

Softball Sweeps Buena Vista At Ust Dome Invitational

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ROSEMOUNT, Minn. - The UW-Eau Claire softball team cranked the offense to high gear, pounding out 16 hits in 13 innings in a doubleheader sweep of Buena Vista University (IA) here today at the UST Dome Invitational hosted by St. Thomas (MN).

The Blugolds posted a 7-2 victory in the opening game and won 8-0 in six innings in game two. Eau Claire moves to 4-2 on the season after splitting with Gustavus (MN) and St. Thomas in the first two days of the event. The Beavers fall to just 1-5 to start the season.

Mallory McKinney (So.-Brooklyn Park, MN/Champlin Park) earned her second win of the season in the circle for the Blugolds, tossing the first five innings of the opener and allowing two runs, one of them earned. She finished with eight strikeouts without allowing a single free pass. **Molly Johnson** (Jr.-Wisconsin Rapids/Lincoln) pitched the final two innings for her first save of the year. She struck out four of the eight batters she faced.

Eau Claire was the first on the board, scoring a pair of runs in the top of the second inning. **Terisa Syvertsen** (Jr.-Woodbury, MN) reached on a one-out error and **Laura Brackey** (Jr.-Oakdale, MN/Tartan) followed with a double to put runners on second and third. **Casey Leisgang** (Fr.-Seymour) brought home a run with a squeeze bunt and **Rachel Paulus** (So.-Wisconsin Rapids/Lincoln) brought home another with a sacrifice fly for a 2-0 lead.

The Beavers battled back with single runs in the fourth and fifth innings, but Eau Claire regained the lead with a three-run top of the sixth inning. Leisgang led things off with a walk and moved to second on a single by Paulus. After a strikeout, **Jill Janke** (Fr.-Black River Falls) slugged a two-run double to right-center field to make the score 4-2. **Steph Farenbaugh** (Jr.-Brownton, MN/McLeod West) notched an RBI single two batters later for the Blugolds third run of the inning.

Eau Claire put the game out of reach in the top of the seventh, tacking on two more runs to finish the scoring at 7-2. McKinney recorded an RBI double in the inning. The Blugolds finished with seven runs on six hits and three errors in the win while the Beavers totaled two runs on just three hits and three errors.

The Eau Claire offense really exploded in the second game of the doubleheader with an 8-0 win that saw 10 Blugold hits in six innings. While the offense came to life, **Andrea Neuville** (Jr.-Green Bay/West) kept the Buena Vista bats asleep with a complete game, two hit shutout. She finished with three strikeouts and two walks.

Eau Claire took a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the second courtesy of a **Molly Blakewell** (Sr.-Eau Claire/North) two-RBI single. The Blugolds put two more on the board in the third, when Leisgang led off the inning with a solo home run. McKinney singled two batters later and another run scored later in the inning on a groundout.

Leisgang struck again in the bottom of the fourth, crushing a two-run round tripper after **Megan Oster** (Fr.-Eau Claire/Immanuel Lutheran) reached on a single. The Blugolds posted two more runs in the sixth, ending the game when Syvertsen ripped an RBI double to make the score 8-0.

Leisgang finished the nightcap 2-for-4 with a pair of home runs, three RBI and two runs scored. Syvertsen was 2-for-2 with a double and two RBI while Janke and Oster both finished 2-for-3 with a double.

The Blugolds return to action one week from today when they travel to Kissimmee, Florida for the Rebel Spring Games. Eau Claire will play 10 games in six days, with Wednesday serving as an off day.

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