

Calnon Goes the Distance as Mustangs Take Game 1 of Championship Series

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What started as a pitcher's duel turned into a blowout as the Billings Mustangs took Game 1 of the Pioneer League Championship Series with a 12-2 win over the Long Beach Coast on Tuesday night at Blair Field.

Each team hit a solo home run in the early going with Emilio Corona opening the scoring with a blast to lead off the bottom of the second before John McHenry tied the game at one with a shot of his own to lead off the top of the third.

The game remained tied 1-1 until the seventh inning when the Mustangs broke through offensively.

Held to just two hits over the first six frames, Billings sent 12 men to the plate in an eight-run seventh inning to break things open.

Adam Cootway led off the inning with a solo homer to left, his second long ball of the playoffs. Nin Burns II added an RBI single to right against a drawn in infield and Jacob Gutierrez knocked in a pair with a broken bat single to make it 5-1 Mustangs.

By the time Billings batted around in the inning, they had loaded the bases for Cootway. The outfielder proceeded to hit his second home run of the inning, smacking a grand slam to right field to cap off the eight-run inning. It marked the sixth multi-homer performance for Cootway this season.

Long Beach got one run back in the bottom of the seventh with an unearned tally, but Billings continued to add on, scoring once in the eighth and twice more in the ninth.

Meanwhile, Cole Calnon (2-0) kept cruising on the mound, limiting the Coast to eight singles after the second inning homer. The right hander went the full nine innings for the first time in his professional career, tossing 133 pitches in the complete game.

The series now heads to Billings for Game 2 of the best of three set with the Mustangs needing just one more victory to clinch the title.

Julian Garcia is expected to start for the Mustangs when the series continues on Friday night. First pitch from Dehler Park is set for 6:35 p.m. MT.