

OVAC Softball Championships



Photo by Alex Kozlowski

John Marshall's Jennifer Vogel (7) slides safely into second base as Wheeling Park's Army Mathieu lowers the tag during action of their OVAC Class AAAA semifinal game Monday in Glen Dale. The Monarchs won, 2-1.

Swoger's Day

Junior leads way as John Marshall advances to OVAC semis

By NICK BEDWAY
For The Intelligencer

Sarah Swoger didn't work the concession stand, nor was she asked to collect the balls and bats after John Marshall's thrilling 2-1 victory over Wheeling Park in an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class AAAA softball quarterfinal Monday afternoon on the Monarchs' home field in Glen Dale.

However, the talented John Marshall junior pitcher did just about everything else in sparking Coach Alfonso "Pancho" Flores' team to a berth in Thursday's 6:30 p.m. semifinals at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling against Brooke, an 11-2 winner over Buckeye Local.

Swoger struck out 11, issued just one walk, which wound up costing her a run, and she drove in the game-ending run with a clutch, two-out single that landed at the base of the leftfield fence in the bottom of the seventh inning.

Swoger's sacrifice bunt also helped set up John Marshall's game-tying tally in the opening inning.

The only hits collected by Wheel-

ing Park (13-15) were Amy Mathieu's infield single on a ground ball to deep short in the second and Caitlin Wilson's double into the left-centerfield gap with just one out in the top of the seventh.

Inside

■ More
OVAC
softball, prep
baseball.

Page 19

Locked in a 1-1 pitching duel with the Patriots' Mary Hohman, Swoger gathered herself and retired Amanda Szerszen on a popup caught by Marcy Dunn at second base, followed by a huge strikeout of Mathieu to retire the side.

Jennifer Vogel, the Monarchs' shortstop who was starting in place of injured sophomore Jessica Hays, began the home half of the seventh with a sharp single. It was her third hit of the day as Vogel had previously doubled in the second inning and beat out an infield single on a slow roller down the third-base line in the fourth inning.

"For someone who hasn't had many at-bats, Jennifer stepped up

today," Flores said, pointing out that Vogel had mainly been used as a pinch-hitter this spring.

Needing only to score a run to advance to the OVAC finals, John Marshall attempted to move Vogel to second base with a bunt, but Samantha Henry was unable to drop down one of Hohman's fastballs into fair territory. She squared around to bunt with two strikes and wound up a strikeout victim when the inside pitch went off her bat and into foul territory.

The rally seemed on the verge of ending when Dunn popped out to Shila Gray between third base and home. Unfortunately, after catching the ball, Gray's momentum caused her to step out of play. Dunn was still out while Vogel was awarded second base because of the book rule allowing a runner to advance if a ball is caught and carried out of play.

Swoger then stepped up to the plate and nailed a high delivery from Hohman well over the head of Chelsie Baker in left field.

Please See SWOGER, Page 22



Photo by Alex Kozlowski

Beallsville's Latera Arnold slides safely into home plate ahead of the tag of Bishop Donahue's Shalynn Crockard during action of their OVAC Class A quarterfinal game Monday in McMechen. The Bishops held on for a 7-6 victory.

Kudla Steps Up for Bishops

Freshman hurler halts Beallsville,

By MARKY BILLSON
Staff Writer

When a softball team sends a freshman pitcher to the circle, the general consensus is the hurler has talent, but come crunch time, experience is preferred.

That was the challenge Bishop Donahue ninth grader Stephanie Kudla faced in her 7-6 win Monday afternoon against Beallsville in the OVAC Class A quarterfinal.

She started off brilliantly in the middle of the dirt infield in McMechen, retiring the first nine batters she faced, but

began to wear down as the game went on.

She took a 7-3 advantage to the top of the seventh, where the Blue Devils (6-12) rallied for three runs with nobody out and Kristin Lallathin standing at second base representing the tying run.

Getting out of the jam wouldn't be easy.

Not only was Kudla tiring, but the next three hitters were all seniors, Amber Cole, lead-off hitter Carrie Tyo, and Kaylan Isaly.

Please See KUDLA, Page 22

Linsly Too Much For Shadyside

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

While not having the opportunity to play for a state softball championship in West Virginia, coach Liz Hofreuter-Landini's Linsly team must use the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference tournament as its version of the state event.

Monday afternoon at Lisa's Field, the Lady Cadets got a good start on their mission

with a victory over mistake-prone Shadyside.

Freshman Megan Byhanna fired a four-hitter, fanning eight and walking two, and third-seeded Linsly took advantage of its many opportunities by pushing across nine unearned runs in gaining a 10-1 victory over the sixth-seeded Tigers in an OVAC Class A

Please See LINSLEY, Page 22

Swoger

(Continued from Page 17)

By the time Baker raced back and picked up the ball, the John Marshall runner had touched home plate for the victory.

"I'm thankful it took a hit to beat us," Patriot Coach Dee Davis said. "We did a lot of good things in this game that we hadn't done early in the season. Mary pitched a strong game and deserved a better result. We just have to keep playing hard and improving."

Flores had a big smile on his face after talking briefly with his players.

"Both teams played very well and made some nice plays. I wish we could find a way to win some of these games earlier instead of waiting for the seventh inning," Flores said, explaining that the Monarch girls had been involved in several games that went down to the wire.

Yesterday's win was the third of the season for John Marshall (17-3) over Wheeling Park and both of the previous wins were also nail-biting type contests.

"If Hohman gets out of the gate good, she can be very tough," Flores reminded in praising JM's pitching rival.

"Sarah did very well. She was able to make good pitches to get out of a couple of tight spots, and I was really happy to see her come up with the big hit."

He also pointed out that Swoger had been moved up to second in the batting order on Monday in case she would have an opportunity to bunt.

The decision paid off in the last of the first inning after Dunn had led off with a double into left center.

Swoger laid down a perfect sacrifice bunt, advancing the runner to third base.

Following a strikeout, the

burden fell on Vanessa Ilovar to knock across the tying run and she connected with a sharp single, lining the ball past the outstretched glove of Szerszen to score the tying run.

Wheeling Park had opened the scoring in its half of the first without the benefit of a base hit.

Hohman drew a walk on four pitches and promptly stole second. Swoger nearly worked her way out of the jam, striking out the next two Park hitters.

Freshman catcher Erika Martin then lofted a short fly ball into centerfield that was dropped for an error, allowing Hohman to score.

After Mathieu's single and an error by Swoger on a ground ball to the mound with two out in the second inning, the John Marshall hurler retired 14 straight batters, striking out six of them before Wilson got her double in the seventh to break the spell.

Hohman retired the side in the third and fourth innings before running into trouble in the fifth. Vogel's single, followed by a double that skipped over Elizabeth Kosowski's glove in right field, put runners on second and third with one out. An alert play by Gray at third base helped Hohman out big time.

Gray fielded Dunn's grounder and looked to first base before turning around and tagging the runner for the second out.

This rally ended when Swoger rapped into a force play at second base.

In sixth inning, an error and walk put two runners on base for John Marshall only to have Cassandra Hedrick hit the first pitch into rightfield where Kosowski made the catch to retire the side.

SPORTS

THE INTELLIGENCER - Wheeling, W.Va. - Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Kudla

(Continued from Page 17)

Tyo and Isaly had even connected for hits off of Kudla earlier in the game, but Kudla bore down and struck out Cole, got Tyo to pop weakly to shortstop Jen Hill and Isaly to hit a tricky ground ball that first baseman Lindsay Yurisko was able to handle for the final putout.

"I gave it everything I had," said Kudla. "I just started throwing nothing but fastballs."

And to come up strong when she did made quite a statement.

Especially when it is considered Kudla has been the only pitcher the Bishops (19-4) have utilized this season with the exception of a short relief stint for Ashley Hill in a 5-4 loss to Bellaire St. John on Saturday.

However, Kudla wasn't the only pitcher who hurled a strong game on Monday. Only three of the seven runs Beallsville sophomore Miranda McFredrick allowed were earned, and had her defense not let her down with two crucial errors in a three-run bottom of the sixth, she may have been able to win the game.

"Miranda did real well," said Beallsville coach Deb Street. "She didn't do much pitching for us last year but came on real well and did a good job for us."

For the game, she allowed seven hits, struck out four, and walked no one.

Ironically, Kudla's line was exactly the same, and while she was mowing down Blue Devils' hitters in the early going, Bishop Donahue was able to capture an early lead.

Sara Edge led off the bottom of the first with an inside-the-park home run for the Bishops, who added a second run in the inning when Samantha

McGlumphy singled with one out, stole second base, and scored on a Jen Hill hit to left.

Even when Beallsville pushed across a run on a fourth-inning on a lead-off triple by Tyo and an Isaly ground out, Bishop Donahue responded with two more runs in the bottom of the frame when Jen Hill led off with a triple to the gap in left center and Alexis George singled her in.

George then stole second and scored when a dropped third strike was thrown into right field in the attempt to nail the hitter at first.

Beallsville rallied in the last two innings, first on a two-run inside-the-park homer by Jennifer Reisz to make the score 4-3, then in its three-run uprising in the top of the seventh, highlighted by a Clarissa Milhoan RBI triple in her final prep at bat, a fielder's choice that knocked her in, and Lallathin's RBI single to center.

"We started out slow hitting at the beginning but battled back," Street said.

But their defensive breakdowns proved costly in the bottom of the sixth when, down only by a run, Yurisko singled to right, went to third on a miscue, and then was able to score on a Shalynn Crockard squeeze by sneaking down the third base line just enough before breaking when Milhoan, the catcher, threw to first.

Edge's sacrifice fly and another error that plated Crockard, who had reached base on her bunt, closed out the frame.

Bishop Donahue moves on to play Linsly at 5 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon in the OVAC semifinals at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Chambers Complex in Wheeling.

Linsly

(Continued from Page 17)

quarterfinal game at the Chamber's I-470 Complex.

The triumph moves Hofreuter-Landini's squad to 14-7 on the season and into Wednesday afternoon's OVAC semifinals against Bishop Donahue at 5 p.m.

Meanwhile, coach Jillian Johnson's Shadyside unit falls to 3-9 with the Ohio sectionals still sitting in front of them.

"We have talked about this being our playoffs and being prepared to do the little things to win," Hofreuter-Landini said. "Things like not being satisfied with a single and taking the extra base on a team."

"I think we did that with a little hesitation today. But luckily we had some opportunities that we were able to take advantage of to get the win."

In all, Shadyside committed nine errors to spoil a fine pitching performance from junior Britney Wallace, who allowed only four hits and managed to hit the strike zone, while getting little support in the field.

Wallace fanned four and walked five, with three of those free passes coming in the sixth inning after things had already been all but decided.

"This has pretty much been the story of our season," a disappointed Johnson remarked. "Britney Wallace pitched a heck of a game but couldn't get any support from her fielders."

"We just can't seem to be able to put a solid game together in the field when we need it. We also had some chances with runners on, but had trouble getting them in. We just weren't able to field or get the bats going tonight."

An infield single, a walk, an error and Summer Flowers' fielder's choice gave Linsly a

1-0 lead in the first before a bunt single, another miscue on a dropped third strike and a passed ball made it a two-game game in the second.

Natalie George's two-out single following the Tigers' fourth error in as many innings pushed the margin to 3-0 after four before two more blunders made it 4-0 in the fifth.

Shadyside's lone tally came in the sixth with Jill Lytton working a leadoff walk and moving to second on Wallace's infield safety. A wild pitch and a one-out error allowed Lytton to score, however, Byhanna later made an inning-saving catch on an Alisha Brown liner to all but shut the Tigers down.

The home-half of the sixth turned into a huge nightmare for the visitors as the Cadets sent 11 batters to the plate and scored six runs while getting just one hit in the inning. Emily Beck's second single of the contest scored a pair as Linsly moved the margin to 10-1.

"I really have to commend Megan (Byhanna), there was a tiny strike zone today, and she not only pitched into it, but when she wasn't getting the corner calls she was able to keep her composure," Hofreuter-Landini added. "For a freshman pitcher, that is a very big thing."

"The bottom line is that we had some things we weren't able to take advantage of, but we took enough of what they were giving us to get the win."

"I have to give a lot of credit to Shadyside also. They made some mistakes, but there is no question they came here to play today."

Beck finished with two singles and two RBIs for the winners while Lytton stroked a first inning double for the Tigers.



MARTINS FERRY'S
Jessica Hilton dives back into third during the fourth inning of Saturday's OVAC 3-A title game. Magnolia's Ashley McSweeney (3) and Bethany Howell both fell down on the play, but Hilton was thrown out at the plate.

T-L Photo/MIKE HARVILLA

Ferry falls to Magnolia in 3-A

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Writer

So much for needing a good night's sleep before playing a game.

Magnolia's softball team threw that cliché directly out the window Saturday afternoon at Lisa's Field at the Chamber's I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

The Lady Blue Eagles (22-3) -- coming off the junior/senior prom on Friday night -- shook the early red-eye and secured their second OVAC softball title in three years, knocking off reigning champion Martins Ferry by a 5-2 count.

"The girls didn't get much sleep, but they came to play," joked Magnolia head coach Charlie Howell. "We didn't hit it well early, but the bats eventually came alive for us."

While Martins Ferry didn't have a prom to contend with, the Lady Riders dealt with six errors, which proved to be too much to overcome.



"We simply didn't play well defensively," said Ferry head coach Jess Cordery. "You can't have that many errors and expect to beat a good team like Magnolia."

Everytime the Lady Riders committed a fielding blunder the Lady Blue Eagles were there to capitalize.

"We fielded and pitched pretty well and offensively we took advantage when (Ferry) made a couple of mistakes," Howell offered.

The Lady Riders nursed a 2-1 lead into the fifth inning, but Magnolia surged ahead for good.

After third baseman Bethany Howell reached on an error, hard-hitting shortstop Ashley McSweeney laced a single.

First-baseman Paige DeMarco followed with a ringing double into the left-center gap, scoring both Howell and McSweeney to put the Lady Eagles in front.

After Magnolia pitcher Tori Green overcame a two-out walk in the sixth to get out of the frame, the Lady Eagle

See, **FERRY**, Page B2

St. John claims Class 1-A title

By **RICH GIBSON**
Times Leader Sports Writer

Another day, another OVAC trophy for Jerry Magistro and his Lady Irish.

St. John's 4-0 Saturday afternoon victory over Linsly resulted in the fifth Class 1-A softball championship in six seasons for the Guernsey Street girls.

Winning for the 17th time in 20 starts this spring, the Lady Irish have no intention of quitting while they're ahead. SJC opens Division IV sectional play this Tuesday afternoon at Shadyside, opposing Bridgeport.

"I have a dedicated group of assistants and a great group of young ladies," Magistro explained. "We played well defensively today and Amanda (Rosepapa) pitched like she normally does."

That spelled big trouble for a young Cadet nine which barely gave itself a chance, misplaying seven potential outs in the field.

"The last thing you can afford is to make multiple errors against a team as strong as St. John's," Linsly coach Liz Hofreuter-Landini observed.

"But we won't even think about hanging our head. We had just

See, **SJC**, Page B2



Photo/SCOTT McCLOSKEY

ST. JOHN'S Courtney Coyne slides into home as Linsly catcher Morgan Drotos applies the tag. St. John won the Class 1-A title.



OVAC Finals Set

Cambridge, Brooke gain wins Thursday

By NICK BEDWAY
For The Intelligencer

Without a senior on the Brooke High School girls' softball roster, the last thing coach Jim Cicchirillo expected was that his Bruins would be playing for an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championship this spring.

However, Thursday night at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling, the green and gold showed signs that it was coming of age by capturing a tense 4-2 victory over top-seeded John Marshall in a 10-inning Class AAAA semi-final.

The victory enabled Brooke (13-6) to punch out a ticket into Saturday's 2 p.m. championship game against Cambridge (16-6), a 1-0 winner over Steubenville in Thursday's opener.

"Our kids are improving," the pleased Cicchirillo said. "We were hoping that by sectional time we would be ready to challenge somebody. This is great. We'll take it and come back here Saturday hoping we can beat another good Cambridge team," he added.

