

Bishops make it back-to back crowns

Class 1A Baseball

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

BROOKSIDE — There were plenty of mistakes to go around Friday as West Virginia Class A sectional rivals Bishop Donahue and Weirton Madonna waged battle for the OVAC small-school championship.

Fortunately for coach Bob Kleeh, it was his Bishops that were able to make the most of their opportunities in recording a second consecutive Class A title.

Bishop Donahue pushed across five unearned runs, including a pair in the bottom of the sixth that made the difference as the Bishops held off the Blue Dons by a 6-4 margin at sunny, but cool Niekro Field.

It was a game that featured 12 hits, half as many errors and a pair of pitchers that both went the distance, either of which could have easily recorded a victory.

Hunter Kaschke did pick up a victory, fanning three and walking one. The sophomore dandy threw 82 pitches, 50 for strikes, but did hit four batters. Amazingly, he plunked three leading off innings, none of which scored.

"Hunter pitched a heckuva game," Kleeh said with a smile. "I told him just



Photo by Shawn Fine

Bishop Donahue players and coaches celebrate after recording the final out to win their second straight OVAC Class 1A championship.

to focus and do his thing. I think he was a little excited and anxious early on, but he got settled in.

"The great thing about him is that I think if I gave him a 15-minute break he

would come back and want to throw seven more innings. He is just such a great kid.

Please See **BISHOPS**, Page 12

Linsly builds big lead, cruises past SCC

By NICK BEDWAY
For The Intelligencer

STEBENVILLE — Years from now the student-athletes at Linsly will be able to look back fondly at the 2011-2012 school year as that remarkable "Championship Season."

On a chilly Friday night at Vaccaro Field, the veteran Cadets baseball team exploded early for a seven-run lead and allowed its stellar defense and effective pitching to take over from there during a 7-2 victory against Steubenville Catholic Central in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference 2A championship game.

The triumph brought the Wheeling private school its ninth OVAC title of the current school year, following championship pennants earned



Photo by Fred Younce

Linsly's Leighton Gibson receives congratulations from Coach Jay Cartwright after hitting a home run Friday.

in football, boys' basketball, cheering, girls' soccer, boys' and girls' swimming and boys'

and girls' tennis.

Better yet for the followers of the Linsly athletic teams,

Class 2A Baseball

the Cadets may even add to this impressive accomplishment. Both the school's boys' and girls' track squads also figure to be very much in the running in the upcoming bi-state league's championship meets. Also, Coach Jay Cartwright's baseball club also may get an opportunity to play for an EOBL title before putting away its equipment.

"I'm very proud of these guys," Cartwright said after the Linsly put the finishing touches on its third OVAC title since he took over the helm six years ago. "This is a great group of kids to be around."

Please See **LINSLY**, Page 13

LINSLY

(Continued from Page 11)

Overall, the Cadets have been conference baseball champions a total of 16 occasions, the first 13 coming under his predecessor Gary Sprauge, who watched proudly from the stands this time.

"After we didn't even make the playoffs last year, the 13 seniors on this team came back very determined to get this one," Cartwright continued.

Linsly's vaunted offense came out on fire, rocking Steubenville Catholic starting pitcher Steve Mihalyo for seven runs and eight hits the first two innings.

The Cadets batted around in the bottom of the first, getting things going when Haydon Stanley drew a one-out walk. Heavy-hitting, slick-fielding shortstop Alex Stephens saw something he liked on Mihalyo's next pitch, belting a long drive over the head of Crusaders center fielder Brant Piani-azek. Circling the bases for the game's first run was Stanley, while Stephens used his quick wheels to slide into third base for an easy triple.

The fun was beginning for the Linsly offense. Leighton Gibson's ground ball to the right side scored Stephens and the next four batters hit safely. Michael Joseph and Neil Tennant followed with singles and both scored when designated hitter Ryan Riethmiller doubled down the right-field line.

Leading 4-0 entering the bottom of the second, the Cadets struck quickly again. Stanley and Stephens laced back-to-back singles, bringing up Gibson. Another Linsly player with a lot of sock in his bat, Gibson connected for a moon shot, three-run homer over the fence to the right of the 360-foot mark in center field.

Linsly jumping on an opposing starting pitcher early in the game is something Cartwright has witnessed most of the year.

"We have experienced hitters and experienced players and we come out wanting to be aggressive in every game," he pointed out.

Cartwright could have said the same thing about the Cadets' pitching and stellar defense that erased all hope the Crusaders had of a possible comeback. Junior pitcher Momo Felt held Steubenville Catholic without a hit through the first four innings but still needed some sparkling plays in the field to keep this game from being a lot closer.

In the opening inning, Felt walked two and was bailed out on a sharp 4-6-3 double play turned with freshman second baseman Colton

Coss fielding Jimmy Panella's hard grounder and feeding Stephens, who used his strong arm to nip the runner at first base.

The defensive gem of the game and probably the season, came in the third inning with Coss, Stephens and first baseman Gibson executing another sparkling 4-6-3 twin-killing. This one came after Felt hit both Panella and Dave Bertoia with pitches that came too far inside.

