

2

SHARES

[ShareTweet](#)

1089 views

By Austin White | awhite26@radford.edu

The Radford baseball team defeated in-state foe Virginia Tech to extend their win streak to three games. With both teams came into the game with very similar records, the back and forth game proved how equally matched they were.

The first batter junior pitcher Andrew Nardi faced, he hit on his third pitch. The Highlanders immediately called a timeout, and the entire infield met. After a brief meeting, they forced two outs while Nardi struck out the fourth batter in the lineup, senior Sam Fragale, to end the top of the first inning.

The Hokies started sophomore Dylan Hall as their pitcher, and he struggled early. After giving up a single to redshirt junior Kyle Butler, he hit the next batter, redshirt sophomore Colby Higgerson, to put two men on base. The next batter junior Matt Roth sent the second pitch Hall threw at him to right field for a single to load the bases.

After three straight balls, Hall threw a fourth to freshman Will Harless scoring Butler to give the Highlanders the lead. Sophomore Straton Podaras stepped up next and blasted a ball to center field that was caught for a sacrifice fly as Higgerson scored to make the score 2-0.

Virginia Tech entered the second inning firing on all cylinders; junior Nick Menken led it off with a double to right field. Redshirt junior Nick Owens beamed a ball straight to second basemen Butler, but he could not make the play. With the ball going past him, Menken scored Virginia Tech's first run.

Senior right fielder Anthony Miano then made two costly mistakes to end the inning. Both Owens and junior Stevie Mangrum scored because of Miano's fielding errors. Miano dropped two fly balls that helped give the Hokies a 3-2 lead.

Substituting out Hall, for senior Joey Sullivan, Virginia Tech wanted to keep the Highlanders off

the board. After letting one batter on base and striking out two others, Sullivan faced Butler. Butler cracks a pitch toward the shortstop Owens who mishandles the ball, scoring freshman Garrett Matheny.

With the game tied 3-3, neither team let their foot off the gas. In the top of the third inning, Menken continued to give Nardi fits, regaining the lead for the Hokies by scoring Fragale on a single right up the middle.

After two more pitching changes, redshirt freshman Conner Yoder was sent from the bullpen to face the Highlanders late in the bottom of the fourth inning. Butler continued his great game by singling to shortstop to score Podaras and tie the game back up.

Soon after, Yoder threw two wild pitches back to back; both scoring runs for Radford. Redshirt sophomore Mason Scoville scored on the first wild pitch while sophomore Carlin Cristian scored on the second giving Radford a 6-4 lead heading into the top of the fifth inning.

Next, Fragale did the same, doubling on his first pitch which Horanski took advantage and scored on making the game 6-5. The Highlander then called another timeout, and Nardi's pitching day was over. Radford switched to redshirt senior Kyle Palmer.

At the bottom of the sixth inning, Matheny scored again, this time on a sacrifice bunt by Christian giving the Highlanders a 7-5 lead. Soon after Roth scored both Christian and Higgerson on a double, he sent into center field extending the lead to 9-5.

Down by three runs, the Hokies immediately responded. Fragale continued his great performance by crushing a home run past the right-field wall. Palmer was then substituted out for freshman Cody Boone.

The teams went back and forth for the rest of the game, with Scoville scoring on a single by Christian at the bottom of the seventh inning to make the game 10-6. Redshirt junior Tom Stoffel responded with a two-run home run in the bottom of the sixth to make it a two-run game.

In the bottom of the eighth inning, Owens made his second error of the game trying to throw Roth out, but his throw was wild and ended up scoring Roth. The game now 11-8, the Hokies desperately tried to tie or retake the lead before the game ended. Radford substituted in redshirt sophomore Brandon Donovan to close the game.

The first batter, Menken, Donovan struck out after a full count. After giving another full count to the next batter, Owens, this time he walks him, putting him on first base. Freshman Michael Fernandez beamed a ball to right field for a single. With two runners on, the next batter was Mangrum who smashed a home run on the first pitch Donovan gave him.

The whole stadium was in disbelief as Virginia Tech tied the game 11-11 going into the bottom of the ninth inning. However, the Highlanders had not had trouble scoring all game. After a full count, Matheny was walked to lead off the inning. Next, Christian advanced Matheny to second base on a sacrifice bunt.

Butler, who was batting 4 for 4, beamed a single to centerfield. After a brief timeout, the Hokies decided to walk the very dangerous Higgerson intentionally. With the bases loaded and all the pressure on sophomore pitcher Graham Seitz, he threw a wild pitch to the left that Matheny took full advantage of. He scored giving the game to the Highlanders in the most miraculous finish of the year.

Photo/Video Credit: ([Radford Athletics](#))