Please See FINALS, Page 23

Photos by Alex Kozlowski

Cambridge's Samantha Roller (16) tries to slide into home plate as Steubenville catcher Breanna Kanoski blocks the plate and prepares to make a tag during action of their OVAC Class AAAA semifinal game Thursday at the I-470 Complex. Roller was ruled safe on the play after an obstruction call was made on Kanoski for blocking the plate before she had the ball.

Maroon Knights Move to Finale

There, they'll face Steubenville Central

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

Hits in key situations were not easy to come by for Wheeling Central Thursday night, however, with Brittany Derr dominating the Frontier hitters, the Maroon Knights did enough to advance to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class AA softball championship game.

Derr allowed hits to the initial two batters she faced in the first inning before bearing down and retiring 19 in a row while Val Palmer highlighted a four-run third inning with a two-run single as Central gained a 4-0 victory over the Cougars in a Class AA semifinal at Lisa's Field at

the Chamber's I-470 complex.

The victory, the 22nd in 25 chances for the Maroon Knights, puts the Maroon-and-White of co-coaches Rick Magruder and Ambrose Bober in Saturday morning's 10:45 a.m. title tilt against Jackie Rossi's Steubenville Catholic Central Crusaders.

Steubenville Central held off Fort Frye for a 5-3 win in yesterday's opener.

Derr, who issued a two-out, seventh-inning walk to Shayna Cochran to stop her string of consecutive batters retired at 19, fanned nine and walked just

Please See KNIGHTS, Page 23



Photos by Alex Kozlowski

Steubenville Central pitcher Alexis Ferrera works to the plate during action of the Crusaders' OVAC Class AA semifinal win over Frontier Thursday at the I-470 Complex.

Finals

(Continued from Page 19)

The grittiest of this gritty Bruin club in yesterday's game would have to be pitcher Caitlin Kocher. Not only did she pitch the entire game to pick up the victory on a seven-hitter with seven strikeouts and two walks, but she also contributed at the plate. Kocher drew a pair of free passes and rapped a key single during Brooke's game-winning, two-run rally in the 10th inning.

"Our pitcher got stronger and faster as the game went on," Cicchirillo stressed. "The more speed she picked up, the better her off-speed pitches worked."

The Bruins also may have surprised themselves by getting to Monarch ace hurler Sarah Swoger for three runs during her four-inning relief stint. After all, Swoger had blanked Brooke the last time she faced them and she was coming off an excellent outing in a 2-1 win over Wheeling Park in the OVAC quarter-finals this past Monday.

Swoger, in fact, looked unhittable in her first inning of work yesterday. Taking over for starter Stephanie Phillips in the seventh inning of a 1-1 game, Swoger struck out the side.

However, those were the only three strikeouts she would get.

The Monarch ace walked both Elizabeth Preston and Kocher with one out in the top of the eighth. Alicia Wayne then drilled an RBI single into centerfield, chasing home Preston to push Brooke ahead 2-1.

John Marshall came to bat in the home eighth needing a run to tie and things looked bleak after the first two batters were retired. However, Vanessa Ilovar singled and McGilton drove one over Christina Cummings' head in left field for an RBI double to tie the

score.

After a quiet ninth inning, Leigh Ann Lauri started the top of the 10th with a base hit. Preston sacrificed her to second and Lauri advanced to third on Kocher's sharp single to left. Disaster then struck the Monarchs when the ball got away from the catcher after Wayne had swung and missed on a high pitch, allowing Lauri to race home with the tie-breaking run and Kocher to advance all the way to third.

John Marshall's bench questioned if Wayne's swing should have been a foul tip but the three umpires conferred and ruled her bat did not come in contact with the ball. Wayne then lofted a fly ball into short centerfield that was dropped, enabling Kocher to race home with the second run of the inning.

The Monarchs' last gasp of the plate began with Cassandra Hedrick lining a smash back toward the mound that Kocher speared one-handed for the out, Jessica Hays bounced out third to first on a nice play by Preston and Kocher struck out the hard-hitting Ilovar for the final out.

Cambridge 1, Steubenville 0

An obstruction call in the bottom of the sixth inning allowed the only run of the game to score as Cambridge ace Allanna Decker outduelled Steubenville's Shay Jackson.

With two outs and none on, the Bobcats' Samantha Roller sent a line drive into the alley in left centerfield and she took off on a dash around the bases.

The relay throw was bouncing toward the infield when Roller made contact with Catherine Moore, who was standing near the third base bag.

Roller kept coming home only to be tagged out on a close plate at the plate.

However, the obstruction call was made and the run permitted to count, breaking the scoreless deadlock.

"I really didn't see it," said Donnie Reeves, coach of the 13-7 record Big Red. "It was a disappointing way to lose but this was a well-played game. We had a couple of opportunities to score and didn't come up with a big hit," he added.

Jackson, Steubenville's ace who is now 13-3 this spring, struck out seven, walked only one and gave up six hits. Decker didn't have a "K" and walked three but she permitted only a pair of harmless singles in pitching a complete game.

Jackson pitched out of a bases-loaded, no-out situation in the fourth inning by enticing Janelle Givens to rap into a forceout at the plate and retiring the next two batters on a pop and lineup to Laura Kirkland at shortstop.

Big Red lost a chance for a run in the opening inning. Whitney Petrella drew a walk and stole second with two outs. Cambridge centerfielder Rachel Wright then made a shoestring catch of Moore's bid for a base hit to retire the side.

Steubenville got two runners aboard in the third inning only to have Jackson's fly ball to center again speared by Wright. Big Red's only other hit was a single by Michelle Kalinkowski in the seventh inning.

She stole second but advanced no further as Kirkland was throw out on a ground ball to short, ending the game.

Knights

(Continued from Page 19)

the one in going the distance for the hill win.

While Wheeling Central was able to score four one-out runs in the third, it also stranded 10 runners in the contest, including six in scoring position.

After an out, the Knights got consecutive base hits from Kayla Gray, Angela Petros and Kat Stiglich, which plated the first run, with the second scoring on a Frontier (11-7) miscue.

Stephanie Barry was then hit by a pitch ahead of a Jen Sparachane walk with Palmer chasing home the final two with a single to centerfield.

Central stranded runners in scoring position in every inning except the sixth.

"Brittany threw very well tonight," Bober said.

Meanwhile, Magruder chimed in, "We have been getting on her (Brittany) to get ahead in the count, and she did that very well tonight. We may not have scored a lot of runs, but we put the ball in play and they made some nice stops on defense.

"If we are able to keep putting the ball in play and get the pitching and defense that we did today, we will be fine. The big thing is that we cannot go out and beat ourselves."

As for Bober, he was pleased with the overall effort and looks forward to battling the Crusaders on Saturday.

"I was real pleased with our effort," he said. "You always want more as a coach, but we played very well."

"As for Steubenville Central, they may be one of the better fundamental teams we will face this year. They are just very solid and know how to do the right things, but we look forwards to playing them."

Angela Petros finished with three singles for the winners while Palmer had two base hits and the two RBIs.

Steubenville Central was able to build a 5-0 lead and hold on in the opener as the Crusaders punched their ticket to the championship round.

Cadet (15-3) errors led to the first three runs for the Jefferson County squad with Kelly Costantini chasing home a run with a fielder's choice and Alaina Augustine adding a run-scoring single in the second.

The Crusaders (13-5) pushed across another with a two-out KelliAnn Calabria single and Jessica Harlan RBI double in the third before another Fort Frye mistake and Costantini's RBI single made it 5-0 in the sixth.

Fort Frye battled back with a Carrie Ketelsen run-scoring double in the sixth and Hayley Neader's two-run single in the seventh, but would run out of time.

Alexis Ferrera mowed down 11 Cadet batters on strikes and did not walk a hitter while scattering five hits to get the mound win.

"I am really glad that we were able to put five up on them early," a relieved Rossi said. "They are a very solid, scary team, and I think they are even better than they were last year."

"But we were able to survive in the seventh and got out of it in time to avoid the bulk of their order."

Harlan singled, doubled and plated a run while Calabria added a single and double and Augustine singled twice and chased a run home. Neader had two singles for the Fort Frye, while Jennifer Stehly and Ketersen both doubled.

OVAC softball heats up

Two-run rally in the seventh sparks Ferry past Harrison Central

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Writer

Something about playing in the OVAC Tournament at Chambers' I-470 brings out the best in the Martins Ferry Lady Riders.

The Lady Riders earned the right to try to successfully defend their 2005 OVAC 3-A softball title Wednesday evening by posting a come-from-behind 2-1 victory over Harrison Central on a chilly night in Elm Grove.

"We knew coming in that it was going to take a special effort," said veteran Ferry head coach Jess Cordery. "To be honest, I thought Harrison was the team to beat in our division, but now it looks like Magnolia might be the team to beat."

'The girls fought and fought.'

*— Martins Ferry's
Jess Cordery*

It's that Magnolia team that the Lady Riders will have to beat if they want to claim their second straight OVAC pennant. The 3-A title game is slated for 12:15 p.m. Saturday afternoon at Lisa's Field back at the I-470 Complex.

It appeared for six quick innings that the Lady Huskies would be the team meeting the Lady Blue Eagles for the crown.

"This was definitely a tough one to lose," said Harrison head coach Don Bethel. "It was a well-played game and Martins Ferry deserves all of the credit because they hit the ball, it wasn't like we booted it around."

Harrison Central sophomore pitcher Katy Leeper was on cruise control for six frames. She had allowed just two innocent singles and only three total base runners, but a relentless Ferry offense came through in the clutch.

Catcher Kayla Lewis led off the seventh with a ringing single down the left-field line. Clean-up hitter Kristen Cerasoli then dropped down a perfectly-executed sacrifice bunt to move pinch runner Megan Jones up to second.

"You don't ask your clean-up hitter to sacrifice too often," Cordery explained. "But, Kristen got the bunt down and if she doesn't execute there who knows how the rest of the inning plays out."

See, **FERRY**, Page B4



T-L Photo/MICHAEL HARVILLA
MARTINS FERRY pitcher Victoria Ziggacheek throws a pitch during Wednesday's OVAC 3-A semifinal at I-470. Ziggacheek threw a complete game to help the Lady Riders advance to the OVAC finals.

St. John reaches sixth straight OVAC 1-A final

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Writer

The St. John Central Lady Irish have made winning OVAC softball titles a habit over the past five seasons.

The Green have pocketed four of the last five 1-A banners and after Wednesday's convincing 9-0 win over fifth-seeded Cameron at Lisa's Field at the I-470 Complex in Elm Grove, it appears that Jerry Magistro's squad is on a collision course with the trophy.

However, it won't be any walk in the park for the Lady Irish Saturday afternoon. St. John Central will meet third-seeded Linsly in the title game at 3:45 p.m. Saturday afternoon back at Chambers I-470 Complex.

Ironically, the Cadets are the team that knocked St. John off in the 2003 title game.

Linsly reached the final thanks to a dramatic

See, **SJC**, Page B4



T-L Photo/MICHAEL HARVILLA
ST. JOHN CENTRAL'S Amanda Rosepapa delivers a pitch during Wednesday's OVAC 1-A Semifinal game against Cameron. SJC prevailed by a 9-0 score.

seven-run seventh, which pushed them to a 9-3 victory over Bishop Donahue.

ST. JOHN CENTRAL hasn't been hitting the ball as well as Magistro would have liked coming down the stretch of the season, but when a team gets pitching like St. John did the offense doesn't have to do much.

Junior ace Amanda Rosepapa worked seven brilliant innings for the Lady Irish. She struck out only four, but allowed only a two-out single to the Lady Dragons.

"Amanda really pitched well, but our infield is pretty solid and they all made plays behind (Amanda)," Magistro pointed out. "We hit better tonight and this is the time of the year when you need your bats to come alive."

With Rosepapa in total control, the St. John offense wasted little time in getting its ace a run to work with.

Lead-off hitter Laraine Skorich led off the bottom of the first with a base hit. She moved up to third when senior shortstop Ashley Marinacci belted one of her two hits.

A wild pitch then allowed Skorich to race home from third, giving the Green the early lead.

With a run in her column already, Rosepapa went to work. She sat down the final 16 hitters she faced after the Lady Dragons hit.

Rosepapa helped her own cause during a third inning in which the Irish sent 10 to the plate and scored five times. Rosepapa unleashed a single, which scored both Betsie Smith and Jenna Vavra.

"Our offense hadn't been as good as I would like it to be," Magistro said. "But tonight, we got some timely hitting and I hope with our pitching and defense we can keep that up."

St. John added three more runs in the last of the sixth. Marinacci drove in a run, while Marissa DeClemente socked her second single and scored in the frame. Vavra raced home as well during the inning.

Rosepapa slammed the door shut when she got three harm-

less ground-ball outs in the seventh.

Linescore:
Cameron 000 000 0 0 1 6
St. John 105 003 x 9 11 0
BATTERIES: Tustin and
Gouldsberry, Rosepapa and Smith.

LINSLEY, meanwhile, didn't have quite as easy a road to the title game.

The Cadets found themselves in a struggle with second-seeded Bishop Donahue. Basically stymied for the better part of six innings by the Bishops, the Cadets sent 13 hitters to the plate and struck seven times in the seventh to take control.

Freshman ace Megan Byhanna then got a pair of pop-outs and her 16th strikeout of the contest to send Linsly to the title game.

"I am real proud of the character that we showed tonight," said Linsly head coach Liz Hofreutter-Landini. "I have been telling the girls all season that the game isn't over until there are three outs in the seventh and they finally listened today."

The Lady Bishops surged to a 3-2 lead thanks to the bat of shortstop Jen Hill who had three run-scoring singles.

Linsly threatened in the sixth, but Donahue worked out of a jam to lead.

In the seventh, however, the hits kept coming and coming. Throw in a couple of errors and the flood gates were open.

Jesse Schucht had a double and scored in the inning, while Katie Yochum had a RBI single. Summer Flowers and Byhanna also had a single and scored in the inning.

Kari Kitchen got Linsly on the board in the first when she ripped a double that scored Yochum who also had a double in the inning.

Linescore:
Linsly 101 000 7 9 11 1
Donahue 101 010 0 3 8 4
BATTERIES: Byhanna and Crotus,
Kudla and Crockard.

Staskey can be reached via email at sstaskey@timesleaderonline.com

St. C. places second

The boy's division of the OVAC Tennis Championships was completed Wednesday at Bethany College.

Wheeling Park won the Overall Championship by sweeping all four singles divisions in the boy's competition with a total of 27 out of 28 possible points. St. Clairsville finished runner-up with 19 points followed by Cambridge with 11. St. Clairsville had 3 players in the final but lost all three to Wheeling Park. Cambridge had 1 finalist.

Jeremy McClelland (WP) defeated Kuaun Macedo (St.C) in the #1 Position 6-0, 6-1.

Steve D'Angelo (WP) defeated Will Lake (St.C) in the #2 Position 6-2, 6-0.

Zach Aderholt (WP) defeated Ryan Regel (St.C) in the #3 Position

First baseman Brittany Burch then lined a single back through the box to score Jones.

After junior Jessica Hilton grounded out, Kara Winzenreid grounded a seeing-eye single into the hole between short and third, allowing pinch-runner Courtney King to score the game-winning run.

"The girls just fought and fought," Cordery said. "I told the girls before the (seventh) inning started that I didn't want to tie the game. I wanted to win it right here. We earned the runs. Each ball we hit was right on the button."

While waiting on her offense to finally solve Leeper, Ferry pitcher Victoria Zigachek just went about her business. She limited Harrison to an unearned run in the fourth and only gave up two hits and a walk.

"She kept us in the ball game," Cordery said. "She's really made a lot of progress throughout the season and in a game like this she could have folded, but she kept doing what we've asked her to do."

Harrison's only other scoring threat came in the top of

the seventh when Jenna Heaston reached on an error and Jackie Sentich singled. A throwing error allowed the runners to move to second and third. From there, Zigachek worked out of the jam by getting a pop out to shallow right.

Leeper was the tough-luck loser. She fanned five and walked one.

"You have to credit (Martins Ferry) hitters," Bethel said. "Katy pitched six strong innings, but it's a seventh inning game. She's still young and she'll be back, and we'll be back."

Harrison Central 000 100 0 1 2 0
Martins Ferry 000 000 2 2 5 3
BATTERIES: Leeper and Coconougher, Zigachek and Lewis.

