

# ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

***ATHLETICS***

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## **GOLDEN SUNS SWEEP HOME NON-CONFERENCE DOUBLEHEADER FROM ROGERS STATE**

**RUSSELLVILLE, Arkansas** – Arkansas Tech Golden Suns Softball returned to the win column here Tuesday as they swept a non-conference doubleheader from Rogers State at the Chartwells Women's Sports Complex.

Tech opened the doubleheader with a come-from-behind 8-6 win and then earned an 8-0 victory in the second game that was halted in the fifth inning due to the 8-run mercy rule.

The two wins snapped Tech's three-game losing streak and improved the Golden Suns record to 31-19 overall. It is the second consecutive season that Tech has won at least 30 games as the Golden Suns won a school-record 41 games last season. Rogers State falls to 25-17 on the season with its two losses.

Tech combined to record 27 hits, including six extra base hits and score 16 runs in the doubleheader.

In the first game, RSU took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning on two hits and a stolen base off of junior hurler **Casey Hammons** (Carthage, Texas).

Tech had a prime scoring chance in the bottom of the first inning as they loaded the bases with no outs, before RSU pitcher Jenny Johnson forced Tech to ground out on three consecutive at-bats to end the inning.

RSU's lead grew to 3-0 in the second inning thanks to a double, two wild pitches by Hammons and a solo home run over the left field fence by Katie Bointy. The Hillcats increased its lead to 5-0 in the fourth inning on a two-run homer by Bointy over the left field fence.

From that point, Tech began its comeback as they plated three runs in the fourth inning. In the inning, senior centerfielder **Krista Cifuentes** (Clinton, Ark.) started the scoring with an RBI double to left field and then senior rightfielder **Sarah Pratt** (Garland, Texas) followed with an RBI triple to left center and then completed the scoring on a sacrifice bunt by sophomore second baseman **Shanda Jameson** (Mansfield, Texas).

The Hillcats increased its lead to 6-3 in the fifth inning on a double, a wild pitch and bunt single.

Tech scored tied the game in the bottom of the fifth inning thanks to three hits, an RSU fielding error by Bointy and a wild pitch. The only earned run in the inning was driven in on a single to left field by freshman shortstop **Stephanie Lasley** (Greenbrier, Ark.).

In the sixth inning, Tech took its first lead of the game thanks to RBI singles by Hammons and junior third baseman **Taylor Gates** (Paris, Texas).

The two run cushion would be all that Hammons would need as she retired RSU in order in the seventh to pick up her 14th win of the season.

Hammons (14-6) pitched her 13th complete game of the year and allowed 11 hits and six runs, while walking none and tying a season-high with 11 strikeouts.

Johnson (23-14) took the loss for the Hillcats as she pitched six innings and allowed 14 hits and eight runs (six earned runs), while striking out six and walking none.

Hammons and Pratt led Tech's 14-hit attack with three hits apiece, while junior catcher **Roxie Palacios** (Crosby, Texas) and Lasley each had two hits in the win. RSU was led by two hits apiece from Johnson, Bointy, Sara Walkup and Megan Wood.

In the nightcap, Tech jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the first inning thanks to an RBI groundout by Jameson. Jameson's groundout scored Pratt, who had led off the inning with a triple to left center.

Tech's lead grew to 4-0 in the third inning on a 2-run triple by Pratt that chased Johnson from the game, an RBI single by Jameson and a solo home run by sophomore first baseman **Tiphani Moon** (Euleess, Texas) off of RSU reliever Jackie Krugel. The triple by Pratt set a new school record for career triples (15), which bettered the old mark of 14 held by former Golden Sun **Molly Schweigert** (2005-08). In addition, Moon tied the school's career mark for home runs with 15. Moon is tied with former Golden Sun **Nicole Berry** (2005-06).

In the fourth inning, Tech increased its lead to 6-0 thanks to back-to-back singles by Lasley and senior leftfielder **Kacie Visina** (Rowlett, Texas), a groundout and a wild pitch by Krugel and then closed the game out in the bottom of the fifth inning on RBI singles by Hammons and Visina.

Freshman **Morgan Rodgers** (Mansfield, Texas) earned the win (12-10) for the Golden Suns as she retired 10 of the final batters she faced. She pitched five innings and allowed just two hits, while striking out a career-high nine and walking none. Rodgers allowed just singles in the first inning to Lillian Nevarez and in the second inning to Marie Gaudet.

Johnson (23-15) took the loss as she threw two innings and allowed five hits and four runs. Krugel pitched 2.1 innings and allowed eight hits and four runs, while walking one and fanning one.

Moon went 3-for-3 to lead Tech's 13-hit attack in the nightcap. In addition to Moon, Pratt went 2-for-3 with two runs scored and 2 RBIs, while Hammons and Visina each added two hits in the win.

The Golden Suns will return to Gulf South Conference action this coming weekend when they travel to Cleveland, Miss., to face Delta State in a four-game series. The series will begin with a doubleheader on Saturday, April 18 beginning at 4 p.m. and will conclude with a doubleheader beginning at 12 p.m. on Sunday, April 19.

**- Tech Athletics -**