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The Times Leader

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Sunday, May 9, 2004

OVAC softball finals:

• Monroe, St. John, Magnolia, Park earn OVAC titles

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Writer

Pitching and defense.

In girls' softball those two factors are arguably the most important.

That theory definitely held true during the day-long Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Championships held at the Chambers' Complex at the I-470 Fields Saturday afternoon.

The four championship games featured solid pitching, defense and timely hitting as brass rings were passed out.

Wheeling Park got the day started, downing John Marshall 2-1 in eight innings. St. John's stopped Shadyside in the 1-A title game by a 3-0 count, while Monroe Central captured its second straight conference title.

Magnolia closed the afternoon by winning the 3-A title over Bellaire.

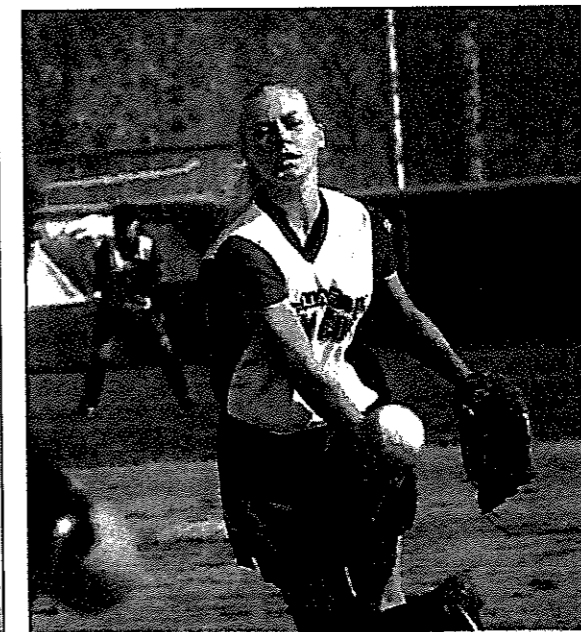
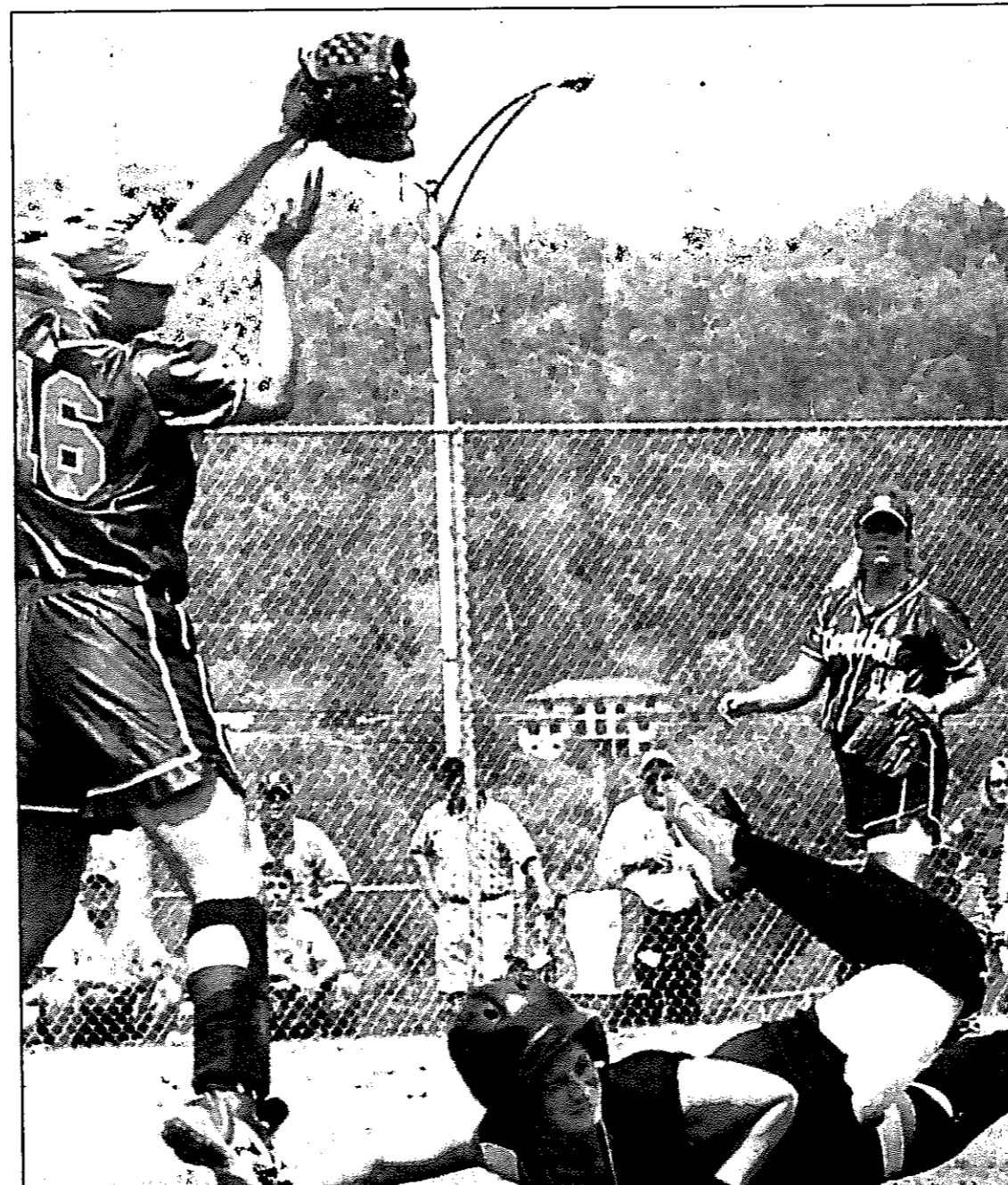
The game most softball enthusiasts had been longing for since the start of the season didn't disappoint.

The 2-A championship game between Monroe Central and Steubenville Central lived up to its advance billing.

However, in the end, it's the Lady Seminoles who will be raising another banner in the gym after they remained unblemished, scoring a hard-fought 3-1 win over the Crusaders.

"It's a shame that one of these teams had to lose today," said Monroe Central head coach Ted Brown. "We are definitely happy to win this, but we are still looking at a bigger picture. We are trying to stay focused on the state tournament."

The title is the second straight for the Woodsfield-based school. It's also the second in school history, making the Lady



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The title is the second straight for the Woodsfield-based school. It's also the second in school history, making the Lady 'Noles a combined 6-0 in their history in the OVAC tournament.

The loss drops the Lady Crusaders to 21-2 and marks the second consecutive year they took home the runner-up plaque.

"All facets of (Monroe's) game were better than ours today," said Central manager Jackie Rossi. "All we can do is regroup, hopefully get out of our sectional and hope for a rematch in the districts."

The Lady Seminoles wasted little time in jumping on highly-regarded Central pitcher Meredith Hitchcock.

Sophomore ace Jewell Jones connected on a double into leftfield and came around to score just two pitches later when second-baseman Anna Blair laced a triple into the leftcenter.

Ashley Kuhn reached on an error, which allowed Blair to race up the line and score, giving the Lady 'Noles the 2-0 lead.

See, OVAC, Page C3



T-L Photo/MICHAEL HARVILLA

ABOVE: Monroe Central's Ashley Kuhn dives back to first base on an attempted pick-off play. Playing first base for Steubenville Central is Molly Derrow.

TOP RIGHT: Bellaire pitcher Amanda Coulter comes home with a pitch during Saturday afternoon's Class 3-A title game Saturday.

RIGHT MIDDLE: St. John Central junior ace Meghan Johnson comes home with a pitch during the Class 1-A title game.

RIGHT BOTTOM: St. John's sophomore Amber Irwin prepares to take a swing during the OVAC 1-A title game Saturday afternoon at Chambers' Complex in Elm Grove.



Fort Frye ousts Barnesville in OVAC 2-A semifinals

By RICK DeLUCA
Times Leader Sports Writer

Despite a late rally with two out in the bottom of the seventh, Barnesville's second-seeded Shamrocks fell just short of a berth in the OVAC title game by dropping a thrilling 3-2 decision to Fort Frye in the OVAC Class 2-A semifinals at Perkins Field in Brookside Saturday afternoon.

Fort Frye, a team denied a chance to qualify for last year's OVAC tourney due to a scheduling glitch, advanced into the OVAC finals opposite top-seeded Steubenville Central on Saturday at 2 p.m. SCC eliminated River earlier in the day by a 12-2 count.

With the win, the Cadets boosted their record to a sparkling 20-4 mark. Barnesville, Sectional tourney winners earlier in the week, fell to 17-3 with the

loss. The Shamrocks will take on Harrison Central for the EOBL championship on Wednesday.

Fort Frye got a strong effort on the mound from Adam Handschumacher who went the distance in recording four strikeouts while walking three. He scattered seven Barnesville hits and managed to escape the Rocks thrilling comeback in the seventh.

Tony Yarnall started on the mound

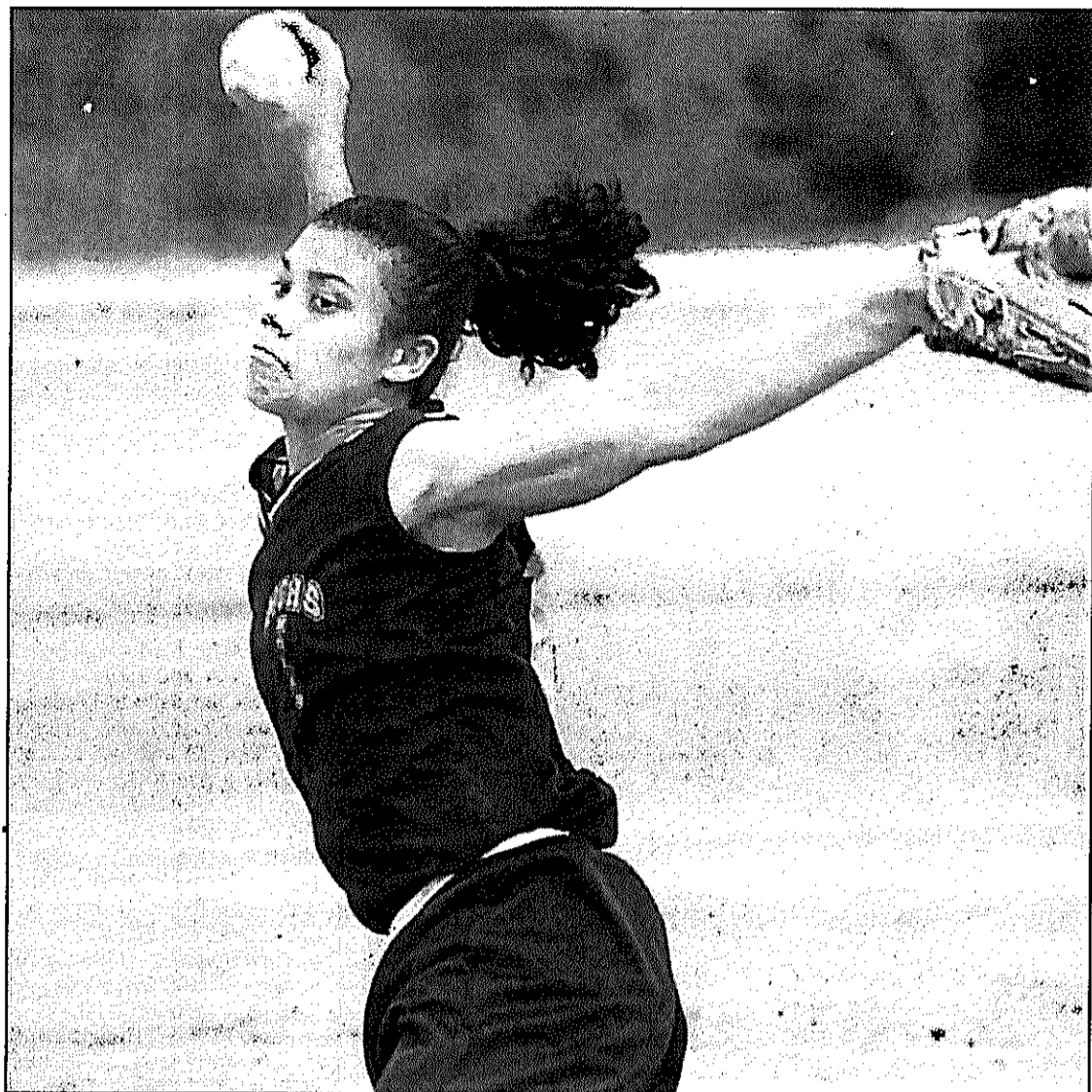
for the Shamrocks registering two strikeouts and two walks while allowing five Cadet hits over five innings. Todd Miller came on in the sixth and chalked up two Ks while holding the winners hitless over two innings.

After going three scoreless innings, the Cadets got on the board in the fourth as freshman shortstop Tyler Engle reached on an infield single and advanced on Jeremy Barton's single

through the middle. Engle scored on Trent Best's groundout to short.

In the top of the fifth, Fort Frye plated two more runs as Cory Best opened with a single to center, advanced on a fielders choice and scored on a Shamrock error. With Handschumacher reaching on an error, Engle singled to right center bringing home

See, CADETS, Page C4



T-L Photo/MICHAEL HARVILLA

DELIVERING a pitch during Saturday's OVAC 2-A championship game at the Chambers 1-470 Field is Monroe Central junior LeeKycia Brown. Brown and the Lady Seminoles improved to 22-0 on the season and pocketed their second straight OVAC title.

● OVAC

Continued from Page C1

"We felt that getting up early was a key," said Monroe Central head coach Ted Brown. "We knew we had to get a couple of runs on the board and put the pressure on them."

Once the Lady Seminoles grabbed the lead, they turned it over to junior ace LeeKycia Brown who was on top of her game and had command of her pitches.

"She knew coming in that she wouldn't mow down everyone like she normally does, but she really had control of the game," said Brown who is her father and coach. "She played in the summer against some college players and it comes down to having control of the pitching."

For the game, Brown allowed just four hits and the lone Central run was unearned. She sat down just five via the strikeout, but she allowed just one walk.

