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SPORTS

Sunday,
May 9, 2021

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

VanNest, defense powers Tigers

• Shadyside edges Toronto for 2A title

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

TORONTO — Shadyside junior pitcher Mason VanNest wanted the baseball.

His head coach, Shawn Selmon, obliged. VanNest did the rest.

Riding the right arm of VanNest and impressive defense, Shadyside captured its third OVAC baseball championship in school history by handing Toronto a 2-1 setback at the Knight Baseball Complex Friday evening.

"He's been doing it all year," Selmon said of VanNest's gem, which included a three hitter, six strikeouts and the Red Knight run was unearned. "You have faith in the guys who have been doing it all year. They've been carrying us."

VanNest got staked to an early run by a Shadyside offense, which had an abundance of runners on base all afternoon.

"I knew I had to find a way to get the job done, but Toronto is a very good team," VanNest said. "Having the offense get you that run is a great feeling because it lifts a huge weight off your shoulders."

Junior Korey Beckett laced a one-out single and promptly stole second. He moved up 90 feet on a base hit by Alex Baker and then scored when Nate Milhoan drove him in on what appeared like it was going to be a sacrifice fly, but the ball was dropped in the outfield.

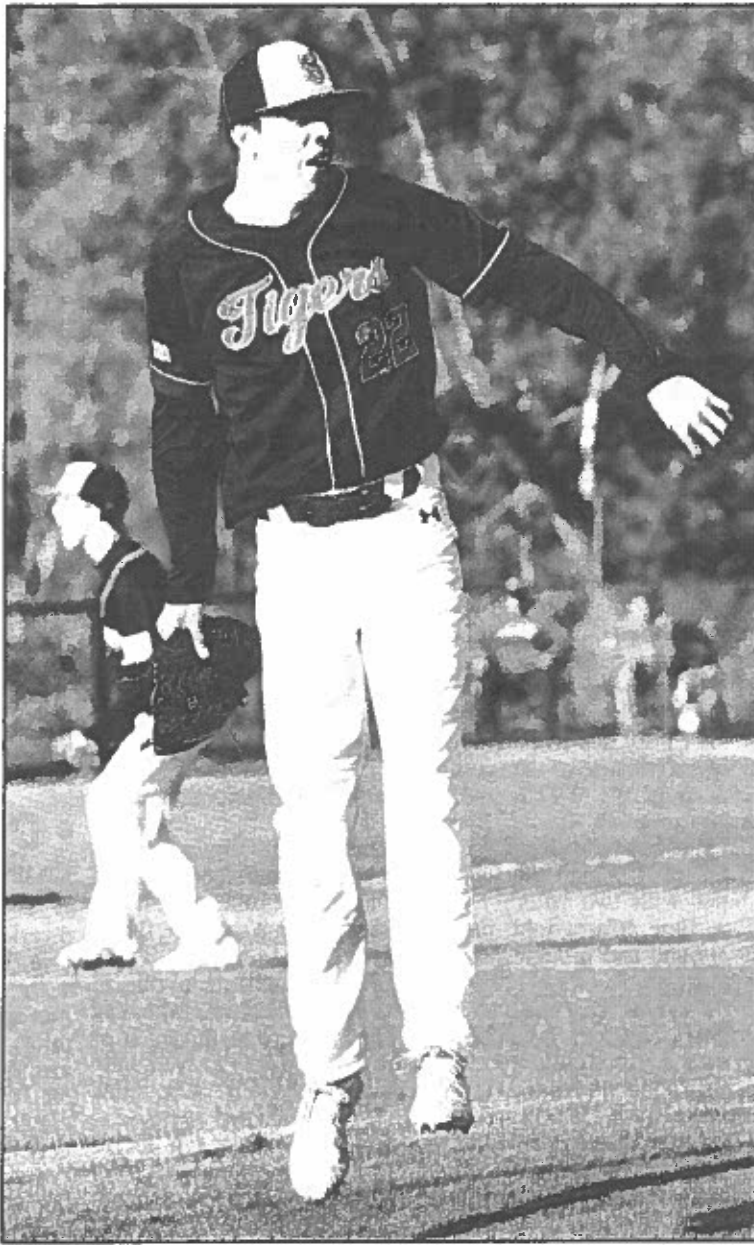
The Red Knights avoided further damage by inducing a 6-4-3 double play.

From there, VanNest was dealing. He worked around a lead-off double in the second. Toronto had two runners reach again in the fourth, but Baker flased the leather on a nifty running, over-the-shoulder catch down the right-field line.

"We just couldn't get much going offensively," Toronto head coach Brian Perkins said. "(VanNest) threw a nice game and we didn't capitalize on opportunities (early). We just didn't get the big hit when we needed it."

In the fifth and sixth, however, Toronto went in order. Shadyside, which had flirted with insurance runs all afternoon only to come up empty each time, finally got one in the seventh when it took advantage of a pair of Red Knight errors.

VanNest reached on an error, moved up 90 feet when junior catcher Ryan Florence was plunked. The Tigers loaded the bases when junior Bryce Amos dropped down a bunt



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

SHADYSIDE'S MASON VanNest reacts after the final out was recorded Friday night as the Tigers defeated Toronto, 2-1, to win the Class 2A championship.

and the Red Knights elected to go to third, but the ball was bobbled.

Beckett, who was on base four times in the game, drove in VanNest with a ringing single back through the middle.

"One of our weaknesses has been not being able to score as many runs as we'd like," Selmon said. "We're winning games with it and I am not into fixing something that isn't broke. Getting the add-on-run was huge, though, in the seventh."

Evan Wolter, who came on in relief of Toronto starter Chris Parker in the third, opened the seventh with a single. He moved to second on a throwing error on an attempted pick-off play.

VanNest, however, was unfazed. He induced a ground out to first, a ground out to third that brought the run home and then ended the game with a strikeout, setting off a celebration.

"We absolutely knew we could come up here and compete," Selmon said. "This (game) is something we've had marked on the calendar for a long time. We were looking to come up here last year, and unfortunately, we had to wait, but that made this (win) even more exciting."

See, **TIGERS**, Page D2

Ferry falls to Linsly in 3A tilt

• Cadets claim 22nd title in program history

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

TORONTO — Linsly School and Ohio Valley Athletic Conference baseball championships are synonymous.

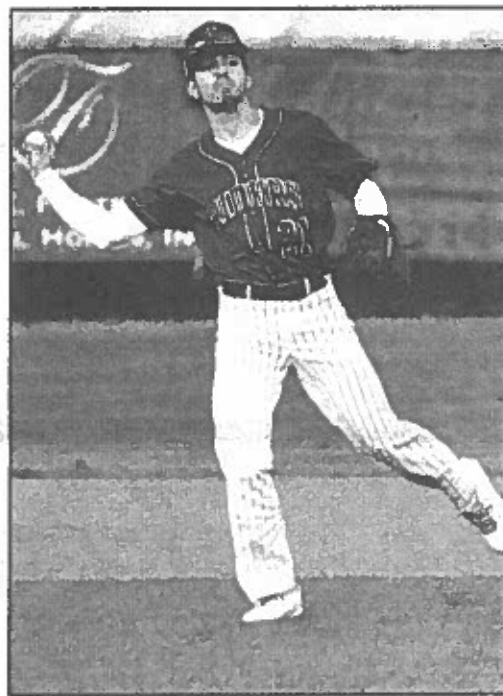
The Cadets added another chapter to their illustrious history Friday night at a chilly Knights Baseball Complex.

Trailing 2-1 in the sixth inning, Linsly struck for two runs and then escaped a jam in the seventh to secure its 22nd OVAC title in school history by a 3-2 score against Martins Ferry in the Class 3A title game.

"This is a great group of kids, and I couldn't be happier for them," Linsly head coach Jay Cartwright said amid a celebration on the field. "This is an outstanding group of seniors, and I am going to miss that group of kids. This was a great high school baseball game and we're fortunate to come out on top."

While the Cadets were celebrating, the Purple Riders were left to wonder what might have been.

See, **FERRY**, Page D2



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

MARTINS FERRY'S Connor Probst makes a throw to first during Friday night's Class 3A championship game against Linsly. The Purple Riders fell, 3-2.

Smith trying to attract more dwarfs into boxing

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

MORRISTOWN — Jeremy "Dynamite" Smith has been battling the odds his entire life. Now, the 24-year-old, is trying to even things out.

Born with dwarfism, Smith has developed from a world champion powerlifter to an undefeated boxer under the tutelage of the Ohio Valley's Travis "The Terror" Clark, who has held various MMA and Boxing titles in

World's Strongest Dwarf. "I started working with him at my gym. He's fought twice and has won two championship belts.

"Right now he is considered the 'Baddest Man on the Planet,'" Clark continued. "He has gotten linked up with Barstool Sports and Rough N' Rowdy."

Westside Barbell is an elite, invitation-only powerlifting gym.

After winning the Barstool Sports BMFM title in Clarksburg, Smith defended his belt

"We beat him hands-down," Clark said. "He said afterwards that Jeremy was the most athletic and powerful dwarf he had ever fought, or even seen."

Clark said he is not surprised with Smith's accomplishments.

"Jeremy works very, very hard in the gym. He has world records for powerlifting in multiple weight classes. We're trying to give him an outlet to speak on what he wants to speak on. This gives him a platform to get it out



Doncic, Mavs cruise past Cavs 110-90 to stay in 5th in West

DALLAS (AP) — Luka Doncic scored 24 points in 23 minutes and the Dallas Mavericks kept the prime spot in a tight race to avoid the Western Conference play-in tournament with a breezy 110-90 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Friday night.

Tim Hardaway Jr. added 20 points for the Mavericks, who didn't trail after going ahead 4-2 while the undermanned Cavaliers lost their ninth consecutive game, one short of their longest skid of the season. The teams play again Sunday in Cleveland.

The already injury-riddled Cavaliers had to play without Kevin Love, who was sidelined after banging knees with Portland's Enes Kanter two nights earlier in a 141-105 loss to the Trail Blazers. Collin Sexton scored 27 points for the Cavaliers.

Dallas guaranteed it would remain in fifth place in the West, a game ahead of either the Los Angeles Lakers or Portland with five games remaining. The Lakers and Trail Blazers, who started the night tied for sixth, played later Friday. The odd team out among the three will be forced

into the play-in scenario as the No. 7 seed. The Mavericks clinched the Southwest Division title, which would give them the fifth seed in a three-way tie with the Lakers and Blazers.

"I think it's something that's always worthwhile," said coach Rick Carlisle, who passed Cotton Fitzsimmons for 15th on the career list with his 833rd victory. "It shows that you're one of the better teams. It's big and we'll take it. It's important to get this win, try to get through this game unscathed and get ready for Sunday."

Trey Burke hit a half-court shot at the buzzer in the first quarter for a 33-19 Dallas lead, and Doncic converted a three-point play in the final seconds before the half for a 62-37 margin while holding Cleveland to 31% shooting before the break.

"I thought the first half in part and the shooting let us down," Cavs coach J.B. Bickerstaff said. "We had some open looks and didn't knock them down."

With seven points in the first four minutes, the 22-year-old Doncic became the fourth-youngest in NBA history to reach

5,000 points. LeBron James, Kevin Durant and Carmelo Anthony were each 21 when reaching the milestone.

TIP-INS

Cavallers: The official diagnosis for Love was a left knee contusion. ... Anderson Varejao played the final 4:37 two nights after ending a four-year absence in his first game with Cleveland since Feb. 10, 2016. Varejao, who spent his first 11 1/2 seasons with the Cavs, signed a 10-day contract this week. ... The second-worst 3-point shooting team in the NBA was 6 of 29 (21%) from deep. Cedi Osman scored 22 but was 2 of 10 from beyond the arc.

Mavericks: Kristaps Porzingis went through a pregame shootaround before missing his fifth consecutive game and eighth in the past nine with right knee soreness.

The 7-foot-3 Latvian had to leave early in the only game he did play in that stretch. ... Maxi Kleber missed his third straight game with a sore right Achilles heel.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Doncic had one assist, a season low, to

leave him one short of 1,500 for his career. The Mavericks didn't need that part of their career triple-double leader's game.

Doncic sat the final 16 minutes as the Mavericks led by as many as 29 points while taking care of a team in the mix for the worst record in the East.

Similar matchups have been far from automatic lately for Dallas, which is 9-3 in the past 12 games with all three losses to Sacramento.

The Kings started the day 12th in the West.

TOUGH STRETCH

The Cavaliers are in the middle of a 10-game stretch to end the season against teams in contention for at least play-in spots. Cleveland has allowed an average of 127 points in the past four games, with an average losing margin of 22.

But one of those was in overtime to Phoenix, the No. 2 team in the West, when the Suns outscored the Cavs 20-4 in the extra period.

UP NEXT

Dallas takes a five-game winning streak in the series into Sunday's meeting.

• Ferry

Continued from Page D1

"Can you get any closer to winning an OVAC championship than we have the last two times we've been (in the final)?" Rider head coach Anthony Reasbeck said. "It's the same thing. The sixth inning cost us against Steubenville five years ago in this game and it got us again (Friday). Every OVAC game we've lost during my tenure has been by one run, but what are you going to do?"

Prior to the sixth, Linsly couldn't solve Rider ace Colby Shriver, who was seemingly getting better as the game went along.

However, a little bit of fatigue looked to be setting in for the sixth. With Shriver's pitch count climbing, Brodie Selmon drew a lead-off walk and was lifted for pinch runner, Jack Selmon. Jack Scouvar followed with a single.

Collin Paul got ahead in the count and then ripped a double to left center that brought both runners around to score.

"Luckily, Collin had that big swing and it's nice to have that speed on the bases that allowed a guy to score easily from first," Cartwright said. "Collin's a big, strong kid. He can hit and he's had some key knocks for us."

Somehow, Shriver — with the help of impressive shortstop Connor Probst snagging a pair of liners — was able to escape further damage to keep his

team within a run.

Ferry, which hadn't truly threatened since the second when it loaded the bases, but couldn't get any more than the one run across, watched Alex Bennett draw a one-out walk.

Colton Reddinger then sacrificed — with two strikes — to get Bennett into scoring position. That also brought an end to the night for Linsly ace Kobe Hill, who had to depart because of the West Virginia pitch count rule of 110.

Cartwright elected to go to Brodie Selmon out of the pen, but he walked Chase Goff and then fell behind the ensuing Rider hitter with two balls. Wasting no more time, Cartwright went back to the mound and brought in Adam Och.

Inheriting the 2-0 count, Och proceeded to throw a ball. His next three pitches were all strikes, setting off a dogpile on the pitcher's mound.

"This is not a knock on Martins Ferry, but Linsly is better than us, and actually they're more than one-run better than us," Reasbeck said. "I have the scrappiest bunch of guys and I just love them. They scrapped like crazy and everyone here saw it. I am happy for Linsly, and I am proud of my guys. Everyone here got treated to a heck of a baseball game, but we just came up a run short."

While Och got the save, Hill earned the win. He was impressive. He limit-

ed the Riders to three hits. He fanned six.

"Kobe was just a bulldog all night," Cartwright said. "Ferry did a good job of battling with two strikes and ran his (pitch) count up and we had to pull him. I would have liked to have ended the game with him on the mound, but both Brodie and Och have been throwing well. Och has been a strike thrower coming in in relief."

Ferry got on the board first when Reddinger drew a bases-loaded walk, forcing home senior Logan Smith, who had singled to open the second.

Linsly knotted the game in the home half of the second on a sacrifice fly by Trey Prather.

The Riders created their run in the fourth. Trevor Hanson, who had singled, went to second on an error and third on a wild pitch, eventually touched home when Hill was called for a balk.

"This conference means a lot to me and our program," Reasbeck said. "Steve Wojcik, Bill Beattie and everyone involved with this conference make it great."

"All of the baseball coaches wake up and check the standings each morning because you want to win this conference. It's the greatest thing in the world, and I love it. Having said that, we will now focus on the sectional and district tournament."

• Tigers

Continued from Page D1

While the Tigers were celebrating their first conference title since 2007 and only the third in the school's history, the Red Knights (17-2) are left looking ahead to the tournament, which could eventually include a rematch with the Tigers.

"Our kids fought to the end and I am proud of them for that," Perkins said. "There is no quit in these guys. I liked the fight our guys had for seven innings. Our district is going to be very good and competitive again. We'll see what happens. We'll get back at it and try to continue to improve."

• Dwarfs

Continued from Page D1

"I'm trying to enlist more dwarfs to get into boxing. I've been approached by a lot of dwarfs out there that are interested, but they think they have to fight against average-sized people. They don't," he said. "That is what I am trying to get out there."

Dwarfism is short stature that results from a genetic or medical condition. It is generally defined as an adult height of 4-10 or less, with the average height for individuals with dwarfism is 4-feet.

Smith is 4-6 and tips the scales at 138 pounds. You would never know that he can bench press more than 320 pounds and squat 745!

"There are a lot of dwarfs that wrestle in high school but after that they don't know what to do with their talents," Smith explained. "Most let their talents go to waste. This is a great opportunity for them to continue using their talents by staying active and being competitive."

From Powerlifter to Boxer

"As many know, I'm a powerlifter by trade. I was invited to Westside Barbell in 2018 and have been here ever since," the transplanted Ohioan said. "A buddy of mine that I work out with showed me a video one day of two dwarfs fighting. It was like a bar bet where someone said, 'You should try that.' So I said, OK."

After a few weeks Smith said a representative from Barstool Sports contacted him and said he should be the next one to fight their champion, which was the aforementioned Hornswoggle.

"I was more than happy to do it," Smith said. "I was excited for the opportunity."

From then on he has

been training with Clark.