Alex Porreca then shot a one-hopper toward the middle that seemed destined for an RBI single when Coss made a diving stop, flipped the ball to Stephens coming across the bag and the senior shortstop again gunned the ball to Gibson at first for still another inning-ending double play.

"Stephens and Coss have been an excellent combination for us," Cartwright said. "But that had to be the best double play I've seen all year on any level."

Steubenville Catholic (16-5) finally broke through for singles by Adam Lyons, Pieniazek and B.J. Grandinetti to get on the scoreboard in the top of the fifth. Once again, a big defensive play took them out of the inning. This time Dillon Williams did the honors, racing in from right field, reaching down and stabbing Mihalyo's bid for another base hit.

"We couldn't get a bounce when we needed something to give us a little more energy," Crusaders coach Donnie Young said. "It's tough to come back when you are down 7-0. We never quit. We kept getting guys on and just could not get that big hit."

"We have not been on a big stage like this and our guys came out a little bit in awe. Once we settled in, I thought we played pretty well. Steven (Mihalyo) doesn't usually leave the ball up like he did. When he did, they hit them a long way. They're a very good team."

Jimmy Brinsky took over on the mound for Felt in the sixth inning and finished off a victory, although he yielded one run in the seventh as Grandinetti was hit by a pitch and later scored on Panella's base hit. But just as Stephens has done throughout his sparkling four-year career, the Linsly shortstop came running in to field Bertoia's slow hit ball and delivered another hard, accurate throw to first for the game-ending out.

Stephens collected his third hit in the fourth inning, while Tennant also had a multi-hit game with a single and double as the Cadets improved their record to 19-5.

BISHOPS

(Continued from Page 11)

"I am just so proud of all of these kids. It is definitely something to defend a title, but at the same time I just want them to keep their feet on the ground and stay humble."

Meanwhile, Logan Linder was the hard-luck loser, having four errors committed behind him while throwing 92 pitches, 67 for strikes. Linder fanned nine and walked one.

Madonna took the lead in the top of the first, but a baserunning miscue put the halts to what may have been a bigger inning. After Ross Comis reached on a one-out fielder's choice and Linder walked, Connor Mogan brought home the first run with a double to deep left-center.

But on a grounder back to the mound on the next batter, Linder was caught in a rundown between third and home. He was tagged out and the runner at first was also thrown out to end the threat and keep the count at 1-0.

Donahue managed to get its first lead in the bottom of the frame, thanks in large part to a pair of Blue Dons errors. Garrett Yurisko reached on an error and went to second on Kyle Gillis' base hit past third.

Phillip Smith reached on a fielder's choice, with Yurisko crossing the dish to make it 1-1 on a throwing

error. Kaschke aided his own cause with a run-scoring double to left-center that put the Bishops up by a 2-1 margin.

Donahue received another gift in the second with Ollie Parker reaching on a leadoff error, advancing to third on a pair of passed balls and making it a 3-1 score when Yurisko beat out an infield single to deep short for an RBI.

It was a reversal of fortune in the top of the third as Madonna took advantage of Bishops mistakes to knot the score at 3-3. After getting two quick outs on six pitches, Kaschke hit his third batter in as many innings, this time costing him a run.

Linder followed with a run-scoring double into the left-center field gap, and came around to score when Mogan reached on an error.

Another manufactured run put the Bishops back on top in the fourth. Parker singled leading off, went to second on a wild pitch and third on DT Meeker's sacrifice bunt. Parker then slid in safely on a wild pitch for a 4-3 reading.

After a rousing pre-at-bat message from coach Jeff Baire, Nick Battista made it a 4-4 score with one swing of the bat, sending a shot over the left-field fence.

Things, however, changed drastically in the bottom of the sixth. Kaschke, Alex Riedel and Parker all singled

to load the bases with no outs before Linder set down the next two.

However, Yurisko's hot-shot to second managed to get through the second baseman and roll into right field allowing what turned out to be the eventual game-winning runs to score.

"Fielding has been our biggest problem our last three or four losses," a disappointed Baire said afterward. "We can be a very good baseball team, but when we don't field the ball we are mediocre at best, and that is what we are right now."

"I don't care who you are playing, you cannot give a team seven or eight chances to score runs and expect them not to score. And the worst part, is that most of them are just routine plays. All I want is for the kids to field the ball and make throws."

"But the bottom line is that it all falls on my shoulders as the coach, and I can promise you that we will work on correcting it. This is a funny game and I tell the kids that baseball is based on failing and how you deal with it, that is what determines how good you are. And right now we are not dealing with it very well."

While Kleeh was very happy, he also knows that there is still a lot of baseball to be played.

"My kids battled (Friday) and I am just so proud of them. That is one heckuva baseball team we beat, but we will see them and Wheeling Central again in the sectional and we have to stay focused and ready to play."

"It is nice to say that we have won two straight OVAC titles, but we have not been successful in our sectional in an awful lot of years and that is still ahead of us, and we will need to beat two very good teams."

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Steubenville ousts St. Clairsville in OVAC playoffs

By MIKE HUGHES
Times Leader Sports Writer

Bases loaded and nobody out is not the way Steubenville's Justin Corsi wanted to make his foray into Monday's OVAC Class AAAA semifinal against St. Clairsville.

