

SPORTS



Times-Mirror/Steve Prakope

Jose Torres of the Purcellville Cannons slides safely into home plate during a Valley Baseball League game June 20 at Fireman's Field in Purcellville.

CANNONS FIRING AT THE PLATE

Loudoun's summer league baseball team off to 9-7 start



Times-Mirror/Steve Prakope

Woodgrove High School graduate Brady Drawbaugh is hitting .429 through the first 16 games of his second season with the Cannons.

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The Purcellville Cannons are aiming to be more consistent as the Valley Baseball League nears the midway point of the 2023 season.

The Cannons were flying high to start the summer campaign — winning eight of their first nine games. Since that point, Purcellville has dropped six of seven games.

Playing in front of more than 1,000 spectators June 20 at Fireman's Field in Purcellville, the Cannons allowed a four-run lead to slip away in a 10-6 loss to the Harrisonburg Turks in 10 innings.

The Cannons (9-7) scored three runs in the third inning and added two more in the fourth to build a 5-1 lead. Leadoff hitter Justin Acal (Pittsburgh) scored three runs and drove

home a run with a double.

Purcellville starting pitcher Maiguire Ayres (Purdue Fort Wayne) delivered his third consecutive quality outing of the season — allowing just one earned run over six innings. Ayres has struck out 17 and walked only two batters in three starts.

Harrisonburg's bats came alive during the final four innings of play. The Turks (9-7) scored two runs in both the seventh and eighth innings before a four-run outburst in the top of the 10th inning put the finishing touch on the comeback win.

"Our bullpen has been our achilles heel so far this year," Cannons president and head coach Brett Fuller said. "We have some guys on the back end. If we can get to them, we feel confident we can win some ball games. It's just the guys in middle relief have not