"Travis has helped me more than anyone will ever know. From my first fight to my second was like a night-and-day experience," Smith admitted. "I can't thank him enough for what he has done for me."

Both of his fights for three one-minute rounds.

"The first fight I couldn't believe how out of shape I was," Smith acknowledged. "I think I kind of underestimated the fact that they were just one-minute rounds. Coming from a powerlifting background we'd do five total lifts in an entire meet, but in boxing you are constantly on the move."

"After that first fight, you can ask Travis. I was dead," he said. "I was throwing up and my body was in shock. The second fight I was in much better shape due to my extensive cardiovascular work."

What Does the Future Hold?

Clark said they have a fight lined up for mid-summer in Florida.

"That's where we're at right now, but we are staying in shape in case something would come up," Clark said. "The odds have always been stacked against Jeremy. He's always been fighting Goliaths, so being able to fight Davids is what he's been looking for."

"With what he has had to overcome his entire life, his work ethic is unmatched," Clark continued.

"I'm not doing this for any personal gain," Smith stressed. "I'm trying to pave a way for more dwarfs to become active in athletics. Hopefully some day this will morph into something like another boxing federation with weight classes for dwarfs."

Only time will tell.

• OHSAA

Continued from Page D1

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tense," Cameron (18-2) coach Holly Pettit said. "We gave up some easy baskets underneath their basket. Our shots just weren't falling. We had a couple of fouls that happened and it set us back a little bit. When a team gets on a run like that, it's tough to come back from."

Cameron's 2021 season included it winning the school's first sectional title since 2008, the first regional championship in school history and making it to the state tournament for the first time.

The loss also snapped Cameron's 17-game winning streak.

"Tug Valley is a great basketball team. We knew what we were up against. They're big and physical. They shoot the ball well and they were just the better basketball team (Saturday)," Pettit said.

The Panthers started the second quarter on a pair of 3-pointers by Kaylea Baisden and Audrey Evans.

Tug Valley did not relinquish the lead.

Baisden then hit a layup with 5:37 remaining to put the score at 19-12.

Lili Neely then stopped the



Photo by Kyle Lutz

Cameron's Ashlynn VanTassell takes a shot during Saturday's state championship game against Tug Valley.

scoring drought for the Dragons with a 3-pointer of her own to put the score at 19-15 with 5:11 remaining.

However, the Panthers went on a 12-0 run to go up by 16. Baisden hit a layup with 23 seconds to go in the half to put her team up, 31-15.

Ashlynn VanTassell gave Cameron some life as she scooped up a loose ball in the final seconds and attempted a

one-handed heave from half court at the buzzer and banked it in.

Cameron was held to two field goals in the second quarter and was outrebounded 23-12 in the first half.

"I told the girls at halftime, that we were definitely outrebounded in the first half," Pettit said.

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For Cameron Girls

By KYLE LUTZ
Sports Writer
CHARLESTON — As the clock hit zero Saturday morning at the Charleston Coliseum, the Cameron girls basketball team walked off the floor as West Virginia Class A state runner-up.

While the Dragons fell short of their goal of cutting down the nets, the 2021 season was one for the history books.

Not only did Cameron make it to the state title game for the first time in school history, it was the first time the Dragons made it to the state tournament in general.

To go with the school's regional championship and a sectional title for the first time since 2008, the Dragons might have to make a little bit more room in their trophy case.

That's because the Dragons, although who had three very talented

seniors in the starting lineup, are very young.

"I love playing with these girls. I'm proud of us," freshman Kenzie Clutter said. "Honestly, I didn't expect us to make it this far. We did pretty good."

Clutter, was also in the starting lineup for the Dragons this year along with classmate Ashlynn VanTassell.

The duo certainly didn't look like freshmen during the state tournament. Both were named to the All-Tournament Team after three impressive games.

VanTassell averaged a double-double (12.7 points and 14 rebounds). She pulled down a tournament high 42 boards over three games.

"I think it's really bright," VanTassell said.

Please see CAMERON Page 10

Martinez, Bader Lift Cardinals Past Pirates

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Carlos Martinez pitched eight marvelous innings, Harrison Bader hit an early three-run homer and the St. Louis Cardinals blanked the Pittsburgh Pirates 3-0 on Sunday for a three-game sweep.

St. Louis has won seven straight against the Pirates and is 20-6 versus Pittsburgh since the start of the 2019 season. The sweep was the second in three series for the Cardinals, who have won eight of 10 overall.

Bader's home run came with one out in the second inning. Paul DeJong walked, Tyler O'Neill singled and, after Andrew Knizner's fielder's choice, Bader drilled a 1-1 slider by rookie Wil Crowe (0-1).

It was Bader's first home run of the season in his third game since returning from a forearm injury.

Martinez (2-4) was effective and efficient, allowing five hits and two walks. He struck out just three, but leaned on his cutter and got 10 groundouts and three double plays.

"This is my best stuff," Martinez said. "When I want to throw hard, I've got the velocity. I'm feeling great."

Alex Reyes retired the side in order in the ninth for his seventh save.

The Pirates went 0 for 8 with runners on base. No Pittsburgh player had more than one hit, and the Pirates did not get more

than one hit in any inning.

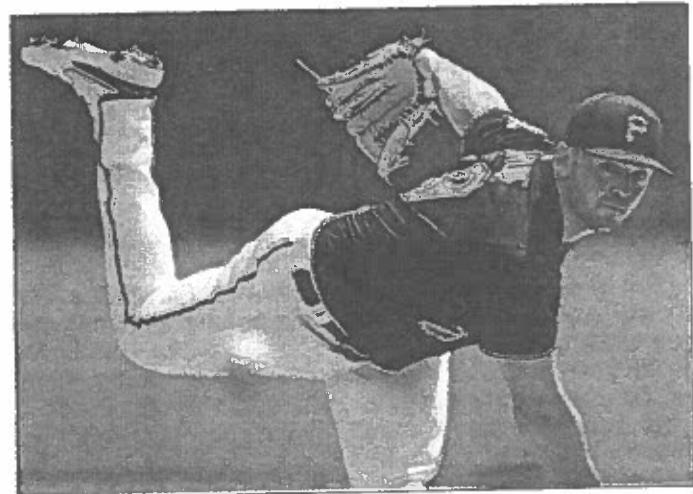
Making his second major league start, Crowe dealt with traffic in every inning, partially thanks to four walks and a hit batter. He needed 97 pitches to get through five.

Crowe made the most of his first big league opportunity to hit, sending a single down the third-base line and drawing a walk in two trips to the plate.

GOING DEEPER

Martinez has gone at least five innings in every start this season and he worked into the eighth for the second consecutive appearance, hitting the 100-pitch mark for the first time this year.

Please see PIRATES, Page 10



AP Photo

Pittsburgh Pirates starting pitcher Wil Crowe delivers during the first inning of Sunday's game against the St. Louis Cardinals in Pittsburgh.

Park Downs Hawks

By CODY TOMER
Sports Writer

WHEELING — The Wheeling Park baseball team was faced with a tough challenge on Saturday afternoon and it didn't back down.

After watching a 5-1 lead in the fifth inning slip away in the OVAC 5A Semifinals, the Patriots collected themselves and plated two runs in the bottom of the sixth to defeat University 7-5 to earn a spot in the OVAC Championship against Morgantown with the date and place to be determined.

Senior leadoff hitter and shortstop Avery Lee made his presence felt in the batter's box and



Photo by Cody Tomer

Wheeling Park's Avery Lee fields a ground ball during Saturday's OVAC 5A Semifinal win over University.

on the basepaths as he patiently drew a walk during the sixth in a 5-5 deadlock.

He then stole second and senior second baseman Noah Seivertson put the ball in play and hustled down the line, forcing the pitcher to rush his throw over the first baseman's head, allowing Lee to race home for the go-ahead run.

A Dylan Gongola RBI hit put the finishing touches on the Park victory.

"I think the biggest takeaway from the day is that we played as a team," Park coach Steve Myers said. "They hung in there and picked each other up and that's kind of who they are."

Please see PARK, Page 10

Hill, Och Power Linsly Back To OVAC 3A Final

By CODY TOMER
Sports Writer

WHEELING — Kobe Hill was the king of the hill and Adam Och launched a 3-run home run as Linsly defeated Fort Frye 8-1 on Saturday in the OVAC 3A Semifinals.

The Cadets move on to the championship to face Martins Ferry with the date and place to be decided.

Linsly enters the game with 21 OVAC titles, including the last two in a row and eight of the last 11, while Martins Ferry will be searching for its second in school history and first since 2002.

In the semifinal, Hill singled to lead off the game and scored on an error. However, he was injured on a pickoff attempt at first.

It didn't seem to phase his performance as he struck out nine and walked two in a complete-game, two-hitter to lead the Cadets back to the championship.

"It's funny because I wasn't too sure if I was going to be able to finish the game," Hill said. "In the first inning

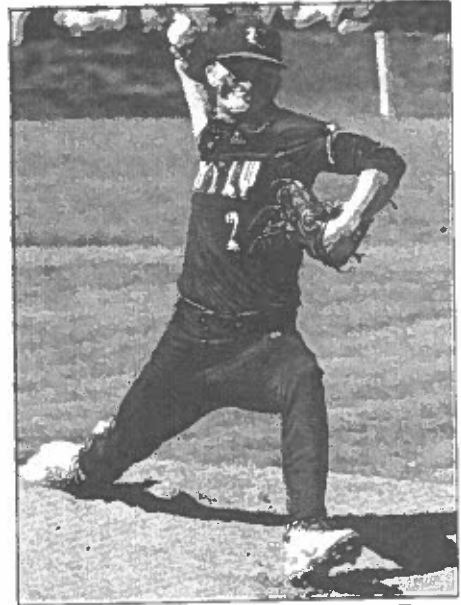


Photo by Cody Tomer

Linsly's Kobe Hill delivers to the plate during a victory over Fort Frye in the OVAC Semifinals on Saturday.

my forearm got stepped on while diving back to the bag.

"It started swelling up pretty bad but the confidence that my coaches had in me led to me finding a rhythm because I knew my teammates and coaches believed in me."

Please see LINSLY, Page 10

The crafty veteran saved some of his best stuff for last. He retired Fairmont's E.J. Trickett on a deep fly ball to center to open the seventh before striking out the final two hitters. Blomquist got Brycen Virgili to chase a fastball out of the zone for the second out before snapping a curveball across the inside edge for strike three against Nick Schroeder, setting off a wild celebration.

Wheeling splits series with Alderson Broaddus to clinch MEC North Division

PHILIPPI — The Wheeling University baseball team clinched the Mountain East Conference (MEC) North Division

Women's Track & Field team won a trio of events on day one of the Mountain East Conference (MEC) Outdoor Championships.

Wheeling claimed the top-four spots in the pole vault. Senior Danielle Stewart established a new MEC Championship Meet record in the pole vault when she cleared 3.85 meters on her first attempt. Freshman Keala McCurry took second at 3.60 meters, Kimbria Lance took third at 3.20 meters, while Gemma Starrs took fourth at 3.20 meters (failed attempt).

Senior Liz Fleming established an NCAA Provisional mark to win the

and a 3-2 loss.

In the opener, Kat Donzella homered, doubled and drove in three runs all in the first inning to fuel a 7-run explosion for West Liberty. The Hilltopper bats weren't finished as they racked up five more runs in the top of the fifth in rolling to the five-inning mercy rule win.

HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL

OVAC 4A Championship Oak Glen 6, Edison 3

WHEELING — Maddie McKay struck out 15 and Olivia Munoz homered and drove in three runs to help Oak Glen secure an OVAC title.

the Redskins.

OVAC 2A Semifinal Toronto 9, River 3

TORONTO — Evan Wolter recorded two singles and two RBIs to lead Toronto to past River in the OVAC Semifinal.

Avery Wiegand and Caleb Leasure each tallied two singles and a RBI.

REGULAR SEASON Edison 10

Steubenville Catholic 2

RICHMOND — Gage Cline doubled and drove in three runs as Edison beat Steubenville Catholic convincingly.

Ian McBane added a triple, a single and two RBI.

DRAGONS

(Continued from Page 9)

"Before every game, I tell them if we play great defense and win the rebounding battle, we should win the game. At halftime, the deficit of rebounds was a lot. I think we made up in the second half, but I think it was too much, too late."

Unfortunately, that was the case for the Dragons. Although Emma Whipkey hit a 3-pointer to start the third quarter to get Cameron within 10, 31-21, that was as close as it would get.

Again, down by 15 going into the fourth quarter, Cameron tried to make one final comeback attempt.

Reagan Gray tallied the first four points for the Dragons, to make it 45-34 in favor of the Dragons, but Tug Valley always had an answer.

After a Makalya May layup and Autumn Hall going 1 of 2 from the line to put the score at

48-34, Neely hit another 3-pointer for the Dragons to get within 11.

Baisden, though, hit a 3-pointer of her own on the Panthers' ensuing possession.

Baisden led the way for Tug Valley with 25 points while both Alyssa Newsome and Makayla May each had 15 points. May also had 11 rebounds to secure a double-double.

"We're just thrilled and thankful for all of the support that our community has given us," Tug Valley coach Clyde Farley said. "I love these girls on levels that go way beyond basketball. Our relationships are so deep. Some of these kids I've known since kindergarten and come all the way through with them."

"I was telling them for weeks; this was their destiny. They bought into that. It's all about them."

VanTassell paced the Dragons with 15 points

and 14 rebounds while Neely had 11 points and eight rebounds.

"The group of girls, they're just amazing from the seniors all the way down to the freshmen," Pettit said. "From Day 1, we knew that we had a talented basketball team and we knew that we could play for a state championship. I think we weren't expected to make it this far and to make it to the championship game proves that these girls want to work, want to get better and wanted to be here. I couldn't be prouder."

VanTassell, Neely and Kenzie Clutter were all voted on the All-Tournament team for Cameron. Tug Valley was represented by May and Baisden. Josie Montgomery (Calhoun County), Macy Helmick (Tucker County) and Sydney Baird (Webster County) rounded out the All-Tournament Team.

PARK

(Continued from Page 9)

"They are all close friends and we couldn't be more proud of them."

Lee finished with three walks, two stolen bases and scored every time he reached safely.

"He's a great addition," Myers said of Lee, who transferred to Park this year from Wheeling Central. "It feels like every time I look up he's standing at first, then he's standing at second and then he's standing at third. We're happy to have him here. He's a competitor and we saw what he's capable of (Saturday) for sure. He's a great kid."

Offensively, Wheeling Park was led by center fielder James Salvatori, who ripped two singles, a double and drove in three runs after belting his first home run of the season last week.

"James is one of a kind," Myers said with a laugh. "We're extremely happy that he's here with us, as well."

Lee led off the game with a walk, stole second and was brought home on a line drive hit to left field by Salvatori for a 1-0 cushion.

Again in the third, Lee led off the inning with a walk, which was followed by a Seivertson single and a Salvato-

ri two-run knock to drive them both home.

Salvatori raced home on an error to make it a 4-0 advantage.

The Hawks got on the board in the fifth when Wenkai Campbell drew a two-out, bases loaded walk but the damage was limited by Park relief pitcher Billy Gooch, who collected a strikeout to end the frame.

Salvatori continued to swing a hot bat in the bottom of the fifth as he doubled with a rocket off the bat and into center field. He scored when a swinging strike three got away from the catcher and rolled to the backstop.

University's first six hitters reached base safely in the sixth — three walks, two hits and one error — and four scored to tie the game until Michael Bittinger came on to pitch.

Bittinger induced a flyout to center, then earned a strikeout and a groundout to keep the game deadlocked at 5-5, allowing his offense to go to work.

"Michael did a great job coming in to finish the game," Myers said. "He's a competitor and a very good baseball player."

PIRATES

(Continued from Page 9)

METS 8, PHILLIES 7

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Pete Alonso capped New York's six-run eighth inning with a three-run double, and the Mets used a defensive meltdown by Philadelphia and a replay reversal to beat the Phillies.

DODGERS 16, BREWERS 4

MILWAUKEE (AP) — A.J. Pollock drove in eight runs and Matt Beaty knocked in seven for Los Angeles, with both players hitting early grand slams in a startling power show.

YANKEES 2, TIGERS 0

NEW YORK (AP) — Co-

rey Kluber handcuffed Detroit batters to earn his 100th career win with his most dominant performance since 2018, and New York completed its first series sweep this season.

NATIONALS 3

MARLINS 1

WASHINGTON (AP) — Max Scherzer delivered in a hurry, tossing a five-hitter to lead Washington over Miami.

BLUE JAYS 7, BRAVES 2

DUNEDIN, Fla. (AP) — Marcus Semien homered and drove in four runs as Toronto finished off a three-game sweep of Atlanta.

RAYS 5, ASTROS 4

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Austin Meadows hit a three-run homer and later scored the go-ahead run as Tampa Bay beat Houston.

TWINS 13, ROYALS 4

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Andrelton Simmons and Mitch Garver homered in a seven-run third inning as Minnesota routed Kansas City.

INDIANS 5, WHITE SOX 0

CHICAGO (AP) — Jose Ramirez and Cesar Hernandez homered, Amed Rosario had three hits and Cleveland blanked Chicago.

RANGERS 5, RED SOX 3

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)

— David Dahl and Brock Holt each hit an RBI single in Texas' three-run eighth inning and Texas edged Boston.

REDS 13, CUBS 12

10 INNINGS

CINCINNATI (AP) — Nick Castellanos hit a game-ending single off Craig Kimbrel (0-1) in the 10th inning to give Cincinnati a wild win over Chicago.

GIANTS 7, PADRES 1

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Kevin Gausman pitched six innings and scored twice to lead San Francisco past San Diego.