But that's the situation the Big Red reliever found himself in with his team ahead 8-4 during the home half of the sixth.

Corsi retired three batters in order with only a sacrifice from Sam Vincenzo allowing a run to score.

Big Red added an insurance run in the seventh and Corsi closed the books on a 9-5 win against the Red Devils.

Steubenville advances to Saturday's championship game against Edison, a 1-0 victor against Harrison Central.

"We got up eight and kind of

laid down a bit," Steubenville coach Fred Heatherington said. "But Justin came in and shut them down."

"We wanted a chance to defend what we won last year and now we're going to get to do that at home."

That wasn't the first time a Big Red pitcher worked his way out of a jam.

Trailing 1-0 in the second, St. Clairsville worked the bases loaded when Riley Carlton's sacrifice bunt attempt found its way into pitcher Jolo Pierro's glove and the Big Red starter chose to hold D.J. Busby at third, loading the bases with one out.

But Pierro knuckled down, catching Chris Milhoan looking at strike three and inducing a pop-out from Grayson Loweecy to end the threat.

The Devils (14-4) stranded eight runners, including six in

'You have to play big against good teams and we couldn't get the hits when we needed them.'

— Tom Sliva

scoring position and the wasted opportunities in the second and sixth ultimately caused their downfall.

"You have to play big against good teams and we couldn't get the hits when we needed them," St. Clairsville skipper Tom Sliva said. "It's simple. We didn't make the plays we needed to and they did. They are the better team."

Plays Big Red made in abun-

dance, especially at the plate.

In the teams' previous meeting at Memorial Park, Steubenville beat Vincenzo 2-1, only managing six hits off the Devils' ace lefty.

This time, they exercised patience at the plate. Big Red batters continually made Vincenzo work deep into the count, running his pitch total to nearly 70 through four innings. He totaled 121 through seven.

In the fifth, the visitors pounced.

Lucky McClurg's third hit of the game started a five-run, four-hit outburst that put Big Red up 8-0 after 4 1/2. Mike Camilletti drove in two on a single and Matt

Petrella's sac-fly and a double from Ryan Vojvodich accounted for the other runs.

"Our bats came alive (early)," Heatherington said. "We battled the whole game and beat a good left handed pitcher."

"We came in and our guys were ready at the plate. We made him work and throw a lot early."

St. Clairsville answered the following half inning, scoring four runs with Vincenzo, Matt Kinnick and Luke Smith getting credit for driving in runs.

McClurg had two singles and a triple to lead Steubenville. Pat Pizzoferrato had two run-scoring singles and Camilletti also drove in a pair.

Vincenzo drove in two runs for St. Clairsville, with Ben Evick, Smith and Kinnick driving in one apiece.

Hughes may be reached at mhughes@timesleaderonline.com

Harrison falls to Edison, 1-0

By MIKE MATHISON
For The Times Leader

RICHMOND — When two aces are on the hill, this is the kind of game one would expect.

Edison's Greg Stagani and Harrison Central's Rasheen Mitchell went pitch-for-pitch Tuesday at the Richmond/Edison Athletic Complex at Jefferson Lake State Park in an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class AAAA semifinal, and it was a bloop single by the Wildcats' Alec Jones that was the difference in a 1-0 victory.

Edison is 17-2 and will meet Steubenville Big Red, a 9-5 winner over St. Clairsville, at 2 p.m. Saturday at Vaccaro Field for the championship.

Stagani threw a four-hitter and Mitchell a two-hitter. "Their pitcher pitched a heck of a game," said Edison coach Mike Collopy. "He kept us off balance. We didn't help ourselves, but a lot of credit goes to him."

"Greg pitched an outstanding game. We made the plays defensively when we needed to. We punched a run home when we needed to, as well."

"We expect him to go out and give his best effort every day. He had good stuff and battled. He was mentally tough. We're happy any time we can get an effort like that, and, like I said, we made the plays behind him when we had to, which is all you can ask for."

Edison scored the lone run in the bottom of the third inning when Josh Pasek walked, stole second, reached third on an error and came home on the blooper.

"I thought we were prepared for today," said Huskies coach Justin Clifford.

"It's a tough one when you give up two hits and you lose. Walks hurt us a little bit. He's improved. He competed. He has competed in every game, but you could see a difference in him today. He wanted the ball in a big game."

Stagani struck out 11 and walked one. He allowed one baserunner to reach third and one to reach second, both in the third inning.

Harrison Central's Garrit Sproull singled to start the top of the third inning and was erased on a fielder's choice by Kalub Mitchell. Dalton Rutter singled to put runners on first and second and a wild pitch moved them up 90 feet.

Stagani got out of the inning by recording his fifth and sixth strikeouts.

After a one-out single the next inning by Rhett Kurn, Stagani sat down 11 of the next 12 batters he faced, five by strikeout, and he threw nothing but strikes in a 1-2-3 seventh.

Mitchell was also superb.

He recorded the last two outs of the first, second and third innings by strikeout when Edison had runners on second and third. Mitchell fanned two in each of the six innings.

"I can't complain about anything with the way he threw the ball," said Clifford.

"You give up two hits and get beat. You shake their hands and you go home."

