

SPORTS

OVAC Softball and Baseball Championships

A perfect 10 for SJC in Class 1A

• Irish take down Donahue

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — The names may change, but the results remain the same for the St. John Central softball team.

Saturday morning on sunny, but chilly Ben's Field, the No. 1 seed Irish (15-1) continued their dominance of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Tournament's Class A field by capturing their 10th championship, and third straight, with a 5-1 decision over third-seeded Paden City at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex.

Despite all the titles, veteran head coach Jerry Magistro called this one special.

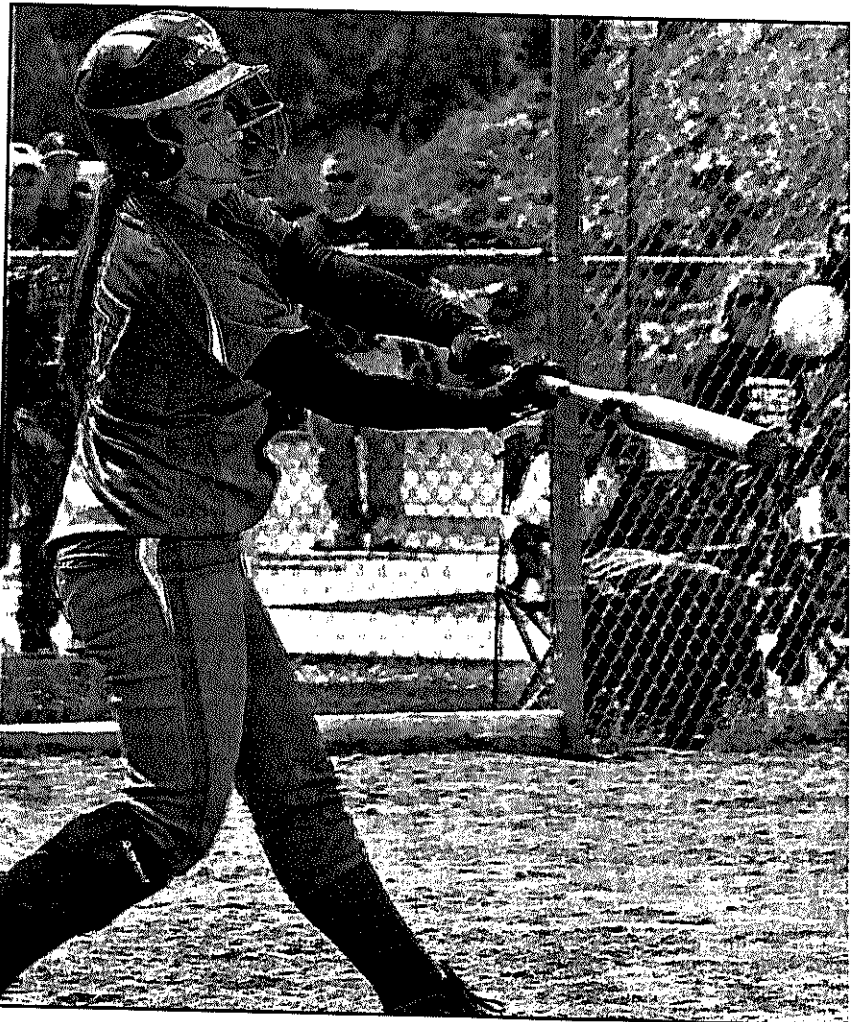
"I'm going to say that (winning) this year means a lot because people don't understand what we've been through," he explained. "We've got some key injuries and we've even got some girls playing hurt."

"When you've had the type of injuries that we've had, those are some pretty major things," he continued. "For these young girls to step up like they have, it's just been great."

