

Ohio stars claim OVAC All-Star contest, 10-7

FOR THE TIMES LEADER

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"We were able to hit their pitches pretty well," Ohio head coach Barry Closser explained. "We hit them a little better than I thought we would."

"But in an all-star game, when you put together a team like this, you're going to have some hitters."

Ohio wasted little time in getting to Mountaineers starting hurler Kylie Earliwine, as

Brianne Cook's fly-ball out to right with the bases loaded scored Kristen King from third for the early 1-0 lead.

After Lisa Merryman pitched her second of two shutout innings, the Buckeyes went to work again.

With one out, Charity Street laced a single to left, and was followed by another single from Bellaire's Jen Biela. Biela later was tagged out at home.

Street scored on the first of two Mariah Hulsey RBI singles. Hulsey and Zanesville's Lindsay Campbell -- who reached on an error -- scored when Monroe Central's Anna Blair knocked a two-run base hit over second

base.

In just two innings, Ohio had mounted a commanding 4-0 lead, and with its stable of pitchers, it was a safe lead.

Nothing makes a coaches job easier than being able to trot out a dominant pitcher to take control of the game.

Well if one makes the job easier, how about two? Or three?

Ohio was able to utilize the talents of Merryman, Hitchcock and Gabrielle Burns in five successive innings and the trio combined to allow only one unearned run.

"They were quick," Closser

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T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

LINING a single to left field is Beallsville's Charity Street during Monday night's OVAC All-Star Game. Ohio pocketed a 10-7 win.

● OVAC

Continued from Page B1

said of his first couple of pitchers. "I noticed that because early on when I went out to catch them in between innings while the catchers got right, I could tell how quick they were."

"Pitching like that makes it really easy on the coaches."

During that span, the Buckeyes plated seven runs, and from that point on, all they had to do was hang on.

But hanging on proved to be more than a simple task.

West Virginia got one run in the fourth when Amy Woods of Cameron led off the inning with a single, and came around to score when Mandy Lamb of Oak Glen's routine ground ball turned into a three-base error.

The Mountaineers got another run in the sixth when Stephanie Glover scored from third when a fly-ball to right field that would have been out No. 3 was dropped.

Two runs, compared to nine for Ohio was relatively harmless, but the Mountaineers weren't done yet.

More errors, and a clutch RBI single from Tyler Consolidated's Ashley Palmer provided three runs in the eighth inning, making the deficit 9-5.

Ohio pushed its lead to five runs in the eighth when Samantha Cunningham tripled, and was driven home by Jessie Tuck of Cambridge.

But the feisty visitors still weren't done.

In the final inning, Kilaine Parsons drove in a run on a single, and one other run scored on a passed ball to cut the lead to three. But with the bases loaded, Charity Street calmed down and got Wheeling Park's Sara Griffith to ground out to end the game.

Ohio's pitchers, despite the late comeback, surrendered only six hits all game. Parsons was the only West Virginia player with more than one hit, as she finished with two singles.

Blair and Hulsey led the Ohio squad, each with a pair of RBIs.

West Virginia	000 100 132 --	7	6	3
Ohio	130 030 21x --	10	13	4

W -- Earliwine 1p (3SO, 0W), Parsons (4) (1SO, 1W), Gassaway (7) (2SO, 2W) and Sampson, Wilson (4), Billings (7), Parsons 2S, rbi.
 O -- Merryman wp (4SO, 0W), Hitchcock (3) (4SO, 1W), Burns (5) (0SO, 0W), Ellringham (6) (0SO, 0W), Jack (7) (1SO, 2W), Rinard (8) (1SO, 0W), Street (9) (1SO, 3W) and Evans, Campbell (6). Kuhn T; Cook S, rbi; Campbell D; Hulsey 2S, 2rbi; Hitchcock rbi; Blair S, 2rbi; Cunningham T; Tuck rbi; Venci S, 2rbi.

Ohio Tops W.Va.

Buckeye squad
races to early lead,
holds on for victory

By MIKE HUGHES
Staff Writer

Ohio scored 10 runs on 13 hits in handing West Virginia a 10-7 setback in the annual OVAC All-Star softball game Monday at the I-470 Complex in Wheeling.

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Inside

■ Linescore from Monday's All-Star Game.

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Above, Ohio's Lindsay Campbell, of Zanesville, races toward home plate as West Virginia's Ashley Luzader, of John Marshall, watches during the OVAC All-Star softball game Monday at J.B. Chambers I-470 complex. Left, Shaydside's Lisa Merryman, center, receives the OVAC Class A player of the Year plaque. Presenting the award are OVAC committee members Charlene Galluzza, left, and Liz Hofreuter-Landini. Ohio won the game, 10-7.

