

Robinson, McCune Silence Unaka Offense

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Kim Robinson and Michala McCune turned in a dominant performance Thursday night in Elizabethton, TN, as they combine for 23 strikeouts and only give up 1 hit in a double-header sweep.

Kim Robinson struck out 11 batters and fired a no-hitter to get the night started for the Blast as they prevailed 3-2 in game one. Robinson was in total control of the game, but fell victimized by a lead-off walk and 2 errors in the 5th inning that allowed 2 unearned runs to score.

"Kim did a great job on the mound tonight," said Watauga coach Jerry Moretz. "She hit a rough stretch in the 5th inning but I was proud of how she worked through it."

After the walk and 2 errors, Robinson struck out 2 and induced a groundball to Allison Townsend to close out the fifth. Offensively, the Blast (3-1) had three runs across in the 3rd inning. Following a groundout by Elizabeth Dollar, Allison Townsend singled to left field and moved to second on groundout by Hope LaPointe. Townsend scored on a 2 out double to deep center field by Kim Robinson.

The Blast took a 2-0 lead in to the top of the 5th. Robinson and Shelby Winebarger both walked to start the inning, putting runners at first and second. Miriska Watts hit a shot to deep short and the shortstop couldn't make a play, loading the bases. Robinson scored on a wild pitch and Kylie McCoury, who was running for Winebarger, moved to 3rd. With 2 outs, Hallie Leonard singled to left to score McCoury, giving the Blast a 3-0 lead.

"With the exception of the errors, Coach Isaacs and I were proud of the way we played in the first game," Moretz said. "The kids had to work out of some tough situations against a good team."

In game 2, it was all about the arm of Michala McCune. She struckout 12 of the 17 batters she faced and gave up only 1 hit in the 4-0 victory. During one stretch of the game, she actually struckout 9 batters in a row. The only hit she gave up came in the seventh inning. But despite losing her no-hit bid, McCune rebounded and struck out the last two batters she faced to end the game.

"Michala was a lot of fun to watch pitch tonight," Moretz said. "She really hit her spots well and her riseball was a thing of beauty."

The Blast got all the offense they would need in the first inning. Elizabeth Dollar led off with a single, followed by a bunt single by Townsend and another single by LaPointe. Dollar was thrown out at home on a grounder by Robinson. With the bases loaded and one out, Winebarger walked, scoring Townsend for a 1-0 lead. McCune was hit by a pitch scoring LaPointe; and Robinson scored on a ground out by Rachel Cox. The 3-0 lead was more than McCune would need.

The Blast added another run in the 4th. Robinson led off with a double and she eventually scored on a passed ball to give the Blast a 4-0 advantage.

"Michala and Kim were really on to say the least," Moretz said. "It is fun as a coach when you have 2 pitchers that are in the zone and you know you can call any pitch for a strike. Unaka is a really good team and the scouting report we had was that they were a good contact hitting team. Our game plan was to give them a steady diet of riseballs and dropballs and see what happened. Fortunately, it worked out."

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The Blast will not play again until July 12th against Greenville. The game was moved from next Tuesday due to a scheduling conflict for Greenville. The Blast are now 3-1.

"This time off will be good," Moretz said. "It'll give us time to work out some kinks and hopefully, sure our defense and start hitting the ball like we are capable. Plus, the players need some time to enjoy their summer."