MAGNOLIA scored early and often in the first 3-A semifinal game, rolling to a 10-0 win over Indian Creek in just six frames.

Ashley McSweeney led the Lady Blue Eagles with two singles and a RBI, while Brooke Keene had three singles and a RBI. Micah Bell had a RBI single.

Indian Creek 000 000 0 3 6
Magnolia 015 202 10 14 0

BATTERIES: Williamson and Brandon, Green and Brill.
Staskey can be reached at sstaskey@timesleaderonline.com

Wheeling Central blanks SCC in 2-A championship game

By NICK BEDWAY
For The Times Leader

Good pitching most often stops good hitting and that surely was the case in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference's Class AA girls' softball championship game played Saturday morning on Lisa's Field at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling.

The two sides combined for only six hits, just two of which went for extra bases. Wheeling Central Catholic, picking up an unearned run in the third inning, turned things over to right-handed pitcher Jennifer Sparachane and she made the tally stand up for a 1-0 victory over Ohio parochial rival Steubenville Catholic Central.

The Crusaders, last year's OVAC 2A champions, were dethroned despite a terrific two-hit hill performance from Alexis Ferrera. Coach Jackie Marook Rossi's talented righthander used her rising fast ball to strike out seven Maroon Knights while yielding only one walk.

Both Wheeling Central hits came in the third inning. The rally started when Sparachane doubled over the head of Steubenville Catholic left fielder Mia Zamana. De Anna McKee, inserted as a courtesy runner for Sparachane, was forced to hold on at second when Valerie Palmer's grounder to the left side of the infield was booted for an error.

With runners at first and second and none out, Ferrera retired Brittany Derr on a popup back to the mound. Andi Burke's also lofted a pop fly but this one fell in behind the second baseman for a single, with McKee moving on to third base.

A hot smash down the third base line off the bat of Kayla Gray bounced off the glove of Jessica Harlan for an error as McKee scored and Burke

raced all the way around to third. Angela Petros then lofted a fly ball caught in right field by Kellian Calabria, whose throw to home plate nipped Burke for a doubleplay to retire the side.

While the damage had been done as far as run-scoring in the 2A title game was concerned, Ferrera continued to pitch well. She did not allow another Wheeling Central baserunner the rest of the game, including the doubleplay. Ferrera retired the last 11 Maroon Knight batters. In the fifth inning, she struck out the side. The only ball that left the infield after the third inning was a harmless fly to centerfield that Christine Happ tracked down.

"We told our girls this morning that defense was definitely going to win this game," said Rick Magruder, who serves as Wheeling Central's co-head coach along with Ambrose Bober.

"We were able to get a couple of clutch hits in the third inning. 'Kat' Stiglich at third base and Kayla (at shortstop) both made some great plays," Magruder added.

Sparachane struck out three and walked just one, the first batter of the game. Whenever Steubenville Catholic threatened to score, which wasn't often, Sparachane was able to shut down the Crusader offense.

Steubenville Catholic's biggest opportunity occurred in the sixth inning when Kimmy Straker led off by drilling a shot to the gap in right centerfield. By the time the Maroon Knights got the ball back to the infield, Straker was standing on third base.

Amy Joyce's one-hopper was fielded on the mound by Sparachane, who twice faked a throw to third base holding Straker before firing to first just in time for the out.

SPORTS

Ferry rolls past Oak Glen in OVAC 3-A tournament

By KIM APPOLLONI
Times Leader Sports Writer

Nearly perfect. That is the only way to describe the play of defending OVAC AAA softball champion Martins Ferry. Jess Cordery's second-seeded crew disposed of invading Oak Glen in just under one-hour, 3-0, Monday.

Junior dynamo Victoria Zigacheek had the Golden Bear batters completely baffled all evening. Zigacheek placed the first 18 batters she faced in the book.

The Lady Rider defense was superb and nearly kept sophomore Erin Shuman from reaching base with a blooming single behind second. Silky-smooth junior Kayla Kuminkoski made a valiant effort, but the ball had eyes and dropped in for the lone OG hit of the night.

Ferry improved to 12-4 and will face Harrison Central on Wednesday in the semi-final round.

"We are playing our best softball at the right time," smiled Cordery. "We get better every inning. I can't say enough about how well this team has gelled. We split with St. Clairsville this season and had a rain out with Harrison Central. We have no preference who we face, we're just delighted to be in the semifinals."

The Lady Riders wasted no time making Zigacheek comfortable on the mound. Multi-talented freshman shortstop Karlin Vinci led off the Rider at bats using her speed to reach first, and then she stole second.

Kuminkoski popped out before the Bears stopped Vinci at third on a fielder's choice for the second out of inning one. Steady sophomore Kristen Cerasoli belted a single, placing runners at the corners. Cerasoli stole second.

Junior standout Sarah Burch made connection and the ball went through the shortstop's leg driving home two tallies.

"We have great chemistry and I can see our confidence growing," added Cordery. "These girls have had to replace a very good squad from last season, and at first weren't sure of themselves. They have worked hard to become a good team and I'm proud of them."

Ferry added a bonus run in the fifth frame. Kuminkoski rapped a single and moved to second on a throwing error. Sophomore slugger Kayla Lewis blasted a single chasing in Kuminkoski.

The Riders ended with six hits. Sophomore Jordan Ford and junior Jess Hilton both rapped base hits, but were even more impressive in the field. Ford had two Willie Mays-like over the shoulder grabs and Hilton was a force at third base.

"Martins Ferry played as well tonight as any team I have seen all season. They were very tough on defense," stated Oak Glen's Matt Cashdollar. "Like Ferry, we are very young and I hope to see them next season."

Zigacheek did not issue a free pass and whiffed six batters. Jennifer McMichael sat down two and walked a pair before freshman McKenzie Hines replaced her in the fourth.

4-A BROOKE 11, BUCKEYE LOCAL 2

AT WELLSBURG, Brooke took advantage of nine Buckeye Local errors to defeat the Lady Panthers, 11-2, in OVAC 4-A quarterfinal action.

Caitlin Kocher went the distance for the Lady Bruins, striking out six and walking none in seven innings of work. She scattered five Buckeye hits.

Brittany Pearson had four RBI on only two hits, while LeighAnn Laurie had two RBI and Alicia Waing one.

Gina Hicks and Heather McHugh were responsible for both of Buckeye's runs. The Lady Panthers fell to 9-9 on the season and will host Indian Creek in a regular season game this afternoon.

OVAC 3-A INDIAN CREEK 6, BELLAIRE 0

AT BELLAIRE, Indian Creek broke open a scoreless game with a five-run fourth inning and never looked back en route to a 6-0 win over the host Lady Reds in match-up of the fourth and fifth seeds.

Indian Creek limited the Lady Reds to just two innocent singles by Megan Palicka and Monica Chase.

OVAC 2-A STEUBENVILLE CC 5, BARNESVILLE 0

AT STEUBENVILLE, the Lady Crusaders received a brilliant pitching performance from Alexis Ferrara in Monday's 5-0 win over invading Barnesville.

Ferrara fanned 11 and allowed nary a walk, while hurling a no hitter. Barnesville's only base runners reached via Lady Crusader errors.

Joyce led Steubenville Central with three singles and two RBI.

FRONTIER 11, RIVER 10

AT BEAVERTOWN, Frontier overcame nine fielding blunders to advance to the OVAC semifinals with a 11-10 win over River.

The Lady Cougars looked up at a 10-7 deficit entering the bottom of the seventh, but struck four times to pull out the victory.

Maggie Brunoni who earned the mound win also had a home run and two RBI, while Laura Binnegar had a pair of base knocks and a RBI.

Tiffany Armann led River with two singles and two RBI. Kelsie Tisher had a double, single and two RBI.

FORT FRYE 1, BUCKEYE TRAIL 0

AT BEVERLY, Fort Frye pushed across a run in the bottom of the sixth, but that would be all the Lady Cadets needed in their OVAC 2-A quarterfinal matchup with Buckeye Trail.

Jennifer Stehly picked up the win, striking out six batters and walking none in seven innings of work.

Buckeye Trail's Kelly Zimmerman was equally impressive, despite absorbing the loss. She struck out seven and allowed one fewer hit than Stehly.

Maggie Hendershot had Fort Frye's lone RBI, coming on a fielder's choice; Buckeye Trail received singles from four different players, but couldn't string anything together against Stehly.

CLASS 1-A BISHOP DONAHUE 7, BEALLSVILLE 6

AT MCMECHAN, Bishop Donahue advanced to the semifinals of the OVAC 1-A tournament by virtue of a 7-6 win over Beallsville.

The Lady Bishops received strong pitching from frosh Stephanie Kudla in the victory. She had four strikeouts and nary a walk. Jen Hill did the brunt of the offensive damage with a single and a triple.

Beallsville was led by Jennifer Reisz who had a two-run home run and Clarissa Milhoan who had a RBI triple. Carrie Tyo was credited with a three-bagger.

LINSLY 10, SHADYSIDE 1

AT LISA'S FIELD, Linsly took advantage of nine Shadyside errors to pull out a 10-1 victory over the Lady Tigers to advance to the OVAC semifinals against Donahue.

Freshman pitcher Megan Byhanna was once again strong on the mound with eight strikeouts and just two walks.

Linsly received a RBI single from Natalie George and a RBI from Summer Flowers. Shadyside was limited to three singles.



Photo by Bruce Crawford

Magnolia's Ashley McSweeney (3) tries to elude a tag at second base from Meadowbrook shortstop Kristen Waers, left, during action of their OVAC Softball Tournament quarterfinal game Monday in New Martinsville. Magnolia won, 1-0.

Magnolia Knocks Off Meadowbrook

Magnolia's Bethany Howell singled to lead off the sixth inning, stole second and advanced to third on a wild pitch, then escaped a run-down to score the game's only run when the ball was thrown into leftfield, as Magnolia advanced in quarterfinal action of the OVAC Class

PREP SOFTBALL

AAA tournament Monday in New Martinsville with a 1-0 victory over Meadowbrook.

Evan Ludewig had a double and Alicia Hinerman had a triple for the Blue Eagles (20-3).

Th Blue Eagles move on to face Indian Creek in the semifinals at 5 p.m. Wednesday.

Harrison Central 3, St. Clairsville 2

At St. Clairsville, Harrison Central scored two in the sixth and one in the seventh to get past St. Clairsville. No other details were reported.

Indian Creek 6, Bellaire 0

At Bellaire, Liz Williamson picked up the victory, striking out six to lead the Redskins (9-8).

Brooke Stevenson doubled twice and drove home four runs for Indian Creek.

Caitlin Pieniazek had two doubles, Haley Mays had three singles and an RBI, and Williamson added two singles with an RBI.

Megan Palicka and Monica Chase each had a single for the Big Reds (9-8).

Martins Ferry 3, Oak Glen 0

At Martins Ferry, the Purple Riders advanced to the next round behind a six-strikeout, one-hit performance from pitcher Vicky Zigacheek.

Erin Schuman had the lone hit for Oak Glen.

Martins Ferry next plays Harrison Central.

CLASS AAAA Steubenville 5, Beaver Local 3


At Steubenville, Steubenville (13-6) received a 10-strikeout performance from Shay Jackson in the circle and a double from her at the plate as Big Red advanced in the OVAC tournament with a win over Beaver Local.

Briana Kanoskie drove in two runs with a double. Whitney Petrella and Veronica Jones also had doubles. Michelle Kalinowski had a double and a single for an RBI, and Catherine Moore had two singles for an RBI.

Ellie Zimmerman had an RBI single for the Beavers.

Big Red plays Cambridge on Thursday.

Cambridge 4,



OVAC SOFTBALL SEMIFINALS
Wednesday
Class AAA
Field 4
Martins Ferry vs. Har. Central, 5 p.m.
Magnolia vs. Indian Creek, 6:30 p.m.
Class A
Field 3
Bishop Donahue vs. Linsly, 5 p.m.
Bell. St. John vs. Cameron, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday
Class AAAA
Field 4
Cambridge vs. Steubenville, 5 p.m.
John Marshall vs. Brooke, 6:30 p.m.
Class AA
Field 3
Fort Frye vs. Steub. Central, 5 p.m.
Whg. Central vs. Frontier, 6:30 p.m.

advances to play Fort Frye Thursday.

Fort Frye 1, Buckeye Trail 0

At Beverly, Maggie Hendershot got the only RBI the Cadets (15-2) needed en route to a tight win over Buckeye Trail.

Jennifer Stehly had six strikeouts for Fort Frye, and Kelly Zimmerman had seven for the Warriors (9-10).

Wheeling Central 8, Toronto 0

At Wheeling, the Maroon Knights routed Toronto behind an eight-strikeout showing from Jen Sparachane.

Brittany Derr hit a triple for two RBIs and Steph Barry added two singles in the win.

Wheeling Central advances to face Frontier on Thursday.

Frontier 11, River 10

At New Matamoras, Frontier scored four runs in the bottom of the seventh to topple River and advance in the OVAC tournament.

Maggie Brunoni hit a two-run homer and strike out four from the circle in the win.

Shayna Cochran had two singles for three RBIs, followed by Chelsea Binegar with two singles and an RBI, and Tori Taylor with a double and a single for the Cougars (11-5).

The Pilots (11-6) were led by Tiffany Armann with two singles and two RBIs, and Kelsie Fisher with a double, single, and two RBIs.

CLASS A Cameron 6, Weirton Madonna 0

At Weirton, Sunni Hartley and Lauren Siburt each had a double, and Karen Gouldsberry added two singles as the Dragons topped Weirton Madonna.

Lacey Tustin picked up the win for Cameron with five strikeouts.

Kacey Magnone had eight strikeouts in the loss for the

Magnolia's DeWayne Rowell singled to lead off the sixth inning, stole second and advanced to third on a wild pitch, then escaped a rundown to score the game's only run when the ball was thrown into leftfield, as Magnolia advanced in quarterfinal action of the OVAC Class AAA tournament Monday in New Martinsville with a 1-0 victory over Meadowbrook.

Evan Ludewig had a double and Alicia Hinerman had a triple for the Blue Eagles (20-3).
Th Blue Eagles move on to face Indian Creek in the semifinals at 5 p.m. Wednesday.

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Ellie Zimmerman had an RBI single for the Beavers.
Big Red plays Cambridge on Thursday.


Cambridge 4, Edison 3
At Cambridge, Allanna Decker picked up four strikeouts in a Cambridge win over Edison. Sara Starr had a double for the Bobcats.

Samantha Taylor had three singles and Kyleigh DeFrank notched a double in a losing effort for the Wildcats (8-10).

Brooke 11, Buckeye Local 2
At Wellsburg, Brooke advanced to play John Marshall with a big win over Buckeye Local.

Caitlin Kocher struck out six, while Alicia Wayne and Brittany Pearson each added two singles.
Casey Magyar picked up the loss for the Panthers despite six strikeouts.

CLASS AA Steubenville Central 5, Barnesville 0
At Steubenville, Alexis Ferrara threw a no-hitter, striking out 11 batters and Amy Joyce came up with two RBIs on three singles to lead the Crusaders (11-5) into the next round.
Steubenville Central



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Lacey Tustin picked up the win for Cameron with five strikeouts.

Kacey Magnone had eight strikeouts in the loss for the Blue Dons (8-11).

Bellaire St. John 9, Bridgeport 0

At Bellaire, Amanda Rosepa struck out 10 in pacing the Fighting Irish (14-3) past Bridgeport and into a second round showdown with Cameron.

Jenna Vavra had a double and a triple for an RBI, while Loraine Skoich had two singles and two RBIs.

REGULAR SEASON Tyler Consolidated 10-10, Doddridge County 0-0

At Kidwell, Reba Collins pitched a nine-strikeout, no-hitter in taking the first game from Doddridge County.

Tony Riffle had two singles for two RBIs and Myriah Hisam added a double in the win.

The Silver Knights (4-14) swept the series as Kaitlyn Goudy picked up her first win of the season, striking out five for the win.

Lindsey Palmer had a triple, double, and a single for two RBIs. Hannah Thomas had three singles.

