

Pioneers Sweep Bobcats

Written by Mike Kelly

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The Tusculum College softball team walked off with an extra-inning victory on Saturday afternoon en route to a sweep of a doubleheader against Lees-McRae College in non-conference play. Tusculum (4-4) tallied 10 hits on the afternoon, driving in five runs while recording a shutout against

Lees-McRae (4-3) in the nightcap. The Pioneers won the opener by a score of 3-2 in eight innings, before shutting out the Bobcats, 6-0, in the nightcap.

Kristen Oakes (Lenoir, N.C.) paced the Bobcats with three hits in six at-bats, driving in both of Lees-McRae's runs, as Lindsey Huntsinger (Asheville, N.C.) and Amanda Decker (Apex, N.C.) each recorded a pair of base knocks.

Laurel Gregg (Mars Hill, N.C.) allowed three runs (one earned) on six hits in seven and two-thirds innings of work in game one, walking three and striking out five. Oakes got the nod in game two, allowing four earned runs on four hits in six innings.

Kaytlin Stroinski and Nicole Ball led the way for Tusculum with two hits each, as Stroinski and Ashley Burke both drove in a pair of runs. Elizabeth Johnson got the nod in game one, allowing two runs on seven hits and striking out six in eight innings of work. Brooke Lauritzen tossed six shutout innings in game two, scattering four hits and recording four strikeouts as Lindsay Bridges threw a scoreless seventh frame.

In game one, The Bobcats got on the board early in game one, pushing two runs across in the top of the first on a two-run single by Oakes that scored Huntsinger and Kierstie Moon (Oxford, Ga.). Tusculum got one back in the bottom of the inning, halving the lead to 2-1 on a Bobcat miscue. The Pioneers pulled even in the third, leveling the score at 2-2 with an RBI single by Burke.

The game would go to extra innings, with the Bobcats putting a runner on third in the eighth before Tusculum shut the door to send the game to the bottom of the frame still tied. Tusculum answered the call in the bottom of the inning, sacrificing Savannah Ewing to third before Paige Sneed dropped a walk-off single into center to score Ewing.

In game two, Tusculum opened the scoring with four runs in the second, lacing three hits and taking advantage of a Bobcat error en route to an early 4-0 lead. Stroinski delivered the key hit in the inning with a two-run double, as she and Katie Gross scored on a pair of wild pitches.

The Pioneers would add a run in each of the fifth and sixth innings to equal the final margin of 6-0, as Lauritzen and Bridges combined for a five-hit shutout.

Lees-McRae returns to the diamond on Monday when the Bobcats travel to Jefferson City, Tenn. to take on Carson-Newman College in an non-conference doubleheader beginning at 2 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Lindsey Huntsinger, LMC Athletics