

SPORTS

Sunday, May 20, 2001

Beallsville wins Class A crown

By RICH GIBSON
T-L Sports Editor

Beallsville's Ronnie Street wasn't exactly sure what to expect as his Blue Devils entered Saturday's OVAC 1-A championship game.

"We've been so up and down this season. I wondered which team would show up today?" he confessed.

Big Blue answered rather emphatically, knocking off St. John Central by a 7-1 count.

"We came in 13-13," Street noted. "That was after being four games under .500 earlier. We made some progress late in the season. Today, was just great. The kids went out and executed."

Unlike Tom Sliva's Fighting Irish whose 2001 spring ended on a total downer.

"We left something like 29 runners on base our last three games," he reported. "We couldn't get a clutch hit to save our lives."

The Green left the sacks loaded twice and stranded a in two other frames.

Give Beallsville credit. They made the pitches and

plays when they had to. It was as simple as that," said Sliva whose club finished 19-8 following a sizzling 12-1 start.

The Blue Devils received a stalwart mound effort from junior righthander Aaron Boughner who continually worked out of trouble.

"Aaron made some huge pitches," Street confirmed. "I scouted St. John's the other night and was really impressed. They are a high quality ballclub."

Not to mention a frustrated one.

In addition to leaving 11 on base, St. John's had two runners gunned down attempting to steal and yet another thrown out at the plate.

Beallsville compiled nine hits, including a splended 4-for-4 afternoon from cleanup man Matt Brown.

Big Blue's third baseman collected two singles, a double and triple, good for two runs batted in.

Leadoff hitter Trevor Schaffer was on base three times, scoring on each occasion.

Catcher Corey Dornon, responsible for throwing out both Irish runners, contributed a two-run single in the top of the seventh.

Rightfielder Seth Venick also singled home a teammate.

St. John's lone run came in the second inning. Leftfielder Kyle Ogilbee walked and came on to score on a single by second baseman Mark Hartlieb.

In the Irish sixth, Hartlieb's bid for extra bases was tracked down by a diving Ryan Kinzy in left field.

In defeat, the Green received a sparkling mound outing from southpaw Ben Shutler, who sat down 12 Blue Devil batters on strikes. Reliever Willie Clegg tacked on two additional Ks.

Dornon finished with two hits. Boughner belted a double.

Ben Shutler and third baseman Matt Nardo singled twice for the Irish.

Street and the Blue Devils will be recognized Monday evening at the OVAC's annual Banquet of Champions.

Linescores:

Beallsville 100 120 3 - 7 9 1

St. John Central 010 000 0 - 1 8 2

BATTERIES: Boughner and Dornon; B. Shutler, Clegg (7) and Clegg, Rykowski (7).

OVAC baseball tourney set

• Action at four sites to begin Saturday

By RICK DeLUCA
Times Leader Sports Writer

With the long regular season coming to a close and the post-season tournaments already in full swing in Ohio, 16 teams have qualified for the OVAC playoffs set to get under way at four sites on Saturday.

Saturday's cut-off for qualifying for the conference baseball playoffs produced some surprises, but the race itself provided the real excitement.

The season provided the closest races ever in all four classes and selecting the final qualifiers wasn't completed until after the last out was recorded on Saturday.

In Class 4-A, the conference found its tightest race with the fourth and final spot in the playoffs being decided by just under four-tenths of a point.

Edison closed out on top in the big school race with its 16-5 mark and 40.9 average while Buckeye Local, the division leader until being dethroned last week, finished in second at 15-7 with a 36.8 mark. East Liverpool, which closed the

season with a string of success, was third at 35.8.

The fourth spot was filled by Steubenville Big Red, who closed the regular season with an impressive win streak that enabled the 14-7 club to edge last week's leader, John Marshall by the smallest of margins.

In Class 3-A, coach Dave Cisar's Magnolia Blue Eagles led from start to finish as they led the division with a 16-3 record and 37.9 average. Buckeye Trail, which opened the season with an eight-game win streak, was second at 15-5 and 33.0.

Harrison Central, which drew more attention with its ace pitcher on the mound, capped out a good season with a 12-8 record and a 30.0 average for third in 3-A.

Meadowbrook, at 9-8, edged out Tyler Consolidated for the fourth spot while St. Clairsville failed to make the playoffs in what could be veteran coach Lefty Hall's last season.

In Class 2-A, Wheeling Central

was another wire-to-wire leader as the Maroon Knights lead their division into the playoffs with a 21-3 record and a 34.6 average. The Knights season-long lead dwindled as the season progressed and lead second place Toronto (17-7) by just four-tenths of a point.

Barnesville also posted a 17-7 record and held on to the third spot in 2-A with a 30.0 average. Linsly is the fourth playoff qualifier with a 28.3 average and an identical 17-7 record. Steubenville Central just missed the playoffs by four-tenths of a points.

In Class 1-A, St. John Central was another division-leader that was atop its class throughout the season as the Fighting Irish will take an impressive 17-5 record into the weekend action. Coach Tom Sliva's club holds the top spot by the biggest with its 28.6 average.

Cameron, at 12-5, is nestled in second place with a 21.8 mark and Beallsville is third at 10-13 and 14.3. Bishop Donahue used a string finish to notch the fourth sport with its 9-13 record and 13.2 mark.

Pairings, times and location for Saturday's semi-finals games will be announced n Tuesday. The semi-finals will be played at four sites - Bridgeport, Toronto, Magnolia and Brooke.



Shutlers Provide Spark

St. John's advances to OVAC Class A Final

By JOEDY McCREARY
Staff Writer

He switched his speeds with consistency — or was it inconsistency? — all evening. Only the results remained constant during Ben Shutler's dominating Monday night on the Perkins Field mound.

Shutler kept the Bishop Donahue hitters guessing, striking out 14 batters as his Bellaire St. John's Irish beat the Bishops 6-3 in an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class A semifinal in Brookside.

The win places St. John's (19-6) into Saturday's Class A championship game against Beallsville.

"He got into a good rhythm," said Irish coach Tom Sliva, who earned his 101st coaching win with the victory.

"He worked in on the hands of their hitters all game. Once he got into a groove, he was tough to hit."

Shutler struck out four of the first five hitters he faced. Through five innings, he had 12 of his 14 strikeouts.

And once his Irish offense — and, more specifically, his brother David — staked him to an early lead, he was virtually unhittable.

"(Ben Shutler) a first-class pitcher who's one of the best around," said Bishop Donahue coach John Fazio. "He kept us off-balance. We looked for a lot of fastballs, and he threw off-speed. We ran into a buzzsaw."

David Shutler led a balanced St. John's lineup with a double, a triple and two RBIs.

St. John's took most of the suspense out of this one early, partly because the Bishops (13-14) were playing in their second game of the day. Bishop Donahue beat Weirton Madonna 17-1 in West Virginia Class A sectional tournament play in Glen Dale on Monday afternoon, then took a bus to Brookside for the OVAC semifinal.

"We saw (Madonna's) pitcher, and then we had to adjust to a guy like (Shutler)," Fazio said. "That really