Brooke tops Cambridge in 4-A title game

By JIM ELLIOTT
For The Times Leader

Just moments after the Brooke Bruins finished off a 2-0 blanking of Cambridge in Saturday's OVAC Class AAAA Softball Tournament Finals at Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers 1-470 Complex, they gathered around second base for a moment of congratulations.

And then, one of the tournament committee members grabbed the microphone and asked for the Bruin seniors to step forward so Ed Cihy, another committee member, could hand them their trophy.

"Nobody moved a muscle. "We don't have any," the Brooke players and coaches said in unison.

That's right, Brooke had just won its first-ever OVAC tournament title, and it did it without a single senior on the roster.

"What a battle," Brooke coach James Cicchirillo said. "They're such a tough team."

While that may be true — Cambridge's record currently stands at 17-7 — the Bruins (14-7) were a little tougher on Saturday. They scored one run in the first when Caitlin Kocher doubled and came around to touch the plate on an error, and another in the third, when Alica Wayne ripped a bases-loaded single to center, bringing in Katy Romitti, who led off the frame with a similar looking single up the middle.

From there, they turned the game over to Kocher, who was pounding the strike zone from the circle.

She scattered six hits, struck out four, and didn't issue a walk.

Every time she needed a big pitch, she got it, like in the fifth, when the Bobcats got two on with two outs, only to see cleanup hitter Dani Shepard fly softly to right.

Cambridge had another crack in the sixth, when Janelle Givens singled with one out, but Kocher, again, was able to harmlessly dis-

patch of Alexa Kafury and Devaney Daugherty on grounders to third baseman Elizabeth Preston, who did her best impersonation of Brooks Robinson Saturday, figuring in on seven assists or putouts, including all three in the sixth.

Cambridge pitcher Allanna Decker batted for herself and reached on an error to start the seventh, but two outs later, she was gunned down after straying too far off third for the game's final out.

"That's uncharacteristic of us," Cambridge coach Bob Shepard said. "Usually when we have that many on, we get them in. Against a good team, you have to take advantage of those opportunities. The balls didn't get down that sometimes get down for us. We couldn't string the hits together like we have in the past."

The hits didn't come in bunches for Brooke either — it had just five — but it was enough to claim a victory, just like the 10-inning semifinal win against John Marshall.

"That was the turning point for us," Cicchirillo said. "This team has matured, and I think we're ready to make a push in the sectionals."

Brooke might have squandered a chance for more in the fifth, when Marissa Reardon and Elizabeth Preston led off with walks. Two outs later, Reardon, now at third, was nearly caught off the bag. A throw that way hit her in the foot, and she broke for home. The ball was picked up by the third baseman who threw her out at home to complete an unconventional 3-5-2 double play.

"When I came back into the dugout, I told my assistant coach I rolled the dice," Cicchirillo explained. "They threw it away once, and I thought someone might get nervous and do it again. But she picked it up and made a beautiful throw. I tried to gamble a little bit."

He might have lost that one, but the Bruins won the big one — for the first time.

OVAC's spring championship events slated to unfold over next two weeks

JEFF HARRISON
THE DAILY JEFFERSONIAN

The two busiest weeks of competition in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference are about to get under way.

Action in both the softball and baseball playoffs will begin Monday, with quarterfinal action in all four divisions taking place at the home field of the higher seeded teams. Tuesday will be the main date for those games.

The softball semifinals are then scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday at the I-470 Complex in Elm Grove (W. Va.), with two games going on each day simultaneously at both 5 and 6:30 p.m.

The title games will be Saturday at the same location, with the schedule tentatively set to include Class 2-A at 10:30 a.m.; Class 3-A at 12:15 p.m.; Class 4-A at 2 p.m. and Class 1-A at 3:45 p.m.

The baseball tournament will

resume on Saturday, with semifinal games slated at Bridgeport, Toronto, Harrison Central and Toronto. The baseball finals will take place Saturday, May 6 at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville, with the tentative schedule including Class 4-A at 11 a.m.; Class 3-A at 1:30 p.m.; Class 2-A at 4 p.m. and Class 1-A at 6:30 p.m.

The tennis championships will take place Monday through Thursday at the Bethany College

Tennis Complex. The rain dates if needed are Friday and Saturday. The boys' doubles will begin the event on Monday at 1:30 p.m.; the girls' doubles will follow on Tuesday, beginning at 1:30 p.m.; boys' singles starts Wednesday at 8 a.m.; and girls' singles starts Thursday at 8 a.m.

An overall boys' and girls' team champion and runner-up will be awarded (Wheeling Park is the defending champion in both). Individual champion and runner-

up awards in each flight will also be given. All school classifications compete in the same event.

The last of the OVAC spring events will take place May 3-5 as the conference stages its track championships. The Class 1-A/2-A meet will be Wednesday and Friday at Shady Side's Fleming Field while the Class 3-A/4-A meet is

set for Thursday and Saturday at Bellaire's Nelson Field.

In other upcoming conference events,

Sunday, May 7 will mark the start releases announcing the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2006 selections while the annual OVAC Banquet of Champions will take place Monday, May 15 at WestBanco Arena in Wheeling.



OVAC softball championship games set

The field for championship softball is set.

Four teams punched their tickets to Saturday's OVAC Softball Championship games Thursday night at the Chambers' I-470 Complex in Elm Grove.

The 2-A and 4-A games were contested, while the 1-A and 3-A schools settled their brackets on Wednesday.

Advancing to the 2-A finals were Steubenville Catholic and top-seeded Wheeling Central.

The Lady Crusaders took out Fort Frye 5-3 and Wheeling Central knocked out Frontier by a 4-0 count.

In 4-A, top-seeded John Marshall was upset in 10 innings by Brooke, while Cambridge got past Steubenville in the first semifinal encounter.

STEUBENVILLE CENTRAL did it the way it's been doing it all season, using solid pitching and a highly-efficient small-ball style of offense.

Alexis Ferrera was strong on the mound for Catholic Central. She struck out 11 and walked none in a complete-game effort.

The Lady Crusaders' offense staked her to a 4-0 lead in the first three innings and from there never looked back.

Kelly Costantini had a two-run single, while Jessica Halen had a pair of singles, a double and a RBI. Kelli Ann Calabria had three hits in the game as well.

Fort Frye received a double, single and a RBI from Carrie Ketelson. Hayley Neader had two singles and two RBI, while Jennifer Stehly had a double and a single.

WHEELING CENTRAL, meanwhile, also went the way of pitching to advance to the finals.

The Lady Maroon Knights handed the ball to Brittany Derr who allowed two hits to the first hitters of the contest.

However, from there it was lights out for the Lady Cougars.

Derr promptly sat down the next 19 hitters she faced until a seventh-inning walk broke the strangle.

Valerie Palmer had two hits and two RBI to lead the Knights at the dish. Kat Stiglich had a RBI single, while Angela Petros had a trio of base hits.

Wheeling Central is now 22-4 on the season.

CAMBRIDGE was able to push the only run across in its 4-A semifinal game with Steubenville on an obstruction call in the sixth inning.

Allana Decker then slammed the door on the Big Red in the seventh to send the Lady Bobcats to the title game.

Decker didn't strike out a batter and walked three, but she worked the route and only allowed two hits in the contest.

Steubenville's Shay Jackson was equally impressive. She allowed six hits and fanned seven against just one walk.

Rachel Wright had two hits for the Guernsey Countians, while Sam Rowen had a single and a triple.

Cambridge is now 16-6 on the season, while Big Red fell to 13-7 on the year.

BROOKE pulled off the upset of the tournament knocking off the Lady Monarchs in 10 innings.

The Lady Bruins trailed most of the way, but scratched a run across in the sixth and then took the lead 2-1 in the eighth when Alicia Wayne's single scored Elizabeth Preston.

However, JM answered when Vanessa Illovar scored in the bottom half of the frame.

In the 10th, the Lady Bruins took advantage of a passed ball and an error, while receiving two hits to push across the game's winning runs. The Lady Monarchs then went in order in the bottom half of the frame.

Linescores:
CLASS 2-A
Steubenville CC 121 001 0 5 7 1
Fort Frye 000 001 2 3 5 3
BATTERIES: Ferrera and Costantini, Stehly and Ketelson.
Frontier 000 000 0 0 2 3
Wheeling CC 004 000 x 4 9 0
BATTERIES: Brunoni and Tidd, Derr and Barry.
CLASS 4-A
Steubenville 000 000 0 0 2 1
Cambridge 000 001 x 1 6 1
BATTERIES: Jackson and Kanoskie, Decker and Daugherty.
Brooke 000 001 010 2 -- 4 10 2
JM 010 000 010 0 -- 2 7 1
BATTERIES: Kocher and Michetti; Phillips, Swoger (?) and Pelaez.

SPORTS

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

INSIDE

k Leaders/ D4
ball Report/D5

Harrison tops St. C. to advance in OVAC

STASKEY
Sports WriterCentral's softball team is
all of actresses and head
Bethel serves as the direc-Huskies completed "act
ree-act play" Monday
er the lights at the St. C.
s Complex.1-seed in the Class 3-A,
ntral, ousted third-seeded

St. Clairsville by a slim 3-2 margin.

Harrison is now a member of the
OVAC 'Final Four' and will meet
Martins Ferry Wednesday at 5 p.m. at
the Chambers 1-470 Complex in
Wheeling in Act Two of this play
known as the OVAC Tournament."We've had 16 dress rehearsals up
until this point," Bethel said. "Tonight
was show time and act one, so we
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from the stage."*'We've had 16 dress rehearsals up until this
point. Tonight was show time and act one.'**- Harrison's Don Bethel*The Lady Huskies nearly found
their play nearly nullified at the hands
of a solid St. Clairsville outfit.

"I am proud of all of my kids,"

Bethel said. "This was a heck of a
softball game, and give St. C. credit
because they are much improved
from when we played them early inthe season, but I am happy with how
we fought back twice."Harrison Central pitcher Katy
Leeper and St. C. hurler Lindsay
Stewart were putting up matching
zeros until the bottom of the fourth
inning.It was then that senior third base-
man Beth Schroeder led off the frame
with a towering drive deep into the
left-center gap. Schroeder rounded

See, HARRISON, Page D2

St. John rolls
past Bridgeport
in OVAC tourneyBy SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports WriterCoach Jerry Magistro has been waiting all season for his St.
John Central Lady Irish bats to come alive.There's no better time than in a tournament to do some offen-
sive damage even if it's not as much as the skipper would have
liked.St. John Central (14-4) used a six-run fourth inning to bust
open a 1-0 game and eventually went on to score a 9-0 victory
over eighth-seeded Bridgeport Monday afternoon in the quarter-
finals of the OVAC 1-A tournament.The win puts the Green back in the semifinals of the tourna-
ment on Wednesday night at 1-470's Field 3 at 6:30 p.m."I can't really complain with a 9-0 win," Magistro said.
"Good teams find ways to win, and what we've done a lot this
year is play good defense and get good pitching."The pitching and defense were there once again for St. John
thanks once again to junior Amanda Rosepapa on the rubber and
a veteran infield, which committed nary an error."We are playing well defensively," Magistro said. "But, we
still need to hit a little better because we missed some chances
today for a couple more runs. We just play a game at time and if
we can continue to get the pitching and defense along with some
hitting, we'll be pretty tough to beat."Rosepapa - who already has a perfect game on her resume
this season - allowed just two harmless singles and fanned 10.
She didn't allow a free pass."Amanda has thrown well all year," Magistro professed. "We
have come to expect that from her."With Rosepapa doing her thing on the mound, the Lady Irish
offense broke through somewhat in the aforementioned fourth
when they sent 10 to the plate.Coming up with just three hits, but taking advantage of four
walks and two Lady Bulldog errors proved to be enough.Senior second baseman Laraine Skorich had a two-run single
in the inning, while Jenna Vavra had a RBI double and Ashley
Wallace had a sacrifice RBI, but she reached when the ball was
dropped in the outfield and later scored.The Lady Irish added a single run in both the fifth and sixth
frames. Vavra led off the fifth with a triple and scored on a
throwing error.In the sixth, pinch-hitter Brandi Richards was plunked. She
later scored when senior third baseman Marissa DeClemente
was issued a free pass.Rosepapa worked a perfect seventh to send the Lady Irish to
the next round.All told, Skorich had a pair of singles, while Rosepapa helped
her own cause with a single and a run scored. Wallace had a
base knock and a RBI to give SJC its run in the second inning.Linescore:
Bridgeport 000 000 0 0 2 3
St. John 010 611 x 97 1BATTERIES: Barncord, S. Wamsley (4) and K. Wamsley. Rosepapa and
Smith.

Staskey can be reached at sstaskey@timesleaderonline.com

Track Leaders/D4
Baseball Report/D5

SPORTS

Harrison tops St. C. to advance in OVAC

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Writer

Harrison Central's softball team is evidently full of actresses and head coach Don Bethel serves as the director.

The Lady Huskies completed "act one of a three-act play" Monday evening under the lights at the St. C. Junior Sports Complex.

The sixth-seed in the Class 3-A, Harrison Central, ousted third-seeded

St. Clairsville by a slim 3-2 margin.

Harrison is now a member of the OVAC 'Final Four' and will meet Martins Ferry Wednesday at 5 p.m. at the Chambers I-470 Complex in Wheeling in Act Two of this play known as the OVAC Tournament.

"We've had 16 dress rehearsals up until this point," Bethel said. "Tonight was show time and act one, so we have to finish the entire play and if you play bad you could get booted from the stage."

'We've had 16 dress rehearsals up until this point. Tonight was show time and act one.'

- Harrison's Don Bethel

The Lady Huskies nearly found their play nearly nullified at the hands of a solid St. Clairsville outfit.

"I am proud of all of my kids,"

Bethel said. "This was a heck of a softball game, and give St. C. credit because they are much improved from when we played them early in

the season, but I a

we fought back twice. Harrison Central's Leeper and St. C. Stewart were put zeros until the bottom of the

inning. It was then that man Beth Schroeder with a towering double left-center gap. S

See, HARRIS

TIMES LEADER - Tuesday, April 25, 2006 - D2

● Harrison

Continued from Page D1

the bases to a tune of an inside-the-park home run, giving St. C. the 1-0 upperhand.

"Give (Schroeder) credit because that was a shot," Bethel said. "She absolutely belted that ball and deserved credit for hitting it."

However, Leeper was seemingly unphased. She promptly sat down the next three to end the inning.

The 1-0 score stood until the top of the sixth when Harrison got its bats rolling.

Second baseman Breanna Spoonmore connected on a one-out single and took second on a wild pitch. Gena Everhart drilled a double that hopped over the third-base bag and scored Spoonmore from second.

Another wild pitch allowed Everhart to move up to third. She scored on an error on an attempted pick-off play, giving the Cadiz-based nine a 2-1 upperhand.

St. Clairsville, however, remained steadfast.

The Lady Devils - who had been limited to just one hit besides the homer - got a lead-off single from number nine hitter Amy Vicker. Schroeder then singled into right, allowing Vicker to race to third and Schroeder moved up a base on the play.

Junior Kayla Pickana grounded sharply to second, which allowed Vicker to tally, knotting the game at two. Jordan Myers got an infield single, but Schroeder was still at third.

Stewart grounded back to the pitcher and Leeper came home with the play and catcher Chelsea Coconougher applied the tag on Schroeder for the second out of the inning.

Leeper then induced another ground out to thwart the Lady Red Devils' rally.

Stewart recorded the first two outs of the seventh with relative ease, getting a ground out and a pop out.

However, Annie Yarish didn't let the Lady Huskies go quietly, singling back through the middle. Freshman Sara Pelegreen then ripped a double into left center and with Bethel waving her home from the time the ball landed, Yarish scored all the way from first without a play.

"There was no stopping on that hit," Bethel said. "(Annie) was going to do one of three things: die of exhaustion, get thrown out or score. There was no question I was going to send her."

Leeper then worked a perfect seventh in which she recorded her ninth strikeout.

Even with Leeper on the hill, Bethel - a former Chicago Cubs AAA player - knew there were no sure bets.

"I've been in way too many games to get comfortable," Bethel said. "Have you ever heard the story of the Boston Red Sox and New York Mets in 1986. That's going to happen again sometime, so until the final out is recorded I'm nervous."

