

Game 6 – College of San Mateo “Bulldogs” (34-10-1) vs. Ohlone “Renegades” (37-10)

FRESNO – For just the second time in the history of California Community College baseball, two Northern California schools competed for the title. Back in 1992, Fresno City College defeated Sacramento City College, 3-2 for the championship. This year, Ohlone College (37-10) became the second team to win an All-NorCal match-up, as they defeated College of San Mateo (34-0-1), 16-10 in the California Community College Athletic Association Baseball State Championships, held at Fresno City College’s John Euleess Ballpark.

Facing elimination, San Mateo broke out first in the top of the second inning, scoring six runs off Ohlone starting pitcher Matt Fontaine (6-2). Thomas Wood got it started with a two-run single that drove in Joey Wallace and Trevor Pasiecznik, who singled and doubled, respectively. Three batters later, Andrew Suvunnachuen doubled in Pasiecznik and Wood for a 4-0 lead, while Justin Maffei made it 5-0 with an RBI double. Nick White then followed with an RBI single, which plated Suvunnachuen for a 6-0 advantage.

Bulldog starting pitcher Devin Bradley (5-1) rode the offensive surge that started the previous day with 15-14 and 16-4 wins that propelled them to the championships.

But that didn’t last long, as tournament Most Valuable Player Jeff Johnson of Ohlone launched a three-run home run in the bottom of the third inning against Bradley to make it 6-4 right after Cody Foster drove in Michael DiRocco to get on the scoreboard.

The offensive spark by the Renegades seemed to rejuvenate Fontaine, as he responded with a shutdown 1-2-3 inning in the fourth. The batters followed Fontaine’s lead with Ryan Walterhouse driving in Kyle Holmstrom from third base with a one-out single to make it 6-5 in the bottom of the stanza.

Playing their third game in two days seemed to show its wear and tear on the San Mateo pitching staff in the latter half of the game, as Ohlone feasted on the Bulldog bullpen after chasing Bradley early in the sixth inning.

San Mateo did go up 7-5 in the top of the sixth on a run-scoring sacrifice bunt by Ryan Allgrove, but Ohlone answered back with a Michael Ussery double, wild pitch and sacrifice fly by DiRocco. The Renegades tied the game on a one-out RBI single from Foster off relief pitcher Nick Franquez (5-2), with Steven Ramos advancing to third base after his double. A walk to Zach Johnson loaded the bases before Jeff Johnson launched a 2-2 offering from Franquez for a grand slam, his fourth home run of the tournament.

Not to be outdone by Jeff Johnson’s offensive heroics, Ramos came out and made two highlight reel diving catches in the top of the seventh inning. His speed came into play in the bottom of the seventh, as he singled and scored from first base on a failed pick-off attempt. It sparked a four-run inning, which put the game out of reach at 15-7.

State Championships - By The Numbers:

1 – One-hitters thrown (by four Ohlone College pitcher vs. El Camino College, which is also the first time the feat was accomplished in state championship history).

1-0 – Record of the pitcher after winning the state championship game the last two years (Josh Lee of Orange Coast in 2009 and Alika Pruett of Ohlone in 2010).

2 – Times the state championship game has been an All-Northern California match-up (other time was in 1992 when Fresno City defeated Sacramento City, 3-2 at Riverside College).

2 – Times College of San Mateo and Ohlone College faced each other before meeting up in the state championship game. Ohlone won both meetings (10-9 and 4-2).

3 – Number of times College of San Mateo reached the state championships prior to 2010. They were defeated in 1969 (Long Beach City College), 1973 (Cerritos College) and 1978 (Los Angeles Harbor College).

6 – Number of stitches needed to close up a cut under the eye of umpire Gary DeFabio, who had a ball deflect off the ground and hit him in the face in the El Camino-San Mateo game on Saturday morning. He returned to work the final game of the day, as well as the state championship game.

7 – RBI by Ohlone's Jeff Johnson in the championship game after his three-run home run and grand slam. Johnson finished with four home runs and 11 RBI, while his twin brother Zach added two home runs and six RBI in the tournament.

9 – Most state championships by a school – Cerritos, while Long Beach City, Sacramento City and Fresno City each have five.

12 hours 21 minutes – Amount of time it took to play the three games on Saturday.

14.8 – Average runs scored by the winning team in the first five games of the tournament

16 – Number of years in a row the state championship was held at John Eules Ballpark at Fresno City College. The tournament will be played at Bakersfield College next year.

20 – Number of first-inning runs scored in the tournament (San Mateo led the way with seven runs against Rio Hondo in a 16-4 win.)

30 – Minutes the game was halted when Rio Hondo CF Mike Vinnitsky ran into the wall on an inside-the-park home run by Ohlone's Jeff Johnson, which required an ambulance to come and take him to the hospital. Vinnitsky returned later that day to join his team in their 16-4 elimination loss to San Mateo.

57 – Number of walks issued by the pitchers in the tournament. By contrast, they also combined to strike out 73 batters.

.536 – Batting average for the leadoff hitters in the six games of the tournament. They were a combined 30-for-56 with 12 RBI and 8 runs scored.

1992 – The last year a school from the Orange Empire Conference was competing in the state championship game.