"We wanted to work every corner that we could today," Brown offered. "I watched them the other night (in the semifinals), and I knew you couldn't just throw the ball down the middle of the plate or they would tee off."

With Brown on cruise control in the circle, the Lady Seminoles posted an insurance run. Jones led off the inning with a single.

Blair dropped down a perfect sacrifice bunt, moving Jones to second. Kuhn immediately followed with a base hit, scoring Jones.

"The difference in the game was: when Monroe got runners on they got them home," Rossi admitted. "We were unable to get a timely hit. I don't know how many we left stranded, but that's a credit to their pitcher."

Chrissy Schumacher had a single to complement Monroe's Jones, Blair and Kuhn.

Hitchcock -- who has more than 500 strikeouts to her credit during her high school career -- struck out eight and allowed just one free pass.

"Meredith got stronger as the game went along, but unfortunately for us, they scored their runs in the early part of the game," Rossi said.

Central's offense was led by all-time leading hitter Tessa

really proud of my kids because we are a young team, and they really stepped up."

That bad inning was the sixth when the Lady Irish struck three times in the frame.

Amber Irwin led off the inning with a base hit. Two hitters later, Jessica Vavra belted a single and Loraine Skorch followed with a fielder's choice where the Orange was unable to record an out.

Merryman regrouped and fanned sophomore Ashley Marinacci for the second out of the inning, but Marissa DeClemente drew a walk, forcing Irwin home.

Junior catcher Ellie Swartz followed with a two-run single into right to put the Green in control.

Staked to the 3-0 lead, Johnson took the hill in the seventh and allowed a lead-off double to Alisha Brown down the leftfield line.

Brown got no further, as Johnson induced a pair of come backers and a pop-out to give the Lady Irish the title.

"Merryman is one of the top pitchers in the valley and I don't care who you name," Magistro said. "I was happy we were able to push across a few runs when we did."

The Lady Tigers appeared to be in control early when they got their first two hitters of the game aboard.

Junior Miranda Lappert led off the game by reaching on an error and Merryman followed with a solid single into left.

From there, it was all Johnson who settled down and got the next three hitters to escape the jam.

"When you get a chance against Meghan...you had better take advantage of it," Merryman said. "(You) know you aren't going to get many chances against her."

The Lady Tigers had another chance in the fifth. Britney Wallace slapped a one-out single and catcher Brittany Lyle reached on an error.

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some timely Blue Eagle hitting especially from the top of the order who collected five of the seven hits.

"It was their day to hit the gap shots," said disappointed Bellaire head coach Melissa Kaldor. "I thought we made good contact, but we hit the ball right at people."

The Lady Blue Eagles broke through in the top of the third after hard-hitting third baseman Rachel Mason drove a triple into the leftcenter gap. Keene drove her home when she reached on an error.

That run proved to be plenty for Keene who was on her game from the point she entered the affair.

She fanned 11 Lady Big Reds' hitters and limited them to two hits during the game.

Magnolia added two insurance runs in the bottom of the fifth after junior Beth Rush reached with a one-out single.

Mason came up again and ripped a double, placing runners at second and third. Keene was unable to get a run home when she rolled out to third.

Sophomore shortstop Ashley McSweeney promptly followed by lacing a two-run double to left off Bellaire pitcher Amanda Coulter.

"I take the blame for that pitch because I called for the rise ball," Kaldor said. "She drove the pitch and made us pay, but our kids gave it their best shot."

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All told, the Lady Big Reds stranded eight runners, including five in scoring position.

"I thought we were aggressive at the plate," Kaldor said. "But, we just couldn't find a hole."

Mason led Magnolia at the dish, coming up a home run shy of the cycle. McSweeney also had a double in the first inning to complement her two-run hit.

Coulter -- who suffered the mound loss -- had a single. In the circle, she had six strikeouts and

OUT OF LEFTFIELD

OVAC softball date cutoff is Saturday



By **GREG HARKNESS**
Times Leader
Sports Writer

The OVAC Softball cutoff date is Saturday.

The softball quarterfinals will begin Tuesday, April 27 at the home field of the higher seed.

The poor spring weather has left many teams scrambling to meet the minimum 10-game OVAC opponent requirement.

Defending champion Edison is currently atop the standings in Class 4-A. The undefeated Wildcats have to be considered the favorite with pitcher Lakeyn Bendle in the circle.

Wheeling Park is sitting in second place, while Buckeye Local is currently third. Beaver Local (fourth), John Marshall (fifth), Brooke (sixth) and East Liverpool (seventh) hold down the next four spots.

The race for the final spot may come down to who wins its first game as winless Steubenville, Weir and Zanesville are in the hunt.

Cambridge has yet to taste defeat, but the Bobcats did not schedule the minimum 10 OVAC games.

Upstart St. Clairsville is the leader of the Class 3-A pack. Martins Ferry is in second place while defending champion Bellaire is third.

Oak Glen holds a slight lead over Harrison Central (fifth) and Magnolia (sixth) for fourth position.

Union Local and Meadowbrook -- last year's runnerup -- round out the top eight.

In Class 2-A, it appears highly likely that a rematch of last year's title game is in the works as Steubenville Central is the current leader. Undefeated and defending champion Monroe Central is second.

Wellsville sits in third position and Wheeling Central owns fourth.

Barnesville (fifth), River (sixth), Fort Frye (seventh) and Toronto (eighth) round out the top eight.

St. John Central holds the top spot in Class A with Shadyside just behind in second. Frontier is in third place and last year's runnerup Beallsville is fourth.

Weirton Madonna (fifth), Cameron (sixth), defending champion Linsly (seventh) and Bridgeport (eighth) round out the top eight.

Conotton Valley would be sixth, but the Rockets did not schedule the necessary 10 OVAC games.

Meanwhile, the OVAC baseball cutoff date is Wednesday, April 28.

MONROE SNUB

The first Ohio state softball poll was released last week and Monroe Central was nowhere to be found.

Now this writer understands that these polls mean nothing. You have to win the championship on the field, but how can a team that advanced to the regional championship game, returns every player and is undefeated not get some recognition in the poll.

The second poll is supposed to be released Tuesday and the now 10-0 Seminoles deserve to be included in it.

COLLEGE UPDATE

■ **CHAD LITTEN**, a former Union Local standout, is off to a superb start to his collegiate career at Waynesburg. In 19 games, the freshman has posted a team-high .453 batting average with 29 hits.

Litten is also second on the team in slugging percentage (.484) and on base percentage (.478). He has scored nine runs and plated 14 more.

FORMER St. Clairsville standout D.J. Hynes is batting .256 for Bethany. He has two double, two home runs and 19 RBI.

■ **BETHANY'S** softball team is playing well and several local products are major reasons why.

Janice Masters -- a St. John Central product -- is batting a team-high .348 with 32 hits, including three home runs and 14 doubles. She has also a team-high 32 RBI, which is 19 more than the nearest teammate.

Master has also scored 16 runs and is slugging at a .598 clip.

Former Buckeye Local outfielder Leslie Lopez is hitting .294 for the Bison. She is tied for the team lead with 32 hits and has scored 20 runs while driving in 12.

Greg Harkness can be reached at gharkness@timesleaderonline.com.

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Central's offense was led by all-time leading hitter Tessa Velario, Kimmy Straker and Megan Gould. Each had a single.

IN 1-A, St. John Central has enjoyed quite a four-year run under manager Jerry Magistro.

The Lady Irish resume, which includes four straight regular-season titles, got a little more glamorous Saturday when they pocketed the conference title by a 3-0 count over Shadyside.

"I am proud of the whole team," Magistro said following the trophy presentation. "I am happy for our seniors who were with me first year and for them to win four straight regular season titles and three out of four really says something about them because they are all winners."

Shadyside appeared to be in control most of the way, but it was one inning that sealed the Lady Tigers' fate.

"Everytime we play these guys, it seems like it comes down to one bad inning," said Shadyside manager Tim Merryman. "We have had some great games over the years. I am

really proud of my kids because we are a young team, and they really stepped up."

That bad inning was the sixth when the Lady Irish struck three times in the frame.

Amber Irwin led off the inning with a base hit. Two hitters later, Jessica Vavra belted a single and Loraine Skorch followed with a fielder's choice where the Orange was unable to record an out.

Merryman regrouped and fanned sophomore Ashley Marinacci for the second out of the inning, but Marissa DeClemente drew a walk, forcing Irwin home.

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Johnson, however, worked out of the mess by inducing a groundout to first and recording a strikeout.

For the game, Johnson recorded seven strikeouts and allowed just one walk.

"I really believe that Meghan and Ellie are two of the best 1-2 combinations in the valley," Merryman said. "They really work well together, and they have been working well together for a long time."

Merryman wasn't too shabby in her own right. She had four strikeouts, but allowed just five hits and the one walk.

The chance of a rematch between the Lady Irish and Lady Tigers still exists in the Division IV district final seeing that both squads are still alive in the sectional.

IN 3-A, Magnolia thwarted Bellaire's opportunity to earn consecutive conference titles, prevailing by a 3-0 count.

The Lady Blue Eagles received solid pitching from Brooke Keene who came on in relief of injured starter Kristen Scheibelhood in the second.

Keene was the beneficiary of

some timely Blue Eagle hitting especially from the top of the order who collected five of the seven hits.

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Coulter -- who suffered the mound loss -- had a single. In the circle, she had six strikeouts and a walk.

Michelle Tomlan and Hillary Bosold also had singles for the Lady Reds who finish at 13-9.

Shadyside advances to semifinals

• Tigers tame Cameron, 11-1, will face Beallsville in OVAC, sectional

By GREG HARKNESS
Times Leader Sports Writer

Shadyside got a strong effort from Lisa Merryman and the Tigers' bats backed her with 12 hits en route to a 11-1 victory over visiting Cameron in OVAC quarterfinal action Thursday night.

The win advances Shadyside to OVAC semifinal action next week against Beallsville. The Tigers will also oppose the Blue Devils in sectional play -- the same as last year.

"We haven't had the chance to play Beallsville this year," Shadyside head coach Tim Merryman said. "But we know we have some great games with them last year and I am sure we will have a couple more this year."

Last year, Beallsville pulled out a victory in the OVAC contest, while Shadyside took home a win in the Division IV sectional tournament.

"I am happy with the overall effort," Merryman said. "We have some huge games next week and we need to keep hitting the ball like we did today."

"Whenever we can score four runs in the first inning it is nice," Merryman added. "We usually play low-scoring games so when we get a little cushion it is nice."

Shadyside sent nine to the plate in the first inning uprising that started with a single and stolen base by Miranda Lappert.

Merryman then sacrificed her to third and Shayla Holenka brought her home with a single.

Ashley Elliott then doubled and Alisha Brown's sacrifice fly brought in Holenka. After Jessica Clendenin walked Jill Lytton scored Elliott with a single.

Freshman Brittany Wallace added a run-scoring single to cap the inning.

Shadyside added three more runs in the second inning as Lappert started the frame with a single before Merryman walked. Holenka scored one run with a sacrifice fly and Elliott brought home another with a single.

Lytton put the finishing touches on the inning with a run-scoring double.

Christina Shunk started the third inning with a single and pinch-runner Lindsay Jovicic later scored on Holenka's base hit.

Shadyside added three more runs in the fourth inning thanks to a two-run error and Merryman's run-scoring infield single that bounced off the leg of the Cameron pitcher.

"We were a little concerned with Cameron," Merryman said. "We had never seen them play and they have had some close games with some pretty good teams, so we wanted to come out and be aggressive at the plate and play good defense."

"I thought we played very well in the field," Merryman added. "We got another solid pitching performance and backed it with good defense."

Merryman finished with 11 strikeouts and no walks. She allowed just three hits.

Shadyside will return to action tonight in a regular season game against Linsly at the J.B. Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

Linescore:

Cameron 000 10 - 1 3 3
Shadyside 431 3x - 11 12 1

BATTERIES: Tustin and Morris; Merryman and Elliott.



OVAC Linescores

MONROE 3 STEUBENVILLE CC 1

Monroe Central 201 000 0 - 3 5 3

Steubenville CC 000 010 0 - 1 4 2

BATTERIES: Brown and Huffman;

Hitchcock and Gould.

ST. JOHN'S 3 SHADYSIDE 0

Shadyside 000 000 0 - 0 3 1

St. John Central 000 003 x - 3 5 1

BATTERIES: Merryman and Lyles;

Johnson and Swartz.

MAGNOLIA 3 BELLAIRE 0

Magnolia 001 020 0 - 3 6 0

Bellaire 000 000 0 - 0 3 1

BATTERIES: Scheibelhood, Keene

(2) and Berker. Coulter and Delbert.

PIRATES SWEEP

Houston's Wade Miller threw 7 1/3 shutout innings as the Astros beat the Pirates for the third time in three days/20

The Intelligencer SPORTS

FRIDAY
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OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE SOFTBALL SEMIFINALS

A Day At The Park

Patriots sprint past Buckeye Local, 8-1

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

For Buckeye Local coach Barry Closser, it was just one of those days.

Heading into Thursday afternoon's OVAC Class AAAA softball semifinal against Wheeling Park, the Panthers had won nine out of their last 10 games and had been holding opponents to less than two runs per contest.

Inside

■ Complete rundown of Thursday's prep action.

Page 21

The tide changed drastically against the Patriots.

Coach Dee Davis' squad plated three runs during the opening frame and pitcher Mindy Haberfield did a superb job on the mound as Park advanced to the conference championship game with an impressive 8-1 victory at the Chambers I-470 Complex.

The Patriots (17-3) will face John Marshall for the crown Saturday at 10:30 a.m. at I-470.

The Monarchs defeated Steubenville 11-6 in Thursday's other semifinal tilt.

"Basically, it wasn't our day," said Closser, who's Panthers dropped to 16-6 on the season.

"You have to give Park a lot of credit because they didn't get here by not having a good team.

Please See PARK, Page 21



Wheeling Park's Julie Holeczy is tagged by Buckeye Local's Amanda Brown during their OVAC Class AAAA softball semifinal game Thursday at I-470 Chambers Complex. The Patriots gained an 8-1 victory.

