

# Steam win rain-shortened second game to earn doubleheader split with Licking County

Ryan Strausborger extended his hitting streak to 16 games after going 4-for-6 in the doubleheader

July 18, 2009

## Game One (7 innings)

WESTERN HILLS, Ohio—Dan Buchholz (Milwaukee) started a three-run third inning for Licking County by smacking a two-run home run, breaking a 2-2 tie and sending the Settlers to a 6-4 game one win over the Steam Saturday afternoon at Western Hills High School.

Reece Asbury (Miami) struggled for the third consecutive start in the loss, lasting just 3.0 innings and giving up five runs (four earned) on seven hits. After beginning the season with 10.0 consecutive scoreless innings, he has now gone 0-3 with a 12.00 ERA over his last three starts. Asbury (1-3) did manage to become the Steam's career leader in strikeout-to-walk ratio (minimum 40.0 innings pitched) in the game after striking out five and walking two. He has fanned 40 and walked just seven in his Steam career for a sparkling 5.71 strikeout-to-walk ratio.

Jonathan Koutis (Ohio Dominican) tossed 4.0 innings for the win, giving up three earned runs on six hits. Koutis (4-2) struck out three and walked two and is now tied for the league lead in wins. Nick Karow (Furman) worked around a two-out single in the ninth for his league-leading sixth save.

Ryan Strausborger (Indiana State) went 2-for-3 with a double, two runs scored, a walk, and a stolen base in the game, extending his hitting streak to 15 games. The two runs gave Strausborger 29 on the season and tied him with Zach Hurley (Ohio State) for the Steam career runs record (67). Brad Gschwind (Miami) singled twice in four at bats, and Ben Thomas (Xavier) drove in three runs, marking the third time this season he has knocked in at least three runs in a game (no other Steam player has more than one three-RBI game this season).

After a rough outing in his Steam debut, Kevin Jordan (Northern Kentucky) was effective in relief of Asbury, working the final four innings of the game and giving up just one run on four hits.

Buchholz went 2-for-4 with the home run, and John McCambridge (Xavier) notched two hits, scored twice, and stole his league-leading 16<sup>th</sup> base of the season (giving him a combined 58 stolen bases this year over the college and summer seasons). Aaron Roberts (Southern Illinois) also had two hits, going 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run scored.

The Settlers jumped out to an early 2-0 lead in the first on three base hits and a walk. McCambridge led off with a double that got past Tim Issler (Ball State) at third and stole third base two outs later. After a Chris Serritella (Southern Illinois) walk, Roberts blooped a single over the head of first baseman Bobby Freking (Xavier) to plate McCambridge, with Serritella motoring to third on the play. Kyle McMillen (Kent State) followed with an infield single to bring home Serritella for the second run of the game.

Cincinnati quickly tied the game in the bottom half of the frame. Strausborger wasted no time in extending his hitting streak, ripping a double past Buchholz at third to begin the inning (nearly a carbon copy of McCambridge's double to lead off the game), and Drew Schmidt (Xavier) lined a base hit up the middle to put runners on the corners with nobody out. A ground out by Jon Edgington (Miami) advanced Schmidt to second, and Thomas followed with a two-run single up the middle to tie the game, giving him the team RBI lead with 16 and extending his hitting streak to six games. Gschwind knocked a single to right-center to put runners on first and third with one out, but Koutis induced Freking to pop out and struck out Ryan Bellamy (Xavier) looking to escape further damage.

After a 1-2-3 second inning, Asbury ran into trouble in the third, serving up a line-drive two-run home run to Buchholz, which gave Licking County the lead back at 4-2. The home run was the second on the season for Buchholz. After a single and a fielding error gave Licking County two runners in scoring position with one out, Tyler Engle (Ohio State) made it a three-run inning for the Settlers by lining a base hit past a drawn-in infield, putting the Licking County up by a 5-2 count.

