2026 NL WILDCARD SERIES

#4 Connecticut Blue Devils vs #5 Hazardville Powderkegs

GAME 1

Powderkegs..... 1 0 0 0 2 3 0 0 0 - 6 13 0
Blue Devils..... 0 0 0 1 0 0 2 2 0 - 5 11 0
Win: Rodon Loss: Burnes
Homeruns- Westburg, Farmer, J.Smith

Spencer Torkelson delivered a 2 out double in the 5th then Jordan Westburg hit a 3 run homer in the 6th to give Hazardville a 6-1 lead. The Blue Devils fought back with a 2 run homer by Bobby Witt in the 7th then a 2 run pinch hit homer by Josh Smith in the 8th to cut the lead to 6-5 but Tyler Phillips, who gave up the Smith homer, then shut the door for a Powderkeg road victory.

Hazardville leads the series 1-0.

GAME 2

Powderkegs..... 0 2 0 2 0 0 2 0 1 - 7 12 0
Blue Devils..... 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 - 1   5 1
Win: Littell Loss: Holmes
Homeruns- Swanson, Greene, Realmuto

The Powderkegs jump on Clay Holmes for 6 runs over 6.1 innings while Zack Littell held the Blue Devil bats in check over his 6.1 innings. Tyler Rogers and Alex Vesia then closed out the game for a 7-1 Hazardville victory.

Hazardville takes the first 2 road games and leads the series 2-0.

GAME 3

Blue Devils ..... 0 1 1 2 0 0 0 0 1 - 4 9 0
Powderkegs..... 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 - 0 2 0
Win: Rasmussen Loss: Skubal Save: Iglesias
Homeruns- none

As the series moves to Hazardville Drew Rasmussen out dueled Tarik Skubal in a battle of the team aces by a score of 3-0. Rasmussen was dominate holding the Powderkegs to just 2 hits as no runner advanced to 2nd base all game. Rasmussen was supported by 4 doubles and a triple. It was all the offense the Blue Devils needed as the road team won another game.

Hazardville leads the series 2 games to 1.

GAME 4

Blue Devils ..... 0 0 3 0 0 0 0 0 2 - 5 7 2
Powderkegs..... 0 2 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 - 3 9 0
Win: Stewart Loss: Rogers Save: Iglesias
Homeruns- Wood, Swanson, Freeman, Butler

Lawrence Butler was the hero for Connecticut has he delivered a 2-run home run the 9th inning to break a 3-3 tie and give the Blue Devils the win. Butler took Tyler Rogers deep after Freddy Fermin singled.

Both Merrill Kelly and Cam Schlittler settled down after early struggles to pitch a fine game. The road team wins again. Can the home team win something?

The series is tied 2 games apiece.

GAME 5

Blue Devils ..... 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 - 0 6 0
Powderkegs..... 0 0 1 0 5 0 3 0 - - 9 10 1
Win: Rodon Loss: Burnes
Homeruns- Wood, Swanson, Freeman, Butler

Carlos Rodon had full control of the game as he pitched 8.1 shutout innings before tiring in the 9th. Randy Rodriguez gave him some help and preserved the shutout. Meanwhile the Connecticut pitching was uncharacteristically wild as 5 of the Powderkeg runs got on base by walk or hits batsmen. J.T. Realmuto, Spencer Torkelson and Willi Castro each had 2 RBI.

The home team finally wins a game as Hazardville takes a 3 game to 2 lead in the series.

GAME 6

Powderkegs..... 1 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 1 2 - 5 12 0
Blue Devils..... 0 0 0 0 0 2 1 0 0 0 - 3 7 1
Win: Romero Loss: Iglesias Save: R.Rodriguez
Homeruns- Realmuto, Witt, Torkelson

In a thrilling 10 inning game the Powderkegs come back in the 9th then win it in the 10th inning.

Both pitching staffs pitched well as the Blue Devils were leading 3-2 heading to the top of the 9th. Connecticut brought in closer Raisel Iglesias to try to extend the series to the 7th game but Spencer Torkelson greeted Iglesias with a dramatic home run to tie the game at 3. With Iglesias still on the mound to start the 10th Jarren Duran led off with a double. Christian Koss followed with a double of his own. After a out J.T. Realmuto singled to give the Powderkegs an insurance run for a 5-3 lead and the ultimate victory.

JoJo Romero pitched 2 innings for the victory with Randy Rodriguez pitching a 1-2-3 10th for the save.

Hazardville wins the series 4 games to 2.

SUMMARY

Congrats to the Dave Gineo and the Connecticut Blue Devils on a great season. After sweeping Hazardville to end the season and get into the playoffs I was very nervous about a repeat performance in this series. With absolutely no luck in the final regular season series Hazardville got some timely hits this time while Dave was stuck in neutral.

Series MVP was Spencer Torkelson who delivered 5 RBI in the series, seemingly all in key spots.

Bob