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- Jerry Magistro
SJC Softball Coach

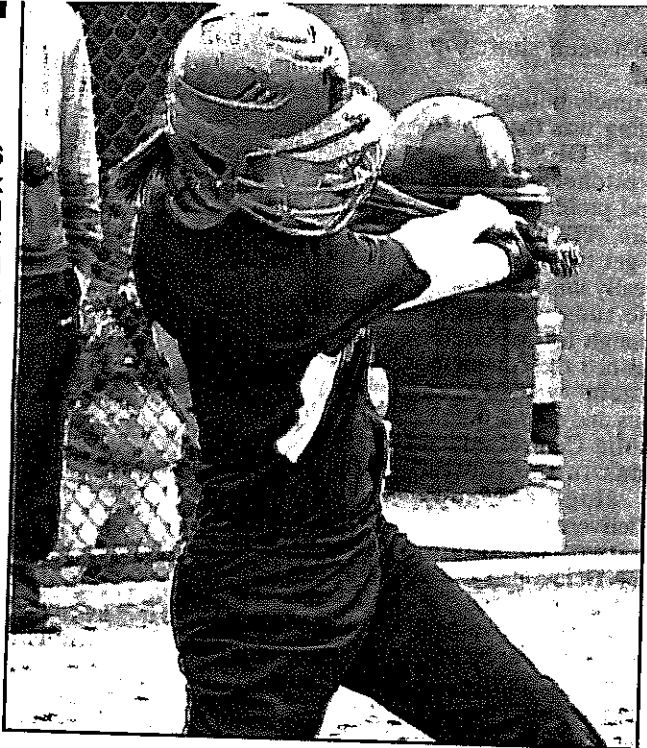


ST. JOHN'S Gilli Johnson makes contact with a pitch during Saturday morning's OVAC Class 1A final against Bishop Donahue. The Lady Irish prevailed, 5-1. Additional images may be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

T-L Photo/RICK THORP

BELLAIRE'S
Daphne Clark
hits the ball
during the OVAC
Class 3A final
against
Steubenville CC
Saturday in Elm
Grove. Bellaire
fell, 8-0.
Additional
images may be
found at
[cu.timesleader-
online.com](http://cu.timesleader-online.com)

T-L Photo/RICK THORP



Steubenville CC denies Bellaire in Class 3A, 8-0

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

ELM GROVE — For the second straight season, the Bellaire softball team reached the OVAC Class 3A title game.

However, it also came up short of its goal once again.

Top-seeded Steubenville Catholic Central scored four runs in the bottom of the first and never looked back en route to an 8-0 victory on Lisa's Field during at the OVAC Tom Bechtel Softball Championship Saturday morning.

While the Crusaders, who now own six conference titles, got seemingly big hit after big hit, Bellaire just couldn't get untracked at the plate against sophomore hurler Alex McComb.

"We just didn't hit the ball," Bellaire head coach Melissa Lahna lamented. "We played

"WE PLAYED pretty well defense, which is great, but to win games, we have to hit the ball."

- *Melissa Lahna*
Bellaire Head Coach

pretty well defensively, which is great, but to win games, we have to hit the ball. We've been up and down a lot."

The Big Reds posted just two innocent singles and had only four base runners for the entire game, none of whom moved further than first base.

"We put the ball in play, but we just couldn't get any timely hits," Lahna said. "We're a young team, so I think we'll be back (in this

See, **BELLAIRE**, Page C2

Steubenville tops Harrison for first OVAC softball title

By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — Veteran head coaches, no matter of the sport, always try to find a silver lining in a loss.

Harrison Central softball coach Donnie Bethel is no different.

"We were a gap-shot away from tying the game," he said after a 4-2 setback to third-seeded Steubenville Saturday afternoon on Ben's Field in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Tournament Class 4A championship game at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex. "A bloop and a blast and we win, but

"I'M SATISFIED with the effort that my girls gave me, but I'm not happy with the end result, obviously."

- *Donnie Bethel*
Harrison Softball Coach

"Even after everything that happened previously (in the game), we fought and scratched and gave ourselves a chance at the end."