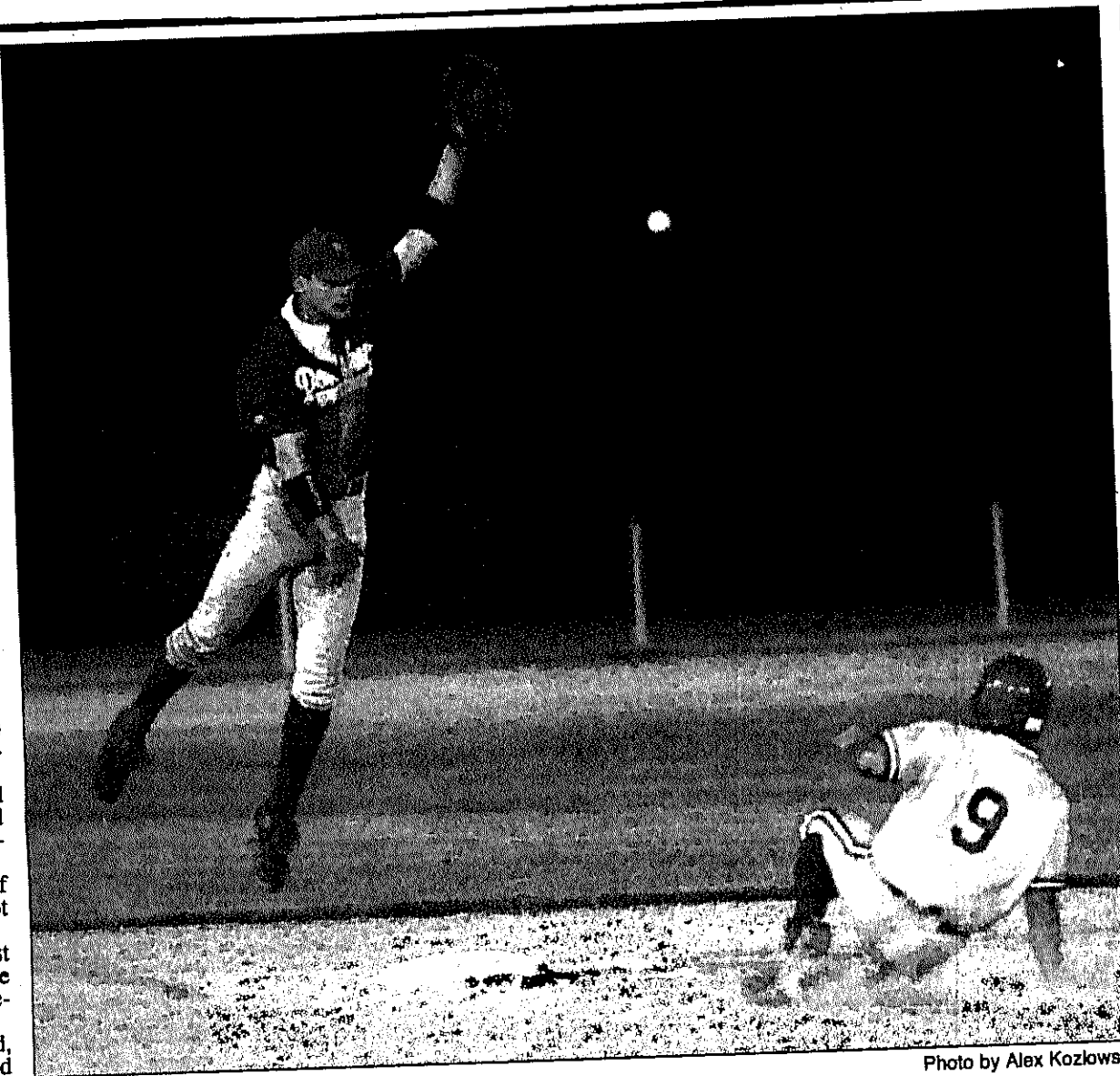


Photo by Alex Kozlowski

Bellaire St. John's baserunner Joe Vavra (9) successfully steals second as Bishop Donahue catcher Matt Trabert's throw sails over the glove of shortstop Mike Hewitt during action of their OVAC Class A semifinal Monday at Perkin's Field. Two runners scored on the play, pushing the Irish lead to 6-1 on their way to a 6-3 victory.

kept us off-balance."

The Irish's first two batters — Mark Hartlieb and Ben Shutler — walked. David Shutler followed with a double that scored Hartlieb.

Two batters later, Joey Vavra's sacrifice fly scored Ben Shutler and pushed the Irish lead to 2-0.

St. John's took a 3-0 lead when a Bishop pickoff play went awry.

Pitcher Nick Haught tried to catch Kyle Ogilbee, who led off the second with a hustling double and moved to third on a fielder's choice, napping. But the throw kicked away from third baseman Adam Turner, allowing Ogilbee to score.

Bishop Donahue awakened in the

OVAC BASEBALL

fourth inning.

After Haught was plunked to start the inning, Matt Francis launched a double to deep center field — only the second hit Ben Shutler surrendered. When St. John shortstop Tyler Moscato dropped the relay throw, Haught scored to close to 3-1.

That's when Shutler composed himself, striking out two hitters and inducing the third to ground out to Hartlieb and end the uprising.

Then, he turned to his brother to help St. John's manufacture its fourth run.

Sean Zeakes led off with a single and was replaced by Rich Hathaway, who stole second and moved to third on a groundout.

Dave Shutler then scored him with a triple to the right-center field alley, pushing the lead to 4-1.

In the sixth, Nardo walked and was replaced by Chris Jingle, who stole second and advanced to third when Vavra reached on an error by shortstop Mike Hewitt. When Vavra tried to steal second, catcher Matt Trabert's throw skipped into center-field and allowed both baserunners to score, pushing the Irish lead to 6-1.

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St. John's

(Continued from Page 17)

Bishop Donahue finally got to Shutler in the sixth, but it was too little, too late.

With one out, Haught singled and moved to second on a wild pitch. Francis then launched his second double of the game, a ground-rule shot that bounced over the waist-high fence in right field.

That scored Haught, and Francis later came around to score on Nathan Fazio's RBI single that made it 6-3.

Losing pitcher Haught struck out seven and walked six in six innings of work. He gave up six runs, but only three were earned, as the Bishop defense committed three errors.

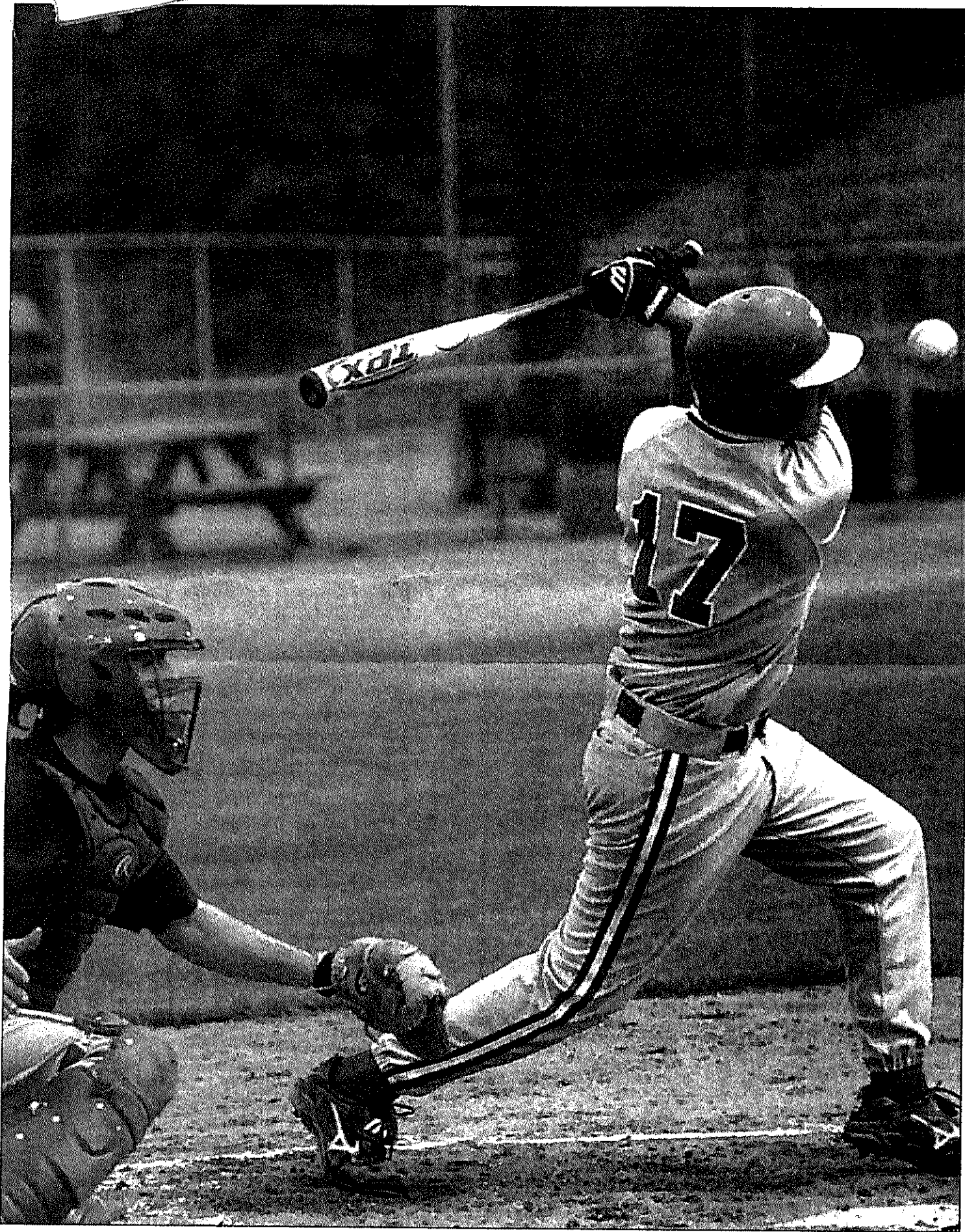
**Buckeye Trail 5,
Harrison Central 4, 10 inn.**
The Warriors, trailing 4-3 entering

the home half of the 10th, tied the game on a solo homer by Josh Armstrong, then won it when Husky pitcher Jarod Ridgeway hit Ryan Wayble to force in the winning run.

Harrison Central had taken a short-

lived 4-3 lead in the top of the 10th when an error allowed Eric Spitznogle to score.

Armstrong, the Buckeye Trail starter, finished with two singles in addition to his 10th-inning homer.



ST. JOHN CENTRAL senior Matt Nardo makes contact on a pitch during Saturday afternoon's OVAC Class A Championship Game at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville. Beallsville catcher Cory Dornon was awaiting the offering from Blue Devil pitcher Aaron Boughner. Beallsville pocketed the crown with a 7-1 victory over the Irish.

T-L Photo/PAULA GINTHER

Cadets claim AA title

• EL stops Steubenville

By **JEREMY MIDEI**
Times Leader Sports Writer

It was championship day at Vaccaro Field on Saturday, as eight teams vied for four OVAC titles. God must not just be a baseball fan, but an OVAC baseball fan, as the games were contested under the first cloudless blue sky of the week.

In the 4-A championship game, the East Liverpool Potters took the field against the Big Red of Steubenville in a regional matchup between two very fundamentally-sound teams.

The Potters sent the stunned Big Red reeling in the first inning -- putting up a four-spot in the opening frame -- and managed to hold on for a 5-1 victory and an OVAC 4-A championship.

East Liverpool starter Jake Nicholson turned in a fine performance, allowing just one run, as the Big Red could muster just only three hits on the day.

The Potters would draw first blood, as they opened the game with back-to-back singles by Seth Birch and Mark Nightengale and a free pass to third baseman Shane Slagle. With one out in the inning, Andy Ball sent a Justin Gerber pitch to rightfield for a triple, sending the Potters on their way to a championship.