Photo by Scott McCloskey

Red With Glee

Steubenville bashes out 20 runs in victory over St. Clairsville

By JIM ELLIOTT
Staff Writer

The mere mention of the word tournament is enough to raise batting averages and lower earned run averages when it comes to Big Red baseball.

After a two-week stretch in which it looked like it was losing its grip, Steubenville opened the Ohio Division II sectional tournament by banging out 13 hits in a 20-5 whitewashing of St. Clairsville (10-12) Thursday evening at Vaccaro Field.

Big Red scored nine runs in the first inning,

chasing St. Clairsville starter Casey Tennant after he'd thrown 49 pitches and gotten just one out.

A pair of errors and four walks by Tennant were the biggest contributors to the Red Devils' downfall, as Steubenville (12-10) had just four hits in the inning.

All of this came against a team that Big Red lost to exactly a week earlier by a 13-3 count.

"We don't talk about the past," Steubenville coach Fred Heatherington said. "This is tournament time, and we just try to get ready to play and play hard. If we can go seven or more innings playing hard, we've got a shot. And that's all we talked about."

The conversation will now turn to Beaver Local, which beat

Sectional Baseball

■ Monroe Central stuns River in a Division IV contest.

Page 21

Monarchs Hit When it Counts



Crusaders Run To Shutout Win

Park

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The mere mention of the word tournament is enough to raise batting averages and lower earned run averages when it comes to Big Red baseball.

After a two-week stretch in which it looked like it was losing its grip, Steubenville opened the Ohio Division II sectional tournament by banging out 13 hits in a 20-5 whitewashing of St. Clairsville (10-12) Thursday evening at Vaccaro Field.

Big Red scored nine runs in the first inning, chasing St. Clairsville starter Casey Tennant after he'd thrown 49 pitches and gotten just one out.

A pair of errors and four walks by Tennant were the biggest contributors to the Red Devils' downfall, as Steubenville (12-10) had just four hits in the inning.

All of this came against a team that Big Red lost to exactly a week earlier by a 13-3 count.

"We don't talk about the past," Steubenville coach Fred Heatherington said. "This is tournament time, and we just try to get ready to play and play hard. If we can go seven or more innings playing hard, we've got a shot. And that's all we talked about."

The conversation will now turn to Beaver Local, which beat Cambridge 9-3 in the earlier game. Big Red and Beaver Local will play Tuesday at Vaccaro in the sectional co-final.

In St. Clairsville, they'll be discussing a first inning that quickly turned into a disaster.

"That was a perfect example of our season, we were up and down all year," said St. Clairsville coach Tom Sliva. "They just gained so much momentum and our kids get so down, and it just widens that gap. It's not like just one team moves in that situation, both teams move and the problem is they both move further apart."

Big Red starter Tom Brown worked three perfect innings to start the game, making the two teams look like they were from different planets.

Please See RED, Page 23

Sectional Baseball

■ Monroe Central stuns River in a Division IV contest.

Page 21

Monarchs Hit When it Counts

John Marshall defeats Steubenville; Park next

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

With the West Virginia Class AAA softball sectional tournament set to begin Monday afternoon, big-school rivals John Marshall and Wheeling Park will give their fans a preview Saturday morning.

However, there will be a twist: The OVAC Class AAAA championship banner will be on the line in the 10:30 a.m. title tilt.

Thursday night coach Pancho Flores' Monarchs pounded out 11 hits while taking advantage of eight walks and four Steubenville errors as John Marshall raced to an 11-6

victory over Steubenville at the Chambers I-470 fields.

In improving to 12-8, John Marshall will be looking for revenge, having lost a pair of regular season outings to coach Dee Davis' Patriots.

"Park is a very, very good team with two nice pitchers and they can hit the ball a ton," Flores admitted. "You go down their lineup and all nine hitters can pound the ball hard."

"We are going to have to play very well to beat them with no errors or walks and if we do make mistakes we will have to look past them."

Last night it was Big Red mistakes that made the difference, with the Monarchs getting big hits when they needed them.

Please See MONARCHS, Page 21



OVAC Finals
all games Saturday
at I-470 Complex

Class AAAA
Wheeling Park
vs. John Marshall, 10:30 a.m.

Class AAA
Bellair vs.
Magnolia, 3:45 p.m.

Class AA
Monroe Central
vs. Steubenville Central, 2 p.m.

Class A
Shadyside vs.
Bell. St. John's, 12:15 p.m.

Crusaders Run To Shutout Win

Steubenville Central advances to title game

By MIKE HUGHES
Staff Writer

When the bottom half of the fourth inning rolled around, Steubenville Central coach Jacki Rossi was starting to wonder if her team was ever going to score.

In each of the first three innings, the Crusaders had gotten a baserunner to third, only to watch Wellsville pitcher Gabrielle Burns shut the door.

But the Central bats finally got to the Tiger ace, as the Crusaders put five runners across in the fifth inning en route to a 7-0 blanking of Wellsville in an OVAC Class AA semifinal Thursday at the I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

"The more it happened, the more

More Preps

Linescores from Thursday's prep softball and baseball action.

Page 22

of a sick feeling I got," Rossi said of her teams inability to score early. "I started to feel like we were snakebitten, but I knew if we could string a couple of hits together and a bunt or two, we would get it together."

Central finally did get it together in the fourth, resulting in five runs on just two hits.

Please See CRUSADERS, Page 23

Crusaders

(Continued from Page 19)

Megan Gould led off the inning with a walk, and advanced to second when Meredith Hitchcock reached safely at first on an attempted sacrifice bunt.

Jessica Elias reached first safely at first on a grounder, bringing home Alexis Ferrera, who came in to run for Gould.

Hillary Jones then hit an RBI single, and following a strikeout of Mia Zamana, Kimmy Straker stroked a single that brought home two more.

"I usually don't praise Meredith on her bunting, but that bunt in the fifth inning really kicked things off for us," Rossi said.

Kelliann Calabria brought home the final run, giving the Crusaders a 5-0 lead, but with the way Hitchcock was pitching, one run was enough.

And with the way starting pitcher Meredith Hitchcock was pitching, one run was enough.

Tries as they might, the Tigers couldn't quite get a beat, or a hit, off of Hitchcock. Through seven innings of work, the Crusader senior struck out 13 batters, walked three, and never surrendered as she fired her third no-hitter of the season.

Hitchcock's strikeout total gives her 502 for her career, yet Fridays performance was far from her best.

She did walk three batters, and

two of those were four-pitch free passes, but it wasn't her mechanics that were to blame.

"It was an OK day for Meredith, but she was battling from behind in the count too much, Rossi said. "She was rushing her pitches too much, it wasn't her mechanics, and that's something we talked about with her after the game.

"It's easily correctable."

It wasn't that Hitchcock was overpowering with her fastball, that she was, but she also spotted her pitches well.

Of her 13 strikeouts, Wellsville was caught looking at strike three five times.

The win sets up the anticipated rematch between Steubenville Central and Monroe Central. Last season, the Seminoles knocked out the Crusaders in the district finals.

"This (win) gives us the opportunity to win an OVAC championship," Rossi said. "Its up to the girls and how well they execute (on Saturday)."

Class A Semifinal

Bellaire St. John 2, Linsly 1

Behind the pitching of Meghan Johnson and some solid defense, Bellaire St. John was able to hang on to a one-run lead to defeat Linsly.

The victory for St. John sets up a meeting between two small-school powers, as the Fighting

Irish will take on Shadyside in a Class A championship game.

Bellaire St. John head coach Jerry Magistro had a feeling coming in that his squad needed to play a near-flawless game against Linsly, and the Cadets made them fight down to the wire.

"Linsly is a tough team this time of year, Magistro said. "They come on strong and play everybody good. They knocked a good Frontier team out (of the OVAC tournament) and Parsons is a real good pitcher.

"I'm glad to see this is her last year."

A lot of teams likewise would say the same thing about Johnson, and against the Cadets, she was nearly untouchable.

She surrendered only three hits — all singles — and struck out nine Linsly batters.

Linsly didn't get many scoring chances, and when it did, Johnson was up to the task, getting Kaleigh Parsons to ground out in the first inning with runners on first and second, and struck out summer Flowers in the second with a runner in scoring position.

All told, Linsly left four runners stranded in scoring position, with the only slight against Johnson coming when the Cadets finally got one run across in the fifth inning.

Justine Wilson reached first on a one-out single, and later scored

on a fielders choice grounder to third from Ashley Neal.

St. John meanwhile had plenty of opportunities to score early, but was hardly able to capitalize.

The Irish loaded the bases in the first inning, but came away with only one run when Johnson walked with the bases loaded to bring home Lorraine Skorich with two outs. Kilaie Parsons got Bri Donaher to pop-up to short to end the inning relatively unscathed.

St. John only other run came in the fourth inning when Brienne Boughers bunt single brought home Johnson to make the score 2-0. The Fighting Irish left five runners stranded in scoring position.

"We had a lot of kids on base and we couldn't find ways to score them Magistro said. "But sometimes that happens, you hit the ball right at someone or things just don't go your way.

Timely hits will be important Saturday when Johnson and St. John take on Lisa Merryman and Shadyside. One right might be all it takes.

"Merryman and Meghan are both horses as far as pitching goes, and Merryman has been on a pretty good roll, Magistro said. "It will be another one of those games.

"We have to come ready to play."

Park

(Continued from Page 19)

"Early on in the first couple of innings we could have battled back and got back in it. But we left a lot of runners stranded."

All told, the Panthers left five runners astray during the first two innings.

While Buckeye Local was struggling to get runners home, the Patriots got to Panthers' starting hurler Casey Magyar right off the bat.

Jen Mitchell started off the bottom half of the first with a walk. She would later move to second on a passed ball.

With one out, Kylie Earliwine took advantage as she rapped a single to score Mitchell and give Park the early 1-0 lead.

Jil Wright, who struggled somewhat during Wednesday's 4-3 loss to Magnolia, stepped to the plate next and promptly blasted a Magyar offering over the left centerfield fence to give the home team a 3-0 advantage.

While she doesn't like to lose, Davis said Wednesday's loss to the Blue Eagles sparked something in her team that was evident Thursday.

Monarchs

(Continued from Page 19)

The Marshall Countians took an early 2-0 lead after three with sophomore Vanessa Ilovar chasing home one run on a fielder's choice and one on a long triple.

But both starting pitchers ran into self-caused trouble in the fourth frame.

John Marshall starter Jade White walked three, allowed an RBI-single to Vanessa Clark and watched Steubenville take advantage of a fielder's choice and an error in plating four for a 4-2 upperhand.

But Big Red freshman hurler Shay Jackson gave the lead right

"I think they were getting a little bit too confident," Davis lamented. "I'm not glad we lost (to Magnolia) but I think it helped us a lot and got some momentum going."

Buckeye Local put together a nice two-out rally in the top of the second inning.

Catcher Amanda Brown dropped a single down the left-field line with two away. Gina Hicks followed with a walk and Janelle Windsheimer, running for Brown, moved to second.

Kristine Mayle next laid down a beautiful bunt. She stepped on the first base bag just in time and the Panthers had the bases juiced.

Megan Bartrug then drew a walk to score Windsheimer to make it a 3-1 game.

The next batter, Kristen King, then flied out to end the threat.

Buckeye Local would not be able to muster another scoring threat, thanks to Haberfield, who tossed five strikeouts in picking up the complete-game victory.

In fact, the hurler allowed just one hit and walked just one during the final five frames.

"She pitched a really nice game," Davis said. "She had a really nice fielding game, too."

During the last five innings, the Patriots' infield defense was responsible for 13 of the last 15 outs. This included four Ks by Haberfield. Of that 13, six were fly ball outs.

"We did a nice job with our interior defense," Davis noted. "We didn't hurt ourselves on errors, we didn't hurt ourselves on walks and we hit the ball when there were people on base."

Wheeling Park sealed the deal with a four-run outburst in the bottom of the fourth, highlighted by an RBI-double by Sampson.

Magyar was replaced during that inning by Tabettha Gretchen, who finished the game without allowing a hit or a walk.

MaryBeth Joseph finished with two singles for the Patriots, while Rachel Ball, Sarah Griffith, Mitchell and Earliwine all tallied singles.

Mayle recorded two singles for Buckeye Local, which also received singles from Gretchen and Brown.

had only one strikeout and issued eight free passes.

Ilovar had a single, double and three RBIs for the winners while junior Samantha Stout singled, doubled and chased home a pair. Whitney Petrella tripled a run home Karly Saccoccia had an RBI double.

"Our defense got us out of a couple of key situations with nice plays also," Flores said. "Jade struggled a little with the strike zone, and I think she had trouble getting used to the umpire's area.

"She normally pitches pretty well, I think she just got a little frustrated tonight."

OVAC softball semifinals

• Bellaire, Magnolia, Shadyside, Monroe earn OVAC wins

By GREG HARKNESS
Times Leader Sports Writer

Half of the eight teams are set.

Four teams advanced to Saturday's OVAC Championship games in action Tuesday night at the J.B. Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

The only final set is in Class 3-A where Bellaire will oppose Magnolia for the crown.

Monroe Central advanced to the Class 2-A championship, while Shadyside will make an appearance in Class 1-A.

The rest of the field will be determined Thursday night at 4:30 p.m. as St. John Central plays Linsly in Class 1-A and Buckeye Local battles Wheeling Park in Class 4-A.

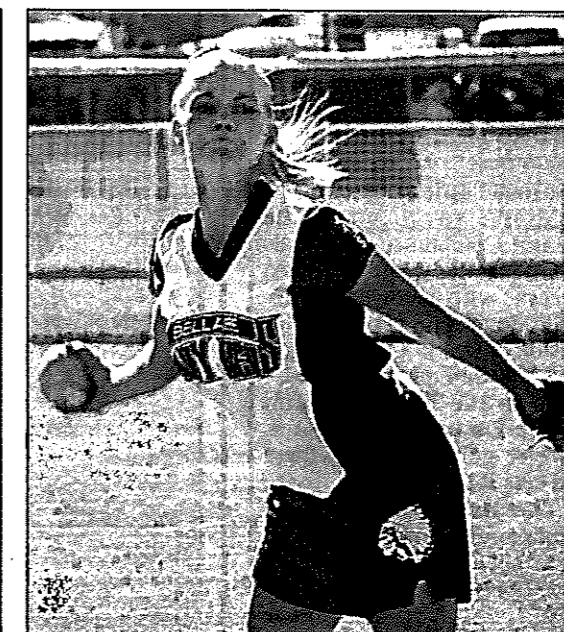
At 6:30 p.m., Steubenville Central faces Wellsville in Class 1-A and Steubenville opposes John Marshall in Class 4-A.