See, **HARRISON**, Page C2



T-L Photo/RICK THORP

HARRISON CENTRAL'S Katie Ellzy scurries back to the base as Steubenville's Rhiannon Petrisko gets set to apply the tag during Saturday's Class 4A game. Big Red won, 4-2. Additional images may be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

Shadyside falls to Central in 2A

By **RICK THORP**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — Little things and a big team effort.

Put those together and they add up to another title for Wheeling Central.

Cassidy McCord's sixth-inning sacrifice fly was the difference as the Maroon Knights rallied to top Shadyside, 5-4, to claim the Class 2A crown Saturday at the Tom Bechtel OVAC Softball Championships at the J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex.

"It was totally different than (Thursday) when we just hammered the ball," Wheeling Central head coach Rick Magruder said, referencing his team's 10-0, five-inning semifinal triumph against Bridgeport.

"The little things got us the runs (Saturday)."

The championship was the school's 12th and third in four years, leaving it

See, **SHADYSIDE**, Page C2

we did yesterday (in a 5-1 win over two-time defending champion Buckeye Local), but we didn't play that poorly, either. They (Big Red) made some plays defensively and ran the bases well. I also liked their pitcher."

Big Red went ahead 1-0 in the first inning with its speed. Sierra Fields beat out a blooper behind the mound for a single and promptly swiped second and third. She then streaked home on a passed ball.

Harrison Central drew even in the top of the fourth when Katie Ellzy singled to left to knock in Shianne Nameth, who had singled and went to second on a groundout.

Carmie Biasi's one-out

anymore.

With the OVAC Tournament in the rear-view mirror, Bethel and his Huskies have their sights set on a very tough Division III sectional tournament.

"This was one of our goals, but we've got a big week ahead of us and then the sectional rolls around," he said.

Ellzy struck out six and walked two. The Robert Morris University recruit scattered half-a-dozen hits, but the Huskies made four errors in the field.

Kara Dunfee had a double and Joelle Jones rapped a pair of singles.

North can be reached at knorth@timesleader-online.com

● SJC

Continued from Page C1

One player that isn't injured is senior ace Hannah Absalom. She tossed a three-hitter that included 13 strikeouts and only one walk. She needed 102 in the 1-hour, 20-minute contest. Oh, by the way, she also knocked in three runs with a two-run homer and a groundout.

"Hannah was on her game once again," Magistro said of Absalom, a three-year OVAC champion. "She sat out her freshman year with an injury. "She also helped herself with the bat once again. That's the kind of player she is, an all-around ballplayer."

Absalom said she always wants to hit the ball.

"I don't like to walk," she noted. "I want to hit the ball."

And hit the ball she has. Her first-inning groundout chased home Taylor Lowe for a 1-0 lead. Her two-run, two-out homer to left-center was her second in two games — to the exact same spot — and gives her six for the season.

Had it not been for an injury her freshman season, she possibly could've been a four-year titlist.

"It's a little bit frustrating to know that, but if I didn't take that season off, I wouldn't be where I am today," she offered. "So, it evened out."

St. John Central padded its margin with two more runs in the fifth. Natalie Cervelli was hit-by-a-pitch leading off and went to second on a passed ball. Amber LaMotte legged out an infield single as Cervelli took third. Cervelli would race home on a wild pitch and LaMotte would slide across the plate on a Lowe sacrifice for a 5-0 reading.

The Wildcats avoided being shutout in the first championship game appearance by tallying their lone run in the sixth. Tori Anderson scored on Amber Neff's infield single.

"We did what we had to to get the win," Magistro acknowledged. "We're still a really young team, and we've got a stretch of important games coming up before our (Div. IV) sectional tournament, which might be tougher this year than it has been in quite some time."

Lowe finished with two runs batted in, while Kate Lovinski added a pair of one-base raps. Both are freshmen.

St. John Central is back in action Monday when it hosts Class 4-A champion Steubenville at Amanda's Field. Game time is 5 p.m.

