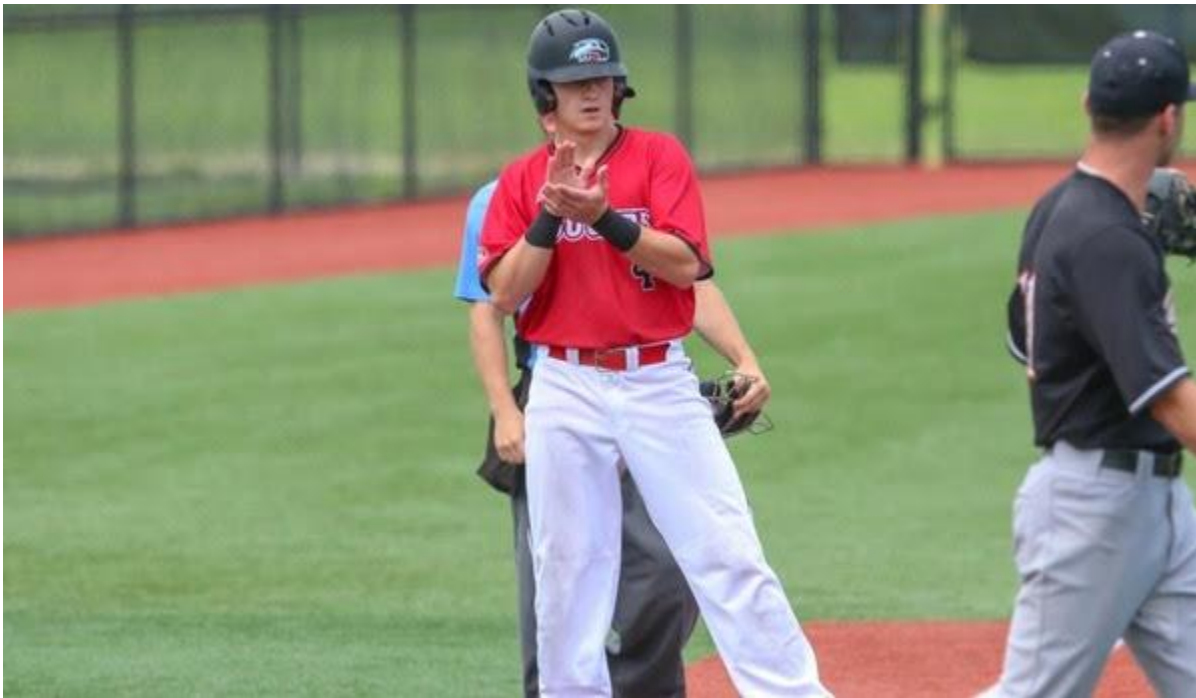


Collin Baumgartner fans 9 in 4 innings, Cougars outlast Tennessee Tech 9-8 in OVC opener

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COOKEVILLE, Tenn. – SIUE and Tennessee Tech combined for 17 runs, 20 hits and six home runs Friday as the Cougars outlasted the Golden Eagles 9-8 to open the Ohio Valley Conference baseball season.

Southwestern High School graduate and SIUE starter Collin Baumgartner worked four innings allowing four runs on just three hits. He struck out a career-best nine hitters.



The Cougars have won three straight games and four of their last five and improved to 4-5 overall.

The Golden Eagles dipped to 7-5. The loss was the first at home this year for Tennessee Tech.

The Cougars got on the board in a big way in the second inning. Brock Weimer led off the inning with his second home run of the year to get the score started. The home run was the 25th of Weimer's career, which is tied for fifth all-time at SIUE.

Peyton Cordova-Smith walked and Raul Elguezabal singled ahead of a three-run homer from Garrett Carmicheal to put SIUE up 4-0. The Cougars never trailed in the game.

"It was a good, close ballgame," SIUE Head Coach Sean Lyons said. "To get four early runs helps the offense get that confidence going."

John Dyer got the Golden Eagles on the board when he connected for a two-run double to right center in the bottom of the inning to cut the Cougars' lead in half.

SIUE tacked on three two-out runs in the fourth. Justin Perkins walked and then scored on a triple by Carmichael. Brady Bunten followed with a two-run homer to extend the Cougars' lead to 7-2.

TTU answered again with Dyer. The Golden Eagles' designated hitter added a two-run home run of his own in the bottom of the fourth to trim the advantage to 7-4. Jason Hogan drilled a two-run home run for Tennessee Tech in the sixth to make it 7-6.

The Cougars added a pair of two-out insurance runs on three hits in the eighth inning. Elguezabal picked up an RBI-double and Perkins singled to add an RBI in the inning. The runs proved necessary for SIUE.

Tennessee Tech first baseman Jason Hinchman cut the lead to 9-8 with a two-run ninth-inning home run.

"Those were really big two-out runs in the ninth," Lyons said. "We needed every one of them."

Five of SIUE's nine runs came with two outs.

"We did some good things offensively," Lyons said. "I am pleased with the fact that we continued to add on throughout the game. But those two-out runs are the kinds of things that give you the opportunity to win."

Carmichael finished 2 for 4 with the four RBIs. Elguezabal was 3 for 4 with an RBI and two runs. Bunten finished with two hits and two RBIs. Dustin Woodcock also added two hits.

"(Carmichael) came up with some big hits," Lyons said. "Once again (the offense) is coming from different guys. That's a real positive."

Dyer finished 2 for 5 with four RBIs for TTU.

Golden Eagles' starter Caleb Morgan also worked four innings. He allowed seven runs on five hits. He struck out six.

Lyons cited changing weather conditions for presenting a challenge. The game was originally scheduled for 6 p.m. First pitch was delayed several times until 7:45.

"It was tough for both starters," he said. "Both guys were ready and we get a pop-up storm which caused another delay. Eventually it caught with both of them."

Game two of the three-game series is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday.