

Saints Stumble in Galveston Series

The Seward County Saints battled winter weather conditions last week in front of their four game series with the Galveston Whitecaps in Arlington, Texas and it might have just been enough to allow the 'Caps to come out on top of three of the four contests in the series. In the opener, the Saints bats were as cold as the winter weather they battled as Galveston shut them out 3-0. In game two the Saints had a 2-1 lead late in the game but a pair of Seward defensive miscues cost them runs as the Whitecaps came back to win 3-2. Seward looked like they were in trouble in game three as they trailed 6-0 after 4 1/2 innings, but a seven run bottom of the 5th put them in front and they hung on to win 7-6. Trying to split the series in the finale, the Saints were up two in the 4th inning, but two Galveston runs tied it and a four run 5th for the Whitecaps sealed the deal and the series with a 9-5 win for Seward foes from the Lone Star State.

In their first chance to get outside in over a week, the Saints looked like they were going to get off to a good start in the series opener with Galveston after Jake Fuller singled and stole second with nobody out in the inning, but after advancing to third on a wild pitch, he was tagged out at home trying to score on a groundout to end the Saints chances for a run. Seward starter JB Olson kept the Whitecaps off the board in the 1st, but Galveston picked up an unearned run off the freshman in the 2nd to take a 1-0 lead. After the Saints picked up two outs on just four pitches in the 3rd, a single followed by a stolen base and another single plated Galveston's second run of the game as they took a 2-0 lead after 3. The Saints finally got some traffic on the bases in the top of the 4th as Brent Williams walked and stole second, Reed Thompson was hit by a pitch, and Kevin Connolly singled with two outs but a strikeout of the Saints leading RBI man ended the threat and kept Seward with a goose egg on the scoreboard. Olson cruised through the 4th and 5th without allowing a baserunner, but the Saints just couldn't get anything else going with their bats as they remained behind 2-0 after 5 1/2. Galveston tacked on a run in the bottom of the 6th and the Saints went down in order in their final at bats, falling 3-0.

Both teams finished with just 4 hits each. Connolly was the lone bright spot for the Saints, going 2 for 4. Olson pitched well for Seward, going 5 2/3 innings, allowing just 4 hits and 2 earned runs while striking out 5, but took the hard luck loss.

SEWARD COUNTY/GALVESTON GAME ONE BOX

SCORE<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/bsb/2013-14/boxscores/20140208_8pyv.xml>

The Saints took an early lead in game two, getting an RBI double from Williams and an RBI single from Connolly to put Seward up 2-0 after an inning. In his first outing as a Saint, Chris Juracek dazzled through the first three innings for the Saints, setting the Whitecaps down 1-2-3 in each frame to keep the Saints in front 2-0. Galveston scored their first run of the game in the top of the 4th with a leadoff single and then a two out single to cut the Seward lead to 2-1. The Whitecaps drew even in the 5th when they used a pair of Juracek balks after a double to push a run across to make it 2-2. In the Saints half of the 5th Alex White walked with one out and Bryson Allen singled with two outs to put two on for the middle of the order, but a strikeout quickly ended that threat and kept the game tied 2-2. Neither team scored in the 6th and it looked like the Saints would head to stretch time still tied up, but a two out passed ball allowed the Whitecaps to sneak a run across to make it 3-2 Galveston after 7. Seward reliever Keenan Hall kept the score there in the 8th and 9th, but the Saints couldn't find a way to score the tying run to send the game to extra innings as they went down 3-2 and watched Galveston sweep away the double header.

The Saints outhit the Whitecaps in the loss, finishing with 7 knocks compared to just 5 for Galveston. However, Seward committed 4 errors in the game, leading to a pair of unearned Whitecap runs, ultimately costing them the game. Allen and Connolly both had a pair of hits for Seward in the loss while Williams and Connolly had the two Saints RBI's. Like Olson a day earlier, Hall took the tough luck loss, going 2 2/3 innings of 1 hit relief while striking out 2 and allowing just 1 unearned run.

