Tech-Salem Match Presents Interesting Possibilities

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The Roanoke Valley and Salem Pirates are likely to be seeing a lot more of Virginia Tech's baseball team in the future. That was the indication Sunday after the Pirates and Gobblers played each other for the first time in an exhibition contest.

Salem won 13-4 in a game that was cut short by many of the finer points usually included in baseball. But the crowd of 1,001, as a shot in the armpit to both college and minor league in the Roanoke Valley.

Afterwards, Virginia Tech Coach Bob Humphreys and Salem General Manager Karl Geraghty agreed on one thing—there will probably be a repeat of the game at least in the future.

There's more, however. One idea is to have Tech baseball to Salem sometime in the fall for possibly a weekend double elimination tournament with three other teams.

"I think North Carolina is talking about something like that," said Humphreys, who suggested one of the teams might be Madison, the state's other university division baseball power.

When Humphreys was high on the exposure his club received in Sunday's game while Salem figures to make some money the same day when it had originally been scheduled to play at Lynchburg.

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Part of the reasoning on this format is to please the players. Some weren't that wild about playing Tech in the first place. They were more irritated when a Saturday night doubleheader in Lynchburg, delayed by rain, ran well past midnight.

The story of Sunday's game was the hitting of Salem infielder Jim Brady and the pitching of former Tech star, Orvin Kaiser.

Kaiser was easily the standout of the lineup this past week, slammed a bases-loaded homer to break the game open in a five-run Salem first.

Brady also had a single, two walks and a pair of stolen bases.

"That's the first grand slam I've hit that I know of," said Brady sanely as he trotted off the field.

Brady says he has worked on a new hitting technique where he goes off his front foot more. He is also happy that he is playing regularly after having logged little time in the first two weeks.

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Kiser worked out with Salem during spring training, but failed to stick. However, he got a valve in the back of Dave Rogers and Larry Kienzle in pitching against Tech.

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Kiser got the win on his old mates and did it in Tech's hitters Wayne Shelton, and getting another key hit, Dennis Duff, to ground to short with men on second and third. "I was looking for a fast ball and he threw all breaking stuff," Shelton moaned about Kaiser's relief, which came with Tech leading 6-2 and the Gobblers trying to break open the game.

"He used mostly fast balls last year," added Shelton, who was Kaiser's catcher then. "I heard he was working on a palm ball, but I didn't believe he had one last year.

John Dean also homered for the Pirates. He hit a three-run shot in the fifth to left-center that put the Bucs ahead for good 7-6. That also wiped out a two-run homer by Duff in the fourth when Tech scored all its runs.

While the crowd was four times the average Sunday attendance for Salem games, there was little doubt it was pro Tech.

"Hey Pablo," shouted Demeter to Salem utility infielder Pablo Cruz after the Bucs first, "find those two people yelling for us.

SALEM SLIDERS: Bryan Clark (6-4) will pitch for Salem tonight as the Bucs open a four-game homestand against Peninsula. This will be advertisers' night. . . . In the other college-pro exhibition Sunday, Lynchburg got only two hits, but beat Lynchburg College 2-1. Tech beat Virginia Tech 1, 5-2, in the Hill City . . . Roanoke's Bobby Father, former Patrick Henry star, pitched two scoreless innings against the Bucs. Sandy Hill of Grenada had a single, stolen base and two walks for the Hokies.