DIAMONDBACKS 8

ROCKIES 4

PHOENIX (AP) — Stephen Vogt hit a go-ahead, two-run triple and Arizona topped Colorado.

ATHLETICS 7, ORIOLES 5

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Center fielder Ramon Laureano robbed the Orioles of the likely go-ahead run with a leaping catch in the eighth inning and then hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the bottom half as Oakland beat Baltimore.

MARINERS 2, ANGELS 0

SEATTLE (AP) — Justus Sheffield shook off early control problems to allow just two hits over six innings, leading Seattle over Los Angeles.

CAMERON

(Continued from Page 9)

"We have an upcoming eighth grade class that's pretty good, too. I think they will fill in the positions of our seniors next year."

Clutter averaged nine points a game. But her composure and never looking rattled really impressed the crowd and media members.

She helped spark the Cameron offense in the first quarter of its quarterfinal matchup against Calhoun County with 10 points. She netted 10 points that game.

"I think we have a lot of people that can step up and play for the seniors," Clutter said

One of those players could very well be Aubre Cain-Loy. The sophomore has seen plenty of playing time this year and was the one that got the Cameron offense going during its quarterfinal matchup against Madonna with two 3-pointers, including one right before the buzzer.

Before welcoming the new players, the Dragons will say farewell to a trio of players that have certainly left their mark on the program.

Seniors Lili Neely, Emma Whipkey and Reagan Gray have been the cornerstone of the Dragons' success over the past few years. They were freshmen when they won the school's first OVAC title.

They were also part of the middle school team to win the school's first conference championship.

"This is definitely a career to re-

member," Neely, who was also voted on the All-Tournament Team, said.

"Starting the seventh grade, we won the PAC 8 with Holly as our head coach. Coming in freshman year and winning the first OVAC (title) in high school history and senior year going out with a bang. Play in the state championship, win the OVAC, it's definitely a great ride."

The Dragons did not have a junior on their roster this season.

Along with Cain-Loy, Gracie Carter, Ashlee Neehouse and Gretchen Foster were the sophomores.

Along with VanTassell and Clutter, Emilee Dobbs, Ashlee Dobbs and Katelynn VanTassell were the freshmen.

With a year under their belt and learning from the upperclassmen that knows all about winning, it seems the Dragons aren't going away anytime soon.

"There were some girls on the bench down here this year that were very talented that a lot of people didn't get to see. Obviously, we had three outstanding seniors," Cameron coach Holly Pettit said. "I think that the sophomores and freshmen that were down here with us, they in the combination with Kenzie and Ashlynn, they're going to be tough."

"They're going to be a force to be reckoned with and I really think Cameron is going to be on the map for a few more years."

LINSLEY

(Continued from Page 9)

"I love my teammates and coaches and I'm so happy to be able to advance to the finals."

Linsley coach Jay Cartwright never doubted his top pitcher.

"He was really tough (Saturday) and that's what we wanted out of our senior ace," Cartwright said. "He's got velocity and he can locate pitches. He's tough on hitters and he's thrown against some really good teams this year."

After Hill scored the initial run of the game, Och delivered his first RBI of the game on a groundout to plate Zac

Taylor for a 2-0 upper-hand.

An error and a RBI single by Kellon Fogle in the second allowed Fort Frye to cut the deficit in half but it proved to be its only run of the game.

Linsley added a run in the fourth and two more in the fifth — all on Fort Frye errors — before Och broke the game open in the sixth with a three-run blast over the center field fence.

"I got down in the count early and I was expecting a curveball," Och said. "He threw a low fastball instead and that's kind of my pitch. I

like it low. I thought the center fielder was going to grab it but it snuck out."

That power is nothing new from Och.

"He's been solid for us all year," Cartwright said of Och. "He hits it to the middle of the field and doesn't try to pull everything."

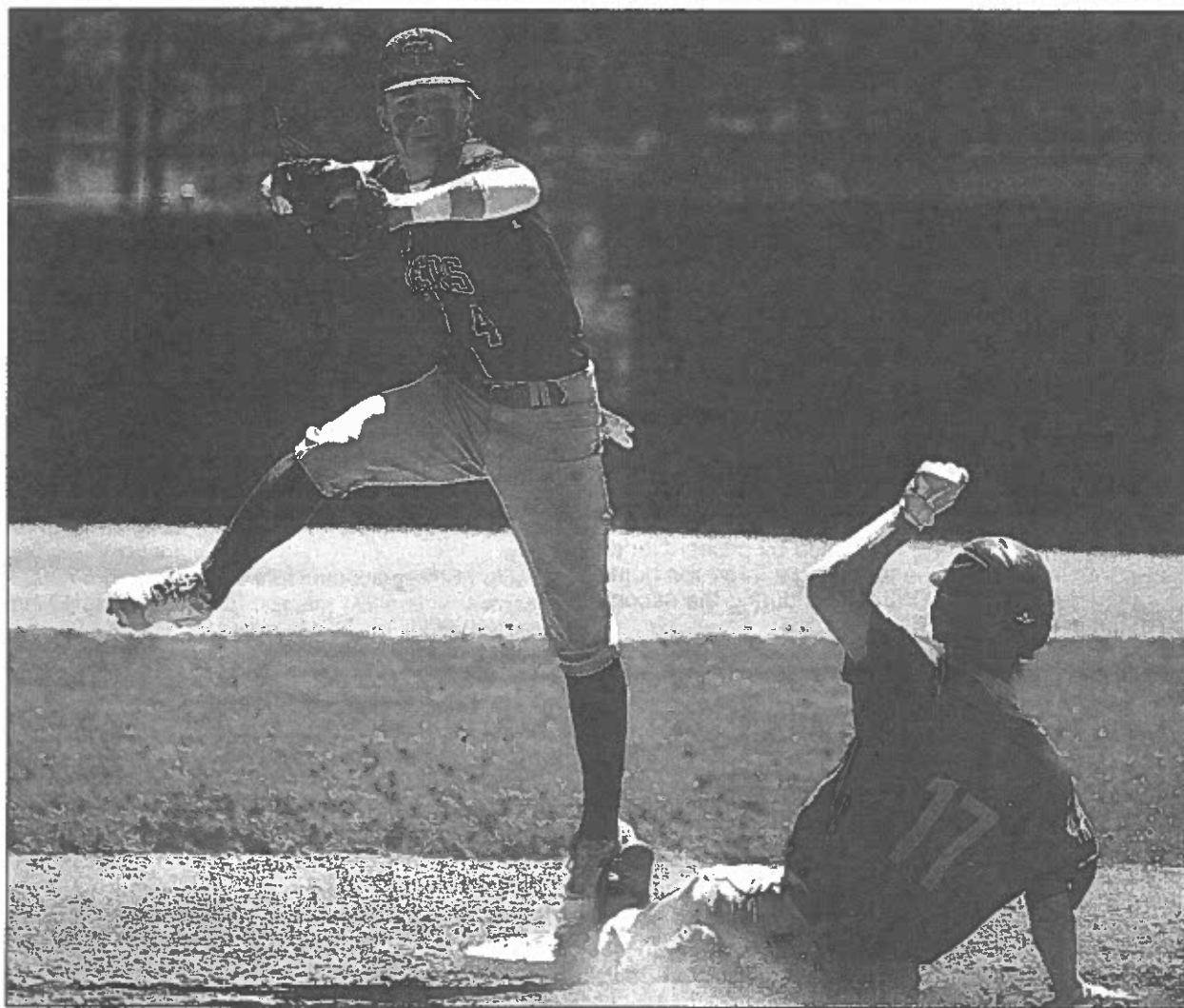
"He's got bat speed and the ball jumps off his bat. That's what we saw (Saturday)."

Along with Hill's pitching performance and Och's strong day at the dish, Jack Scou-vart supplied a pair of singles in the Linsley triumph.

Classified/B5-6

SPORTS

Monday,
May 3, 2021



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

MARTINS FERRY second baseman attempts to turn a double play as Shamrock runner Jeremy Hunkler slides into second during the first inning of Saturday's OVAC Class 3A semifinal at Memorial Park. The Riders won, 3-2.

Ferry outlasts Barnesville

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

BARNESVILLE — After his club defeated Barnesville on Monday in a regular-season game in nine innings, Martins Ferry head coach Anthony Reasbeck said “big wins come in May.”

The calendar has flipped to May, and ironically, his Purple Riders posted their biggest win to date.

Taking advantage of three Barnesville errors in the outfield during the decisive second inning, the Purple Riders scored all three of their runs and

then held for a 3-2 victory behind brilliant pitching by junior Colby Shriver.

“I don’t see any trophies yet,” Reasbeck said. “This is a bigger win, but I am not sure it’s a big win. We’ll see. We have to continue to get better.”

The Purple Riders are expected to play for the conference title on Friday at Toronto’s Red Knight Baseball Complex against Linsly, which defeated Fort Frye in the other 3A semifinal.

“We’ll worry about (Linsly) later in the week,” Reasbeck said. “We have John Marshall on Monday. It may sound stupid, but we’re not playing at the level I think we’re capable of. We

had a chance for a knock-out blow and we just couldn’t deliver it.”

The Riders had the Shamrocks dazed in the second, however.

Kameron Hughes led off the inning by inducing a walk after being down in the count nothing and two.

Logan Smith followed and hit a shot into left center, which was dropped, leaving runners at first and second.

Brayden Maine then followed with a single and the Riders played station to station on the base paths.

Conner Probst lofted a fly ball to right, which was plenty deep enough

See, **FERRY**, Page B2

Shadyside’s Francis no hits Shenandoah in 2A semifinal

By **JEFF HARRISON**
For The Times Leader

That’s baseball!

Both coaches summed up Saturday’s OVAC Class 2A semifinal between Shadyside and Shenandoah in that manner, but when the dust settled it was a jaw-dropping ending that resulted in the host Tigers scoring a 1-0 victory over the Zeps.

Pitchers Rhys Francis of Shadyside and Dayton Hill of Shenandoah locked horns in a dandy, with the game scoreless heading to the bottom of the seventh inning.

Shadyside’s Alex Baker led off with a single and pinch-runner Tyler Stottlemeyer was advanced to second via a sacrifice bunt by Ben Wach.

After a strikeout, the game appeared headed for extra innings when Hill got Jordan Joseph to hit a high pop-up in the infield, but the ball dropped painfully between a trio of Zeps and Stottlemeyer sprinted from second home with the game-winning run.

“That’s baseball,” said Shadyside coach Shawn Selmon. See, **SHADYSIDE**, Page B2



Photo/KRISTIN MAZGAJ

SHADYSIDE PITCHER Rhys Francis works to the plate during Saturday’s OVAC Class 2A game against Shenandoah. Francis pitched a no hitter in the Tigers’ win.



Photo/KRISTIN MAZGAJ

ST. CLAIRSVILLE pitcher Tyler Tonkovich works to the plate during Saturday’s OVAC Class 4A semifinal against Cambridge.

St. Clairsville blanks Cambridge in 4A semi

By **BUBBA KAPRAL**
For The Times Leader

ST. CLAIRSVILLE - Veteran St. Clairsville baseball coach Tom Sliva was hoping for three solid innings from his ace.

What the Hall of Fame mentor received was a masterpiece from Tyler Tonkovich.

The senior dandy hurled a complete-game gem, helping the Red Devils pocket a 2-0 OVAC 4A semi-final win over a strong Cambridge squad Saturday afternoon at Memorial Park. St. C. now advances to the title game against Weir, which defeated Indian Creek in the other semi.

Tonkovich needed just 88 pitches to blank the Bobcats. He struck out seven, walked none and yielded just four hits, one coming on a fly ball lost in the sun.

Impressive as his mound performance was, it takes on even added luster. Tonkovich is just returning

from a tough battle with Covid.

“I never would have expected Tyler could have pitched as well as he did today. Earlier in the week, he could barely pitch before becoming exhausted,” Sliva said. “I went into the game thinking if we could get three good innings from Tyler than we would piece meal it with the rest of our staff.”

“This just shows you what type of character young man Tyler is and what a great competitor he is,” he continued. “I am at a loss for words to truly describe what he did today. He showed a lot of guts.”

Tonkovich was in trouble just twice, those coming in the fourth and seventh innings.

With one out in the fourth, Blaine Brumfield delivered a single for Cambridge. However, he was gunned down trying to steal second base by St. Clairsville catcher Marcus Bush. Brock Valentine cracked a double and Jake Valentine reached See, **ST. C.**, Page B2





T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

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See, **ST. C.**, Page B2

River falls in 2A OVAC softball final

By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — River was looking for its first Ohio Valley Athletic Conference softball championship. The Pilots are still in search of that elusive crown.

Saturday afternoon under ideal weather conditions, second-seeded River (17-4) couldn’t get its bats going or its fielding -- at times -- in dropping a 10-0 decision in five innings to No. 4 seed Caldwell in the Tom Bechtel Class A title tilt on Ben’s Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Sports Complex.

The Redskins’ Madi Mumaw faced the minimum number of Pilots in tossing a no-hitter. The only Pilot to reach was Josie Reed, who drew a walk to lead off the bottom of the first. Reed, however, was doubled up when Mumaw made a diving catch of an attempted sacrifice bunt by Lindsay Huffman and then relayed to first baseman Jaden Haught.



T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

RIVER SHORTSTOP Elizabeth McConn, on knees, and second baseman Aeydn Kraft get tangled up at second base Saturday afternoon while Caldwell’s baserunner is safe. The Pilots fell, 10-0, in five innings to the Redskins.

Caldwell scored three times in sending eight batters to the plate in the top of the first. Josie Lori gave Mumaw all the run support she would need with an RBI single. Reagan Shockling’s two-out, two-strike single to right-center plated the other two runs.

Sydney Saling and Reagan Wheel-din each singled in runs in the Redskin’s third-inning uprising, while Reagan Wheeler doubled in two more. Mumaw scored the final tally in the fourth as part of a double steal.

See, **RIVER**, Page B2

Toronto shuts down River in 2A baseball

By **AARON PETCHAL**
For The Times Leader

TORONTO — The Toronto baseball team keeps rolling along.

The top-seeded Red Knights jumped out to a big lead against fourth-seeded River in an OVAC Class 2A semifinal, had a bit of a hiccup in the fifth enabling the Pilots to get back into the game, but bounced right back and put the game away as the Toronto came away with a 9-3 victory Saturday afternoon at the Knights Baseball Complex.

“The kids were excited to play in the OVAC Tournament,” Toronto (15-1) head coach Brian Perkins said. “They brought that excitement to the field. We were able to get off to a quick start, and we were able to keep the momentum going throughout the game.”

The Red Knights — the No. 1 ranked team in Ohio Division IV — led 7-0 after three innings.

“Toronto is very well coached,” first-year River (11-7) head coach Tim Blue said. “Coach Perkins has an outstanding program. That banner out there says Division IV State Champions 2019. He is one of the best coaches in the state of Ohio. You can’t give up 11 walks, and expect to beat any team let alone the No. 1 ranked team in the state.”

With the win, Toronto will play Shadyside in the tournament final at either 5 p.m. or 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Knight Baseball Complex. Shadyside — the No. 2 seed — shutout

See, **TORONTO**, Page B2

Martinez (2-4) was effective and efficient, allowing five hits and two walks. He struck out just three, but leaned on his cutter and got 10 groundouts and three double plays.

"This is my best stuff," Martinez said. "When I want to throw hard, I've got the velocity. I'm feeling great."

Alex Reyes retired the side in order in the ninth for his seventh save.

The Pirates went 0 for 8 with runners on base. No Pittsburgh player had more than one hit, and the Pirates did not get more than one hit in any inning.

Making his second major league start, Crowe dealt with traffic in every inning, partially thanks to four walks and a hit batter. He needed 97 pitches to get through five.

Crowe made the most of his first big league opportunity to hit, sending a single down the third-base line and drawing a walk in two trips to the plate.

GOING DEEPER

Martinez has gone at least five innings in every start this season and he

ST. LOUIS Cardinals' Harrison Bader (48) is greeted by pitcher Carlos Martinez (18) as he returns to the dugout after hitting a three-run home run off Pittsburgh Pirates starting pitcher Wil Crowe during the second inning of a baseball game in Pittsburgh, Sunday.

worked into the eighth for the second consecutive appearance, hitting the 100-pitch mark for the first time this year. He retired the last eight batters he faced.

"He's been able to get quicker outs, been on the ground, getting double plays when there's a little traffic," Cardinals manager Mike Shildt said. "He's been efficient with all of his pitches."

SCARY MOMENT

Pirates catcher Jacob Stallings was grazed in the face by a 97 mph fastball from Martinez in the fourth inning but stayed in the game.

"It was scary," Stallings said. "It's the first time it ever happened to me."

Stallings said the pitch hit him in the nose, lip and cheek, but he avoided full contact. Martinez apologized to Stall-

ings afterward.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Cardinals: RHP Jordan Hicks will undergo scans on his right forearm when the team returns to St. Louis on Monday, and Shildt said "there is optimism" that Hicks might be able to avoid the injured list.

UP NEXT

Cardinals: RHP Adam Wainwright (0-3, 4.08 ERA) is scheduled to start against the New York Mets to begin a seven-game homestand Monday. Wainwright was placed on the COVID-19 injured list Thursday due to contact tracing, but is eligible to be removed Monday. Shildt said Wainwright has repeatedly tested negative.

Pirates: LHP Tyler Anderson (2-2, 3.38) opens a three-game series at San Diego on Monday.

• Ferry

Continued from Page B1

to score Hughes on the sacrifice fly. The throw in to the infield was well off the mark and went out of play, allowing Smith to score and sending Maine all the way to third.

