

Aviator Field

The Box Score

Shelter Island defeated Westhampton by a score of 9-6 in this one. By doing so, the Bucks took over first place in the standings. It was a well-balanced attack as four Bucks each had two hits. The game was tied at four until Shelter Island scored five runs in the seventh inning capped with a two-run single by John Shields. For the losing Aviators, Sean O'Keefe and Nick Bottari both hit home runs. The loss dropped Westhampton to 12-5-1, while Shelter Island improved to 12-4.

More Than the Box Score

John Shields had impressive at bats throughout the afternoon for Shelter Island. Of course, he had the big hit in the seventh, but his at bat in the fourth inning is worth noting. The Bucks were in the midst of a two-out rally having already knocked out the Westhampton starter. Westhampton brought in a side-winding lefty to face the lefthanded bat of Shields. Watching a lefthanded batter against a lefty pitcher truly shows if they are able to keep their front side in and not bail out early. This is especially the case for a side-arm pitcher as the ball looks like it's coming right at you as soon as he releases the pitch. Shields did not bail, he did the opposite, as he roped an inside fastball to the wall in right field for a two-out, two-run

double. His eye was key as well, as in his next at bat he faced the same pitcher and did not chase outside the zone. The big single in the seventh inning shows that a common theme with Shields' approach at the plate is that he never tries to do too much. He is more than willing to take what the pitcher gives him, and that willingness is what helped his team in today's victory. Shields will be entering his junior season at State College of Florida Manatee at Sarasota in the fall.

Power Surge

Westhampton's Sean O'Keefe looked like a man amongst boys in this one. Yes, much of it has to do with his 6'4", 235-pound frame, but his violent swing contributes to that notion as well. To say the least, O'Keefe is a presence standing in the batter's box. In his first at bat, the first basemen out of Western Michigan hit a booming foul ball on an off-speed pitch that was only a few feet foul from a home run. On the next pitch, a high fastball, he went down swinging. In at bat number two, the opposing pitcher started O'Keefe with another off-speed pitch, which he fouled straight back. On the next pitch, however, O'Keefe did not miss. For some reason the pitcher tried that off-speed pitch one more time and to his chagrin, O'Keefe hit the ball to the trees in left center field, well over the fence. He did a great job of keeping his whole body connected and generating power with his load. O'Keefe followed it up in his next at bat, as he went after a high fastball and hit an absolute missile up the middle for a single. The in-game adjustments made by O'Keefe were very impressive and his raw power is impossible to ignore.

Commanding the Game

Pitchers will take any advantage they can get, and the entire Shelter Island staff had one today in catcher Anthony Semo. Semo showed off his arm right away, as he gunned down a runner trying to steal second base in the first inning. His positioning before the throw is what led to his success on this particular play. Semo did an excellent job of setting up his legs in the right positions, allowing him to pop up and get off a strong throw quickly. However, Semo also did the little things required by a catcher. No ball in the dirt got by him, as he was not afraid to leave the glove out of it and let his body do the work. He also stole several close pitches. His pre-pitch set up is what allowed him to display pitches off of the outside corners as strikes. Most noticeably, though, was how he followed the runner down to first base on every ground ball. This is a lost art that every coach would love. It even paid off! Semo was right behind the bag on a double-play ball that went array. The baserunner that had just gotten to first and tried to take second, but thanks to Semo's awareness he was out. The Fordham sophomore was also more than capable at the dish. He did not record a hit in this one, but he did reach base twice on a walk and a hit-by-pitch. Semo also did a good job of taking what the pitcher gave him as he hit a couple of tough luck line drives the opposite way right into the right fielder's glove.