

## 2009 SEASON RECAP

**NANSTAD RECOGNIZED AS MVP** -- Mike Nanstad has been a part of the Albion Tigers' success for the last eleven seasons, but in 2009, some would argue that he was the reason for their success as they won their third West Division title in six years. For his efforts over the 2009 season, Nanstad was voted Most Valuable Player by the Southeast Section managers, and was presented with the award Sunday night in Waunakee. Nanstad started 13 games for Albion, winning 10 of them and finishing 8 of them. He threw a whopping 115.3 innings for the Tigers, striking out 138 while walking only 32 and posting a 1.72 ERA. His efforts in the last two weeks were especially remarkable, going on the road to beat East Division leader Fort Atkinson and West Division co-leader Lodi to vault Albion into first place. Nanstad joins teammates Ben Everson (2004) and Jesse Appel (2006) as Albion's recent winners of the award.

**BLUE DEVILS ELIMINATE TIGERS** -- After a one-year absence, the Albion Tigers returned to the Southeast Section playoffs on Sunday but were quickly dispatched by the Jefferson Blue Devils 4-1. The Tigers, winners of the West Division, finished with a record of 11-6. Jefferson, meanwhile, is also now 11-6 and takes a three-game win streak into the sectional final at Fort Atkinson next week.

**TIGERS WIN MARATHON, DIVISION** -- In the sixth inning of their regular-season finale on Sunday, the Albion Tigers clinched a playoff spot with some unexpected happenings on the out-of-town scoreboard. But with their eyes on an outright division title, the Tigers battled co-leader Lodi for 13 innings before pulling out a dramatic 4-2 victory. The Tigers have now qualified for the playoffs in six of the last eight years, including three first-place finishes. Mike Nanstad was once again Albion's workhorse, striking out 13 and allowing only one unearned run over 12 innings before giving way to reliever Josh Eastman. The Tigers scored early, when Aaron Laskowski led off the third with a single and scored on Ben Everson's deep double to left. The score stayed 1-0 until Lodi scored an unearned run in the bottom of the ninth to force extras. In the top of the 13th, Jason Millar singled to lead off and advanced on a wild pitch. He then scored on Matt Buhrow's RBI single to left to give Albion a 2-1 lead. Laskowski then followed with the big blow - a 2-out, 2-run home run to left that pushed the lead to 4-1. Josh Eastman allowed an unearned run in the bottom of the 13th, but held on to preserve Nanstad's 10th win of the year by striking out All-Star Tyler Kurt to end the game. Everson finished 2x6 on the day with two doubles and an RBI, while Laskowski was 3x7, scored two runs and drove in two.

**TIGERS CLAW ONE OUT AGAINST GENERALS** -- After two weeks of disappointing losses, the Albion Tigers bounced back in grand fashion on Sunday and won 5-3 at Fort Atkinson to reclaim their share of first place in the Southeast Section. Mike Nanstad threw his eighth complete game of the year, striking out five and allowing only five hits. Albion got on the board early with two in the first when Ben Everson and Ethan Vaade walked and eventually scored on Jesse Appel's sacrifice fly and Marty Johnson's RBI single. Everson led off the third with a double and Vaade walked before Appel's bunt single was misplayed, allowing Everson to score. Vaade would score on the next pitch, which was wild and went all the way to the screen. Albion capped their scoring in the fifth when Jim Eastman singled home Levi Decker with two outs.

**NANSTAD, VAADE AMONG LEAGUE'S STARS** -- The Albion Tigers were well represented on Friday night when right-handed pitcher Mike Nanstad and infielder Ethan Vaade took the field in the Home Talent League All-Star Game. Both players played on the Eastern/Southeast squad, which scored an 8-3 decision over the All-Stars from the Northern and Western Sections. Vaade, the Southeast Section's leading hitter at .409, reached base on a fielder's choice in the fourth and again on a tough error in the seventh. Nanstad, 8-3 on the season with an ERA under 2.00, threw a scoreless frame in the third inning to earn the win for the E/SE stars.