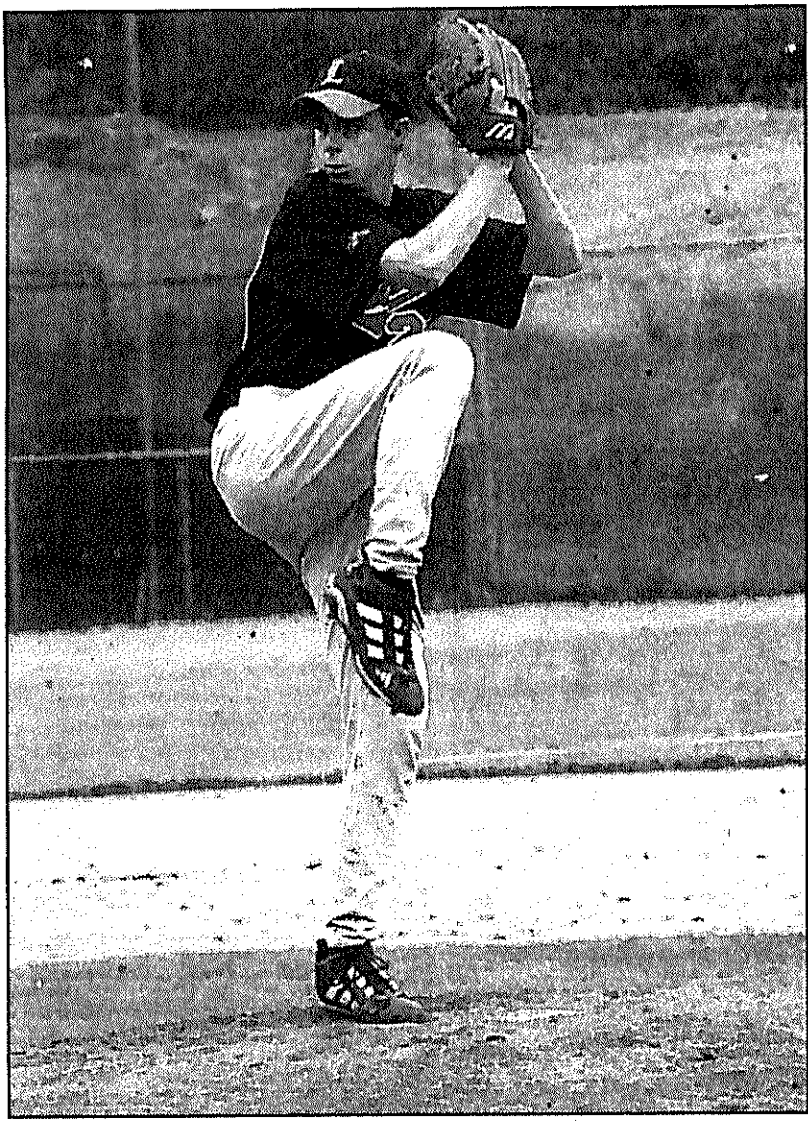
Ball later scored on a groundout to first.

Big Red starter Gerber would get over his first-inning funk and not allow another run until the sixth.

Steubenville would nibble at the lead in the third as sophomore Sean Liggett would crush a double to the gap in right. Senior Dave Crisante would follow suit, sending Liggett home on a double to the virtually the same spot. Nicholson would clamp down however, striking out the next batter and inducing a harmless foul ball popout to the first baseman to end the inning.

Coach Brian Connelly's Potters

See, **CADETS**, Page 3C



T-L Photo/PAULA GINTHER

LINSLY southpaw Garrett Powell prepares to fire a pitch to the plate during Saturday afternoon's OVAC Class AA Championship game at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville.

Cadets

Continued from page 1C

would add an unnecessary insurance run in the sixth, on a Nate Conley single with a man at third.

With the win, East Liverpool improved to 17-7 on the season.

Line score:
 Steubenville 001 000 0 -- 1 3 0
 East Liverpool 400 001 x -- 5 8 2
 BATTERIES: Gerber and Kocher; Nicholson, Ball (7) and May.

IN THE 2-A championship game, the Linsly Cadets defeated the Toronto Red Knights by a 5-2 tally. Matt Morrison's Toronto club simply could not take advantage of the opportunities afforded them.

The Cadets were led by junior pitcher Garrett Powell, who held the state-ranked Red Knights to only two runs in six innings or work. "We lost the championship last

year in 1-A and this year we had to go through what I think is the hardest division to win it," Linsly headman Gary Sprague said.

Sprague added to his already impressive resume, by adding a tenth OVAC title -- after already having gone over 400 wins this year.

"Garrett pitched himself out of some jams and the defense did an excellent job of helping him out today. I am tickled pink for these kids. We'll enjoy this one for awhile," Sprague added.

The Cadets finished their season at 20-8.

Line score:
 Linsly 004 001 0 -- 5 9 0
 Toronto 000 000 2 -- 2 5 3
 BATTERIES: Powell, Milton (7) and Zitzelberger; LeMasters, Swearingen (5), Williams (7) and Romey.

Baseball Pairings Set

The pairings for the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference baseball tournament were announced on Monday evening.

The four first-round sites are Brooke High School, Perkins Field in Brookside, Alumni Field in New Martinsville and The Red Knight Baseball Complex in Toronto. All first-round games will be contested on Saturday.

Edison, Magnolia, Wheeling Central and Bellaire St. John's have been anointed as the No. 1 seeds in Class AAAA, AAA, AA and A respectively.

RED KNIGHT COMPLEX, TORONTO

Edison (17-5) will challenge Jefferson County rival and No. 4-ranked Steubenville (14-7) in an 11 a.m. contest, with a Class AA matchup between No. 2 Toronto (17-7) and third-seeded Barnesville (17-7) to follow at 2 p.m.

ALUMNI FIELD, NEW MARTINSVILLE

Top-seeded Magnolia and head coach Dave Cisar will open OVAC play with an 11 a.m. battle with fourth-seeded Meadowbrook (9-8) on the home field of the Blue Eagles

(16-3) who have won eight of their last nine games.

In the 2 p.m. nightcap, No. 3 Beallsville (10-13) will battle one of this season's most pleasant surprises, No. 2 Cameron (12-5) in Class A action.

BROOKE HIGH SCHOOL, WELLSBURG

In a Class AAAA tilt, third-seed East Liverpool (13-6) will take to the diamond opposite No. 2 Buckeye Local (15-7) and second-year head coach Joe Smarrella at 11 a.m. Meanwhile, it will be a battle of city rivals in game two, as fourth-seeded Linsly (17-7) and top-seed Wheeling Central (21-3) will battle for the third time this season at 2 p.m. in a Class AA matchup.

The two split during the regular season.

PERKINS FIELD, BROOKSIDE

At 11 a.m., second-seeded Harrison Central (12-8) and highly-touted hurler Trent Luyster, will look to advance with a victory over second-seed Buckeye Trail (15-5) in Class AAA.

Bishop Donahue, the No. 4 Class A entry, will play top-seeded Bellaire St. John's at 2 p.m.

OVAC baseball semi-final slate

Saturday, May 12, 2001

AT BROOKE

11 a.m. -- No. 3 East Liverpool (13-6) vs. No. 2 Buckeye Local (15-7) (Class 4-A)

2 p.m. -- No. 2 Linsly (17-7) vs. No. 1 Wheeling Central (21-3) (Class 2-A)

AT TORONTO

11 a.m. -- No. 4 Steubenville (14-7) vs. No. 1 Edison (16-5) (Class 4-A)

2 p.m. -- No. 3 Barnesville (17-7) vs. No. 2 Toronto (17-7) (Class 2-A)

AT MAGNOLIA

11 a.m. -- No. 4 Meadowbrook (9-8) vs. No. 1 Magnolia (16-3) (Class 3-A)

2 p.m. -- No. 3 Beallsville (10-13) vs. No. 2 Cameron (12-5) (Class 1-A)

AT BROOKSIDE

11 a.m. -- No. 3 Harrison Central (12-8) vs. No. 2 Buckeye Trail (15-5) (Class 3-A)

2 p.m. -- No. 4 Bishop Donahue (9-13) vs. No. 1 St. John Central (17-5) (Class 1-A).

EL Advances to OVAC Class AAAA Final

Shane Slagle was at it again. The East Liverpool hurler allowed just two runs on four hits, and fanned nine Buckeye Local batters as the Potters advanced to the OVAC Class AAAA final with a 13-2, six-inning victory over the Panthers Tuesday afternoon at the Red Knight Baseball Complex in Toronto.

Slagle also pulled double-duty at the plate, driving in a pair of runs with two singles.

But the big bat for the Potters belonged to senior Nate Conley. Conley plated four runs with a double and a single.

The Panthers Billy Marchbank did crush a solo shot of Slagle, but was unable to pick up the win on the hill, giving up three runs over the first three innings before being relieved.

East Liverpool will play Steubenville on Saturday for the OVAC Class AAAA crown.

OVAC CHAMPIONSHIPS

BASEBALL SATURDAY

(at Vaccaro Field, Steubenville)

Class A

Beallsville vs. St. John's

Class AA

Linsly vs. Toronto

Class AAA

Magnolia vs. Buckeye Trail

Class AAAA

Staubenville vs. East Liverpool

OVAC Baseball Semifinals At Four Fields Today

Brookside, Toronto, Wellsburg, New Martinsville host first round games; Finals next Saturday at Vaccaro Field

The OVAC baseball tournament will get underway today, with semifinal contests being played at four ballparks throughout the Ohio Valley: Perkins Field in Brookside, Red Knight Baseball Complex in Toronto, Brooke Memorial Field in Wellsburg and Alumni Field in New Martinsville.

