Arrante helps Crusader Baseball sink Navy

By Jim Maloney

CRUSADER SPORTS STAFF

It has been an up and down season for the Crusader Baseball team. After splitting the first Patriot League series of the year against Army, they were swept by the Bucknell Bison the following weekend. However, the next weekend Crusader Baseball responded by taking all four games at Lafayette, which evened their league record at 6-6. In order to stay in contention for a Patriot League tournament berth, the Crusaders needed to have a strong showing in their four game set versus the always tough Navy Midshipmen.

On Saturday the Crusaders split a doubleheader with Montana (4-6-3) to the mound for game one. Montano was coming off a strong outing at Lafayette, but was roughed up by Navy with a complete game victory.

On Sunday the Crusaders hosted Lehigh in a four game series which evened their season record at 3-3. However, the Midshipmen continued their excellent play and swept the series.

Ryan Kenny (4-5) got the starting nod for Holy Cross in game one and yielded two runs in the top of the first. In the bottom half, second baseman Peter Summa started his big day by delivering an RBI single to cut the lead in half. Navy posted three more runs in the top of the fourth to pull the lead to 5-1, but again Holy Cross responded in the bottom of the inning. Catcher Dale Johnson contributed an RBI triple and later scored on a groundout to cut the deficit to 5-3.

Holy Cross continued to chip away at the Navy lead in the fifth when Summa tripled to center and scoring Eddie Turner to close within a run. However, the Crusaders could not plate Summa and the game remained 5-4 in favor of Navy until the bottom of the seventh. With their backs up against the wall in the seventh, Holy Cross showed some fight by rallying to tie the score on a Turner single, sending the game to extra innings. Kenny pitched into the eighth, but was relieved by Lucey with one out to a 12-0 lead. After allowing hits to the first two batters of the game, Arrante showed great poise by allowing just two hits in Navy's next 23 at-bats. "I think the best thing for me was giving up the leadoff triple," Arrante said. "It forced me to get focused and settle down right away." Arrante stuck out five on the afternoon while walking just one.

The offense was once again supplied by Summa who made sure Arrante's effort did not go to waste by belting a three-run homer in the bottom of the sixth off Navy starter and loser Scott Vane (0-6) that put Holy Cross up 4-1. Navy threatened in the bottom of the seventh, putting runners on first and second, but Arrante fanned pinch-hitter Wil Mahan to end the game.

This week the Crusaders host Dartmouth and UMass on Wednesday and Thursday respectively at 3 PM. However, the important contests for the Crusaders come this weekend when they host Lehigh in a four game series. Currently, the Crusaders (15-17 overall, 7-9 PL) still have postseasong home hopes alive, the Crusaders would have to come to play Sunday.