Stewart, meanwhile, deserved a kinder fate. She recorded five strikeouts and issued nary a free pass, while allowing seven hits.

Coconougher had a double, while Yarish had another single in the game.

Linescore:

Harrison 000 002 1 3 7 1

St. Clairsville 000 101 0 2 5 1

BATTERIES: Stewart and Thrash. Leeper and Coconougher.

Staskey can be reached via email at [sstaskey@timesleaderonline.com](mailto:ssstaskey@timesleaderonline.com)

St. John roll past Bridgeport in OVAC tournament

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Writer

Coach Jerry Magistro has been waiting all John Central Lady Irish bats to come alive.

There's no better time than in a tournament sive damage even if it's not as much as the sl liked.

St. John Central (14-4) used a six-run fourth open a 1-0 game and eventually went on to s over eighth-seeded Bridgeport Monday afternoon of the OVAC 1-A tournament.

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Senior second baseman Laraine Skorich ha in the inning, while Jenna Vavra had a RBI c Wallace had a sacrifice RBI, but she reached dropped in the outfield and later scored.

The Lady Irish added a single run in both frames. Vavra led off the fifth with a triple throwing error.

In the sixth, pinch-hitter Brandi Richards later scored when senior third baseman Mai was issued a free pass.

Rosepapa worked a perfect seventh to send the next round.

All told, Skorich had a pair of singles, while her own cause with a single and a run score base knock and a RBI to give SJC its run in the

Linescore:

Bridgeport 000 000 0 0 2 3

St. John 010 611 x 9 7 1

BATTERIES: Barncord, S. Wamsley (4) and K. Warr Smith.

Staskey can be reached at [sstaskey@timesle](mailto:ssstaskey@timesle)



Photo by Mike Harvilla

Magnolia's Cassie Neff is tagged at the plate by Martins Ferry catcher Kayla Lewis (18) during their game OVAC Class AAA championship game Saturday.

Blue Eagles Dethrone Riders

**By NICK BEDWAY
For The News-Register**
Magnolia High School didn't suffer from a post-prom hangover during Saturday afternoon's Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class AAA girls' softball championship game held on Lisa's Field at the I-470 complex in Wheeling.

Playing on short rest, Coach Charlie Howell's Blue Eagles looked sharp as ever in defeating defending champion Martins Ferry (13-5) by a 5-2 score behind Torri Greene's eight-strikeout, two-hit pitching and an offense that came alive in the late innings.

"We didn't hit the ball early but we got some big hits at the right time," said Howell as Magnolia improved its record to 22-3 and won the conference title for the second time in three years.

Playing with a young team that included only one senior in yesterday's starting lineup, the Purple Riders played loosely in the field and were charged with six errors. "We did not play well defensively," said Ferrer Coach Jess Cordery. "But we were still in the game until the end. Magnolia has the kind of lineup that is going to hit the ball and hit it hard. You have to make all the plays if you are going to beat them," Cordery added.

Still, the Purple Riders held a 2-1 lead until the bottom of the fifth inning that began with the Blue Eagles' Bethany Howell reaching on still another Ferrer miscue. Magnolia senior whiz Ashley McSweeney collected an infield hit when her ground ball could only be knocked down by Martins Ferry shortstop Karlin Vinci, who had to reverse herself after starting toward second base to cover on a hit and run play.

Paige DeMarco, the No. 4 hitter in the Blue Eagle lineup, then stepped to the plate and did what a cleanup hitter is supposed to do in this situation. She cleaned the bags with a two-run double to the fence in left center field, putting Magnolia in front 3-2.

Two insurance runs crossed the plate in the sixth inning, which included two Purple Rider errors, a sharp single by Kayla Brill and McSweeney's run-scoring double down the left field line.

The Blue Eagles finished with seven hits, two by McSweeney. She reached base on all four plate appearances, getting aboard via Martins Ferry errors in the first and third innings. Brooke Keene's single drove home a run in the first inning and Bethany Howell picked up an RBI on a ground ball to short that was kicked in the sixth inning.

A Magnolia error and singles by Kayla Lewis and Jess Hilton accounted for Martins Ferry's first run and its only two hits of the game in the top of the first. The Purple Riders scored a run without a hit in the fourth inning to go ahead 2-1. An obstruction call at third base allowed Hilton to cross the plate. But that was all the Purple Riders could muster against Greene. "Their pitcher really kept us off-balance," said Cordery. "We didn't have many good swings against her."

The Blue Eagle coach believes that the pressure his team can put on an opposing pitcher has a lot to do with Magnolia's success this spring. "I don't think I've ever coached a team with such a solid lineup from top to bottom," Howell said. "Everyone is capable of getting a big hit and they've been doing it all year."

Magnolia and Martins Ferry have seen a lot of each other in the OVAC tournament recently. In 2004, the Blue Eagles knocked off the Purple Riders in the title game. Last May, Martins Ferry knocked off Magnolia in the semifinals on its way to winning the championship.

OVAC CLASS AAA CHAMPIONSHIP
Magnolia 5, Martins Ferry 2
Martins Ferry 100 100 0 - 2 2 6
Magnolia 100 022 x - 5 7 2
MF - Zigacheek Ip (1SO, 3W) and Lewis, Hilton S, rbi.
M - Greene wp (8SO, 3W) and Brill, McSweeney S, D, rbi; DeMarco D, 2rbi; Keene S, rbi; Howell, S, rbi.

Irish Defeat Cadets for OVAC Title

**By TRACY WATSON
For The News-Register**
Consistency is something in the world of sports that can make teams, coaches and programs very special things to be around.

When you talk of consistency in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, you need look no further than head coach Jerry Magistro and his Bellaire St. John softball program.

After all, the Fighting Irish had already wrapped up six straight OVAC regular season titles entering Saturday afternoon's Class A tournament title game against Linsly.

You can now add five of six tournament titles to that impressive resume.

Sophomore fire-baller Amanda Rosepapa fashioned a one-hitter, fanning nine and not issuing a free pass, and St. John took advantage of four unearned runs to gain an impressive 4-0 victory over the mistake-prone Cadets in the small-school title game at Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chamber's I-470 Complex.

It was also St. John's third victory of the season over Linsly.

"I am so proud of these girls and how they have come together this year," Magistro said. "And while this is great, I will be honest with you, I am even prouder of the fact that we have six regular season titles."

"Those titles are judged by strength of schedule and that is something that we proud our-



Photo by Scott McCloskey

Bellaire St. John's Ashley Marinacci (14) slides into home safely before as Linsly catcher Morgan Drotos awaits for the throw.

selves on. We will play anyone, and we actively go out and try to get the best teams available on our schedule."

While the Fighting Irish struggled to find the big hit it was looking for yesterday, St. John was able to take advantage of seven Linsly errors. The Green-and-White finished with six hits on the day, but stranded 13 runners, including 10 in scoring position and twice left the bases loaded.

The designated hosts got the only two runs they would need in the first inning without the benefit of a hit. Ashley Marinacci got hit by a pitch with

two out and steal second. Marinacci then hustled home all the way from second when sophomore Jenna Vavra reached on an error.

Vavra moved to third on a pair of wild pitches and eventually crossed the dish with the second run when Courtney Coyne reached on another miscue.

The Irish stranded nine between the second and fifth frames before a Marissa DeClemente single and three more Cadet errors led to another two-run inning and a 4-0 advantage. Vavra was credited with an RBI during

the inning. "St. John is just so both offense and defense. The last thing you can do is give them errors," Linsly coach Hofreuter-Landidi said. "And that is exactly what they did."

"It is hard to get against that team. They dig down that deep. How good your pitcher is, how pumped up you are. But I will not have there are not many players. I felt we could get to today, but there were teams left and we were them. We are a young team with just one senior good freshman pitcher. Preparation for the season begins tomorrow."

DeClemente finished the pair of singles for the Irish while the Cadets came on a two-out Jessie Schucht in the fifth inning, which broke up the Irish attempt at not hitting, but a perfect game.

"Our kids work so hard. We also have so many coaches that put so much into this team, and that helps us become champions," Magistro added. "I pitched very well to today. It has been all season. Defense was just great."

OVAC CLASS AA CHAMPIONSHIP
Bellaire St. John 4, Linsly 0
Linsly 000 000 0 - 0 0 0
Bellaire St. John 200 000 0 - 0 0 0
L - Byhanna Ip (8SO, 3V) Schucht D.
B - Rosepapa wp (9); Smith, DeClemente 2S; Vavra S; Rosepapa S; Wallace S;

Knights Shut Out Crusaders for Cro

**By NICK BEDWAY
For The News-Register**

Good pitching most often stops good hitting and that surely was the case in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference's Class AA girls' softball championship game played Saturday morning on Lisa's Field at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling.

The two sides combined for only six hits, just two of which went for extra bases. Wheeling Central Catholic, picking up an unearned run in the third inning, turned things over to right-handed pitcher Jennifer Sparachane and she made the tally stand up for a 1-0 victory over Ohio parochial rival Steubenville Catholic Central.

The Crusaders, last year's OVAC 2A champions, were dethroned despite a terrific two-hit performance from Alexis Ferrera. Coach Jackie Marook-Rossi's talented righthander used her rising fast ball to strike out seven Maroon Knights while yielding only one walk.

Both Wheeling Central hits came in the third inning. The rally started when Sparachane doubled over the head of Steubenville Catholic left fielder Mia Zamana. De Anna McKee, inserted as a courtesy runner for Sparachane, was forced to hold on at second when Valerie Palmer's grounder to the left side of the infield was booted for an error.

With runners at first and second and none out, Ferrera retired Brittany Derr on a pop up back to the mound. Andi Burke's also lofted a pop fly but this one fell in behind the second baseman for a single, with McKee moving on to third base.

A hot smash down the third base line off the bat of Kayla Gray bounced off the glove of Jessica Harlan for an error as McKee scored and Burke raced all the way around to third. Angela Petros then lofted a fly ball caught in right field by Kellian Calabria, whose throw to home plate nipped Burke for a doubleplay to retire the side.

While the damage had been done as far as run-scoring in the 2A title game was concerned, Ferrera continued to pitch well. She did not allow another Wheeling Central baserunner the rest of the game. Including the doubleplay, Ferrera retired the last 11 Maroon Knight batters. In the fifth inning, she struck out the side. The only ball that left the infield after the third inning was a harmless fly to centerfield that Christine Happ tracked down.

"We told our girls this morning that defense was definitely going to win this game," said Rick Magruder, who serves as Wheeling Central's co-head coach along with Ambrose Bober. "We were able to get a couple of clutch hits in the third inning. 'Kat' Stiglich at third base and Kayla (at shortstop) both made some great plays," Magruder added.

Sparachane struck out three and walked just one, the first batter of the game. Whenever Steubenville Catholic threatened to score, which wasn't often, Sparachane was able to shut down the Crusader offense.

Steubenville Catholic's biggest opportunity occurred in the sixth inning when Kimmy Straker led off by drilling a shot to the gap in right centerfield. By the time

the Maroon Knights got the ball back to the infield, Straker was standing on third base.

Any Joyce's one-hopper was fielded on the mound by Sparachane, who twice faked a throw to third base holding Straker before firing to first just in time for the out.

"We were expecting her (Sparachane) to fake to third base which is why we held our runner," said Marook-Rossi. The Crusader coach was hoping that Joyce could beat the play at first but that didn't happen.

Sparachane then retired Melissa Costantini on a called third strike and the inning ended when Calabria's low liner to shortstop was speared by Gray, who had one knee on the infield dirt.

"We couldn't get any hits back-to-back today," Marook-Rossi said. "The opportunities were there but I thought they made some great plays against us," she added.

The OVAC championship was the third for the Maroon Knights

under the combined efforts of Magruder and Bober. "We have a lot of young players, but they know what they are doing. They are good and we put the ball in play, we have a chance to win."

OVAC CLASS AA CHAMPIONSHIP
Wheeling Central Catholic 1, Steubenville Catholic Central 0
Staub. Cathollic 000 000 0 - 0 0 0
Whg Central 001 000 0 - 0 0 0
SC - Ferrera Ip (7SO, 1W) Straker S, T.
WC - Sparachane wp (1); Barry, Sparachane D; Gray

ACE SPORTS GOOD

#1 FOR ARC

AUTHORITY DEALER

• MATHEWS
• BOWTECH

Bruins Take Class AAAA Championship

**By JIM ELLIOTT
Assistant Sports Editor**

Just moments after the Brooke Bruins finished off a 2-0 blanking of Cambridge in Saturday's OVAC Class AAAA Softball Tournament Finals at Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex, they gathered around second base for a moment of congratulations.

game over to Kocher, who was pounding the strike zone from the circle.

She scattered six hits, struck out four, and didn't issue a walk.

Every time she needed a big pitch, she got it, like in the fifth, when the Bobcats got two on with two outs, only to see cleanup hitter Dani Sheppard fly softly to right. Cambridge had another great

enough to claim a victory, just like the 10-inning semifinal win against John Marshall.

"That was the turning point for us," Cicchirillo said. "This team has matured, and I think we're ready to make a push in the sectionals."

REGULAR SEASON
John Marshall 5, Edison 4

At Glen Dale, the Monarchs (18-4) rallied for three runs in the bottom of the seventh to

sweep of the Lumberjills.

OVAC Class AAAA Final
Brooke 2, Cambridge 0
Brooke 101 000 0 - 2 5 3
Cambridge 000 000 0 - 0 0 1
B - Kocher wp (4SO, 0W) and Mitchell, Kocher D, S; Wayne S, rbi; Reardon S; Romitti S.
C - Decker Ip (2SO, 2W) and Daugherty, Starr S; Mahley S; Wright S; Rolfer S; Givens S; Daugherty S.

REGULAR SEASON
John Marshall 5, Edison 4
Edison 000 004 0 - 4 4 0

For The News-Register
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Playing on short rest, Coach Charlie Howell's Blue Eagles looked sharp as ever in defeating defending champion Martins Ferry (13-5) by a 5-2 score behind Torri Greene's eight-strikeout, two-hit pitching and an offense that came alive in the late innings.

"We didn't hit the ball early but we got some big hits at the right time," said Howell as Magnolia improved its record to 22-3 and won the conference title for the second time in three years.

Playing with a young team that included only one senior in yesterday's starting lineup, the Purple Riders played loosely in the field and were charged with six errors. "We did not play well defensively," said Ferry Coach Jess Cordery. "But we were still in the game until the end. Magnolia has the kind of lineup that is going to hit the ball and hit it hard. You have to make all the plays if you are going to beat them," Cordery added.

Still, the Purple Riders held a 2-1 lead until the bottom of the fifth inning that began with the Blue Eagles' Bethany Howell reaching on still another Ferry miscue. Magnolia senior whiz Ashley McSweeney collected an infield hit when her ground ball could only be knocked down by Martins Ferry shortstop Karlin Vinci, who had to reverse herself after starting toward second base to cover on a hit and run play.

Paige DeMarco, the No. 4 hitter in the Blue Eagle lineup, then stepped to the plate and did what a cleanup hitter is supposed to do in this situation. She cleaned the bags with a two-run double to the fence in left center field, putting Magnolia in front 3-2.

the plate in the sixth inning, which included two Purple Rider errors, a sharp single by Kayla Brill and McSweeney's run-scoring double down the left field line.

The Blue Eagles finished with seven hits, two by McSweeney. She reached base on all four plate appearances, getting aboard via Martins Ferry errors in the first and third innings. Brooke Keene's single drove home a run in the first inning and Bethany Howell picked up an RBI on a ground ball to short that was kicked in the sixth inning.

A Magnolia error and singles by Kayla Lewis and Jess Hilton accounted for Martins Ferry's first run and its only two hits of the game in the top of the first. The Purple Riders scored a run without a hit in the fourth inning to go ahead 2-1. An obstruction call at third base allowed Hilton to cross the plate.

But that was all the Purple Riders could muster against Greene. "Their pitcher really kept us off-balance," said Cordery. "We didn't have many good swings against her."

The Blue Eagle coach believes that the pressure his team can put on an opposing pitcher has a lot to do with Magnolia's success this spring. "I don't think I've ever coached a team with such a solid lineup from top to bottom," Howell said. "Everyone is capable of getting a big hit and they've been doing it all year."