CLASS AAAA

At 11 a.m., No. 1 seeded Edison will take on No. 4 seed Steubenville at Toronto. Big Red has been on a tear as of late, winning their last nine games, including wins over Buckeye Local, Toronto, and a 16-1 drubbing of Buckeye Trail, as well as advancing to the Ohio Division II district tournament. Also at

11 a.m., Buckeye Local (2) and East Liverpool (3) will lock horns in Wellsburg. The Potters will be lead into battle by hard-throwing Shane Slagle, who last Saturday fired a no-hitter against Zanesville. The Panthers also have a no-hitter on the year of their own, courtesy of Billy Marchbank.

CLASS AAA

No. 3 seed Harrison Central will take on the No. 2 seed Buckeye Trail at Perkins field at 11 a.m. The Huskies have already advanced to the Ohio Division III district tournament at Warsaw on Tuesday. The Warriors are coming off a tough loss to Steubenville. No. 1 seed Magnolia will

host No. 4 seeded Meadowbrook, also at 11 a.m. The Blue Eagles have won 10 of their last 11, including splitting a doubleheader with defending West Virginia Class AA champion Bridgeport.

CLASS AA

Top seeded Wheeling Central will do battle with intracity rival, and No. 4 seeded Linsly at 2 p.m. in Wellsburg. Linsly has won four of its last five, including a 2-1 victory over the Maroon Knights on May 2nd. Wheeling Central, the defending West Virginia Class A champion two years running, will be lead into battle by hard-hitting Justin Edwards. No. 3 Barnesville

and No. 2 Toronto will get underway at 2 p.m. at the Red Knights home field in Toronto. Barnesville has already advanced to the Ohio Division III districts at Warsaw on Monday.

CLASS A

Red 'Haught' Bishop Donahue, led by Nic Haught, will travel to Bridgeport at 11 a.m. try to knock off No. 1 seeded Bellaire St. John's. Beallsville (3) will battle an upstart Cameron (No. 2 seed, 15-5) squad at 2 p.m. in New Martinsville.

The Dragons have won three in-a-row, an 14 of their last 16.

The OVAC baseball finals will take place next Saturday at Vaccaro in Steubenville.



Linsly Upsets Maroon Knights

Cadets' hurler Powell survives wild start, stymies Central hitters

By JOEDY McCREARY
Staff Writer

As far as beginnings go, Linsly pitcher Garrett Powell's start was tenuous at best. As Saturday's Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class AA semifinal wore on, though, Powell got stronger and kept Wheeling Central's hitters guessing.

Powell survived a shaky start to strike out nine, and Linsly's hitters came alive in their second at-bats against top seed Wheeling Central in the Cadets' 8-4 win at the Brooke High field. The No. 4 seed Cadets earned a berth in the Class AA finals next Saturday at Vaccaro Field.

Linsly, which lost to Bellaire St. John's in last year's Class A title tilt, will face two-time defending double-A champion Toronto in this year's finale.

The Red Knights outslugged Barnesville, 14-11, in Saturday's other Class AA semifinal at Toronto.

Powell threw three wild pitches in the first inning but settled down to baffle Central's hitters. The Linsly lefty finished with a six-hitter with two walks.

"He's a typical lefthander, goofy as a bedbug," Linsly coach Gary Sprague said. "But he's a battler. I almost took him out, but we stuck with him and it paid off. He's got a nasty breaking ball."

Linsly (19-8) took the lead for good with four runs in the fourth inning.

In their second at-bats against Central pitcher Chris Drosiekko, the Cadets pounded out four hits in that frame.

Linsly trailed 2-1 heading into that inning but tied it when Sam Milton's one-out RBI single scored R.J. Zitzelsberger. The Cadets took the lead when James Wallace followed with a run-scoring single, scoring Eddie Swierkos and advancing Milton to second.

A walk to Tyler Petri loaded the bases. Pinch-hitter Matt Buchwach then hit what appeared to be an inning-ending double-play ball to shortstop Justin Edwards, who flipped to Mark Sapon for the first out. But as Buchwach beat Sapon's throw to first, Milton and Wallace scored to push the Linsly lead to 5-2.

Central closed to 5-3 on Jared Zavolta's RBI double in the bottom



of the fourth.

But Linsly tacked on two more runs in the fifth on a run-scoring Swierkos sacrifice fly and Wallace's second RBI single of the game.

Central (24-4) made some noise in the bottom of the seventh, loading the bases with one out.

Sapon walked, Justin Edwards singled to center field and Chad Malarski reached on a fielder's choice when Milton, Linsly's shortstop, dropped the ball on a force play on Edwards at second.

Morgan Kent followed with an RBI grounder to shortstop, scoring Sapon and making it 8-4, but Powell struck out Jeff Hartman to end the game.

"When you play a team like Linsly, and they have a pitcher like (Powell) who keeps you off-balance, you've got to take advantage of your opportunities, (because the opportunities) may be minimal," Central coach Terry Edwards said.

"When you get against a good pitcher that works the corners and pitches well ahead in the count, you've got to be very disciplined."

Losing pitcher Drosiekko gave up six hits and seven runs, four earned, with two strikeouts and four walks.

Linsly scored first when Charlie Sines' first-inning sacrifice fly plated Jason Witzberger, but Central tied it up in the bottom of the frame when Justin Edwards scored on the second of Powell's three wild pitches.

Central then took a short-lived 2-1 lead on a second-inning Zavolta RBI single to left.

"You expect a close game" when playing Wheeling Central, the defending two-time West Virginia Class A champion, Sprague said.

"It's always a battle and we knew

what we were in for."

Toronto 14 Barnesville 11

At Toronto, Barnesville was able to score six runs during the top of the seventh inning, but unfortunately for the Shamrocks, they still needed three more to catch Toronto, as the Red Knights held a comfortable 14-5 lead going into the final frame.

Tom Wilson and catcher Mike Romey combined to split six RBIs evenly for the Red Knights (19-9). Shawn Cain also had a solo shot during the bottom half of the first.

Clay Wilson drove in a pair of base runners with two basehits for the Shamrocks.

CLASS AAAA

Steubenville 6 Edison 3

At Toronto, Steubenville's Justin Banks crushed a three-run shot of Edison starter Dave Ujich during the top of the first give Steubenville an early 4-0 lead, and Big Red never looked back in giving the top-seeded Wildcats and early tournament exit.

David Eft went the distance for Big Red, striking out five, and allowing just one free path in seven innings of work.

Joe Peese also plated a pair of base runners on a single.

David Goodwin did have a solo home run for the Wildcats, and Ken Vascovy plated a runner on a double and a single.

Steubenville advances to the Class AAAA championship game on Saturday at Vaccaro field against either East Liverpool or Buckeye Local.

Those teams' semifinal, scheduled for a Saturday morning start at Wellsburg, was not played.

CLASS AAA

Magnolia 5, Meadowbrook 4

At New Martinsville, Russ Shepherd's home run with one out in the bottom of the seventh lifted the Blue Eagles past the Colts and into the 3-A finals.

Shepherd connected over the right field fence against Meadowbrook starter Darin Graham to snap a 4-4 tie in what was a well-pitched game through the first five innings.

Magnolia led 2-1 entering the sixth when the Colts exploded for three runs to knock out Jon Smith, who had struck out 12 batters to that point. Aubrey Neuhart's two-run single highlighted the uprising.



File Photo by Alex Kozlowski

Linsly pitcher Garrett Powell, seen here working to the plate in a game earlier this season, struck out nine Wheeling Central hitters to earn an 8-4 win over the Maroon Knights in an OVAC Class AA semifinal Saturday at Brooke High School.

The Blue Eagles, improving their record to 19-3, rebounded for two in the bottom of the sixth to tie the score. Joe Blatt's two-run single provided the key hit of the inning.

It was Blatt's second single of the day.

Winning pitcher was Brett Ripley, who took over for Smith in the sixth and got three of the four outs he recorded on strikeouts.

Freshman Jon Kemp also homered for Magnolia, while Mike Tracey contributed with a double.

Kyle Rankin connected for a home run in Meadowbrook's five-hit attack. Devon Singleton had an RBI single.

The loss dropped the Colts' record to 10-8.

Magnolia will face the winner of Monday's semifinal matching Harrison Central and Buckeye Trail. That game was rained out Saturday and will be made up at 4:30 p.m. Monday at Perkins Field.

CLASS A

Beallsville 4, Cameron 3

At New Martinsville, the Blue Devils (13-13) beat Cameron to advance to next Saturday's Class A finals.

Winning pitcher Seth Venick singled, doubled and knocked in two runs to lead Beallsville. He came on in relief of Aaron Boughner, who

struck out seven with three walks in five innings of work.

Ryan Kinzy singled twice and plated a run for Beallsville.

Wyatt O'Neil hit a solo homer for Cameron, while Casey Hughes singled three times, doubled and knocked in two runs.

Jed Lucey, who struck out seven with no walks, took the loss for the Dragons.

Beallsville will face the winner of Monday's other semifinal pitting Bishop Donahue against Bellaire St. John Central, which was cancelled Saturday because of heavy rains. That game is set for 7:30 p.m. Monday at Perkins Field.

Linsly Beats Toronto for 'AA' Championship

By NICK BEDWAY
Executive Sports Editor

Don't call the Linsly School baseball team a bunch of overachievers even though the Cadets' starting lineup in Saturday's Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class AA championship game included a junior batter and just three seniors.

