

Auburn Reporter

League-leading Ravens 'starting to get it'

by ERICK WALKER

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The Auburn Riverside fastpitch team is at it again. The Ravens extended their winning streak to five straight games last week, picking up South Puget Sound League 3A victories against Bonney Lake and Enumclaw. Riverside beat Bonney Lake, 4-0, then downed the Hornets, 4-2. The two wins helped Auburn Riverside (4-0 in league, 6-2 overall) forge a one-game cushion over Enumclaw (2-1) and Bonney Lake (2-1). More importantly, the two wins came against the two teams expected to challenge Auburn Riverside for the league title. "I think the key for us is, the girls really hit," Ravens coach Chris Leverenz said. "I thought last year's team was decent hitters, but these girls are better. I think they're starting to get it."

And while ace pitcher Amanda Fitzsimmons has played a big role, particularly last week by picking up two wins in the circle, the Ravens have gotten a little bit from everyone. In the win against Bonney Lake, freshman Jamie Koenig went 1 for 2 with an RBI. Fitzsimmons, who had offseason shoulder surgery, went the distance in the circle, striking out 13, and adding a triple and two runs batted in. In the victory against Enumclaw, Fitzsimmons delivered again, striking out eight and allowing just two runs in a complete-game effort. Roxie Schwarz' RBI single down the right-field line in the sixth inning proved to be the difference.

"(Amanda's) throwing great," Leverenz said. "But having her throw back-to-back games for the first time made me nervous." Katie Grad added to Auburn Riverside's offensive attack, picking up a pair of hits and an RBI. The two wins came on the heels of an 11-3 rout of Auburn Mountainview, a game in which Fitzsimmons went 4 for 5 with a two-run homer. During the five-game winning streak, the Ravens have outscored their opponents, 26-7.

"I've been pleasantly surprised," Leverenz added. "We lost (Kelley and Kristine Kaneshiro) and (Katie) Payne, but these young kids are just consistent."