

Softball Rebounds With Sweep At Whitewater

Posted: Sunday, April 15, 2007

WHITEWATER - The fifth-ranked UW-Eau Claire softball team had two big sixth innings on its way to sweeping UW-Whitewater, winning game one 10-3 and game two 11-4 at Martha Van Steenderen Field.

The Blugolds improve to 17-7 overall and 2-2 in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC), while the Warhawks fall to 12-6 overall and 1-3 in the conference. The Blugolds have won seven straight games against the Warhawks and this is their first win in Whitewater since the 2002 season.

Rachel Paulus (Sr.-Wisconsin Rapids, WI/Lincoln) led the game off with a double for the Blugolds. After a sacrifice bunt, **Mallory McKinney** (Sr.-Brooklyn Park, MN/Champlin Park) hit a sacrifice fly to right field that scored Paulus to make the score 1-0. The first three Eau Claire batters would get on in the top of the second to load the bases. **Bekki Kidnie** (Fr.-St. Paul, MN/Johnson) then delivered a double that scored both **Casey Leisgang** (Jr.-Seymour, WI) and **Katie Stalker** (Fr.-Madison, WI/La Follette) to give the Blugolds a 3-0 advantage.

Whitewater got on the scoreboard in the bottom of the third when Suzanne Gersich hit a two-run home run to make the score 3-2 Eau Claire. With the bases loaded in the top of the fourth Paulus hit a RBI-single that scored Leisgang to extend the Blugolds lead to 4-2.

Eau Claire took control of the game in the sixth inning as they scored a total of six runs. **Amber Haack** (Sr.-Madison, WI/La Follette) got the scoring started, hitting a three-run home run to make the score 7-2. It was her third of the year. Another sacrifice fly by McKinney scored Paulus and then **Michelle Butkus** (Jr.-Medford, WI) singled to score **Mandy Tschernach** (Sr.-Rice Lake, WI) to make the score 9-2. The final score of the inning came on a bases loaded walk that plated **Stephanie Salter** (Sr.-Schofield, WI/D.C. Everest) to make the score 10-2. The Warhawks would get one run in the bottom of the sixth but the Blugolds would prevail 10-3.

Eau Claire had 16 hits, which ties the second highest output this season. Leisgang was 4-for-4 with three runs scored and Paulus was 3-for-5 with a RBI and two runs scored. **Bri Sturm** (So.-Zumbrota, MN/Zumbrota-Mazeppa) received the win for the Blugolds on mound allowing just two hits in four innings pitched. She improves to 7-3 this season. McKinney picked up her first save of the season, striking out five in the final three innings. This was her fifth career save and she now holds the school record by herself for most saves in a career.

In game two, the Blugolds would score 11 runs on 11 hits. Michelle Butkus doubled in the top of the first that scored Rachel Paulus from second to give the Blugolds a 1-0 lead. The Warhawks took their first lead of the afternoon with an RBI single by Suzanne Gersich and a sacrifice fly by Kyle Shramek.

Eau Claire answered in the top of the second with an RBI-single by Amber Haack that scored Stephanie Salter. Katie Stalker then scored on an infield groundout by Mandy Tschernach. Mallory McKinney capped off the scoring in the inning with a two-RBI single that scored Haack and Butkus to make the Eau Claire lead 5-2.

The Warhawks cut the lead to one run in the bottom of the fifth on a two-RBI double by Lauren Cruz. However, the top of the sixth inning would be another big inning for the Blugolds as they would score five runs. Paulus scored on an error by the first baseman, but the majority of the scoring would come on a Casey Leisgang grand slam with two outs to make the score 10-4. It was her fourth homer of the season. Bekki Kidnie then hit her fifth home run of the season in the top of the seventh as the Blugolds won 11-4. The Blugolds now have 20 home runs in 24 games.

McKinney and Butkus each went 2-for-4 with two RBIs for Eau Claire. Bri Sturm picked up the win improving to 8-3 this year. She allowed five hits in five innings pitched.

The Blugolds will remain o