The finals will be Saturday afternoon with times to be determined at the I-470 Complex.

SHADYSIDE'S Lisa Merryman outduelled Beallsville's Charity Street and senior Jessica Clendenin came up with the game-winning RBI as the Tigers advanced with a 1-0 win.

"It was a great pitched game," Shadyside head coach Tim Merryman, who picked up his 100th career victory, said. "In the later innings, we started making better contact and I thought it was just a matter of time before we got a break."

Street held the Tigers (12-4) hitless until the bottom of the seventh inning as catcher Ashley Elliott reached on a single and moved into scoring position on a single from freshman Jill Lytton.



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Street held the Tigers (12-4) hitless until the bottom of the seventh inning as catcher Ashley Elliott reached on a single and moved into scoring position on a single from freshman Jill Lytton.

Clendenin then came through with a single to left to plate the winning run.

"Elliott got things started with a base hit, then a pair of kids really came up big," Merryman said. "Jill Lytton has been hitting the ball very hard and Clendenin came through with a huge hit."

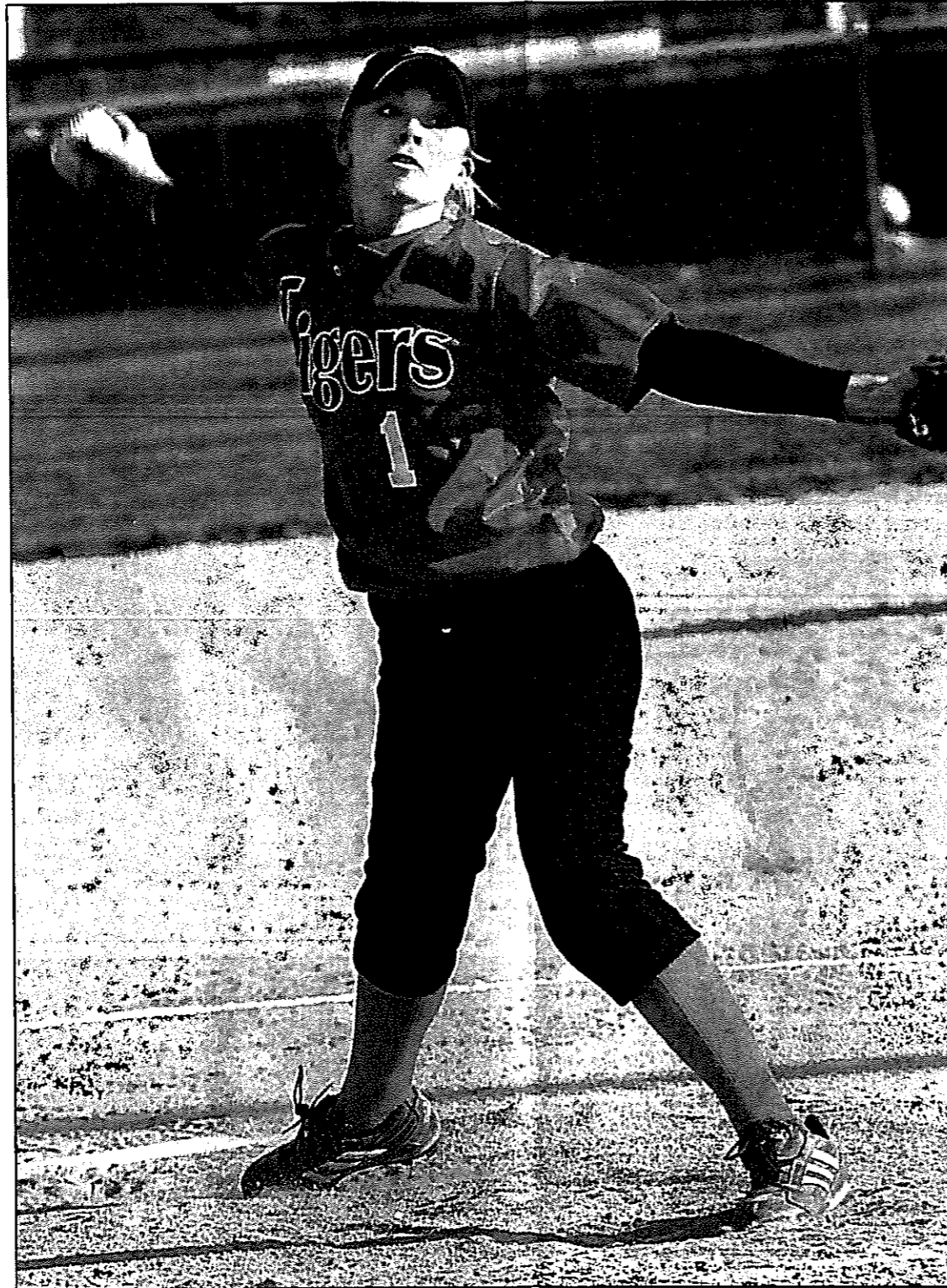
Merryman was superb, limiting the Blue Devils to a Charity Street double. She fanned 16 and did not permit a walk.

Street, meanwhile, was equally sharp in allowing just three hits. She fanned seven and walked a pair.

"We have battled Charity for four years and we have to do it again tomorrow (today)," Merryman said. "And it seems like every time we play, it is a one-run game and I expect the same thing."

The two teams will waste little time getting to know each other as the schools square off today in Ohio sectional play at Shadyside. First pitch is set for 5 p.m.

See, OVAC, Page B2



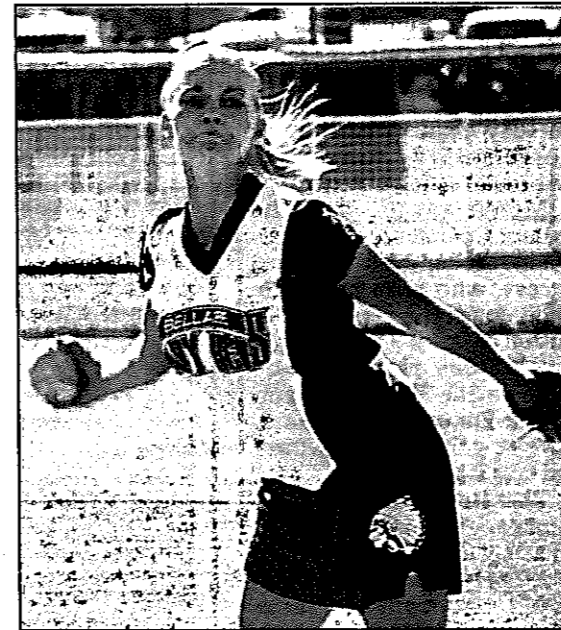
T-L Photos/MICHAEL HARVILLA

ABOVE: Shadyside's Lisa Merryman fires a pitch to the plate against Beallsville in OVAC Class 1-A semifinal game at J.B. Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove. Merryman had 16 strikeouts in a 1-0 victory.

TOP RIGHT: Bellaire's Amanda Coulter winds up to deliver a pitch against St. Clairsville.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Monroe Central's Ashley Kuhn takes a pitch against Wheeling Central.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Martins Ferry's Jessica Hilton scores as Magnolia catcher Chelsea Barker awaits the throw.



Heat, Kings in

MIAMI (AP) — Young experienced, the Miami were supposed to wilt the unfamiliar pressure of 7.

ad, they ran the New Hornets right out of the playoffs.

A potent fast break led an early lead, the tended their home win streak to 16 games a night by beating the 85-77 to take the series 4-3.

Miami advanced to the Conference semifinals the top-seeded Indiana who have been idle completing a sweep of on April 25.

"I can play with anyone in the East," Miami Dwyane Wade said, going to go up there it to them."

Heat will travel to Dallas for Game 1 on Tuesday night. "They're a dangerous team," the Hornets' Baron Reid said. "If I was Indiana, I'd be nervous playing this team. They're talented, and they've got nothing we can't handle."

The only other game of the night, Sacramento defeated Minnesota 104-98 in Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinal series.

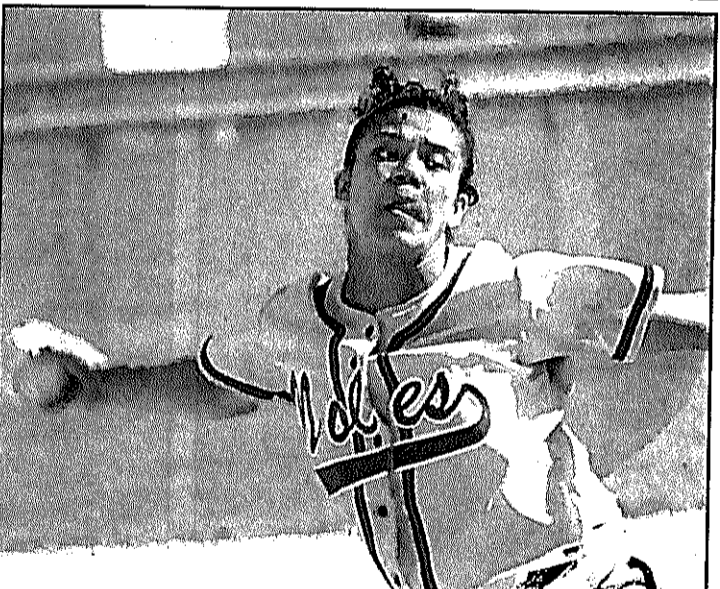
In other second-round action, the Los Angeles Lakers defeated the San Antonio Spurs in Game 2 Wednesday night, and the Detroit Pistons will play the second game Friday night against the Spurs and Pistons leads after home victory.

14, Timberwolves 98 in Minneapolis. Mike Cassell scored 33 points for the Timberwolves against the Minnesota Timberwolves, who averaged 23.6 points a five-game victory as in the first round, 21-21 from the field. Cassell scored 40 points for the Timberwolves. Arnett, who held up the trophy in a pregame ceremony after remarks by Commissioner David Stern, scored a quiet 16 points on rebounds — plus six assists.

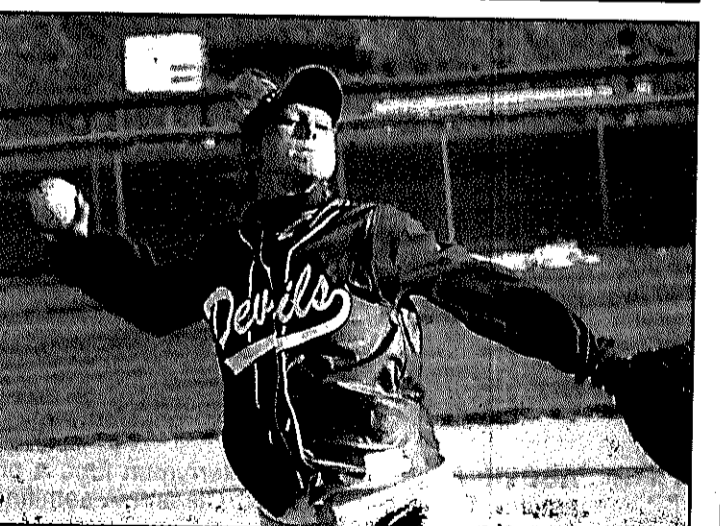
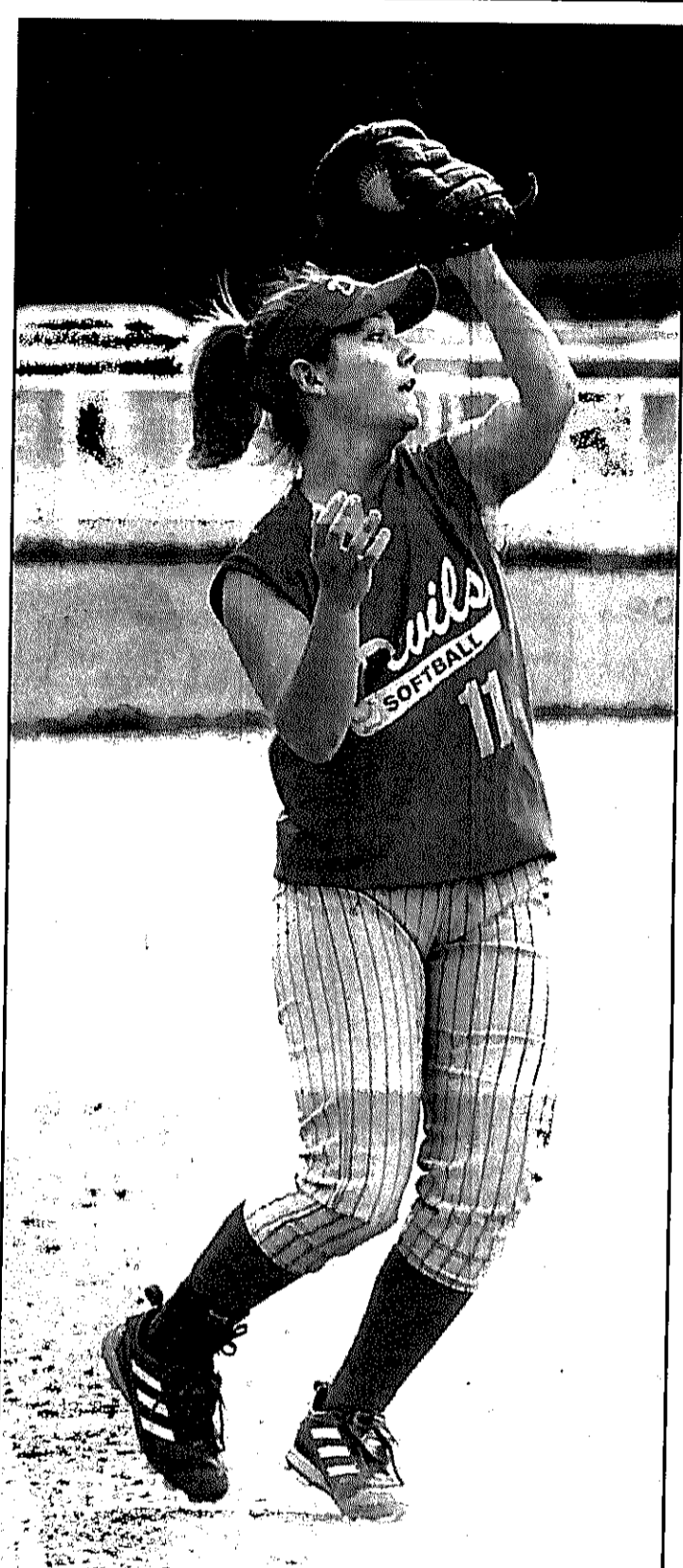
Game 2 is Saturday night.

ctional —
Continued from Page B1

and walk, followed by a runner placed runners at first and third with one out. The batter attempted to intentionally walk Josh Samples, set the play at the plate.



