

Post Game Notes

Notre Dame vs. Central Michigan

May 12, 2010

- In making his first career start, senior David Mills (Battle Creek, Mich.) became the first Irish player to start his first game on the mound as a senior since Joe Thaman did so in 2004. Thaman played first base his first three years (2001-03) with the Irish before making his debut on the hill during the 2004 campaign, appearing in 29 games and making one start. Mills is the only four-year Notre Dame pitcher to make his first start as a senior since at least 1969, when games started statistics were first kept.
- Mills worked 2.0 scoreless innings in the game and notched his 14th consecutive walk-free outing. Mills has not yielded a base on balls since March 27 at USF (first game of the doubleheader), a stretch spanning 20.1 innings and 79 batters. His season average of 0.93 walks per nine innings would rank third in school history (Mills needs just one more inning to qualify), while his career average of 1.74 walks per nine innings currently ranks fourth. In addition, Mills' season strikeout-to-walk ratio of 6.00 (18 strikeouts, three walks) would rank fourth in ND history (again, he needs another inning to qualify).
- The stretch of not allowing a walk by Mills is the longest for an Irish pitcher since Tom Thornton worked 22.1 consecutive innings (89 batters) without yielding a base on balls from May 14-June 3 of the 2006 season. Thornton, who walked just seven batters in 82.1 innings that season (0.77 per nine innings, second in ND history), also had walk-free stretches that season of 16.2 innings (61 batters), 15.1 innings (70 batters, including the end of the 2005 season), 14.0 innings (56 batters), and 12.2 innings (64 batters). Fittingly, Mills ranks one place behind Thornton in both the season and career walks per nine innings averages; Thornton's career average of 1.73 is a hair ahead of Mills' 1.74 clip.
- Senior Ryan Connolly (Binghamton, N.Y.) singled in the first inning to extend his on-base streak to 12 games and up his on-base percentage in his first plate appearance of the game this season to .553 (26-for-47). Connolly has now reached base safely (via hit, walk, or hit-by-pitch) in 59 of his last 60 games; he was last held off the basepaths in two straight appearances in 2008 (0-for-1 against both Milwaukee on March 26 and against Chicago State on April 22).
- Senior Casey Martin (Chesterton, Ind.) went 3-for-4 on the night, all against left-handers, to improve his season average versus southpaws to a scorching .561 (23-for-41).
- Junior Todd Miller (Franklin, Tenn.) worked a 1-2-3 inning against Central Michigan to pick up a rare third-inning hold (with the planned staff day, Mills was in line for the win when Miller entered the game). Since returning from injury, Miller has racked up 4.0 scoreless innings while allowing just one hit (.077 opponents' batting average).
- The home run by West Virginia's Grant Buckner in the third inning off of senior Eric Maust (Alpharetta, Ga.) in the series finale was the first surrendered by Maust in 56.0 innings, a streak spanning 258 batters.
- Freshman Frank DeSico (Cleveland, Ohio) notched his third four-hit game of the season against West Virginia on May 8 (second game of the doubleheader); the last Irish player to have more games in a season with four or more hits was Craig Cooper in 2006 (three four-hit games, one five-hit game). DeSico's three four-hit games all came in a 20-game stretch, the shortest span for three games with four or more hits since A.J. Pollock had three four-hit games in a 17-game span in 2008 (March 4 vs. Maine, March 26 vs. Milwaukee, and March 30 vs. Cincinnati).
- The number of errors for Notre Dame's opponent continues to be a barometer for the success of the Irish, as after the loss to Central Michigan (who committed one error), Notre Dame is now 5-22 when its opponent commits one error or fewer but 15-6 when its opponent makes two or more miscues.
- Notre Dame has been successful on its last seven stolen base attempts and was last caught stealing at Michigan on April 20 (on a controversial call to boot).
- The Irish kept Central Michigan in the park on Wednesday, the first time in seven games Notre Dame has not allowed a long ball. Ironically, immediately preceding that stretch was the streak in which the Irish went 12 straight games without yielding a round-tripper.