



STANFORD ATHLETICS

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*Jeffrey Inman pitches first collegiate complete game, while Sean Ratliff hits a pair of homers and Michael Taylor also goes deep

Stanford Starts Series With 6-4 Victory At Washington State

Pullman, Wash. – Stanford (19-24, 4-12 Pac-10) started a three-game Pac-10 series at Washington State (21-21, 4-12 Pac-10) with a 6-4 victory over the Cougars on Saturday at Bailey-Brayton Field in a game televised live by Fox Sports Net Northwest. Jeffrey Inman (4-2) pitched the first complete game of his collegiate career to earn the victory, giving up just five hits and one earned run while striking out three and walking two. Stanford's victory was the first time this season the Cardinal has won the opener of a Pac-10 series with the Cardinal now needing just one win in the final two games of the series to snap six-game Pac-10 and overall series losing skids.

"I really didn't have all my pitches going today, but I just let them get themselves out," said Inman. "I saw they were swinging at everything, so I was just trying to get my fastball over and trying to be more efficient than I've been in my last couple of outings."

"We got a great pitching performance and also hit the ball well today," offered Stanford head coach Mark Marquess. "Jeffrey Inman pitched really well today. He had really good command of his stuff."

Sean Ratliff (3-5, 2 HR, 4 RBI) homered twice and drove in four runs, while Michael Taylor (2-5, HR, RBI) also went deep for the Cardinal, and Cord Phelps (2-3) and Adam Sorgi (2-4, 2B) added two-hit games. Ratliff (9), Sorgi (8), Toby Gerhart (8) and Taylor (6) all extended hit streaks with the runs by Ratliff and Gerhart career-bests.

"It's a lot of help," noted Ratliff about having Michael Taylor hit behind him in the lineup. "He's got a reputation in college baseball of someone that if you make a mistake is going to pound it. Other teams are of the mindset that you have to throw strikes to the hitter in front of him because if you don't, you'll have to face him with another guy on base. It's nice to have that kind of big bat protection."

"We've been working on a lot of things as a team," mentioned Taylor about Stanford's ninth straight double-digit hit game. "Those things are starting to pay off now. Hitting is very contagious, and that's why we've been able to score a lot of runs the last couple of weeks."

Travis Coulter (2-5) had two of Washington State's five hits.

Washington State starter Wayne Daman, Jr. (3-4) took the loss, allowing six runs on 11 hits and two walks with three strikeouts over 6.2 innings.

Stanford started the game's scoring with a single run in the top of the second to take a 1-0 lead and would never trail in the contest. Sorgi got the rally going with a leadoff double, before moving to third on Randy Molina's groundout and scoring on Brian Juhl's bloop RBI single down the left field line.

Washington State tied the score at 1-1 in the bottom of the second on the first of three unearned runs the Cougars would score in the contest. Zach Borba reached on a one-out throwing error by Stanford shortstop Adam Gaylord before stealing second base and scoring on Jeff Miller's two-out RBI single through the left side.

Stanford took the lead for good when Taylor ripped the first pitch he saw to lead off the top of the fourth over the wall in rightcenter field to put the Cardinal in front, 2-1.

Ratliff made it 5-1 with a towering three-run shot to rightcenter with two outs in the fifth. Phelps had started the inning with a single and moved to second on Gaylord's sacrifice bunt. Joey August then drew a walk and Gerhart kept the inning alive when he just beat out the tail end of a potential inning-ending double play to give Ratliff a chance to hit.

Washington State came back with a pair of runs in the fifth to cut Stanford's lead to 5-3 but might not have scored without a pair of Stanford miscues in the inning. The Cougars put runners on first and third with one out when Josh Ashenbrenner walked and moved to third on a single by Coulter. Inman then got Paul Gran to hit into what looked like an inning-ending 6-4-3 double play but Gaylord booted the grounder for his second of three errors in the contest, allowing Ashenbrenner to score and the Cougars ended up with a pair of runs on the play when Ratliff's throw trying to get Coulter going from first to third hit him in the back and bounced into the Washington State dugout.

Stanford got one more run on Ratliff's two-out solo homer in the top of the seventh and then had to extinguish another potential big inning in the bottom half of the seventh to secure the victory.

Gaylord's third error of the contest to the seventh inning scare that started when Coulter singled with one out. Gran then hit a comebacker to Inman that looked to be an inning-ending 1-6-3 double play, but Gaylord dropped Inman's throw as Coulter scampered over to third base. Inman then uncorked a wild pitch to put Cougars on second and third with just one out but settled down to get out of the jam on an RBI groundout to Simi Reynolds and an inning-ending groundout by Jared Prince.

Stanford finally did turn its first double play of the game in the ninth after pinch-hitter Scott Suttmeier had started the inning with a leadoff single.

"It's huge to have the first one out of the way and get the victory," explained Taylor. "It really gives you the upper hand to win the series."

"It's been a tough season," added Ratliff. "We can't really ever seem to get the ship righted. We get a win and then we struggle a little bit again, but it's good to get a win in a series-opener to have a little bit of command coming into the rest of the series."

Stanford and Washington State will continue the series on Sunday (2 pm, PT) and Monday (12 pm, PT). Stanford is scheduled to go with LHP Jeremy Bleich (1-8, 5.88) versus Washington State RHP Nick Ison (4-6, 5.37) on Sunday, while neither team has announced a probable starting pitcher for Monday.

The Cardinal will next return home to Sunken Diamond for a three-game set against Washington (Friday-Sunday, May 11-13, 6 pm, 1 pm, 1 pm, PT). CSTV will televise Sunday's series finale live. Tickets for the Washington series and all remaining regular season Stanford Baseball home contests 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 won its 10th straight game in Pullman and has still yet to lose a game in Pullman since 1970
- Stanford has won 25 of the last 27 games between the clubs, including two in a row after Washington State broke Stanford's 23-game win streak against the Cougars with win in the first two games of a three-game set at Sunken Diamond the last time the clubs met March 25-27, 2006
- Stanford leads the all-time series between the clubs, 31-15
- Stanford needs just one more victory in the final two games of the series to end series losing streaks of both six overall and six straight Pac-10 series that are the longest since the team lost six straight Pac-10 series by dropping its final five Pac-10 sets of 1993 and its first conference series of 1994, and eight straight series overall from April 13, 1978 – March 31, 1979
- Stanford's three home runs in the contest were a season-high
- Stanford extended its season-best string of consecutive double-digit hit games to nine and improved its team batting average to a new season-high .289
- Sean Ratliff (CF) has now played in and started all 43 games this season and is the only Stanford player to do so
- Sean Ratliff had a two-homer game for the second time in 2007 and is the only Stanford player to hit two or more homers in a game this season
- Sean Ratliff has taken over sole possession of the team's home run lead with nine
- Sean Ratliff extended his career-high hit streak to nine games
- Adam Sorgi extended his hit streak to nine games
- Toby Gerhart ran his career-high hit streak to eight games
- Michael Taylor extended his hit streak to six in a row with all six being multiple-hit contests
- Jeffrey Inman pitched his first collegiate complete game and had the longest outing of his collegiate career with his 9.0 innings of work
- The game clocked in at 2:41 to mark Stanford's shortest game in its last 22 contests since the Cardinal went 2:34 against Sacramento State on March 24