

SPORTS

UWS Softball Earns A Share of UMAC Regular Season Championship

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The UW-Superior Softball team came into their final home series of the season with a 14-1 conference record needing just one win to secure a co-conference championship and two to claim it outright.

Standing in their way of being the sole winner of the UMAC this season was familiar foe Bethany Lutheran. The Vikings needed two wins to claim

a conference championship with the Yellowjackets and three to win outright.

Another opportunity coming into this series was the chance to host the UMAC tournament, setting up a competitive three game set between both squads.

In the first game of the series it was a true pitchers duel through the first five innings between the Vikings and Yellowjackets. UWS had some opportu-

nities early but ran into two outs on the base paths leaving the game tied 0-0 heading into the sixth inning.

With a runner on first Kaija Mork stepped up to the plate for the vikings and launched a two-run homer to give the Vikings a lead they would not surrender ultimately taking game one 2-0.

This set up an interesting scenario heading into game two as the Jackets needed to win both to host the UMAC tournament and Bethany Lutheran just needing to win one.

The Yellowjackets would get the first two runs on the board in game 2 as Peyton Bennett hit two home runs one in the first and another in the third.

The Vikings however tied the game before the Yellowjackets took the lead on a single by Zoe Thomson gave them the



Lily Hanson Launched Her Third Home Run of the Season in the 13-0 Victory Over Bethany Lutheran.
Photo by Sama (Sky) Abdullayeva | The Promethean

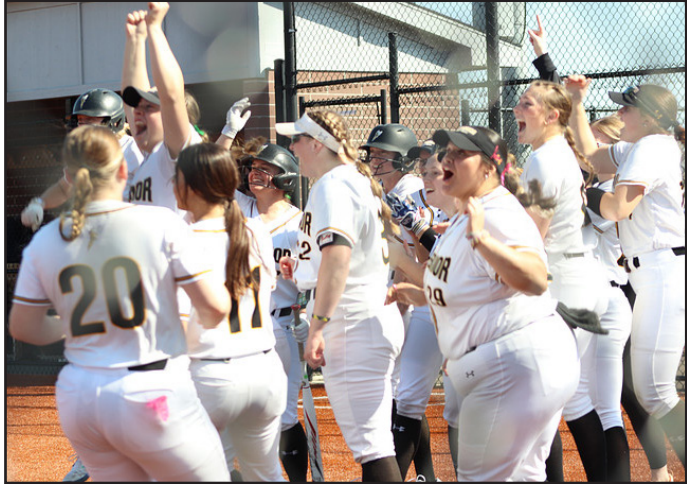
lead back at 3-2.

The lead would not last as the Vikings scored twice in the sixth to take the lead 4-3 and the victory which meant they would get home field advantage in the UMAC tournament.

In game three the Yellowjackets still had something to play for as they could still claim a co-conference crown with the Vikings and they took the early advantage in game 3 after a single by

Abby Mitchell gave the Jackets a 1-0 lead and a home run by Lily Hanson added three more to make it 4-0.

The Yellowjackets would not look back as they added nine more runs to take the game 13-0 and also earn a co-conference championship with Bethany Lutheran. For UWS it is their second regular season UMAC championship both coming from Head Coach Mellissa Fracker.



The Yellowjackets Earned a Share of Their Second Regular Season UMAC Championship.
Photo by Sama (Sky) Abdullayeva | The Promethean

UWS Baseball Falls Short of UMAC Tournament

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Before their season began the UW-Superior Baseball team had high expectations placed on them. The team was picked to place second in the UMAC preseason poll coming off a loss in their UMAC Championship game last season.

The Yellowjackets loaded their schedule with tough non-conference competition to get themselves ready for the

UMAC portion of their schedule. UWS started out hot in conference play with two sweeps of Martin Luther and Northland College.

After that their schedule ramped up as they were then swept by Crown College. After an offensive explosion of a series with North Central found themselves 9-3 in conference play heading into their final three

series. That record would extend to 10-3 with a victory over Minnesota Morris but then would drop the next two to the Cougars.