Trevor Hanson then hit what appeared to be a lazy fly into right center, which again was dropped by the Shamrocks outfielder, allowing Mayne to score.

"We've not made many errors this season, so that (second) inning was uncharacteristic of us," a disappointed D.J. Butler said. "It cost us today, but we kept battling and our kids left it all out there."

Now with a three-run cushion, Shriver went to work.

He pitched around a one-out single in the third, but in the second, fourth and fifth, he sat the Shamrocks down in order.

The Purple Riders appeared to be on the verge of blowing the game open in the fifth when put two aboard and chased Barnesville starter Ayden Hannahs.

Junior Kason Powell, however, got a strikeout and then induced a ground ball on the infield and the Shamrocks cut down a Rider runner at the plate. The escape was completed with a

groundout to short.

The Shamrocks finally got to Shriver in the sixth. Ninth-hitter C.J. Hannahs, who had a hit earlier in the game, ignited the rally with a single. Ayden Hannahs drew a walk.

Two hitters later, Jake Edwards singled in C.J. Hannahs. Logan Shepherd grounded out to third, but the Riders conceded the run. Shriver then got the next Shamrock to pop out innocently to first baseman Logan Smith.

Reasbeck, by his own admission didn't give one thought to going to his bullpen in that sixth. It was going to be Shriver's game.

"Colby is nuts, but he's my nut, and I mean that as the greatest compliment possible," Reasbeck said. "He showed something in the sixth. It's Kentucky Derby day, and Colby is our horse, so we were going to ride him."

Ferry didn't threaten to tack on any insurance runs in the seventh.

Barnesville proceeded to lead off the bottom half with a seeing-eye single by catcher Kyvan Johnson.

Again, however, Shriver didn't panic. He went to work. He got back-to-back fielder's choices on the infield, but then walked C.J. Hannahs to put the tying run in scoring position.

But, he buckled down and got the final out on a fly ball to right.

"Our kids battled to the last out and we had the guy up we wanted with a chance," Butler said. "It just didn't go our way. We knew (Shriver) was good. He threw his off-speed stuff for a strike, threw out of the zone when he wanted to and got us chasing. He did everything he had to win."

While the Purple Riders will play on Friday for their first conference title since 2002, the Shamrocks are left wondering what might have been.

Despite consistently being among the area's premier teams each and every spring, the OVAC title has eluded the Shamrocks since 1997.

This marks the seventh time since 2009 the Shamrocks have been a part of the OVAC Tournament, but have stubbed their toe.

"For me, it's crushing," Butler said of coming up short again in the OVAC. "I've got to be able to do something to get these guys over the hump. A lot of this (disappointment) is on me. It's obviously something I am doing because we get this far every year and I just can't get us over the top."

• Shadyside

Continued from Page B1

whose team improved to 15-4. "It's obviously not the way you want to win a baseball game, but a win's a win."

"Baseball guys love this kind of game," added the Tigers' fourth-year boss. "It's a strategic game...a pitchers' duel...and we were fortunate to come out on top."

"That's baseball," echoed Shenandoah's first-year coach Tyler Engle. "Just when you think you've seen it all..."

"It was a very unfortunate loss, for sure," the Zeps' coach continued. "I told our guys we just played the number one or number two team in our district and we've proven to ourselves that we can go toe-to-toe with them."

Not to be lost in the dra-

matic ending was the fact that Shadyside's Francis was masterful, with the junior spinning a no-hitter and posting 11 strikeouts. Only two Shenandoah players reached base - one on a hit batsman and the other on a walk.

The "tough loss" label goes to Hill, who escaped a couple of jams while finishing with five hits allowed, three Ks and two walks.

"Both pitchers did an outstanding job today," said Shadyside's Selmon. "Rhys kept them off-balance all game. That's our fourth no-hitter as a staff, and we had guys ready if we needed them if it went another seven innings."

Shadyside let two scoring opportunities slip away,

including the second inning where singles by Ryan Florence and Corey Beckett and a walk to Baker loaded the bases with one out, but Hill posted a strikeout and an infield grounder to shut the door.

In the fifth, the Tigers had two runners on via a walk to Eric Allen and a single by Joseph, but again Hill came through with a "K" to end the threat.

Shenandoah's only scoring chance came in the fourth when Cade Denius was hit by a pitch; stole second and moved to third on a sac bunt by Robbie Cool, but Francis got the next batter to foul out to catcher Florence to keep the Zeps scoreless.

"We've got to make our own breaks so we don't put

that much pressure on our pitcher and our defense," said Shenandoah's Engle, whose team dropped to 13-7. "Hats off to their pitcher - he threw a heck of a game - but Dayton did, too."

Shadyside will now take on top-seeded Toronto, a 9-3 winner over River in the other semifinal, for the OVAC Class 2A championship. The Tigers will be shooting for their third conference baseball crown, having won in 1994 and 2007.

"I told our guys all year long if we hit the ball well, we're a very difficult team to beat," said Coach Selmon, "so we'll be ready to go and see where the cards fall."

• St. C.

Continued from Page B1

on an error, placing runners on the corners. Tonkovich ended the threat by inducing a groundout.

Cambridge staged one last effort to score in the final frame. With two outs, Angelo Rocco launched a fly ball to left that fell for a single after it was lost in the sun. An error on a ground ball, placed runners at first and second. Tonkovich, however, ended matters by fielding a popup, dropping the curtain on his superb performance.

"I felt much better today. I felt good," Tonkovich offered. "But it is not about me. It was a nice team win and we get to play for another OVAC championship."

Sophomore Jake Valentine was also impressive on the hill for the Bobcats.

He fanned four, walked three and allowed just three hits.

St. Clairsville pushed across both of its runs in the third inning.

Bush reached on an error and moved to second on a Jaren Starks' bunt. Freshman dandy Braylen Blomquist followed with a single before Tonkovich walked to load the bases. Senior slugger Will Balgo singled, driving in Bush and Blomquist.

"I am happy for the kids, They work hard and put a lot of time in. They have had to deal a lot with the Covid situation," Silva said. "Give Will credit. He came through with a big hit. Cambridge has a nice team and Valentine pitched really well.

"Playing for an OVAC champion-

ship is always exciting. It is one of our goals going into the season," he added. "I am proud of this team. We have a good group of young men."

St. Clairsville improved to 12-6 while Cambridge slipped to 11-7. The two teams split in the regular season.

"We ran into an excellent pitcher today. Tonkovich was really impressive," Cambridge coach Jamal Lowery said. "One inning and a couple of errors hurt us. I couldn't ask for a better pitching effort than what Jake gave us today.

Silva was honored after the game. He was presented a plaque for recently reaching the 400-win plateau, encompassing his success at both St. John Central and St. Clairsville.

Chicago, the right-hander had allowed 12 runs over 5 2/3 innings.

Giolito (1-3) struck out eight and allowed two runs - one earned - in 5 1/3 innings. He had given up 12 runs (11 earned) in his last 7 2/3 innings.

LATE SWITCH

Star rookie Yermir Mercedes was scratched from the White Sox lineup after reporting late. Lamb replaced him at designated hitter. Mercedes entered Sunday second in the majors with a .395 batting average.

"I'm not upset with him," manager Tony La Russa said.

• River

Continued from Page B1

River also had a baserunner, albeit momentarily, in the bottom of the fifth when Katie Rufener reached on an error. However, after touching the first base bag she made a turn towards second and was tagged out.

The championship was the first for Caldwell, which starts five freshmen and a pair of sophomores, including Mumaw. In fact, the Redskins had never played in an OVAC Tournament game in program history until earlier in the week when they took out top-seeded Toronto.

The victory also allowed the Redskins to avenge a 7-4 reversal earlier in the campaign.

Meanwhile, River is left to pick up the pieces after only hitting one ball out of the infield. That came when Reed flied out to centerfield.

"It was a beautiful day to play for a championship on a field named after a gentleman who was a big proponent of fastpitch softball. He was also my coach at one time," veteran River head coach Dave Wright said of Ben Taylor. "Maybe one day River can find a head coach that is able to win a championship on this field."

• Toronto

Continued from Page B1

No. 3 seed Shenandoah, 1-0, Saturday afternoon in the other semifinal.

"We are excited to represent the Toronto community in the OVAC Tournament," Perkins said. "Shadyside is a good team. We are looking forward to playing in the finals."

Chris Parker got the win for the Red Knights. He allowed one run on one hit while striking out six and walking three in four-plus innings of work on the mound.

"Chris Parker did a nice job," Perkins said. "He came out and threw multiple pitches for strikes. He kept the momentum on our side. River has some talented ballplayers."

Parker was relieved by Dom Bouscher with one on and nobody out in the top of the fifth. Bouscher pitched the rest of the way, allowing three runs on four hits while striking out five without walking a batter.

River also used two pitchers. The pair for the Pilots struggled with their control as the duo combined to give up eight walks while also hitting two batters.

Mark Martie took the loss for the Pilots. He allowed six runs on five hits while striking out five and walking four in his 2 1/3 innings on the mound. He was replaced by Connor Hunter, who pitched the final 3 2/3 innings. Hunter allowed three runs on five hits while striking out one and walking four.

"We had too many called third strikes," Blue said. "You cannot do that and keep the momentum. We aren't scoring enough runs. We have to do a better job of making contact with the ball."

All 14 hits in the game were singles. Toronto out-hit River, 10-4.

Evan Wolter recorded two singles and two RBIs to lead the way offensively for the Red Knights, Avery Wiegand and Caleb Leasure each tallied two singles and an RBI and Parker picked up a single and two RBIs. Also, Brant Reeves collected two base hits and Bouscher brought home a run with a sacrifice fly.

"They hit the ball," Blue said. "They do the little things. You cannot give them walks, and you cannot make errors. They hustle. They are told to do something, and they do it."

Jake Rose and Martie each tallied a single and an RBI. Elijah Wayt and Hunter each collected a base hit and Brody Lollathin brought home a run with a groundout for River.

Bouscher led off the home half of the first inning with a walk, and he stole second and third before scoring on a base hit by Wolter to give Toronto an early 1-0 lead.

Reeves and Earley both singled to put two runners on in the second. After a strikeout, Leasure walked to load the bases. Reeves scored on Bouscher's sacrifice fly, and after Weigand was hit by a pitch, Wolter singled home Earley to increase the Red Knights advantage to 3-0.

Toronto broke the game open in the third as the Red Knights put four runs up on the scoreboard to extend their advantage to 7-0. Toronto's big inning was aided by multiple River errors. Leasure and Weigand delivered RBI singles, while the other two runs scored on errors.

"I am proud of our seniors," Blue said. "We have six seniors. They are not going to get the chance to play in another OVAC game, but I am proud we were able to make it to the tournament. We only have 13 boys on the roster."

River's comeback bid was aided by some Toronto errors.

With River Thompson, who was hit by a pitch, on first with one out, Hunter reached on an error and moved to second when an errant throw went into the dugout. Martie then singled Thompson home from third to put the Pilots on the scoreboard. Lollathin then plated Hunter with a groundout and, finally, Rose brought home Martie making the score, 7-3.

"That happens in baseball," Perkins said. "We made a mental mistake. We were able to overcome that."

The Knights responded with two runs in the home half of the inning. Parker picked up an RBI with a groundout, and Wolter followed with his second RBI single of the game to make the score, 9-3.

"We have focused all year on having plate discipline," Perkins said. "We see a lot of pitches. When you see a lot of pitches, you have a chance for success in the box."

VanNest Throws Shadyside to OVAC 2A Crown

By SETH STASKEY
For the News-Register

TORONTO — Shadyside junior pitcher Mason VanNest wanted the baseball.

His head coach, Shawn Selmon, obliged.

VanNest did the rest. Riding the right arm of VanNest and impressive defense, Shadyside captured its third OVAC baseball championship in school history by handing Toronto a 2-1 setback at the Knight Baseball Complex Friday evening.

"He's been doing it all year," Selmon said of VanNest's gem, which included a three-hitter, six strikeouts and the Red Knight run was unearned. "You have faith in the guys who have been doing it all year. They've been carrying us."

VanNest got staked to an early run by a Shadyside offense, which had an abundance of runners on base all afternoon.

"I knew I had to find a way to get the job done, but Toronto is a very good team," VanNest said. "Having the offense get you that run is a great feeling because it lifts a huge weight off your shoulders."

Junior Korey Beckett laced a one-out single and promptly stole second.

He moved up 90 feet on a base hit by Alex Baker and then scored when Nate Milhoman drove him in on what appeared like it was going to be a sacrifice fly, but the ball was dropped in the outfield.

The Red Knights avoided further damage by inducing a 6-4-3 double play.

From there, VanNest was dealing. He worked around a lead-off double in the second. Toronto had two runners reach again in the fourth, but Baker flased the leather on a nifty running, over-the-shoulder catch down the right-field line.

"We just couldn't get much going offensively," Toronto head coach Brian Perkins said. "(VanNest) threw a nice game and we didn't capitalize on opportunities (early). We just didn't get the big hit when we needed it."

In the fifth and sixth, however, Toronto went in order.

Shadyside, which had flirted with insurance runs all afternoon only to come up empty each time, finally got one in the seventh when it took advantage of a pair of Red Knight errors.

VanNest reached on an error, moved up 90 feet when junior catcher Ryan Florence was plunked. The Tigers loaded the



Photo by Seth Staskey

Shadyside's Ben Wach catches a pop up during Friday's OVAC title victory over Toronto.

bases when junior Bryce Amos dropped down a bunt and the Red Knights elected to go to third, but the ball was bobbled.

Beckett, who was on base four times in the game, drove in VanNest with a ringing single back through the middle.

"One of our weaknesses has been not being able to score as many runs as we'd like," Sel-

mon said. "We're winning games with it and I am not into fixing something that isn't broke. Getting the add-on run was huge, though, in the seventh."

Evan Wolter, who came on in relief of Toronto starter Chris Parker in the third, opened the seventh with a single. He moved to second on a throwing error on an attempted

pick-off play.

VanNest, however, was unfazed. He induced a ground out to first, a ground out to third that brought the run home and then ended the game with a strikeout, setting off a celebration.

"We absolutely knew we could come up here and compete," Selmon said. "This (game) is something we've had marked on the calendar for a long time. We were looking to come up here last year, and unfortunately, we had to wait, but that made this (win) even more exciting."

While the Tigers were celebrating their first conference title since 2007 and only the third in the school's history, the Red Knights (17-2) are left looking ahead to the tournament, which could eventually include a rematch with the Tigers.

"Our kids fought to the end and I am proud of them for that," Perkins said. "There is no quit in these guys. I liked the fight our guys had for seven innings."

"Our district is going to be very good and competitive again. We'll see what happens. We'll get back at it and try to continue to improve."

Amend Fires Historic No-Hitter in WLU Triumph

SALEM, Va. — Makenzie Amend threw the first no-hitter in Mountain East Conference Tournament history and the West Liberty softball team breezed to a pair of shutout wins on Friday at the James I. Moyer Complex.

Coach Herb Minch's defending tournament champion Hilltoppers (32-14) blanked West Virginia Wesleyan, 3-0, behind Amend's pitching gem in the tourney opener before shutting out Fairmont State, 5-0, in a winner's bracket semifinal on Friday night.

West Liberty advances to take on MEC South Division champion West Virginia State (28-12) in Saturday's 2 p.m. winner's bracket final. The Yellow Jackets defeated Notre Dame (Ohio), 4-1, and Frostburg State, 5-2, on Friday to remain unbeaten in the double-elimination tournament.

The Hilltoppers didn't lose a game in sweeping to the 2019 MEC Tour-

nament championship and got their title defense off to a flying start with Amend in the circle for Friday's lid-lifter.

The reigning MEC Pitcher of the Year struck out the side in the top of the first inning and never looked back on her way to carving out a spot in the MEC record book.

Amend went on to strike out 11 Bobcats and didn't allow a runner past first base in her masterful performance. Wesleyan's only two baserunners came on a hit-by-pitch in the top of the second and a two-out walk in the top of the sixth.

Junior centerfielder Katie Beeman saved the no-hitter in the top of the seventh when the Bobcats' Kennedy Cowart blooped a soft fly ball just over the shortstop's head only to see Beeman come out of nowhere with a diving catch. Amend got the final two outs on a popup and strikeout.

Junior catcher Kat Donzella provided all

the offense her battery-mate needed, breaking up a scoreless tie with a solo home run in the top of the fifth and putting the game out of reach with a two-out, two-run double in the sixth.

Honored as the MEC Player of the Year on Thursday, Donzella came up a triple shy of the cycle with a single, double and home run. Beeman and Laral Saunders each added a pair of base knocks while Allie Cook chimed in with a double.

In the second game, Annie Paterson and Riley Bennington combined on a 6-hit shutout and the WLU offense delivered more than enough support.

Riley Conkle got things started for the Black and Gold with a two-out, two-run double off the right field fence



AMEND

in the bottom of the second. Sidney Little brought Beeman sprinting home from third with a bunt single in the bottom of the third and Beeman put an exclamation point on the win with a two-run opposite-field home run in the fifth.

Paterson worked the first five innings to get the win, striking out seven while giving up just three hits and no walks. Bennington kept the Falcons off the board over the final two innings to complete the shutout. Little finished with two singles and an RBI while Connor Assif also had a pair of base hits.

GOLF
West Liberty Men Battle Elements in NCAA Regional NORTH EAST, Pa. - The West Liberty University men's golf team

joined the rest of the NCAA Division II Atlantic/East Regional field in fighting through challenging conditions during a soggy second round at Lake View Country Club. After a rough start, West Liberty's Alex Easthom shot a 6-over-par 78 for a two-day score of 8-over-par 152.

