

Softball Clinches Third Straight WIAC Title With Sweep Of Titans

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EAU CLAIRE - The sixth-ranked UW-Eau Claire softball team became the first team in Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) history to capture three consecutive regular season conference titles today as it swept UW-Oshkosh in a doubleheader at Gelein Field.

Pitching dominated in both games today as in game one the Blugolds got two runs in the bottom of the sixth to win 2-0. In that game, Blugold pitcher **Mallory McKinney** (*Jr.-Brooklyn Park, MN/Champlin Park*) set a new school record for shutouts in a season with her 10th. In game two, the only run of the game came on a **Jill Janke** (*So.-Black River Falls, WI*) home run and the Blugolds won 1-0.

The Blugolds improve to 30-4 overall this season and 14-0 in WIAC play. The Titans fall to an overall record of 23-15 and a conference record of 10-4.

Game one, was relatively quiet until the bottom of the sixth inning. Coming into the sixth inning the Blugolds had only one hit. The inning started off with a **Steph Salter** (*Jr.-Schofield, WI/D.C. Everest*) single to right center. **Casey Leisgang** (*So.-Seymour, WI*) then hit a bunt single past the pitcher and Salter advanced all the way to third base.

After Leisgang stole second, **Rachel Paulus** (*Jr.-Wisconsin Rapids, WI/Lincoln*) grounded into a fielder's choice and Salter was thrown out at the plate. Mallory McKinney then lined out to third and with two outs Jill Janke hit a two-RBI single that scored both Leisgang and Paulus. McKinney would shut the door in the top of the seventh and Blugolds went onto win 2-0.

McKinney (19-1) pitched her 16th complete game of the season and struck out six, while just allowing five hits. McKinney now holds the record for shutouts in a season with 10. The previous record for shutouts in a season was nine held by Kari DeGross (?88) and Heidi Bergstrom (2000).

Game two, much like game one, was a pitcher's dual. The lone run of the game came on Jill Janke solo home run to left field in the bottom of the fourth. With that home run the Blugolds tied a team record for home runs in a season with 28, which was set last year. Janke finished the game 2-for-2.

Bri Sturm (*Fr.-Zumbrota, MN/Zumbrota-Mazeppa*) pitched well throughout, as she only gave up four hits through the first six innings. The Titans then began to threaten in the top of the seventh as with two outs they got back-to-back singles. Mallory McKinney was then brought into the game to close and she got the Titan batter to pop up to second base as the Blugolds won 1-0.

Sturm picked up her eighth win of the season, going 6.2 IP, striking out two and allowing six hits. McKinney picked up her first save and the team's third total this season.

Tomorrow's home doubleheader against St. Mary's University has been cancelled due to a backup of making games in St. Mary's conference. The Blugolds will conclude the regular season on Monday, as they will travel to face UW-Superior in a doubleheader. The first game is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m.

Game One Box Score

Game Two Box Score

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