

Nichols' Walk-Off Home Run Lifts Georgia Tech Past Lipscomb, 5-3

The sophomore had two hits and drove in three of Tech's five runs on the afternoon

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Box Score

ATLANTA - Thomas Nichols' walk-off two-run home run lifted No. 12 Georgia Tech (3-0) over Lipscomb, 5-3, Sunday afternoon to help the Yellow Jackets sweep the season-opening three-game series against the Bisons.

Nichols' home run came with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning after the Bisons tied the game in the top of the frame. Luke Murton led off Tech's portion of the ninth with a single to right field, and pinch runner Evan Martin advanced to second on a groundout by Tony Plagman. Connor Winn then pushed Martin to third base with a ground ball to the left side before Nichols yanked an 0-1 pitch over the right field wall to win the game for the Yellow Jackets.

Tech closer Mark Pope (1-0) picked up the first win of his career after tossing the final 1.1 innings. The freshman right-hander yielded one run on three hits to the Bisons, with the run coming off a throwing error with two outs in the top of the ninth inning. Pope also struck out two batters and walked none.

"I was very pleased with all of our young pitchers this weekend," Georgia Tech head coach Danny Hall said. "I thought that they all pitched great, and I wanted to get them all out there because they will be the guys that will have to get some big outs for us, especially in the middle of the week. So I wanted them to get in a situation where there wasn't a lot of pressure on them. We did that yesterday, and then I thought that Pope handled himself very well today."

Lipscomb reliever Kyle Tognazzini (0-1) tossed a perfect eighth inning, but gave up the home run to Nichols in the ninth to suffer his first loss of the season. He entered the game with two outs and two runners on base in the bottom of the seventh, but worked out of the jam with a strikeout.

Nichols went 2-for-4 with two runs and three RBI, while Murton, Matt Skole and Cole Leonida all added two hits apiece.

Sophomore Brandon Cumpton worked six strong innings in the first weekend start of his career, but did not factor into the decision. He held Lipscomb to just two runs on five hits while striking out six and walking two.

An RBI double by Tyler Wilson staked the Bisons to a one-run lead in the top of the second inning, but the Jackets answered with three runs in the bottom of the frame to take a 3-1 lead. Tech tied the game with a run-scoring single off the bat of Nichols, who plated Skole after the Tech third baseman led off the inning with a double. A pair of walks then loaded the bases for Derek Dietrich, who walked on five pitches before Murton's single up the middle made the score 3-1 in Tech's favor.



Thomas Nichols belted a walk-off two-run home run to give the Jackets the sweep

A sacrifice fly by Lipscomb centerfielder Allen Bolden pulled the Bisons to within one run in the fifth inning, but Yellow Jacket relievers Andrew Robinson and Kevin Jacob held Lipscomb off the scoreboard in the seventh and eighth frames. Pope entered with two outs and a runner on in the eighth inning, but forced Andrew Nickerson to ground out, ending the Bison threat.

The Jackets hit the road for a pair of midweek games at Georgia Southern before returning to Russ Chandler Stadium to host Rutgers for a three-game series next weekend. The two-game series in Statesboro begins Tuesday at 6 p.m. before concluding Wednesday with a 4 p.m. first pitch. Both games can be heard on WREK Radio (91.1 FM in Atlanta), and live stats will be available at Ramblinwreck.com.

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