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL
John Marshall 12 Parkersburg 0
PARKERSBURG — The Monarchs are rolling along led by their pitching staff.

Jacob Korngiver struck out nine and walked four and Bryce Rayl added a pair of strikeouts and a walk in relief as they combined to shutout Parkersburg.

Joel Wise led the JM offensive attack with a home run, two singles, a double and three RBI, followed by Rayl and Derek Black with two hits and a RBI each. Reid Wiley singled and

plated three runs in the win.

St. Marys 10 Paden City 2
PADEN CITY — In his first career start on the mound, senior Hunter Fletcher pitched into the sixth inning, striking out three and walking three in a Paden City loss to St. Marys.

Scott Lavoie turned in two singles and two RBI for the Wildcats and Joey Baker doubled.

Monroe Central 4 Bridgeport 0
WOODSFIELD — Auston Hogue struck out seven with no walks in a complete game effort as Monroe Central shut out Bridgeport.

Hogue also doubled at the dish, while Westin Swallow belted a solo blast.

SOFTBALL
John Marshall 6 Edison 5
GLEN DALE — John Marshall continued its winning ways by defeating visiting Edison.

Bounces Don't Go Nailers' Way

JACKSONVILLE, FL — Hockey is a game of bounces, and on Friday night, those bounces went to the Jacksonville Icemen at VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena. Wacey Rabbit's eventual game winning goal in the second period bounced in off of a Wheeling

rebound flew into the air where it was batted home by Jared Cockrell for the first goal of his pro career.

Wheeling got some good quality chances as it looked for an equalizer, but unfortunately, that wasn't in the cards. Ara Nazarian iced Jacksonville's

3-1 win with an empty netter in the final minute, after Nick Saracino rushed the puck out



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SPORTS

INSIDE:

Shadyside-Toronto/C3

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Scoreboard/C5

Indians No-Hit Again/C6

SATURDAY'S BEST
MLB

■ 1 p.m. — Washington at N.Y. Yankees, MLB Network
 ■ 4 p.m. — San Diego at San Francisco, FS1
 ■ 7 p.m. — Philadelphia at Atlanta, FS1
 ■ 10 p.m. — L.A. Dodgers at L.A. Angels, MLB Network

NBA

■ 7 p.m. — Washington at Indiana, NBATV
 ■ 10 p.m. — Brooklyn at Denver, NBATV

NHL

■ 3 p.m. — N.Y. Rangers at Boston, NBC
 ■ 7 p.m. — Montreal at Toronto, NHL Network
 ■ 10 p.m. — Vancouver at Edmonton, NHL Network

SUNDAY'S BEST
NASCAR

■ 3:30 p.m. — Good-year 400, Darlington Raceway, FS1

MLB

■ 7 p.m. — Philadelphia at Atlanta, ESPN

NHL

■ 7 p.m. — Dallas at Chicago, NHL Network

NBA

■ 1:15 p.m. — Miami at Boston, ESPN
 ■ 3:30 p.m. — N.Y. Knicks at L.A. Clippers, ESPN

Maxwell Helps Send
Central to Title GameKnights to Face
Shady Spring At
5:30 p.m. TodayBy KYLE LUTZ
Sports Writer

CHARLESTON — Although its in a new classification, the Wheeling Central boys basketball team has punched its ticket to a familiar event, the state championship game.

J.C. Maxwell scored the first nine points for the Maroon Knights en route to a double-double (30 points, 12 rebounds) in a 61-49 victory over Hampshire in a West Virginia Class AAA semifinal matchup Friday night at the Charleston Coliseum.

Wheeling Central will face Shady Spring at 5:30 p.m. today for the state championship.

"I thought early on, especially defensively we followed our game plan," Wheeling Central coach Mel Stephens said. "We felt like they had some kids that could really shoot the ball and we wanted to make sure we got out on them. Offensively, we got off to a good start. (Friday), is probably the best we've shot from the field in a month and a half. If you're making shots, that makes life a little bit easier."

And it was Maxwell that was making those shots for Wheeling Central. He finished the game 13 of 17 from the field including 3-for-5 from behind the arc. The senior also dished out three assists, had three blocks and supplied three steals.

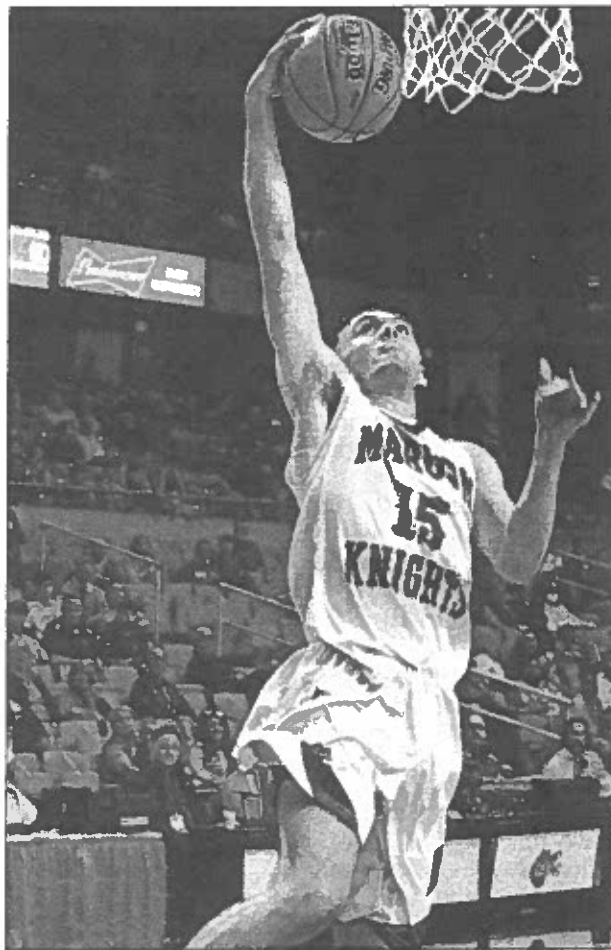


Photo by Kyle Lutz

Wheeling Central's J.C. Maxwell goes in for a dunk during Friday's Class AAA semifinal matchup against Hampshire at the Charleston Coliseum. Maxwell led the way for the Maroon Knights with 30 points and 12 rebounds.

"I just got going early," Maxwell said. "I struggled on Wednesday, but I stayed confident. I hit my first few shots and credit to these guys. They kept looking for me, kept staying confident in me and I just kept shooting and they kept going in."

The Trojans, who knocked off top-seeded Robert C. Byrd on Tuesday kept it close for the majority of the game and showed a little bit of resili-

ency.

They were down by as many as 13 in the third quarter after a Caleb Ratcliffe layup to put the score at 36-23 with 6:24 remaining.

Hampshire was able to cut its deficit to four by the end of the quarter. With 30 seconds remaining, Damon Steinmetz hit a jumper to put the score at 42-38.

Please see Central
Page C2

Photo by Seth Staskey

The Linsly baseball team celebrates after its comeback victory over Martins Ferry in Friday's OVAC Championship.

Linsly Rallies for 22nd
OVAC Baseball TitleBy SETH STASKEY
For the News-Register

TORONTO — Linsly School and Ohio Valley Athletic Conference baseball championships are synonymous.

The Cadets added another chapter to their illustrious history Friday night at a chilly Knights Baseball Complex.

Trailing 2-1 in the sixth inning, Linsly struck for two runs and then escaped a jam in the seventh to secure its 22nd OVAC title in school history by a 3-2 score against Martins Ferry in the Class 3A title game.

"This is a great group of kids, and I couldn't be happier for them," Linsly head coach Jay Cartwright said amid a celebration on the field. "This is an outstanding group of seniors, and I am going to miss that group of kids. This was a great high school baseball game and we're fortunate to come out on top."

While the Cadets were celebrating, the Purple Riders were left to wonder what might have been.

"Can you get any closer to winning an OVAC championship than we have the last two times we've been (in the final)?" Rider head coach Anthony Reasbeck said. "It's the same thing. The sixth inning cost us against Steubenville five years ago in this game and it got us again (Friday). Every OVAC game we've lost during my tenure has been by one run, but what are you going to do?"

Prior to the sixth, Linsly couldn't solve Rider ace Colby Shriver, who was seemingly getting better as the game went along.

However, a little bit of fatigue looked to be setting in for the sixth.

Please see Linsly, Page C2

Former Linsly Player and Basketball Star Signs With Dolphins

Tight End is the Son
Of Pro Football Hall
Of Famer Mel BlountBy CODY TOMER
Sports Writer

WHEELING — Former Linsly football player Jibri Blount, the son of Pro Football Hall of Famer and former Steelers' cornerback Mel Blount, has signed a contract to play for the Miami Dolphins.

Jibri transferred from Linsly after his sophomore year and went on to have a stellar prep basketball career at Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary and played college hoops at Cleveland State and North Carolina Central but hasn't stepped on the football field since he left Linsly.

Despite the lack of playing time, the Dolphins liked what they saw from the 6-foot-5, 245-pounder — signing him as a tight end.

"I'm just really overwhelmed with joy, excitement and a lot of emotion," Jibri said. "I'm super thankful for the Dolphins' organization for the opportunity they've given me."

"My main sport was basketball and it's always going to be a part of me. I've made some great connections and met some of my closest friends through basketball but I'm excited for the things that God is doing in my life now and this stretch coming up."

Jibri's time at Linsly also helped prepare him for this upcoming journey on and off the field.

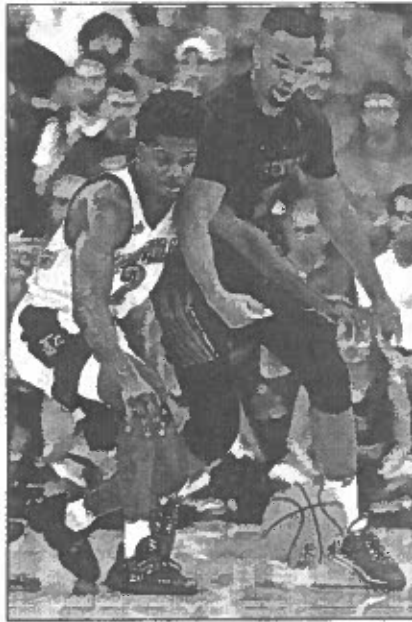
"I had some challenging times but

Linsly was a great experience for me because a lot of different people there taught me different things about myself," Jibri said. "Moving forward, that was always something I wanted to carry with me to help me continue to grow and be a better person every day of my life. So, that was one of the main things I took with me."

Jibri was a standout on the hardwood, earning Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Player of the Year as a senior at North Carolina Central, where he led the conference in minutes per game (36.8) and steals per game (2.2).

He finished third in the conference in scoring (19.2 PPG) and rebounding (9.5 RPG) and fifth in

Please see Blount, Page C2



North Carolina Central forward Jibri Blount, right, battles Louisville guard Darius Perry, left, for the ball during a college basketball game.

AP Photo

Cubs Edge
Pirates, 3-2Paden City Football Coach Zach
Heasley Resigns From Alma MaterBy CODY TOMER
Sports Writer

PADEN CITY — Some-



upcoming year and possibly going another year without coaching. It was my dream at

for two runs off relievers Andrew Chafin and Ryan Tepera in the ninth — and loaded the bases with two outs.

Todd Frazier had a run-scoring groundout, and Ka'ai Tom had an RBI single.

**CARDINALS 5
ROCKIES 0**

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Jack Flaherty (6-0) hit his first career home run in his 117th at-bat and became the major leagues' first six-game winner, allowing three hits in seven innings.

Nolan Arenado went 2-for-4 in his first game against the Rockies since Colorado traded the five-time All-Star to St. Louis on Feb. 1. Arenado doubled against Austin Gomber (2-4), one of the players he was traded for.

Harrison Bader hit a go-ahead, two-run homer in the third.

rors and Josh Harrison's three-run homer, and the Nationals stopped a three-game skid.

**PHILLIES 12
BRAVES 2**

ATLANTA (AP) — Odubel Herrera hit a three-run homer in Philadelphia's six-run first inning and the Phillies set season highs for runs and hits (16) as they won their fifth straight.

J.T. Realmuto had three hits, including a two-run homer, and Jean Segura drove in two runs with four hits.

Attendance was 38,952 as the Braves allowed 100% capacity for the first time since before the coronavirus pandemic.

**MARLINS 6
BREWERS 1**

MIAMI (AP) — Isan Diaz hit his first career grand slam, a third-inning drive off Patrick

Milwaukee lost its sixth straight and fell to 0-5 on its seven-game trip.

**ASTROS 10
BLUE JAYS 4**

HOUSTON (AP) — Yuli Gurriel homered and tied a career high with four hits while driving in four runs.

Carlos Correa added a two-run homer and Jose Urquidy (3-2) allowed two runs and four hits in seven to win his third straight decision.

**WHITE SOX 3
ROYALS 0**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Carlos Rodon (5-0) struck out eight and allowed five hits in six innings.

Relievers Codi Heuer, Aaron Bummer and Liam Hendriks worked the final three innings to complete the shutout. Hendriks earned with sixth save.

we wanted to go on both ends and were able to get that lead back out there."

With 6:18 left in the fourth quarter, a Steinmetz bucket put the score at 44-40 in favor of Central.

However, that's as close as they would get.

Leyton Toepfer hit a 3-pointer to give the Maroon Knights some breathing room. A little over a minute later, Ryan Reasbeck hit a long range shot of his own to put the score at 50-40 with 4:34 remaining. On the next Wheeling Central possession, Toepfer drove to the hoop and tallied a layup.

The Trojans scored the next five points to cut their deficit to within seven, but that was as close as they would get for the remainder of the game.

Drew Keckley led the way for Hampshire with 15 points while Carter Smith netted 10.

For the Maroon Knights, Reasbeck, who scored his 1,000th point in Tuesday's quarterfinal game against Nitro, tallied 16 points.

"I'm just really excited to play (today), Reasbeck said. "Every team's goal is to get down here and obviously

Spring for the Class AAA state title. The last time Wheeling Central reached the state championship was in 2018 when it defeated Ravenswood in Class A.

The Tigers, who are the No. 3 seed, defeated Herbert Hoover (87-45) in the quarterfinals and Winfield (68-51) in the semifinals.

They have four players averaging double figures in the state tournament. Braden Chapman has scored 17.5 points in the past two games while Cameron Manns has averaged 14.5 points.

Todd Ducan has averaged 13.5 points in his two state tournament games and Cole Chapman has 12.

"Just watching them play (Friday), they're very good. All their kids can shoot the ball really well," Stephens said. "They get out and pressure you defensively. They make it tough to get into whatever you try to do. We got to get busy and try to come up with some kind of game plan to negate both of those things. Their shooting ability and their ability to get out and pressure the ball."

LINSLY

Continued from Page C1

With Shriver's pitch count climbing, Brodie Selmon drew a lead-off walk and was lifted for pinch runner, Jack Selmon. Jack Scouvar followed with a single.

Collin Paul got ahead in the count and then ripped a double to left center that brought both runners around to score.

"Luckily, Collin had that big swing and it's nice to have that speed on the bases that allowed a guy to score easily from first," Cartwright said. "Collin's a big, strong kid."

"He can hit and he's had some key knocks for us."

Somehow, Shriver — with the help of impressive shortstop Connor Probst snagging a pair of liners — was able to escape further damage to keep his team within a run.

Ferry, which hadn't truly threatened since the second when it loaded the bases, but couldn't

get any more than the one run across, watched Alex Bennett draw a one-out walk.

Colton Reddinger then sacrificed — with two strikes — to get Bennett into scoring position. That also brought an end to the night for Linsly ace Kobe Hill, who had to depart because of the West Virginia pitch count rule of 110.

Cartwright elected to go to Brodie Selmon out of the pen, but he walked Chase Goff and then fell behind the ensuing Rider hitter with two balls. Wasting no more time, Cartwright went back to the mound and brought in Adam Och.

Inheriting the 2-0 count, Och proceeded to throw a ball. His next three pitches were all strikes, setting off a dogpile on the pitcher's mound.

"This is not a knock on truly threatened since the second when it loaded the bases, but couldn't

one-run better than us," Reasbeck said.

"I have the scrappiest bunch of guys and I just love them. They scrapped like crazy and everyone here saw it. I am happy for Linsly, and I am proud of my guys. Everyone here got treated to a heck of a baseball game, but we just came up a run short."

While Och got the save, Hill earned the win. He was impressive.

He limited the Riders to three hits. He fanned six.

"Kobe was just a bulldog all night," Cartwright said. "Ferry did a good job of battling with two strikes and ran his (pitch) count up and we had to pull him."

"I would have liked to have ended the game with him on the mound, but both Brodie and Och have been throwing well. Och has been a strike thrower coming in in relief."

Ferry got on the board first when Reddinger drew a bases-loaded walk, forcing home senior Logan Smith, who had singled to open the second.

Linsly knotted the game in the home half of the second on a sacrifice fly by Trey Prather.

The Riders created their run in the fourth. Trevor Hanson, who had singled, went to second on an error and third on a wild pitch, eventually touched home when Hill was called for a balk.

"This conference means a lot to me and our program," Reasbeck said. "Steve Wojcik, Bill Beattie and everyone involved with this conference make it great. All of the baseball coaches wake up and check the standings each morning because you want to win this conference. It's the greatest thing in the world, and I love it. Having said that, we will now focus on the sectional and district tournament."

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By SETH STASKEY
For The Intelligencer

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Though the Cal Giffin OVAC Track and Field Championship Meet only scores action during the final day, the tone is set during the early week qualifying.

