

Chatham Glenwood uses eight-run second inning to defeat Redbirds

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Chatham Glenwood scored eight times in the second inning and went on to a 13-0 win over Alton in four-and-a-half innings, due to the 10-run rule, in the season opening Prep Baseball Report Metro-East Kickoff Classic game played Thursday night at SIU-Edwardsville's Roy E. Lee Field at the Simmons Baseball Complex.

The Redbirds were held to two hits on a cold, blustery night. The eight-run second inning was the big key to the game.

“Yeah, and that can happen,” said first-year Alton head coach Scott Harper. “That’s baseball a little bit; I mean, conditions are brutal, but we’ve got to come out and play, and we just didn’t step up to the situation. We had a couple of miscues, they had a couple of balls that kind of found a way through us. Our pitchers need to work better commands so those free passes are going to help. We get out, it’s our first ball game, so we know results are now what we hoped for, but we turn around and we’re going to play tomorrow.”

Getting the first game in was important, as the Redbirds now know what they need to work on, and Harper feels things will come along as the season progresses.

“Yeah, absolutely,” Harper said. “We’re always working to try to get better. That’s just kind of the name of the game; it’s a long season, baseball is. It’s a grind, and so, you come out, you compete, you try to do the best you can. We didn’t do very well tonight, so we’re going to come out tomorrow and compete again.”

Harper feels that the Redbirds’ versatility and depth will be a big factor in their season.

“I’d like to say our versatility and our depth a little bit,” Harper said. “Our pitching staff will come along. We’ve got a lot of guys who’s come back, so just finding that groove; it’s always tough adjusting early to get good command and throw strikes. But we’ve got guys who can play some different positions. We’re still finding out the way with where we are, because we haven’t been out but twice to even be able to evaluate where we want to be and spots that we want to be in.”

Things started out good on the first batter of the game, as Robby Taul tripled over the center fielders head to the fence to start the game, and two outs later, Adam Stilts drew a walk. Stilts was thrown out trying to steal second to end the inning. After the Titans went down in order in the first, Adam Holm reached on an error when a throw eluded the first baseman for an error and went to second on a base hit by Jake Jurgens. Jalen Ping reached on a fielder’s choice, with Jurgens safe at second on another error, and a walk to Matt Clevenger forced in the first run.

Jurgens scored on a passed ball, and a walk to Gavin Wahlbrink reloaded the bases, with Ping scoring on a sacrifice fly by Jake Curtis to right. Nolan Rooney then struck out, but four straight singles by Lucas Ryan, Luke Lehnert, who drove in two runs, Holm and Jurgens drove home a total of five more runs to make it 8-0 for Glenwood before Ping struck out to end the inning.

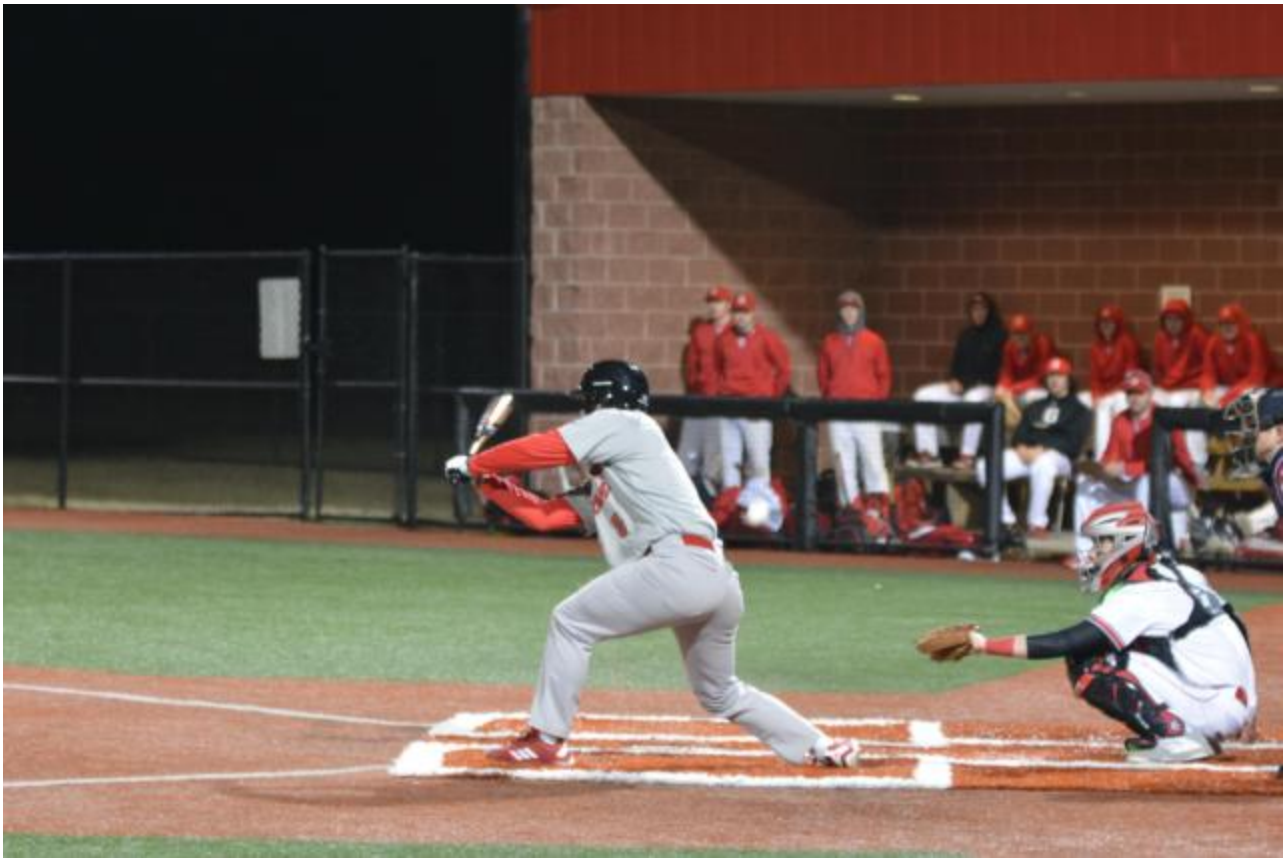
In the Titans third, Clevenger was hit by a pitch to start, Wahlbrink drew a walk and an infield single by Rooney loaded the bases again. Clevenger scored on a wild pitch, and a ground out Ryan drove home another run to make the score 10-0. In the fourth, Holm led off with a triple, came in to score on a Jurgens single, and a Ping single put runners on first and third. A walk to Wahlbrink loaded the bases again, and the final run came home on a fielder's choice to make it 13-0.

The Redbirds came up with a fourth inning solid single to right by Tyler Steward, but it was the only other hit for Alton, as Titan pitching shut down the offense. Wahlbrink came up with four strikeouts on the night, Evan Rightnowler fanned five in two innings of work and Rooney struck out one in the fifth in getting the win for the Titans.

Alton, starting their season at 0-1, will have two games tomorrow, against Lockport and Effingham, and Harper is very optimistic about the new season.

“Oh, absolutely,” Harper said. “You want to go into that, and you’ve got a good group of young men here that are working hard, and so, we definitely want to have high expectations for them. We expect a lot, but we’re just going to keep working at it.”





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)