

Aviator Field

The Box Score

The Aviators beat the Breakers by a score of 6-2 in this heat-shortened five inning affair. Westhampton got off to a quick start as they scored all six of their runs in the first inning. The inning began with six straight batters reaching base. However, the Aviators had to use more of their bullpen than they would have liked because starter Ryan Smith was hit in the leg with a line drive and had to be replaced in only the first inning. With the win, Westhampton tied Riverhead atop the standings at 26-11-2. Southampton fell to 15-22-1 and are now in a battle with Long Island for the fifth and final playoff spot.

More Than the Box Score

Westhampton center fielder Daniel Franchi continued his tremendous season with a 3-3 afternoon. With those three hits, Franchi tied the Aviator single-season record for hits in a season. The Binghamton product did it in a multitude of ways. Franchi grounded one through the shortstop hole on the first pitch he saw to start the day. He would later add line drive singles up the middle and through the right side, respectively. Franchi maintained an aggressive approach at the plate as it was clear that he did not want to get behind in the count. He has a very simple swing that sees no variance in his bat path. He does a good job of keeping his body

connected and letting his hands do the work. Franchi also continued to be a pest on the base path as he added another stolen base to his total. The most important thing about Franchi is that he is always engaged in the game. He is ready to hit as soon as he gets in the batter's box and is a leader on the defensive side of the ball. Franchi sets the table for this dangerous Aviator lineup, which could make them poised for a deep run in the postseason.

Patience is a Virtue

Bailey Peterson proved again today as to why he is one of the toughest outs in the league. In Peterson's three at bats for Westhampton today, he saw no less than five pitches in each at bat. This means that even when the result is unsuccessful, he is taxing the pitcher and helping out his teammates. Along with this, Peterson also has an unbelievable knowledge of the strike zone. He is adept at fouling off pitches in the zone and taking ones out of it when the count gets to two strikes. When he finally does swing, he swings angry. In his second at bat of this one Peterson laced a 3-1 pitch over the center fielder's head and off the wall. This ball was a straight-line drive that carried all the way to the center field fence. His length and extension through the zone are what gives him an edge. Peterson's ability to take balls and hammer mistakes is what makes him an extremely tough out for this Westhampton team. Peterson plays all over the diamond and is heading into his senior season at Michigan State.

Avoiding the Shutout

Lehigh product Gerard Sweeney was able to hit a late home run in order for Southampton to avoid the shutout. It was one of two hits for the first baseman on the day, as he also picked up a single from the right side of the plate. In both swings, Sweeney was able to keep his head on the ball throughout his swing. He also had a grit about him that had no specific handedness. Either way Sweeney would fight off tough pitches until he got one that he could capitalize on. He did just that in the last inning when he launched a ball over the wall in right center field. Sweeney looked a bit more confident from the left side, but still made solid contact from the right. However, the ability to switch hit as a whole makes him more valuable in today's game. It is always great to have a middle of the order bat that is "matchup proof". Sweeney could be an important piece in Wednesday's wild card game and the rest of the playoffs if they get there.