

TCU rallies for CWS berth, 6-5 over Pepperdine

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 10 June 2014 10:45

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — TCU had already tied the game in the top of the ninth when No. 9 batter Kyle Bacak came to the plate with a runner on third base.

With a 1-0 count, Bacak got the sign that sent the Horned Frogs back to the College World Series, executing a suicide squeeze bunt as the Horned Frogs rallied for a 6-5 victory over Pepperdine on Monday.

"I really wasn't thinking about a squeeze or anything like that," he said. "It kind of caught me by surprise at first, but it made sense."

The Frogs (47-16), the visiting team in Game 3 despite hosting the super regional, started the ninth with three consecutive hits off Pepperdine closer Eric Karch (4-2) that included Dylan Fitzgerald's tying RBI double. There was an infield popout before Bacak bunted as Jerrick Suiter, who had reached on a high-chopping infield single, charged home from third.

Closer Riley Ferrell (2-1) got the final six outs, leaving two runners on base and Waves two-way threat Aaron Brown on deck when Bryan Langlois struck out to end the game.

TCU is in the College World Series for the second time in five seasons and plays Sunday against fellow Big 12 team Texas Tech. A third Big 12 team, Texas, is on the other side of the bracket.

"That's all we've ever talked about," said Kevin Cron, the junior first baseman who homered and had an RBI double. "It's a pretty unbelievable feeling."

Brandon Caruso and Brown homered for the Waves (43-18), the West Coast Conference regular-season champ trying to get to the College World Series for the first time since winning the 1992 national championship. Steve Rodriguez, their 11th-year head coach, was then an All-American infielder for Pepperdine.

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"To be able to come in this place and do what we did, I thought was very impressive," said Rodriguez, who has a roster loaded with freshmen and advanced as a No. 3 seed in the regional at Cal Poly.

The Big 12 tournament champion Frogs have won 32 of their last 36 games, and had won 10 in a row before losing 3-2 Sunday in Game 2. Their fourth super regional in six years was their first at home.

"I dreamed of this, playing for the right to go Omaha in front of our fans," said Jim Schlossnagle, in his 11th season as TCU's coach.

The first batter Ferrell faced in the eighth with two men on was Brad Anderson, whose sac fly put Pepperdine up 5-4.

TCU tied the game at 4-all with two runs in the sixth. Boomer White, who had an inning-ending strikeout in the third with the bases loaded, had a two-out RBI single and Cron followed with a run-scoring double, an inning after his solo homer.

Caruso had a leadoff triple in the first, when TCU right fielder Fitzgerald misplayed the ball, stepping in before it went over his head. Caruso scored on Brown's single.

Bacak also had an RBI single in the second, the third consecutive two-out single by the bottom three batters in TCU's lineup.

Brown's 13th homer put the Waves up 4-2 in the fifth.

He was drafted in the third round Friday by Philadelphia as an outfielder. In Sunday's win for Pepperdine, after TCU won the opener 3-2 on Saturday, Brown pitched seven scoreless innings

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and from center field threw out the potential tying run at the plate in the eighth inning.

"Can everybody confirm that Aaron Brown will not be in Omaha, because I will sleep better if that's the case," Schlossnagle said. "What a great, great player."

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