North can be reached at knorth@timesleader-online.com

● Harrison

Continued from Page C1

The fourth-seed Huskies (10-6), who qualified on the final day before the cut-off, finished runnerup for the second consecutive season, losing to Buckeye Local a year ago. The title was the first for Steubenville.

"I'm satisfied with the effort that my girls gave me, but I'm not happy with the end result, obviously," Bethel continued. "I'm hoping that we're starting to turn that corner and play with a little more consistency."

"We didn't play as well as we did yesterday (in a 5-1 win over two-time defending champion Buckeye Local), but we didn't play that poorly, either. They (Big Red) made some plays defensively and ran the bases well. I also liked their pitcher."

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Carmie Biasi's one-out

single in the Big Red half of the inning gave the Jefferson Countians a 2-1 advantage. She would eventually score what turned out to be the game-winning run on an error.

The Huskies whittled into the deficit when Ellzy unloaded her sixth home run of the season to deep right-center, making it 3-2 leading off the sixth. However, despite having two runners on later in the inning and again in the seventh, they couldn't dent the scoreboard anymore.

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● Bellaire

Continued from Page C1

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Much of the Big Reds' struggles are a credit to McComb and Catholic Central's defense, which committed only one error.

"Bellaire didn't hit many balls with a ton of authori-

ty," Crusaders' head coach Jim DiCarlo said. "We wanted to take away their bunt, and we felt if we could do that, we'd have a good chance of keeping their run production to a low total."

McComb showed in the top of the first that she was on her game, sitting the Big

Reds down in order.

Meanwhile, Steubenville Central (12-4) took advantage of some early control problems by Bellaire starting pitcher Daphne Clark.

She plunked senior lead-off hitter Micca Mirabella in the helmet and then issued back-to-back walks to load the bases.

It appeared she may escape the frame without any damage. She induced back-to-back fly outs to centerfielder Abbey Cusick. However, first baseman Megan Lloyd roped a bases-clearing triple to the fence in left.

"We were (excited) at the start of the game, but one pitch hurt us," Lahna said. "But, that doesn't determine the game. We have to hit the ball and we didn't do that. When you don't hit, you don't win."

She came home when Maddy Metcalf came through with a seeing-eye

single between shortstop and third.

"The timely hitting in the first inning was the key to the game," DiCarlo said. "Their pitcher had some command problems, so our kids were very patient and then to get two-out, timely hits is really important."

Those runs were more than enough for McComb, who finished the complete-game gem with seven strikeouts and nary a walk.

Catholic Central added four runs in the fourth. Senior slugger Maddy Gulan delivered the big hit with a two-run single. Ashlynn Daley also had a RBI single in the frame.

The Big Reds' two hits were a single apiece by senior Mackenzie Conroy and Mary Garloch.

Bellaire is now 12-6 and will visit Harrison Monday.

Staskey can be reached at sstaskey@timesleader-online.com



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| P195/65R15 | PEGASUS MINOS | \$56 |

● Shadyside

Continued from Page C1

second all-time behind Bishop Donahue's 13.

"They were determined," Magruder added.

The Maroon Knights struck first, scoring two in the home half of the second.

Allie Cook led off with a single, then moved to third on consecutive wild pitches. Following an Ashley Gast walk, Hannah Mozingo's sacrifice fly scored Cook. Later, McCord laced a two-out single scoring Mozingo.

Wheeling Central tacked on another run an inning later when Sydney Bennington scored from third while Cook was being chased in a rundown between first and second.

By the time action moved to the fifth, weather started becoming an issue. The game began under a light rain, but when the Lady Tigers came to bat in the fifth the rain started coming down heavier.

Sam Rosser walked with one out and then moved to second when Kenzie Fielding grounded out.

Karly Klug reached on an error, sending Rosser to third. Then, after Klug stole second, Katie Heath slapped a single to short scoring Rosser making the count 3-1.

A wild pitch advanced Klug and Heath to third and second, respectively, with Lindsey Dunn at the plate.

