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### **UCA Wins In Ninth**

Magnolia, Arkansas - Trailing 7-3 heading into the ninth inning, the University of Central Arkansas scored six runs to defeat Southern Arkansas University, 9-7, Sunday under bright blue skies. After winning 4-0 and 4-2 on Saturday, the Muleriders were only three outs away from completing their first Gulf South Conference West Division sweep since the three-game series with Ouachita Baptist in mid-march, when it came apart at the seams for SAU. UCA improved to 10-10 in conference play and 26-20 overall, while SAU slumped to 13-8 in league action and to 30-22 for the year.

In the fateful ninth, UCA designated hitter Cody Graddy led off with a pop fly to first base that was dropped. Pinch hitter Dallas Black flew out to centerfield, leaving SAU two outs away from an easy win. Jonathan Ashworth singled, and Mitch Cameron drew a walk, to load the bases. Todd Gossage singled up the middle to score both Graddy and Ashworth.

Jeremy Hambrice moved from first base to pitcher in relief of Aaron Gisler. Chris Houk hit a three-run home run over the left field fence, and suddenly, the Bears had the lead. Drew Sadler walked, Roger Lenderman singled, and after Robbie Nix struck out, Graddy, with UCA batting around the order, singled to score Sadler. The marathon inning finally ended when Black flied out.

For seven innings, Mulerider starter Cody Jones had smooth sailing, scattering five hits, giving up two unearned runs, allowing no walks, and striking out six. Drew Webster came on in the eighth and retired one batter, but allowed two hits, and one earned run, with one strikeout, before lifted in favor of Gisler. Gisler pitched an inning and was charged with two hits, four runs with three earned, walked one, and fanned two. Hambrice went two-thirds of an inning, and gave up three hits, two runs with one earned, walked one, and fanned one. Hambrice was the loser, falling to 4-4.

Daniel started for the Bears and worked five innings. He allowed eight hits, six earned runs, walked two, and fanned three. Daniel Price pitched the sixth, and allowed two walks. Brian Blankenship pitched two and a third innings, and gave up two hits, one earned run, walked two, and struck out three. Jake Goodwin retired the final two batters, allowing only a walk. Blankenship got the win to go to 3-2 for the year and Goodwin earned his fifth save.

Central Arkansas had nine runs, 12 hits, two walks, one hit batter, and made two errors, while Southern Arkansas had seven runs, ten hits, seven walks, three hit batters, and three boots. SAU took a 2-0 lead in the first inning, made it 3-0 in the third, and after UCA scored twice in the fourth, SAU came back with two in the fifth, and added another in the sixth. Neither scored in the seventh, and both scored one run in the eighth, making it 7-3 heading into the last inning.

Houk got the big blow with his home run in the ninth that scored three runs for the win. He was hitless in four at-bats when he got the difference maker. Gossage, son of former major league pitcher, "Goose" Gossage (who was in attendance), was two for four, scored twice, was hit by a pitch, and drove in two runs. One of his hits was a double. Matt Warren was two for four, scored, and drove in a run. He also had a double.

Ashworth was two for four, scored, and had a double. Graddy and Lenderman were two for five.

Steady Aharon Eggleston was three for six for the Muleriders, scored twice, and stole his 26<sup>th</sup> base. Tyler Murray was three for five, scored, and drove in two runs. Hambrice was hitless in three at-bats, walked twice, scored, and drove in a run with a sacrifice fly. Scooter Hendrickson was one for three, and had an RBI on a sac fly. His double was SAU's only extra-base hit. Derek Weldon was one for two, had an RBI, walked, and was twice hit by pitches. Ross Boudreaux was hitless in two at-bats, but scored twice, walked twice, was hit by a pitch, and drove in a run. Armando Alvarez was one for three, drove in a run, and sacrificed twice, and Eric Moya was one for four, scored, walked, and sacrificed.

Southern Arkansas stranded 14 base runners and Central Arkansas eight.

The Muleriders step out of GSC play Tuesday in Magnolia for a doubleheader with Texas Wesleyan University, starting at 2 p.m. SAU will close GSC play in Memphis Saturday and Sunday, needing one win over Christian Brothers University to clinch a berth in the conference tournament.