TOP LEFT: Martins Ferry's Angie Cerasoli delivers a pitch versus Magnolia in OVAC Class 3-A semifinal action at the J.B. Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.
TOP RIGHT: St. Clairsville's Beth Schroeder hauls in a pop up against Bellaire in 3-A action.
ABOVE: Monroe Central's LeeKycia Brown prepares to unleash a pitch against Wheeling Central.
RIGHT: Beallsville's Charity Street winds up to deliver against Shadyside in 1-A action.



● Shadyside

Continued from Page B1

moved to third on two outs, Wallace was able to get on the plate on a Josh Coulter wild pitch to knot the score.

Wellsville was held by Shadyside the following two innings, but the Shadyside team took on eight runs to deal.

Wellsville would score runs in the top half of the fifth, but Meintel would be solid to earn the complete victory.

Meintel earned the victory the distance striking out and walking two for Shadyside while Congrove took the loss for Wellsville.

Leading Shadyside pitcher was Wallace with a double and two RBI, while Josh Coulter cracked a double and run. Meintel aided his cause with two singles, while Sadlowski and Ryan each ripped singles. Evans also produced a RBI in the evening.

Linescore:
Wellsville 000 100 2-3 4 6
Shadyside 000 135 x-9 6

BATTERIES: Congrove/Reynolds; Meintel and Stevens
IN THE NIGHTCAP: Central pounded out 12 runs, Conotton Valley did the same the Irish three better as the Irish ripped the cover off of the ball knocking off the Goshute White by a score of 12-5.

The Bowerstown school will now move on to compete with Shadyside on Tuesday in the lower bracket championship in Toronto at 6 p.m.

Things were looking good for the Irish in the first inning when John Central took a 3-1 lead hammering the ball off of starter Eric Leggett. Conotton Valley had other chances as they came back with vengeance to knock off Central in resounding fashion.

For Central coach Don, it just wasn't meant to be. Conotton was just hitting where the St. John's defense weren't.

"Conotton Valley didn't hit us by much, but they hit the ball exactly where we weren't playing," admitted "They nailed a few on our heads, and we made a few errors to help them along."

"We made a few mental mistakes as well," said Gillis. "We had a few guys get picked off base paths, but those things happen in the game of baseball. Those things happen, and we weren't meant to win today."

The Rockets jumped to a scoreboard first in the top of the opening inning as Yosick scored on an error by Johnnies. Yosick had reached base by cranking a double.

In the bottom half of the inning, St. John's bats were re-energized as Andy Jingle led off the top of the bottom half with a double, and just two batters later senior Bryan nailed an absolute bomb 370-feet over the left-field fence for a two-run home run. Dustin Kolanski reached t

● OVAC

Continued from Page B1

Linescore:
Beallsville 000 000 0 - 0 1 0
Shadyside 000 000 1 - 1 3 1

BATTERIES: Street and Schumacher; Merryman and Elliott.
MONROE Central continued its defense of the Class 2-A title with a 7-0 win over Wheeling Central.
The win improved Monroe Central to a spotless 20-0 on the season.

"Coulter was really ready to go," Bellaire head coach Melissa Kaldor said. "I can't say enough about her. I think she gets stronger as the game goes on."

Bellaire (13-6) was led by senior Crystal Ware, who smoked two doubles and added a single to plate a pair of runs.

The Big Reds received two hits each from Hillary Bosold, Jen Riela and Sarah Delbert. Bosold ripped a triple and also plated a

● **UVAC**

Continued from Page B1

Linescore:
 Beallsville 000 000 0 -- 0 1 0
 Shadyside 000 000 1 -- 1 3 1
 BATTERIES: Street and Schumacher; Merryman and Elliott.

MONROE Central continued its defense of the Class 2-A title with a 7-0 win over Wheeling Central.

The win improved Monroe Central to a spotless 20-0 on the season.

The Seminoles scored a run in the bottom of the first as senior Anna Blair tripled and scored on senior shortstop Ashley Kuhn's single.

Monroe Central put together a five-run fifth inning keyed by a two-run double from Whitney Wright and run-scoring double from Kayln Donley.

"Our lineup is strong enough where we are capable of having a big inning at any time," Monroe Central head coach Ted Brown said. "I was happy with our defense. We are starting to play well and the right time."

Junior ace LeeKycia Brown picked up the win in the circle. She had no walks and fanned nine, which gave her better than 200 strikeouts on the season.

"She had a couple of bad pitches on 0-2 counts and that won't make dad too happy, but we will get over it," Brown said with a grin.

Jewell Jones and Chrissy Schumacher finished with two hits each for the Seminoles.

Wheeling Central (16-4) received hits from Kayla Gray and Angela Petros.

"We had a couple of great games with Steubenville Central last year, so if they win I am sure there will be a lot of people here to see that one," Brown said. "Steubenville Central is a great team. They are well-coached and are a very good hitting team."

Linescore:
 Wheeling Central 000 000 0 -- 0 2 2
 Monroe Central 100 051 x -- 7 8 2
 BATTERIES: Jones, Garan (5) and Orkoskey; Brown and Huffman.

DEFENDING 3-A champion Bellaire blistered the ball in a 12-0 six inning victory over St. Clairsville.

The fine hitting backed a solid pitching performance from junior Amanda Coulter. She fanned five and did not walk a batter.

"Coulter was really ready to go," Bellaire head coach Melissa Kaldor said. "I can't say enough about her. I think she gets stronger as the game goes on."

Bellaire (13-6) was led by senior Crystal Ware, who smoked two doubles and added a single to plate a pair of runs.

The Big Reds received two hits each from Hillary Bosold, Jen Biela and Sarah Delbert. Bosold ripped a triple and also plated a run.

"The last few games, a couple of tough losses, we haven't hit the ball well," Kaldor said. "I told the girls today the name of the game was to hit the ball and they responded."

Bellaire also backed Coulter with spotless defense.

"I think that was the first time all season that we have not committed an error," Kaldor explained. "We played hard and ran the bases aggressively."

Beth Schroeder smacked a double for the Red Devils (10-8). Amy Drake donated a base knock.

Bellaire opens Ohio sectional play tonight at 5 p.m. against Barnesville at Cambridge City Park.

Linescore:
 Bellaire 142 104 -- 12 13 0
 St. Clairsville 000 000 -- 0 2 4

BATTERIES: Akers, Stewart (5) and Myers; Coulter and Delbert.

MAGNOLIA took advantage of seven Martins Ferry errors en route to picking up a 10-4 victory.

The Blue Eagles (16-10) overcame 10 walks and six errors of its own.

Sophomore Ashley McSweeney drilled a double, a triple and plated a run. Senior Kristen Scheibelhood added two hits, including a double, and plated two runs.

Junior standout Rachel Mason roped a triple and drove in a run, while Paige DeMarco also added a triple and drove in a run.

Brooke Keene earned the pitching win despite the 10 walks.

Sophomore Ashley Suto led Martins Ferry (15-5) with two singles. Kelsey Carpenter added a base hit for the Riders.

Linescore:
 Magnolia 022 024 0 -- 10 9 6
 Martins Ferry 011 110 0 -- 4 3 7

BATTERIES: Keene and Barker; Cerasoli, Barkey (6) and Oliver.



Buckeye Local nips Brooke in OVAC softball tournament

• Top-seeded Ferry, St. John's, SCC triumph; Edison ousted

AT CONNORVILLE, Amanda Brown singled in the game-winning run as Buckeye Local advanced into OVAC Class 4-A semifinal action after a 4-3 victory over Brooke Wednesday night.

Sophomore Casey Magyar earned the pitching victory with a complete game four-hitter. Magyar fanned four and walked four for Coach Barry Closser's team.

Magyar added a double at the plate, while senior standout Kristen King had a pair of triples. Gina Hicks added an RBI for the Panthers.

Buckeye Local, now 11-4, also received two singles from Kristine Mayle.

Brooke (6-10) was led by Amy Bullock with a single, double and a RBI. Rae Ann Klein donated a run-scoring for the Bruins.

The Panthers are back in action tonight at John Marshall for a 5 p.m. start.

Buckeye Local will oppose second-seeded Wheeling Park



T-L Photo/MICHAEL HARVILLA

ST. JOHN Central freshman Amanda Rosepapa fires a pitch to the plate Wednesday against Bishop Donahue in Bellaire. Rosepapa recorded a one-hitter in a 4-1 victory.

● Softball

Continued from Page B1

next week in OVAC semifinal action at the J.B. Chambers/1-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

PARK 13, EAST LIVERPOOL 0

AT WHEELING, the host Patriots rolled to a 13-0 victory over East Liverpool Wednesday.

Amy Sampson led the Park attack with a single, double and one RBI.

Mindy Haberfield earned the pitching victory with nine strikeouts and two walks. She also aided her cause with a run-scoring double.

Wheeling Park now opposes Buckeye Local.

STEUBENVILLE 3, EDISON 1

AT RICHMOND, Steubenville pulled off the tournament's biggest upset as Big Red took advantage of an injury to Edison ace Lakeyn Bendle to pull off the 3-1 victory.

Shay Jackson went the distance to earn the victory. She fanned five and walked two, while helping her own cause at the plate with a single, triple and a RBI.

OVAC CLASS 3-A

BELLAIRE 3, HARRISON 1

AT NEFFS, Bellaire got a strong pitching effort from Amanda Coulter in a 3-1 victory over Harrison Central Wednesday night.

Coulter went the route with seven strikeouts and one walk.

Sarah Delbert had a two-run double for the Big Reds (12-6). Tara Whitely added a run-scoring single, while Nikki Driscoll, Michelle Tomlan and Jenn Biela also had

hits.

Stephanie Cunningham had two doubles, while Ashley Doren added a single, double and drove in the lone run.

Bellaire will face St. Clairsville next week in OVAC semifinal action.

FERRY 3, MEADOWBROOK 1

AT MARTINS FERRY, Angie Cerasoli limited Meadowbrook to three hits in a 3-1 victory Wednesday night.

Cerasoli fanned five and walked three to earn the victory.

Megan Anzak had a single and a double with a RBI. Tracey Canter and Lynsey Agnew added a run-scoring single.

Katie Lee plated a run with a triple, while Kristen Harrison had a double for the Colts.

Martins Ferry (12-4) will host Bridgeport tonight. The Riders will play the winner of Magnolia-Oak Glen next week in OVAC semifinal action.

ST. CLAIRSVILLE 5, UL 1

AT ST. CLAIRSVILLE, Brittany Akers and Beth Schroeder sparked the host Red Devils to a 5-1 victory over Union Local Wednesday night.

Akers allowed just three hits with six strikeouts and three walks.

Schroeder plated three runs with a single and a double. Amy Drake added a run-scoring double.

Megan Jack had a single and a double for the Jets.

St. Clairsville, now 10-6, will visit Barnesville tonight. The Red Devils will play Bellaire next week in the OVAC semifinals.

OVAC CLASS 2-A

SCC 10, BUCKEYE TRAIL 0

AT STEUBENVILLE, Meredith Hitchcock just missed a no-hitter as Steubenville Central rolled to a 10-0 victory over Buckeye Trail.

Hitchcock permitted just one hit -- a seventh-inning, two-out double to Nicky Miller. Hitchcock finished with 15 strikeouts and one walk.

Megan Gould plated a run with two singles, while Kimmy Straker (two singles) and Tessa Valerio (single, double) also had two hits.

Steubenville Central, now 16-1, visits Harrison Central Friday night. The Crusaders will play the winner of Wellsville-Toronto next week in the OVAC semifinals.

WHEELING CENTRAL 5, RIVER 4

AT ELM GROVE, Wheeling Central scored a run in the bottom of the seventh to pick up a 5-4 victory.

Andi Burke plated the game-winning run with a sacrifice fly in the decisive seventh.

Wheeling Central (16-3) will next face Monroe Central next week in the OVAC semifinals.

Mariah Hulsey had two singles and a

double for the Pilots, while Katie Jones added a two-run single.

OVAC CLASS 1-A

BEALLSVILLE 6, MADONNA 2

AT BEALLSVILLE, the host Blue Devils evened their record at 9-9 on the season with a 6-2 victory over Weirton Madonna Wednesday.

Charity Street posted the pitching win with five strikeouts and one walk. She added two singles and a triple with two RBIs.

Jamie Ankrom donated a triple and a single to drive home a run. Jennifer Reisz added two base hits.

Weirton Madonna received two singles from Jaime Setcavage.

Beallsville will oppose the winner of tonight's Shadyside-Cameron game next week in the OVAC semifinals. Beallsville will visit Fort Frye Friday night in regular season action.

ST. JOHN'S 4, BISHOP DONAHUE 1

AT BELLAIRE, St. John Central got strong effort from freshman Amanda Rosepapa in the circle as the Fighting Irish advanced past Bishop Donahue, 4-1.

Rosepapa limited the Bishops to just one hit while fanning eight and walking none.

Marissa DeClemente doubled in a run, while Amber Irwin, Megan Johnson and Ellie Swartz added run-scoring singles.

Jenn Hill had a run-scoring single for Bishop Donahue.

