

Softball Swept By Luther

Posted: Monday, April 13, 2009

EAU CLAIRE, Wis.- Marred by defensive miscues and struggles at the plate, the seventh-ranked UW-Eau Claire softball team dropped a twin bill to 13th-ranked Luther College (Iowa) 8-3 in eight innings and 9-1 in six innings today at Gelein Field.

With the loss, the Blugolds drop to 7-2 in the all-time series against the Norse. On the season, the Blugolds are 20-7 and remain at 8-2 in the WIAC. The win gives Luther a 24-2 record and extend its winning streak to 11 games.

In the first game, both teams were unable to tally a run on the board. It wasn't until the bottom of the third when the Blugolds struck first and took a 2-0 lead. **Jenny Janke** (Fr.-Black River Falls, Wis.) began the inning with a single and her pinch runner, **Emily Muller** (Fr.-Lancaster, Wis.) advanced to second on a sacrifice. After **Katie Stalker** (Jr.-Madison, Wis./LaFollette) singled to left, **Aleisha Harper** (Fr.-Mondovi, Wis./Eau Claire North) drove in Muller and Stalker on a base hit to right field. Luther scored a run of its own in the top of the fourth, but the Blugolds answered with an **Ainsley Klar** (Jr.-La Crosse, Wis./Aquinas) drove in Stalker on a single to right to take a 3-1 lead.

The Blugolds had control going into the top half of the seventh, until the Norse slowly chipped away to tack on two runs on three hits and one Eau Claire error to tie the game at three. Eau Claire had a chance to win the game in the home half of the seventh, but with two on, **Tamara Zeman** (Jr.-Lodi, Wis.) struck out, sending the game into extra frames.

In the top of the eighth, the Norse exploded for five runs on four hits to take a commanding 8-3 lead. With their backs against the wall, the Blugolds were unable to answer, going three up-three down to end the game.

Ashley Meinen (Fr.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonnell) took the loss in the circle in one and two-thirds innings of relief for starter **Jenny Ross** (So.-Mendota Heights, Minn./Henry Sibley) who was pulled after giving up three runs and striking out six. Klar paced the offense going 2-for-3 with one RBI and walk.

The second game was all Luther, which scored at least one run in each of the five innings played. Eau Claire struggled offensively, recording just two hits and leaving seven runners on base. The Blugolds' lone run came in the bottom of the second when Zeman grounded out to the second baseman, allowing pinch runner **Meghan O'Hearn** (So.-Woodbury, Minn.) to score from third.

Bekki Kidnie (Jr.-St. Paul, Minn./Johnson) collected both Blugold hits, going 2-for-3. **Bri Sturm** (Sr.-Zumbrota, Minn./Zumbrota-Mazeppa) was saddled with the loss, allowing four earned runs on eight hits.

Eau Claire continues their marathon week, taking on St. Norbert College on Wednesday for its final home appearance of the season. The doubleheader with the Green Knights is scheduled to begin at 4 p.m. at Gelein Field.

Game One Box Score

Game Two Box Score

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