

Softball Defeats Top-Ranked St. thomas At Sun West Games

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ORANGE, CA - The UW-Eau Claire softball team got off to a great start at the Sun West Games by defeating Wesleyan (CT) 7-1 followed with a 2-1 win over top-ranked St. Thomas (MN) here today at Hart Park Field.

With the two wins the Blugolds are now 5-3 on the season and have won five consecutive games. Wesleyan falls to 3-5 on the season while St. Thomas falls to 7-2. Eau Claire is ranked 13th in the latest National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) Division III national poll.

In game one against Wesleyan the Cardinals owned a 1-0 lead going into the bottom of the third inning before Eau Claire exploded for six innings. With one out and the bases loaded **Mallory McKinney** (Sr.-Brooklyn Park, MN/Champlin Park) began the scoring spree with a single to third base scoring **Stephanie Salter** (Sr.-Schofield/D.C. Everest) to tie the game 1-1. Wesleyan threw a wild pitch to **Bekki Kidnie** (Fr.-St. Paul, MN/Johnson) scoring **Casey Leisgang** (Jr.-Seymour) from third to give Eau Claire a 2-1 lead. Kidnie followed the wild pitch with a single driving in **Rachel Paulus** (Sr.-Wisconsin Rapids/Lincoln) and McKinney to extend the lead to 4-1. Kidnie was called out on the play trying to stretch the single into a double.

Jill Janke (Jr.-Black River Falls) kept the Blugold third alive hitting a double to right center field. **Mandy Tschernach** (Sr.-Rice Lake) reached base on an error by the pitcher advancing Janke to third base. **Amber Haack** (Sr.-Madison/La Follette) brought Janke and Tschernach home with a double down the left field line to make the score 6-1.

Eau Claire added one more run in the bottom of the fifth inning when Tschernach drove the ball to center field for a double scoring Janke to make the score 7-1. Janke reached base with a single to left center field.

The Blugolds allowed just six Cardinal hits allowing one earned run and extra-base hits. Eau Claire committed no field errors against one error for Wesleyan which led to the seventh Blugold run.

Against the top-ranked Tommies the Blugolds got out of the gates early to take a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning. Leisgang started the game with a single to right field and advanced to second base on a wild pitch. Leisgang advanced to third on a sacrifice bunt and McKinney drove her home with a double to left field to make the score 1-0.

After a scoreless second and third inning and two outs in the top of the fourth Eau Claire took a 2-0 lead as the Tommie catcher committed a throwing error to third base scoring the Blugold base runner from third base.

The Tommies came back to score a run in the bottom of the fourth inning but was able to collect just one hit the rest of the game as the Blugolds earned the victory. McKinney held the Tommies to just four hits striking out six and walking just one batter. St. Thomas left four runners on base and had only one extra-base hit versus McKinney.

The Blugolds look to add to their five-game winning streak today when they face Elmhurst (IL) and Amherst (MA). Action is set to begin at 3:00 P.M. and 5:30 P.M., respectively.

Wesleyan-Eau Claire Box Score

Eau Claire-St. Thomas Box Score