

Softball Opens 2010 with Two Wins

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire softball team kicked off its 2010 campaign with two wins at the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) Division III Leadoff Classic at the Frank Brown Complex today.

Facing Alma College (Mich.) in the first game of the day, the Blugolds needed an extra inning to beat the Scots 6-5. The loss dropped Alma's record to 8-3 on the season. In the second game, the Blugolds played just five innings as they defeated Farmingdale State College (N.Y.) 17-4.

Against Alma, The Blugolds scored twice in the second inning after **Sara Baumgartner** (*Jr.-Arcadia, Wis.*) and **Ainsley Klar** (*Sr.-La Crosse, Wis./Aquinas*) runs, but the Scots closed the gap to one run in the fourth. In the bottom of the fourth, the Blugolds added two more runs, both coming from Klar and Baumgartner again but Alma added three more runs before the end of regulation to send the game into extra innings.

In the extra inning, Alma scored one run but the Blugolds added two to secure the victory. Klar again found home plate while **Jess Freagon** (*So.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell*), who pinch ran for Baumgartner, scored the winning run.

Kassie Krummel (*Fr.-Walcott, Iowa/Durant*) earned the win in the circle after pitching just the final inning. **Ashley Meinen** (*So.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell*) also saw time as the pitcher, but **Jess Hegseth** (*Fr.-Zumbrota, Minn./Zumbrota-Mazeppa*) started the game and pitched four innings. It was just the fourth time in school history and the first time since 1993 the Blugolds started a freshman pitcher. The other times were in 1989 and 1985, the program's inaugural season.

In game two, the Blugolds scored 12 runs in the first inning. They then went on to score one in the second, three in the fourth and one in the fifth. In the only inning the Blugolds did not score, the third, Farmingdale scored all four of its runs.

Brittany Bergquist (*Fr.-Stevens Point, Wis./SPASH*) recorded her first collegiate home run as she drove in two others in the fourth to pick up three RBIs for the day.

Nikki Bromelkamp (*So.-Zumbrota, Minn./Zumbrota-Mazeppa*) led the Blugolds with four RBIs in the game while **Katie Stalker** (*Sr.-Madison, Wis./La Follette*) led the team with three hits. A total of 11 different Blugolds scored runs against Farmingdale, with six scoring twice and five others scoring once.

Hegseth was credited with the win as she faced 19 batters and struck out three of them after pitching three innings. Krummel pitched the final two innings.

The Blugolds will play two games tomorrow while the tournament will conclude Sunday as Eau Claire plays two more games. Eau Claire will face fourth-ranked East Texas Baptist at 1 p.m. tomorrow while the Blugolds' following opponent will be determined when bracket play gets underway later in the day.