

Louisburg offense comes alive at Chanute



Louisburg junior Hailey Crowder makes contact with a pitch during a game earlier this season. Crowder hit two home runs during Thursday's doubleheader in Chanute in which the Lady Cats won the opener 18-14 and lost the nightcap 8-2.

CHANUTE – Following a two hour bus ride to Chanute, Louisburg softball coach John Ozier thought it might take his team a little while to get going during Thursday's doubleheader.

Boy, was he wrong.

The Lady Cats put up their best offensive performance of the season as they outlasted Chanute 18-14 to get their third consecutive win on the season. The winning streak was short-lived, however, as the Lady Cats couldn't complete the sweep in an 8-2 loss in the nightcap.

Still, Ozier liked what he saw from his offense in the opener and the fight he saw from his team throughout the night.

"Chanute is a very good hitting team, as evidenced by their 9-run inning to take the lead later in the game," Ozier said. "The girls showed great resolve by answering Chanute's big inning, coming back to take the lead in our very next at bat. Up and down our line-up, we put together some really good at bats. We have been working on our approach at the plate,

staying patient and waiting for the hittable pitches.”

Louisburg wasted no time getting started in the opener as it scored eight runs in the first inning thanks to two RBI hits from junior Emalee Overbay, one by Molly Rison and a 3-run home run by junior Hailey Crowder.

The Lady Cats (3-11) got production from up and down the lineup and it started from the leadoff spot. Senior Miranda White had a team-high five hits, including a double and a triple, and was a home run away from the cycle.

Overbay got the key hits with runners on base. She finished with four hits, which included two doubles, a triple and had five RBIs. She was also a home run away from a cycle.

Rison and fellow freshman Karson Griggs each had three hits. Rison added three RBIs and Griggs drove home a pair of runs as well. Allyssa Griggs also finished with a triple and two RBIs.

Crowder delivered a big home run in the first game and had another home run in the nightcap to have her best performance of the season.

“The top of our lineup puts a lot of pressure on the opposing defenses,” Ozier said. “Miranda is really seeing the ball well right now. Karson can move runners either with her bunting ability or hitting to the right side. Our three, four and five hitters (Overbay, Allyssa Griggs and Rison) all have great power.

“Hailey Crowder has been working hard with her approach and it really paid off against Chanute. She hit towering home runs in each game.”

Starter Allyssa Griggs shut down the Chanute lineup for the first three innings and took a 9-1 lead into the fourth, but Chanute finally broke through and scored nine runs in the fourth, which was aided by a few Louisburg errors.

All of a sudden, the Lady Cats found themselves down 10-9 in the fifth, but they didn't back down. Louisburg scored three runs in the fifth on an RBI single from Karson Griggs after White led the inning off with a triple.

Rison and freshman Kennia Hankinson followed with RBI groundouts to give Louisburg a 12-10 lead. The Lady Cats added five more in the sixth when Overbay came up with the bases loaded and promptly cleared them with a triple.

Allyssa Griggs added a triple of her own to score Overbay and Rison had an RBI single to go up 17-10.

Louisburg's offense cooled off in the nightcap, but freshmen pitchers Bailey Sarna and Bailey Kern kept the Lady Cats in the game.

Chanute had a 3-0 lead into the third inning, but the Lady Cats cut into the deficit in the next two frames. White continued her hot hitting with a solo home run in the third and Crowder followed suit in the fourth with her second home run of the day.

Louisburg trailed by a run going into the bottom of the fourth, but Chanute tacked on a run in the fourth and four more in the fifth to pull away.

"Bailey Sarna and Bailey Kern kept us close until Chanute put together a big fifth inning to put it away," Ozier said. "We appeared to run out of gas from the emotional roller coaster in game one and just could not string together any big hits in game two. "

The Lady Cats return to action today when they travel to Ottawa for a doubleheader. On Friday, Louisburg will also travel to De Soto in a makeup contest from its postponement last week. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.