

Baseball finishes second in SAC

Wingate knocks off Elon for first place

Jeff Dunlop
Reporter

The Elon College baseball team lost two of three games to Lenoir-Rhyne this past weekend and also lost the SAC regular season championship in the process.

In the first game of Saturday's twinbill, Elon (30-9, 14-6) topped the Bears, 4-3, thanks in part to an explosive performance from centerfielder Maurice Blakeney.

Blakeney, who leads the team with a .367 batting average, pounded out two doubles and a homer and also drove in two runs.

In extra innings however, it was a sacrifice fly from Jamie Spence that allowed Nick Thompson to score the winning run.

In the second game of the doubleheader, Elon was unable to score off of the pitching of

Lenoir-Rhyne, resulting in a 2-0 victory for the Bears.

The damage came for Elon in the fourth inning when Darren McGlamery of Lenoir Rhyne cranked a solo homerun with two outs.

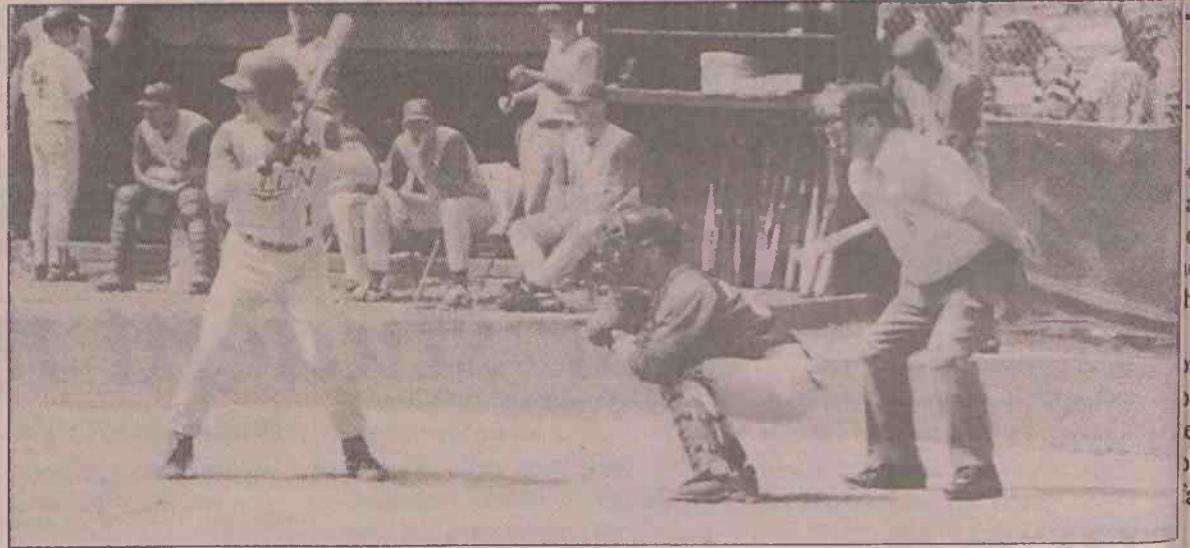
The Bears also scored an unearned run in the top of the seventh. Rod Gorham went all seven innings in earning the loss, his third of the season.

A win would have clinched the title for the Fightin' Christians.

Elon still had a chance to earn the South Atlantic Conference championship with a victory in Sunday's finale.

However, Lenoir-Rhyne scored twice in the first and never relinquished their lead, winning the game, 5-2.

Elon made a rally in the eighth inning, only down 3-2, but Blakeney was gunned down on an attempt to tag up and score from third.



Scott Hildebrand/ The Pendulum

Travis Smith felt the pressure as Elon saw the conference title slip away.

The Bears then added two more runs in the ninth to put the finishing touches on the victory. Senior pitcher Todd Bechtold (5-2) suffered the loss in his last regular season start for Elon.

With the two losses over the

weekend, combined with a three-game sweep of Mars Hill by Wingate, Wingate claimed the SAC regular season championship for the first time in the school's history.

Elon finished second in the

conference, an improvement from last year's third place finish.

Elon is scheduled to play Presbyterian College in the first round of the South Atlantic Conference Tournament on Tuesday.

Softball splits series with Lenoir-Rhyne, takes fourth seed in SAC tourney

Jeff Dunlop
Reporter

The Elon softball team closed out the end of the regular season this past Thursday by splitting a doubleheader against Lenoir-Rhyne.

The first game of the doubleheader saw an offensive showcase by both teams, as Lenoir-Rhyne edged out Elon by the score of 13-9.

Rarely used freshman Tiffany Caco stepped up big for Elon in the losing effort, going 3 for 4 from the plate while driving in a run.

Liz Smith went the distance for the Fightin' Christians in taking the loss, her fifth of the season.

Elon (29-15, 9-5-7)

immediately bounced back from that defeat by trouncing the Bears, 15-5, in the second game of the doubleheader.

Leading the way for Elon this time was Allison McCorkie and Dana Wascak. Each of them drove in four runs which helped the Fightin' Christians close out the regular season with a victory and clinch a fourth place finish in the South Atlantic Conference.

Next up for Elon is the SAC Tournament which got underway on Tuesday. Elon is seeded fourth in the tournament and was rewarded with a first round game at home against fifth seeded Gardner-Webb.

Head Coach Sue Leonard is optimistic about her team's chances in this tournament.

"I feel that we're prepared for this tournament," Leonard said.

"Our first round game is at

home, and we've won most of our home games this year."

Elon has a home record of 13-4 this season and split their series with Gardner-Webb, 1-1. Both of those games were at Gardner-Webb.

Despite their home success, Leonard is aware of possible problems that could arise in the tournament.

"We rely basically on one pitcher (Susan French)," Leonard explained.

"That could be a question mark."

The top seeded team in the tournament is Wingate College, who finished 11-1 in the SAC. It's only conference loss was to Elon back on March 23.

The four first-round winners will travel to Mars Hill for the semi-finals and championship game this weekend.

Want to write sports stories?

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