"We can take some steps from here. Obviously, we're not happy with just being here, but we took a step in the right direction today as a program, even though we were on the losing end."

Indians slip by Royals

CLEVELAND (AP)

— Coming off one of their best road trips in franchise history, the Cleveland Indians want to establish something at home.

At least for one night, that goal was accomplished.

Derek Lowe allowed one run in six innings and Jack Hannahan had a two-run double as Cleveland sent Kansas City to its 12th straight loss, 4-3 on Tuesday night.

The Indians dropped four of five on their homestand to open the season.

The losses included a 16-inning game on Opening Day and a 12-inning defeat the following day. Cleveland went 7-2 on a road trip that began with a three-game sweep in Kansas City.

"We didn't have a very good homestand," manager Manny Acta said. "This is where we're supposed to play well. You can't expect to be a road warrior. Only a few teams can do that. We need to play better baseball here."

The Royals, winless in four games against Cleveland, proved to be the cure again.

Lowe (3-1) gave up eight hits and struck out five. Chris Perez got his seventh save, allowing a ninth-inning run. Cleveland went 2 for 12 with runners in scoring position and left 13 runners on base.

The Indians loaded the bases with no outs in the second and eighth, but did not score in either inning.

Shadyside rally falls short in AA semis

By NICK BEDWAY
For The Times Leader

WHEELING — Trailing by eight runs entering the seventh inning of Tuesday's OVAC Class AA semifinal baseball game at Holloway Field, invading Shadyside scored six times without the benefit of a hit but still wound up falling 9-7 to Linsly.

Three errors, a trio of hit batters and one walk left the Tigers with the tying run at the plate when Jarred Brooks struck out to end the improbable last-ditch comeback attempt.

"That was one of the craziest innings I have ever seen," Cadets coach Jay Cartwright said after his team advanced to this weekend's championship game. "But we are very excited to be back in the OVAC finals after not making the tournament last year. Our No. 1 goal, since we aren't in the SSAC, is win this tournament every year."

Capturing the conference crown is something the Cadets have been very good at accomplishing during the last several decades. Linsly won 13 titles during Gary Sprague's long reign at the Cadets helm. They've garnered two more of those highly coveted pennants since Cartwright took the helm in 2007.

The trio of Linsly pitchers, Momo Felt, Jimmy Brinsky and Adam Jones, combined to pitch three-hit ball, all three being singles off the bat of right fielder D.J. Shoemaker.

Jones pitched the extended top of the seventh and did not allow a ball to be hit out of the infield but he committed two of the errors while the other was the result of catcher's interference with the bases loaded forcing in a run.

Shadyside coach Mike Meintel also was shaking his head after his team's record fell to 11-8. The Tigers had problems of their own in the field and several other balls fell safely that should have resulted in outfield outs.

"We had some balls we didn't catch, but we are very young in the outfield," Meintel said.

"Being down 9-1, I never thought it would come down to this. The little things early in the game that we didn't do turned out to really hurt us."

"But Linsly is a great team and an excellent program."

The Cadets offense accounted for 11 hits off the lefty Brooks, who had beaten them 4-2 in their most recent game played at Shadyside.

"Jarred did not have his best stuff," Meintel noted. "His curveball and slider were not working and they were good enough hitters where they could jump on the fastball."

Felt, the starter for Linsly (18-5), couldn't throw strikes early, walking five in the first two innings. Two walks after Shoemaker's leadoff single to right field in the top of the second resulted in a run as Luke Nardo picked up the RBI on a fielder's choice.

The Cadets bounced back with two runs in the bottom of the inning, starting out with back-to-back doubles by Michael Joseph and Neil Tennant. With one out, Jameson Murray's single down the right-field line put Linsly on top to stay at 2-1.

Cartwright's team then struck for five runs and six hits in the third inning. Joseph drove in a pair with a single, while Ryan Riethmiller and Colton Coss also had RBI hits. The fifth run scored on an error.

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Linsly Bolts to Early Cushion

WHEELING — Linsly's sister duo of Morgan and Jackie McDermott won the girls' No. 1 Doubles title Tuesday as the OVAC Tennis Championships continued at the Wheeling Park Bubble.

The victory gave the Cadets the early lead in the Class 1A-4A Division with nine points. Oak Glen, St. Clairsville and Weirton Madonna each have two points, while Wheeling Central has one.

The McDermott's defeated Mor-

gantown's Stephanie Arnold and Abby Rosiello, 8-6.

In Class 5A, University holds the lead after victories at No. 2 and No. 3 Doubles.

Meghan Zerke and Cassie Seamon won the No. 2 crown by defeating Wheeling Park's Lexie Patterson and Emily Caperton, 8-3. At No. 3, Chammi Rassekh and Shaw Chico topped Linsly's Hannah Soloninka and Emmy Weaver, 9-7(3).

The Hawks have 10 points. Wheel-

ing Park is in second with seven, followed by Morgantown (six), Parkersburg South (two), John Marshall (one) and Brooke (one).

The tournament continues at 8:30 this morning with boys' singles action. Girls' singles matches will begin at 8:30 a.m. Thursday.

