

Softball Picks up Pair of Wins on Second Day of Invitational

By: Ashley Hofer, Sports Information Student

Posted: Monday, March 21, 2011 at 9:53 PM

TUCSON, Ariz. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire softball team wrapped up two more victories, coming back to defeat Hastings College (Neb.) 5-3 in eight innings and shutting out Calvin College (Mich.) 11-0 in five innings today at the Tucson Invitational Games.

Eau Claire and Hastings traded the lead multiple times in the first four innings of the day. **Aleisha Harper** (Jr.-Mondovi, Wis./Eau Claire North) stole two bases – second and home – in the first and **Jenny Hess** (So.-Wisconsin Rapids, Wis./Lincoln) scored on an error by the catcher in the third inning for two early Blugold scores. But a triple in the second led the Broncos to two runs in the second inning and Hastings took control of the game with a score off a two-out double in the fourth.

During the top of the seventh inning, **Brittany Bergquist** (So.-Stevens Point, Wis./SPASH) doubled to left field. Two batters later, Hess bunted to score **Amanda Houle** (Fr.-Chisago City, Minn./Chisago Lakes), who pinch ran for Bergquist. The score tied, the Blugolds kicked the offense into gear in the eighth inning. With two outs, **Emily Haluska** (So.-Stevens Point, Wis./SPASH) doubled to left center and drove home **Nikki Bromelkamp** (Jr.-Zumbrota, Minn./Zumbrota-Mazeppa) and **Sara Baumgartner** (Sr.-Arcadia, Wis.) for the lead. Back on defense in the bottom of the eighth, the Blugolds completed a double play and struck out the final batter for the victory.

Lauren Carlson (Fr.-Eagan, Minn.) picked up the win in the outing, pitching 4.1 innings and tallying seven strikeouts. At the plate, Haluska went two-for-four with two RBIs.

The Blugolds scored early and often in the second game against Calvin, never relinquishing the 2-0 lead established in the second inning. A Haluska double midway through the second scored Baumgartner. During the next at-bat, Bergquist reached on an error by the pitcher, and Haluska scored, giving Eau Claire a two-run lead in the process.

The Blugolds sealed the game with a powerful nine-run fourth inning. **Jess Freagon** (Jr.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell) capitalized on two errors en route to third base, and later scored on a groundout. With two outs, the Blugold offense again kept the inning alive. Three singles set the stage for back-to-back **Emily Muller** (Jr.-Lancaster, Wis.) and Baumgartner doubles that scored a combined four runs. Freagon followed it up with a two-run homer and **Kaitly Acker** (Sr.-Cross Plains, Wis./Middleton) tripled and later scored.

Ashley Meinen (Jr.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell) earned the win by pitching just over three innings, allowing one hit and striking out two opponents. The Blugolds allowed the Knights only two hits in the five innings played. Haluska led the Blugolds with three RBIs, and another three players – Freagon, Baumgartner and Muller – added two apiece.

The Blugolds are now 7-1 this season, having won seven straight games. The Blugolds will continue the Tucson Invitational tomorrow with an 11 a.m. (Central) game against Otterbein College (Ohio) and a 1 p.m. (Central) competition against North Central College (Ill.).