

**BULLETIN --** Cumberland's opening weekend of baseball season has been canceled because of the extended amount of rain and snow over the last month and expected more precipitation this weekend across the Midstate.

The Bulldogs were scheduled to play Missouri Baptist University and Missouri Valley College two games each over the weekend, but all of the scheduled games have been canceled.

CU will now open the season 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 17 at North Alabama. The Bulldogs will host Iowa Wesleyan and the University of St. Francis next weekend at Stockton Field.

**Coach Woody Hunt** enters his 29th season this spring after amassing more than 1,200 career victories and 25 conference championships, regular season and conference tournament. Hunt returns just three position starters and only three hurlers who worked in more than 20 innings last season, but the Bulldogs head into the campaign ranked 17th nationally and picked to repeat as champion of the TranSouth Conference.

CU's strength this season could again be on the mound, where weekend starters and seniors Shawn Schaefer and Robert Post both return after combining for a 17-7 record in almost 170 innings of work with 147 strikeouts in 2009. Schaefer was the workhorse of the staff last season, tossing 88.0 innings with seven complete games in 13 appearances. Post struck out 78 in 78.1 innings with five complete games in 13 starts.

Senior Adam Sprague also returns to the mound after serving in both as both a starter and reliever last year. The lefthander struck out 48 in 60.1 innings, making a team-high 15 appearances and eight starts. His best work of the season may have been an eight-inning performance in the NAIA Regionals against Brescia Univ., giving up an unearned run on six hits with five strikeouts.

Newcomers Aaron Wilkerson, Peter Taraskevich and Daniel Kern should also see plenty of action for the Bulldogs. Wilkerson transferred from Panola Community College in Texas where he struck out 110 last season in a little less than 80 innings of work. Taraskevich is a senior who last pitched at Nova Southeastern University in south Florida and has the unique ability to throw

both lefthanded and righthanded. According to coaches, he has a plus curveball from the leftside and more velocity from the rightsider. Kern transferred from Broward Community College and will likely finish games for the Bulldogs, using his big-time slider as an out pitch.

Seniors Max Kautz, Sam Kikla and Matt Greener are the Bulldogs only returning positions starters for 2010. Kautz led the Bulldogs last season with a .417 batting average in 41 games with eight doubles, six home runs, 29 RBIs and 42 runs scored. He also stole eight bases and walked 19 times.

Greener started games at five different positions as well as designated hitter last year, but settled in at third base for the second half of the season. He with .344 with 13 doubles, four homers and 29 RBIs as well as 31 runs scored and 21 walks.

Kikla played both shortstop and second base last season as well as the outfield, and may begin the 2010 campaign at first base. He led the Bulldogs with 11 home runs, 52 RBIs, 44 runs scored and nine stolen bases while batting .349 with 11 doubles and 20 walks.

One newcomer who should play a big role is University of Kentucky transfer Troy Frazier, an outfielder and senior who hails from Louisville, Ky. Frazier batted .256 with five doubles, three home runs, 23 runs scored and 26 RBIs in just 90 at-bats in 2008, but saw his playing time diminish with a news coach last season when he played in just 25 contests.

David Fanshawe, another Broward CC product, should start the season behind the plate, with Greener at third and either Kikla or Calhoun Community College product Derrick Harwood at shortstop.

Freshman Greg Appleton or transfer T.J. Murphy are fighting for the starting spot at second base, and whomever loses out at shortstop will likely start the year at first base.

In the outfield newcomer Kris Miller, a transfer from Lewis & Clark State and Panola CC who just enrolled in January, along with Frazier and Kautz should be in the lineup along with Jesse Bowman, a transfer from Volunteer State Community College who redshirted at CU last season.

**CU baseball opener canceled**

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

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