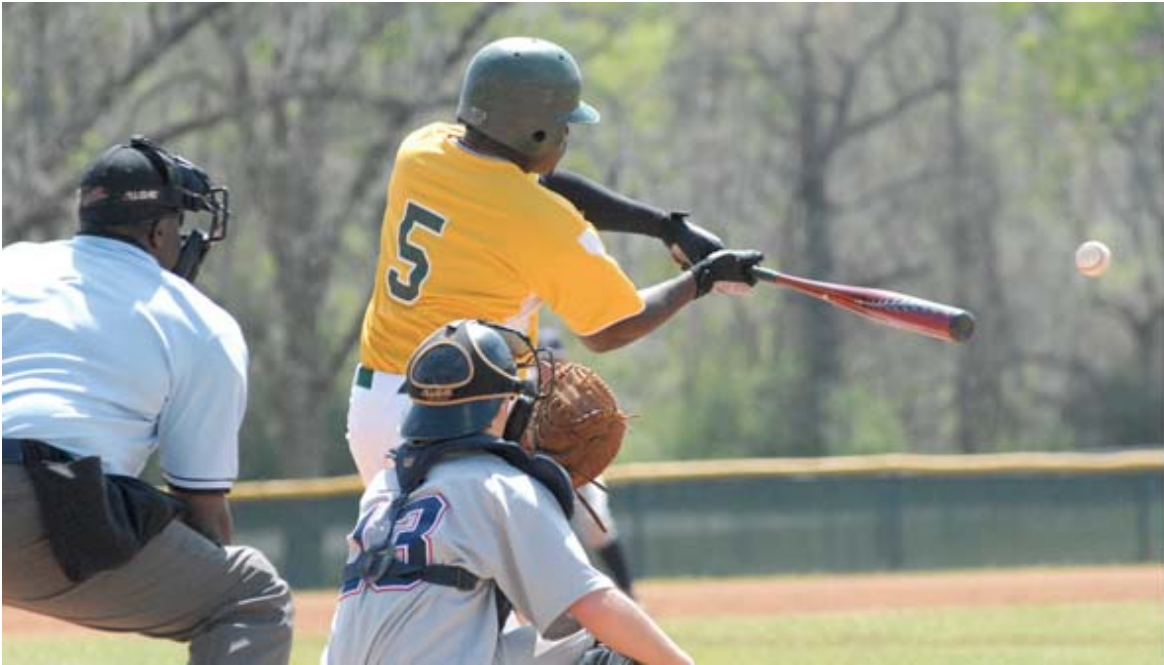


# THE Selma Times-Journal

SERVING SELMA AND THE BLACK BELT SINCE 1827



*Raul Fernandez (5) makes contact with a pitch during a recent game. The Hornets have been working to bring everything together to build for the future. -- Special photo*

## **Hornets building for the future**

Published 8:41pm Monday, March 28, 2011

Rome wasn't built in a day. That's the philosophy Concordia College head baseball coach Steven Washington has stressed to his team all season.

Despite a tough start, he said his players are buying in. The wins have been tough to find for the young program, but, Washington said it has not hurt their spirit.

"We are going to continue to tweak it until we get it right," he said. "We are going to become a more mature, older team that doesn't beat themselves. We're going to work to put together a solid baseball program."

The team, Washington said, has shown a lot of patience. He said they realize this season is just part of the big picture in relation to the program.

“We have to get better year to year,” he said. “We have to start slow and build up. Next season we’ll be in an even better position to move forward. The players believe in themselves and the program and we all feel good about the direction of the program.”

Concordia has started the season 12-18 after dropping a Monday doubleheader to Edward Waters by 7-3 and 8-2 scores. However, Washington said his team is keeping a steady temperament following wins and losses.

“This is a great, great group of kids and that is the most important thing,” he said. “They are very respectful and you can build on that. That’s been a big part of our strategy.”

At times, Washington said the adjustment to the college game has been tough for some of the younger players. Adjusting to the speed of the game, he said, will take time.

“We have some teachable moments, you never have a perfect game,” he said. “We just have to take those moments and improve on them. In college baseball, you have to go out and win because you can’t wait for the other team to do something to beat themselves.”

The Hornets have had a few teams forfeit games along the way, which has hurt the on-field experience of the squad. But, Washington said they are taking full advantage of every chance they get to take the field.

The most important piece of the team isn’t wins and losses, Washington said. First and foremost, he wants to build good students and good citizens. So far, he said, this has been the case.

“The future looks bright,” he said. “We are doing it the right way.”

## **Concordia, Wallace clash at Bloch Park**

Published 11:57pm Saturday, March 19, 2011

In a battle of local schools, Wallace-Community College was able to sweep a doubleheader from Concordia.

The Patriots eeked out a win in the noon game 3-2, jumping out to a lead early and holding on in the end.

“We got lucky in that first game,” Patriots coach Frank Elliott said. “We were able to put together some hits early on and finally get them out at the end, but we kept it close.”

The Patriots put up two runs in the top of the first inning when LaMichael Goree hit a double to drive in Tyler Cofield and Devon Reed.

Wallace again put a run on the board in the top of the second when Dion Duncan got on base with the help of an error and advanced before being driven in on a sacrifice fly by Dustin Owen.

The Hornets answered in the bottom half of the second with Amauri Rijos scoring on a passed ball.

Concordia was able to tack on another run in the bottom of the third.

Jeff Ward led off the inning with a single and stole second and was driven in by Hector DeJesus on a double.

“We tried to throw all of our pitchers today,” Elliott said. “Every couple of innings we were throwing a new guy out there and they all did a great job.”

The second game Wallace was able to get more timely hits to take a 6-2 win.

“We played better that game,” Elliott said. “Their first pitcher gave us trouble, but we were able to get to the second one and get hits.”

Reed led the Patriot offense at the plate going 4 -for-4 with two runs scored.

Owen was 2-for-4 with two RBI and two doubles.

Concordia coach Steven Washington said his team was still getting into the swing of things after early games were cancelled.

“We had some problems early with games,” Washington said. “We have a series of home games coming up though and that should really help us out.

This is a freshman and sophomore laden team so being on the road can take a lot of you mentally and physically. Being at home will help.”