

Long Ball Powers Apps to Series Sweep

Written by Megan Samassa
Sunday, 31 March 2013 11:27

Appalachian State University softball took two games from College of Charleston on Saturday afternoon at Sywassink/Lloyd Family Stadium to complete the series sweep. The Mountaineers defeated CofC, 8-7, in game one, before taking the 10-7 win in game two. With the wins Appalachian improves to 15-11 overall on the season, while College of Charleston falls to 15-15 overall on the season and 6-5 in the SoCon. The series sweep of College of Charleston will allow Appalachian to move into a tie for first in the Southern Conference as it has posted a 9-3 record in conference play.

Game One: App State 8, College of Charleston 7

College of Charleston would be the first to light up the scoreboard in game two of the series as they scored two unearned run in the top of the first inning to take the early 2-0 lead over Appalachian.

The Mountaineers loaded the bases in the bottom of the first when Sarah Warnock singled down the right field line, but would get out on a bunt back to the pitcher allowing Cynthia Gomez to reach base. CofC would issue two walks to Lindsay Loudermilk and Allie Cashion to load the bases for Meghan Smith.

Smith would foul off 10 pitches and draw two balls before driving a grand slam over the left field wall to give the Apps the 4-2 lead in the bottom of the first. The home run marks Smith's fifth of the season, which ties for a team-high. The Cougars answered right back in the top of the second inning when they loaded the bases with two outs before Allison Pedigo drove a line drive single off the right field wall to knock in two runs and knot the score at 4-4.

The Black and Gold regained the lead in the bottom of the third when Cashion notched her sixth home run of the season over the center field fence. The Apps extended its lead to 8-4 in the bottom of the fifth inning when they scored three unearned run, capitalizing on two Cougar errors. Loudermilk reached first on a fielder's choice before Cashion drew her second walk of the contest. Freshman Ellie Manriquez reached first on an error, which would allow pinch runner Raquel Cooke and Cashion to touch home. Appalachian tacked on its final run of the game when Caroline Rogers singled to left field, plating Ashley Seering.

College of Charleston continued to battle back as it scored two runs in the top of the sixth inning when Lizzy Vaughn hit a two run home run over the center field wall, but it would not be enough as App State was able to retire the final outs of the game to take the 8-7 victory.

Warnock and Rogers led the way for Appalachian offensively as they each tallied two hits, while Smith drove in four RBI with her first grand slam of the season. The Mountaineers out-hit the Cougars 7-5 in game one, while only committing one error compared to College of Charleston's two.

Sophomore Alissa Schoelkopf (9-6) earned the win in the circle as she went the distance, pitching seven innings with eight strikeouts.

Game Two: App State 10, CofC 7

College of Charleston would take the first lead in the game for the third time as it scored two runs in the top of the first inning off of three hits and one walk.

The Mountaineers broke open the scoreboard in the bottom of the second inning with back-to-back hits to right field. Smith led off the inning with a double to right before Ashley Seering singled to the same side, plating Smith and bringing the Apps within one.

Ellie Manriquez touched first on a fielder's choice, bringing up Rogers who picked up her third straight hit of the afternoon with a single to right center that scored Seering. Manriquez scored

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the Apps third run of the inning when she crossed home on a wild pitch.

The final run of the second inning came in when Rogers took home on a Cougar throwing error, allowing Appalachian to take the 4-2 lead. Smith and Seering combined for back-to-back hits for the second time in the contest in the bottom of the third inning as Smith doubled to center field and Seering drove her in with a single to center field.

College of Charleston added its third run of the game in the top of the fourth inning when Pedigo scored off a single from Mackenzie Maples, bringing the Cougars within two. The Apps responded in the bottom of the fourth inning when Dani Heichen had a leadoff single up the middle and advanced to second on a groundout. Heichen came around to score when Loudermilk drove a single to the center field wall, extending the Appalachian lead to 6-3.

The Cougars continued to battle back as they scored one run on one hit in the top of the sixth inning, bringing the score to 6-4. Cashion drove her second home run of the day and seventh of the season over the center field wall in the bottom of the fifth inning to allow Appalachian to take the 7-4 lead. The senior outfielder needs just six more to tie the career record set by Katie Boyd (44).

The Mountaineers would add three runs in the bottom of the sixth inning when Heichen was hit by a pitch and Warnock singled up the middle. A bunt single from Gomez would load the bases for Loudermilk who would be hit by a pitch to bring in one run.

Cashion reached first on a fielder's choice that would allow Warnock to score from third and extend the App lead to 9-4. Appalachian scored its final run of the contest when Smith hit a deep groundout to second that would allow Gomez to cross home.

College of Charleston did not surrender as it scored three runs on four hits in the top of the seventh inning, but it was not enough as the Apps went on to a 10-7 victory taking the series sweep. Loudermilk, Smith and Seering each had two hits for App State, while Loudermilk, Cashion and Seering all drove in two runs.

Smith led the Apps through the entire series as she went 4-for-10 at the plate with a grand slam, a two-run home run and seven RBI, while Loudermilk was 4-for-10 with a walk-off home run and five RBI and Cashion went 4-for-9 with two home runs and four RBI. Warnock would add six hits on the weekend, while Seering added four hits.

Between Appalachian and College of Charleston, 11 home runs were hit in the series with App State tallying five. Smith and Cashion each had two for the Black and Gold, while Loudermilk had one.

Appalachian will travel to Chapel Hill, N.C. for one game on Tuesday, April 2 before traveling to Columbia, S.C. for one game against the Gamecocks. Tuesday's game is scheduled to start at 5 p.m., while first pitch of Wednesday's contest is slated for 7 p.m.

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Photo Courtesy: Allie Cashion, ASU Athletics