"They can play," said a delighted head coach, Gary Sprague, just following his squad's 5-2 victory over two-time defending conference 2A champion Toronto (20-11) at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville.

"They are talented kids. They believed they could do this."

Yesterday's victory finished off a 20-8 season for Linsly, and Sprague pointed out that the key to winning an OVAC baseball championship for the first time since 1997 was the demanding schedule the Cadets played late in the season.

"We beat Wheeling Central twice in 10 days. When the kids did that, they knew they had a chance at this." Central is the two-time defending West Virginia Class AA state champions. The Maroon Knights head into regional play this week just two wins away from another trip to the state tournament.

The Cadets got some big help from a shoddy Toronto defense in the OVAC final, as the Red Knights had three errors in the third inning that paved the way for the Cadets to take a 4-0 lead.

On the other hand, Sprague's team played errorless ball, collected 10 hits and got some clutch pitching from junior lefty Garrett Powell, who allowed just five hits and worked his way out of several jams.

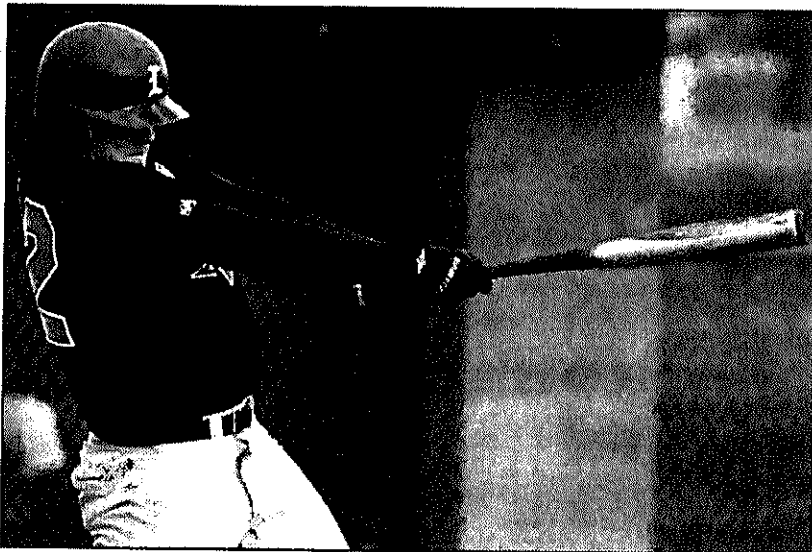
Powell had a shutout going into the seventh but was pulled from the game after allowing the first two Red Knight batters to reach base on a single by J.D. Hannan and a walk to Shawn Cain.

Powell, who had thrown 131 pitches to this point, was replaced by Sam Milton, who did not surrender a hit while recording the game's final three outs.

The Red Knights got their runs after a passed ball moved the two runners up a base. Mike Romey's groundout to second base scored the first Red Knight tally.

This was followed by a walk to Doug Luczko and then a freak play when Billy Williams' fly ball to medium right was dropped by the Cadets' Matt Buchwach, as Cain crossed the plate.

However, Buchwach alertly picked up the ball and saved himself an error by throwing to second base in time to force Luczko, who was headed back to the bag at first. The game ended one batter later on Lewis's fly that Buchwach snagged.



R.J. Zitzelsberger and the Linsly Cadets are the OVAC's Class AA champions. They beat Toronto 5-2 for the title on Saturday.

Powell, who showed great movement on his pitches put the side down without a runner reaching base only in the fifth inning. He faced just three batters in the opening frame but one Toronto runner was picked off first and the other nailed by catcher R.J. Zitzelsberger on an attempted steal of second base.

Overall, Toronto left 10 runners aboard, as it was unable to take advantage of Powell's wildness. He walked seven while striking out eight. In the second inning, Powell he struck out the side after Luczko's double and a Billy Williams single down the left field line put runners on second and third with none out.

He wiggled out of a bases loaded jam in the fourth and stranded two runners in the third and sixth frames.

"That's the way he has pitched all year," Sprague said. "He had several good games for us but he also had to pitch his way out of several jams. When our defense has been good, it helped him do that."

Tyler Petri began Linsly's four-run third inning with a bloop single to right off Toronto righthander Andy Lemasters. After Steve Fragale popped up on a sacrifice attempt, Jason Witzberger got his second hit of the game, this one on a chop single that got over Lemasters' head and between the second baseman and shortstop.

Lemasters then tried to pick off Petri at second base but threw the ball into centerfield, putting runners on second and third. Josh Norman's ground ball to the left side was booted, allowing Petri to score to make it 1-0, as Witzberger took third.

Norman promptly stole second base, placing Cadets on second and third again. Zitzelsberger then bounced a grounder to short and both runners scored as the throw bounced

past the Toronto first baseman. Charlie Sines then singled through a drawn-in infield to plate the fourth run in the inning.

Linsly added a fifth run in the top of the sixth. Milton reached on what was ruled a single after his high hopper was fielded by a nice play by Josh Hughes, but the shortstop's throw was in the dirt and not handled by Luczko at first. James Wallace then dropped a line drive into right center for a double that allowed Milton to come all the way around from first base.

Witzberger had a perfect day at the plate for the Cadets with two hits and two walks. Wallace, who had singled earlier, matched Milton and Witzberger with a pair of hits. Norman, Zitzelsberger and Sines finished the day with one single and one RBI each.

The OVAC championship was the 10th for Linsly during Sprague's 28-year reign as head coach. It also helped capped off a season in which the highly-successful Linsly mentor surpassed the 400 mark in career victories.

"I'm tickled pink," Sprague said. "We couldn't win (the OVAC title) in Class A last year, so had to go through what I think is the toughest division in the OVAC and win double-A."

Matt Morrison, Toronto's head coach, was disheartened because of so many missed opportunities by his team. "We couldn't get a big hit," Morrison said. "Defensively, we had one bad inning and things snowballed from there."

Class A
Beallsville 7, Bell. St. John's Central 1

The Blue Devils ended the Fighting Irish's two-year grip on the Class A conference championship, as

winning pitcher Aaron Boughner pitched around eight hits and five walks.

Matt Brown led the Beallsville offense with a four-for-four day at the plate as he was a home run away from hitting for the cycle. Brown singled twice, doubled and tripled, picking up two RBIs. Corey Dornon had two hits and also drove home two runs. Trevor Schaffer singled and ended up scoring three Blue Devil runs.

Although Beallsville had eight hits, the OVAC small school champions whiffed a total of 14 times. Starting St. John's hurler Benny Shutler fanned 12, and relief hurler Willie Clegg struck out two after taking over in the seventh inning.

After Beallsville took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning on an unearned run, St. John's got even in the bottom of the second on Mark Hartlieb's RBI single.

The Fighting Irish had numerous opportunities but stranded 11 runners.

Ben Shutler and Matt Nardo had two hits each for St. John's.

Beallsville made it 2-1 in the fourth and scored two times in both the fifth and seventh innings to put the game away.

Class AAA
Magnolia 8, Buckeye Trail 4
After the Warriors rallied for four runs in the top of the sixth to tie the score, the Blue Eagles got a bases-clearing triple from Joe Blatt to go back ahead to stay in the Class AAA finale.

Jon Smith, who took over for starting pitcher Eric Burke during Buckeye Trail's uprising, picked up the win for Magnolia.

Coach Dave Cisar's team collected nine hits in all, including two each from Blatt, Brett Ripley and Drew Cecil. John Kemp drove in three runs, two with a single and the other on a squeeze bunt.

Buckeye Trail's Josh Armstrong had two singles and a pair of RBIs.

Class AAAA
East Liverpool 5, Steubenville 1
Jake Nicholson and Andy Ball combined on a three-hitter to shut down the Big Red offense in the OVAC 4A title joust.

The two East Liverpool hitters combined for three strikeouts and one wal. The Potters broke open the game with a four-run bottom of the first inning, the uprising highlighted by Ball's bases-loaded triple. Mark Nightengale added a double and single for the Potters.

Steubenville's only run was scored in the third inning on an RBI single by Dave Crisante. Sean Liggett tripled and Mike DiAngelo singled for the only other Big Red hits.

HIGH SCHOOL LINESCORES

BASEBALL
OVAC Championships
(at Vaccaro Field, Steubenville)

Class A

Beallsville	100	120	2-7	8	0
Bell, St. John's	010	000	0-1	8	2

B-Boughner wp (4SO, 5W) and Dornon, Dornon 2S, 2rbi; Schaffer S; Brown D, T, 2S, 2rbi; Venick S.

BSJ-B.Shutler lp (12SO, 1W), Clegg (7) (2SO, 1W) and Clegg, Nardo (7), B.Shutler 2S; D.Shutler S; Nardo, 2S; Hartlieb S, rbi; Vavra S.

Class AA

Inslly	004	001	0-5	10	0
Toronto	000	000	2-2	5	3

L-Powell wp (8SO, 7W), Milton (7) (0SO, 1W) and Zitzelsberger, Witzberger 2S; Norman S, rbi; Zitzelsberger S, rbi; Sines S, rbi; Milton 2S; Wallace S, D, rbi; Petri S.

T-Lemasters lp (1SO, 1W), Swearingen (5) (1SO, 1W), Williams (7) (1SO, 0W) and Romey, Hannan 2S; Romey rbi; Lucsko D; Williams S, rbi; Lewis S.

Class AAA

Buckeye Trail	000	004	0-4	6	4
Magnolia	210	014	x-8	9	3

BT-Armstrong (5SO, 0W); Baros (6) (2SO, 0W) and Kittle, Dinges S; Armstrong 2S, 2rbi; Baros S; Kennedy S, rbi.