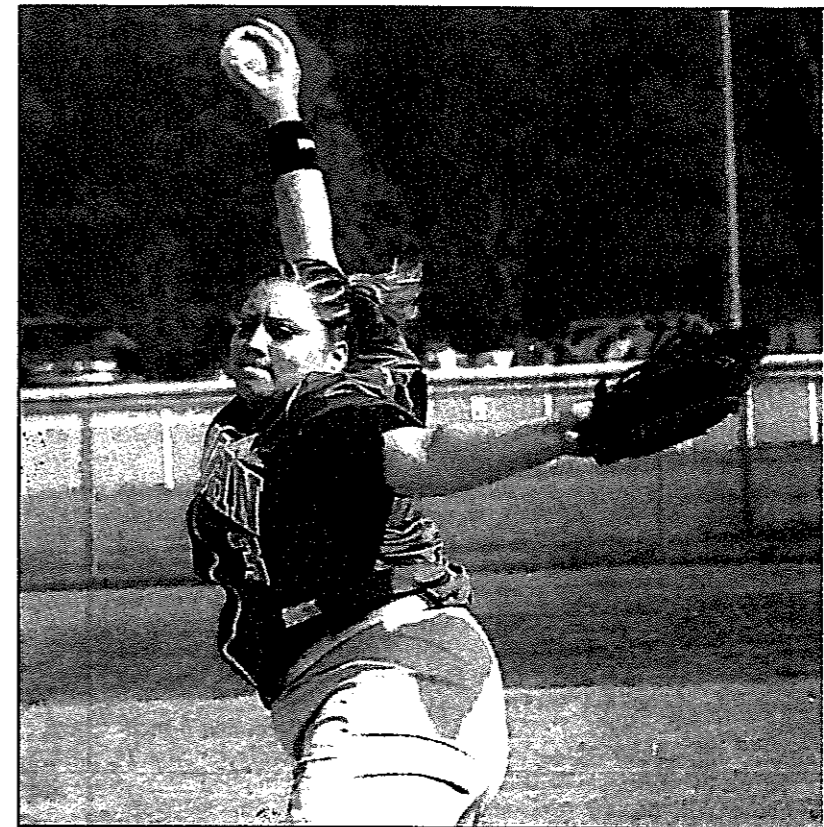
St. John Central will face Linsly next week in OVAC semifinal action.

OVAC Softball

OVAC CLASS 4-A	
BUCKEYE LOCAL 4 BROOKE 3	Brooke 101 010 0 - 3 4 3
Buckeye Local 100 111 x - 4 9 2	BATTERIES: Visco and Felton; Magyar and Brown.
OVAC CLASS 3-A	
BELLAIRE 3, HARRISON CENTRAL 1	Harrison Central 010 000 0 - 1 9 0
Bellaire 000 012 x - 3 6 3	BATTERIES: Yarrish and Cunningham; Coulter and Delbert.
FERRY 3, MEADOWBROOK 1	
Meadowbrook 100 000 0 - 1 3 0	Martins Ferry 000 300 x - 3 8 1
BATTERIES: Pine, Kasper (4) and Sichina; Cerasoli and Oliver.	
ST. CLAIRSVILLE 5, UNION LOCAL 1	
Union Local 000 000 1 - 1 3 4	St. Clairsville 110 003 x - 5 6 2
BATTERIES: Jack and Faunda; Akers and Myers.	
OVAC CLASS 2-A	
STEUB. CENTRAL 10, TRAIL 0	Buckeye Trail 000 000 0 - 0 1 4
Steubenville Cent. 500 122 x - 10 9 0	BATTERIES: Miller and Nell; Hitchcock and Gould.
WHEELING CENTRAL 5, RIVER 4	
River 000 220 0 - 4 6 3	Wheeling Central 031 000 1 - 5 10 1
BATTERIES: Semon and Cecll; Jones, Garrett (5) and Orkoskey.	
OVAC CLASS 1-A	
BEALLSVILLE 6, MADONNA 2	Weirton Madonna 020 000 0 - 2 3 3
Beallsville 011 031 x - 6 8 2	BATTERIES: Glover and Panlamilio; Street and Schumacher.
ST. JOHN'S 4, BISHOP DONAHUE 1	
Bishop Donahue 000 100 0 - 1 1 1	St. John's 000 004 x - 4 4 1
BATTERIES: Gross and Block; Rosepapa and Swartz.	

SPORTS

Friday, May 7, 2004



OVAC semis:

- Wheeling Park, St. John's, JM, SCC advance to title games

By GREG HARKNESS
Times Leader Sports Writer

The OVAC softball finals are set. The final four teams punched their tickets Thursday night in games at the J.B. Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

The finals are set for Saturday beginning with the Class 4-A championship game as John Marshall will battle Wheeling Park. First pitch is set for 10:30 a.m.

The Class 1-A championship tilt has rivals Shadyside and St. John Central squaring off. It is set for a 12:15 p.m.

The main event is set for 2 p.m. as all eyes will be on the 2-A final where undefeated Monroe Central will oppose Steubenville Central.

The day's activities conclude with the 3-A title game. Bellaire and Magnolia will start at 3:45 p.m.

ST. JOHN CENTRAL advanced with a 2-1 victory over defending Class 1-A cham-

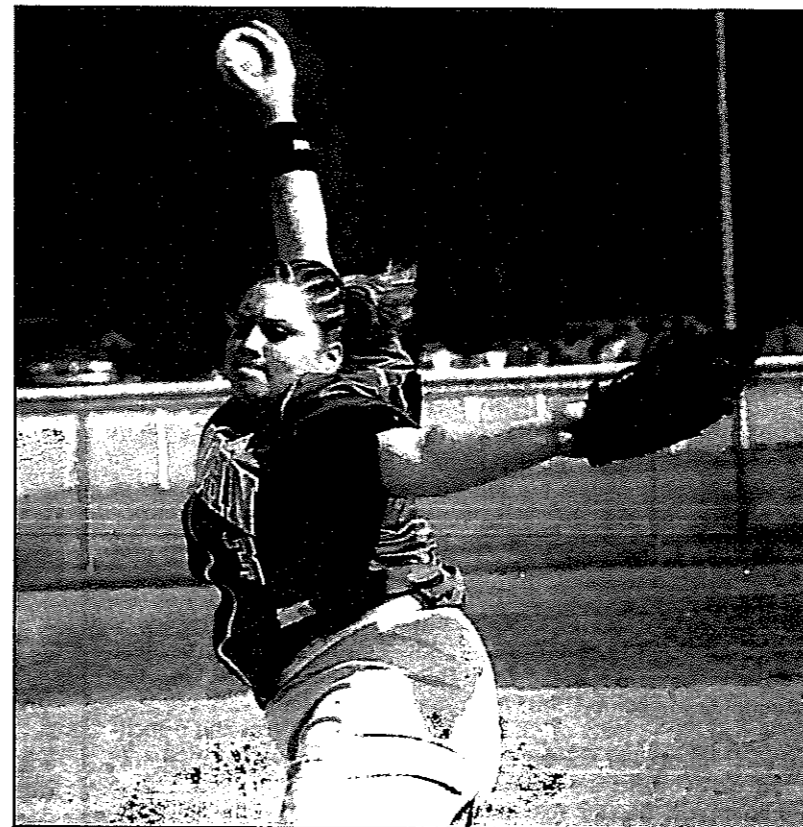




T-L Photos/MICHAEL HARVILLA

TOP PHOTO: Buckeye Local catcher Amanda Brown (left) tags out Wheeling Park's Julie Holeczy to complete a double play during action Thursday night in the OVAC Class 4-A semifinals at the J.B. Chambers/I-470 complex. Wheeling Park advanced with an 8-1 win.

TOP RIGHT: St. John Central junior Meghan Johnson delivers a pitch during action in the OVAC Class 1-A semifinals Thursday night. St. John's nipped Linsly, 2-1.



OVAC semis:

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ST. JOHN CENTRAL advanced with a 2-1 victory over defending Class 1-A champion Linsly.

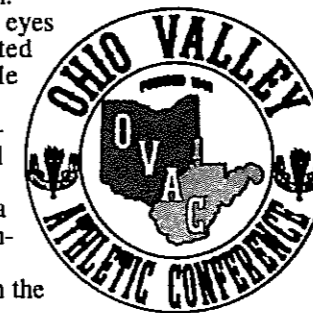
The victory improves the Irish to 15-6 on the season.

"Linsly is a tough team this time of year," St. John Central head coach Jerry Magistro said. "They come on strong and play everybody good. They knocked a good Frontier team out and (Kiliane) Parsons is a real good pitcher.

"I'm glad to see this is her last year," he added with a smile.

Junior ace Meghan Johnson was sharp again in the circle. She fanned eight and walked none while limiting the Cadets to just four hits.

St. John Central took a 1-0 lead when it loaded the bases in the first



Steubenville 3, Edison 1

At Richmond, without injured starter Lakyn Bendle, Edison (18-4) fell victim to an opportunistic Steubenville (4-10) club that has now won three straight.

Shay Jackson went the distance for Big Red, striking out five while scattering as many hits. She also singled, tripled and drove in a run.

Maelynn Johnson added an RBI single, and Whitney Petrella doubled in the win.

CLASS AAA

Martins Ferry 3, Meadowbrook 1

At Martins Ferry, Angie Cerasoli struck out five in a winning effort, pitching Martins Ferry (12-4) past Meadowbrook and into the conference semifinals next Tuesday opposite either Magnolia or Oak Glen.

Megan Anzak (double), Tracy Canter (single) and Lynsey Agnew (single) all plated a runner for the Purple Riders.

Kristen Harrison doubled for the Colts, while Katie Lee tripled home their run.

Bellaire 3, Harrison Central 1

At Bellaire, Sarah Delbert provided a two-run double as part of a six-hit attack, lifting Bellaire (12-6) by Harrison Central (8-10).

Amanda Coulter gained another win on the hill. Despite surrendering nine hits, she fanned seven and allowed just one walk in seven frames.

Tara Whitely singled in a run for the Big Reds.

Sarah Cunningham had a pair of doubles in a losing effort. Stacey Doren singled, doubled and plated a run.

St. Clairsville 5, Union Local 1

At St. Clairsville, Brittany Akers got the better of her anticipated matchup with Megan Jack, and St. Clairsville (10-6) went on to down Union Local (6-11).

Akers allowed just three hits and struck out six over seven innings, while Jack fanned six and surrendered only six hits.

Beth Schroeder singled twice, doubled and drove in three for the Red Devils, while Amy Drake brought home another with a double.

Jack singled and doubled for two of Union Local's hits.

CLASS AA

Steubenville Central 10, Buckeye Trail 0

At Steubenville, Meredith Hitchcock whiffed 15 more batters and came within a two-out double in the top of the seventh of a no-hitter, as Steubenville Central (16-1) prevailed over Buckeye Trail to advance.

Megan Gould singled twice and plated for in the win, and Jessica Elias (two) and Tessa Valerio had other Crusader RBIs.

CLASS A

Beallsville 6, Madonna 2

At Beallsville, Charity Street once again took care of business as Beallsville (8-9) got the better

of Weirton Madonna.

On the mound the senior scattered three hits, struck out five and issued a single walk. At the plate, she singled twice, tripled and was responsible for two runners scoring.

Jamie Ankrom plated a run for the Blue Devils, while Jennifer Reisz singled twice.

Serena Setcavage had a pair of singles for the Blue Dons.

Bellaire St. John's 4, Bishop Donahue 1

At Bellaire, freshman Emily Rosepapa struck out eight and allowed only a Jen Hill RBI single, as Bellaire St. John's (11-5) beat Bishop Donahue.

Marissa DeClemente, Eli Swartz, Megan Johnson and Amber Irwin all had a run batted in for the Irish.

OVAC softball semis set

The OVAC softball semifinals are set.

Games are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday this week at the J.B. Chambers/I-470 Complex in Wheeling.

The semi-final schedules is as follows:

TUESDAY, MAY 4, 2004

FIELD 3 @ 4:30pm Class 2-A
Wheeling Central vs. Monroe Central

FIELD 3 @ 6:00pm Class 1-A

Shadyside vs. Beallsville

FIELD 4 @ 4:30pm Class 3-A

Bellaire vs. St. Clairsville

FIELD 4 @ 6:00pm Class 3-A

Martins Ferry vs. Magnolia

THURSDAY, MAY 6, 2004

FIELD 3 @ 4:30pm Class 1-A

St. John Central vs. Linsly

FIELD 3 @ 6:00pm Class 2-A

Wellsville vs. Steubenville Central

FIELD 4 @ 4:30pm Class 4-A

Wheeling Park vs. Buckeye Local

FIELD 4 @ 6:00pm Class 4-A

Steubenville vs. John Marshall

■ FOR FIELD CONDITIONS

CALL 304-242-9480

● OVAC

Continued from Page B1

inning and settled for just a single run when Johnson walked to force in a run.

"We had a lot of kids on base and we couldn't find ways to score them," Magistro said. "Sometimes that happens. You hit the ball right at someone or things just don't go your way."

The Green added another run in the fourth inning when Brianne Boger's bunt single scored a run to make it 2-0.

Linsly cut the deficit to 2-1 in the fifth inning.

Catcher Justine Wilson reached on a one-out single and later scored on senior Ashley Neal's fielder's choice.

Johnson finished with two hits and a RBI, while Marissa DeClemente, Lorraine Skorich and Ashley Marinacci added hits for the Irish.

Neal, Parsons, Jordan Joltes and Rachel Walters had the Cadet hits.

Linescore:
Linsly 000 010 0 -- 1 4 2
St. John Central 100 100 x -- 2 5 2

BATTERIES: Parsons and Wilson; Johnson and Swartz.

WHEELING Park advanced in the 4-A bracket with an 8-1 victory over Buckeye Local.

The Patriots improved to 17-3 on the season. Buckeye Local, meanwhile, dropped to 16-6 on the season.

"Basically, it just wasn't our day," Buckeye Local head coach Barry Closser explained. "You have to give Park a lot of credit because they didn't get here by not having a good team."

"Early on, we had a chance to battle back, but we left a lot of runners stranded," Closser added.

Wheeling Park jumped to a 3-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning thanks to Kylie Earliwine's run-scoring single and Jill Wright's two-run blast.

