

Zephyrs set new home run record in win at Alliance

By JEREMY WOZNICK
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ALLIANCE — The WESTCO Zephyrs senior legion baseball team set a new record for home runs in a season in an 18-0 blanking of the Alliance Spartans on Tuesday night in Alliance.

Tre Meier and Zac Rada both hit homers to bring the Zephyrs' record-breaking total to 37. The Zephyrs tied the old mark of 35 on Sunday in Greeley, Colo. That record was set in 1999.

"It's pretty fun," Zephyrs coach Mark Moran said of the new record. "We've played 40 games now and we've hit 37 homers. There aren't many legion teams that can do that."

The win improved WESTCO to 28-12 on the season. It marked the Zephyrs' eighth win in their last 10 games.

After rallying for a late-inning win over Alliance just a week ago, the Zephyrs made sure no dramatic heroics were needed on Tuesday by scoring eight runs in the first inning and five more in the second to grab a commanding 13-0 lead.

Moran said the early scoring outburst by his team set the tone for the contest.

"I think it really helped that we came out and scored so many runs in the first couple innings," Moran said. "That gave us some confidence moving forward. As we've talked about a million times, it's a lot easier to play with a lead."

The offensive support was more than enough for Nate Goodwin, who tossed a three-hit shutout on the mound. Goodwin (3-2) struck out four and walked just one in five innings of work.

The Zephyrs pounded out 15 hits in the game.

Meier led the charge at the plate by going a perfect 4-for-4. In addition to belting a grand slam in the second inning, Meier drove in five, scored four runs and also hit his team-leading 18th double of the season.

Rada's home run was his sixth of the season. It was a two-run shot in the fourth. Rada also drove in four runs and scored a pair.

Tyler Patrick went 3-for-4 with a double, two runs batted in and two runs scored.

Also collecting multiple hits for the Zephyrs were Goodwin and Joe Sanchez. Goodwin went 2-for-2, drove in two and scored twice, while Sanchez finished 2-for-3 with three runs batted in and two walks.

Goodwin and Connor Wilburn added doubles. Beau Lofink scored two runs and drew two walks.

“We played really well,” Moran said. “Nate pitched great, we played great defense and we hit the ball really well. It was a good night for us.”

Andrew Garza led Alliance offensively by going 2-for-2.

Jake Palmer took the loss on the mound for the Spartans.

In Tuesday’s junior game, Tharyn Curtis pitched the WESTCO Express to a 7-0 win over Alliance.

Curtis allowed five hits and struck out five in seven shutout innings.

Offensively, the Express totaled 14 hits. Leighton Freeze and Jacob Schmid both had three hits each. Freeze drove in two.

Finishing with two hits each for the Express were Curtis, Liam Kautz and Ty Wilson. Cody Rossman scored two runs.

Both WESTCO teams will be right back in action today when they host Chadron. The junior game will begin the action at 5 p.m. at Cleveland Field in Scottsbluff. Spectators will be treated to free hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and baked beans as part of Fan Appreciation Night.

The Zephyrs will then wrap up their regular-season schedule this weekend by hosting the Scottsbluff Screen Printing Tournament. The wood bat tournament will begin on Friday and run through Sunday.

Seniors

Zephyrs (28-12) 850 32 — 18 15 0

Alliance 000 00 — 0 3 1

WP — Goodwin (3-2). LP — Palmer.

HR — Meier, Rada. 2B — Goodwin, Meier, Wilburn.

Juniors

Express (23-12) 320 100 1 — 7 14 1

Alliance 000 000 0 — 0 5 0

WP — Curtis. LP — Bottger.

3B — Curtis. 2B — Freeze, Schmid, Wilson.