M-Burke (3SO, 4W); Smith wp (6) (3SO, 1W) and Mason, Blatt S, T, 3RBI; Ripley 2S; Kemp S, 3rbi; Tracy S; Cecil 2S.

Class AAAA

Steubenville	001	000	0-1	3	0
East Liverpool	400	001	x-5	8	2

S-Gerber lp (3SO, 3W) and Kocher, Crisante S, rbi; DiAngelo S, Liggett T.

EL-Nicholson wp (1SO, 0W), Ball (6) (2SO, 1W) and May, Nightengale D, S; Burch S; Ball T, 3rbi; Conley S.

Paden City
 000 | 130 | 0-4 | 8 | 1 || Pkbg, Catholic | 601 | 100 | x-8 | 9 | 1 |

P-Sluder lp (0SO, 1W), Bowers (1) (0SO, 5W), Kline (4) (1SO, 2W) and Gatian, Mercer 3S; Bowers S, rbi; Cline 2S, 2rbi; J.Feldmeier D, rbi.

PC-Lang wp (5SO, 3W) and Barlament, Jeffrey S, D; Hewitt S, D, 2rbi; Lang S, D, 3rbi.

Harrison Central
 002 | 000 | 2-4 | 9 | 1 || Indian Valley | 000 | 131 | x-5 | 10 | 3 |

HC-Snyder lp (7SO, 2W), Bartrug (6), (1SO, 0W) and Greene, Burt 2S; Luyster S, D.; Luther S, rbi; Bartrug S, D, 3rbi.

IV-McPeak wp (7SO, 2W) and Hippenbotham, Enema D, S; McPeak HR, 2rbi; Gasser 2S, rbi.

SOFTBALL
OVAC Championships
(at Belle Isle Field, Wheeling)

Class AAAA
(One out when winning run scored)

Whg. Park	000	000	000	000	000	0	8	0
Edison	000	000	000	000	001	1	7	1

WP - Doyla (7SO, 3W), Haberfield lp (15) (0SO, 1W) and Greathouse, Minor 3S; Haberfield 2S.

E - Peddicord (14SO, 0W), Baker wp (15) (1SO, 1W) and Cline, Mohny 2S, rbi; Cline 2S; Shepherd 2S.

Class AA

Toronto	032	000	0-5	9	2
ShadySide	001	200	0-3	4	2

T-Fleming wp (6SO, 2W) and Brand, Bailey 2S; McClan S, 2rbi; Clegg S, rbi; Weidger S, rbi; Fleming D.

S-Merryman lp (2SO, 2W) and Fluharty, Merryman S, rbi.

**West Virginia Class AA
Region One Semifinal
(at New Martinsville)**
(One out when winning run scored)

Magnolia	000	000	000	000	000	0	2	2
Weir	000	000	000	000	01-1	1	1	1

M-Tyler (8SO, 1W) and Howell, Blatt S, Nelson S.

W-Martin (2SO, 0W) and Sobutka, Mackey 2S; Goysovich 2S; Phillips 2S; Sobutka S, rbi; Martin D, S.

Buckeye falls in OVAC 4-A semifinal

By RICK DeLUCA
Times Leader Sports Writer

East Liverpool Coach Brian Connelly was hoping his Potters could bounce back from a heart-breaking Saturday afternoon tournament loss at Zanesville when they took the field in the OVAC Class 4-A semi-final at Toronto Tuesday.

And after Buckeye Local's Billy Marchbank crushed a solo homer in the first inning, Connelly had forgotten about Zanesville and was just hoping his Potters could bounce back from that early 1-0 deficit.

After managing to rally to take a 3-1 lead in the third, the Potter bats exploded for seven runs in the fifth inning and three more in the sixth as they advanced into the 4-A finals with a 13-2 six-inning win over Buckeye on Tuesday.

In boosting their record to 16-7 on the season, the Potters earned a berth in the OVAC Class 4-A finals opposite a red-hot Steubenville Big Red club on Saturday at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville.

"Our bats have been hot the last two weeks," Connelly said after the win. "Our seniors wanted to go out with some kind of championship and I give them a lot of credit for coming back from our loss on Saturday in the tournaments.

"This is a classy bunch of kids," the personable Potter coach added. "They just never give up.

"They have hit the ball well all season long and they played very well defensively tonight," he said. "This group of guys have done everything that we have asked them to do."

East Liverpool beat Buckeye Local in their only regular season meeting on the Potters' diamond by 11-1. The Potters' Saturday night

See, OVAC, Page 6B

OVAC

Continued from Page 1B

opponent, Big Red, split with EL during the regular season.

On Tuesday, the Potters got a masterful performance on the mound from Shane Slagle who limited the Panthers to just two hits over the first five innings and allowed four in the game. He finished with nine strikeouts, seven coming in the middle three innings, and did not walk a batter.

Marchbank, who hurled a no-hitter against Martins Ferry earlier in the season, started on the mound for the Panthers pitching well until the disastrous fifth. He closed with six strikeouts and two walks. Brian Zack came on in relief in the fifth and added a strikeout and walk.

After Marchbank's blast over the left field fence in the first gave the Panthers a 1-0 lead, the Potters rallied for a pair in the second as Andy Ball singled to right, advanced when Kinsey Henderson was hit by a pitch and scored on Rhett Maze's single to left. Nate Conley followed with a single to right that plated Henderson.

In the third, EL added another run on a one-out double to right-center by Mark Nightengale and a single past short by Slagle.

The Potters bats erupted in the fifth, but were aided by three Panther errors to score seven times.

Seth Birch opened with a single

to left, Nightengale reached on an error and Slagle singled to plate one run and an error scored a second.

Ball walked, Matt Tokorchek reached on an error and Henderson walked before Maze pushed home a run with a single.

Conley's walk added another and Birch's double to right added two more for a 10-1 lead.

East Liverpool scored three times in the sixth as Brian May doubled, Henderson singled to center for a run, Maze doubled to center for another and Conley doubled to center to score Maze.

Buckeye scored one more run in bottom of the sixth as Justin Posgai singled, Marchbank reached on a fielder's choice and Nathan Prati blasted a triple to the base of the right centerfield fence.

Maze led the Potters with a double and two singles, Conley and Birch had a double and single each, Slagle and Ball had two singles each and Nightengale and May added doubles to lead East Liverpool.

Aside from Marchbank and Prati's extra base hits, the Panthers got singles from Posgai and Zack.

Line score:
East Liverpool 021 073 — 13 14 1
Batteries: Slagle and Henderson; Marchbank, Zack (5) and Prati.

Linsly tops Wheeling Central in OVAC 2-A semifinals

By RICK DeLUCA
Times Leader Sports Writer

Down 2-1 and hitless going into the fourth inning, Linsly erupted with four hits and four runs in the inning and went on to post an 8-4 win over top-seeded Wheeling Central in the OVAC Class 2-A semifinals at Brooke High School on Saturday.

Coming in as the 2-A's fourth seeded team, coach Gary Sprague's Cadets notched the 19th win of the season while advancing into Saturday's OVAC championship finals at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville.

During the regular season, Linsly split a pair of outings with the Maroon Knights.

Coach Terry Edwards' Maroon Knights entering sectional tournament action this week with a 26-5 season mark.

Lefthander Garrett Powell went the distance on the mound for the winners recording nine strikeouts and walking three. Powell recovered from a rocky start that saw the Linsly mound ace record four wild pitches and two hit-batsmen.

"He's a battler, Sprague said about his lefthander following the win. "That's what I like about him. He's a typical lefthander. I almost took him out, but I asked coach

(Terry Depew) and he said no and it paid off.

"He's got a nasty breaking ball," Sprague added.

Linsly's bats, without a hit in the first three innings, banged out nine in the last four.

"The bats came out today. We hit the ball very well," the Cadet coach said. "I was very pleased with our defense. We only had one error today."

"We expected a very close game. They (Central) are a very well-coached team and they always battle. We knew we were up against a good team," Sprague added.

Linsly opened the scoring in the first with Jason Witzberger reaching on an error, advancing once on a wild pitch and again on a Josh Norman sacrifice bunt. He later scored on a sacrifice fly to left by Charlie Sines.

Central knotted the score in the bottom of the first. Jason Edwards drilled a two-out double to right center, advanced to third on a wild pitch and later scored on another.

The Knights took the lead at 2-1 in the second after Jeff Hartman led off the inning with a HBP was later bunted over to third by Brandon Ball and scored on Jared Zavolta's single to left center.

In the fourth, the Cadets broke

their hitless streak with a single up the middle by R. J. Zitzelberger. Ed Swierkos walked before Sam Milton's single to left center scored Zitzelberger. James Wallace followed with another single that plated Swierkos and Matt Buchwach's fielder's choice brought home two more runs as the Cadets lead advanced to 5-2.

Brandon Ball doubled with one out in the fourth for Central and later scored on a Zavolta double.

Linsly added two more runs in the fifth as Zitzelberger reached on an error and scored on Swierkos' sac fly. Milton doubled and later scored on a Wallace single.

The Cadets added another run in the sixth on a Norman single, wild pitch and Sines' single.

Milton led the winners at the plate with a single and double while Wallace had two singles and Tyler Petri had a double.

Central was paced by Zavolta, Edwards and Ball with a double and single each. Zavolta had two RBIs.

Chris Drosieko started on the mound for Central and recorded two strikeouts and four walks while Edwards added two Ks in relief.

