

Grizzlies clobber Colts

Cheyenne hitters record 22 hits in win

A night after runs were hard to come by and a stolen base of home accounted for the fourth and winning run in the 14th inning, the Cheyenne Grizzlies (14-4) needed no late-game magic on Saturday night, clobbering the visiting Laramie Colts 21-11.

The Grizzlies recorded a season-high 22 hits and reached base a total of 32 times through hits, walks and hit batters. Every Grizzly starter had a hit and nine different players scored, while eight drove in at least one run.

Shortstop Jose Jauregui scored in each of the first three innings and finished the night going 4-for-5 with three runs batted in. First baseman Mike Domenick and third baseman Ryan Javech also had big offensive games, combining for eight RBI. Javech singled in all six of his at-bats, scoring three times.

"I'm just seeing the ball well and everyone's hitting the ball well, which is pretty contagious," Javech said.

"We know we can hit and it's good to get runs for our pitchers," added Jauregui. "I was just trying to get on base any way I could. The first time I was just trying to slap the ball to the right side, and with (Kevin) Logan stealing second, it opened up a big hole. After that it was just base hit after base hit."

The game didn't start well for the Grizzlies, as three infield errors accounted for four unearned runs given up by starter Bryce Reid. Cheyenne would get two runs back in the first, though, and by the second inning had regained the lead, 5-4.

"It's always hard to come back, but the way we've been hitting the ball and running the bases I knew we could get back on top real quick, and we did," head coach Aaron Holley said.

Still, the game was full of comebacks as Laramie tied it up in the third, 5-5. In the bottom half of the third, though, the Grizzlies sent 10 men to the plate, with seven reaching base, and chased Colts' starter Jason Bell out of the game after just 2 1/3 innings. The Grizzlies scored six times in the inning to seemingly take control of the game.

But again in the next frame, Laramie came fighting back, scoring four runs to cut the deficit to two and finishing the night for Reid.

After pitching so well in his first four starts (4-0, 1.07 ERA), Reid struggled with location Saturday for a rare off night. He left the game after just three-plus innings, surrendering five earned (nine total) runs on seven hits, five walks, a hit batter and just two strikeouts.

"I just couldn't find the strike zone," Reid said. "I felt fine but the biggest thing for me is finishing my pitches. I tried, tried, tried but just couldn't do it. It's something to work on for my next start. We win as a team we lose as a team, though. It's nice to get the W under your name but it's a team win and that's what counts."

Ryan Schwenn, who ended up recording the win, his first of the season, came in to relieve Reid, tossing two innings and allowing two runs on three hits. The two runs allowed Laramie to tie the game up again, after trailing by six two innings prior.

But just like the last two times, when the Grizzlies trailed, their offense prevailed, scoring three runs from the middle of the order to take a 14-11 lead. Cheyenne would get four insurance runs in the seventh and three more in the eighth to put away the Colts for good.

Cheyenne got three quality innings of relief out of Chad Correa from the sixth through eighth innings, allowing no runs on four hits, and the most important stat, just one walk.

"I was just able to get ahead of hitters," Correa said. "When I did that I could go to my changeup or curveball, so I was able to throw everything for strikes. My arm's been fresh so it felt really good to be out on the mound again."

In the five innings prior, Cheyenne pitchers had allowed eight free bases, a big part of Laramie's comebacks.

"Offensively, we're just hitting the ball well," Holley said. "We knew we could throw up runs but the question was can we stop them from scoring runs? Chad went out there and threw up a bunch of zeroes and allowed us to build off our lead."

Joe Luft came in to pitch the ninth, allowing a couple base runners before finishing off the Colts.

"It feels good to get the win," Javech said. "Every time they put up runs we were confident we could answer them, and we did."

With the win, the Grizzlies have won five consecutive games and stand a game ahead of Fort Collins in the MCBL standings. They host Greeley Sunday at 4 p.m.

"We're continuing to play well," Holley said. "We continue to hit well, we continue to have guys come off the bench and play well, we continue to have guys come out of the pen and throw strikes. They make it pretty easy to coach. The hardest thing is finding the playing time for the guys who want and deserve to play more when we have such a big roster that's full of talent."

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