



STANFORD ATHLETICS

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BASEBALL RECAP

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Date: May 7, 2006

*Chris Lewis (2-4, HR, 3 RBI) leads Stanford offensively, while Jeremy Bleich picks up the win with 4.1 innings of sparkling relief

Stanford Wins Sunday's Rubber Game Over California, 6-4

Stanford, Calif. – Chris Lewis (2-4, HR, 3 RBI) hit a two-run homer in the fourth inning and then drove in another run with a two-out RBI single in the eighth to lift Stanford (22-21, 7-11 Pac-10) to a 6-4 victory over California (24-24, 9-12 Pac-10) in the rubber game of a Pac-10 series Sunday. Jeremy Bleich (3-4) earned the win, allowing just one run on two hits and two walks over 4.1 innings of sparkling relief before a Sunken Diamond season-high crowd of 2586. Erik Davis picked up his second save of the season by thwarting a ninth inning California rally when he forced Chris Errecart to hit into a bases loaded game-ending 5-2-3 double play after the Golden Bears had already scored a run in the frame.

"I'm used to this situation," said Davis. "I've been coming in during these situations all year, and I love it. I think I've been doing well, so hopefully they keep putting me back out there."

Michael Taylor (2-4, 2B) added a two-hit game and also scored a pair of runs for the Cardinal, while Jason Castro and Ryan Seawell each had an RBI. Chris Minaker went 0-for-4 to end a season-high 12-game hit streak one shy of the career-high 13-game run he put together in 2005.

Allen Craig (2-5, HR, RBI) homered for the Golden Bears, while four other California players – Travis Howell (2-3), Brennan Boesch (2-4, 2B), Rob Nesbitt (2-5, RBI) and Errecart (2-5) – each produced two-hit contests as California outhit Stanford, 12-8. Brett Munster also drove in a run.

California took an early 1-0 lead when Mike Van Winden singled to lead off the second inning, moved to third on a ground ball by Jordan Karnofsky and scored when Taylor failed to come up cleanly with a single by Howell through the right side of the infield.

Stanford came back with two runs in the bottom of the third to take a 2-1 advantage. Brent Milleville drew a leadoff walk and moved to third when Brian Juhl doubled to right field. Milleville scored and Juhl moved up to third on a passed ball charged to Howell before a sacrifice fly by Seawell plated Juhl.

The Golden Bears tied the contest at 2-2 in the fourth when Satin led off with a single, moved to second on a one-out walk to Karnofsky and third on single by Howell before scoring on Munster's sacrifice fly.

Lewis made it 4-2 in the bottom half of the fourth when he broke the deadlock by launching a long two-run homer over the center field wall that also scored Molina, who had singled ahead of him.

"I was just thinking I wanted to hit this ball as hard as I could and fortunately I got it pretty good," offered Lewis.

"We only got eight hits today, but we got some at the right time," added Stanford head coach Mark Marquess.

Craig immediately cut the two-run Cardinal lead in half when he came right back and blasted a solo shot over the left field wall to start the Golden Bears' fifth. California had a golden opportunity to score again in the inning when Errecart and Boesch followed Craig's homer with a single and a double to put runners on second and third with no outs. But, the Cardinal retired both base runners in two separate rundowns on the next play after Satin grounded a ball to Molina and the Cardinal third baseman caught Errecart trying to score. Bleich then forced Van Winden into a ground out to end the inning.

"That was a big turning point in the game," said Marquess. "It was a huge lift for us mentally."

Stanford added a single insurance run in both the sixth and eighth innings to take a 6-3 lead into the ninth with Taylor starting both rallies. He led off the sixth with a single and moved to third on a tailor-made double play ball that was booted by Craig at shortstop. Castro then just beat out the back end of another potential double play to allow Taylor to come home from third. In the eighth, Taylor doubled with one out and scored when Lewis came through with his two-out RBI single up the middle two batters later.

California's ninth inning rally started when Bleich walked Howell and Munster back-to-back with one out with the final two pitches of Munster's at bat actually being thrown by Sean Ratliff (0.0 IP, 1 H) but the walk being charged to Bleich. Ratliff then allowed an RBI single to Nesbitt before he was replaced by Davis (0.2 IP, 1 H), who allowed an infield single to Craig before recording Errecart's game-ending double play.

Stanford had a season-high four double plays in the contest, helping stop California rallies in the third, fifth, seventh and ninth innings.

California starter Alex Rollin (0-1) suffered the loss, allowing four runs (three earned) on four hits and a walk with three strikeouts over the first 3.2 innings and was followed by five Golden Bear relievers that kept California in the game by limiting the Cardinal to just two additional runs.

Stanford starter Matt Manship (4.0 IP, 8 H, 3 R, 3 ER, 1 BB, 3 SO) received no-decision.

"We came in and took care of business," said Lewis. "I was proud of the guys today."

Stanford begins a five-game road swing with a non-conference contest at Santa Clara next Tuesday, May 9 (6 pm, PT). The Cardinal will also play at Sacramento State on Wednesday, May 10 (2:30 pm, PT), before visiting Washington for another critical three-game Pac-10 series Friday-Sunday, May 12-14 (6:30 pm, 2 pm, 1 pm, PT).

"We're not looking too far ahead," said Marquess. "We just want to play a consistent game next Tuesday at Santa Clara."

NOTES

- Sunday's victory evened Stanford's season series with California at 3-3 as the Cardinal avoid losing a season-series to the Golden Bears for the first time since 1978 when California won four of the seven games the teams played
- Sunday's victory also allowed Stanford to avoid losing a series to California at home for the first time since 1995, extending its home series win streak over the Golden Bears to 11 in a row
- Stanford has won 14 of its last 16 games over the Golden Bears at Sunken Diamond
- Stanford won its second consecutive series for just the second time this season and has now won two straight Pac-10 series for the first time since taking its final two Pac-10 series of the 2004 campaign versus USC and Arizona State
- Chris Minaker's 12-game hit streak and 15-game errorless streak both came to an end ... Minaker hit .490 (25-51) with six doubles, a triple, three homers and 16 RBI during the hot stretch
- Chris Minaker has now started 140 consecutive games at shortstop and played every inning at the position in the last two seasons
- Stanford recorded a season-high four double plays
- Stanford came from behind to win for the 15th time in its 22 victories this season
- Stanford improved to 4-4 in rubber games this season
- Stanford was held under double digits in hits for the fifth straight contest but has managed to win three of those games