Umpires stopped the game for a few minutes to allow for some work on Ben's Field. Dunn then returned to the batter's box and reached on an outfield error clearing the bases and knotting the score at 3-3.

At that point, the home plate umpire said he heard thunder and called for a weather delay, which lasted about 40 minutes.

"That kind of put a damper on our run, we were kind of on fire there," Shadyside head coach Jillian Ongley said. "I don't know. When Megan (Heagney) got up after that delay was when we got the go-ahead, so it just stopped us for a while."

Heagney doubled in Dunn on a shot that fell just inside the right field line making the score 4-3 LTs.

"The weather affected both teams, but I think it gave us a chance to refocus," Magruder noted. "In fact, it might have helped us."

Basinger, who allowed just three hits and fanned six, could be seen pumping up the team as it huddled near the team's dugout during the delay. It apparently helped.



Photo Provided

SHADYSIDE'S KENZIE Fielding (11) tags out Wheeling Central's Joni Zavolta at third base to complete a double play during Saturday's OVAC Class 2A final.

"She's truly dedicated," Magruder said. "She's become a great leader."

Jai'Ehir Jackson's lead-off single set the stage for Joni Zavolta. She laced a single to right and the speedy Jackson raced all the way home to knot the game at 4-4.

"When (Jai'Ehir) gets on base, it's tough to throw her out," Magruder said.

The LTs' went down in order in the sixth, setting the stage for McCord's heroics.

Cook reached on an

error. A walk and an infield single loaded the bases. With one out, McCord's sac scored Cook with the eventual game winner.

"This isn't where we wanted to be, but I don't think anyone needs to hang their heads," Ongley said.

"Playing in a game like this, against a team like this is great practice for sectionals. We have some tough games coming up, so we just need to keep building."

Thorp can be reached at rthorp@timesleaderonline.com

Paden City wins first 1-A tourney contest

By **MATTHEW PEASLEE**
For The Times Leader

WHEELING — Paden City's run production in the seventh and eighth inning of Thursday's OVAC 1A softball semifinal against Madonna has been a microcosm of its season as a whole.

"It's teamwork," Wildcats coach Janie Fox said after her team topped the Blue Dons, 5-4. "It's everybody doing their part and stepping up. That's what makes the difference and it definitely did in this game."

Megan Pierce plated Hannah Stanley for the go-ahead run in the top of the eighth. Then, Paden City pitcher Taylor Cosper sent Madonna down in order in the bottom half to win it.

It improved the Wildcats' record to 10-12,

while advancing them to their first OVAC title game.

"We're starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel," Fox said.

"The girls have grown a lot over the past two seasons and I think everything is starting to come together."

Last year, Paden City fell to St. John in an OVAC semifinal.

In the seventh inning, Madaline Cox drove in Tori Anderson to break a 3-3 tie that had been existed since the third inning.

Madonna's first two batters of the bottom of the seventh, Becca Holt and Amanda Paul, reached base and safely moved over on Emily Pietranton's sacrifice bunt. Courtney Kaczmarek struck out before Montana Mascio's two-out single scored Holt and forced extra innings.

OVAC

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Softball

Semifinal action gets under way at 4 p.m. Tuesday on Field 3 at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex. That's when Wheeling Central takes on Bridgeport, followed by another Class 2A matchup, between River and Shadyside at 5:45 p.m. Class 3A Steubenville Catholic and Madonna meet at 7:30.

Meanwhile, Class 1A takes center stage on Field 4, beginning at 5:15 p.m. when St. John tangles with Bishop Donahue, followed by Madonna and Paden City at 7 p.m.

A Class 3A matchup between Shenandoah and Bellaire at 4 p.m. gets things started on Wednesday at Field 3. That's followed by Class 5A games pitting Indian Creek and Cambridge at 5:45 p.m., and the nightcap, which will be played at 7:30 p.m., features Wheeling Park and John Marshall.

Field 4 plays host to a pair of Class 3A matchups

as Martins Ferry battles Steubenville at 5:15, and Buckeye Local meets Harrison Central at 7 p.m.