In their next series the Yellowjackets played Northwestern dropping game one in extra innings before sweeping the double header a day later.

This put the Yellowjackets in an interesting position heading into their final regular season series of the season. They needed to win two of their final three games and a little bit of help from North Central and Crown College in order to make the UMAC tournament.

The Yellowjackets dropped game one of their series with Bethany Lutheran 2-0. Senior pitcher Ben Welle put up a strong performance



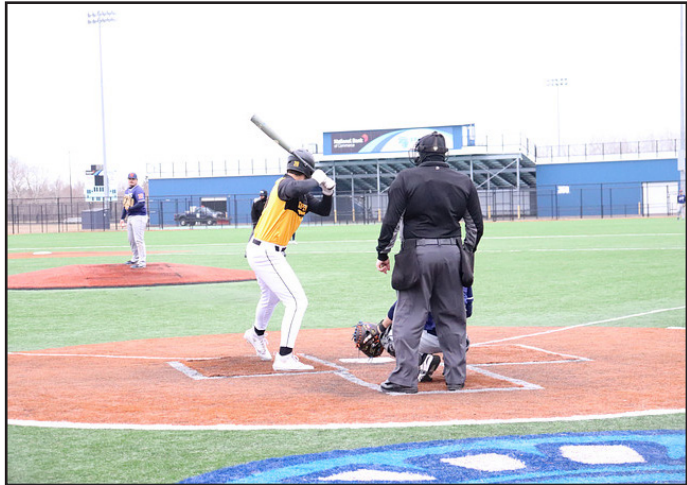
Noah Dagostino Waits On Deck In Game Against Northland College.
Photo by Sama (Sky) Abdullayeva | The Promethean

on the mound but the offense was unable to muster up any runs. They got the help they needed from North Central as they took down Minnesota Morris but the Yellowjackets still needed to win twice as Northwestern took care of Crown.

The Yellowjackets' hopes of reaching the UMAC were quickly shot down as they dropped the first game of the doubleheader against Bethany

Lutheran in seven innings with a final score of 13-1. UWS was able to make it close in game two but ultimately lost 5-4.

With the series sweep the Yellowjackets season comes to a close after Minnesota Morris took both games of a doubleheader against North Central. With the losses the Yellowjackets finished in fifth place in the UMAC and with an overall record of 18-21.



Max Howell Waits For A Pitch In Game Against Northland College.
Photo by Sama (Sky) Abdullayeva | The Promethean

Northland College Hosts Final On Campus Athletic Event

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While UW-Superior sports will begin their summer hiatus in the coming weeks, the return of collegiate sports in the UMAC for the upcoming fall semester will see the absence of a familiar face.

Following the school's announcement that Spring 2025 will be its final semester as an institution, Northland College recently played its final sporting event on campus grounds in Ashland.

The game, a heartbreaking 11-12 loss to North Central University in which a 5 run,

ninth inning rally came up just short, marking the final time a collegiate sporting event would take place at the college.

The end of Northland signals the continuation of a saddening trend of closures of Lake Superior schools, following just 2 years after the closing of more previous UWS competition in Finlandia University.

The final ever sporting events between the two geographically linked rivals were a set of doubleheader baseball games played in Superior on Mar. 21, both of which

the Yellowjackets won in only 7 innings, with the first being a 13-1 victory, followed shortly thereafter with a 13-3 win.

Despite a plethora of athletic history between the colleges, recent years have not been kindly to the competition between the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference foes, with the most recent victory for Northland over UWS coming over a year ago on Apr. 16 2024, a 7-1 win for the Lumberjacks baseball team.

Over the course of Northland's final two semesters however, the

Ashland school would amass a 0-18 head-to-head record against the Yellowjackets across all sports.

For upcoming seasons, the UMAC has

stated that the conference will continue into the future as a seven-member competition, rather than seek out an immediate replacement for Northland.



Northland College's final NCAA home game was a family event, with food for the players and their families.
Photo by Xavier Walt | The Promethean