OVAC Tournament Girls' Doubles
 McDermott-McDermott (L) d. Arnold-Rosiello (Morg), 8-6; Zerke-Seamon (Uni) d. Patterson-Caperton (WP), 8-3; Rassekh-Chico (Uni) d. Soloninka-Weaver (Lin), 9-7(3)



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

BUCKEYE'S Jesse Faulkner (7), Karlee Leonard (left) and Ivy Starcher (center) celebrate after the Lady Panthers claimed the OVAC 4A softball title.



Photo/MIKE MATHISON

BELLAIRE'S Dalton Conroy shows his excitement as the Big Reds scored a 7-0 victory against Buckeye Trail to win the 3A baseball title.



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

ST. JOHN'S Gina Beekman (left) and Rosa Young accept the OVAC 1A Championship Trophy after the Lady Irish toppled Donahue, 6-0.

OVAC Titles: Worth the wait

Bellaire wins first baseball championship since 1993

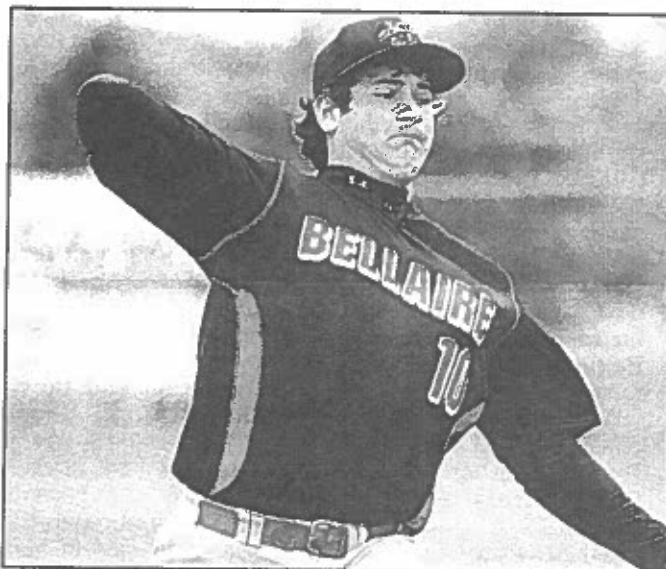
By RICH GIBSON
 Times Leader Sports Writer

STEUBENVILLE — You take these OVAC championships anyway you can get them.

Bellaire's Big Reds struck out 11 times and managed no more than five singles against Buckeye Trail southpaw Zach Roe in Saturday's 3-A conference title game.

Still, John Patrone's ballclub returned home with the big trophy following a 7-0 blanking of the self-destructive Warriors at Vaccaro Field.

Bellaire has made steady progress during Patrone's four-season tenure, culminating with Saturday's achievement. "Yes, we definitely set



BELLAIRE PITCHER Nick McMahon works to the plate during Saturday morning's Class 3A OVAC title game at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville.

Photo/MIKE MATHISON

See, BELLAIRE, Page C2

Roe retired Bellaire's first two batters in the first before the wheels fell off. McMahon drew a walk and Dalton Conroy followed with a base hit. A pair of throwing errors allowed both runners to score.

Designated hitter Tyler West also induced a free pass, swiped both second and third base, then scored on Trail's third error of the inning.

It was more of the same for Bellaire in the third. McMahon reached on a misplay. West's sacrifice bunt went for an infield single. When leftfielder Bralen Snell's ground ball was booted, McMahon and West raced home for a 5-0 lightning.

The Reds (15-8) tacked on two more in the sixth. Second baseman Nick Patrone walked and advanced when senior centerfielder Manny Ray rapped an opposite-field single. Both Patrone and Ray would later come home via two more Warrior gaffes.

West was the game's lone multi-hitter, producing two singles. Snell reached base four times. Zack Roe, Jessi Roe and Cody Burkhart accounted for Trail's three hits.

Bellaire 302 002 0 — 7 5 0
 B. Trail 000 000 0 — 0 3 10
 Batteries: McMahon and Back. Z. Roe and Patterson.

● Bellaire

Continued from Page C1

our goals high this season," the Reds' skipper confirmed.

"We didn't hit particularly well today and have been inconsistent in that area at times. But we've won a few games with pitching and defense."

Saturday's victory was a dramatic case in point. Senior Nick McMahon permitted no more than three hits in a solid route-going performance. The Reds' righthander struck out four and issued three walks.

"Nick's been coming on strong and he showed that today," Patrone advised. "I thought he really mixed his pitches well."

McMahon admitted the game plan was simple. "Just throw strikes and let the guys behind me make plays," he smiled. "This feels good. It's been a while."

That, referring to the last time a Bellaire team celebrated an OVAC baseball crown. "Not since 1993, we believe," Patrone confirmed. "We've been building (for this) and today the kids got it done. This (trophy) is for them, our coaches and the entire school."

For Mike Neuhart's Warriors, Saturday's championship appearance was an unmitigated disaster. Though Roe pitched well enough to win, his teammates were guilty of an unimaginable 10 fielding errors. Bellaire, in turn, played flawless defense.

"We took advantage of a few things but we also wanted to be aggressive on the bases," Patrone added.

