

Mountaineers Remain Unblemished At Home

Written by Megan Samassa
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Appalachian State University softball remained perfect at Sywassink Lloyd Family Stadium as it took two games from non-conference opponent, North Carolina A&T, on Wednesday. The Mountaineers defeated the Aggies 1-0 on a walk-off home run in the first contest before taking game two, 5-3.

With the win App State improves to 27-16 overall on the season and 16-0 at home, while North Carolina A&T falls to 7-30 overall.

Game One: App State 1, North Carolina A&T 0

Game one of the doubleheader turned into a pitchers dual as the game went six complete innings before senior Meghan Smith came up to bat in the bottom of the seventh for Appalachian. Smith drove her sixth home run of the season off the scoreboard in center field to allow the Apps to earn their 15th straight win in the friendly confines of Sywassink/Lloyd Family Stadium.

The Aggie pitching staff held the Black and Gold lineup to only three hits as the senior duo of Smith and Allie Cashion were the only Mountaineers to tally hits. Smith captured her eighth multi-hit game of the season and extended her hitting streak to eight games, notching two hits in the contest, while Cashion lined her 16th season double off the left field wall to bring her within two of the single season record.

North Carolina A&T left five runners on base with its best chance of scoring coming in the top of the fourth inning when it saw a leadoff hit from Sabrina Edmonds. Edmonds advanced to second with two outs on an Alejandra Barcenas single up the middle. The final out of the inning was retired when Alissa Schoelkopf struck out her sixth batter of the contest.

Sophomores Katherine Johnson and Schoelkopf combined to pitch a complete seven innings, keeping North Carolina A&T to four hits. Johnson earned her third start of the season, throwing 1.1 innings before Schoelkopf came on in relief to pitch 5.2 innings with 10 strikeouts, just one shy of her season-best 11 strikeouts against Wichita State.

Game Two: App State 5, North Carolina A&T 3

The Aggies scored their first run of the day when Raven Smith hit her seventh home run of the season just over the left center field fence, allowing North Carolina A&T to take the 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning.

Tranea Jones extended the Aggie lead to 2-0 in the top of the third inning when NC A&T loaded the bases on an App State error. Jones hit a shallow single to right field that plated Smith. The Mountaineers came within one of the Aggies when Sarah Warnock had a leadoff double and Dani Heichen drew her team-high 23rd walk to put runners on first and second for Cashion. The left fielder lined her second double of the day off the center field wall to score pinch runner Cynthia Gomez.

The Apps knotted the score at 2-2 when Smith hit a deep sacrifice fly to left field, allowing Heichen to score the tying run. The Black and Gold took the lead when freshman Ellie Manriquez hit her second career double, scoring Cashion and giving App State the 3-2 advantage over the Aggies.

Cashion tied the single season doubles record when she lined her 18th double off the right center field wall before Smith blasted her second home run of the day and eighth of the season over the center field wall to extend the Appalachian lead to 5-2 in the bottom of the fifth inning. The Aggies got a second home run, this time off the bat off Alexiss Dominguez, over the center field fence in the top of the sixth inning to bring them within two of the Apps before Schoelkopf

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came on in relief for Shivaun Landeros with two outs and the bases cleared. Schoelkopf picked up the strikeout in five pitches to retire the final out the inning.

Smith led the Apps in game two as she tallied one hit and three RBI to extend her hitting streak to nine game, while Cashion went two-for-two at the plate with one RBI. Landeros (10-6) went 5.2 innings in her 19th start of the season, while Schoelkopf pitched 1.1 innings to earn her first career save.

Appalachian will be back in action on Saturday, Apr. 27 when it travels to Auburn, Ala. to play a non-conference doubleheader against the Tigers. Game one is slated to start at 2 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Meghan Smith, ASU Athletics