

SPORTS

Arcola's softball team runs winning streak to seven games

By Mike Monahan

ARCOLA - On April 11 Arcola's softball team lost two games in a row, granted the two were against Class 2A Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond (11-1) and Class 3A Mattoon (3-1) the Lady Riders were just 3-6 through April 11. Arcola has reeled off seven straight wins and a tie since then and are now 10-6-1 overall and are 6-2 in the Lincoln Prairie Conference.

"Beating Sullivan means a lot," said Arcola's Kacie Sisk. "Sullivan is a really good team. It gives us more energy to push because it shows how good of a team that we can be when we are at our best and when we hit the ball. I think it is just a confidence booster."

Arcola hosted Urbana Tuesday and travel to Decatur St. Teresa Friday.

Arcola 12, Cerro Gordo/Bement 1, 5 innings

Jacey Kessler and Keira Hohlbauch led the way offensively as Kessler was perfect in three at-bats with five runs batted in and Hohlbauch, who was the winning pitcher,

helped her own cause by going 3-for-3 with four RBIs.

Arcola actually trailed 1-0 as the Broncos as Maddie Grant singled, went to second on a wild pitch and third on a sacrifice before scoring on a ground out by freshman Hunter Malone.

The Lady Riders took the lead for good with two in their half of the first inning. They still led 2-1 heading into the home half of the third when Arcola scored four runs to take a 6-1 lead. AHS added four more in the fourth for a commanding 10-1 advantage.

Hohlbauch threw just 64 pitches, including 47 for strikes in the win over the 0-16 Broncos.

Arcola 11, Blue Ridge 1, 5 innings

After a scoreless first inning Arcola tallied two in the second and scored at least two runs in every inning after that. The Lady Riders led just 2-1 after two and a half innings before taking control with four in the fourth for a 8-1 advantage.

Three AHS batters had three hits in the game in Reyli

Vega (3-for-4), Hohlbauch, the winning pitcher (3-for-4 with an RBI) and Vanessa Conarco (3-for-3. Sisk drove in three runs, while the other four players had one RBI each.

Hohlbauch threw the complete game with 72 pitchers, 57 for strikes. She had 12 strikeouts and only one walk on five hits.

Blue Ridge fell to 8-12-1 and 3-6 in the LPC.

Arcola 3, Sullivan 2

Prior to the game Sullivan nipped Shelbyville, a team that was 8-3, 4-3 and entered with a 12-6 mark.

The game was deadlocked at two after three and a half innings when Arcola scored the game-winning run. With one out Ema Simpson tripled to center and Vega drove her in with a ground ball.

Sullivan threatened in the sixth innings when the first two batters reached and moved up a base on a bunt. With one out and runners at second and third Sisk got a strikeout and then a flyball to center as the game ended with Ava Simpson squeezing the ball for the final out.

After a sluggish first inning which saw Sullivan score what turned out to be its only two runs, starting and winning pitcher Kacie Sisk settled down although the defense also had two errors in the inning.

"My change-up was working a little better," said Sisk. "I was really focusing and zoning in on the spots like hitting the corners better. When I missed the corner it was a line drive."

Offensively, Sisk said, "Their pitcher was waiting for the fastball inside and that is something where I could just keep my hands through and just drive it," said Sisk.

Sullivan led off with a single and an error as Chloe Smith was on second. A single by Taylor Mercer put runners on first and third. J'Nae Webb reached on an error as Smith scored. An infield single by Maddy Probus scored Mercer.

Sisk threw 94 pitches, 63 for strikes.

"Kacie is a dog when she is in the pitcher's circle," said Arcola coach Cara Roberts. "She fights until she gets the outcome that she wants. I told them after the game. 'They (Sullivan) have had some really big wins. They beat a lot of the good teams in the area and for us to be in the game and beat them was huge,' I think



ARCOLA'S Keira Hohlbauch gets the out at first in a softball game played against Sullivan on Thursday, April 27 at Moore Park in Arcola. Arcola defeated Sullivan 3-2. Photo by Nancy Rairden.



ARCOLA'S Vanessa Conarco catches a fly ball for an out in a softball game played against Sullivan on Thursday, April 27 at Moore Park in Arcola. Arcola defeated Sullivan 3-2. Photo by Nancy Rairden.



ARCOLA'S Kacie Sisk came up just short in her attempt to stretch her hit into a triple and was called out at third on the play in a game played against Sullivan on Thursday, April 27 at Moore Park in Arcola. Arcola defeated Sullivan 3-2. Photo by Nancy Rairden.

their (Arcola's) momentum is where it needs to be going into the postseason. They are playing well as a team together."

Roberts moved Ema Simpson into the leadoff position.

"She has a really good on base percentage," said Roberts. "I feel like when she gets on base the girls behind her do well. Ema is a fast runner and with Reyli (Vega) behind her she can burn and she can play small ball really

well. She sacrifices her when she is up to bat is what we have seen and that has helped quite a bit."

Monday's game
Cerro Gordo/Bement 100 00-1-1-1
Arcola 204 42x-12-13-1

Winning pitcher: Keira Hohlbauch 5

innings, 1 hit, 1 run, 1 walk, 8 strikeouts
ARCOLA: Ava Simpson 1-for-3, 2 runs; Reyli Vega 1-for-2 stolen base, 2 runs; Eva Hopkins stolen base, 4 runs; Kacie Sisk 1-for-3 2 runs; Hohlbauch 3-for-3, double, 4 RBIs; Jacey Kessler 3-for-3, 2 runs, 2 stolen bases, 5 RBIs; Miaya Brian 1-for-1, RBI; Vanessa Conarco 2-for-3, double, RBI; Makenna Wagoner 1-for-3; Makenzie Thomas stolen base

Thursday's game
Sullivan 200 000 0-2-7-1
Arcola 101 100 x-3-7-3

Winning pitcher: Sisk 7 innings, 7 hits, 2 runs, 1 earned, 0 walks, 7 strikeouts

ARCOLA: Ema Simpson 2-for-3, triple, stolen base; Vega RBI; Ava Simpson RBI; Sisk 3-for-3, double, run; Hohlbauch 1-for-2; Conarco 1-for-3, RBI

Blue Ridge 001 00-1-5-7
Arcola 022 43-11-14-0

Winning pitcher: Hohlbauch 5 innings, 5 hits 1 run, 1 walk, 12 strikeouts

ARCOLA: Vega 3-for-4, stolen base, 3 runs; Ava Simpson run, RBI; Sisk 2-for-3, sacrifice, 3 runs, 3 RBIs; Hohlbauch 3-for-4, double, stolen base, 2 runs, RBI; Gracie Wagoner 1-for-2, RBI; Conarco 3-for-3, RBI; Kessler 2-for-3, run

Friday's game
Sullivan 200 000 0-2-7-1
Arcola 101 100 x-3-7-3

Winning pitcher: Sisk 7 innings, 7 hits, 2 runs, 1 earned, 0 walks, 7 strikeouts

ARCOLA: Ema Simpson 2-for-3, triple, stolen base; Vega RBI; Ava Simpson RBI; Sisk 3-for-3, double, run; Hohlbauch 1-for-2; Conarco 1-for-3, RBI



ARCOLA'S Reyli Vega, shortstop for the Purple Riders, fields the ball during warm up in a softball game played against Sullivan on Thursday, April 27 at Moore Park in Arcola. Arcola defeated Sullivan 3-2. Photo by Nancy Rairden.

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