Buckeye Local trimmed the deficit in the second inning as Megan Bartrug drew a bases loaded walk to bring in a run and make it 3-1.

The Patriots broke the game open in the fourth.

Amy Sampson had a run-scoring double to key the uprising.

Mindy Haberfield picked up the pitching victory. She finished with five strikeouts and limit-

ed the Panthers to just one hit over the final five frames.

"Haberfield pitched a nice game today," Closser said.

Mayle closed with two singles for Buckeye Local, while Tabettha Gretchen and Amanda Brown added singles.

Buckeye Local will play for a Ohio Division II sectional title Monday night at State Lake Park against Edison.

Linescore:
Buckeye Local 010 000 0 -- 1 4 4
Wheeling Park 310 400 x -- 8 8 0

BATTERIES: Magyar, Gretchen (4) and Brown; Haberfield and Sampson.

JOHN MARSHALL pounded out 10 hits en route to an 11-6 victory over Steubenville.

Sam Stout and Vanessa Hlover led the Monarchs' offense. Stout had a single and a double, while Hlover added a triple and a single. Both drove in a pair of runs.

DeAnn Wallace and Matty Dunn added two hits each.

Jade White picked up the pitching win with two strikeouts and four walks. She helped the cause with a run-scoring single.

Steubenville was paced by Karly Saccoccia's two-run double.

Linescore:
Steubenville 000 402 0 -- 6 8 4
John Marshall 101 630 x -- 11 10 1

BATTERIES: Jackson and Venci; White and McDermitt.

MEREDITH Hitchcock fired a no-hitter in pitching Steubenville Central to a 7-0 victory over Wellsville.

Hitchcock fanned 13 and walked three in turning the trick.

Megan Gould led the offense with two hits, while Tessa Valerio added a triple.

Kimmy Straker, Kelian Calabria, Jessica Elias and Hilary Jones added hits for Steubenville Central.

Wellsville's Gabriel Burns took the loss. She fanned eight and walked three for the Tigers.

Linescore:
Wellsville 000 000 0 -- 0 0 4
Steubenville Central 000 520 x -- 7 7 1

BATTERIES: Burns and Kern; Hitchcock and Gould.

SOFTBALL OVAC TOURNAMENT CLASS AAAA Quarterfinals

Buckeye Local 5, Brooke 3

At Connorville, Amanda Brown came through with the game-winning single in the bottom of the sixth inning as Buckeye Local (11-4) advanced with a victory over Brooke (6-10). The Panthers visit John Marshall today at 5 p.m.

Casey Magyar got the victory, and also contributed at the plate. She struck out four in a complete-game effort, and also added a double.

Kristen King tripled twice for the Panthers, and Kristine Mayle rapped a pair of doubles. Gina Hicks added an RBI.

For the Bruins, Rae Ann Klein and Amy Bullock each had an RBI.

OUT OF LEFTFIELD

OVAC softball, all sectional pairings listed



By **GREG HARKNESS**
Times Leader
Sports Writer

The OVAC softball pairings have been released.

Games will be played Tuesday at the site of the higher seed with the winners advancing to semifinal action which will be held at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling.

St. John Central (8-3) earned the top seed on Class A and the Irish will host Bishop Donahue (3-6). Second seeded Shadyside (8-4) will welcome Cameron (6-7).

Beallsville (7-6) picked up the third seed and will play host to Weirton Madonna (8-7), while defending champion Linsly (8-6) will hit the road at Frontier (6-4).

In Class 2-A, Steubenville Central (11-1) picked up the top seed. The Crusaders will entertain Buckeye Trail (3-12).

Defending champion Monroe Central (13-0) claimed the second seed and will host Barnesville, while Wheeling Central (14-3) was the third seed and will host River (7-3).

Wellsville (6-5) is the fourth seed and will play Toronto (7-5).

In Class 3-A, Martins Ferry (11-3) took the top seed to host defending runnerup Meadowbrook (3-7). St. Clairsville (9-4) is the second seed and will welcome Union Local (6-10).

Third-seeded Bellaire (11-6) hosts Harrison Central (6-8), while fourth-seeded Oak Glen (8-7) welcomes Magnolia (6-5).

In Class 4-A, undefeated and defending champion Edison (13-0) welcomes Steubenville (2-10), while Wheeling Park (11-1) is the second seed and hosts East Liverpool (2-9).

Buckeye Local (9-4) staked claim to the third seed and hosts Brooke (4-8). John Marshall (7-4) welcomes fifth seed Beaver Local (7-5).

OVAC BASEBALL

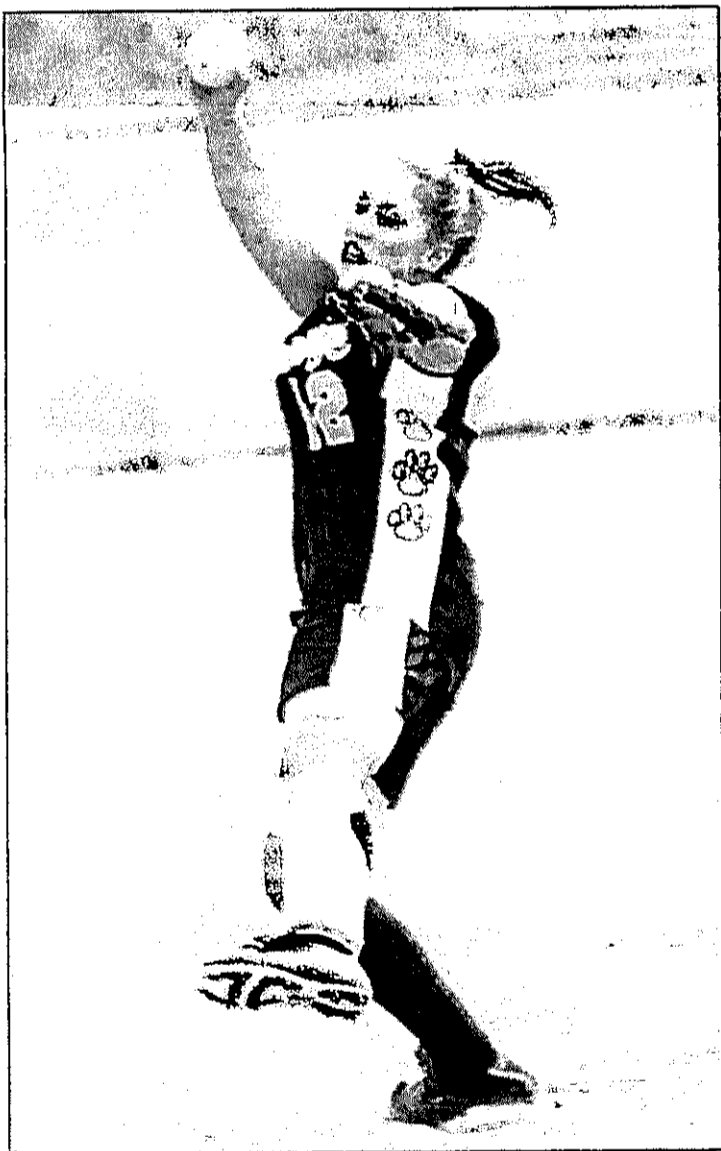
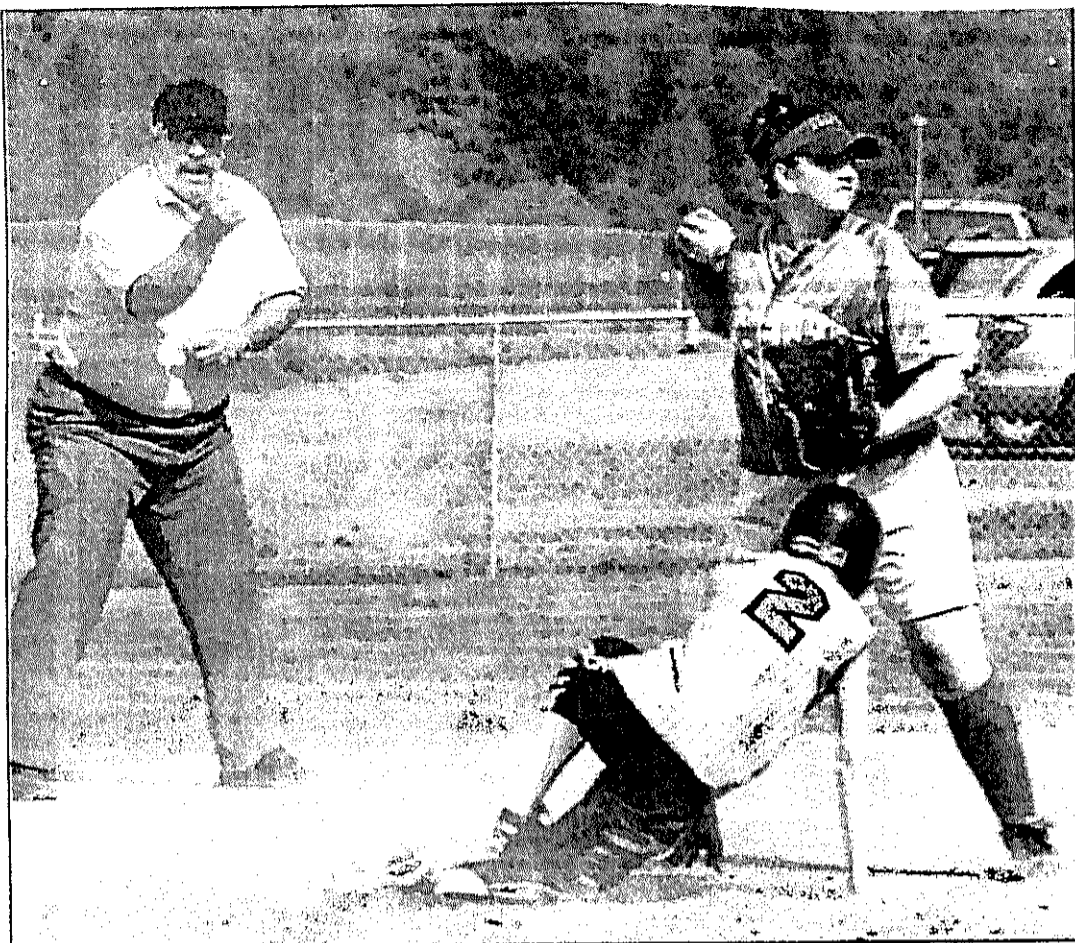
The OVAC baseball cutoff date is set for Wednesday with action beginning Saturday at the site of the higher seed. From one to eight, the current standings look like this:

Class 4-A -- John Marshall, Steubenville, Beaver Local, Weir, Cambridge, Wheeling Park, Buckeye Local and Zanesville.

Class 3-A -- Harrison Central, Indian Creek, Meadowbrook, Magnolia, St. Clairsville, Bellaire, Tyler Consolidated and Martins Ferry.

Class 2-A -- Steubenville Central, Barnesville, Fort Frye, Caldwell, River, Wheeling Central, Toronto and Buckeye Trail.

Class 1-A -- Weirton Madonna, Cameron, Shadyside, Beallsville, Linsly, St. John Central, Bishop Donahue and Conotton Valley.



T.L. Photo: MICHAEL HARVILLA
TOP PHOTO: Linsly's Alana Reisinger is called out at third base as St. John Central's Brie Donaher takes the throw during action Thursday night at the J.B. Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove

RIGHT: Buckeye Local sophomore Casey Magyar fires a pitch to the plate against Wheeling Park.

Monroe, Linsly girls gain in OVAC tourney

AT WOODSFIELD, Monroe Central slipped past Barnesville, 9-8, in a Class AA OVAC quarterfinal game Tuesday afternoon.

The win propels the Lady Seminoles into the semifinals as they improved to 15-0.

LeeKycia Brown went the route, striking out nine and walking two. She allowed 11 hits.

Ashley Kuhn led the winners with two doubles and an RBI. Whitney Wright produced a double, single and RBI as did Kayln

Donley. Anna Blair had an RBI double.

Barnesville's Brianna Cook slammed two home runs and a double, knocking in five runs. Amy Hines and Tiffany Stephens each delivered two hits.

LINSLY 2 FRONTIER 0

AT WHEELING, Kilaine Parsons spun a five-hit shutout as the Lady Cadets advanced to the OVAC Class 1-A semifinals. She truck out five and walked one.



Photo by Scott McCloskey

Wheeling Park's Julie Holeczy gets ready to throw during the Patriots' OVAC semifinal win over Buckeye Local Thursday. See page 19 for story and related photo.



Photo by Rick Thorp

Wheeling Park's Kylie Earliwine (29) throws a pitch as teammate Julie Holeczy gets into her defensive stance during Saturday's game against John Marshall.

Haberfield's Hit Lifts Patriots

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

Last Thursday, Wheeling Park's Mindy Haberfield tossed a gem on the mound to help the Patriots advance to the OVAC Class AAAA championship softball game.

Saturday, she brought the title home for the Patriots thanks to her effort at the plate.

Haberfield blasted a two-out single in the bottom of the eighth inning to score Jill Wright and give Park (18-3) a thrilling 2-1 victory over John Marshall (12-9) in the first of four OVAC championship tilts at the Chambers I-470 Sports Complex.

"It was just what I was waiting for because I hadn't had a hit all day," said an elated Haberfield, who had grounded out twice and struck out in her previous three plate appearances Saturday.

Kylie Earliwine started the bottom of the eighth by grounding out to third.

Wright then walked.

On the first pitch to the Patriots' next batter, Rachel Ball, Wright stole second.

Two pitches later, Ball grounded out to the shortstop for the second out. Wright moved to



plete-game effort by striking out two and walking two, while Earliwine fashioned a 12-strikeout, 2-walk complete-game outing.

"(Earliwine) had us going after some pitches that we shouldn't have been going after," Flores said. "But that's all a part of the game. These are just kids here. They play hard and give you everything they have."

Both teams certainly laid it on the line Saturday. Just what you would expect from two Class AAAA and sectional rivals.

"This is a big win for us because we beat them twice already and it's hard to beat a team three times," Davis said.

