

Offense Struggles As Softball Splits

Posted: Thursday, April 16, 2009

DULUTH, Minn.- In its third doubleheader in four days, the 14th-ranked UW-Eau Claire softball team split with St. Scholastica (Minn.) today, winning 1-0 in the first game before dropping the nightcap by a score of 3-1 at Kenwood Field.

With the win and the loss, the Blugolds are now 23-8 overall, and move to 15-5 in the all-time series against the Saints. St. Scholastica is now 15-11 on the season.

Offense came at a premium in game one, with both teams combining for just seven total hits. In the first two innings, each team managed just one hit as the game remained scoreless. The top of the third inning proved to be the game's only run-scoring inning. Following a fly out and ground out from the Blugolds' first two batters, **Aleisha Harper** (Fr.-Mondovi, Wis./Eau Claire North) reached base with a single up the middle. **Bekki Kidnie** (Jr.-St. Paul, Minn./Johnson) was then hit by a pitch, putting runners on first and second. Cleanup hitter **Ainsley Klar** (Jr.-La Crosse, Wis./Aquinas) followed Kidnie with a base hit down the left field line, scoring Harper. The RBI was Klar's 10th of the year, and Harper's 24th run scored.

With a slim 1-0 lead, Eau Claire's defense clamped down on the Saints, and **Bri Sturm** (Sr.-Zumbrota, Minn./Zumbrota-Mazeppa) pitched a gem, allowing just two hits while striking out eight. The complete game victory gives Sturm a 6-3 record on the season. Harper led the Blugolds' offense, collecting two of the team's five hits.

Game two followed in line with the hitting woes the Blugolds had in game one. Eau Claire manged just three hits, their lowest hit total of the season. Despite struggling at the plate, the Blugolds jumped ahead 1-0 in the top of the second inning. **Nikki Brommelkamp** (Fr.-Zumbrota, Minn./Zumbrota-Mazeppa) led the inning off with a double down the right field line and advanced to third on a **Kaity Acker** (So.-Cross Plains, Wis./Middleton) ground out. With a single to left, **Heidi Arciszewski** (Jr.-Thorp, Wis.) drove in Brommelkamp to give Eau Claire the lead.

St. Scholastica wasted little time evening the score at 1-1 with a Robin Lake single, scoring Jena Dieryck in the bottom of the third. Both teams went cold for the next two innings, until the Saints put up two runs off reliever **Jenny Ross** (So.-Mendota Heights, Minn./Henry Sibley). With a 3-1 lead heading into the top of the seventh, St. Scholastica put the game away with a three-up-three-down inning to end the contest.

Ross took the loss in the circle in two innings of relief, giving her her second loss of the year. Freshman **Ashley Meinen** (Fr.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonnel) started the game for the Blugolds, pitching four innings and allowing one run on four hits. Arciszewski, Brommelkamp and Harper were the owners of each of the Blugolds' three hits.

The Blugolds take a day off and hit the road for two big WIAC doubleheaders. On Saturday, Eau Claire takes on UW-Stevens Point before traveling to UW-Whitewater on Sunday to take on the 2008 National Runner-Up. Saturday's games will be a 2 p.m. start.

Game One Box Score

Game Two Box Score

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