

# Free softball in season opener against tough ALAH team

Tuscola's softball team served up some free softball on opening night in Ervin Park.

The Lady Warriors needed an extra frame to upend a good Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond team by one run, 4-3, to secure the first win of the 2018 season. They fell behind early thanks to a few errors but rallied to take the lead in the fifth then broke up a 3-3 tie in the bottom of the eighth behind a double by Claire Ring and well placed fly ball by Jackie Watson.

Watson led the way on offense with two hits, while Ring and Isabelle Shelmadine kick started their season stat sheet with a double apiece. Shelmadine reached twice in the game, swiped a base and drove in three in the game. Ashton Smith got the first start of the year and worked into the seventh giving up three runs, one earned on 12 hits while striking out three before giving way to Kaitlyn Reifsteck. The freshman hurler collected the win striking out three of the four she faced to move to 1-0 on the young season.

ALAH took the lead in the top of the first on a hit and an error, then added to the lead in the third on a pair of hits building a 2-0 lead that stuck until the bottom of the fifth. Jackie Watson singled to open the stanza, moved to second on a single by her sister Sydney and scored on a single by Kendyl Ring. Shelmadine followed with a double two batters later in the three hole to push across a pair giving Tuscola its first lead of the game.

ALAH battled its way out of the sixth and knotted it at three in the top of the seventh with back-to-back-to-back base knocks before Reifsteck fanned the final two leaving it tied. The Lady Knights set the Warriors down in order forcing the extra frame. Reifsteck fanned



Photos: Douglas Cottle  
**The Tuscola Warriors during and the A-L/A-H Knights stand on the base-lines during the playing of our National Anthem.**

**Right: Warrior Kyra Moyer slides safely into first base during non-conference action with the A-L/A-H Knights. The Warriors won their opener in extra-innings 4-3.**

the leadoff then leaned on her defense for a double play initiated by Shelmadine to end the top half. Claire Ring doubled to open the bottom half, moved on an intentional walk issued to Allison Clark and a bunt single by Smith and scored on a fly ball by J. Watson to end the suspense. Tuscola moves to 1-0 on the year with the victory.



## Shelmadine shows the way south again

Isabelle Shelmadine has opened her three previous seasons with a trip south to Benton, and this year was no different. The senior showed the way on both offense and defense for the Lady Warriors who went 2-1 on the weekend falling to a very strong second-ranked Trico squad in a one run thriller.

She was 8 for 11 in the three game swing helping the Warriors to a 6-3 win over Benton on Friday, and a 5-0 win over Zeigler in the second game on Saturday. Sandwiched in between was a 3-for-4 effort in the 3-2 loss to Trico.

Tuscola built a 3-0 lead early against the Rangerettes of Benton on the back of a pair of singles by Abby Jacob and Ashtyn Clark. The duo moved ahead a base thanks to a free pass to Shelmadine, and the trio scored on back-

to-back base hits by the Ring sisters Kendyl and Claire. Benton answered with three of their own taking advantage of a pair of walks issued by Kaitlyn Reifsteck and two hits.

Senior Alexis Koester opened the fourth with a double, classmate Clark reached on a walk, and the pair moved on a wild pitch and scored on a single by Shelmadine, who in turn scored on a single by K. Ring. Ring went 3 for 4 in the game while Shelmadine turned in a 2-for-3 effort with two RBI's. Reifsteck fanned the side in the top of the frame and faced just one more than the minimum the rest of the way securing win number two for the Warriors. The freshman gave up three runs on five hits and five walks while recording eight strikeouts.

Ashton Smith had the pill in the Trico game giving up one in the first and two in the fifth on a controversial call to take the loss. The junior threw a gem throwing just 76 pitches while working six frames striking out five and walking none. Shelmadine led the way on offense going 3 for 4 in the game against the SIU commit from Trico.

Tuscola made it interesting pushing one across in the sixth and another in the seventh but left five on in the two frames falling for the first time this season. Clark had a big hit in the seventh and walked in the fifth.

Reifsteck shutdown Ziegler in the final game of the excursion south notching her third win of the year and the first shutout of her young career giving up just two hits and one walk in seven innings of work while reach-

ing double digits in strikeouts recording ten. She carried a no hitter into the fifth and faced just two more than the minimum.

Shelmadine got the ball rolling with a leadoff single, stole second and scored on a three-RBI double by Allison Clark. K. Ring singled and C. Ring walked setting the table for Clark in the Warriors' first frame. The Warriors added two more in the fourth on back-to-back doubles by Jacob and Shelmadine and a single by Ali Clark to end the scoring.

Shelmadine wrapped up her last trip south with the Warriors going 3 for 4 in the game. Clark was strong as well going 2 for 3 with three RBI's moving Tuscola to 3-1 on the year with the victory.

### This week's Tuscola school events

#### Tuesday, March 20

- Baseball at St. Joe-4:30 p.m.
- JV Baseball vs Unity-4:30 p.m.
- Softball at Monticello-4:30 p.m.

#### Wednesday, March 21

- Baseball vs Blue Ridge-4:30 p.m.
- Softball vs Blue Ridge-4:30 p.m.

#### Thursday, March 22

- Baseball vs Charleston-4:30 p.m.
- Softball vs GCMS-4:30 p.m.
- JV Baseball at Paris-4:30 p.m.

#### Friday, March 23

- Baseball vs Cerro Gordo-4:30 p.m.
- Softball vs Cerro Gordo-4:30 p.m.

#### Saturday, March 24

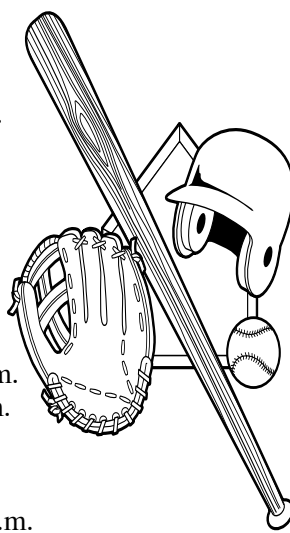
- Baseball vs Oakwood-10 a.m.
- Softball vs Marshall & PBL-10 a.m.
- JV Baseball vs Oakwood-noon

#### Monday, March 26

- Baseball at Champaign vs Central-4:30 p.m.
- Board Meeting at EP-7 p.m.

#### Tuesday, March 27

- Baseball vs Sullivan-4:30 p.m.
- Girls' and Boys' Track at Sullivan-4:30 p.m.
- Softball vs Sullivan-4:30 p.m.



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**Douglas County**

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