Magnolia and Martins Ferry have seen a lot of each other in the OVAC tournament recently. In 2004, the Blue Eagles knocked off the Purple Riders in the title game. Last May, Martins Ferry knocked out Magnolia in the semifinals on its way to winning the championship.

OVAC CLASS AAA CHAMPIONSHIP
Magnolia 5, Martins Ferry 2
Martins Ferry 100 100 0 - 2 2 6
Magnolia 100 022 x - 5 7 2
MF - Zigacheek lp (1SO, 3W) and Lewis, Hilton S, rbi.
M - Greene wp (8SO, 3W) and Brill, McSweeney S, D, rbi; DeMarco D, 2rbi; Keene S, rbi; Howell, S, rbi.

"I am so proud of these girls and how they have come together this year," Magistro said. "And while this is great, I will be honest with you, I am even prouder of the fact that we have six regular season titles."

"Those titles are judged by strength of schedule and that is something that we proud our-

age of seven Linsly errors. The Green-and-White finished with six hits on the day, but stranded 13 runners, including 10 in scoring position and twice left the bases loaded.

The designated hosts got the only two runs they would need in the first inning without the benefit of a hit. Ashley Marinacci got hit by a pitch with

second run when Courtney Coyne reached on another miscue.

The Irish stranded nine between the second and fifth frames before a Marissa DeClemente single and three more Cadet errors led to another two-run inning and a 4-0 advantage. Vavra was credited with an RBI during

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Knights Shut Out Crusaders for Cro

By NICK BEDWAY
For the News-Register

Good pitching most often stops good hitting and that surely was the case in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference's Class AA girls' softball championship game played Saturday morning on Lisa's Field at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling.

The two sides combined for only six hits, just two of which went for extra bases. Wheeling Central Catholic, picking up an unearned run in the third inning, turned things over to right-handed pitcher Jennifer Sparachane and she made the tally stand up for a 1-0 victory over Ohio parochial rival Steubenville Catholic Central.

The Crusaders, last year's OVAC 2A champions, were dethroned despite a terrific two-hit hill performance from Alexis Ferrera. Coach Jackie Marook-Rossi's talented righthander used her rising fast ball to strike out seven Maroon Knights while yielding only one walk.

Both Wheeling Central hits came in the third inning. The rally started when Sparachane doubled over the head of Steubenville Catholic left fielder Mia Zamana. De Anna McKee, inserted as a courtesy runner for Sparachane, was forced to hold on at second when Valerie Palmer's grounder to the left side of the infield was booted for an error.

With runners at first and second and none out, Ferrera retired Brittany Derr on a pop up back to the mound. Andi Burke's also lofted a pop fly but this one fell in behind the second baseman for a single, with McKee moving on to third base.

A hot smash down the third base line off the bat of Kayla Gray bounced off the glove of Jessica Harlan for an error as McKee scored and Burke raced all the way around to third. Angela Petros then lofted a fly ball caught in right field by Kellian Calabria, whose throw to home plate nipped Burke for a doubleplay to retire the side.

While the damage had been done as far as run-scoring in the 2A title game was concerned, Ferrera continued to pitch well. She did not allow another Wheeling Central baserunner the rest of the game. Including the doubleplay, Ferrera retired the last 11 Maroon Knight batters. In the fifth inning, she struck out the side. The only ball that left the infield after the third inning was a harmless fly to centerfield that Christine Happ tracked down.

"We told our girls this morning that defense was definitely going to win this game," said Rick Magruder, who serves as Wheeling Central's co-head coach along with Ambrose Bober. "We were able to get a couple of clutch hits in the third inning. 'Kat' Stiglich at third base and Kayla (at shortstop) both made some great plays," Magruder added.

Sparachane struck out three and walked just one, the first batter of the game. Whenever Steubenville Catholic threatened to score, which wasn't often, Sparachane was able to shut down the Crusader offense.

Steubenville Catholic's biggest opportunity occurred in the sixth inning when Kimmy Straker led off by drilling a shot to the gap in right centerfield. By the time

the Maroon Knights got the ball back to the infield, Straker was standing on third base.

Amy Joyce's one-hopper was fielded on the mound by Sparachane, who twice faked a throw to third base holding Straker before firing to first just in time for the out.

"We were expecting her (Sparachane) to fake to third base which is why we held our runner," said Marook-Rossi. The Crusader coach was hoping that Joyce could beat the play at first but that didn't happen.

Sparachane then retired Melissa Costantini on a called third strike and the inning ended when Calabria's low liner to shortstop was speared by Gray, who had one knee on the infield dirt.

"We couldn't get any hits back-to-back today," Marook-Rossi said. "The opportunities were there but I thought they made some great plays against us," she added.

The OVAC championship was the third for the Maroon Knights

under the combined efforts of Magruder. "We have a lot of yc team, but they kno play," Bober said. " ing is good and wh put the ball in play, have a chance to win.

OVAC CLASS AA CHA
Wheeling Centr
Steubenville Cath
Steub. Catholic 000 00
Whg Central 001 01
SC - Ferrera lp (7SO, 1W)
Straker S, T.
WC - Sparachane wp (9 Barry, Sparachane D; Gray

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• MATHEWS
• BOWTECH

Bruins Take Class AAAA Championship

By JIM ELLIOTT
Assistant Sports Editor

Just moments after the Brooke Bruins finished off a 2-0 blanking of Cambridge in Saturday's OVAC Class AAAA Softball Tournament Finals at Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex, they gathered around second base for a moment of congratulations.

And then, one of the tournament committee members grabbed the microphone and asked for the Bruin seniors to step forward so Ed Cihy, another committee member, could hand them their trophy.

Nobody moved a muscle. "We don't have any," the Brooke players and coaches said in unison.

That's right, Brooke had just won its first-ever OVAC tournament title, and it did it without a single senior on the roster.

"What a battle," Brooke coach James Cicchirillo said. "They're such a tough team."

While that may be true - Cambridge's record currently stands at 17-7 - the Bruins (14-7) were a little tougher on Saturday. They scored one run in the first when Caitlin Kocher doubled and came around to touch the plate on an error, and another in the third, when Alica Wayne ripped a bases-loaded single to center, bringing in Katy Romitti, who led off the frame with a similar looking single up the middle.

From there, they turned the

game over to Kocher, who was pounding the strike zone from the circle.

She scattered six hits, struck out four, and didn't issue a walk.

Every time she needed a big pitch, she got it, like in the fifth, when the Bobcats got two on with two outs, only to see cleanup hitter Dani Shepard fly softly to right.

Cambridge had another crack in the sixth, when Janelle Givens singled with one out, but Kocher, again, was able to harmlessly dispatch of Alexa Kafury and Devaney Daugherty on grounders to third baseman Elizabeth Preston, who did her best impersonation of Brooks Robinson Saturday, figuring in on seven assists or putouts, including all three in the sixth.

Cambridge pitcher Allanna Decker batted for herself and reached on an error to start the seventh, but two outs later, she was gunned down after straying too far off third for the game's final out.

"That's uncharacteristic of us," Cambridge coach Bob Shepard said. "Usually when we have that many on, we get them in. Against a good team, you have to take advantage of those opportunities. The balls didn't get down that sometimes get down for us. We couldn't string the hits together like we have in the past."

The hits didn't come in bunches for Brooke either - but it was

enough to claim a victory, just like the 10-inning semifinal win against John Marshall.

"That was the turning point for us," Cicchirillo said. "This team has matured, and I think we're ready to make a push in the sectionals."

REGULAR SEASON

John Marshall 5, Edison 4
At Glen Dale, the Monarchs (18-4) rallied for three runs in the bottom of the seventh to beat the Wildcats (10-11).

Courtney McGilton drove in the winning runs with a dramatic two-out single, one of three hits she enjoyed on the day.

Vanessa Illovar also had three hits for John Marshall.

River 10-11, Valley 1-0
At Hannibal, Marcy Meredith not only collected four hits in the doubleheader, but pitched a complete game four hitter with five strikeouts and no walks in the first game as the Pilots (13-7) collected an easy

sweep of the Lumberjills.

OVAC Class AAAA Final

Brooke 2, Cambridge 0
Brooke 101 000 0 - 2 5 3
Cambridge 000 000 0 - 0 6 1
B - Kocher wp (4SO, 0W) and Michelti. Kocher D, S; Wayne S, rbi; Reardon S; Romitti S.
C - Decker lp (2SO, 2W) and Daugherty. Starr S; Mahley S; Wright S; Roller S; Givens S; Daugherty S.

REGULAR SEASON

John Marshall 5, Edison 4
Edison 000 004 0 - 4 4 0
John Marshall 010 100 3 - 5 9 4
E - Williamson (3SO, 0W), Bandle (5) lp (3SO, 4W) and Reighard, Givens (6). Givens S, rbi; Blake S, rbi.
J - Swager (5SO, 0W), Phillips wp (5) (4SO, 1W) and Palaez. Illovar T, 2S; McGilton 3S, 2rbi; Hays rbi.

River 10, Valley 1
Valley 001 000 0 - 1 4 4
River 163 000 x - 10 11 3
V - Frye (2SO, 1W), Lemley (3) (4SO, 3W) and Partridge.
R - Meredith (5SO, 0W) and Rhodes. Meredith S, T, rbi; Tisher D; Blake D, rbi; Haney D; Williams 2S.

River 11, Valley 0
Valley 000 00 - 0 4 6
River 009 2x - 11 6 0
V - Lemley (3SO, 5W) and Partridge. Frye 2S.
R - Cheyenne (2SO, 2W) and Rhodes. Meredith 2S, rbi; Blake D.



Photo by Mike Harvilla

Cassle Neff is tagged at the plate by Martins Ferry Kayla Lewis (18) during their game OVAC championship game Saturday.

The Eagles Throne Riders

NICK BEDWAY
News-Register
High School did-rom a post-prom during Saturday Ohio Valley Ath-rence Class AAA all championship on Lisa's Field at omplex in Wheel-

Two insurance runs crossed the plate in the sixth inning, which included two Purple Rider errors, a sharp single by Kayla Brill and McSweeney's run-scoring double down the left field line. The Blue Eagles finished with seven hits, two by McSweeney. She reached base on all four plate appearances, getting aboard via Martins Ferry errors in the first and third innings. Brooke Keene's single drove home a run in the first inning and Bethany Howell picked up an RBI on a ground ball to short that was kicked in the sixth inning.

short rest, Coach well's Blue Eagles arp as ever in efending champi-Ferry (13-5) by a behind Torri ght-strikeout, two- g and an offense alive in the late

"I hit the ball early some big hits at ne," said Howell improved its 2-3 and won the title for the second years.

with a young team d only one senior 's starting lineup.

Riders played he field and were h six errors. "We y well defensive-erry Coach Jess ut we were still in til the end. Mag- e kind of lineup to hit the ball and ou have to make if you are going," Cordery added.

"Purple Riders held until the bottom of ning that began Blue Eagles' well reaching on r Ferry miscue. nior whiz Ashley y collected an when her ground only be knocked rtins Ferry short-Vinci, who had to elf after starting nd base to cover run play.

Marco, the No. 4 Blue Eagle line-pped to the plate t a cleanup hitter o do in this situa-eaned the bags un double to the center field, put- ia in front 3-2.

Magnolia error and singles by Kayla Lewis and Jess Hilton accounted for Martins Ferry's first run and its only two hits of the game in the top of the first. The Purple Riders scored a run without a hit in the fourth inning to go ahead 2-1. An obstruction call at third base allowed Hilton to cross the plate.

But that was all the Purple Riders could muster against Greene. "Their pitcher really kept us off-balance," said Cordery. "We didn't have many good swings against her."

The Blue Eagle coach believes that the pressure his team can put on an opposing pitcher has a lot to do with Magnolia's success this spring. "I don't think I've ever coached a team with such a solid lineup from top to bottom," Howell said. "Everyone is capable of getting a big hit and they've been doing it all year."

Magnolia and Martins Ferry have seen a lot of each other in the OVAC tournament recently. In 2004, the Blue Eagles knocked off the Purple Riders in the title game. Last May, Martins Ferry knocked out Magnolia in the semifinals on its way to winning the championship.

OVAC CLASS AAA CHAMPIONSHIP
Magnolia 5, Martins Ferry 2
Martins Ferry 100 100 0 - 2 2 8
Magnolia 100 022 x - 5 7 2
MF - Zigacheek lp (1SO, 3W) and Lewis; Hilton S, rbi.
M - Greene wp (8SO, 3W) and Brill; McSweeney S, D, rbi; DeMarco D, 2rbi; Keene S, rbi; Howell, S, rbi.

Irish Defeat Cadets for OVAC Title

By **TRACY WATSON**
For The News-Register

Consistency is something in the world of sports that can make teams, coaches and programs very special things to be around.

When you talk of consistency in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, you need look no further than head coach Jerry Magistro and his Bellaire St. John softball program.

After all, the Fighting Irish had already wrapped up six straight OVAC regular season titles entering Saturday afternoon's Class A tournament title game against Linsly.

You can now add five of six tournament titles to that impressive resume.

Sophomore fire-baller Amanda Rosepapa fashioned a one-hitter, fanning nine and not issuing a free pass, and St. John took advantage of four unearned runs to gain an impressive 4-0 victory over the mistake-prone Cadets in the small-school title game at Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chamber's I-470 Complex.

It was also St. John's third victory of the season over Linsly.

"I am so proud of these girls and how they have come together this year," Magistro said. "And while this is great, I will be honest with you, I am even prouder of the fact that we have six regular season titles."

"Those titles are judged by strength of schedule and that is something that we proud our-



Photo by Scott McCluskey

Bellaire St. John's Ashley Marinacci (14) slides into home safely before as Linsly catcher Morgan Drotos awaits for the throw.

selves on. We will play anyone, and we actively go out and try to get the best teams available on our schedule."

While the Fighting Irish struggled to find the big hit it was looking for yesterday, St. John was able to take advantage of seven Linsly errors. The Green-and-White finished with six hits on the day, but stranded 13 runners, including 10 in scoring position and twice left the bases loaded.

The designated hosts got the only two runs they would need in the first inning without the benefit of a hit. Ashley Marinacci got hit by a pitch with

two out and steal second. Marinacci then hustled home all the way from second when sophomore Jenna Vavra reached on an error.

Vavra moved to third on a pair of wild pitches and eventually crossed the dish with the second run when Courtney Coyne reached on another miscue.

The Irish stranded nine between the second and fifth frames before a Marissa DeClemente single and three more Cadet errors led to another two-run inning and a 4-0 advantage. Vavra was credited with an RBI during

Knights Shut Out Crusaders for Crown

By **NICK BEDWAY**
For the News-Register

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The two sides combined for only six hits, just two of which went for extra bases. Wheeling Central Catholic, picking up an unearned run in the third inning, turned things over to right-handed pitcher Jennifer Sparachane and she made the tally stand up for a 1-0 victory over Ohio parochial rival Steubenville Catholic Central.

The Crusaders, last year's OVAC 2A champions, were dethroned despite a terrific two-hit hill performance from Alexis Ferrara. Coach Jackie Marook-Rossi's talented righthander used her rising fast ball to strike out seven Maroon Knights while yielding only one walk.

Both Wheeling Central hits came in the third inning. The rally started when Sparachane doubled over the head of Steubenville Catholic left fielder Mia Zamana. De Anna McKee, inserted as a courtesy runner for Sparachane, was forced to hold on at second when Valerie Palmer's grounder to the left side of the infield was booted for an error.

With runners at first and second and none out, Ferrara retired Brittany Derr on a pop up back to the mound. Andi Burke's also lofted a pop fly but this one fell in behind the second baseman for a single, with McKee moving on to third base.

A hot smash down the third base line off the bat of Kayla Gray bounced off the glove of Jessica Harlan for an error as McKee scored and Burke raced all the way around to third.

Angela Petros then lofted a fly ball caught in right field by Kellian Calabria, whose throw to home plate nipped Burke for a doubleplay to retire the side.

While the damage had been done as far as run-scoring in the 2A title game was concerned, Ferrara continued to pitch well. She did not allow another Wheeling Central baserunner the rest of the game. Including the doubleplay, Ferrara retired the last 11 Maroon Knight batters. In the fifth inning, she struck out the side. The only ball that left the infield after the third inning was a harmless fly to centerfield that Christine Happ tracked down.

