

# Taylor records second straight home sweep with pair of victories over SMWC

By Sean Douglas

Behind an afternoon of strong pitching and timely hitting, Taylor ran up its win streak to six games with a two-game sweep of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, its second straight sweep at Gudakunst Field. A Lauren Kanai three-run bomb, her second in TU’s last four contests, lifted the Trojans to a 5-1 victory in game one, before another gem in the circle by the Grand Rapids, Michigan native led to a 4-0 triumph in game two.

Kanai, Maddi Evans, Jessica Doctor, and Cassy Lewis shined throughout the afternoon, holding the Pomeroy to just nine hits and giving up one earned run. Additionally, the four-



Lauren Kanai crushed a three-run bomb and allowed just two hits in Taylor’s second home doubleheader sweep over SMWC (Photo Credit - Taylor University)

some combined to strike out 12 batters and post a sparkling 0.50 earned run average. Emma West put together another strong series at the dish, finishing three-for-six in the leadoff spot with

three runs scored, a double, and one run batted in. Ashton Whitman also collected three hits and an RBI, while Kanai, Kara Tucker, and Taylor Wilson each finished with two knocks apiece.

After two scoreless frames to begin game one, the Trojans opened the scoring in the bottom of third inning. After West was hit by a pitch, a successful sacrifice bunt by Tucker and a Pomeroy

fielding error put her at third base. Wilson took advantage, hitting an RBI single to score West and give the Trojans a 1-0 lead.

Back-to-back doubles from Aleyah Rastetter and West in the fourth frame pushed the Trojans’ advantage to 2-0, before Kanai blew the game open with her third home run of the season, and her second of the three-run variety, in the bottom of the sixth.

Evans (6-1) earned her Crossroads League leading sixth win of the season, giving up three hits and striking out five in five innings of work. Lewis pitched the final two frames and recorded her third save, allowing two hits and one run.

West led off game two

with a bunt single, and Tucker followed with an RBI double, giving Taylor a 1-0 lead after the first inning.

The Trojans added to their advantage in the third frame, as a Caitlyn Grim RBI groundout and a Whitman RBI single increased the Trojans’ lead to 3-0. Lexi Abruzzo capped off Taylor’s scoring in the fifth, plating Whitman with an RBI single of her own.

Kanai (5-2) shut down the Pomeroy offense in her third straight win in the circle, allowing just two hits in her five innings of work while striking out five. Doctor also performed well in her second appearance of the season, pitching two scoreless frames to end the contest.

# Taylor increases win streak to 12, completes four-game sweep of Bethel

by Sean Douglas

Coming off its pair of shutout victories over Bethel in the first doubleheader, Taylor completed its second straight four-game sweep of a Crossroads League opponent, defeating the Pilots 7-1 in game one and 8-5, in eight innings, in game two. The Trojans’ 12-game win streak is their longest in eight years, when they rattled off 16 straight triumphs

from April 13 through May 9 of 2013. In the opener, Luke Shively, Drake Gongwer, and Jack Ross completely shut down the Bethel offense, combining to allow just two hits and one run while striking out 11. Gongwer (1-0) earned his first win of the 2021 campaign, striking out four and allowing just one hit in four innings of work. Shively opened the contest with four quality innings,

striking out six, while Ross pitched a scoreless ninth. TU collected eight hits in the opener, with Conner Crawford and Camden Knepp each recording two apiece. Crawford finished two-for-two with a home run, two runs scored, and a run batted in, while Knepp went two-for-three with a pair of singles and two RBI. Kade Vander Molen opened the scoring in game one, crossing home plate on

a Bethel (4-16, 1-7 CL) error to give the Trojans a 1-0 lead. The Pilots tied the contest in the bottom half of the first inning, but Taylor regained the advantage for good in the fourth. After reaching base via hit by pitch, Crawford later scored on another Bethel miscue, and a two-run single from Knepp increased Taylor’s lead to 4-1 after four innings of play. Crawford’s solo shot, his

third of the season, and Knepp’s second RBI single in the sixth made it 6-1, and Matt Dutkowski added a little insurance in the seventh, scoring on Bethel’s third error of the contest. Crawford kept up his strong hitting in game two, recording three more knocks, including an RBI single in the first inning to give the Trojans an early 1-0 advantage for the second straight game. After Bethel tied the contest in the third, a Ben Kalbaugh RBI double in the fourth and another run on a Pilot error in the fifth increased TU’s lead to 3-1. In the seventh, the Trojans pushed two more runs across on a Kalbaugh RBI fielder’s choice and a sacrifice fly from Dutkowski. The Pilots came roaring

back in their half of the seventh, scoring four runs to tie the contest at 5-5, but a sacrifice fly from Vander Molen followed by RBI singles from TJ Bass and Kalbaugh in the eighth secured the Trojans’ four-game sweep. Crawford finished three-for-three in the nightcap and five-for-five on the day, while Kalbaugh went two-for-five in the second contest with three RBI. Rusche collected a pair of hits and three runs scored. Cy Stanley (1-0) earned his first win of the season in relief for the Trojans, pitching a scoreless 1.1 innings and collecting a pair of strikeouts. Luke Carlson pitched a solid 2.2 frames to start, striking out four, while Mitch Ubelhor sat down four Bethel batters in his 2.1 innings of work.

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Marion Parks & Recreation is currently accepting Men’s and Co-ed Summer Softball registrations.

The registration deadline is April 26, 2021 at 4 p.m, and you must be at least 16 years old to participate. The Summer Softball League

will start on May 10. All Men’s League games will be played on Monday nights and all Co-ed games will be played on Thursday nights at Matter Park.

If you have any questions, please contact Rose Cadena in the Parks Dept. at 765-382-3761 or [rcadena@cityofmarion.in.gov](mailto:rcadena@cityofmarion.in.gov).

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