



Local Matters.

courier gold rush > sports

Hot streakPanther baseball team wins ninth in 10 games

[Print Page](#)

Published: 07.07.09

Marvin Olberding

In extending their recent string of success to nine wins in 10 games with a doubleheader sweep of Faith Christian, July 1 at Meadow Wood Park, the Woodland Park Panthers showed that they have the ability to use the whole field with their high-caliber offense.

The Panthers used an eight-run fourth inning in the opener and a seven-run fourth in the nightcap to earn 13-6 and 12-8 victories, respectively, and the key to success was patience at the plate, taking what the opposing pitchers gave them and using it to their advantage.



Woodland Park Panthers summer ball is rolling along with nine wins in 10 games.Courtesy photo

"We've got a lot of guys that like to pull the ball, but you could see by the way they played their outfield that they were going to pitch us outside," said Panther assistant coach Fred Huggins. "We developed the mental approach that we were going to let the ball travel a little bit and try to go the other way."

The strategy worked to perfection in the second game, with 12 of the Panthers' 17 hits going to center or right field and six going for extra bases. In a three-run third inning, Jerid Huggins started the Panthers off with a double to right center, Charlie Jones brought him home with a looper over first base that turned into a double, Sam Shultz singled to center to score Jones and Josh Logsdon drove in Shultz with an RBI single to right to tie the game at 5-5.

After the Eagles responded with two runs in the top of the fourth, the Panthers went right back to the same formula to take the lead for good. After a lead-off walk by Ryan Cannella, one of three Panther walks in the inning, Huggins hit a two-run homer to right field to tie the game, and Shultz and Logsdon followed later in the inning with RBI doubles to right center field. Jonathan Sisk would later hit a two-run single — the only ball pulled to left for a hit in the Panthers' fourth inning — and score on a balk to round out the Woodland Park scoring.

Perhaps the biggest benefactor of the Panthers' patient approach at the plate was the third baseman, Jones, who finished the second game 4-for-4 with two doubles, two singles, two RBI and three runs score. Only one of the right-handed batter's four hits, an RBI double in the first inning, was hit to the left half of the field.

"Two summers ago, I had a problem with trying to pull every single pitch, so I've been trying to hit the ball everywhere and get on base," Jones said.

Jones' effort is not only paying off at the plate, but in the eyes of his coaches, as well.

"It's not natural for most of these guys to do; we've got a lot of pull hitters, Charlie being one of them," Fred Huggins said. "He doesn't ever go the other way, and he did it two or three times today."

The Panthers' strong offensive performance on their home field extended their new winning streak to three games and came just two days after splitting a doubleheader in Boulder, which snapped Woodland Park's previous six-game roll.

After falling 14-7 in the first game of the double-dip, a contest where Woodland Park used five pitchers in an effort to find more depth on the mound, Panther right-hander Taylor Watters held the Boulder bats in check while his teammates built a 9-2 lead in the second game. Boulder rallied in the sixth inning, but their comeback attempt fell short and Woodland Park salvaged a split with a 9-7 win.

Logsdon went 4-for-4 in the win with a double and a stolen base.

With the Faith Christian sweep, the Panthers improved their record to 13-7 as the regular season approaches its home stretch. Woodland Park hosted Prairie View, July 6 and the Old Chicago Knights (Fairview), July 9 before traveling to Denver East July 11. The Saturday doubleheader begins at 11 a.m. The July 6 game was after press time.

Copyright © 2009 - Colorado Community Newspapers Online

[\[x\] Close Window](#)