CINCINNATI REGISTER

OCTOBER 8, 2032 · THE CINCINNATI REGENTS BEAT

Regents win 100, end October drought dating to 2009

BY **WENDELL BARR** · CINCINNATI REGISTER

October 6, in Cincinnati. Regents 9, New Orleans 0. Cortez Adriano got the win in relief, which tells you how the last week went for the rotation.

It was the 100th win of the season. It was not enough to win the division. Galveston won 102.

I will start with the part this town has waited 22 years to read. The Regents are in the postseason. The last time this franchise played an October game it was 2009 and the club was the Atlanta Smashers. It has not played one as the Durham Dragons, and until this week it had not played one as the Cincinnati Regents. I have covered the drought from two cities. It is over in this one.

Now the rest.

On the morning of August 2 the club led the Jade by two games. It went 34-23 from there, which is a good two months. Galveston was better. By September 10 the Regents were second, and they stayed second. On September 20, 21 and 22 Galveston came here two games up. Tim Wood singled home the winning run in the ninth on the 20th, Galveston won 10-5 on the 21st, and Matt Burke and the bullpen won 11-1 on the 22nd. One game back with 12 to play. The Regents went 6-6. Galveston went 7-5.

In September I asked Chris how much the division mattered against simply getting in. He said winning it "would be quite an accomplishment considering the strength of this Conference and our guys being used to making tee times in October instead of playing baseball." They will not be making tee times. They also did not win it.

The deadline came and went without a trade. Chris told me why, and he put it plainly: "budget constraints and limited trade capital have kept us from fine-tuning at the deadline. I believe in the club we've

assembled." He said they had made "internal adjustments" to the bullpen. I asked what they were. September call-ups, he said: Jon May, Ryan Appolonia and Cortez Adriano, and Craig Lewis, a veteran he brought up instead of trading for one. Adriano has pitched 17 innings with 21 strikeouts and a 2.12 earned run average. Lewis has a 5.00 since the deadline. Matt Klaus, whom the club put on the trade block in July with a note that he could be had for cheap, had a 2.40 after the deadline. Nobody took him. Good.

What carried this team was the bats with men on base. Since the deadline the Regents hit .297 with runners in scoring position and slugged .521. That was the best in baseball over those two months, and I looked it up a second time because I did not believe it either. Joe Duemler hit .338 with men in scoring position for the year, with 36 home runs and 110 runs batted in. Eric Chini ended three games after the deadline by himself: a home run in the 11th against Denver on September 6, a home run in the ninth against Tampa Bay on September 29, and a single against New Orleans on October 4.

The lineup struck out fewer times than any in the league. It finished third in runs.

In May I wrote that Nick Addison's 6-0 record in relief was a record the rest of the summer would take apart. In August he was 11-0 and I said I was wrong. He finished 15-0. Nobody beat him all year. Plenty of people hit him: he has a 4.17 earned run average and a 5.34 since the deadline. I gave up trying to make those two lines agree in August.

Here is the one I did not want to write. Chris told me in July that the club had been lucky to stay away from serious injuries all season, and that one to a key player "could make things interesting." The luck held until October 4. That night Jordan Montanez left his start after five outs with a partially torn labrum. He will miss about three months. Josh Baker, who Chris says gets the ball in Game 1, pitched 3 2/3 innings in the finale and is carrying a day-to-day injury into the series. He went 17-6 with a 3.09 earned run average. He had a 4.18 after the deadline.

Now Boston.

The series opens here October 8 and 9. Games 3, 4 and 5 are in Boston from the 11th. If it goes six or seven, it comes back here October 15 and 16. The Regents won three of four from Boston in May, all of them decided by four runs or fewer, one of them in 12 innings. They have not seen Boston since.

They have seen this franchise in October before, under other names. In 2002 and 2003 the Atlanta Smashers beat the Lehigh Valley Scrapples in the semifinal, four games to two and then four games to one, and won the championship both years. Those are the two banners. Most of the men on either roster were children then.

Boston comes in without its closer, Nick Luke. Cincinnati comes in without Montanez.

It is October, and the Regents are playing in it. I did not expect to see that in this town.