Photos by
Alex Kozlowski

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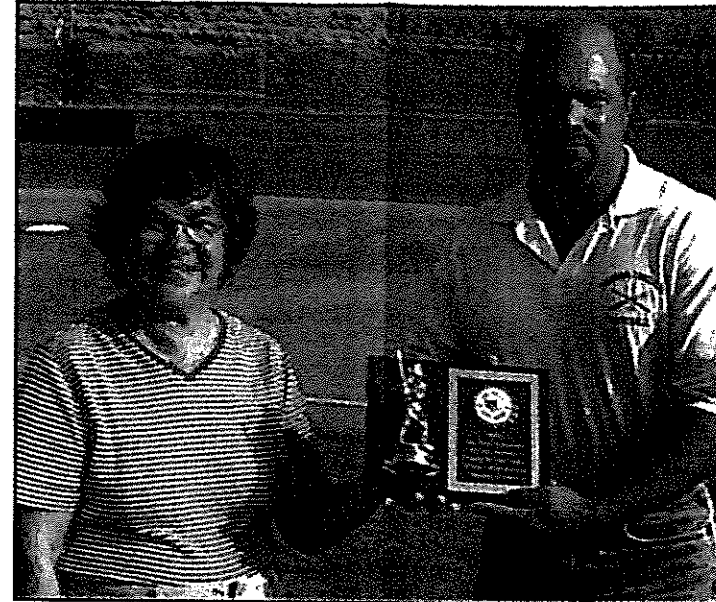
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Ohio pockets OVAC Softball All-Star tilt

JEFF HARRISON
THE DAILY JEFFERSONIAN

WHEELING, W.Va. — Ohio made it back-to-back all-star game victories on the diamond by holding off a late charge by West Virginia to win the OVAC All-Star Softball Game at the Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove on Monday by a 10-7 score.

One day earlier, Ohio captured a 7-2 decision in the George Kovalick/OVAC All-Star Baseball Game in Steubenville.

Ohio got two strong innings apiece on the mound from Shadyside's Lisa Merryman and Steubenville Catholic Central's Meredith Hitchcock at the outset, with each hurler notching four strikeouts during her stint.

The Buckeye gals, meanwhile, put one run on the board in the first and added three in the second to take an early 4-0 lead.

In the first, Monroe Central's Ashley Kuhn led off with a triple and Buckeye Local's Kristen King was hit by a pitch before Steubenville Catholic's Tessa Valerio hit into a fielder's choice, with Kuhn caught off

third base.

Barnesville's Brianna Cook followed with a sacrifice fly to center field, plating King with the game's first tally.

Ohio's second inning featured one-out back-to-back singles by Beallsville's Charity Street and Bellaire's Jen Biela and Zanesville's Lyndsey Campbell reaching on an error to load the bases. River's Mariah Hulsey delivered an RBI single and, after Hitchcock hit into a fielder's choice (with Biela thrown out at the plate), Monroe's Anna Blair rapped a two-run single to extend the lead to 4-0.

West Virginia broke through in the fourth inning when Cameron's Amy Woods singled and scored when Oak Glen's Mandi Lamb hit into a fielder's choice with a throwing error on the play.

Ohio tacked on three more in the sixth frame, with the first run coming when Shenandoah's Ashley Smith, Wellsville's Gabrielle Burns and Steubenville's Brittany Venci collected consecutive singles, with Venci driving in Smith.

After two outs, Steubenville

Jeff Harrison/The Daily Jeffersonian
Frances Burkhart of Barnesville presented the Paul Burkhart/OVAC Coach of the Year Award to Monroe Central's Ted Brown, who guided his team to a perfect 32-0 season and the Ohio Division III state championship as well as the OVAC Class 2-A title and the Pioneer Valley Conference crown. The award is now named in honor of the late Paul Burkhart, the long-time Barnesville High softball coach and member of the OVAC Softball Committee.



Jeff Harrison/The Daily Jeffersonian
These four girls represented the local area in the annual OVAC Softball All-Star Game at the Chambers/I-470 Complex in Elm Grove, W. Va. on Monday. Kneeling, l to r, are Jessica Tuck of Cambridge and Nicky Miller of Buckeye Trail. In back are Ashley Smith of Shenandoah and Brianna Cook of Barnesville. Ohio posted a 10-7 victory in the contest.

See OVAC page B-2

Ohio softball all-stars prevail

OVAC from page B-1

Catholic's Valerio reached on an error and both Burns and Venci scampered home.

The Mountain State girls got one back in the top of the seventh when Weirton Madonna's Stephanie Glover walked and scored as Wheeling Park's Sarah Griffith reached on an error.