**TIGERS TIGHTEN GRIP ON FIRST** -- Somebody should tell Mike Nanstad that complete game victories and double-digit strikeout performances aren't supposed to be routine. Though, he is starting to make it seem so following his 13-strikeout, 2-hit performance in an 8-2 win against the Evansville Jays on Sunday. The win was Albion's seventh in a row and gives them a 2-game lead on second-place Utica and Lodi with 4 games to play. Albion got going early on Sunday with three in the first inning with RBIs from Ethan Vaade, Marty Johnson, and Jason Millar. They added one more in the second on a successful squeeze play by Ben Everson, and an error pushed the lead to 5-0 after 2 innings. Aaron Laskowski (3rd) and Johnson (4th) added single RBIs over the next two innings, and Jim Eastman's third hit of the day scored Brian Towns in the seventh with the final Albion run. Nanstad would allow two unearned runs in the eighth, but the Jays never threatened the Albion lead as Nanstad earned his 8th win of the year.

**BATS, BUHROW LEAD TO NL WIN** -- The Albion Tigers exploded for 16 runs on 14 hits and got another solid pitching performance from Matt Buhrow and Aaron Laskowski, and earned a 16-7 Night League win at Sun Prairie on Thursday night. Four Tigers (Buhrow, Leif Thronson, Levi Decker, and Dan Millar) had multiple hits, while Buhrow threw 5 strong innings to even Albion's NL record at 3-3. Albion started fast and did not slow down, scoring four in the first inning on RBIs from Jesse Appel, Brian Towns, and Buhrow. Towns, Decker, and Millar led off the third with three straight hits, and two runs would come around on RBIs from Ty Thronson and Kyle Stearns. Then, in the fourth, the Tigers really blew it open with RBIs from Buhrow, Millar, Ty Thronson, Stearns, and a 2-run single from Aaron Manogue to earn a 12-6 lead. And for good measure, Millar added his second RBI of the night in the sixth and then scored on Mike Nanstad's 3-run pinch double that provided the final scoring margin.

**SAME OLD SCRIPT: TIGERS DO IT AGAIN** -- Baseball games are won by good pitching and timely hitting, and the Albion Tigers again proved those are two things they do well as they earned a 4-1 win over the Orfordville Orioles on July 4th. All-Star pitcher Mike Nanstad again went the distance, striking out 12 and walking none, while scattering eight hits in earning his seventh win of the year. Albion struck first in the third inning, when a Jesse Appel linedrive hit Oriole pitcher Alex Pratt in the foot and bounced into rightfield, allowing Ben Everson to score from second to give the Tigers a 1-0 lead. After Orfordville pulled even in the 5th,

Albion took the lead for good in the 6th when Jason Millar and Corey Vickers had back-to-back singles, and then eventually scored on Jim Eastman's 2-run single to right. Marty Johnson added an RBI single in the 7th to provide the final run for Albion.

**VETERAN BATS LEAD TIGERS OVER MERCHANTS** -- The Albion Tigers got another solid pitching performance from Mike Nanstad, played flawless defense, mixed in some timely hitting, and it all added up to a 5-1 victory at Stoughton. Albion's ace right-hander went the distance, scattering 8 hits and striking out 6. On offense, the Tigers wasted no time getting on the board, scoring two in the first inning after Aaron Laskowski tripled off the rightfield fence to start the game. Ben Everson would walk and Ethan Vaade drove in Laskowski with a fielders' choice groundout. Jesse Appel and Jason Millar followed with singles, with Millar's hit scoring Vaade for a 2-0 Albion lead. In the third, Vaade would lead off with a single, move to second on a sacrifice from Appel, and eventually score on Millar's sacrifice fly to deep center. In the fifth, Everson reached on a passed third strike and was followed by singles from Appel and Millar to push the lead to 4-0. Stoughton tallied a run in the sixth, but Albion answered in the ninth when Laskowski singled, stole second, and scored on Vaade's third hit of the day. Appel, Laskowski, and Millar each finished with 2 hits, with Millar having three RBIs. Vaade chipped in with 3 hits and 2 RBIs.

