a regular season three-game home series to 71 in a row
- Stanford also avoided being swept in a three-game regular season series by USC for the first time since 1996 and ran that string of series to 19 straight
- Michael Taylor (RF) and Sean Ratliff (CF) have now each started all 19 games this season
- Michael Taylor extended his string of consecutive games started to 135 dating back to the 2005 season
- Michael Taylor extended his hit streak to a new career-high 10 games
- Michael Taylor had a career-high five RBI
- Michael Taylor had a season-high four hits
- Joey August had a career-high three RBI
- Grant Escue had a career-high-tying two RBI
- Grant Escue hit his first career triple
- Mark Marquess recorded his 1268th career victory to move into sole possession of 11th-place on the all-time list of victories by NCAA Division I Baseball coaches
- Stanford scored a season-high 14 runs
- Stanford recorded its seventh comeback victory in 11 wins this season
- Stanford's six runs in the bottom of the eighth equaled the team's highest-scoring inning of the season
- Stanford scored 10 runs (all earned) on eight hits off the USC bullpen in 2.0 innings of work
- Sean Ratliff extended his career-high hit streak to six games
- Stanford snapped a four-game losing streak to USC and a season-high-tying three-game skid overall
- Stanford ended a two-game home losing streak and improved to 10-2 at Sunken Diamond this season
- Stanford won for just the second time in nine games against ranked teams this year compared to its 9-1 record versus unranked clubs
- The game was played in front of a season-high crowd of 2116
- The game lasted 3:42 and was the fifth time in the last six contests as well as the 10th time this season that the Cardinal has played more than three hours
- Stanford recorded its second straight errorless game after having not recorded one in the first 17 contests of the season
- Wande Olabisi and Min (Brian) Moon both made their collegiate debuts with Olabisi pinch-running in the Stanford eighth and Min playing third base in the top of the ninth