Such was the case for Shadyside (1A/2A), Bellaire (3A), Union Local (4A) and Morgantown (5A) etched their names into OVAC history as the first track and field boys champions since the 2019 season.

All four squads used an impressive combination of top-end performers as well as depth to claim the conference titles Saturday afternoon at sunny and chilly Red Devil Stadium.

Here's a capsule look at the individual classes:

CLASS 5A

The battle of Wheeling Park's speed and Morgantown's distance and field wasn't limited to the girls side. It was the same scenario in the boys meet, too.

Though the Mohigans won out and claimed their third title in their brief history of the OVAC with 158 points, the Patriots took the runner-up plaque with 128 points.

Wheeling Park did the bulk of its damage on the track by winning seven of their eight gold medals there.

The most impressive performances of the week were put forth by Patriots senior sprinter Torrence Walker, who was named the Most Outstanding Male Athlete of the meet.

Walker blazed 10.56, which was just four hundredths of a second off the meet and class-record time. He returned to the oval and blitzed the 200 field, running a 22.03.

Senior Andrew Glass won the high hurdles in 15.29.

In the relays, Park shined brightly. It won the shuttles (1:03.14), 4x2 (1:32.26), 4x1 (43.29) and 4x4 (3:32.60).

In the field, however, senior Christian Sorge won the pole vault with a jump of 14-feet.

Steubenville freshman Savior Faulks won the intermediates in 40.65.

John Marshall sophomore Ashton Collett won the big-school high jump at 5-8.

Class 1A/2A

Shadyside owns one of the most storied track and field histories in the Ohio Valley. The Tigers added another chapter on Satur-

day. Fending off Steubenville Catholic and Caldwell, the Tigers won their second straight OVAC title and 30th of all time with 118 points.

The Tigers wasted no time in flexing their muscles. Their shuttle team posted a 64.03 to prevail in the hurdle relay.

The Tigers picked up a pair of wins in the field, too.

Junior Wyatt Reiman won the high jump with a 5-10 clearance.

Freshman Andrew Osman soared over 11-6 to win the pole vault.

Steubenville Catholic Central's 4x2 broke the tape at 1:35.76 to win the conference title.

Senior Joe Rohde gave the Crusaders their first individual winner when he captured the 400 in 51.34.

He captured the 200 in 23.50.

Catholic Central's 4x4 team posted a 3:35.95 to win the final event and did so with a class-record time.

Wheeling Central freshman Aiden Scott won the 1600 in 4:37.65. He completed the distance double with a 10:17.96 to win the 3200.

The Maroon Knights sprint forces combined to win the 4x1 in 46.25.

Toronto's Josh Fancher swept the throwing events to fuel the Red Knights. He won the discus with a mark of 143-8 and then claimed the shot put at 47-4 1/2.

CLASS 3A

Bellaire came into the meet as the unquestioned favorite to prevail and didn't disappoint.

Riding their strength in distance, hurdles and throwing events, the Big Reds picked up victories in half of the 18 events and finished with 142 points, which was 42 better than runner-up Barnesville.

Junior strong man Colt Sechrest was up to his same old tricks in the throwing circles. He won the discus with a toss of 169-9 and then added the shot put with a toss of 48-9.

On the track, the victories kept coming for the Big Reds. They got things rolling with a 1:04.57 to win the shuttles.

Freshman dandy Mayson Sochor continued his impressive campaign in the hurdles. He won the highs in 16.12 and then came back to win the intermediates in 42.93.

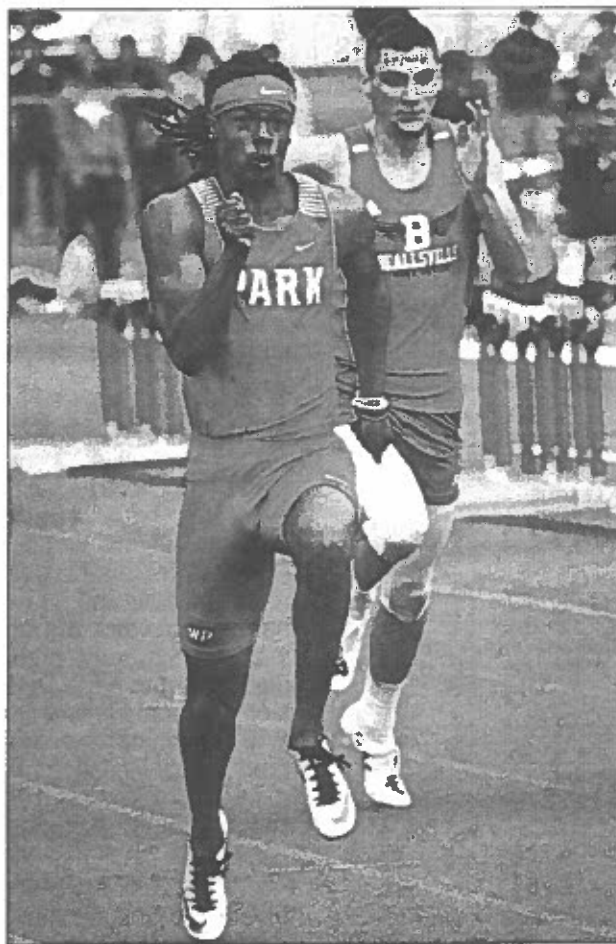


Photo by Seth Staskey

Wheeling Park's Torrence Walker was named Most Outstanding Athlete of Saturday's OVAC Meet.

The 3A distance field belonged to senior stand-out Jacob Defibaugh, who had an impressive all-around meet. He swept all three long races, winning the 1600 (4:35.84), the 800 (2:04.65) and the 3200 (10:09.67).

Sophomore speedster Ray Ray Pettigrew had another solid meet. He won the 100 in 11.42.

Linsly got a win from sophomore Nathan Coleman in the long jump. He marked the sand at 20-5 1/4 to win by more than a foot.

The Cadets 4x2 prevailed with a 1:36.68.

Martins Ferry's lone victory of the meet came in the 4x8 when the Riders ran eight laps in 8:38.58.

Magnolia senior Jason Beisel turned in a lap in 52.78 to win the 400. He later sprinted half a lap in 23.60 for the gold.

The Blue Eagles also claimed the 4x4 with a 3:34.42 effort.

CLASS 4A

Union Local has been the premier team in this class all spring and it showed again on Saturday.

The Jets took a couple of good shots from St. Clairsville during the middle portion of the meet, but the Jets simply weren't going to be denied their first OVAC title in boys track.

Union Local finished with 154 points, which was 10 better than the Red Devils.

Fueling the Jets were 10 victories, which were spread out between the field and track.

Senior Liam Vinskov-

ich had a big day. He claimed the high jump with an impressive 6-4 clearance.

Classmate Nathan Meyer marked the sand at 20-6 1/4.

Sophomore Jaksan Price delivered in the discus with a mark of 134-5 to win the platter crown.

On the track, Union Local started strong by winning the shuttles in a solid 1:02.82. The Jets followed with a blistering 8:15.62 to win the 4x8.

Hayden McCrate captured his first OVAC title, skimming 10 hurdles in 15.99 for the victory.

Shawn Coe had a solid day as well. He won the 1600 meter run in the class with a 4:39.27. He came back and won the 800 as well with a 2:05.58. He finished the distance triple by claiming the 3200 in 10:23.21.

The Jets closed out their title run by winning the 4x4 with a time of 3:34.99.

St. Clairsville sophomore Karl Kain won the pole vault with a jump of 13-feet.

On the track, the Red Devils won the 4x2 in 1:35.05.

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The Golden Bears also turned in a 44.68 to win the 4x1.

Weir's Jonathon Howard claimed the shot put with a mark of 45-9.

St. Clairsville Shocks Weir

By KIM NORTH
For The Intelligencer

ELM GROVE — It's the little things that win championships. St. Clairsville did those Saturday in claiming its 12th Ohio Valley Athletic Conference baseball title, and the first since going back-to-back in 2015-16.

The No. 2 seed Red Devils (14-6) executed bunts in several key situations to rally for a hard-earned, 5-4, decision over top-seeded Weir (7-3) on the wind-swept and chill-filled Wheeling University diamond at the I-470 J.B. Chambers Sports Complex.

The victory gives St. Clairsville its third Class 4A crown and the fifth under veteran head coach Tom Sliva. The first nine titles came in Class 3A, with the initial seven under the leadership of the late OVAC Hall of Famer Richard "Lefty" Hall. Sliva, who pocketed his 400th career win in the semifinals, now has nine OVAC titles, the first four coming at St. John Central in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2002.

"These (OVAC championships) are awfully nice and the kids get excited, but I don't keep track of how many or when," Sliva admitted. "The kids did a nice job today."

With Weir holding a 3-1 lead entering the top of the sixth, St. Clairsville sent nine batters to the plate while chasing Red Riders starter Tyler Kelly after back-to-back leadoff singles by Drew Sefsick and Mason Myers. Reliever Anthony DiMatteis got Marcus Bush to ground to the hole at short, but the throw to second for the force was ruled late as the bases were loaded. Logan Shields' shot to second was fielded but the throw home sailed over the catcher's head, allowing Sefsick and Myers to both score and tie the game as courtesy runner Harrison Kazmirski took third and Shields ended up at second. Jaren Starks laid a perfect bunt down the first base line that he legged out as Kamzirski raced home for a 4-3 lead. Will Balgo's sacrifice fly to right plated Shields for a 5-3 reading.

"We did a really good job of getting some bunts down when we needed to that moved runners up, and we got the key hits when we had to. That's the key in high school baseball. Put the ball in play and make your opponent make the plays. That's what we did, but you can see by the last half-inning, it's never easy," Sliva added. "It's tough to make all the plays all the time."

Weir threatened in its last at-bat as Trenton Taflan walked leading off and went to third when Jack Scopel cued a single down the right-field line. Mason Drobish crushed a ball to deep left-center that Starks tracked down for a sacrifice fly and a 5-4 deficit. An error in the outfield on a liner off the bat of Thomas Devecchis kept the Red Riders' hopes alive with just one out.

However, a comebacker to the mound prevented any movement from the runners and Balgo got a called third strike to end the game.

"Our two senior pitchers did their jobs," Sliva noted. "Tyler (Tonkovich) settled down after the first inning and kept us in the game and then Will (Balgo) came in and shut the door."

Tonkovich, who picked up the win, struggled in the windy conditions as he fanned five and walked a like number before giving way to Balgo with a runner on in the sixth. Balgo, who earned the save, struck out a pair and issued one free pass. Together, they combined on a seven-hitter.

The Red Riders also threatened in the sixth when Grant Wilharm drew a leadoff walk that chased Tonkovich from the mound. Balgo struck out the first batter he faced before inducing an inning-ending 1-6-3 double play.

"We did a lot of good things today, but there are still some things that we can clean up," Sliva noted. "That's baseball ... definitely high school baseball."

"I thought we did a good job of hanging in there and never getting down. We stuck with it and we're fortunate."

Freshman Braylen Blomquist led the Scarlet-and-Gray's 11-hit attack with a trio of one-base raps that produced a run. Bush and Shields, the No. 8 and 9 hitters in the lineup, evenly distributed four base raps.

"You can't give a good team more than three outs in an inning, that's just the way baseball is," Weir head coach David Cowden said. "We fought back towards the end but when didn't force much during the middle innings after we took the early lead."

"St. Clairsville is a good ballclub and I'm not going to take anything away from them," Cowden added. "We pitched pretty good and we hit pretty good, but a play here and a play there and it's a different game."

Scopel singled thrice and drove in a run for the Red-and-Black. Luke Gillette had two singles and Devecchis slugged a two-run double in the

Truex Jr. Dominates Darlington

DARLINGTON, S.C. (AP) — Martin Truex Jr. got nervous in a hurry near the end of his dominating drive at Darlington Raceway on Sunday.

Barely pushed much of the race, the Joe Gibbs Racing driver suddenly saw Kyle Larson catching up in the closing laps.

Truex, though, called on his steady demeanor and track focus to pull away for his third NASCAR Cup Series victory this season.

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Truex's owner, Joe Gibbs, told him after that Larson gave the three-time Super Bowl winning coach a scare.

"Yeah, he scared me, too," Truex told him.

The victory gave Truex some payback at Darlington from the last time here last September, when he led 196 laps, yet finished 22nd after tangling for the lead late with Chase Elliott.

"It's fun when you're out front," Truex said.

"You're always just mindful on staying focused on what you're doing."

No one was more focused at Darlington than Truex.

He took control midway through the first of three stages, moving in front on a restart and settling in for a long ride up front. Truex led the final 21 laps to take the first stage, then the last 36 as he collected the

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Not that it was easy. When Truex noticed Larson right behind him inside of 30 laps left, he thought, "Oh, man, he's right behind me."

"You're heart rate goes up," he continued, "You're anxiety goes up."

Very quickly, Truex was back to his steady, powerhouse driving at the track "Too Tough To Tame."

"Hopefully, we can keep this

rolling," Truex said.

Truex's owner, Joe Gibbs, told him after that Larson gave the three-time Super Bowl winning coach a scare.

"Yeah, he scared me, too," Truex told him.

The victory gave Truex some payback at Darlington from the last time here last September, when he led 196 laps, yet finished 22nd after tangling for the lead late with Chase Elliott.

This time, Truex made sure he had no issues by running out front — often holding a 10-second lead on the field — to win for the second time at the track "Too Tough To Tame."

Truex led 248 of the 293 laps for his 30th career victory in NASCAR's top series.

He's the only driver with multiple wins over the year's first 12 races.

"It's fun when you're out front," Truex said.

"You're always just mindful on staying focused on what you're doing."

No one was more focused at Darlington than Truex.

He took control midway through the first of three stages, moving in front on a restart and settling in for a long ride up front. Truex led the final 21 laps to take the first stage, then the last 36 as he collected the second stage win by some 14 seconds over his JGR teammate Kyle Busch.

Truex broke out when racing resumed for the final stage and easily managed a couple of rounds of green-flag pits stops to stay ahead.

Larson was second with Truex's teammate, Kyle Busch, third. William Byron was fourth and Denny Hamlin, who came in as the NASCAR points' leader, was fifth.

CENTRAL

(Continued from Page 9)

Maroon Knights kept it tight for the remainder of the quarter.

A pair of free throws by Ryan Reasbeck tied the game at 34-34 after Central was down by six earlier in the quarter (28-22 with 5:07 remaining). However, Central couldn't get over the hump.

Cole Chapman's conventional 3-point play with a second left in the third gave Shady Spring the lead for good.

"It was frustrating," Maxwell said

about picking up his fourth foul. "But I have confidence in these guys. I tried to do my part and keep the energy on the bench high. I thought they played pretty well while I was out, and I was just eager to get back in. Thankfully the coaches trusted me to go in early fourth."

Unfortunately, Wheeling Central only scored nine points in the fourth quarter.

Reasbeck's 3-pointer with 6:37 to go made it 39-37 in favor of Shady

Spring, but that was as close as the Maroon Knights would get the rest of the way.

The Tigers went on a 10-2 run to take the first double digit lead of the game.

Braden Chapman led the way for the Tigers with 14 points while Cole Chapman and Todd Duncan each had 12 points.

For the Maroon Knights, Reasbeck led the way with 17 points while Maxwell netted 14.

All five players made the All-Tour-

namment Team.

Drew Keckley (Hampshire), Seth Shilot (Winfield) and Bryson Lucas (Robert C. Byrd) also made the team.

"That right there was a true reflection of our season," Shady Spring coach Ronnie Olson said. "We can do it either way. We can grind you out or we can get it up and down the floor shoot 3s. To end the game like that, to win it on the defensive end like that and with Todd (Duncan) going down was just amazing. I think it's a true reflection of us."

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Scopel singled thrice and drove in a run for the Red-and-Black. Luke Gillette had two singles and Devecchis slugged a two-run double in the first that gave the designated hosts a 2-0 margin. Kelly walked one and didn't strike out a batter. DiMatteis had one of each.

For Weir, which was seeking its seventh title all-time but first since 1994 and only the second since a four-year run in 1955-58, there's a lot of baseball left to play.

"With games, graduation and everything that goes on with it we don't have an open day the rest of the season," Cowden said. "We're going to be pretty busy the rest of the month."

St. Clairsville travels to Barnesville on Monday while Weir hosts Oak Glen.

Wheeling Central Falls in State Title

Maroon Knights fall to Shady Spring 55-43

By KYLE LUTZ
Sports Writer

CHARLESTON — When Wheeling Central made the transition to Class AAA in basketball, the goals remained the same.

And the Maroon Knights also made it to the final day of the season. Unfortunately, they came just short of cutting down the nets.

Shady Spring ended the first half on a 10-3 run and scored the first six points of the second half to secure a 55-43 victory over Wheeling Central in the West Virginia Class AAA state championship Saturday evening at the Charleston Coliseum.

"We knew coming in Shady Spring was very good," Wheeling Central coach Mel Stephens said. "I thought we had a pretty good game plan, and it was pretty effective in the first half. I thought we kind of slowed them down a little bit. They made that little run at the end of the first half to cut it to one. Then they came out of the gate in the third quarter and ripped off six straight to take the lead and we never seemed to recover from that."

The Maroon Knights boasted a 12-9 lead at the end of the first quarter. However, after a Todd Duncan tip-in to put the score at 12-11, Wheeling Central went on a 7-0 spurt to take its largest lead of the game.

Leyton Toepfer's 3-pointer with 4:31 to go in the first half put the score at 19-11.

That's when the Tigers made their run. Braden Chapman started and ended the spurt with a 3-pointer. His long-range ball with 45 seconds remaining put the score at 22-21 in favor of Wheeling Central as both teams went into the locker rooms.

