

ASU Softball Streaks Into Record Books

Written by Megan Samassa
Thursday, 02 May 2013 07:31

Appalachian State University softball wrapped up its perfect 18-0 home season with a sweep over Radford in its final mid-week doubleheader of the 2013 season at Sywassink/Lloyd Family Stadium. The Apps defeated the Highlanders 2-1 in game one before taking game two, 11-3 on Wednesday night.

The Apps are one of only four teams in the nation who boast perfect home records as Michigan (13-0), Eastern Illinois (14-0) and Oregon (11-0) have not been beat at home. The Mountaineers' sweep over the Highlanders allows the Apps to own the best home record in the nation as Eastern Illinois can only finish with a 17-0 record if it sweeps SIU Edwardsville in its weekend series, Oregon will compile a 17-0 record with a sweep over Seattle and Oregon State, while Michigan will end with a 16-0 record with a sweep over Northwestern. With the wins, Appalachian improves to 29-18 overall on the season, while Radford falls to 17-34 on the season.

Game One: App State 2, Radford 1

After two strikeouts from starter Shivaun Landeros, Radford's Jessie Hutchens hit a solo home run over the left field fence to give the Highlanders a 1-0 lead.

The Apps threatened to score in the bottom of the fifth inning when they loaded the bases on three hits, including a Sarah Warnock bunt single with one out. Radford retired the final outs of the inning before the Black and Gold were able to push a run across, maintaining the 1-0 lead heading into the top of the sixth inning.

Appalachian sat down the Highlander offense in order in the top of the sixth, bringing up junior Lindsay Loudermilk in the bottom half.

After taking two strikes the junior first baseman lined her sixth home run over the right field wall to tie the game at 1-1.

Sophomore Cynthia Gomez came in on a pinch hit situation for the Apps in the bottom of the seventh inning and line a single to left side of the field to get things started for the Mountaineers. Warnock picked up her second hit of the contest when she drove a deep single to center field to move Gomez to third base before Dani Heichen lined a hard hit to the third baseman to cause an error and allow Gomez to score from third.

The run gave the Apps the 2-1 victory and its 17th-straight win at Sywassink/Lloyd Family Stadium as Warnock led the Appalachian offense with two hits, while Loudermilk added one hit and one RBI and Heichen added one RBI.

Landeros (11-6) pitched all seven innings in the circle, allowing just four hits and striking out a season-high seven batters.

Game Two: App State 11, Radford 3

Appalachian came out strong in game two as they tallied five runs on six hits in the bottom of the first inning.

Three straight singles would plate the Black and Gold's first run of the contest as Heichen led off the inning with a bunt single before stealing second and advancing to third on a Gomez bunt single. An Allie Cashion single through the right side of the field would score Heichen to give the Apps an early 1-0 lead with no outs.

Loudermilk hit a hard hit ball through the shortstop's legs that would cause an error and plate both Gomez and Cashion, extending the App State lead to 3-0 with no outs.

Ashley Seering tacked on the Mountaineers fourth hit of the inning when she singled up the middle, scoring the only unearned run of the inning as Loudermilk crossed home.

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The Apps put runners on first and second with one out when freshman Alex Sohl hit a shallow single to right field before advancing to scoring position on a wild pitch.

An Ellie Manriquez walk loaded the bases for Caroline Rogers, who drove a single up the middle to score the Apps' final run of the first inning.

Radford scored its first run of the contest when Emily Naegele doubled to center field with two runners on base. The Highlanders added two runs on a wild pitch and a throwing error from the catcher to bring Radford within two of the Apps.

Appalachian responded in the bottom of the third inning when Sohl reached base on a throwing error, before Racquel Cooke came in to pinch run. Cooke advanced to second on a single from Manriquez before Caroline Chambers picked up her second hit and RBI of the season with a single to right field, giving App State the 6-3 lead over the Highlanders.

The Apps increased their lead to four when Manriquez drove her first career home run over the right field wall. The Black and Gold tacked on their second run of the inning on back-to-back doubles from Rogers and Chambers to take the 8-3 lead over Radford.

App State took a 9-3 lead with two outs in the bottom of the fifth inning when Heichen who re-entered for Chambers scored on two wild pitches. The Mountaineers added a 10th run in the bottom of the sixth inning when Manriquez grounded out, allowing Smith, who singled earlier in the inning, to score from third base. Appalachian earned the mercy over Radford when the Highlanders second baseman committed an error, allowing the Apps to take the 11-3 victory.

Chambers led the Apps as she went 2-for-3 at the plate with two RBI, while Manriquez 2-for-3 with two RBI and Cashion and Seering each drove in an RBI. Katherine Johnson would get the start in the circle pitching 1.1 innings, while Alissa Schoelkopf came on in relief pitching 4.2 innings with 10 strikeouts. Schoelkopf earned her 18th win in the circle for the Black and Gold.

Appalachian will travel to Statesboro, Ga. for its final regular season games. The Apps will take on Georgia Southern for their final Southern Conference series of the 2013 series. A series win will allow the Black and Gold to win its first ever regular season championship. The doubleheader is slated for 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 4 before the single game on Sunday, May 5 at 1 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Lindsay Loudermilk, ASU Athletics