

Softball Ends Regular Season with Two Losses

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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LA CROSSE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire softball team fell just short in two games against UW-La Crosse at North Campus Field to wrap up the regular season today.

The Blugolds jumped out to early leads in both games, but fell short 7-4 in game one while falling 5-4 in game two. The Blugolds are now 19-19 on the season and finish in second place in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) with a record of 11-5. The Eagles, who won the WIAC title yesterday, finished undefeated in conference play at 16-0 and 32-6 overall.

In the first game, the Blugolds jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the third inning with **Katie Stalker** (*Sr.-Madison, Wis./La Follette*) and **Aleisha Harper** (*So.-Mondovi, Wis./Eau Claire North*) scoring. The lead was short-lived, however, as La Crosse scored three runs in the bottom of the inning.

Emily Haluska (*Fr.-Stevens Point, Wis./SPASH*) tied the game up with a run in the fifth inning, but La Crosse answered right back with four runs in the bottom of the inning to make the score 7-3. The Blugolds had an opportunity in the seventh inning after Stalker scored to make it 7-4, but the Blugolds ended up leaving two stranded on base to end the game.

Kassie Krummel (*Fr.-Walcott, Iowa/Durant*) was given the loss in the circle as she pitched the final three innings. **Ashley Meinen** (*So.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell*) started the game and went three innings and both struck out one batter apiece.

The Blugolds came out strong in game two and scored three runs in the second inning and one in the fifth to take a 4-1 lead. However, the Eagles rallied and scored four runs in the bottom of the fifth to take the 5-4 advantage. The Blugolds left two runners on base the rest of the game.

Jess Freagon (*So.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell*) scored two runs in game two while **Sara Baumgartner** (*Jr.-Arcadia, Wis.*) and **Jenny Hess** (*Fr.-Wisconsin Rapids, Wis./Lincoln*) recorded the others. Freagon also led the game with two hits and two RBIs while Harper led game one with three hits.

Pitching, **Jess Hegseth** (*Fr.-Zumbrota, Minn./Zumbrota-Mazeppa*) was credited with the loss after pitching 4.2 innings and giving up 11 hits and five runs. Krummel finished off the game, pitching 1.1 innings, and struck out one batter while giving up no hits.

Up next the Blugolds will be at the WIAC Tournament in Oshkosh. The two-day double elimination event will get underway Friday and the winner will automatically qualify for the NCAA Division III Tournament.