

# Red Falls to Willmar, Bringing 2021 Season to an End

**ST. CLOUD, Minn. (July 31, 2021)** — With an 8-2 loss to Willmar in the first game of the state tournament's final-eight elimination bracket, Tri-City Red's 2021 season came to an end on Saturday at Joe Faber Field at the St. Cloud Athletic Complex.

After a scoreless first inning in which both sides went down 1-2-3, Red struck first in the bottom of the second, when Paul Diekoff blasted a leadoff solo homerun to right field. Red was unable to push any additional runs across the plate, however, despite a subsequent single by Landon Both, who advanced to third when Ben Rosin was hit by a pitch and then Maddox Folska ground out.

Willmar went on a tear in the third, combining timely extra-base hits and scattered walks, to take a 5-1 lead. It added three more runs in the top of fourth, to make it a solid 8-1 lead. Red was able to push a run across in the bottom of the inning, due to a walk by Both -- who then advanced on consecutive singles by Folska and Connor Chervany.

Although Tri-City was able to hold Willmar scoreless for the remaining innings (which included Willmar's insertion of an illegal pitcher in the bottom of the seventh inning, which was challenged by Red and upheld), Red could not muster the offense to overcome Willmar's lead.

Ike Mezzenga got the start for Red, going three innings. Brandon Cook started the fourth, going two-thirds inning. Leo Fleischhacker finished things up, pitching three and one-third, with three strikeouts.

Tri-City Red finished the season with yet another winning record (20-10 overall) -- making it 29 out of 30 seasons that Red finished .500 or better. (The only year in which Red finished below .500 in its entire history was 2004, when the team went 22-23.) Adding yet another state tournament appearance to its life-time record (for a total of 18), Red reinforced its status as one of the few ever-present and most-respected powers within Minnesota Legion Baseball.

## Game Summary

Willmar 8, Tri-City Red 2

## Game 30 - July 31, 2021

(MN State Tournament, Game 4; Final Eight Bracket)

Willmar	0	0	5	3	0	0	0	8	9	0
TC Red	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	6	1

Willmar: Etterman; and Schramm

TC Red: Mezzenga, Cook (4), Fleischhacker (4); and Goldman

Home Run, TCR: Paul Diekoff

Win: Sam Etterman

Loss: Ike Mezzenga

TCRed Final Overall Record: 20-10