"We told our girls this morning that defense was definitely going to win this game," said Rick Magruder, who serves as Wheeling Central's co-head coach along with Ambrose Bober. "We were able to get a couple of clutch hits in the third inning. 'Kat' Stiglich at third base and Kayla (at shortstop) both made some great plays," Magruder added.

Sparachane struck out three and walked just one, the first batter of the game. Whenever Steubenville Catholic threatened to score, which wasn't often, Sparachane was able to shut down the Crusader offense.

Steubenville Catholic's biggest opportunity occurred in the sixth inning when Kimmy Straker led off by drilling a shot to the gap in right centerfield. By the time

the Maroon Knights got the ball back to the infield, Straker was standing on third base.

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Sparachane then retired Melissa Costantini on a called third strike and the inning ended when Calabria's low liner to shortstop was speared by Gray, who had one knee on the infield dirt.

"We couldn't get any hits back-to-back today," Marook-Rossi said. "The opportunities were there but I thought they made some great plays against us," she added.

The OVAC championship was the third for the Maroon Knights

the inning.

"St. John is just so strong on both offense and defense and the last thing you can do with them is give them multiple errors," Linsly coach Liz Hofreuter-Landidi admitted. "And that is exactly what we did."

"It is hard to get out a hole against that team when you dig down that deep, no matter how good your pitcher is and how pumped up your team is."

"But I will not hang my head, there are not many people who felt we could get to this game today, but there were only two teams left and we were one of them. We are a young team with just one senior and a very good freshman pitcher and preparation for the 2007 season begins tomorrow for us."

DeClemente finished with a pair of singles for the winners while the Cadets' only hit came on a two-out double by Jessie Schucht in the fourth inning, which broke up Rosepapa's attempt at not only a no-hitter, but a perfect game.

"Our kids work so hard, but we also have some great coaches that put so much time into this team, and that is what helps us become winners," Magistro added. "Amanda pitched very well today, but as it has been all season, our defense was just great today."

OVAC Class A Championship
Bellaire St. John 4, Linsly 0
Linsly 000 000 0 - 0 1 7
Bellaire St. John 200 002 x - 4 6 1
L - Byhanna lp (5SO, 3W) and Drotos; Schucht D.
B - Rosepapa wp (9SO, 0W) and Smith; DeClemente 2S; Vavra rbi; Coyne S; Rosepapa S; Wallace S; Velkovich S.

OVAC CLASS AA CHAMPIONSHIP
Wheeling Central 1,
Steubenville Catholic 0
Steub. Catholic 000 000 0 - 0 4 2
Whg Central 001 000 x - 1 2 1
SC - Ferrara lp (7SO, 1W) and C. Happ.
Straker S, T.
WC - Sparachane wp (3SO, 1W) and Barry; Sparachane D; Gray rbi.

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Ins Take Class AAAA Championship

ELLIOTT
Sports Editor
ns finished off a 2- of Cambridge in OVAC Class (ball Tournament isa's Field at the ers I-470 Com- thered around sec-

game over to Kocher, who was pounding the strike zone from the circle.

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enough to claim a victory, just like the 10-inning semifinal win against John Marshall.

"That was the turning point for us," Cicchirillo said. "This team has matured, and I think we're ready to make a push in the sectionals."

REGULAR SEASON
John Marshall 5, Edison 4

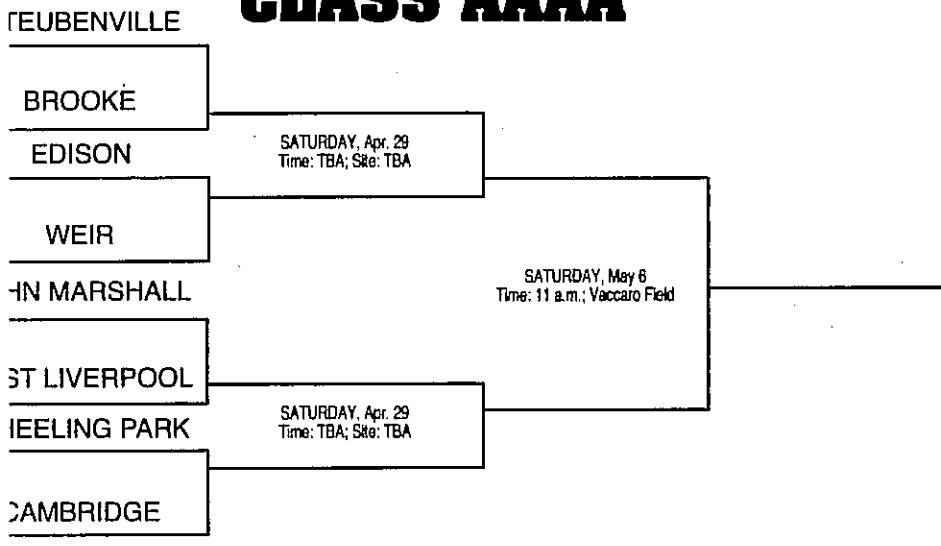
sweep of the Lumberjills.

OVAC Class AAAA Final
Brooke 2, Cambridge 0
Brooke 101 000 0 - 2 5 3
Cambridge 000 000 0 - 0 6 1
B - Kocher wp (4SO, 0W) and Michet- u; Kocher D, S; Wayne S, rbi; Reardon S; Romitti S.
C - Decker lp (2SO, 2W) and Daugherty; Starr S; Mahley S; Wright S; Roller S; Givona S; Daugherty S.

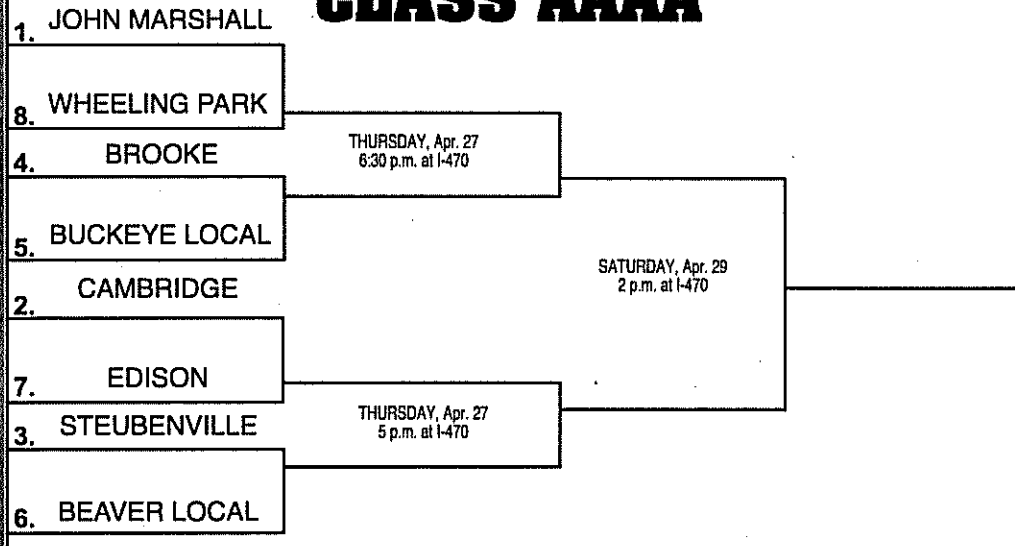
OVAC Boys Baseball Championship

OVAC Girls Softball Championship

CLASS AAAA



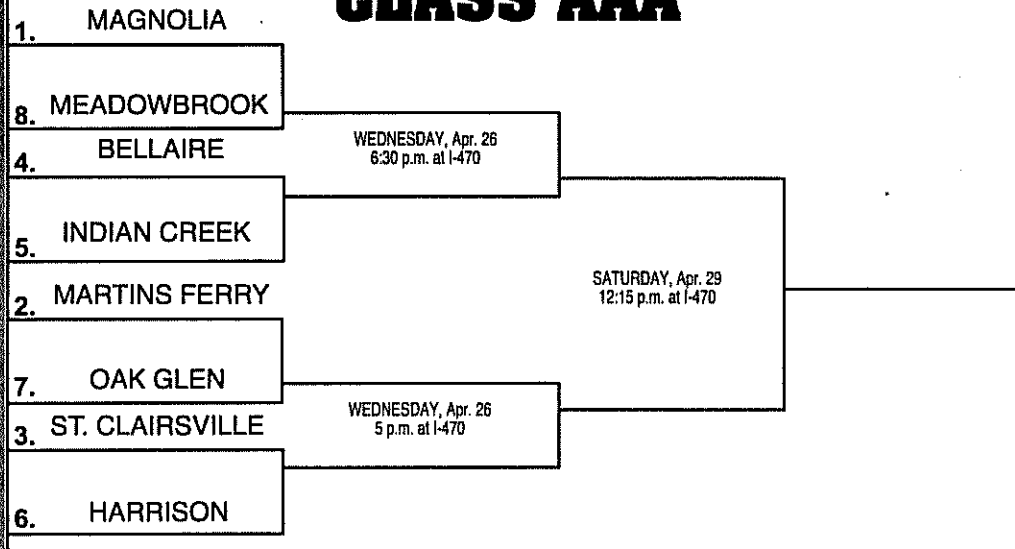
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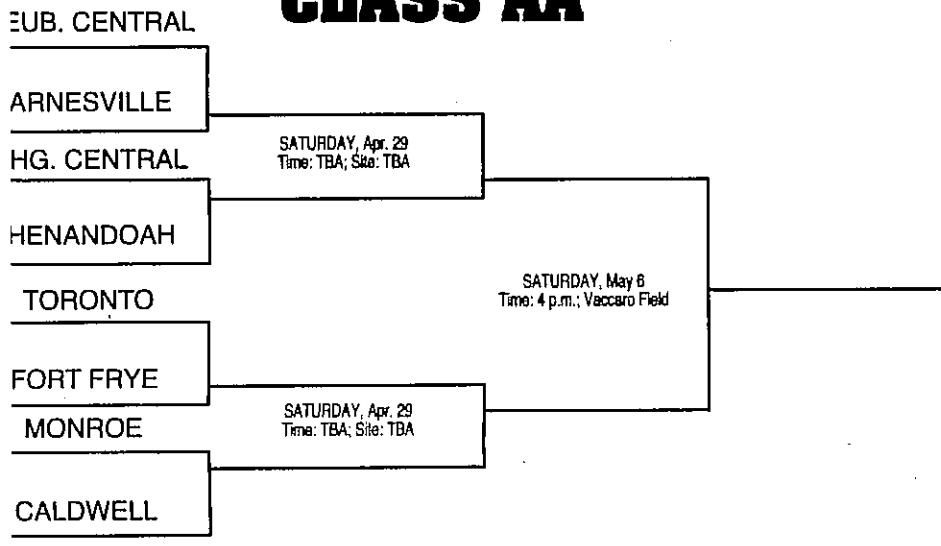
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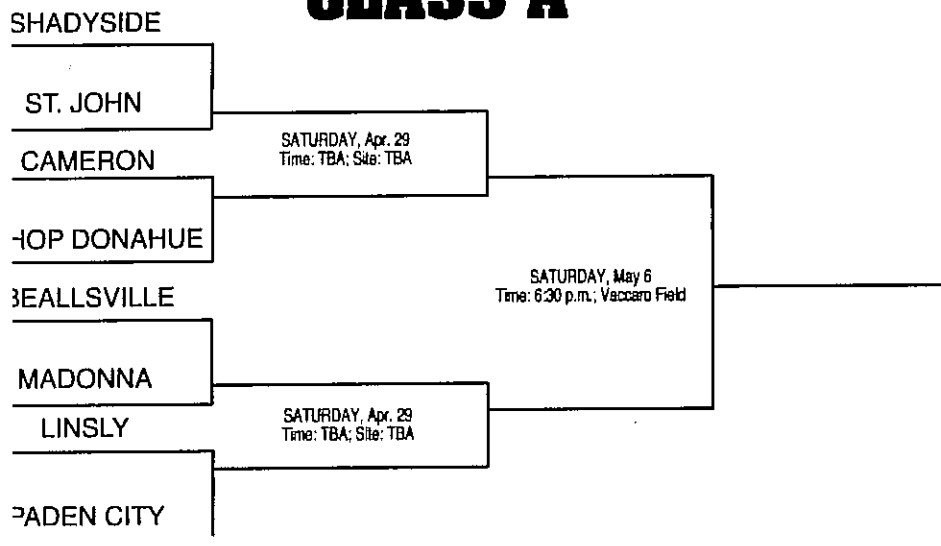
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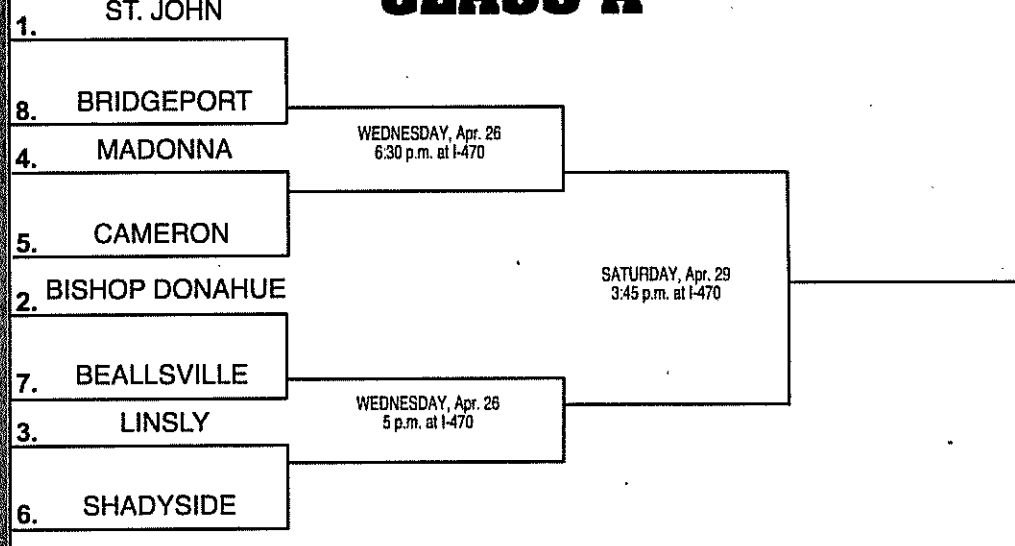
CLASS AA



CLASS A



CLASS A



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St. John's Tops Cameron

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

Cameron found out the hard way Wednesday night that this is not the time of year to be fooling around with Bellaire St. John on the softball diamond.

After all, coach Jerry Magistro's Lady Fighting Irish were seeking a sixth straight trip to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class A championship game when the two teams hooked up at Lisa's Field.

And when all was said and done, sophomore Amanda Rosepapa made sure that was exactly where she and her teammates would end up.

Rosepapa fired a one-hitter, retiring the final 19 batters she faced and St. John scored five two-out runs in the

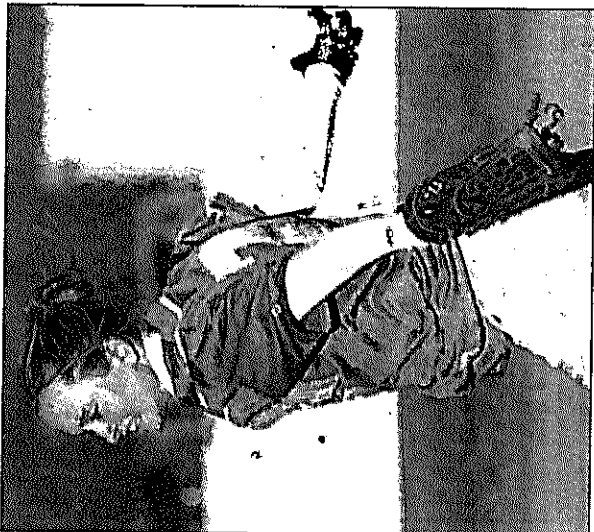
third to take control in rolling to a 9-0 blanking of the Dragons in an OVAC Class A semifinal at the J.B. Chamber's I-470 complex.

The win moves Magistro's defending district, and OVAC champions into Saturday's championship game against Linsly at 3:45 p.m. back at Lisa's Field.

