

Bears Belt North Georgia, 9-7 At Super Regionals

Written by LRU Sports Information
Saturday, 21 May 2011 09:08

Behind the strength of three home runs, No. 6 Lenoir-Rhyne (45-8) rallied from a four-run deficit to defeat second-ranked North Georgia (50-10), 9-7, Friday in the first game of the 2011 NCAA Division II Southeast Super Regional Softball Tournament at Haines & Carolyn Hill Stadium.

The two teams will play the second game of the three-game series Saturday at 2:00 p.m., with a possible third contest immediately following at 4:30 p.m.

The Saints, who saw their 12-game winning streak snapped, jumped out to a 4-0 lead with two runs in each of the second and third innings.

In the second frame, North Georgia's Callie Fernandez (Lawrenceville, Ga.) opened the scoring with an RBI double before Ansley Williams (Cartersville, Ga.) connected on a run-scoring single. The Saints' Sarah Johnson (Powder Springs, Ga.) and Pilar Harden (Watkinsville, Ga.) hit back-to-back solo home runs in the third to push North Georgia's advantage to four.

Lenoir-Rhyne cut the margin to one run at 4-3 in the top of the fourth inning on a three-run home run by sophomore pitcher Megan Laxton (Taylorsville, N.C.).

A North Georgia error led to two L-R runs in the top of fifth inning that gave the Bears a 5-4 lead. Junior catcher Sarah Atkins' (Newport News, Va.) RBI ground out gave Lenoir-Rhyne the one-run advantage.

Fernandez gave the Saints the lead back with a two-out, two-run home run in the bottom of the fifth.

The Bears took the lead for good with a three-run sixth inning capped off by a two-run home run from junior second baseman Carlee Carpenter (Newton, N.C.), who broke a six-all tie with the round-tripper.

The teams traded solo home runs in the seventh inning for the 9-7 final.

Atkins hit the Bears' third and final home run in the last inning and finished with two runs batted in for Lenoir-Rhyne. Fernandez led the Saints with four hits, two home runs and four RBI.

Laxton (6-1) pitched the final five innings to get the victory while North Georgia's Sarah Phillips (Powell, Ohio) (20-5) suffered the loss.