Line score:
Linsly 100 421 0 -- 8 9 2
Whg. Central 110 100 1 -- 4 7 3
Batteries: Powell and Zitzelberger; Drosieko, Edwards (5) and Hartman.

Barnesville drops wild 14-11 OVAC decision to Toronto

By JEREMY MIDEI
Times Leader Sports Writer

WITH OMINOUS rain clouds looming overhead, the OVAC 2-A semifinal was held Saturday afternoon amid intermittent patches of sunlight at Toronto's Red Knight Baseball Complex.

In a wild one, the host Knights were able to stave off a game Barnesville Shamrock squad, after squandering a nine run lead in the late innings.

After holding the 'Rocks scoreless in the opening frame, coach Matt Morrison's Knights started off the first inning with a bang as senior Shawn Cain, batting second in the order, deposited a Josh Dennison pitch over the leftfield wall.

The Knights, however, were just warming up.

And Barnesville would give Toronto all the fuel it would need as a plethora of Shamrock miscues would position the Knights for a huge first frame.

A walk, an error and two wild pitches later, the Knights scored another run and were in position to further the damage.

And further it they did, as Scott Lewis rapped a run-scoring single and Adam Wilson double home two runs. Bill Keenan put the Knights up by six, scoring Wilson on a seeing-eye single to left.

Barnesville would get on the board in the second, as senior Clay Wilson would walk to start the inning. One out later, Jay Stephen sent the 'Rocks first run home on a line-drive double. Catcher Cameron Davis scored Stephen on a fielder's choice.

Toronto made the score 7-2 in the bottom of the second via a Bill Williams RBI single.

The 'Rocks crept within two runs in the fifth as Davis led off the inning with a single. A Kyle Neptune walk positioned Davis at second as Boomer Reed strode to the plate and promptly sent a single to the gap in right. Neptune would later score on a Wilson single. A Red Knight miscue sent home the final run of the inning.

Toronto exploded for five runs in the bottom half of the fifth, highlighted by sophomore catcher Mike Romey's bases-loaded triple, a towering blast to rightcenter. Wilson

and Keenan each had RBIs in the inning.

Barnesville again hindered its cause in the fifth, allowing two runs to score due to errors. All told, the Shamrocks committed six errors on the day.

The sixth inning ended in disaster for Barnesville as, after starting the inning with back-to-back walks, freshman reliever Zak Thomas sat down the side with a little help from centerfielder Josh Hughes, who made a remarkable two-out diving catch to preserve the lead for Toronto.

However, that didn't stop the Green from making it interesting in the seventh. Barnesville led off the inning with back-to-back hits, getting two runs across before the first out. A Davis single further sliced into the deficit and, following two walks, loaded the bases for Barnesville.

Things really started to get sticky for the Red Knight faithful when sophomore Nathan Hunkler ripped a double to right, scoring two runs.

With two outs and the bases again loaded due to consecutive walks, the tying run stood at the plate before reliever Doug Luscko struck out the final batter to preserve the win and send the Knights to the OVAC 2-A Championship game against the Cadets of Linsly, next Saturday at Vaccaro Field.

Toronto starter Matt Swearingen picked up the win, pitching five strong innings for the Red Knights.

The Shamrocks suffered two losses on the day as centerfielder Max Lallathin had to be helped off the field in the fifth after a full-speed collision with leftfielder Clay Wilson. The senior suffered an apparent concussion and was later taken to the hospital for precautionary reasons.

Toronto upped its record to 18-7, while Barnesville dropped to 17-8.

Line score:
Barnesville 020 030 6 -- 11 9 6
Toronto 610 052 x -- 14 11 3
BATTERIES: Dennison, Roger (2), Butler (5) and Davis; Swearingen, Thomas (6), Lucsko (7) and Romey.

IN OVAC 4-A semifinal action, the Steubenville Big Red downed the Edison Wildcats, 6-3, behind a strong performance by Justin Banks.

The junior shortstop knocked in three runs on two hits, including a mammoth home run. Joe Pease chipped in with a two-run single.

Senior David Eft went the distance for Steubenville, striking out five while scattering seven hits.

With the victory, coach Fred Heatherington's squad now advances to the 4-A championship game at Vaccaro Field on Saturday.

Line Score:
Steubenville 400 020 1 -- 6 8 1
Edison 110 000 1 -- 3 7 1
BATTERIES: Eft and Kocher; Ujcich, Rose (5) and Reese.

Trail, SJC gain spots in OVAC title games

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Writer

Two more finalists of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Baseball Tournament were set Monday evening at Bridgeport's Perkins Field.

Buckeye Trail advanced to Saturday's 5 p.m. 3-A final by ousting Harrison Central, 5-4 in 10 innings.

St. John Central, meanwhile, knocked out Bishop Donahue, 6-3. The Irish will be in action during Saturday morning's 11 a.m. 1-A final opposing Beallsville.

BUCKEYE TRAIL and Harrison Central battled in a true grudge match as both teams struggled to score runs, but each received strong pitching and solid defense.

"This was the best we have played this year. The kids never gave up and they showed a lot of heart," said Trail manager Cory McQuain.

The Warriors never did give up as they trailed twice in the game and were able to come back both times.

Trailing 3-2 in the bottom of the fifth, the Warriors received a one-out single from Josh McQuain. Jared Dinges quickly followed with a double that brought McQuain all the way around to knot the game at three.

That is how it would stay until the top of the 10th when Harrison Central saw Eric Spitznogle reach on a fielders choice.

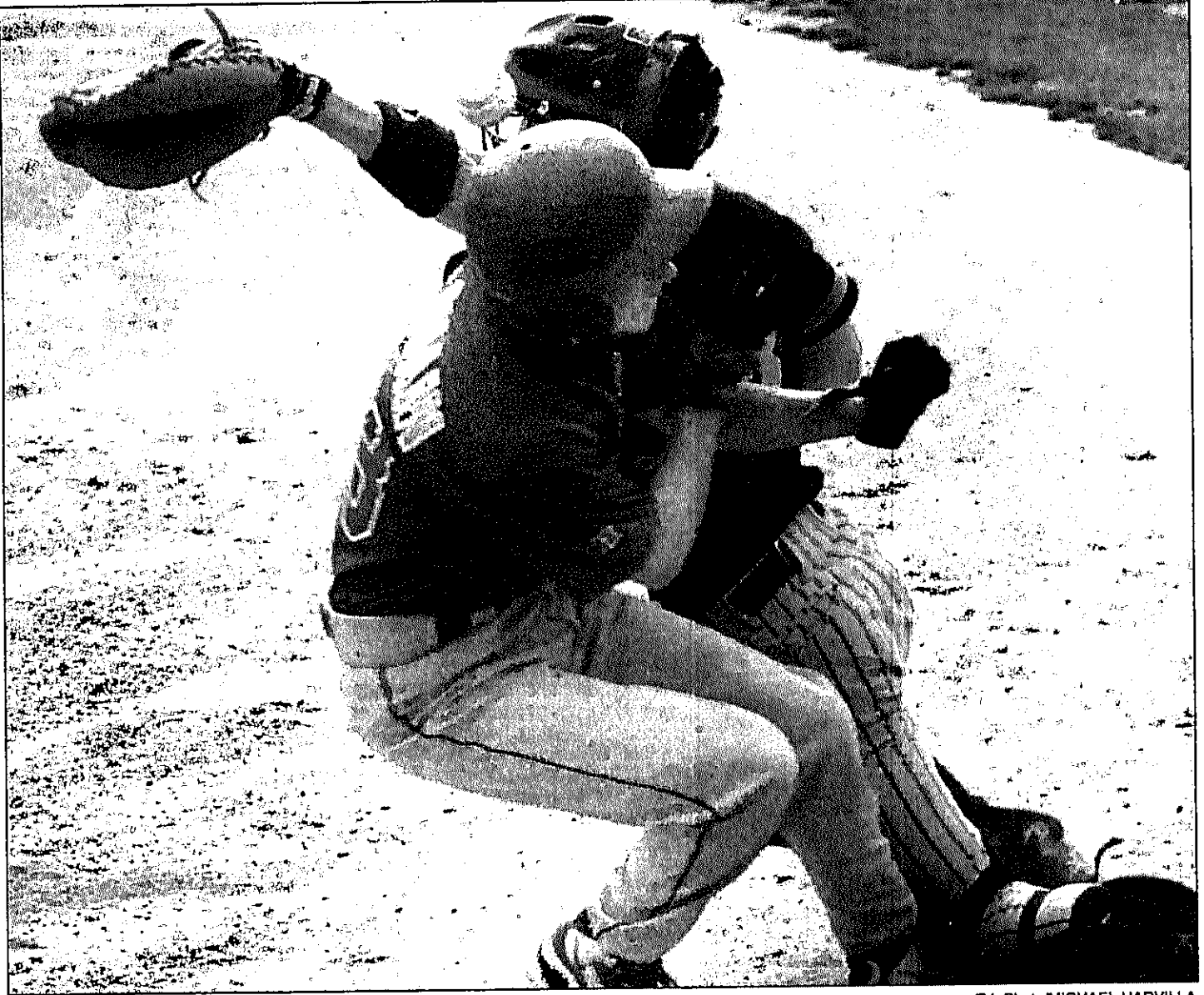
He moved to second on an error and senior standout Trent Luyster, who is bound for Ohio State next season, reached on an infield single. A throwing error allowed Spitznogle to go home and give the Huskies a slim one-run lead.