Kountis did not walk a batter through the first four innings but came unraveled in the fifth, throwing 12 of his 15 pitches in the inning out of the strike zone (two walks and a hit batter) before being lifted for Jarad Miller (Valparaiso) with the bases loaded and nobody out. Thomas moved everybody up a base and brought home a run with a ground ball to second, but Miller followed by retiring Gschwind and Freking on a strikeout and a pop out to keep the score 5-3 in favor of Licking County.

Serritella brought home a run in the sixth with a one-out single and Roberts followed with a walk to load the bases, but Jordan induced McMillen to ground into a 1-2-3 double play to keep the Steam within three.

A double by Bellamy followed by a passed ball and a walk gave the Steam first and third with nobody out in the bottom half of the sixth, but T.J. Jones (Cincinnati) grounded into a rally-killing double play and the Steam managed just one run in the frame, closing the gap to 6-4.

### **Game Two (9 Innings)**

The Steam rebounded from the game one loss to defeat Licking County 4-1 in a five-inning, rain-shortened second game. The rain came down hard starting with two outs in the top of the fifth with Ryan Martin (Michigan State) on the mound. Martin struck out Brandon Gessner (Otterbein College) swinging to make it an official game, and after Strausborger singled to begin the bottom of the fifth, the umpires waved the teams off the field. Following a 32-minute delay, the game was called, giving the Steam (15-10) the victory.

Mike Jefferson (Louisiana Tech) stymied the Settlers (15-10) in the start to earn the victory, but had to be replaced after 4.0 innings due to a high pitch count. Jefferson (2-1) gave up just one earned run on three hits while striking out seven and walking three. Jefferson has punched out 18 batters over his last three starts despite not reaching the fifth inning in any of them. He now has 34 strikeouts on the season, ranking him second in the GLSCL behind teammate Ian Kadish (Marshall).

Martin worked the fifth and final inning for his first save, allowing just a walk in the inning and striking out his 22<sup>nd</sup> batter of the season (in just 16.0 innings).

Steam pitchers have now struck out a whopping 60 batters over the last six games, totaling 47.0 innings.

Joe Muraski (Northwestern) pitched a complete game in the loss (albeit only 4.0 innings), giving up four earned runs on seven hits. Muraski (2-2) did not walk a batter and struck out four.

Strausborger went 2-for-3 in the five-inning affair, extending his hitting streak to 16 games. Gschwind had a perfect night at the plate, going 2-for-2 with an RBI and a run scored, and Cody Elliott (Ball State) smacked his first home run of the season, a two-run shot in the fourth inning.

Licking County managed just three hits in the game, with John Lydic (Sinclair C.C.) driving in the Settlers' lone tally.

Cincinnati plated two runs in the first inning to take an early lead, the first lead of the year for the Steam against the Settlers. Strausborger again led off with a single to extend his hitting streak and then beat the throw to second on a ground ball single in the hole at shortstop by Schmidt. Strausborger and Schmidt then pulled off a double steal, but Muraski looked like he would escape unharmed after striking out both Edgington and Travis Shaw (Kent State). However, Muraski balked home Strausborger and Gschwind followed with an opposite-field single to put the Steam up 2-0.

With the stolen base, Strausborger tied Zach Hurley for the Steam all-time record with 29, and when the Indiana State product crossed the plate for the 68<sup>th</sup> time, he surpassed Hurley for the Steam career runs record. Strausborger has wasted little time in adding games to his hitting streak lately, going 5-for-6 with two doubles and four runs scored in the first inning over the past six games.

Licking County plated a run in the fourth inning off of Jefferson to cut the deficit to one. Steve Davis (Coastal Carolina) doubled with two outs and came around to score on a Lydic single to left.

Elliott gave the Steam a 4-1 lead and wowed the crowd in the fourth inning by launching an opposite field two-run home run over the wall in right field, his first for the Steam after going deep twice for the Cardinals this season.

The Steam play their fourth and fifth games in three days Sunday afternoon when they travel to Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio to take on the Stark County Terriers in a 3:00 doubleheader. Cincinnati returns to Western Hills High School on Wednesday, July 22 for a 7:05 game with the Xenia Scouts. After Sunday's doubleheader, seven of the Steam's final nine games will be played at home.