

ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

ATHLETICS

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GOLDEN SUNS DROP BOTH GAMES ON FIRST DAY OF GSC CROSSOVER SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

DECATUR, Alabama – Arkansas Tech Golden Suns Softball saw its nine-game Gulf South Conference winning streak come to a halt here Friday with two shutout losses on the first day of the GSC Crossover Tournament at Wilson-Morgan Park.

Friday was supposed to be the second day of action in the annual Crossover Tournament, but rain and severe weather forced tournament officials to postpone Thursday's action and reschedule all of Thursday's games for Monday morning.

Tech, who fell to 28-16 overall and 11-5 in the GSC with the two losses, opened the day with a 1-0 loss to West Georgia and then concluded the first day with a 6-0 loss to second-ranked Alabama-Huntsville.

Against West Georgia (19-18, 3-6 GSC), Tech's offense collected nine hits, but the Golden Suns left 10 runners on base and advanced two runners to third bases, but couldn't get anyone to cross home plate. Tech left two runners on base in the second, third and fifth innings.

UWG broke open the scoreless game in the third inning thanks to an RBI double by Candice Brown off of junior **Casey Hammons** (Carthage, Texas), which plated Erica Colee with an unearned run thanks to a throwing error by junior catcher **Roxie Palacios** (Crosby, Texas). The run snapped Hammons' 17 inning scoreless streak.

In the fifth inning, Tech put runners on first and second thanks to a single by sophomore second baseman **Shanda Jameson** (Mansfield, Texas) and an error by UWG third baseman Kaley Sullivan, which allowed sophomore first baseman **Tiphani Moon** (Euless, Texas) to reach base. Following the error, UWG hurler Kacie Crider got out of the jam by forcing Palacios to line out and junior third baseman **Taylor Gates** (Paris, Texas) to foul out.

The Golden Suns had another scoring chance in the sixth inning as freshman shortstop **Stephanie Lasley** (Greenbrier, Ark.) was thrown out at the plate on a single by senior centerfielder **Krista Cifuentes** (Clinton, Ark.). Lasley had reached base on a two-out double down the left field line.

Crider (11-8) earned the win for the Wolves as she tossed a complete game shutout, allowing nine hits and fanning two.

Hammons (12-6), the two-time reigning GSC West Division Pitcher of the Week, took the loss as she pitched six innings and allowed three hits and one unearned run, while striking out six and walking none.

Jameson and Lasley led Tech's offense with three hits. Brown paced the Wolves with two of her team's three hits.

In the game against the Lady Chargers, who defeated Tech in the championship round of last season's GSC Tournament in Southaven, Miss., Tech was held to just six hits and left four runners on base in suffering its second straight shutout loss and just its seventh shutout loss of the 2009 season.

UAH, who improved to 29-2 overall and 8-1 in the GSC with the win, opened the scoring in the third inning thanks to a 2-run homer by Beth Lawson off of Hammons. The homer was Lawson's GSC high tying 13th of the year.

In the fifth inning, UAH pushed its lead to 6-0 as they sent nine batters to the plate and scored four runs off of four hits. The big hits in the inning were a 2 RBI single by Kelli Long and a 2-RBI double by Emily Roach.

Hammons took the loss (12-7) as she tossed five innings and allowed five hits and four runs, while walking one and striking out two. Freshman **Morgan Rodgers** (Mansfield, Texas) pitched to two batters in the fifth and then threw in the sixth inning. Rodgers pitched one inning and allowed three hits and two runs.

Sage Woodham, the two-time reigning GSC East Division Pitcher of the Week and Alex Lewis combined on a six-hit shutout for the Lady Chargers. Woodham (13-0) earned the win as she tossed 5.1 innings and allowed six hits and no runs, while striking out three and Lewis pitched 1.2 innings and struck out two of the four batters she faced.

Rodgers and senior rightfielder **Sarah Pratt** (Garland, Texas) were two of the six Golden Suns to pick up a hit in the loss. Other Tech hits were recorded by Jameson, Moon, Palacios and Lasley.

Tech will continue play in the GSC Crossover on Saturday, April 4, when they face 17th-ranked West Florida at 4 p.m. UWF opened the first day of the crossover with 2-1 loss to Arkansas-Monticello and a 3-2 win in eight innings over Southern Arkansas.

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