

UT softball grabs one win against CMU

Over the weekend, the University of Toledo softball team went 1-2 against Central Michigan University with losses of 1-0 on Friday, followed by a 4-2 win and a 6-4 loss on Saturday. The results drop the Rocket record to 20-27 overall and 8-7 in Mid-American Conference play.

CMU 1, TOL 0

A two-out ninth-inning RBI single from CMU center fielder Allison Curtis was all Central Michigan (25-11, 10-3 MAC) needed at Scott Park, as CMU prevailed in a pitcher's duel over Toledo Softball (19-26, 7-6 MAC), 1-0.

Though tagged with the loss, second-year pitcher Heather Webb (9-9) was outstanding in the circle in pitching her seventh complete game of the season. She took a no-hitter into the ninth and only permitted one walk, which came in the third inning.

The Rockets threatened in the opening frame when fourth-year infielder Chandler Rice and third-year outfielder Ashley Rausch reached on a walk and fielding error, respectively. Both runners advanced into scoring position off a perfectly executed sacrifice bunt by third-year infielder Samantha Showalter. UT missed a golden opportunity, as a popout to shortstop and a retired batter left the Rocket duo stranded.

Toledo put two aboard in the bottom half of the third with consecutive two-out singles by Rausch and Showalter, but fourth-year outfielder Celeste Fidge ripped a line drive to right that found CMU first baseman Erika Underwood's glove.

In the next three frames, the only athlete to get on base was Rice, with a deep double to center in the fifth. Toledo tried to get its offense going again in the home half of the seventh when second-year third baseman Katie Cozy reached on a free base. Third-year Courtney Heinritz pinch ran for Cozy at first and advanced on a groundout to second by second-year shortstop Megan Choate. First-year outfielder Maddie Emery stepped into the box and connected for a deep ball to left that was, unfortunately, caught by the left fielder.

Once again, Rausch stepped to the dish and got things started for Toledo with a single to right. Showalter advanced her on her second sacrifice bunt of the contest. Fidge followed with a walk to put two Rockets aboard, but a fielder's choice to third on the next play ended the UT threat with zero damage.

After two immediate popouts to Rice at second, Webb's no-hitter ended with a single up the middle in the ninth. After she swiped second, Curtis stepped up to bat and connected for a single to right field. Fidge launched the ball home, but not before CMU scored a run to gain a 1-0 lead.

TOL 4, CMU 2

The Rockets jumped on the scoreboard first with a pair of runs scored in the bottom of the second. Third-year catcher Kylie Gross connected on her first pitch for a single to right center. Cozy drove a hard double to the center field fence on the next play to allow Gross to plate the first run of the game. After Cozy advanced on a single through the right side by Choate, she gave UT a 2-0 edge by scoring off a wild pitch.

Central Michigan wasted no time answering back and evened the score at 2-2 with two runs scored on an RBI double and a UT fielding error in the top of the third.

Rice led off the bottom of the frame and lined her first pitch down the right field line for a single. A CMU fielding error put Rausch aboard on her sacrifice bunt, and both Toledo runners advanced on a double steal. Rice gave the Rockets back their lead by scoring on a sacrifice fly executed by Fidge.

Rice hit a 2-1 pitch over the left-field fence for the 19th homer of her career.

CMU 6, TOL 4

The Chippewas were the first to score, plating a pair of runs off a wild pitch and an RBI single to left in the second inning.

With CMU leading 2-0, the Chips packed the bags in the top of

the third on a single, a walk and a hit batter. A two-out walk forced a Central Michigan tally, but the Rockets got out of the inning with no further damage.

In the bottom half of the frame, Rice hit a leadoff single on the first pitch and advanced to second on a groundout by Showalter. Fidge stepped into the box and drove a two-out single to left-center that allowed Rice to cross the plate and put UT on the board.

Cozy brought Toledo within one of the Chips by scoring on a fielding error in the fourth.

Consecutive hit batters put two Rockets aboard in the home half of the fifth. Rausch and Showalter advanced bases on a sacrifice bunt by Fidge, and a throwing error permitted Rausch to cross the plate and knot the score at 3-3. After Showalter advanced to third on the error, she gave UT its first lead of the game, scoring on a sacrifice fly by Gross.

In the top of the sixth, the Chippewas wasted no time scoring on a sacrifice fly and deadlocked the score at 4-4.

The midnight blue and gold put three aboard on a free base, a fielding error and a hit batter in the sixth. Showalter stepped up to bat and drove a ball to third base with one down. The CMU third baseman threw Choate out at home, and CMU pitcher Hanna Warren retired Fidge to escape the inning.

CMU infielder Rachel Vieira lined a 1-0 pitch up the middle for a single, and CMU outfielder Sydney Heath gave the Chippewas a 6-4 lead on a two-run blast to center. Central Michigan continued to threaten, loading the bases on a fielder's choice, a double and a free base with one down. The Rockets got out of the inning with plays at home and second base.

With one final chance to extend or win the contest in the seventh, Gross drove a leadoff double to right center. She was stranded on base after three consecutive groundouts by the Rockets.

The Rockets will head to Michigan State April 19 to face against off the Spartans at 4 p.m. in East Lansing.