

2008 CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE STATE BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Game 7 – Sierra College Wolverines 6, Southwestern College Jaguars 2

FRESNO – On the strong right arms of Cameron Ray and Josh Crockett, the Sierra College Wolverines notched their first-ever state baseball championship with a 6-2 win over the Southwestern College Jaguars on Monday at the 2008 California Community College State Baseball Championship, held at Fresno City College's John Eules Ballpark.

Ray (12-3), coming off of just two days rest, threw 5 1/3 innings, allowing just one unearned run on two hits, walking none and striking out three. Crockett, the Wolverines' closer, threw the final 4 1/3 innings and allowed just one run on four hits with two strikeouts.

While the pitchers kept the Jaguars (40-14) off-balanced, Sierra's offense jumped out to an early lead and never looked back.

After falling behind 6-0 in the early game, the Wolverines (39-15) drew first blood in the finale with a run in the second inning and two in the third. The first run came when Ryan Fox reached on an infield single, stole second and scored on a single to right by Alex Anicich. In the third, a Kyle Saukko single was followed three batters later by a two-run home run to right off the bat of Ryan Stevens, giving Sierra a 3-0 lead.

Southwestern answered back in the bottom of the third when Julio Torres reached first on a dropped fly ball to left and scored on a two-out triple down the right-field line to cut the deficit to 3-1.

That two-run advantage stretched to three in the top of the fourth when Brian Wright singled to center off of reliever Eric Krause. He went to second on a sacrifice bunt by Anicich, stole third and scored on a sacrifice fly to right by Jesse Olson for a 4-1 Sierra advantage.

After rolling through five strong innings, Ray encountered some trouble in the sixth when a hit-by-pitch and error put runners on first and second with one out. Head coach Rob Wilson pulled Ray and went with Wolverine closer Josh Crockett, who promptly retired the next two batters with a strikeout and fly out, ending the threat.

In the bottom of the seventh, Southwestern used a hit batsman, a catcher's interference and two stolen bases put runners on second and third with two outs, but Crockett wiggled out of the jam with a foul popup to third, ending the threat.

Sierra padded its lead in the top of the eighth when Logan Lotti led off with a single to left and advanced to third on a double to right by Stevens. An RBI single by Wright and a sacrifice fly by Anicich brought in to the two Wolverine runners, making the score, 6-1.

Once again, the Jags threatened in the eighth when back-to-back singles by Edgar Molina and Kenny Miramontes put runners in scoring position. But Crockett, who finished the

regular season with a 0.00 ERA limited the damage to an RBI ground out by Jake Simpson, ending the scoring for the game.

With two outs in the bottom of the ninth, Crockett helped strand two more Southwestern baserunners with a fly out to left, ending the game and sending the Wolverines to the mound for the traditional dog-pile celebration.

With a 2-0 record in the State Championships, Ray was named the tourney's Most Valuable Player. He allowed just four runs (three earned) over 12 1/3 innings with five strikeouts, posting a 2.19 ERA.