

Eastern Oklahoma State College
Hank Mooney, Office of Public Information
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Seventh ranked Eastern Baseball team stages ‘come from behind’ win over top team in the nation

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Some coaches like to test the “mettle” of their team by scheduling challenges early in their season. Eastern Oklahoma State College Mountaineer Baseball Coach Aric Thomas couldn’t have asked for a bigger challenge as his team faced the number one ranked team in the nation for their season opener Saturday (Feb. 12).

The baseball team from the Wilburton college squared off with athletics powerhouse Howard College at the Northeast Texas Community College Tournament in Mount Pleasant, TX. The Howard College baseball team, who won the 2009 NJCAA National Championship, finished last year’s season with a 45-10 record and is currently ranked number one in the NJCAA pre-season poll released January 27th. Howard College, with their main campus in Big Spring, TX, is also home to last year’s NJCAA National Champion men’s basketball team as well.

The Eastern Mountaineers won last year’s Region II tournament but fell to Delgado Community College in the District tournament to finish with a 9th place ranking in the NJCAA. They began this year’s season ranked 7th in the NJCAA pre-season poll and have been ranked in the top 15 in the country five of the past six seasons.

In Saturday’s opener, Howard drew first blood with a score in the second inning but was answered by Eastern with one run in the bottom of that same inning. Howard then jumped out to a 6-1 lead after three and a half innings of play but the Mountaineers clawed their way back into the game with 3 runs in the bottom of the fourth. They kept the game close by scoring a run in the seventh inning on a Keith Price homerun. Price is a Red Oak graduate from Talihina. They took their first lead in the game by scoring two runs in the eighth.

The lead would hold as they stopped Howard from scoring in the top of the ninth with some good defensive play and help from pitching by Tuttle Sophomore Trent Scrivner. Freshman Pitcher Blake Logan from Roff is credited with the win while Scrivner is credited with the save.

“I am very proud of my players and I think they showed a lot of poise by coming back to win after being down 6-1 against the number one team in the nation,” Thomas said. “This big win really sets the tone for the rest of the season.”

The Eastern team continued their winning ways as they defeated Seminole State College 6-1 and then tackled 13th ranked Northeast Texas Community College on Sunday (Feb. 13) with a 15-10 victory.

The Mountaineers, now 3-0, will host Murray State College Friday (Feb. 18) to begin the Eastern Oklahoma State College baseball tournament this weekend.