

# Saints hooked by Longhorns

■ Patrician uses home run barrage to win exciting first game, but drops next two in season-ender at Marengo

By Colin Merritt  
The Choctaw Sun

LINDEN — Down 4-3 in the top of the seventh, things looked pretty bleak for Patrician Academy in the opener of their best-of-three Class AA semi-final series against the Marengo Academy Longhorns last Wednesday. The Saints desperately needed a run just to tie the home-standing Longhorns with the bottom of the order coming to the plate.

Then, on the first pitch he saw, first baseman Dallas Anderson smacked a home run over the left field fence to tie the game, 4-4, in dramatic fashion. The homer ignited the Saints as they went on to post a seven-run inning, highlighted first by Anderson's game-tying blast and later by Barry Meeks' second blast of the game, a grand slam that put the Saints up for good on their way to the 10-5 victory.

In the win, senior ace Lance Gibson allowed just five hits and five walks with seven strikeouts, while Meeks finished 3-for-4 with two homers, a double and six RBI. Senior Tony Randolph also had two hits for the Saints, while Casey Landrum, Robert Anderson and Will McBride all added singles. Senior B.J. Bonner had one hit, the second of back-to-back first inning homers that gave the Saints the initial 2-0 lead.

The Saints would actually take a 3-1 lead into the fifth before Lance Gibson allowed an uncharacteristic four-straight walks and hit a batter to allow Marengo to tie the game 3-3. The Longhorns would then take the 4-3 lead in the bottom of the sixth on a passed ball to set the table for heroes Anderson and Meeks in the seventh.

In game-two, Patrician sent sophomore Mikell Bonner to the mound to try and clinch the series. Bonner would pitch well, but three unearned runs on three Patrician errors would find him trailing 3-0 after one inning. Patrician

would rally to tie the game at 5-5 in the top of the seventh on another clutch piece of hitting from Dallas Anderson. After walks to Lance Gibson and Barry Meeks, Anderson would lace a double into the left-center field gap that scored both runners.

However, the tie was short-lived as Marengo pushed across the winning run in the bottom of the seventh after a hit batter, a walk, and two base hits to win 5-4 and send the series into a decisive game three on the following day.

Bonner took the loss despite a complete game six-hit performance with four strikeouts. Anderson, Meeks and Gibson all had two-hit games. One of Meeks' hits was a homer, his third of the day and 12th of the season. Tony Randolph, B.J. Bonner and Casey Landrum all picked up singles for the Saints.

Patrician would send senior Neal Cook to the mound in the Thursday afternoon rubber-match that would determine who would meet Lowndes Academy the following week for a shot at the state title. Cook would allow a first inning run before Marengo struck for eight

more in the second inning on five hits and an error.

Down 9-0 after two, Patrician would rally for four runs in the fifth to close the gap, but the Longhorns answered back with two more in the bottom of the inning to cement the 11-5 victory.

Dallas Anderson continued his hot hitting with another two-hit game, while Lance Gibson and Casey Landrum record the Saints only other hits.

Although the loss ended Patrician's season, coach Duane Johnson couldn't be more proud of this squad.

"I want to commend this team for never quitting," Johnson said proudly of this group that lost a top pitcher, Barry Meeks, midway through the season, but still battled to make the playoffs and came just one game short of the championship series. "We could have thrown in the towel a long time ago, but we didn't. That's why this team will always be special — we over achieved." Patrician finished the season with a 20-9 record.



'RIP'

Junior Barry Meeks strokes one of his three homers in the Saints best-of-three series with Marengo. Meeks, who had a grand slam and a solo homer in game one, hit his 12th homer of the season in game two. Patrician coach Duane Johnson believes that the 12-homer season is a school record.



Choctaw Sun photos by Colin Merritt

Patrician Dallas Anderson is mobbed by teammates after hitting the game-tying homer in the Saints final at-bat of their 10-5 opening game win during the best-of-three first-round playoff matchup with Marengo Academy. In all, the Saints hit four homers in the win, but ended up losing the series after dropping the next two game, 6-5 and 11-5.



PA's Lance Gibson (left) looks at the home plate umpire in disbelief after his fourth walk in a row during Marengo's two-run fifth that tied game-one at 3-3. Gibson, who picked up the win in the 10-5 game after throwing seven innings of five-hit ball with seven K's, also hit a batter in the wacky inning that started with two outs and no runners on. The third out was actually recorded at the plate after catcher Robert Anderson retrieved a passed-ball and threw it to Gibson covering



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## Patrician Baseball 2007 Batting Stats

- Lance Gibson**  
*senior-pitcher-shortstop*  
103 plate appearances, 65 hits, 52 runs, .671 average, 10 doubles, 3 homers, 3 triples, 8 walks, 1 strikeout
- Barry Meeks**  
*junior-pitcher-outfielder-DH*  
93 plate appearances, 39 hits, 34 runs, .419 average, 12 homers, 5 doubles, 2 triples, 13 walks, 7 strikeouts
- Tony Randolph**  
*senior-outfielder*  
77 plate appearances, 26 hits, 21 runs, .377 average, 2 doubles, 2 triples, 11 walks, 21 strikeouts
- B.J. Bonner**  
*senior-outfielder-DH*  
88 plate appearances, 29 hits, 21 runs, .329 average, 2 doubles, 1 homer, 6 walks, 20 strikeouts
- Clay Goodwin**  
*senior-center field*  
104 plate appearances, 30 hits, 28 runs, .278 average, 3 doubles, 1 triple, 1 homer, 10 walks, 25 strikeouts
- Dallas Anderson**  
*junior-first base*  
70 plate appearances, 20 hits, 21 runs, .275 average, 1 homer, 1 double, 10 walks, 9 strikeouts



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