

Bizarre finish still on Zephyrs' minds ***WESTCO to travel to Spearfish today***

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In his 20 seasons as head coach of the WESTCO Zephyrs senior legion baseball team, there's not much Mark Moran hasn't witnessed happen during a game.

But what transpired at the conclusion of a doubleheader between the Zephyrs and Douglas, Wyo., on Thursday night at Cleveland Field in Scottsbluff was even a first for him.

Trailing 21-19 in the bottom of the seventh inning of the second game, the Zephyrs were awarded a win by forfeit after both Douglas coaches were ejected for arguing.

According to American Legion Baseball rules, a team must be guided by at least one coach at all times in order to continue playing. Since both of the Douglas coaches were tossed, the game was stopped.

"The thought never crossed my mind that the game would end that way," Moran said. "We were down to our last out, so I thought we'd just finish it. But since Douglas was without a coach, the umpires decided they weren't going to let the game continue."

As a result, the Zephyrs earned their 24th win of the season by a forfeited score of 7-0. That particular score was determined by crediting the winning team with one run per inning of a regulation game. In addition, all of the individual statistics count because the contest passed the point of an official game.

"It was really a strange ending," said Moran, who is just 14 wins shy of 700 in his career. "I talked to both of their coaches briefly after the game and they weren't mad or upset about it. I guess it was just one of those things that happened in the heat of the moment."

Moran said the only other time he could recall such a bizarre situation was five or six years ago when a coach from Laramie was ejected from a game for arguing during a tournament hosted by the Zephyrs. Because Nebraska American Legion Baseball rules state that any coach who is ejected from a game must sit out the following game, the Laramie coach had to abide by the ruling. Instead, the coach had his team pack up and leave. The Zephyrs were credited with a forfeit win because Laramie was their next opponent in the tournament.

"That's the nearest thing I can think of that even comes close to this," Moran said.

The Zephyrs managed to pound out a total of 36 hits in the two games combined.

In the second game, WESTCO finished with 22 hits. Zac Rada led the way by going 4-for-5. Tyler Patrick belted his sixth home run of the season and drove in five runs. Patrick's dinger lifted the Zephyrs' season home-run total to 31, which is the second most hit in team history. The record is 35. That was set in 1999.

Patrick, Nate Goodwin and Eric Moreno all had three hits each. Finishing with two hits were Joe Sanchez, Tre Meier, Dylan Busskohl and Dan Harshbarger. Sanchez had a triple and a double.

The Zephyrs never led in game one after Douglas scored six times in the second and added four more in the fourth.

Sanchez, Meier, Goodwin, Rada, Busskohl and Brian Colburn all had two hits each.

The Zephyrs pounded out seven doubles in the contest. Busskohl led the way with a pair, while Harshbarger, Meier, Moreno, Rada and Sanchez all had one. Meier added a triple.

Goodwin took the loss on the mound. He struck out two. Colburn and Busskohl also saw action on the mound in relief.

WESTCO will be faced with two tough road trips this weekend. The Zephyrs will play a doubleheader at Spearfish, S.D., today beginning at 1 p.m. The two teams split a pair of games at Cleveland Field back on June 11.

"We played two real close games with them a couple weeks ago," Moran said of Spearfish. "They're a solid team. They threw two good pitchers and they have a lot of good athletes. We'll have our hands full."

Moran said Moreno (7-2) and Sanchez (7-0) will start on the mound in today's games.

The Zephyrs will then travel to Greeley, Colo., on Sunday for a doubleheader against Greeley Gojo Sports. First pitch from Butch Butler Field is scheduled for 11 a.m. Greeley sports a record of 20-10.

"They're always one of the better teams we play every summer and they're a good team again," Moran said of Greeley.

All four of this weekend's games can be heard live on KOAQ 690 AM.

Game One

Douglas 160 401 2 — 14 18 3

Zephyrs 011 113 1 — 8 14 0

WP — Cheever. LP — Goodwin (2-2).

HR — Igo. 3B — Meier, Klava. 2B — Buszkohl (2), Harshbarger, Meier, Moreno, Rada, Sanchez, Igo, Espeland.

Game Two

Douglas 000 000 0 — 0 11 4

Zephyrs (24-11) 111 111 1 — 7 22 3

HR — Patrick. 3B — Sanchez. 2B — Meier, Rada, Sanchez, Andrews, Igo, Malone.