In addition to their misplays in the field, Trail, in an all-day catch-up mode, had three runners gunned down attempting to steal by Bellaire sophomore catcher Wyatt Back.

Edison, Cambridge collect OVAC baseball championships

STUEBENVILLE — Edison and Big Red delivered yet another outstanding high school baseball game Saturday, the Wildcats pulling out a tense 5-4 win to claim the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 4A championship.

The perennial powers both sent quality pitchers to the hill at chilly Vaccaro Field — Mark Smyth for Edison and JoJo Pierro for Big Red. The difference proved to be a bases-loaded bounding ball in the home half of the fourth inning.

Edison found itself trailing 4-2 after Big Red scored three times in the top of the frame. Things weren't looking good either as Pierro quickly retired the first two Wildcat hitters.

Koby Sronce drew a two-out walk and immediately stole second. He moved to third on Chad Wickham's single. If not for a diving stop by Bryan Pierro, Big Red's shortstop, Sronce would have scored on the hit.

Josh Pasek followed Wickham to the plate and delivered a RBI base hit. Greg

Stagani worked JoJo Pierro for a free pass to fill the bases with Wildcats. Smyth then hit the bounding ball that resulted in a Big Red fielding miscue and allowed Pasek and Wickham to scamper home with what proved to be the winning runs.

Smyth dominated in the fifth and sixth innings and recorded a strikeout to start the seventh. He gave way to Stagani after Matt Petrella legged out an infield single. The fire-balling right hander whiffed the two batters he faced to record the save.

Class 5A

Cambridge pitcher Dillon Sonnafrank struck out eight of the first nine batters from Morgantown en route to the Bobcats' 9-6 victory at Vaccaro Field to win the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championship Saturday.

Sonnafrank finished with 11 strikeouts and six walks. He issued free passes to the first two batters of the seventh inning and was replaced by lefthander R.J. Endly, who fanned three in a row to end the game.

ay, April 22, 2012 - C3

OVAC baseball semifinals postponed

Mother Nature put a real damper on the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference baseball tournament semifinals Saturday.

All 10 contests, two each in the five divisions, were postponed by inclement weather at Bridgeport's Perkins Field, Jets Field in Morristown, Steubenville's Vaccaro Field, Jude Park in McMechen and Monarch Field in Moundsville.

The contests have been rescheduled for Monday, with some being pushed back to Tuesday. The higher seeded team in each matchup will serve as the home team.

The championship finals are slated for Friday and Saturday.

For a complete list of the pairings, times and locations, see Page C7.



Edison's Mark Smyth works to the plate against Steubenville on Saturday. Photo by Mike Mathison

Steubenville, Edison Stage Typical Classic in Class 4A Championship

Two-out help in the fourth keys Wildcats

CLASS 4A BASEBALL

By ED LOOMAN
For the News-Register
STEUBENVILLE — Edison and Big Red delivered yet another outstanding high school baseball game Saturday, the Wildcats pulling out a tense 5-4 victory to claim the OVAC Class 4A championship. The perennial powers both sent quality pitchers to the hill at chilly Vaccaro Field — Mark Smyth for Edison and JoJo Pierro for Big Red.

The difference proved to be a bases-loaded bounding ball in the home half of the fourth inning.

Edison found itself trailing 4-2 after Big Red scored three times in the top of the frame. Things weren't looking good either as Pierro quickly retired the first two Wildcats hitters.

Then, Koby Sronce drew a walk and immediately stole second. He moved to third on Chad Wickham's single. If not for a diving stop by Bryan Pierro, Big Red's shortstop.

See, Classic, Page B2



Today's Results:
Q. Can the John Marshall softball team continue its winning streak and win a state title?

Yes: 75%
No: 25%

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Q. Ar

CLASSIC

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Sronce would have scored on the Wickham hit.

Josh Pasek followed and delivered an RBI single. Greg Stagani worked a free pass to fill the bases. Smyth then hit the bounding ball that resulted in a Big Red fielding miscue and allowed Pasek and Wickham to scamper home with what proved to be the winning runs.

Smyth dominated in the fifth and sixth innings and recorded a strikeout to start the seventh. He gave way to Stagani after Matt Petrella legged out an infield single. The fire-balling right hander whiffed the two batters he faced to record the save.

"Basically, as we were talking, two plays made the difference, one on our side and one on their side — both defensively," Edison coach Mike Collopy said.

"Mark pitched an outstanding game. We put in a situation where he hadn't pitched for a while and he came out and pitched as well as he could under the circumstances.

"He battled. Then Greg came in and did the job when we needed him."

The other play Collopy mentioned also came in the fourth when Big Red scored three times.

JoJo Pierro drove a leadoff single to right and advanced when Pat Pizzoferrato was safe on Edison's lone defensive miscue error. Both advanced on a passed ball. Michael Camilletti walked to load the bases.

JoJo Pierro touched the plate thanks to a wild pitch. Pizzoferrato scored when Ryan Vojvodich bounced one to third. Petrella's grounder to short plated Camilletti.

Big Red got the game's first run in the second. Pizzoferrato ripped a double to center and scored on Vojvodich's fly to right.