If rain interferes, the semifinals will be moved to Thursday, also at I-470 for

Baseball

The matchups were set last weekend, and the titles will be awarded Friday and Saturday at the Red Knight Baseball Complex in Toronto and Steubenville's Vaccaro Field, respectively.

It all begins Friday with Linsly taking on Bellaire at 5 p.m. in the 3A final at Toronto. That's followed by the Class 4A championship at 7:30 p.m., pitting Martins Ferry and Steubenville.

The action switches to Vaccaro on Saturday, with three crowns set to be decided. At 10 a.m. Bishop Donahue goes for its fourth consecutive Class 1A title when it battles Madonna.

At 1:30 p.m. the big schools take center stage, as Wheeling Park and Edison will decide Class 5A. Wrapping it up is the 2A championship at 4 p.m., between Caldwell and Shadyside.

ER — Wheeling, W.Va. — 11

REDSKINS

(Continued from Page 9)
game, playing Wheeling Park.

The Redskins collected three runs in both the third and fourth innings in this one.

Geangel and Abby Orr, both reaching on singles, came around to score on Bethany Davis' single to take a 2-0 lead in the third.

Then, Davis scored on Alexis Monroe's single to right field.

In the fourth inning, Hannah Webb, Sydney Karis and Marissa Defallo collected three singles in a row to load the bases and set the tone for a potential big inning.

With nobody out, Orr delivered a double, which scored all three. It capped the scoring as the Redskins were sent down in order in the sixth and seventh innings.

Creek tallied 10 hits, with Geangel and Malorie Sullivan adding first-inning singles and Karis singing in the second.

Cambridge left five runners on base, all in the first four innings.

"They battled in the beginning," Penner said. "Cambridge was a worthy opponent."

The Redskins are 12-1, with their only loss coming against Buckeye Local.

"We're happy to have a chance to play for a championship," Penner said.

"The girls just don't quit. They keep after it."

HARRISON

(Continued from Page 9)

batters from the end of the first inning through the midway point of the fifth. The Panthers scattered seven hits in the contest.

"You have to scratch for everything you can get off her," Buckeye coach Joe Soos said. "Ellzy has to be the best, at least top two, pitchers in the valley."

Panthers pitcher Ivy Starcher went in the circle with strong acclaim, too. She struck out the first two batters in the bottom of the first inning and quickly recorded two strikes on the Huskies' next batter, Shianne Nameth.

After fouling off the next four pitches, Nameth jumped on a pitch and

drove it over the center-field fence to open the scoring with a solo home run.

"Shianne hits that real hard to get us started," Bethel said. "We were ready to play after that."

"Buckeye is a great ball club and they were ready, too. We just caught them at the right time."

Harrison (10-5) reached base safely in all six innings that it was at the plate. The Huskies scored again in the fifth inning on a Nameth sacrifice fly to center.

They added a pair in the sixth on RBI singles and another in the seventh with Alexia Dowdle scoring on a wild pitch.

They finished with seven

hits, as well.

"I thought we played a solid ballgame," Bethel said. "Pitching, defense, timely hitting. We put the ball in play real well."

The Panthers did, too — in the sixth inning.

With two outs, Karlee Leonard started a rally with a single, followed by a Kierstyn Czuchran single.

Next, Lauren Swiger plated Leonard with a hit, followed by a Morgan Statton single.

A strikeout after that ended the frame.

"Our kids fought," Soos said. "(Harrison's) hits were a little bit stronger and more timely."

"If anyone is going to shut you down it's going to

be Ellzy."

Bethel agreed.

"It's very tough to beat Katie when she's on and when we score five runs," he said.

Buckeye, the No. 1 seed which now sits at 10-4, entered the semifinal as two-time defending OVAC champions. Earlier this season, Harrison beat the Panthers 1-0.

"I knew this was too good of a team," Bethel said, "we couldn't shut them out again."

The Huskies face Steubenville at noon today.