**NANSTAD DOMINATES DEERFIELD** -- Dominant is one way to describe Mike Nanstad's performance against Deerfield on Sunday. Overpowering and intimidating would also work. But despite recording eighteen strikeouts and allowing only two hits, Nanstad was satisfied to be the winning pitcher as Albion beat Deerfield 1-0 in a hotly contested Southeast Section game. Albion, despite some scoring threats early, was unable to push anything across until the sixth inning, when leadoff hitter Aaron Laskowski reached and advanced to second on a throwing error. Ben Everson bunted him to third, and Laskowski eventually scored on Jesse Appel's RBI sacrifice fly to deep centerfield. Deerfield would threaten with two baserunners in the seventh and the leadoff man in the ninth, but both times Nanstad was able to work out of trouble and preserve the Tigers' share of first place.

**BUHROW LEADS TIGERS OVER BLUES IN NL GAME** -- The Albion Tigers used a fast start and a great pitching performance to win their Night League game against Cambridge on Thursday night, 7-2. Aaron Laskowski led off the game with a triple and scored on a throwing error on the play, and the Tigers were on their way building a 5-0 lead. In fact, the first five Tigers in the lineup (Laskowski, Aaron Manogue, Marty Johnson, Brian Towns, and Casey Schmeling) all reached base and scored, with RBIs from Schmeling, Dan Millar and Matt Buhrow. Schmeling and Josh Eastman would score unearned runs in the third to run the Albion lead to seven. But the story was written by Buhrow and Laskowski on the mound. Buhrow was outstanding, shutting out the Blues on only 2 hits over five innings. He struck out six and walked only one. Laskowski finished up, throwing the final two innings and protecting the lead for Albion.

**RIGHTY-LEFTY COMBO DOES IT AGAIN** -- For the better part of a decade, the Albion Tigers have relied on the award-winning pitching combo of right-hander Mike Nanstad and left-hander Ben Everson. The same two guys were at it again on Sunday, but this time Everson did his damage at the plate, while Nanstad was throwing a 6-1 complete game victory against Stoughton. Nanstad struck out seven while walking none, and the win keeps Albion in a three-way tie for first place with Utica and Lodi. Stoughton got a run early, but Albion pulled even in the fifth. Marty Johnson and Corey Vickers walked before Brian Towns singled to load the bases. On the next pitch, Everson would gain his first RBI of the day on a groundball to third. The game stayed even at 1 until the bottom of the eighth. Jason Millar singled to start the inning, and was followed by two bunt plays - a single by Johnson and a picture-perfect sacrifice by Casey Schmeling. Towns was intentionally walked to load the bases, which set the stage for Everson's 2-run single to center to give the Tigers a 3-1 lead. Aaron Laskowski singled to right to re-load the bases before Aaron Manogue drove in the fourth run with a groundball out up the middle. Jesse Appel then delivered the dagger - a 2-run double to right-center that scored Laskowski and pinch-runner Riley Clifton as the Tigers opened up a 6-1 lead.

**TIGERS BEAT UTICA, CLIMB INTO FIRST-PLACE FRAY** -- The Albion Tigers had a big day offensively and got another outstanding effort on the mound from Mike Nanstad as they won at rival Utica 13-10 on Sunday. The win, combined with other scores from around the Southeast Section, puts both teams into a four-way tie for first place in the West Division, along with Stoughton and Lodi. Albion struck first in the third inning on Jason Millar's RBI single, then expanded their lead to 7-0 with a six-run fourth. Aaron Laskowski had an RBI groundout, then after Albion loaded the bases, Ethan Vaade and Marty Johnson had back-to-back hits that each scored two runs. Utica had a six-run inning of their own in the sixth, but the Tigers would bounce back. In the 7th, Corey Vickers led off with a single and came around to score on Laskowski's RBI fielder's choice. The Tigers then put it out of reach with 5 more in the eighth, highlighted by Vickers' 2-run single to right and single RBIs from Laskowski and Aaron Manogue. Vickers, Johnson, and Vaade each would end the day with three hits for the Tigers.

