

The Challengers opened up their 2016 campaign this past weekend with a 5 game road trip to Emerson, GA and the Perfect Game Spring Swing at Lakepoint Sports. The team went 3-2 over the weekend, including a 3-game sweep of fellow NJCAA Regional XII foe Macomb (MI).

In the season opener, the Challengers lost to Georgia Highlands (GA) College 10-2, but received a quality start from Freshman RHP Doug Smith (Galloway/Central Crossing) who threw 5 innings, yielding 0 earned runs while striking out 6. In the nightcap, the team bounced back to beat Macomb (MI) CC 3-2. Highlighted in the win was another quality start by Sophomore RHP Kyle Warner (Elyria/Midview) and a strong relief performance from Freshman LHP Juan Perez (Cleveland/James F. Rhoades) who threw 4 innings of 2-hit ball, while striking out 6 to earn the save. Offensively, the Challengers were led by Freshman OF Zach Desa who went 2-3 with an RBI.

Day 2 of the trip once again saw the Challengers lose the first game of the day to Three Rivers (MO) CC 7-0, only to come back and win the second game of the day 9-1 vs. Macomb CC. In game 1, the Challengers struggled to get any offense going against quality pitching from Three Rivers (MO) CC. In game 2 of the day, the bats finally came alive to produce 9 runs. The offense was highlighted by key performances from Sophomore INF/OF Windermi Mora (Guacara, Venezeula) and Freshman INF's Collin Minor (Medina/Medina) and Manny Rodriguez (Cleveland/Lincoln West). In the win over Macomb CC, Freshman RHP Anthony Savarino (Olmsted Falls/Olmsted Falls) threw 6 innings, only allowing 1 hit in his college debut.

On the final day of the trip, once again the Challengers took down Macomb CC by the score of 3-2. A strong starting pitching performance by Freshman RHP Mitch Cromley, who threw 5 innings, allowing only 1 hit and 1 unearned run while striking out 7 set the tone. The offense was paced again by Windermi Mora who registered 2 hits and collected 3 stolen bases. Additionally sophomore 1B Tyler Lienerth (Grafton/Midview) provided a key 2 RBI double during a 5th inning rally.

This weekend the Challengers hit the road for a 12 game road trip to North Carolina and Virginia during spring break. The first leg of the trip features a 4-game series on Saturday and Sunday against Wake Tech (NC) CC in Holly Springs, NC. Doubleheader's both days are scheduled to begin at 1 PM.