

ASU Softball Takes Two From Western

Written by Megan Samassa
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Appalachian State softball took two games from Southern Conference rival Western Carolina on Saturday as they defeated the Catamounts 6-1 in game one and 5-4 in game two. Appalachian State will conclude the three-game series on Sunday

when they look to take the three-game sweep of the Catamounts at 1 p.m.

Game One: App State 6, Western Carolina 1

Appalachian lit up the scoreboard first in Cullowhee as Sarah Warnock had a leadoff walk and advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt from Cynthia Gomez. Warnock advanced to third on a wild pitch and came around to score on an Allie Cashion single to the edge of the grass in center field, giving the Mountaineers the 1-0 lead.

The Apps continued to make a threat as Meghan Smith singled up the middle to put runners on first and third with two outs. Freshman Shivaun Landeros drew the second walk of the inning in her second career at-bat, but the Catamounts were able to retire the last out before the Black and Gold could push any more runs across the plate in the third inning.

Lindsay Loudermilk led off the top of the fifth inning with a shallow single to center field and pinch runner Racquel Cooke advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt from Cashion.

App State extended its lead to 2-0 when Smith laced a double down the left field line, plating Cooke. With two outs on the board, Ashley Seering dug in and drove a double off the left center fence to score Smith from second and give the Apps the 3-0 advantage over the Catamounts. The Mountaineers added to their lead in the top of the sixth inning as Warnock doubled through the left side of the field and advanced to third on a passed ball. Warnock scored her second run of the contest when Loudermilk singled over the third baseman's head to give the Apps the 4-0 lead over Western and knock in her tenth RBI of the season.

Cashion extended the Black and Gold lead to 6-0 when she hit her second home run of the season over the center field fence, scoring Loudermilk.

App State continued its strike offensively as Seering led off the seventh with a single and Caroline Rogers would walk to put two on and force WCU to make its second pitching change of the game.

Western Carolina put its only run of the contest in the bottom of the seventh inning when Heather Chastain hit a leadoff home run over the left field fence, bringing the Catamounts within five of the Apps. The lone run would not be enough as the Mountaineers defeated Western 6-1 in game one of the series.

Landeros (3-2) pitched her third complete game of the season as she struck out three and only allowed three hits through seven innings. Smith led the Apps at the plate as she went 4-for-4 with one RBI and scored once, while Cashion went 2-for-3 with three RBI and Loudermilk went 2-for-3 with one RBI. Smith tied the school record for hits in a single game with four, as she tied with Loudermilk's four-hit game against Southern Illinois earlier this season.

The Apps out-hit the Catamounts 12-4 in game one, while four players on the Black and Gold roster had a multi-hit game.

Game Two: App State 5, Western Carolina 4

Appalachian picked up right where it left off at the end of game one as Cashion led off the top of the second with a double down the left field line and advanced to third on Smith's fifth hit of the

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afternoon.

Seering plated Cashion when she reached first on a fielder's choice to give the Apps the 1-0 lead.

Cashion extended the Mountaineer lead to three when she drove her second home run of the day over the center field fence. The Waxhaw, N.C. native is now 10 home runs away from tying the career record set by Katie Boyd (44).

Western put a run on the board in the bottom of the third inning when they had back-to-back singles to lead off the inning. After a play at the plate would give Appalachian two outs, Amber Steinhardt singled on a shallow ball to center field to plate Shemekia Scotton and bring the Catamounts within two.

The Cats took their first lead of the day when Haley Pace hit a three run home run over the left field fence, allowing Western to take the 4-3 lead over App State.

The Apps responded to the four run inning by Western as they loaded the bases with only one out in the top of the fourth inning. Designated player Ellie Manriquez drew a walk before Dani Heichen and Warnock both hit singles. Western Carolina was able to retire the next two batters as the Black and Gold were unable to capitalize on the opportunity.

Smith hit a line drive home run over the left center fence, knotting the score at 4-4 and giving Smith her sixth hit of the afternoon for App State.

Appalachian tacked on its second run of the inning when Seering doubled to right field before Pepper Butler came in to pinch run. Manriquez drew her second walk of the game to put runners on first and second for the Apps with only one out. Butler advanced to third on a long fly ball from Rogers and touched home on a single through the left side of the field from Heichen. The Mountaineers loaded the bases with two outs as Warnock walked but the Western defense was able to retire the final out for the third time in the contest.

Western Carolina would threaten in the bottom of the seventh as they pushed runners to second and third with two outs, but a groundout to second would end the game as the Apps took home the 5-4 victory.

Cashion led the Black and Gold in game two as she went 2-for-3 at the plate with two RBI and scored twice, while Smith went 2-for-3 with one RBI. Smith ended the day going 6-for-7 at the plate with two RBI, while Cashion had five RBI on the afternoon.

Sophomore Alissa Schoelkopf (2-4) earned the win in the circle as she pitched 6.1 innings with five strikeouts, while Landeros closed the game getting the final two outs.

Appalachian out-hit the Catamounts 9-6 in game two despite having bases loaded four times and stranding 13 runners in the contest.

Photo Courtesy: Sarah Warnock, ASU Athletics

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