Edison pushed two runs across in the third. Sronce walked and sprinted to third

on a Wickham base knock. Sronce was cut down at the plate on Pasek's grounder back to JoJo Pierro. Stagani followed by lining a single to plate Wickham. Smyth walked before Alec Jones flew to center, scoring Pasek in the process.

The Wildcats appeared poised to score more but a diving catch in right by Big Red's Mason Heatherington ended the threat.

Smyth held Big Red to four hits during his time on the mound. He fanned four and walked three.

"We're pretty simple and maybe that's because of who their coach is," Collopy responded when asked to describe the importance of Saturday's victory. "We looked at winning (Saturday) and we don't look too far beyond (Saturday).

"Name it whatever you want to name it, but we took the approach that we were playing Big Red at 1:30 (Saturday) at Vaccaro Field. We wanted to execute and play good baseball."

Wickham finished with three of Edison's six hits and Pasek added two.

"That's the way it goes, it's the game of baseball," Big Red's Fred Heatherington said. "When you don't make the plays and you get behind in the count, you're not going to win. They got some timely hits, good pitching and they won the game."

JoJo Pierro recorded three strikeouts and allowed five walks in suffering the tough pitching loss.

"JoJo battled, but he didn't get ahead in the count," Heatherington noted. "His curveball wasn't working and you're not going to beat them with just a fastball. That's what we tried to do."

Both teams will return to action Monday. Edison, now 19-2, will visit East Liverpool. Big Red, 13-6, will travel to Toronto.



Photo by Mike Mathison

Bellaire's Nick McMahon tossed a three-hitter against Buckeye Trail in Saturday's OVAC Class 3A baseball title game.

Big Reds Are Back On Top

Bellaire takes advantage of Trail's fielding woes

By RICH GIBSON
For the News-Register

STEUBENVILLE — You take these OVAC championships anyway you can get them.

Bellaire's Big Reds struck out 11 times and managed no more than five singles against Buckeye Trail southpaw Zach Roe in Saturday's OVAC 3A title game.

Still, John Patrone's ballclub returned home with the big trophy following a 7-0 blanking of self-destructive Buckeye Trail at Vaccaro Field.

Bellaire has made steady progress during Patrone's four-season tenure, culminating with Saturday's achievement.

"Yes, we definitely set our goals high this season," the Reds' skipper said.

"We didn't hit particularly well (Saturday) and have been inconsistent in that area at times. But we've won a few games with pitching and defense."

Saturday's victory was a dramatic case in point. Senior Nick McMahon

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BIG REDS

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permitted no more than three hits in a solid route-going performance. The Reds' right-hander struck out four and issued three walks.

"Nick's been coming on strong and he showed that (Saturday)," Patrone said. "I thought he really mixed his pitches well."

McMahon admitted the game plan was simple.

"Just throw strikes and let the guys behind me make plays," he said. "This feels good. It's been a while."

He was referring to the last time a Bellaire team celebrated an OVAC baseball crown.

"Not since 1993, we believe," Patrone said. "We've been building (for this) and the kids got it done. This (trophy) is for them, our coaches and the entire school."

For Mike Neuhart's Warriors, Saturday's championship appearance was an unmitigated disaster. Though Roe pitched well enough to win, his teammates were guilty of an unimaginable 10 fielding errors. Bellaire, in turn, played flawless defense.

"We took advantage of a few things but we also wanted to be aggressive on the bases," Patrone added.

In addition to their misplays in the field, Trail, in an all-day, catch-up mode, had three runners gunned down attempting to steal by Bellaire sophomore catcher Wyatt Back.

Roe retired Bellaire's first two batters in the first before the wheels fell off. McMahon drew a walk and Dalton Conroy followed with a base hit. A pair of throwing errors allowed both runners to score.

Designated hitter Tyler West also induced a free pass, swiped both second and third base, then scored on Trail's third error of the inning.

It was more of the same for Bellaire in the third. McMahon reached on a misplay. West's sacrifice bunt went for an infield single. When left fielder Bralen Snell's ground ball was booted, McMahon and West raced home for a 5-0 score.

The Big Reds (15-8) tacked on two more in the sixth. Second baseman Nick Patrone walked and advanced when senior center fielder Manny Ray rapped an opposite-field single. Both Patrone and Ray later come home via two more Warrior gaffes.

West was the game's lone multi-hitter, producing two singles. Snell reached base four times. Zack Roe, Jessi Roe and Cody Burkhart accounted for Trail's three hits.

Regular Season

Paden City 20, Jefferson CC 6

PADEN CITY — Zach Heasley had a

Cambridge Wraps up Class 5A Baseball Championship

STEUBENVILLE — Cambridge pitcher Dillon Sonnafrank struck out eight of the first nine batters from Morgantown en route to the Bobcats' 9-6 victory at Vaccaro Field to win the OVAC Class 5A championship on Saturday.

Cambridge scored in the second through fifth innings to take an 8-2 lead.

Morgantown battled back with four in the top of the sixth, thanks to a leadoff single by Tyler Bradford, followed by four Bobcats errors.

Sonnafrank finished with 11 strikeouts and six walks. He issued free passes to the first two batters of the seventh inning and was replaced by left-hander R.J. Endly, who fanned three in a row to end the game. Sonnafrank allowed four singles.

