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Monday, 18 February 2013 07:39

Appalachian State softball fell 2-1 in eight innings to Wichita State in its final game of the FCGU/LaQuinta Inn & Suites Invitational.

Wichita State got off to a quick start over the Mountaineers as leadoff hitter Ali Vandever doubled to left center and came around to score on a sacrifice fly to center field in the top of the first inning.

After the first inning hit, pitcher Alissa Schoelkopf settled in and struck out 11 batters in eight innings with two looking strikeouts and allowing only four hits.

Junior Lindsay Loudermilk drove a single through the infield in the bottom of the fifth before freshman Alex Sohl put down a bunt to advance pinch runner Racquel Cooke to second. Cooke would be left stranded on second, as the Apps were unable to get her across the plate.

Sophomore Sarah Warnock drove a ball to right field and advanced to third on an error by Wichita State with two outs but was unable to cross home as the final out was retired.

Megan McCracken knocked a single to center field for the Shockers before pinch runner Layne Greenlee stole second. Kaitlyn Carey dug in for Wichita and singled through the infield as Greenlee would try and score from second but would be thrown out by Allie Cashion at the plate to record the final out of the inning.

In the top of the seventh inning senior Meghan Smith reached first on an error by the third baseman to start a rally for Appalachian. Freshman Pepper Butler came in to pinch run for Smith and would advance to second on a single by Sohl to put runners on first and second for App State with two outs.

Sophomore Cynthia Gomez came up with a clutch hit with two outs and two on as she knocked a single over the shortstops head, allowing Butler to score from second, knotting the game at 1-1 and sending the game into extra innings.

Wichita State capitalized on international tiebreaker rules as Carey advanced to third on a sacrifice bunt and would come around to score on a deep fly ball, giving the Shockers a 2-1 lead heading into the bottom of the eighth.

Gomez was placed on second for the Black and Gold and advanced to third when Whitney Johnson put down a sacrifice bunt. Dani Heichen reached first on a throwing error by the pitcher and Cashion would be intentionally walked to load the bases with two outs as the Apps trailed by one.

App State was unable to push the final run across the plate, as they would fall 2-1 to the Shockers in eight innings.

With the loss Appalachian falls to 1-4 overall on the season, while Wichita State improves to 3-6 overall. Schoelkopf suffered the loss in the circle as she pitched eight innings for her first complete game of the season, making her 0-2 overall.

The Apps tallied five hits, while keeping the Shocker offense to only four hits on the afternoon. Five different players on the Mountaineer roster recorded a hit on the day as Gomez notched one run batted in.

Warnock led the entire Black and Gold roster on the weekend as she recorded seven hits with two runs batted in, while Loudermilk had six hits, going four-for-four in her first game in an App

State uniform on Friday afternoon and drove in four runs.
In the circle for App, Shivaun Landeros finished the weekend with a 1-2 record, pitching 16.2 innings with 11 strikeouts and Schoelkopf pitched 16.1 innings with 23 strikeouts. Katherine Johnson pitched two innings in relief with one strikeout.
Appalachian will have a week break before they take on USC Upstate on Tuesday, Feb. 26 in Spartanburg, S.C. for its first double-header of the 2013 season. Game one is slated to start at 4 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Cynthia Gomez, ASU Athletics