It will be the sixth straight appearance in the finals for the Johnnies (14-3), who have won four of five. Their only loss during that time was a 1-0 defeat to coach Liz Hofreuter-Landini's Lady Cadets in the finals two years ago.

"This is six in a row for us and we are just happy to be in this position," Magistro said.

Please See IRISH, Page 23



Bellaire St. John pitcher Amanda Rosepapa prepares to deliver to the plate during Wednesday's OVAC semifinal game against Cameron.

Photo by Alex Kozlowski



Photo by Alex Kozlowski

Martins Ferry pinch runner Courtney King prepares to take off as Harrison Central third baseman Chelsea Coconougher defends Wednesday. King scored the winning run on a Kara Winzenreid single.

Ferry Moves On to OVAC Title Game

By NICK BEDWAY
For The Intelligencer

Trailing 1-0 entering the bottom of the seventh inning Wednesday night at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling, Coach Jess Cordery gathered members of his Martins Ferry girls' softball team and delivered a little pep talk.

"I told them we did not want to tie it. We wanted to win it and get out of here," Cordery said.

Responding to their coach's plea, the Purple Riders got an RBI single from catcher Sarah Burch with one out and a two-out game-winning knock by Kara Winzenreid for a 2-1 victory over hard-luck Harrison Central to advance to the finals of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class AAA tournament.

Martins Ferry (13-4), the defending conference champion, will next face No. 1 seeded Magnolia (21-3) at 12:15 p.m. Saturday in the 3A final, also at the I-470 complex. The Blue Eagles, playing in the opening game of the semifinal double-header Wednesday, shut out Indian Creek 10-0 in a game shortened to six innings by the mercy rule.

Cordery thought the biggest play in Martins Ferry's comeback win against Harrison Central was the sacrifice bunt dropped down by Kristen Cerasoli after Kayla Lewis had led off the decisive seventh with a base hit. The Ferry coach sent speedster Megan Jones in to pinch run for his catcher and then flashed the bunt signal to Cerasoli.

"It's not often you ask your cleanup hitter to bunt, but we wanted to make sure we moved up the runner. She did a great job of putting the ball in play. There's no telling what might have happened in the inning if we had failed to sacrifice the runner up to second," Cordery explained.

Burch, who had a single and a ground out in two previous trips to the plate, took a Katy Leeper pitch up the middle for another base hit as Jones sped around third base on her way to home plate. Burch went on to second base to put herself in scoring position.

Courtney King, another Purple Rider with good speed, was then inserted as a pinch runner and she advanced to third on a ground out to short.

With two down, all that stood between the two teams and extra innings was Winzenreid, the only senior starter on this youthful Martins Ferry team.

Please See FERRY, Page 23

ON THE LINE

Today's Results:

Q. What playoffs are you more interested in — the NBA or NHL?

NBA: 40% NHL: 50%

Tomorrow's Poll:

Q. Should Brett Favre have just retired from the NFL?

Tell us what you think. Register your answer at www.theintelligencer.net

(The results of this poll are not scientific and represent only the opinions of Internet users who have chosen to participate.)

Ferry

(Continued from Page 19)

Hitless in the game to this point, Winzenreid came through in the clutch by slapping the ball past slick Harrison Central shortstop Sara Pelagreen into left field as King raced home.

"They deserved the win," Huskies Coach Don Bethel said. "Ferry hit the ball hard when they had to do it and I wish them luck against Magnolia."

Although agreeing that Leeper probably deserved a better fate than a loss after holding Martins Ferry to just six hits and not allowing a walk, Bethel quickly pointed out that Harrison Central didn't earn the run it tallied off Purple Rider ace Vickie Sigacheck.

After three hitless inning against Sigacheck, the Huskies did get a leadoff single from Breanna Spoonemore in the fourth inning. After failing to get down a bunt, Gena Everhart hit into a force out on what could have been a doubleplay but the throw from second base got away, allowing the runner to

advance a base.

Everhart took third on a flyout to center by Chelsea Cocounougher and scored the game's first run on a wild pitch.

Harrison Central did not get another hit until the seventh inning when Jackie Sentich rapped a two out single. An overthrow put runners at second and third but the Huskies' bid to increase its lead was halted on a fly ball out to right field.

Burch was the only Purple Rider with more than one hit as Leeper faced only three batters in four innings.

Magnolia 10, Indian Creek 0

Magnolia played errorless ball and pounded out 14 hits in rolling past Indian Creek in the first game.

Sophomore Tori Greene allowed only three harmless singles in a route-going effort, striking out five and issuing just one walk. Dani Batton led the Blue Eagle girls' offense with two doubles and a single. Her two-base knock in the bottom of the sixth inning chased home

Brooke Keene and Evann Ludewig with Magnolia's ninth and 10 runs to end the game.

Keene also had three hits, all singles, and collected one RBI, while Ashley McSweeney, the smooth-playing shortstop with the vaccum glove, singled twice and knocked in one run. With RBI hits in the Magnolia lineup were Paige DeMarco, Alicia Hinnerman and Alycia Bell.

Singles by Keene, Ludewig and Bell produced the game's first run in the bottom of the second. Magnolia then pounded out four hits and took advantage of some loose fielding by the Redskins to score five times in the third inning to put the game well out of reach.

Batton's two-bagger was the only extra-base hit in the frame. It became 8-0 in the fourth inning, McSweeney driving home one run with a single. She later scored on a wild pitch.

In the sixth frame, Keene and Ludewig singled with one-out and another double into right center pushed the lead to 10-0.

Irish

(Continued from Page 19)

"Amanda pitched very well today, but a big part of her success was the fielding that she received behind her.

"Our infield made all of the plays today. I was also very happy to see our bats come alive, because this is the time you have to be hitting the ball. Hopefully we can keep that up."

Rosepapa struck out four and didn't walk a batter with Michelle Cain's solid two-out, first inning single providing the only base runner of the game for coach Mark Witzberger's 9-9 record squad.

"Amanda is such a coachable kid," Magistro remarked. "She is quiet and just goes out on the mound and does what she has to do. She works hard all of the time and puts so much time in during the off season."

Laraine Skorich singled and later scored on a wild pitch to give the hosts a 1-0 lead in the first. The score remained that way until the Irish used six hits to score five tallies in the third.

Skorich again led off with a single and scored on a wild pitch a short time later before St. John got a walk, three straight singles and a double — all with two out to take command.

Rosepapa aided her own cause with a two-run single while Ashley Wallace also plated a run with a base hit.

The Irish added three more in the sixth, including Ashley Marinacci's run-scoring single, while Rosepapa did her part on the mound. The sophomore hurler set Cameron down on six or fewer pitches in three different innings, including the seventh.

Skorich, Marissa DeClemente and Marinacci all singled twice for the winners while Sara Timko added a double.

Linsly 9, Bishop Donahue 3

At Wheeling, standing just three outs away from a trip to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class A championship game, Bishop Donahue's girls softball team ran face first into a brick wall.

Linsly scored seven seventh inning runs, capitalizing on four Bishops' errors, five infield singles and a double, while freshman Megan Byhanna fanned 16 Donahue hitters as the Lady Cadets posted a surprising victory at Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chamber's I-470 Complex.

The win improves coach Liz Hofreuter-Landini's team to 15-7 on the season as they play in their second conference title game in three seasons.

"What you witnessed in the seventh inning today is the character that we have been working on all season long," a smiling Hofreuter-Landini said. "The game is not over until the final out is recorded in the seventh inning. I have been telling this

team that all season long and I am very glad that they have been listening."

With Donahue (12-4) leading 3-2 and Linsly set to send up its 8-9-1 hitters, who were a combined 0-for-7 in the game, things appeared to be in hand for coach Miki Maxwell's squad.

However, while the designated hosts hadn't committed an error the entire game to that point, a two-base miscue to leadoff the frame put Sarah VanKirk at second. Byhanna then reached on an infield single, with VanKirk bringing home the tying run on another error.

Morgan Drotos would reach ed on another infield single with Byhanna going to third on the third consecutive Donahue miscue. A Katie Jochum RBI single was followed by Jessie Schucht's two-run double to right and all of a sudden the Cadets had built a 6-3 lead.

In all, Linsly sent 13 batters to the dish in the seventh and give Byhanna, who allowed seven-hits, the opportunity to collect the win in the bottom of the frame, where she would set the Bishops down in order.

"They are a very good and good hitting team," Hofreuter-Landini added. "We knew they would hit the ball hard today, we were just hoping they wouldn't string a bunch of them together and Megan really prevented that from happening."

Irish Top St. Clairsville

Ashley Wallace and Ashley Marinacci had two RBIs a piece, as Bellaire St. John topped St. Clairsville 6-2 in regular-season softball action Thursday.

Jenna Vavra and Betsy Smith each added RBIs for the Fighting Irish (15-3).

St. Clairsville pitcher Lindsay Stewart had two hits and drove in a run.

Buckeye Local 11-8, Indian Creek 4-3

At Connorville, Casey Magyar struck out seven, giving up just six hits, as Buckeye Local defeated Indian Creek in a regularly scheduled game Thursday and in the completion of an earlier game.

Magyar, Gina Hicks and Amanda Brown all had RBIs.

Indian Creek's Caitlin Pinzik and Breanne Anderson collected one RBI a piece.

In the completion of an earlier game, Heather McHugh singled and drove in two for the Panthers.

Pinzik doubled, tallying one RBI for the Redskins (9-10).

Edison 15, Beaver Local 0

At Calcutta, a 19 hit effort keyed Edison past Beaver Local.

Ashley Skinner, Jenna Still, Kim Smyth, Kyleagh DeFrank and Katelyn Dipasquale all had multiple hits, including a triple for the Wildcats.

Beallsville 8, Bridgeport 2

At Bridgeport, Beallsville's (17-1) Tony Stephens struck out six and walked none before combining with Joey Albus from the mound to take Beallsville to a victory over Bridgeport.

A.J. Thompson had a home run and double, resulting one RBI, while teammate Bryan Bilyeu had two RBIs for the Blue Devils. Jed Marling and Tony Stephens both doubled.

Corey Doughty tallied one RBI from a home run and two singles for the Bulldogs. Tommy Morgan had an additional RBI.

Jeff. County Christian 18, Valley 16

At Mingo Junction, Valley fell short of a win against Jefferson County Christian.

Kevin White had two doubles and two singles, while Jordan Stackpole hit a single and two doubles for the Lumberjacks.



SOFTBALL OVAC Finals (at I-470 Complex)

Class AA
Steubenville Central vs. Wheeling Central, 10:45 a.m.

Class AAA
Martins Ferry vs. Magnolia, 12:15 p.m.

Class AAAA
Brooke winner vs. Cambridge, 2 p.m.
Class A
Bellaire St. John vs. Linsly, 3:45 p.m.

Tyler Consolidated 4, Shadyside 2

At Kidwell, Reba Collins triple drove in one run to help Tyler Consolidated defeat Shadyside.

Amanda Chaplin amounted an additional RBI for Tyler Consolidated.

Stacey Warren drove in one run for Shadyside. Chelsea Tambunn contributed with two singles to the Tigers' effort.

PREP SOFTBALL

OVAC CLASS AAAA Semifinals
(at I-470 Field No. 4)
Cambridge 1 Steubenville 0
Steubenville 000 000 0 - 0 2 1
Cambridge 000 001 x - 1 6 1
S - Jackson lp (8SO, 1W) and Kanoski, Kirkland S; Kalinowski S.
C - Decker wp (0SO, 3W) and Daugherty, Wright 2S; Roller T.
Brooke 4, John Marshall 2 (10 inn.)
Brooke 000 001 010 2 - 4 10 2
J. Marshall 010 000 010 0 - 2 7 1
B - Kocher wp (7SO, 2W) and Michetti, Lauri 2S; Wayne 2S, 2rbi; Pearson 2S.
JM - Phillips (3SO, 1W), Swoger lp (7) (3SO, 2W) and Pelaez, Hovar 2S; McGilton 2D, rbi.

OVAC Class AA Semifinals
Steubenville Central 5, Fort Frye 3
Steub. Central 121 001 0 - 5 7 1
Fort Frye 000 001 2 - 3 5 3
S - Ferrera wp (11SO, 0W) and K.Costantini, Harlan S, D, rbi; Calabria S, D; Augustine 2S, rbi; K.Costantini S, 2rbi.
F - Stehly lp (3SO, 0W) and Ketelsen, Ketelsen D, rbi; Stehly D; Neader 2S, 2rbi.

Wheeling Central 4, Frontier 0
Frontier 000 000 0 - 0 2 3
Wheeling Central 004 000 x - 4 9 0
F - Brunoni lp (4SO, 4W) and Tidd, Taylor S; Binagar S.
W - Derr wp (9SO, 1W) and Barry.

A.Petros 3S; Palmer 2S, 2rbi; Stiglich S, rbi.

REGULAR SEASON
Tyler Consolidated 4, Shadyside 2
Shadyside 000 020 0 - 2 4 2
Tyler Cons. 200 020 x - 4 5 3
S - Wallace lp (4SO, 0W) and Mulvey, Tambunn 2S; Warren S, rbi.
T - Goudy (6SO, 6W), Collins wp (5) (1SO, 3W) and Bassett, Hissam (6). Collins T, rbi; Chaplin rbi;

Game One
Buckeye Local 8, Indian Creek 3
Indian Creek 020 000 1 - 3 8 5
Buckeye Local 202 022 x - 8 10 2
I - Williamson lp (3SO, 0W) and Welch, Mays S, D, rbi; Pinzik D, rbi; Stubbs 2S; Stevenson 2S.
B - C.Magyar (2SO, 1W), McHugh wp (3) (9SO, 1) and Brown, J.Magyar (3). Miller 3S; Windsheimer S, T; Brown 2S; McHugh S, 2rbi; Stuart T.

Game Two
Buckeye Local 11, Indian Creek 4
Indian Creek 101 110 0 - 4 6 1
Buckeye Local 034 031 x - 11 11 2
I - Cematteo (1SO, 3W), Williams (3) (4SO, 0W) and Brandon, Pinzik S, D, rbi; Anderson S, rbi.
B - C.Magyar (7SO, 3W) and J.Magyar, Brown (6). C.Magyar S, D, T, rbi; Hicks 2S, rbi; Windsheimer 2S; Brown S, rbi; Stuart T.
Bellaire St. John 6, St. Clairsville 2

St. Clairsville 101 000 0 - 2 5 3
Bellaire St. John 000 150 x - 6 7 3
S - Stewart (6SO, 1) and Smith, Pickana D; Stewart 2S, rbi;
B - Rosepapa wp and Smith, Marinacci D, 2rbi; Vavra S, rbi; Smith S, rbi; Wallace 2rbi.

Edison 15, Beaver Local 0
Edison 503 07 - 15 19 1
Beaver Local 000 00 - 0 2 1
E - Williamson wp (7SO, 2W) and Givens, Dipasquale S, D, T; Peckens 2S, D; Skinner S, T; Still S, T; Blake 2S; Givens D; Smyth S, T; DeFrank S, T.
B - Zimmerman lp (3SO, 2W) and Dickens, A.Smith S; K.Smith S.

Game One
Wheeling Park 20, Weir 5
Wheeling Park 864 11 - 20 16 4
Weir 005 00 - 5 9 6
Wh - Hohman wp (3SO, 1W) and Martin, Hohman S, rbi; Wilson 3S, 3rbi; Kosowski 2S, D, 3rbi; Gray 2S, rbi; Mathieu S, D, rbi; Martin S, 2rbi; Baker 3S, 2rbi.
We - McElwee lp (0SO, 3W), Swiger (2) (0SO, 1W) and Lamp, Swiger D, S; Noble D, 2rbi; Cowden 2S, rbi; McElwee D, rbi; Livengood S, rbi; Lamp S, rbi.

Game Two
Wheeling Park 7, Weir 1
Wheeling Park 021 022 0 - 7 6 0
Weir 100 000 0 - 1 5 4
Wh - Hohman wp (5SO, 1W) and Martin, Eckman S, D; Wilson 2S, rbi.
We - Cowden lp (4So, 4W) and Lamp, Gina Quattrochi 2S; Noble S, rbi.