**TIGERS FIND WINNING FORMULA** -- After losing three straight Southeast Section games, the Albion Tigers found their way back into the win column with a 9-3 win against Lake Mills on Sunday. Starting pitcher Mike Nanstad went the distance for the Tigers, striking out fifteen while walking only one. Nanstad's effort was complemented nicely by the Albion offense, which scored three runs in the first inning and never looked back on their way to the six-run margin. Ethan Vaade paced the Tigers with 5 hits and 4 RBIs, and his 2-run double was the key blow in the 3-run first. Albion scored two more in the third when Corey Vickers singled in a run and later scored on a balk. Vaade struck again in the fourth inning with another RBI double, and scored a run himself in the seventh when Jason Millar tripled. Albion tacked on two more in the eighth, on Jim Eastman's sacrifice fly and yet another base hit from Vaade.

**LATE HITS LIFT ALBION TO NL WIN** -- The Albion Tigers got solid pitching and some timely offense late and earned a 5-4 win in a Night League game at Stoughton. The Tigers built a 3-0 lead with RBIs from Marty Johnson in the first, Brian Towns in the second, and Casey Schmeling in the fifth. Starting pitcher Matt Buhrow worked strong into the sixth inning, until Stoughton was able

to tie the score and load the bases with two outs. But reliever Aaron Laskowski got a strikeout to end the threat and set the stage for the seventh, where Laskowski would lead off with a single. Two outs later, he would score on Jesse Appel's triple down the rightfield line, and Appel would score on the next pitch when Ethan Vaade doubled to right-center for a 5-3 Albion lead.

**ALL-AROUND EFFORT LEADS ALBION OVER WHITEWATER** -- The Albion Tigers were nearly perfect in every aspect of the game on Sunday as they cruised to a 12-1 win over Whitewater. Ben Everson (six innings) and Matt Buhrow (three innings) combined on a two-hitter and the Tigers played flawless defense in shutting down the host Swingers. The Tiger offense was silent early, but came to life in the third on consecutive two-out hits from Jim Eastman and Aaron Laskowski, both of whom would later score on Aaron Manogue's double to right. The game stayed 2-0 until the seventh, when the Tigers scored two runs on three hits from Corey Vickers, Laskowski, and Jesse Appel. After Whitewater got one run back in the seventh, the Tigers roared to life with a six-run eighth, highlighted by Appel's two-run single and additional RBIs from Laskowski, Manogue, Jason Millar, and Ethan Vaade. Appel capped the scoring in the ninth with another two-run hit - this time a blistering double down the rightfield line. Appel finished the day 3x6 with 5 RBIs, and Laskowski reached and scored four times while driving in two himself. Manogue also had three RBIs for Albion.

**NANSTAD SHUTS DOWN ORIOLES 4-3** -- Most of the hitters in the Home Talent League's Southeast Section have had their fill of Mike Nanstad over the years, and the Orfordville Orioles were reminded of that on Sunday when Nanstad struck out sixteen of them while allowing only two hits and one run to lead the Albion Tigers to a 4-3 victory in a league opener for both teams. Aaron Laskowski's RBI groundout in the second inning started the scoring for Albion, and the Tigers took a 2-0 lead after an error on the very next pitch. Corey Vickers singled to right to make it 3-0 in the third. After Orfordville got one back in the seventh, Aaron Manogue singled home Jim Eastman in the 8th for what proved to be the winning run. Orfordville put the potential game-winning run on base in the ninth, but reliever Ben Everson was able to finish it off with a scoreless frame.