Two more Ohio runs crossed in the bottom of the seventh. Bellaire's Biela reached on a walk and Zanesville's Campbell ripped a double before River's Hulsey picked up an RBI with a base hit. Hitchcock then hit into a double-play, with Campbell scoring to make it 9-2.

West Virginia capitalized on two Ohio errors in the eight to score three times. Brooke's Ashley Visco reached on a two-out single; Brooke teammate Marissa Ciccollela reached via an error; Tyler's Ashley Palmer ripped an RBI single and Tyler's Alexis Billings got on thanks to another Buckeye miscue, with two runs scoring on the play to cut the gap to 9-5.

Ohio got its final run in the bottom of the eighth when Harrison Central's Samantha Cunningham drilled a one-out triple and scored when Cambridge's Jessica Tuck hit a slapper back to the mound and beat it out for a single when no one covered first.

West Virginia made things interesting in the ninth, benefiting from three walks, a hit batsman and an RBI single by Linsly's Kilaine Parsons to score twice, cutting the lead to 10-7 with the bases loaded and two outs, but Ohio caught a runner off third to end the game.

Seven Ohio pitchers combined for 11 strikeouts and five walks while a trio of West Virginia pitchers teamed for six Ks and two walks.

Hulsey and Blair each had two hits for Ohio while Parsons had a pair of West Virginia.

GAME NOTES: Special presentations at the game included the Paul Burkhardt/OVAC Coach of the Year to Monroe Central's Ted Brown, who guided his team to the Ohio Division III state championship with a 32-0 record as well as the OVAC Class 2-A and PVC crowns. The award was handed out by Frances Burkhardt, widow of Paul Burkhardt, the long-time Barnesville High coach who passed away last summer...

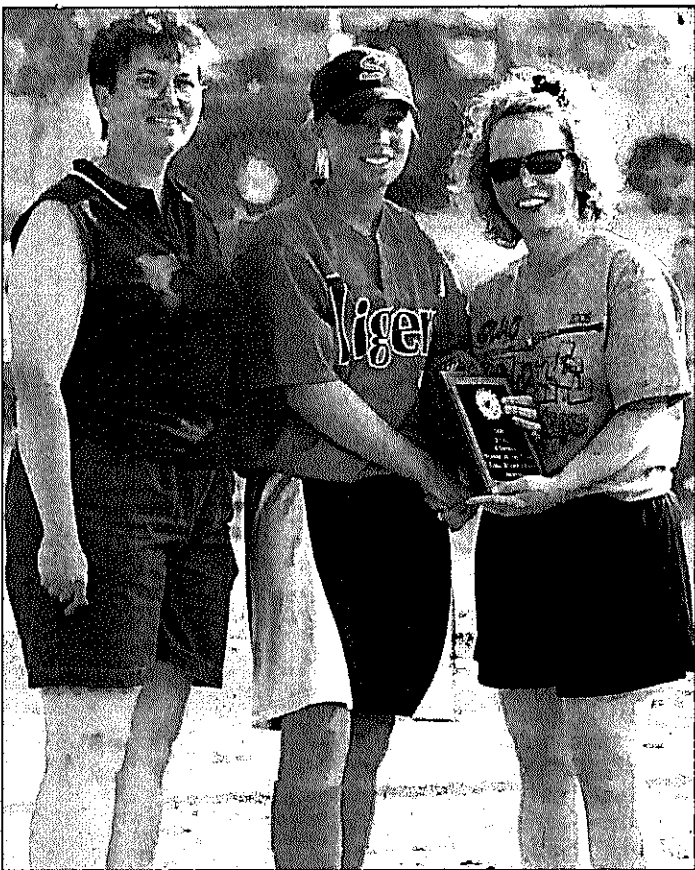
Player of the Year awards were given to junior Lakyn Bendle of Edison (Class 4-A); junior Rachel Mason of Magnolia (Class 3-A); junior LeeKycia Brown of Monroe Central (Class 2-A); and Shadyside's Merryman (Class 1-A)...

Special awards were presented to coaches Spencer Bendle of Edison and Tim Merryman of Shadyside for achieving their 100th wins this past season...

Ohio had 25 players in its batting order, meaning some girls only batted once. That group included Buckeye Trail's Nicky Miller, who drew a walk in her only plate appearance...



OVAC Award



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

HONORED AS the OVAC Softball Class 1-A Player of the Year was Lisa Merryman of Shadyside. Pictured with the Lady Tigers' pitching ace are Charlene Galluzzo, left, and Liz Hofreuter-Landini, members of the OVAC Softball Committee.

Player of year



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

RECEIVING THE OVAC Class 2-A Player-of-the-Year Award is Monroe Central's LeeKycia Brown. The Lady Seminoles' standout is shown receiving the award from Jeff Harrison, member of the OVAC Softball Committee.