

Trojans thwarted up north by the Bears

Jeffrey Davenport & Ashley Zeldin | May 23, 2007

Los Angeles, CA -- The USC baseball team headed into its series at California with dwindling hopes of playing in the postseason. Following a 6-3 loss that completed a Bears sweep on Monday in Berkeley, a berth in the NCAA Regionals seems unlikely.

The Trojans (26-26, 8-13 Pacific-10 Conference) took a 1-0 lead in the second on an RBI double by third baseman Hector Rabago that scored Darren Gemoll.

Cal (28-24, 11-10) responded with two runs in the third and fifth off of USC starter Tommy Milone to take a 4-1 advantage. The teams traded one-run efforts in the seventh and eighth innings to complete the scoring.

Freshman shortstop Grant Green extended his hitting streak to nine games, having hit safely in 26 of his last 28 games.

In Sunday's 6-1 loss, the Bears' Alex Rollin pitched 6 1/3 innings, allowing one unearned run on six hits before leaving the game when Nick Buss' line drive clipped his non-throwing hand.

However, the rest of the USC offense couldn't break through, despite loading the bases in the first with two outs. Matt Cusick and Green led off with consecutive singles and catcher Johnny Bowden was hit by a pitch, but freshman Robert Stock struck out to end the threat.

Cal roared back with two runs in the bottom of the inning.

Then the Trojans managed a run in the second, as Hector Estrella reached on a fielding error and advanced to second on a single to left field by Buss. After a sacrifice bunt by Roberto Lopez, Estrella scored on an RBI groundout by Cusick.

The Bears stretched their lead, scoring a run in the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth innings for the winning margin.

Cal spared itself an extra-inning battle Saturday, as Bears shortstop Michael Brady hit a walk-off solo home run off reliever Rabago for the 4-3 win. Buss notched his first four-hit game this season, and junior leftfielder Lucas Duda went 2-for-2 with three walks.

The Trojans conclude the regular season by traveling to UC Santa Barbara tonight and hosting a three-game homestand against Stanford Friday through Sunday at Dedeaux Field.

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