

Hurler Sydney Baumgartner Off to Strong Start for Piasa Birds, Hopes for Breakout Season

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EDWARDSVILLE – Piasa Southwestern pitcher Sydney Baumgartner threw a complete game recently win for the Piasa Birds in their 12-8 softball win over Edwardsville Wednesday afternoon at the Edwardsville Sports Complex, striking out two and walking none. Edwardsville has been a difficult team for the Piasa Birds in the past with their strong softball tradition under head coach Lori Blade.

Baumgartner was backed by a 17-hit attack by the Birds, who scored three runs in the first and second innings, and four more in the fourth to take control.

“It was really kind of just like a mental game, but my teammates always have my back,” Baumgartner said in a postgame interview, “and it was really nice that have my teammates, like, behind me and knowing that they always are behind me, and just making sure they always have my back.”

Southwestern scored three runs in both the first and second innings, then tacked on four more in the fourth. Baumgartner was very appreciative of the run support provided for her.

“Yeah, it’s awesome,” Baumgartner said. “It’s really comforting to go out there and know that your teammates are there for you, they’re hitting the ball behind you, and they always have your back, no matter what.”

Baumgartner uses a variety of pitches to keep hitters off-balance, and it came in handy when needed.

“I like my curveball a lot,” Baumgartner said, “my drop ball. Changeups are also really crucial, especially against a team like Edwardsville, who’s really a good, awesome hitting team. It’s really nice to change up speeds.”

Baumgartner thinks that the Birds are ready to have a breakout season, and has high hopes and goals for her team. The Piasa Birds have won seven of their first eight games this season and appear poised to make a run in the postseason.

“I definitely think that we will have a really good year this year,” Baumgartner said, “and I hope that we can do really big things. And I hope we have a conference championship again.”

Southwestern is a very good hitting team that could rewrite the school’s record books again this season, and are on the edge of being a great team.

“I really think that we are almost there,” Baumgartner said. “We’re right on the verge of it, and we’re about to cross over.”