SEWARD COUNTY/GALVESTON GAME TWO BOX

SCORE<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/bsb/2013-14/boxscores/20140208_nh04.xml>

Looking for better results in game three, the Saints had to play from behind right away as Galveston strung together five 2nd inning hits to score four runs to take a 4-0 lead in the blink of an eye. The Seward offense was again slow to get going as they managed just one hit through the first four innings to remain behind 4-0 midway through the game. In the 5th the Saints really looked like they were in trouble as Galveston added a pair of runs on three straight hits to make it a 6-0 contest. But the Saints came roaring back. Brandon Rix and Jordan Leinweber started off the inning with singles and a ball of the bat of White was misplayed to put him on base and give the Saints their first run of what was to be a long inning. Hudson Bilodeau singled to drive home Leinweber to make it 6-2 and an RBI groundout from Fuller cut the Galveston lead in half at 6-3. With two outs, the Saints kept on clicking. Connolly stroked a ball to the outfield for a single to score a pair and a huge error on the Whitecaps gift wrapped the tying and go ahead runs to make it 7-6. In in relief of starter Austin King, freshman Grant Glaze breezed through the Whitecaps order in the 6th, setting them down in order on just 10 pitches to keep the Saints in front by one. Seward threatened in the bottom of the inning, but couldn't cash in an insurance run on a pair of singles and the teams went to the final inning with the score 7-6 in favor of the Saints. Head Coach Galen McSpadden elected to stay with Glaze in the 7th rather than call upon his closer and the move paid off, as Glaze went right at the middle of the Galveston order, retiring them 1-2-3 including a fly out to end the game to secure the 7-6 win.

Like Seward did to Galveston in game two of the series, the Whitecaps actually outhit the Saints in the loss 10-9. But, the Saints played their first error free game of the season in the win while the 'Caps committed 3 errors, leading to 5 unearned Seward runs. Eight of the nine Saints starters had hits in the win including a pair from Leinweber. Connolly finished with 2 RBI's in the victory while Fuller, Rix, and White each had an RBI and scored runs. Glaze was masterful out of the bullpen for Seward, picking up the win by going 2 2/3 scoreless innings, allowing just 1 hit.

SEWARD COUNTY/GALVESTON GAME THREE BOX

SCORE<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/bsb/2013-14/boxscores/20140209_18gi.xml>

In the series finale things didn't start so hot for the Saints who saw their first three batters of the contest strikeout swinging. Galveston wasted no time jumping in front of the Saints, scoring twice in the bottom of the 1st to take an early 2-0 lead. The Saints came back to tie the game at 2 in the 3rd, getting a double from White and a single from Williams wrapped around an error and a walk to take the game back to square one. Galveston mounted a bit of a rally of their own in the bottom half of the inning, using a Seward error to break the tie and take a 3-2 lead. The Saints came right back, getting four straight one out singles, including RBI hits from White and Fuller to go back in front 4-2. With one out and two runners still on base, Bryson Allen gave a 1-2 pitch a ride, but it died in the graveyard of an outfield at UTA Stadium and the Saints had to settle for a sacrifice fly and one run rather than the big fly and three runs. Seward's 5-3 lead didn't last long. In the bottom of the 4th, the Whitecaps had back to back one out hits and couple with a Seward error and another single,

Galveston quickly tied the game back up at 5. The Saints stranded two runners in the top of the 5th and they paid for it in the bottom as Galveston scored four times on four hits to open things up to 9-5. Seward reliever Pete Macke gave the Saints a chance, putting up zero's in the 6th and 7th, innings against the 'Caps, but the Saints offense could get nothing going. It remained 9-5 into the 8th when Adam Guay tossed a scoreless inning for Seward, but again, the Saints offense mustered just a catcher's interference call and a walk and were unable to score in the inning. In the 9th Williams got the Saints first hit since their three run 4th, but that would be it for the guys in green as they fell 9-5 to lose the series 3-1.

The Saints had 8 hits in the loss including 2 each from Williams and White who each drove in a run as well in the game. Brent Bezio took the loss for Seward, lasting just 2/3 of an inning and allowing 4 hits and 4 runs. Macke and Guay combined for 3 2/3 innings of scoreless relief to close the game out for the Saints.

SEWARD COUNTY/GALVESTON GAME FOUR BOX

SCORE<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/bsb/2013-14/boxscores/20140209_2xfc.xml>

After the weekend, the Saints drop to 2-3 on the year. They will look to bounce back with a series win next weekend when they return home to Brent Gould Field to take on the Northeastern Plainsmen in a four game series starting on Saturday. The Saints and Plainsmen will shoot for 1:00 first pitches on both Saturday and Sunday in the four game set.

Roy Allen

SCCC/ATS