"They are very efficient at

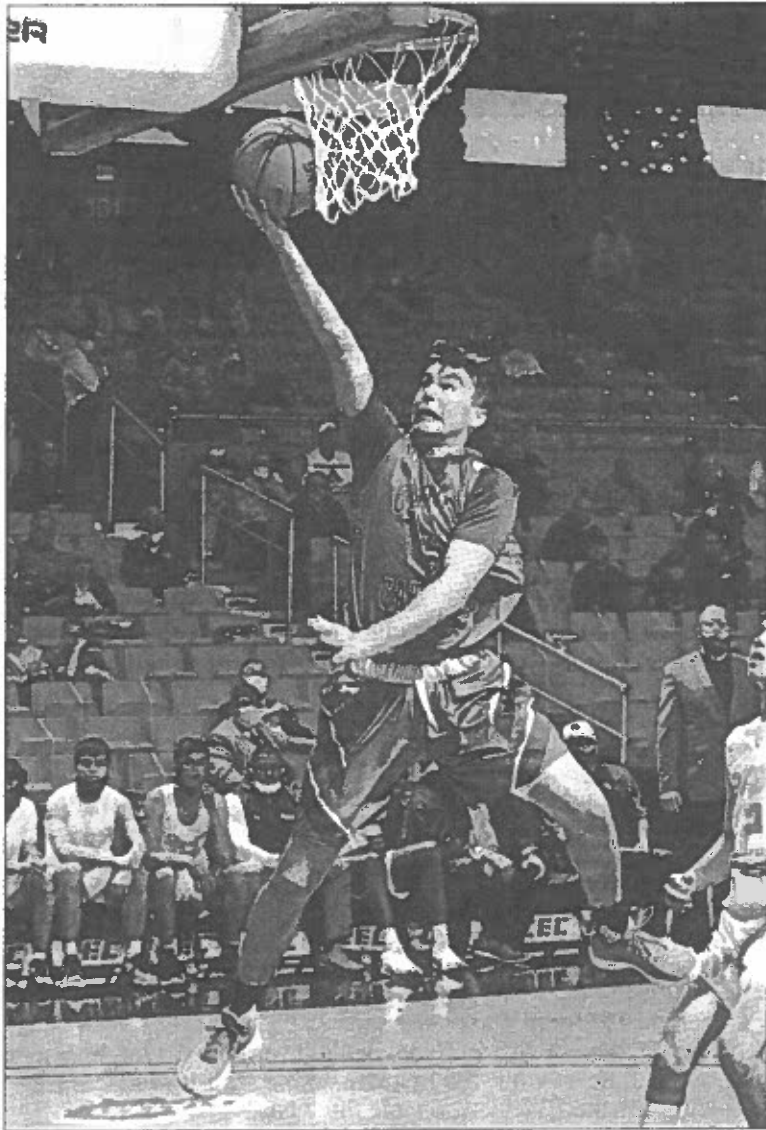


Photo by Kyle Lutz

Wheeling Central's Ryan Reasbeck goes up for a layup during Saturday's W.Va. Class AAA State Championship game.

shooting the ball and very efficient at driving the ball to the basket," Stephens said. "Our feeling was we couldn't help off too many guys to try and stop the dribblers. It was imperative that the guy guarding the ball had to try and control that dribbler. When we weren't able to do that, they were able to get some easy buckets and once that starts, you are concerned with trying to control that guy and then they start knocking down some long ones.

We felt zone was a thing and for the most part of the first half, it was pretty effective."

Cameron Manns started the second half for the Tigers with a conventional 3-point play. The foul was called on J.C. Maxwell, his third of the game. He then picked up his fourth with 2:19 remaining in the third.

However, even with Central's senior leader on the bench, the

Please see CENTRAL, Page 11

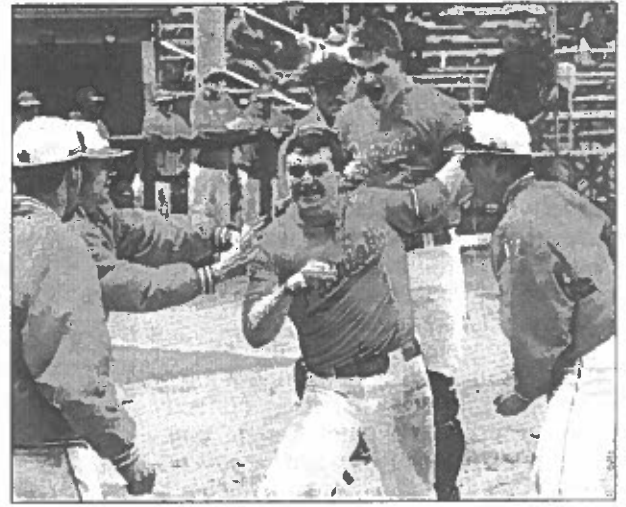


Photo by Cody Tomer

Wheeling Park's Billy Gooch (1) is greeted by teammates after scoring the go-ahead run of the OVAC 5A Championship game on Saturday.

Patriots Return To Top of OVAC

By CODY TOMER
Sports Writer

WHEELING — It takes a special group of players and coaches to raise championship banners.

Wheeling Park baseball coach Steve Myers believes he has that special group and showed why on Saturday.

With the game deadlocked in the seventh inning of the OVAC 5A title game, Wheeling Park rose to the occasion and grabbed glory — pulling out a 3-2 victory over Morgantown at the I-470 Baseball Complex.

It's the first OVAC baseball title for the Patriots since 2014 and fourth in team history.

"It was a great effort," Myers said. "I think it's a reflection of who these kids are. They are great kids to be around and they have heart. They compete."

"We are always talking about meeting a challenge and they met (Saturday's challenge). They stick together."

Park all-state golfer and senior second baseman Noah Seivertson, who is accustomed to

the pressure of hitting a putt on the 18th green, did not shy away from the moment and delivered the go-ahead hit in the top of the seventh and Billy Gooch came sliding across home to beat the tag, sending the Park dugout into hysteria.

"Those two guys are always leading the way. They got their opportunity (Saturday) and they came through," Myers said. "We're happy for the whole group and the nine seniors."

Seivertson was simply trying to put the ball in play to get the winning run home.

"I was just trying to get some kind of hit to get the run in," Seivertson said. "He threw me outside sliders two times in a row and he threw it one more time and I just got the barrel to it the last time and hit it hard to the right side."

Gooch's hustle earned him an infield single to start the frame and lead-off hitter Avery Lee followed with a walk to set the stage for Seivertson.

Also making the triumphant ending possible

Please see OVAC, Page 10

Park Girls Capture Third Straight Conference Crown

By SETH STASKEY
For The Intelligencer

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — The final Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Championships of the school year were presented Saturday afternoon.

The OVAC Cal Giffin Track and Field Championship concluded its week at chilly Red Devil Stadium with several familiar faces rising to the top of the girls team standings.

Wheeling Park (5A), St. Clairsville (4A), Linsly (3A) and Steubenville Catholic Central (1A/2A) left with the top prizes.

Here's a look at each girls meet:

CLASS 5A

Wheeling Park and Morgantown went stride for stride for the most part of the 18 events.

In the end, however, Park's speed events were too much for Morgan-

town's distance events to overcome. The Patriots tallied 116 points, which was 10 better than the Mohicans.

For Park, the win is their third straight conference title and 15th overall. That ranks third in conference history.

Wheeling Park secured its first win of the day in the first event. The Patriots raced to the shuttle title in a time of 1:11.51. The Patriots later captured the 4x1 in 51.09.

Sophomore Ellie Reasbeck skimmed 10 hurdles in 16.46 to win the highs.

Senior Marlee Porter was the low hurdle champion, breezing to victory with a 46.41 effort.

Steubenville had a solid showing, accumulating 88 points.

Big Red's first win came in the

long jump when freshman Sabria Jones posted a mark of 16-10 to win by three quarters of an inch.

Jones carried that momentum to the track. She won the 100 meter dash in 12.45. She completed a three individual gold day with a 25.92 to win the 200.

Big Red's speed translated to a win in the 4x2 with an impressive 1:45.93 effort.

Junior Amya Livingston had another strong showing, throwing the shot put to a mark of 42-feet to win the title.

Brooke senior Mara Pendergrast picked up a win in the high jump with a 5-4 clearance.

Morgantown distance ace Irene Riggs was named the meet's Most

Please see PARK, Page 10



Photo by Seth Staskey

Wheeling Park's Kaylee Davis, left, battles St. Clairsville's Casadie DiBetta for the lead.

NCAA DIII
Golf Comes
To Celebration



Anderson,
Pirates End



Makenzie Amend, Bennington and Katie Beeman joining her on the MEC All-Tournament Team.

The Hilltoppers jumped out to a quick 1-0 lead in Game 2. Donzella led off the game with a double down the right field line and sprinted home on an infield error with two outs.

State scored two runs on three straight hits in the bottom of the fourth and had the bases loaded with one out only to see Bennington get the final two outs to limit the damage. Bennington went on to blank the Yellowjackets on two hits over the final five frames as the WLU offense tried to answer.

Beeman kept Hilltopper hopes alive in the top of the sixth when she roped a game-tying home run - her second circuit blast in as many days - over the left field fence and the game headed into extra innings.

Neither team scored until the top of the ninth when Paterson led off the inning with a solo blast over the wall in right-center and it was on to the winner-take-all championship game.

SATURDAY

WLU Baseball Sweeps Wheeling

WHEELING - The West Liberty University baseball team swept a Mountain East Conference North Division doubleheader from division-leading Wheeling in thrilling fashion under the lights at the J.B. Chambers I-470

OVAC

(Continued from Page 9)

was the incredible outing of senior left-handed pitcher Chris Vargo, who threw a complete game with five strikeouts, one walk and four hits allowed on 108 pitches.

"It took me a couple innings to settle in but after that my changeup was working really well outside," Vargo said. "It got a lot of swing throughs."

"I stayed focused the whole game and I knew the kids behind me had my back. They'll always have my back and I know they'll make the plays when we need them to."

Myers knew what kind of effort he would get from Vargo and was proud of the performance he put forth.

"That was a fantastic effort," Myers said of Vargo. "He's thrown well all year and he's so focused. He stays mentally strong throughout the game and we believe in him and what he's capable of doing. He just went out there and proved what we've always thought about him."

Morgantown pitcher Quincy Thornton was also in top form, tossing seven strikeouts, four walks and allowing five hits on 103 pitches.

With his pitch count rising and Gooch standing on first in the seventh inning, Morgantown coach Pat Sherald went to lefty Reed Bailey in relief.

"He got his pitch count up to 103 and he really went hard for us," Sherald said of Thornton.

re completing the sweep with a 7-5 decision in an 8-inning marathon that didn't end until well after midnight.

Colton Coss had two of WLU's six hits while Ross Salvatori had the only extra-base hit of the game, a leadoff double in the top of the fourth.

Jason Schutte belted a two-run homer in the top of the second and Ty Helmke added a solo blast in the third of the nightcap.

The two rivals will close out the regular season today with a 1 p.m. doubleheader at West Liberty.

GOLF

Hilltoppers Conclude

Season at NCAA Regional

NORTH EAST, Pa. - The West Liberty University men's golf team wrapped up another impressive season here Saturday as the NCAA Division II Atlantic/East Regional Tournament finished its three-day run at Lake View Country Club.

Coach Thadd Obecnycy's Hilltoppers settled for a 15th-place finish in the team standings but it did little to dim a strong season showing for the Black and Gold, who took runner-up honors at the Mountain East Conference championships and earned their seventh straight NCAA Tournament bid as the No. 2-ranked team in the Atlantic Region.

Junior Alex Easthom - the reign-

ing 14-over-par 250 for the tournament to share 15th place with three other golfers, just seven shots off the lead.

HIGH SCHOOL

SATURDAY

BASEBALL

OVAC 1A Championship

Madonna 6, Conotton Valley 5

TORONTO - It took extra innings but Madonna plated the winning run in the eighth to capture its third straight OVAC 1A title against Conotton Valley.

Mason Thompson paced the Dons with a triple, a single and a RBI.

REGULAR SEASON

Tyler Consolidated 8, Ravenswood 3
Tyler Consolidated 13
Ravenswood 4

SISTERSVILLE - Lefty Owen Westbrook earned a complete game victory in Game 1 and Carson Gorby delivered four doubles in the nightcap as Tyler Consolidated swept Ravenswood.

Zade Billings provided two hits in the first win, along with Jayde Helmick who stole three bases.

Hayden Brown earned the win in Game 2 with 10 strikeouts.

John Marshall 6

Oak Glen 1

GLEN DALE - Ethan Neely belted a grand slam and a solo home run as John Marshall won its fifth game in a

She also added two hits and a RBI, while Dekotah Namack crushed a homer and drove in two runs.

Abby Salisbury tallied a triple and a RBI in the win.

Brooke 6, Toronto 5

WELLSBURG - Maleah Misch went the distance in the circle, striking out 10 as Brooke edged Toronto.

Linsly 15, Paden City 0

Linsly 10, Paden City 1

WHEELING - Alaina Cook showed off her wheels with a triple, while adding a single and two RBI to lead Linsly past Paden City in the opening game of a double header.

Baeleigh Burwell garnered two hits and two RBI, while Gia Recrosio supplied a double and a RBI and Zoey Tsikouris added a hit and a RBI.

In the nightcap, Karena Recrosio was a homer shy of the cycle as she singled, doubled and tripled with a RBI.

Ripley 6, John Marshall 5

John Marshall 5, Ripley 4

GLEN DALE - The John Marshall softball team was finally cooled off in the twinbill opener before getting back on track in the nightcap.

LACROSSE

Martinsburg 13, Wheeling Central 8

MARTINSBURG - Caleb Karnell scored two goals and handed out three assists but Wheeling Central fell to Martinsburg.

PARK

(Continued from Page 9)

Outstanding Athlete after she won the 3200 meter record in a meet, class and stadium record time of 10:43.61. She broke her own mark, which she just set on Tuesday, by more than seven seconds.

CLASS 1A/2A

Steubenville Catholic Central's strength in the hurdles, middle distance and relays was simply too much for Shadyside to overcome. The Crusaders finished with five victories and a total of 94 points.

Clara Symington provided a boost by claiming both hurdling events, winning the highs in 16.09 and the lows in 46.10.

Junior Rebecca Bolster won the 400 with a time of 1:03.25.

The Crusaders also claimed the 4x200 relay by nearly six full seconds with a 1:50.56. They also claimed the 4x4, winning by nearly seven full seconds with a 4:27.20.

Shadyside picked up four victories during the course of the 18-event meet.

In the long jump, junior Paige Gorby prevailed with a solid mark of 16-0 3/4.

Alie Hawthorne captured the pole vault with jump of 7-6.

On the track, the Tigers claimed the shuttle relay in 1:20.51.

The Tigers sprinted and passed the baton to a victory in the 4x1 with a time of 54.72.

Paden City's Hope Weber was impressive in the throwing circles. She won the shot put (31-4 3/4) and discus (98-3).

Madonna was the conference champion in the 4x8, posting a time of 10:45.20.

Junior Kristina Lasho gave the Blue Dons an individual champion, winning the 800 in 2:35.45.

CLASS 3A

Linsly and Barnesville locked in an 18-event battle that actually

started during Monday's qualifying. In the end, the Cadets depth and their top-end points, which allowed them to claim seven events was too much for the Shamrocks.

The title is the third straight and fifth overall for the Cadets.

The Cadets got things rolling with a win in the first running event of the day. They claimed the shuttles in a time of 1:15.32.

Individually, Linsly was solid. Junior Mara Carlisle won the high hurdles in 17.88. Syndey Glessner followed with a victory in the 100 in 12.71. She completed the sprint sweep in the 200 with a 26.26.

Another race and another win for Linsly occurred in the 4x2 when it posted a 1:53.03 to win by more than seven seconds. Linsly's speed was too much again in the 4x1 where the Cadets posted a 53.31 for the win.

Senior Molly Heron was once again impressive. She posted a victory in the 400 with a 64.72.

The Cadets put the finishing touches on their title sprint with a 4:25.01 to win the 4x4.

The Shamrocks racked up several points on the strength of their middle distance, hurdling and field events. All told, Barnesville won seven events.

The Shamrocks answered Linsly's win in the shuttles by capturing the 4x8 with a time of 10:43.80.

Freshman Mara Bethel was impressive. She won the 1600 in 5:32.20. She added the 800 title in 2:32.94.

Grace Detling captured the pole vault with a jump of 8-feet. Earlier in the meet, she had captured the 300 low hurdles in 52.48.

Aubrey Johnson won the 3200 meter run with a time of 12:38.73.

Junior Anna Yater continued her fine season in the discus. She twirled the platter to a mark of

115-6 for the victory.

Magnolia's Jaci Rohde won the long jump with a mark of 16-6 1/2.

Senior standout Madi Winters continued her fine week of throwing the shot put. She prevailed with a mark of 39-7.

CLASS 4A

St. Clairsville enjoyed a solid evening of qualifying on Tuesday and the Red Devils delivered with high-end point on Saturday. Add it up and it results in 168 points. That total led to St. C.'s fourth consecutive conference title and 13th in school history.

The Red Devils got going early when senior Jaeda Nowak won the shot put with a mark of 35-feet.

The last event to conclude was the girls pole vault and it, too, resulted in a Red Devil victory. Emily Thompson remained undefeated in her specialty, soaring over 11-6 to set a 4A and OVAC Championship Meet record.

Thompson actually started her day by winning the class title in the high hurdles in a solid 16.61.

Casadie DiBetta won the 100 and 200 meter dashes, with times of 12.82 and 27.08, respectively.

