



University of Great Falls
ARGONAUTS

SPORTS INFORMATION * NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: Friday, April 30, 2010

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Lady Argos' Season Ends At Cal Pac Qualifier

Redding, CA – The dream of playing in the NAIA National Tournament ended today for the University of Great Falls softball team who dropped consecutive games to Simpson University and Holy Names University at the California Pacific Conference NAIA Qualifying Tournament. The top-seeded Red Hawks of Simpson defied the odds as they rallied from a six-run deficit in the bottom of the seventh inning to top the Lady Argos in the day's first game, scoring an improbable 8-7 victory. Holy Names then eliminated UGF from the double elimination tournament in game two as they jumped out to a 4-0 lead against the apparently shell-shocked Lady Argos, en route to a 6-3 win. The Lady Argos close out their season at 16-15 overall, giving the Lady Argos and fourth-year head coach **Gary Ehnes** the program's first-ever winning season.

"We put together a real good season and I couldn't be prouder of our team," said Ehnes. "We obviously let that first game get away from us and then, we were down 4-0 before we knew what hit us in the second game. These two games won't be what defines this team, though. These girls have laid the foundation for us to take our program to the next level and that's exactly what we plan to do."

The Lady Argos jumped out to 2-0 lead in the top of the first against the Red Hawks as **Sarah DeVore** (Hardin, MT) hit an RBI single to center field, scoring **Jenn Andrews** (Spokane, WA) and **Amanda Morris** (Great Falls, MT). Andrews would later make the score 3-0 when she doubled to left field, scoring **Jenna Rosenberg** (Othello, WA) who singled to open the frame. Andrews was then cashed in on a double by Morris, giving the Lady Argos a 4-0 edge with just three-and-a-half innings remaining.

The host Red Hawks got one run back in the bottom of the fourth as **Nicki Feuerbach** scored on a sacrifice fly by **Danielle Crisosto**. But, the Lady Argos responded with two more in the top of the fifth as Rosenberg hit a two-run bomb over the fence in center, making the score 6-1.

The Lady Argos added an insurance run in the top of the seventh as **Anna Owen (Toledo, WA)** singled, promptly stole second, and was brought in to score on Rosenberg's single. Then, the proverbial wheels fell off.

The Red Hawks loaded the bases to start the inning as Crisosto was hit by a pitch followed by a base on balls delivered to pinch-hitter **Amanda Ayala** and a single by **Morgan Davis**. **Stefanie Singh** then got the run-scoring started as she delivered a two-RBI single to left, scoring Crisosto and Ayala. That was enough to lift freshman pitcher **Alyse Sifuentes (Patterson, CA)** who had come on to relieve starting pitcher **Lindsay Cline (Helena, MT)** in the fifth inning. Cline re-entered the game, replacing Sifuentes to try and get the three remaining outs and lock down the Lady Argos' first-ever win in postseason play. It was not to be, however, as a flurry of action including one walk, two passed balls, two wild pitches and three hits coupled around two out-making plays pushed the Red Hawks to the win. The walk-off hit was provided by Crisosto who singled to right field, scoring Feuerbach and setting off a wild celebration for the home-standing Simpson team.

"It's just a gut-wrenching way to lose a ball game," Ehnes said. "We did everything right for six and a half innings and were in good position to beat a quality team on their field and for whatever reason it just wasn't meant to be."

The Lady Argos still had an opportunity to advance to tomorrow's action if they could beat Holy Names. The two teams had met previously in the season with the Lady Argos opening up a 4-0 lead in the first game of a doubleheader back on April 2 before the rains came, washing out a potential UGF victory and the whole doubleheader as well.

This time it was Holy Names who jumped out early, scoring four in the home-half of the first after the Lady Argos went down quietly in their first at-bat. Again, suspect defensive play cost the Lady Argos as there were two errors in the inning along with a wild pitch and a hit-batsman.

Ehnes' squad did not go without a fight, however, as they righted the ship and got themselves back into contention with a three-run fourth inning. Owen knocked a double to left, scoring Morris, who had reached on a walk, and **Brittanie Thibodeaux (Lake Stevens, WA)** who had doubled just prior to Owen. After a fly-out and a strikeout, Cline came up with a two-out run-scoring double, bringing Owen around. It looked as if UGF may tie the game when **Emily Graham (Calgary, AB)** followed up Cline's double with a single, advancing Cline to third. However, Holy Names pitcher **Markie Benavidez-Talbott** induced a fly-out to center field from **Micaela Kurth (Boise, ID)** to end the threat.

Holy Names would add two insurance runs in the bottom of the fifth and the Lady Argos failed to mount a serious offensive threat off their own in down the stretch. Rosenberg doubled to leadoff the top of the sixth and was lifted in favor of pinch-runner **Chea Hollis (Great Falls, MT)**, but Hollis was stranded on-base after two ground-outs and a line-out.

Holy Names (25-20) meets Simpson (35-17) in today's third game of the round-robin style tournament. Regardless of the outcome of that meeting, the two teams will meet again tomorrow to determine the tournament champion who receives an automatic bid to the NAIA National Softball Championships in Decatur, AL on May 27-29.