"Hopefully we bring the same ballgame," Bethel said. "I'll be satisfied with that, whether we win or lose."

JM

(Continued from Page 9)

forth," John Marshall coach Ed West said. "We had the one good inning where we got up a little bit, but I knew the game wasn't over."

"I was never at the point where I thought we had this one in the bag until we got the last out. Believe me."

"They're a good-hitting team and they were hitting the ball solidly."

"We made some plays on defense. That's the bottom line. Our defense played well."

The Patriots actually out hit the Monarchs, 12-10, but committed five

errors, three of which came in the fourth.

Alyssa Blake earned a victory from the circle for the Monarchs, while Carly Greer, who homered in

the first, took the loss.

"They've been hitting her a little bit," Park coach Dee Davis said. "If she keeps pitching to these batters, she'll start

to learn their weaknesses.

That's when she's at her best. We'll play them in regionals and then she'll be ready. That's how she is."

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ABSALOM

Continued from page B1

What Paden City couldn't muster at the plate, Absolom did.

She had an RBI ground-out in the first inning and then delivered the dagger with a two-run home run in the third inning.

Paden City coach Jeanie Fox said it shouldn't have come to that.

"The goal was for her to never see a ball that she could hit," Fox said. "Unfortunately we got too close to the corner a couple of times. It's really tough for a pitcher to force it to the outside like that. She's just an outstanding player in every aspect."

Absolom said she knows the drill. Keep the ball away.

"I know they want to keep the ball away, but when I come up I'm looking for anything I can hit," Absolom said. "I never like to surrender and take a walk. I want to hit the ball."

She did just that in two key situations.

After Taylor Lowe drew an one-out walk and moved around to third on a wild pitch and a stolen base, Absolom grounded sharply to third, allowing Lowe to score the first run of the game.

In the third, with two outs, Lowe was on first, reaching on a fielder's choice, and Absolom smashed a 1-1 pitch over the left-field fence to give the Fighting Irish a 3-0 lead.

"She had good range with the bat," coach Jerry Magistro said. "Anything close, she's able to drive. She's really been an all-around player for us. She plays well for us in the outfield, too. She has a cannon for an arm. She gets the job done at the plate and she's one of the best pitchers in the area."

Paden City would not disagree.

Absolom struck out the side in the second, third and fourth innings and had two in the first inning.

"That was the best pitching performance we've seen this season," Fox said.

After Paden City had two runners reach via a hit batsman and error, Absolom struck out the next two hitters to end the threat.

Paden City's Tori Anderson had the first of two Paden City (10-14) hits in the fourth, and, after Amber Neff drew a two-out walk, Absolom

ended the threat again with a strikeout.

"I like to start out quickly and get ahead in the count," Absolom said. "I was able to do that (Saturday). I got ahead in the count and was able to keep them of balance."

A couple of errors led to St. John taking a 5-0 lead in the fifth before Paden City broke the shutout in the sixth.

Anderson reached on an error and later scored on a single by Neff.

Neff didn't nearly equal the strikeouts by her circle counterpart, but she did hold the Fighting Irish (15-1) to just three hits.

"She did what she needed to do for the most part," Fox said. "I thought she threw a good game."

It was St. John's third straight OVAC softball championship.

"It is nice for Hannah to go out with another championship," Magistro said. "The great thing about this tournament is we were able to play a bunch of people. I thought it was a strong team effort. It was big for us. (Paden City) has a good team."

And a young team. The Wildcats start two freshmen and the rest juniors.

CRUSADERS

Continued from page B1

The Big Reds posted just two innocent singles and had only four base runners for the entire game, none of whom moved further than first base.

"We put the ball in play, but we just couldn't get any timely hits," Lahna said. "We're a young team, so I

think we'll be back (in this game) again next year. These girls play hard, work hard and they have a ton of heart."

Much of the Big Reds' struggles are a credit to McComb and Catholic's defense, which committed only one error.

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Megan Lloyd roped a bases-clearing triple to the fence in left.