The question entering the bottom of the 10th was whether Saffell would turn to Luyster to close the deal, though he will probably pitch in the district semifinal this evening.

"It never even entered my mind to bring Trent in. Not with that situation of playing in the district game," Huskie head coach Mike Saffell said.

With Luyster still in centerfield, the Huskie lead would be short-lived as senior Josh Armstrong knotted the game up with just one swing of the bat as he sent a Jarryd Ridgeway pitch sailing over the left field fence.

From there the flood gates seemed to open for



T-L Photo/MICHAEL HARVILLA

COLLIDING with Harrison Central catcher Adam Greene is Buckeye Trail's Josh McQuain during Monday night's OVAC 3-A semifinal clash at Perkins Field in Brookside.

Ridgeway, who is a mere freshman.

"Jarryd is only a freshman and I am sure he will learn from this game," said Saffell.

Troy Berros followed Armstrong's blast with a solid single, while Jim Trelka was then hit with a pitch to put the winning run on second base.

Ridgeway fanned the next Warrior hitter, but hit Ryan Wayble to load the sacks. Joey Marchiano was also plunked by a Ridgeway offering, which brought Berros across the plate to advance the Old Washington school into the conference title game.

"We had a tendency before this game to hang our heads when we got down. We told the team that we didn't care what happens even if they (Harrison) were to get up by 10 runs. The didn't give up and I am really proud of my team for that," McQuain said.

Beros gained the mound win for the Warriors as he was strong in relief of Armstrong, who exited after five solid innings.

Beros fanned six and did not allow a walk, while

Armstrong sat down five via the K.

Trail was led at the dish by Dinges as he socked two singles and a double, while Berros added two singles.

Armstrong also drove in a run with a single to complement his home run.

Harrison Central showed the effects of a lack of batting practice, as the Huskies, who won last year's 3-A title, had not taken batting practice with a live arm since last week.

"We hadn't taken any batting practice since last Thursday with all the weather and everything and it took us a time through the order to get going at the plate. Both of Trail's pitchers were pretty good," Saffell said.

The Huskies were led at the plate by Luyster, who continued his fine career with a trio of singles and two RBI.

Senior Willy Luther was also strong at the plate as

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Beallsville advances in OVAC

By **BUBBA KAPRAL**
T-L Executive Sports Editor

Beallsville made the plays when it needed to Saturday afternoon in the OVAC Class A Baseball Tournament semifinals at New Martinsville.

The Blue Devils of second-year head coach Ronnie Street scored runs in each of the last two innings to pull out a hard-earned and well-deserved 4-3 triumph over Cameron.

As a result, the scrappy Monroe Countians will now play the OVAC championship Saturday against the winner of Monday's St. John Central-Bishop Donahue clash, which fell victim to wet field conditions Saturday at Bridgeport's Perkins Field.

"I was very proud of our kids today," Street said. "We kept battling all game long and got it done when we had to."

The count was deadlocked at 2-2 after five innings.

Blue Devils' third baseman Matt Brown opened the top half the sixth with a line single to left and moved to second when the baseball got past the Dragons' outfielder. Seth Venick - who enjoyed a

See, BLUE DEVILS, Page 5C

OVAC

Continued from page 1C

huge all-around game - followed with a single, moving Brown to third.

Starting pitcher Aaron Boughner delivered a sacrifice fly to right field, plating Brown and giving Beallsville a short-lived 3-2 edge.

Cameron responded in the home-half of the sixth. It took just one swing for the Marshall Countians to knot it as Wyatt O'Neill - the state wrestling champ at 215 pounds - launched a monstrous home run to left center.

The resilient Blue Devils bounced back to score the game-winning run in the seventh.

Designated-hitter Clint Marcum opened with a single and advanced to second on the play when the ball was misplayed by Cameron's leftfielder. Chris Caldwell followed with a single, setting up runners at first and third with no outs.

After Cameron southpaw Jed Lucey retired the next two Blue Devils, Ryan Kinzey delivered the game-winner for Beallsville with a single.

Venick, who replaced Boughner on the hill in the sixth, sat the Dragons down quietly in the seventh to earn the mound victory.

"Both Aaron and Seth did a fine job on the mound," Street said. "We got some key hits and made all the defensive plays we needed to. It's a nice win for the program."

Beallsville took a 2-0 lead in the first thanks to a single by Trevor Schaffer, a walk to Kinzy and a two-run double by Venick.

Venick - who opened the game in right field - made a critical play in the home-half of the first when he gunned down a Dragon baserunner at the plate with a pin-point throw from right. It ended an apparent big inning for the Dragons, who tallied just one run in the frame despite two hits, a walk and a Blue Devil error.

In addition to the mound win and his assist from right field, Venick's day included a double, single and

two RBI.

He received support from many a Blue Devil.

Boughner was solid on the mound, until yielding to Venick with two outs in the sixth. He allowed just six hits, fanned seven and walked three.

Marcum chipped in with two singles.

Lucey was the tough-luck mound loser for Cameron. He went the route, striking out six while scattering nine hits.

Casey Hughes wielded a hot bat for Cameron with a double, three singles and two RBI. Tyler Hughes produced two singles for the Dragons.

Linescore:

Beallsville	200	001	1	4	9	2
Cameron	100	010	1	3	7	3

BATTERIES: Boughner, Venick (6) Dorman; Lucey and Beresford.

IN SATURDAY'S opener at New Martinsville, Magnolia captured an OVAC Class AAA semi-final clash, downing Meadowbrook, 5-4.

The triumph improved the Blue Eagles of veteran diamond guru Dave Cisar to 19-3 and placed them in Saturday's title game against the survivor of Monday's Harrison Central-Buckeye Trail affair.

The Blue Eagles and Colts were deadlocked heading into the final frame. Magnolia pulled out the nod via a home run to right centerfield by cleanup hitter Russell Shepherd.

"I am very happy for our kids and coaches," Cisar said. "We made some big plays and kept battling all game long."

"Meadowbrook is a quality team and played well," he added. "This has been a very pleasing and surprising year. We have only three seniors on the team."

Linescore:

Meadowbrook	000	103	0	4	5	0
Magnolia	000	112	1	5	8	3

BATTERIES: D. Graham and J. Graham; Smith, Ripley (6) and Carroll.

OVAC

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he drilled a RBI single and senior Jeremy Bartug added a pair of base knocks.

Freshman Tom Snyder, who started the game on the mound, drilled a triple to lead off the fourth inning.

As for Harrison Central, the Huskies' season is far from complete as they are scheduled to play this evening at River View High School in Warsaw in the district tournament, opposing Shenandoah.

Saffell knows his team will come back as they always have and there is a strong chance that the Zeps will face the intimidating Luyster on the hill.

IN THE NIGHTCAP, the Fighting Irish of St. John Central received a strong pitching performance from junior ace Ben Shutler en route to the berth in the title game.

Shutler sat down 14 Bishop Donahue hitters with the strikeout and allowed just five hits and two earned runs.

"Ben has pitched solid all year. He has a lot of heart. There have been times this year when he has been as strong in the seventh as he was early in the game. He got a good rhythm going and worked the ball in on their hands really well," Irish coach Tom Sliva said.

Shutler was able to get ahead of Donahue hitters all night long.

"Working ahead is the key for any pitcher and I thought once he got in the groove tonight, he had as good of stuff as he had all year," Sliva continued.

Though Shutler was pitching well, the Irish still had to score runs to support the performance by their pitcher.

They were able to push runs across the dish with just five hits, but the Green did take full advantage of wild pitching from BD's Nick Haught.

Haught allowed seven free passes, while striking out just as many.

"There have been times when we came out this season and stung the ball. The kid we saw tonight was tough to hit. He has pretty good pop and he comes from three different angles. Bishop is playing good baseball and they are a good baseball team," Sliva continued.

The Johnnies pushed two runs across in the last half of the first when Mark Hartlieb and Shutler reached on walks.

David Shutler quickly followed with a run-scoring double to put Sliva and company ahead for good. Junior Joey Vavra socked a sacrifice fly to bring in Ben Shutler.

Senior Kyle Ogilbee scampered for a bloop double to lead off the second. He then took third on a fielders choice and came home when a pick-off play failed and the ball got away.

Donahue cut into the deficit in the top of the fourth as Haught was hit with a pitch. Troy Francis then doubled to move Haught over to third, who scored on an error.

The Irish got the run back in their half of the frame when Sean Zeakes led the off the inning with a single. Following a strikeout and ground out, David Shutler was back at it as he drilled a triple into the right field gap that brought Zeakes all the way around.

The Irish went back to work in the fifth as they tallied two more runs both of which were unearned. Senior Matt Nardo and Vavra scored without the Green earning a base hit in the inning.

Haught and Francis got their sticks out again in the top of the sixth as they touched up Ben Shutler for two runs. Haught singled and Francis quickly doubled him home. Nate Fazio then singled home Francis.

As for the Irish's next opponent, Beallsville, Sliva has not witnessed the Blue Devils this season, but knows the type of program they have in Monroe County.

"I know traditionally they have always had good baseball teams. The coaches are good baseball men and some of the names on their team, I have seen in the past. I'm sure they'll be ready to play Saturday," Sliva continued.

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Linescores:

Harr C 002 010 000 1 - 4 11 2
B Trail 200 010 000 2 - 5 12 4
BATTERIES: Snyder, Ridgeway (5) and Greene; Armstrong, Beros (5) and Kittle.

Bishop Donahue 000 102 0 - 3 5 3
St. John Central 210 012 x - 6 5 1
BATTERIES: Haught and Trabert; B. Shutler and Clegg.