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Lady 'Cats Pummeled In SCAA Title Game

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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

BLOOMFIELD - The Lady Bearcats were back in the SCAA Title game for the first time in three years on Thursday night. The 'Cats, riding a five game win streak, had their hopes dashed at the hands of the top-seed Advance Hornets in a 15-1 run-rule contest.

Advance starter Hannah Clark didn't give up a hit until the fourth inning, and gave up one run on a bases-loaded balk, also in the fourth. The freshman right hander fanned five batters in the win.

Kendra Stevenson took the start for the 'Cats, but was lit up early; the sophomore right-hander walked four batters and gave up eight runs (three earned). Riley Rickman took the mound in relief with one down in the bottom of the first inning, giving up seven runs (one earned) while striking out six batters in three and 2/3 innings of work.

"There's a reason why Advance has only lost one game; they're just solid. They've got pitching; Hannah Clark is a heck of a pitcher," head coach Leonard Morse said. "She can put it exactly where she wants it, and she's got the defense behind her. They're a great defensive team, and they hit well; if you make a mistake against this lineup, they'll capitalize. They're a good, all-around team. The worst part for us is that [Clark] is a freshman."

Ace
pitcher

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Becky Anderson was out of commission for the Lady Bearcats due to illness. Morse was proud of his two pitchers' efforts, despite their poor showing on the scoreboard.

"Becky [Anderson] had been in the hospital since Tuesday night, so she wasn't able to pitch today. We only had one practice to get everyone re-gearred," he noted. "I thought throwing Kendra [Stevenson] out there would be a good enough idea, since I've had her catching for so long, but it just didn't work out. She and Riley [Rickman] both had trouble out there, but they're both sophomores."

"I'm proud of their effort; I'm proud of this whole team. We broke the string of fourth place finishes," Morse continued. "We may have only scored one run, but the girls were excited there at the end. They're playing like a team right now."

Despite the disappointing finale, Morse saw signs of improvement up and down the lineup in each game of the tournament.

"Monday, we stood toe-to-toe with Bernie. We came right back the next day and played a tough Woodland team; they have some very good players," he said. "We hit the ball in that game like I've never seen them hit before. We didn't have a lot of official hits, but we caused a lot of errors because we were hitting. Tonight...when you get steamrolled by a good team, you just get steamrolled by a good team."

"The girls are still in it; they're getting better about overcoming mistakes and staying in games," Morse added. "That's the biggest thing we're working on. Even there at the end, we were still hitting, still in to it. They are coming together as a team, and this is something that I hope the girls can build on."

Stevenson and Maddy Christian were both 1-1 at the plate for the Lady 'Cats; Stevenson also plated the Bearcats' only run of the game.

Kelsi Sturgeon led the Hornets' offensive attack, going 3-4 with four RBI's and four runs scored.

Dexter will be back in action Friday (April 20) when they take the field in the opening round of the Bernie Invitational Tournament.

Photos Above:

Top: Head coach Leonard Morse addresses the team before Thursday's SCAA Tournament championship game.

Bottom: Kendra Stevenson winds up for a pitch during the first inning.

/images/Sports/2012/Softball/2012.4.19 - Advance/20120419_SB_Advance_Stats.jpg

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