Cambridge singled twice in the second for two runs, three times in the third for two runs, three more times in the fourth for a run and twice in the fifth for three runs.

Morgantown's Albie Eddy took the loss. He fanned three and walked five.

triple among two hits and drove four home as Paden City beat Jefferson County Christian. Kyle Postlethwait added two hits and three RBI for the Wildcats (4-13) while Trey Leonard had an RBI double.

Wayne Seabright led Jefferson County Christian (2-10) with a double among two hits and two RBI.

River 10, Monroe Central 0

HANNIBAL — Cody Caldwell hit an RBI double as River blanked Monroe Central. Brandon Price and Kam Brown each had two hits and an RBI for the Pilots (5-13).

Kordell Antill led the Seminoles with a double.

River 14, St. John 3

HANNIBAL — Brad Goddard had three hits and drove two home as River defeated Monroe Central.

Cole Isaly had a triple among two hits and three RBI for the Pilots, while Cody Caldwell added an two RBI double.

Cody Gillespie led the Irish with two hits while Cody Leonard added a double and drove two in.

Brooke 12, Cameron 2

WELLSBURG — Nick Breen hit a double and drove in two as Brooke beat Cameron.

Kelaen Welch had three hits and two RBI for the Bruins (12-12) while Austin Schambach added two hits and drove in three.

Cameron was led Austin Pegg with two hits.

Linsly claims OVAC 2A baseball title

• Cadets knock off
Steubenville CC, 7-2

By RICH GIBSON
Times Leader Sports Writer

STEUBENVILLE — There will be no state championship trophy for Jay Cartwright and his Linsly Cadets. Then again, there never is.

Wheeling's historic private school has an ongoing tradition producing talented athletic teams. Add Linsly's 2012 baseball combine to that list.

The Orange & Black scored early and often in Friday evening's OVAC 2-A title game against Steubenville Central.

Cartwright's club recorded a first inning four-spot, then returned for three more tallies in the second which proved more than enough.

Starter Momo Felt and reliever Jimmy Brinsky combined on a six-hitter in the Cadets' 7-2 victory under sunny skies and chilly temperatures at Vaccaro Field.

One year after failing to qualify for OVAC play, Linsly returned to prominence, improving its spring mark to 19-5.

"We have 13 seniors on this year's team. They remember the feeling of (not making it here) last season," Cartwright related.

"Obviously, we'll lose a quality group, but as coaches, we'll look forward to the challenge of building a new team next year."

Felt, a valley transfer after playing abroad in Germany last year, issued a pair of first inning walks but escaped when his teammates turned a 4-6-3 double play.

The Cadets then sent nine hitters to the plate to take charge.

Centerfielder Hayden Stanley drew a one-out walk from Central starter Stephen Mihalyo. Shortstop Alex Stephens followed, lining a run-scoring triple to the centerfield fence.

First baseman Leighton Gibson's ground ball scored Stephens before left-fielder Michael Joseph and catcher Neal Tennant hit successive singles.

That brought on designated hitter Ryan Riethmiller who sent an opposite field drive soaring over the head of Crusader rightfielder Alex Porreca. Two runs scored and it was 4-0.

In the Cadets' second, Stanley and Stephens opened the frame with back-to-

'We have 13 seniors on this year's team. They remember the feeling of (not making it here) last season.'

— Jay Cartwright

See, LINSLY, Page D2



Photo/MIKE MATHISON

LINSLY'S Leighton Gibson is congratulated by Cadets' head coach Jay Cartwright after connecting on a three-run home run in the second inning of the OVAC Class 2A title game Friday afternoon.

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● Linsly

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back base knocks. Gibson then sent a Mihalyo offering well over the fence in right for a 7-0 lighting. The Soldiers, however, would not tally again.

"It's always nice jumping ahead like that," Cartwright explained. "Give their kid (Mihalyo) credit. He settled in and kept us off balance the rest of the way."

Felt did not allow a hit through four innings before Central bunched three fifth-inning singles to get on the board.

Adam Lyons, Brant Pieniazek and BJ Grandinetti connected with the latter's infield hit plating Lyons.

Linsly's lead was 7-1 entering the seventh when reliever Jimmy Brinsky yielded a two-out ribbie single to Crusader cleanup hitter Jimmy Panella. A game-ending ground ball followed and the Cadets dugout emptied in celebration.

"This is a great group of guys to be around," Cartwright offered. "We had a good combination of pitching and played solid defensively."

In the Crusader fourth, Cadets' freshman second baseman Colton Coss made a diving stop to start a spectacular 4-6-3 twin-killing. "You just don't see plays like that made at the high school level," Cartwright smiled.

Felt fanned five, walked three and hit two batters. Mihalyo and reliever Porreca totaled four Ks and three walks.

Stephens collected three of the winners' 11 hits. Tennant singled and doubled. Gibson totaled four RBIs. Panella produced two singles for Central.

S. Central 000 010 1 — 2 6 2
Linsly 430 000 x — 7 11 2
Batteries: Mihalyo, Porreca (5) and Laukert. Felt, Brinsky (6) and Tennant.

Gibson may be reached at rgibson@timesleaderonline.com