

# **Calhoun defeats Carrrollton 5-0 behind 16-strikeout game by Grace Baalman**

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
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After logging 10 innings two days prior, Calhoun pitcher Grace Baalman only got stronger. She struck out 16 batters, walked one, and allowed only two base runners as the Calhoun Warriors defeated the Carrollton Lady Hawks 5-0 on Thursday afternoon in

Carrollton. The Warriors sweep the Lady Hawks in the conference series after defeating them 3-2 in 10 innings on Tuesday.

The sophomore Baalman was once again spectacular as she has been all season long.

“She’s been dominating all year. Last time we played Carrollton she was pretty dominating, we just had a couple mistakes. “Calhoun coach Matt Baalman said.” They bunted on her 12 times because they know they’re not going to hit her and that’s what a lot of teams do. We’re adapting to the bunt, getting pretty good at it, and feel pretty good at the moment.”

This time the Calhoun bats were an instant impact as the Warriors burst out to 3-0 lead on an RBI single, an RBI groundout, and an RBI double in the top of the first inning off of Carrollton pitcher Emmie Struble. But for Matt Baalman no lead is safe against the Lady Hawks at home.

“I wasn’t comfortable with 3, but I was happy with 3,” Baalman said. “As the game went on Grace got a little better and our defense really played good.”

Carrollton’s only hit of the game came in the bottom half of the first inning when Katelyn Dunlop lined a single into left field. After that Baalman asserted her dominance strikeouts and an occasional groundout.

Baalman retired 12 Lady Hawks in a row and during that span struck out six batters consecutively.

After her rough first inning Struble, a sophomore, settled in and retired 11 Warriors in a row through the third and sixth innings. She allowed five runs, all earned, gave up nine hits and struck out six batters.

The Warriors added one run apiece in the second and seventh innings on an RBI double and an RBI groundout respectively.

So far this season Calhoun and Carrollton have played three times. The Warriors have won the last two meetings, while the Lady Hawks were victorious in the first game 1-0 in the Beardstown Tournament Championship game. There is a strong chance that the two rivals will hook up again in the regional finals in Carrollton.

“Carrollton is our rivalry, they’re a tough opponent,” Coach Baalman said. Carrollton’s in our regional, we play right here again. They’re no easy out, they never are so it’s going to be a dog fight all the way to end in regionals.”

Carrollton drops to 19-3, but look to bounce back against Routt Catholic at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 5, in Carrollton.

Calhoun improves to 21-3 and will take on the Jerseyville Panthers at home at 4:30 p.m. on Friday.

“I feel like we’re playing the best ball we have all year,” Baalman said.