Maggie Marody won the 3200 meter run with a 12:50.85.

The Red Devils also laid claim to both the 4x2 (1:51.54) and 4x1 (51.88) relays.

Oak Glen, which finished second, got its meet started by winning the 4x8. The Golden Bears turned in a 10:54.65.

The Golden Bears' first individual win came in the 1600 when junior Sophia Arner crossed the line in 5:48.20. She added the 800 title with a time of 2:34.82.

Kami Ward won the 400 in 62.59 and Izzy Barganski was the low hurdle champ with a 50.27.

Oak Glen also won the 4x4 thanks to a 4:24.16.

DIII

(Continued from Page 9)

Course and the other half taking on the challenging Palmer Course. On Wednesday, they'll flip and play the other course before cuts are made heading into the final two days.

"I'm not sure how many will get cut exactly but it will probably be around half," Thompson said. "Then, the last two days will be played on Jones, and Palmer will open back up to the public."

The fact that the

NCAA decided to bring its biggest Division III golf event to Wheeling says a lot about not only the course but the Ohio Valley.

"I can't say enough about the great folks of Oglebay," Thompson said. "They've been tremendous partners and the folks at the golf course have been great. We're going to have the best golfers in the country here."

"Even at the DIII level they can compete with some of the best in Divi-

sion I."

The 2019 defending champion is Illinois Wesleyan, which will be in attendance and looking to repeat.

"I'm really anxious to watch the practice rounds to see players play for the first time when they see it here," Thompson said. "One of the favorites is Illinois Wesleyan. A mountain for them is a speed bump to us. They don't play courses like this every day and it changes your game. I'm really excited to see what

they are saying after practice."

Westminster will be the PAC representative, while other nearby schools include Carnegie Mellon and Otterbein.

"This is a great location and it's going to be a different experience for all of these golfers coming out across the country," Thompson said. "It's really nice though to see the ability for different parties to work together to really showcase what is great about the valley. That's what this is."

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SPORTS

Monday,
May 10, 2021

St. C. outlasts Weir for OVAC 4A baseball crown

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE → It's the little things that win championships. St. Clairsville did those Saturday in claiming its 12th Ohio Valley Athletic Conference baseball title, and the first since going back-to-back in 2015-16.

The No. 2 seed Red Devils (14-6) executed bunts in several key situations to rally for a hard-earned, 5-4, decision over top-seeded Weir (7-3) on the wind-swept and chill-filled Wheeling University diamond at the I-470 J.B. Chambers Sports Complex.

The victory gives St. Clairsville its third Class 4A crown and the fifth under veteran head coach Tom Sliva. The first nine titles came in Class 3A, with

the initial seven under the leadership of the late OVAC Hall of Famer Richard "Lefty" Hall. Sliva, who won his 400th game last month, now has nine OVAC titles, the first four coming at St. John Central in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2002.

"These (OVAC championships) are awfully nice and the kids get excited, but I don't keep track of how many or when," Sliva admitted. "The kids did a nice job today."

With Weir holding a 3-1 lead entering the top of the sixth, St. Clairsville sent nine batters to the plate while chasing Red Riders starter Tyler Kelly after back-to-back leadoff singles by Drew Sefsick and Mason Myers. Reliever Anthony DiMatteis got Marcus Bush

See, ST. C., Page B2



MEMBERS OF the St. Clairsville baseball team celebrate their OVAC Class 4A championship Saturday after beating Weir, 5-4. T-L Photo/KIM NORTH



ABOVE: BELLAIRE'S Mayson Sochor and Union Local's Hayden McCrate race to their respective class championships in the 110M high hurdles during Saturday's OVAC Cal Giffin Track and Field Championships at St. Clairsville's Red Devil Stadium. The Big Reds and Jets won the 3A and 4A team championships, respectively.

BELOW: SHADYSIDE'S Kooper Chimley runs in the 4x400 meter relay during Saturday's OVAC Championship. He helped the Tigers win another 1A/2A championship.

Shadyside, Bellaire, UL capture OVAC boys track championships

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Though the Cal Giffin OVAC Track and Field Championship Meet only scores action during the final day, the tone is set during the early week qualifying.

Such was the case for Shadyside (1A/2A), Bellaire (3A), Union Local (4A) and Morgantown (5A) etched their names into OVAC history as the first track and field boys champions since the 2019 season.

All four squads used an impressive combination of top-end performers as well as depth to claim the conference titles Saturday afternoon at sunny and chilly Red Devil Stadium.



hustles in the Ohio Valley. The Tigers added another chapter on Saturday. Fending off Steubenville

in flexing their muscles. Their shuttle team posted a 64.03 to prevail in the hurdle relay.

The Tigers picked up a pair of wins in the field, too.

Junior Wyatt Reiman won the high jump with a 5-10 clearance.

Freshman Andrew Osman soared over 11-6 to win the pole vault.

Steubenville Catholic Central's 4x2 broke the tape at 1:35.76 to win the conference title.

Senior Joe Rohde gave the Crusaders their first individual winner when he captured the 400 in 51.34. He captured the 200 in 23.50.

Catholic Central's 4x4 team posted a 3:35.95 to win the final event and did so with a class-record time.

St. Clairsville, Linsly girls claim OVAC track titles

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

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Wheeling Park (5A), St. Clairsville (4A), Linsly (3A) and Steubenville Catholic Central (1A/2A) left with the top prizes.

Here's a look at each girls meet:

CLASS 1A/2A
Steubenville Catholic Central's strength in the hurdles, middle distance and relays was simply too much for Shadyside to overcome. The Crusaders finished with five victories and a total of 94 points.

The title is the 16th in school history for Central, but it's the first since 2015.

Junior hurdler Clara Symington provided a boost by claiming both hurdling events. She won the highs in 16.09 and then captured the lows in 46.10.

Junior Rebecca Bolster won the 400 with a time of 1:03.25.

The Crusaders also claimed the 4x200 relay by nearly six full seconds with a 1:50.56. They also claimed the 4x4, winning by nearly seven full seconds with a 4:27.20.

Shadyside picked up four victories during the course of the 18-event meet.

In the long jump, junior Paige Gorby prevailed with a solid mark of 16-0 3/4.

Freshman Alie Hawthorne captured the pole vault with jump of 7-6.

On the track, the Tigers claimed the shuttle relay in 1:20.51.

The Tigers sprinted and passed the baton to a victory in the 4x1 with a time of 54.72.

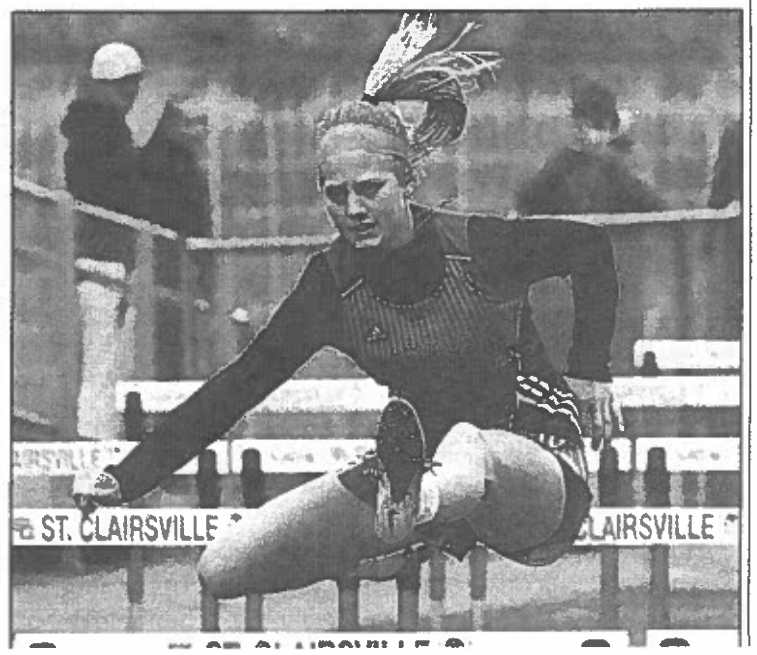
Paden City's Hope Weber was impressive in the throwing circles. She won the shot put (31-4 3/4) and discus (98-3).

Madonna was the conference champion in the 4x8, posting a time of 10:45.20.

Junior Kristina Lasho gave the Blue Dons an individual champion, winning the 800 in 2:35.45.

CLASS 3A
Linsly and Barnesville locked in an 18-event battle that actually started during Monday's qualifying. In the end, the Cadets depth and their top-end points, which allowed

See, GIRLS, Page B2



Medina Spirit could lose Ky. Derby win; track bans Baffert

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Medina Spirit's victory in the Kentucky Derby is in serious jeopardy because of a failed postrace drug test, one that led Churchill Downs to suspend Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert on Sunday in the latest scandal to plague the sport.

Baffert denied all wrongdoing and promised to be fully transparent with the Kentucky Horse Racing Commis-

sion during its investigation.

Baffert's barn received word Saturday that Medina Spirit had tested positive for an excessive amount of the steroid betamethasone, which is sometimes used to treat pain and inflammation in horses.

Medina Spirit's win over Mandaloun in the Derby stands — for now.

"To be clear, if the findings are up-

held, Medina Spirit's results in the Kentucky Derby will be invalidated and Mandaloun will be declared the winner," Churchill Downs officials said in a statement shortly after Baffert held a hastily planned morning news conference outside his barn to announce and respond to the allegations.

The track said failure to comply with the rules and medication protocols jeop-

ardizes the safety of horses and jockeys, the sport's integrity and the Derby's reputation.

"Churchill Downs will not tolerate it," the statement read. "Given the seriousness of the alleged offense, Churchill Downs will immediately suspend Bob Baffert, the trainer of Medina Spirit, from entering any horses at Churchill Downs Racetrack."

• St. C.

Continued from Page B1

ground to the hole at short, but the throw to second for the force was ruled late as the bases were loaded. Logan Shields' shot to second was fielded but the throw home sailed over the catcher's head, allowing Sefsick and Myers to both score and tie the game as courtesy runner Harrison Kazmirski took third and Shields ended up at second. Jaren Starks laid a perfect bunt down the first base line that he legged out as Kamzinski raced home for a 4-3 lead. Will Balgo's sacrifice fly to right plated Shields for a 5-3 reading.

"We did a really good job of getting some bunts down when we needed to that moved runners up, and we got the key hits when we had to. That's the key in high school baseball. Put the ball in play and make your opponent make the plays. That's what we did, but you can see by the last half-inning, it's never easy," Sliva added. "It's tough to make all the plays all the time."

Weir threatened in its last at-bat as Trenton Taflan walked leading off and went to third when Jack Scopel cued a single down the rightfield line. Mason Drobish crushed a ball to deep left-center that Starks tracked down for a sacrifice fly and a 5-4 deficit. An error in the outfield on a liner off the bat of Thomas Devecchis kept the Red Riders' hopes alive with just one out.

However, a comebacker to the mound prevented any movement from the runners and Balgo got a called third strike to end the game.

"Our two senior pitchers did their jobs," Sliva noted. "Tyler (Tonkovich) settled down after the first inning and kept us in the game and then Will (Balgo) came in and shut the door."

Tonkovich, who picked up the win, struggled in the windy conditions as he fanned five and walked a like number before giving way to balgo with a runner on in the sixth. Balgo, who earned the save, struck out a pair and issued one free pass. Together, they combined on a seven-hitter.

The Red Riders also threatened in the sixth when Grant Wilharm drew a lead-off walk that chased Tonkovich from

the mound. Balgo struck out the first batter he faced before inducing an inning-ending 1-6-3 double play.

"We did a lot of good things today, but there are still some things that we can clean up," Sliva noted. "That's baseball ... definitely high school baseball. I thought we did a good job of hanging in there and never getting down. We stuck with it and we're fortunate."

Freshman Braylen Blomquist led the Red-and-Gray's 11-hit attack with a trio of one-base raps that produced a run. Bush and Shields, the No. 8 and 9 hitters in the lineup, evenly distributed four base raps.

"You can't give a good team more than three outs in an inning, that's just the way baseball is," Weir head coach David Cowden said. "We fought back towards the end but when didn't force much during the middle innings after we took the early lead."

"St. Clairsville is a good ballclub and I'm not going to take anything away from them," Cowden added. "We pitched pretty good and we hit pretty good, but a play here and a play there and it's a different game."

Scopel singled thrice and drove in a run for the Red-and-Black. Luke Gillette had two singles and Devecchis slugged a two-run double in the first that gave the designated hosts a 2-0 margin. Kelly walked one and didn't strike out a batter. DiMatteis had one of each.

For Weir, which was seeking its seventh title all-time but first since 1994 and only the second since a four-year run in 1955-58, there's a lot of baseball left to play.

"With games, graduation and everything that goes on with it we don't have an open day the rest of the season," Cowden said. "We're going to be pretty busy the rest of the month."

Linescore:
OVAC Class 4A Championship
(at 1-470 J.B. Chambers Sports Complex)
St. Clairsville 5, Weir 4
St. Clairsville 000 014 0 - 5 11 1
Weir 200 010 1 - 4 7 1

STC — Tonkovich wp (5K, 5BB), Balgo sv (6), (2K, 1BB) and Bush; Starks S, rbi; Blomquist 3S, rbi; Balgo SF, rbi; Bush 2S, Shields 2S
W — Kelly (2K, 1BB), DiMatteis ip (6), (1K, 2BB) and Scopel; Gillette 2S, Scopel 3S, rbi; Drobish SF, rbi

Tortorella out after 6 years as CBJ coach

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — John Tortorella is out as coach of the Columbus Blue Jackets after six seasons.

General manager Jarmo Kekalainen said in a statement Sunday that parting ways with the winningest coach in franchise history was a mutual decision.

The 62-year-old Tor-

torella was in the last year of his contract, and the separation wasn't a surprise after a tumultuous season that saw the Blue Jackets plunge to last place in their division amid the coach's admitted failure to influence the team culture.

"Torts and I have had numerous conversations throughout the season,

and we have agreed that the time is right for both he and the club to go our separate ways," Kekalainen said a day after the Blue Jackets concluded the season with a 5-4 overtime win against Detroit. "He is a great coach and his accomplishments with our club over the past six seasons speak for themselves."

• Pirates

Continued from Page B1

game against the Cubs in the first. He was injured after he caught a liner and dived to first base trying to complete a double play. ... OF Bryan Reynolds (lower body soreness) was out for rest.

Cubs: OF Jake Marisnick (right hamstring strain) exited Sunday's game in the first inning after he was injured attempting to field a single. ... SS Baez (stiff back) was out of the starting lineup for rest after he left Saturday's game after the seventh inning. He pinch hit in the ninth. ... RHP Jake Arrieta (right thumb) is expected to be ready for next weekend's series at Detroit, manager

David Ross said. Arrieta threw a bullpen Saturday and will throw another this week in Cleveland.

UP NEXT
Pirates: RHP Mitch Keller (2-3, 6.29 ERA) is scheduled to start Monday to open a three-game home series against Cincinnati and RHP Tyler Mahle (1-1, 3.23).

Cubs: RHP Adbert Alzolay (1-2, 4.50) is expected to start Tuesday at Cleveland to begin a two-game series after Monday's off day. RHP Shane Bieber (3-2, 2.98) will pitch for the Indians.

• Girls

Continued from Page B1

them to claim seven events was too much for the Shamrocks.

The title is the third straight and fifth overall for the Cadets.

The Cadets got things rolling with a win in the first running event of the day. They claimed the shuttles in a time of 1:15.32.

Individually, Linsly was solid. Junior Mara Carlisle won the high hurdles in 17.88. Senior Syndey Glessner followed with a victory in the 100 in 12.71. She completed the sprint sweep in the 200 with a 26.26.

Another race and another win for Linsly occurred in the 4x2 when it posted a 1:53.03 to win by more than seven seconds. Linsly's speed was too much again in the 4x1 where the Cadets posted a 53.31 for the win.

Senior Molly Heron was once again impressive. She posted a victory in the 400 with a 64.72.

The Cadets put the finishing touches on their title sprint with a 4:25.01 to win the 4x4.

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Freshman Mara Bethel was impressive. She won the 1600 in 5:32.20. She added the 800 title in 2:32.94.

Senior Grace Detling captured the pole vault with a jump of 8-feet. Earlier in the meet, she had captured the 300 low hurdles in 52.48.

• Boys

Continued from Page B1

Bellaire came into the meet as the unquestioned favorite to prevail and didn't disappoint.

Riding their strength in distance, hurdles and throwing events, the Big Reds picked up victories in half of the 18 events and finished with 142 points, which was

the 3200 (10:09.67).

Sophomore speedster Ray Ray Pettigrew had another solid meet. He won the 100 in 11.42.

Linsly got a win from sophomore Nathan Coleman in the long jump. He marked the sand at 20-5 1/4 to win by more than a foot.

The Cadets 4x2 pre-

clearance.

Classmate Nathan Meyer marked the sand at 20-6 1/4.

Sophomore Jaksan Price delivered in the discus with a mark of 134-5 to win the platter crown.

On the track, Union Local started strong by winning the shuttles in a solid 1:02.82. The Jets followed with a blistering

A Better Vision for the Valley

Expert Presentations | Q&A | Community Discussion
Thursday, May 20 @ 6:30 PM

Do you have ideas for a better, stronger, and more sustainable Ohio River Valley economy? If so, we'd love to hear them. Please join us on May 20 at 6:30 p.m. for our second, virtual "Better Vision for the Valley" conference to discuss the potential for sustainable economic development in our communities.

This conference and roundtable discussion will build upon previous conversations on alternative development opportunities for the Ohio River Valley, such as renewable energy, regenerative agriculture,