

Blast Defends Happy Valley Title

Written by Mike Kelly
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It was a little sweeter the second time around.

A year ago, the Watauga Blast (6-7) marched its way to the Happy Valley Summer League softball championship by dominating the league by winning 13 of 14 games. But this season, the challenge got a little tougher.

But none the less, the Blast, thanks to some timely hitting, a great performance by Taylor Drummonds and a solid effort on the mound by Kim Robinson, defeated Greenville 3-2 in the finals Thursday night in Elizabethton, TN. Drummonds scored the game winning run in the top of the seventh.

With the game tied 2-2, Drummonds, who was 3-4 with four stolen bases and two runs scored, led off the inning with a single. She promptly stole second base, and scored the game winner on a single by Hope LaPointe for a 3-2 lead.

It was a gratifying win for the Blast, which was swept by Greenville during the regular season. Watauga jumped out to an early lead by scoring twice in the top of the first. But Greenville tied things up by scoring a run in the 3rd and another run in the bottom of the sixth.

This was a very well played game by both teams," said Watauga coach Jerry Moretz.

"Greenville was well coached, young and talented. Their pitcher was tough and we went toe to toe with each other. It was truly a championship game. It had the feel of a state playoff game.

"Very proud of the team. They came such a long way this summer and everything just came together for us in the tournament. Great way to end the summer season."

Kim, who threw a no-hitter on Tuesday in the semifinals against South Greene, had a perfect seventh inning and struck out two batters in the frame. A ground ball to Hallie Leonard at first base for the final out closed things out.

Robinson went the distance for the win. In seven innings, she gave up two runs, one earned on just two hits, she walked three and struck out nine.

"Taylor Drummonds was such a spark for us," Moretz said. "Her speed was just too much for them to handle. Taylor is just so smart. She sees things that not a lot of players see and I can just look at her and she knows what I want her to do. Kim has really come on the last two games. She and Nicole have gelled in the last two games. Nicole has done a fantastic job calling pitches and Kim has responded by hitting her spots. These two should be a lot of fun to watch.

"Defensively, we have made some fantastic hustle plays. Riley (Pudney) made a diving catch on a foul ball in the bottom of the 5th that really gave us a lift. She is such a talented player that we can play at any position on the field and give you that kind of play wherever she is. Riley is a good pitcher in her own right as well."

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Pitching:

Kim Robinson 7IP 2R 1 ER 2 H 9 K 3 BB

Leading Hitters:

Taylor Drummonds 3 for 4, 4 SB, 2 R
Hope LaPointe 2 for 4, R, RBI
Nicole Dollar 1 for 3, RBI
Hallie Leonard 1 for 3
Rachel Hawkins 1 for 2