If John Marshall downs

After Samantha Stout struck out, Luzader moved to second on a wild pitch.

Vanessa Ilvar then walked. Next, Kayla Varney hit into a fielder's choice that loaded the bases.

However, it would go for naught as Courtney McGilton struck out to end the inning.

Park had better luck in their half of the first when Amy Sampson laced a one-out single. Earliwine followed with a chopper to third and she beat the throw to first.

Wright followed with a single to score Sampson to make it 1-0.

JM put together another nice run in the top of the fourth frame.

Marcy Dunn rapped one of her two base hits on the day to start things off. A sacrifice bunt by Deanna Wallace moved her to second.

Dunn moved to third on a wild pitch. But Earliwine ended the threat by fanning Heilman and Gouldsberry to end the inning.

After shutting down Park 1-2-3 in the bottom of the fourth, the Monarchs reached the scoreboard in their half of the fifth.

OVAC SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

'Noles Repeat as 2-A Champs

Brown fans five as Monroe Central tops Steubenville Central

By MIKE HUGHES
Staff Writer

Monroe Central (22-0) manufactured an early 3-0 lead and made it stick as the Seminoles captured their second-straight OVAC Class AA championship with a 3-1 victory over Steubenville Central Saturday afternoon at the I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

Head coach Ted Brown knew that if his club could get an early lead on the Crusaders, then they would be in the driver's seat.

"We felt (getting ahead early) was key," Brown said. "With them being the home team and their ability to hit the ball, we figured if we got them down a couple of runs right off the bat, we could put a bit of a pressure on them and we'd be ok."

That was the plan, and it didn't take long for Brown's club to execute it in full.

With one out in the top half of the first, Monore sophomore Jewell Jones sent Meredith Hitchcock's first offering into left-center, giving Jones a stand-up double.

After letting a first-pitch ball pass by, Anna Blair then crushed a triple down the line into right, bringing home Jones.

Next up, Ashley Kuhn hit a grounder through the second baseman's legs to bring home Blair.

Hitchcock struck out Whitney Wright and got Krista Huffman to ground out to short, but not before Monroe took an early 2-0 lead.

Two innings later, Jones ripped a single past a diving Tessa Valerio at short for a single, and was advanced to second on a well-placed bunt to Blair.

After a wild pitch saw Jones move to third, she was driven home on a 2-1 single through short by Kuhn.

"In the first inning they put together a couple of hits and then we had an error, but the difference in the game was that when they got runners on base, they scored those runs," Steubenville Central coach Jacki Rossi said.

Hitchcock settled down after the third inning, and not another Seminoles' base-runner advanced past first base, or got a hit for that matter. Monroe only moved three runners into scoring



Photo by Scott McCloskey

Monroe Central's Leekyia Brown works to the plate during Saturday's OVAC Class AA title game in Wheeling.

"We had runners in scoring position a couple of times but just couldn't get them in and that is because of their pitcher."

But it wasn't just Leekyia Brown's mowing down of 12-to-14 batters that kept the Crusaders from scoring runs on this day, she received plenty of home from a solid infield.

Steubenville Central had a perfect scoring opportunity in the fourth inning nullified by a great defensive stand.

Valerio led off the inning with a ground-ball to short that Kuhn scooped up and fired to first. But the throw was low and first baseman Crissy Schumacher was unable to field the ball.

Next, Molly Darrow battled with Leekyia Brown for eight

was now two, and Leekyia Brown got Hitchcock to swing at strike three for the final out.

"They had some pressure on us and we didn't have any outs, but (Ashley) came up with a big double play and took two of them out for us," Brown said.

Kuhn and Blair form a solid middle-infield for the Seminoles, as the tandem has combined for just six errors — five for Kuhn, one for Blair — in 22 games.

Steubenville Central finally got a run across in the fifth inning when Kimmy Straker doubled in Jessica Elias with two outs. Elias had reached second with a lead-off double.

Leekyia Brown closed the door though, retiring six of the next seven batters she faced

because I didn't have a hit all day," said an elated Haberfield, who had grounded out twice and struck out in her previous three plate appearances Saturday.

Kylie Earliwine started the bottom of the eighth by grounding out to third.

Wright then walked.

On the first pitch to the Patriots' next batter, Rachel Ball, Wright stole second.

Two pitches later, Ball grounded out to the shortstop for the second out. Wright moved to third on the play setting up Haberfield's heroics.

"They just told me to go up there and relax," Haberfield said. "And that's what I did."

Haberfield sent a Deven Heilman offering sailing over the head of the centerfielder and Wright scampered home with the winning run as her jubilant teammates awaiting her at home plate.

"When we came in that last time I told (the team) that they were a veteran ballclub and they had to do what they had to do to get on base," said Park skipper Dee Davis.

"I told them that if we get somebody on base I guarantee we'll score."

Getting runners home was much harder for coach Pancho Flores' Monarchs, who stranded 12 baserunners.

"We missed a ton of opportunities," lamented the veteran JM mentor. "We had so many runners in scoring position. We just couldn't come through with the hit that we needed."

The contest featured an excellent battle on the mound between Heilman and Park's Earliwine.

Heilman finished her com-

after," Flores said. "But that's all a part of the game. These are just kids here. They play hard and give you everything they have."

Both teams certainly laid it on the line Saturday. Just what you would expect from two Class AAAA and sectional rivals.

"This is a big win for us because we beat them twice already and its hard to beat a team three times," Davis said.

If John Marshall downs Brooke in Monday's sectional opener, the teams would meet for a fourth time Tuesday in Wellsburg.

Saturday's game got off to a bit of a late start, thanks to Mother Nature.

The heavy thunderstorms that rolled through Wheeling Friday afternoon left their mark on the Chambers fields.

The hard-working crews from the Wheeling Recreation Department started clearing water from the field about three hours prior to the original 10:30 a.m. start time. The field was ready to go shortly after 11 a.m.

John Marshall's trouble scoring runs started in the top of the first.

Ashley Luzader reached on a single with one out.

Magnolia Blanks Bellaire Behind Solid Pitching

For The News-Register

Magnolia thwarted Bellaire's opportunity to earn consecutive conference titles, prevailing by a 3-0 count in the OVAC Class AAA title tilt Saturday at the Chambers I-470 Sports Complex.

The Lady Blue Eagles received solid pitching from Brooke Keene who came on in relief of injured starter Kristen Scheilbehold in the second.

Keene was the beneficiary of some timely Blue Eagle hitting especially from the top of the order who collected five of the seven hits.

"It was their day to hit the gap shots," said disappointed Bellaire head coach Melissa Kaldor. "I thought we made good contact, but we hit the ball right at people."

The Lady Blue Eagles broke through in the top of the third after hard-hitting third baseman Rachel Mason drove a triple into the left-center gap. Keene drove her home when she reached on an error.

That run proved to be plenty for Keene who was on her game from the point she entered the affair.

She fanned 11 Lady Big Reds' hitters and limited them to two hits during the game.

Marcy Dunn rapped one of her two base hits on the day to start things off. A sacrifice bunt by Deanna Wallace moved her to second.

Dunn moved to third on a wild pitch. But Earliwine ended the threat by fanning Heilman and Gouldsberry to end the inning.

After shutting down Park 1-2-3 in the bottom of the fourth, the Monarchs reached the scoreboard in their half of the fifth.

Luzader started the frame off with a double to center.

A sacrifice bunt by Stout sent Luzader to third with one out.

Ilovor then came up and hit a pitch back to Earliwine who got Luzader caught in a rundown between third and home.

Luzader was able to maneuver her way home to knot the game at 1-1.

Neither team was able to muster a scoring threat until the top of the seventh when John Marshall had runners at first and second with one out.

The inning ended on a strikeout and a flyout to deep left.

Holeczy finished with two singles for Park.

Dunn, Ilovor and Varney each rapped three singles for the Monarchs.

Magnolia added two insurance runs in the bottom of the fifth after junior Beth Rush reached with a one-out single.

Mason came up again and ripped a double, placing runners at second and third. Keene was unable to get a run home when she rolled out to third.

Sophomore shortstop Ashley McSweeney promptly followed by lacing a two-run double to left off Bellaire pitcher Amanda Coulter.

"I take the blame for that pitch because I called for the rise ball," Kaldor said. "She drove the pitch and made us pay, but our kids gave it their best shot."

Bellaire threatened in the home half of the fourth when it had runners on second and third with just one out. Keene, however, induced a strikeout and a pop-out to short to end the rally.

All told, the Lady Big Reds stranded eight runners, including five in scoring position.

Mason led Magnolia at the dish, coming up a home run shy of the cycle.

McSweeney also had a double in the first inning to complement her two-run hit.

Coulter — who suffered the mound loss — had a single. In the circle, she had six strikeouts and a walk.

home on a 2-1 single through short by Kuhn.

"In the first inning they put together a couple of hits and then we had an error, but the difference in the game was that when they got runners on base, they scored those runs," Steubenville Central coach Jacki Rossi said.

Hitchcock settled down after the third inning, and not another Seminole's base-runner advanced past first base, or got a hit for that matter. Monroe only moved three runners into scoring position, but the telling stat is that all were brought home.

The Crusaders' ace pitcher retired 12 of the next 14 batters she faced — two reached on errors — and finished with eight strikeouts, but the damage had already been done.

"I'm not exactly sure what it was," Rossi said.

"She pitched a lot stronger in the second half of the game, but unfortunately, that is when they scored their runs during the first half of the game."

"They just outplayed us."

Irish Blank Tigers for 1-A Crown

For The News-Register

It's been quite a run for Bellaire St. John manager Jerry Magistro.

The Lady Irish resume, which includes four straight regular-season titles, got a little more glamorous Saturday when they earned the OVAC Class A title with a 3-0 victory over Shadyside.

"I am proud of the whole team," Magistro said following the trophy presentation. "I am happy for our seniors who were with me first year and for them to win four straight regular season titles and three out of four really says something about them because they are all winners."

Shadyside appeared to be in control most of the way, but it was one inning that sealed the Lady Tigers' fate.

"Everytime we play these guys, it seems like it comes down to one-bad inning," said Shadyside manager Tim Merryman.

"We have had some great games over the years. I am really proud of my kids because we are a young team, and they really stepped up."

That bad inning was the sixth when the Lady Irish struck three times in the frame.

Amber Irwin led off the inning with a base hit. Two hitters later, Jessica Vavra belted a single and Loraine Skorch followed with a fielder's choice where the Orange was unable to record an out.

Merryman regrouped and fanned sophomore Ashley Mari-

saders from scoring runs on this day, she received plenty of home from a solid infield.

Steubenville Central had a perfect scoring opportunity in the fourth inning nullified by a great defensive stand.

Valerio led off the inning with a ground-ball to short that Kuhn scooped up and fired to first. But the throw was low and first baseman Crissy Schumacher was unable to field the ball.

Next, Molly Darrow battled with Leekycia Brown for eight pitches, fouling off three before receiving a walk, giving Central runners on first and second with no outs.

Seldom does Kuhn make an errant play in the field, but she more than made up for it on the next batter.

Megan Gould hit a sharp grounder up the middle that Kuhn raced over to field, stepped on second and fired to Schumacher at first for the double play.

Valerio did advance to second, but instead of no outs, there

them out for us," Brown said.

Kuhn and Blair form a solid middle-infield for the Seminoles, as the tandem has combined for just six errors — five for Kuhn, one for Blair — in 22 games.

Steubenville Central finally got a run across in the fifth inning when Kimmy Straker doubled in Jessica Elias with two outs. Elias had reached second with a lead-off double.

Leekycia Brown closed the door though, retiring six of the next seven batters she faced.

She finished with five strikeouts, and used every corner of the plate to hold down the hard-hitting Crusaders.

"Leekycia pitched very well," Ted Brown said.

"We had a plan coming into this game and she understood that she's not going to mow down the batters like she usually does."

"It came down to controlling the game and she did a great job of controlling the batters, and we played excellent defense behind her."

care who you name," Magistro said. "I was happy we were able to push across a few runs when we did." The Lady Tigers appeared to be in control early when they got their first two hitters of the game aboard.

Junior Miranda Lappert led off the game by reaching on an error and Merryman followed with a solid single into left.

From there, it was all Johnson who settled down and got the next three hitters to escape the jam.

"When you get a chance against Meghan...you had better take advantage of it," Merryman said. "(You) know you aren't going to get many chances against her."

The Lady Tigers had another chance in the fifth. Britney Wallace slapped a one-out single and catcher Brittany Lyle reached on an error. Johnson, however, worked out of the mess by inducing a groundout to first and recording a strikeout.

For the game, Johnson recorded seven strikeouts and allowed just one walk.

Merryman wasn't too shabby in her own right. She had four strikeouts.

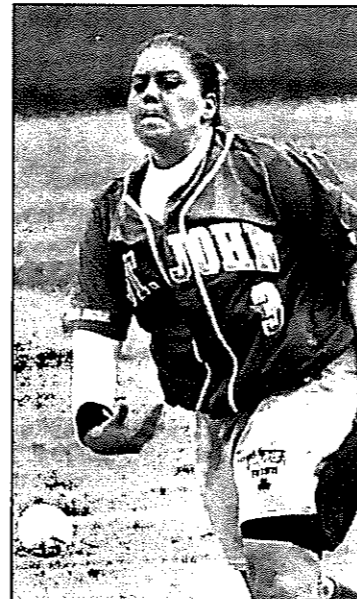
REGULAR SEASON

River 17, Paden City 3

At Hannibal, the Pilots erupted for 7 first-inning runs en route to the win.

Mariah Hulsey and Kayla Haney each recorded two singles, a double and an RBI for River (12-7).

Collyn Wright added two singles and an RBI.



Bellaire St. John's Meghan Johnson struck out seven batters Saturday.

nacci for the second out of the inning, but Marissa DeClemente drew a walk, forcing Irwin home.

Junior catcher Ellie Swartz followed with a two-run single into right to put the Green in control.

Staked to the 3-0 lead, Meghan Johnson took the hill in the seventh and allowed a lead-off double to Alisha Brown down the leftfield line. Brown got no further, as Johnson induced a pair of come backers and a pop-out to give the Lady Irish the title.

"Merryman is one of the top pitchers in the valley and I don't