

UNDERDOGS TO WONDERDOGS

disappeared beyond the scoreboard. Whichever analogy you choose, the big fly would chase Tech starter Jericho Jones. Jones stayed in the game as the DH, with Simoneaux summoning southpaw Jamey Bradshaw from the bullpen.

After walking Danny Grubb, Bradshaw allowed a pinch-hit single by Hedstrom, then walked Wetzel to load the bases with one out for Susdorf. Everything was set up perfectly. The Bulldogs had their best hitter representing the go-ahead run at the plate. But Bradshaw would rise to the occasion, blowing two fastballs past a swinging Susdorf, then striking him out with a curveball breaking down and away from the left-handed batter. Fresno State had missed a golden opportunity to get closer, but the bases

were still loaded for Alan Ahmady, and in all likelihood the outcome of the game rested on his at bat. Much like the ninth inning in that first win over Cal Poly, what followed would reinforce another oft-quoted baseball adage: "Put the ball in play, and you never know what might happen."



"So now the right-handed bat of Ahmady. Alan, 1-for-2 this afternoon. Bases loaded, two outs, bottom of the seventh, tying runs on base for Fresno State. First pitch, fastball, swung on, driven in the air to center, Cobb going back, still going back, reaches up and DROPS THE BALL! He dropped the ball in front of the warning track! One run is in, two are in, here comes Wetzel to the

Sophomore first baseman Alan Ahmady at the plate. *Fresno State Athletics*



plate, Ahmady diving in safely at third. Fresno State has tied this ball game, and Adam Cobb wants to run and hide in center field."

Longtime Louisiana Tech announcer Dave Nitz later told me that he had never seen the senior center fielder drop a ball before. Never. But this one wasn't over yet. Bradshaw got Overland to fly out to left to end the inning, stranding Ahmady at third and keeping the score tied at 7-7. Brandon Burke pitched a scoreless eighth for Fresno, Bradshaw did the same for Tech. In the top of the ninth, singles by Jericho Jones and Chris Kersten had men at first and second for Patrick Thomas.



"Burke sets, and delivers the 1-0, pulled on the right side, Ahmady dives, can't get it. It's through into right field, they're sending the runner. Detwiler's gonna have a shot at him, the throw to the plate, Grubb misses on the tag. Safe at home is Jericho Jones, and Louisiana Tech has the lead!"

It was an impressively athletic move by the 6 foot 5 inch 205-pound Jones to lunge below the baseline and slide around the tag by an inch or less, after what had been a near-perfect throw from Detwiler in right. So after fighting all the way back from six down to tie the game, the Bulldogs were behind again, and the visitors were still threatening with two outs and men on the corners.



"8 to 7 La. Tech now, and another runner ninety feet away. Third-to-first fake, they got him at first! Out at first base is Thomas, he fell for that third-to-first fake, the same