"We were (excited) at the start of the game, but one pitch hurt us," Lahna said. "But, that doesn't determine the game. We have to hit the ball and we didn't do that. When you don't hit, you don't win."

She came home when Maddy Metcalf came through with a single between shortstop and third.

"The timely hitting in the first inning was the key to the game," DiCarlo said.

"Their pitcher had some command problems, so our kids were very patient and then to get two-out, timely hits is really important."

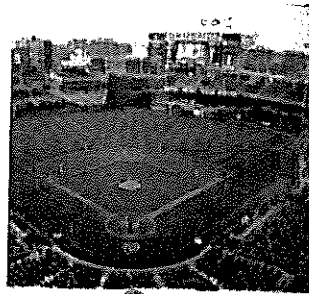
Those runs were more than enough for McComb, who finished the complete-game gem with seven strikeouts and a walk.

Catholic added four runs in the fourth. Senior slugger Maddy Gulan delivered the big hit with a two-run single. Ashlyne Daley also had a RBI single in the frame.

The Big Reds' two hits were a single apiece by senior Mackenzie Conroy and Mary Garloch.

Allgame

Pittsburgh



atch on the field

Redskins Kick In The Door

Geanangel pitches Creek to 5A final

By **MATTHEW PEASLEE**
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — The Indian Creek softball team has been on the cusp of the OVAC 5A title game for a few seasons now.

"We've been knocking at the door the last five years," Redskins coach Angie Penner said.

It's finally their time to go in that door.

Creek blanked Cambridge, 6-0, in an OVAC 5A semifinal at the I-470 Youth Sports Complex on Friday. It will face John Marshall, which beat Wheeling Park in the nightcap, at 1:30 today.

"I think the all the kids were excited to get out to play," Penner said. "You try to get that consistency, so it was good to finally be out for a game."

"We were ready to go. They worked very hard for this."

Junior pitcher Paige Geanangel struck out 13 batters — a season high — without issuing a walk. She allowed four hits, including a leadoff double by Audrey Tingle.

"We're glad that our girls came to play," Penner said. "Paige usually is not outworked. She is peaking at the right time in the season, too. Let's hope she's on for the championship game now."

John Marshall beat the Redskins in last year's semifinal. Nearly a decade ago, Creek made its last appearance in the OVAC title

Please See REDSKINS, Page 11

Buckeye Sees Its Run End

Ellzy leads Huskies to 4A title contest

By **MATTHEW PEASLEE**
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — Katie Ellzy did what Katie Ellzy does — and then some.

The highly touted Harrison Central pitcher struck out 10 and walked two in the Huskies' 5-1 victory against Buckeye Local in

JM Does It Again

Monarchs top rival Patriots

By **TONY VIOLA**
Staff Writer

WHEELING — John Marshall sure seems to have Wheeling Park's number thus far this season.

In three games — all JM victories — the Monarchs have asserted their dominance in one way or another.

Friday night at Lisa's Field, they did it in the fourth inning when they scored six runs en route to a 8-5 victory in an OVAC 5A semifinal

The No. 3 seed Monarchs (20-5) advanced to today's championship game where they will face Indian Creek for a chance to capture their third consecutive OVAC title.

Both teams traded early blows as it was tied 2-2 after three innings.

Then John Marshall went on a roll.

JM loaded the bases on a single, an error and a bunt to set the stage for Bailey Filben, who knocked in Megan Wise to make it 3-2.

Sissy George drove in Jazmine Keller and Abbi Namath before Jessica Kinnick doubled in George and advanced to third on a throwing error that scored Hannah Rogerson.

The No. 2-seeded Patriots (13-5) put on a rally in the seventh.

Ashleigh Sidon got things going as she brought in pinch runner Laral Saunders with a hit and Kat Donzella doubled in Kelsi Johnson before Keleigh Sidon scored her twin sister with a sacrifice fly.

"We battled back and

*Please See JM, Page
11*

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WHEELING — Katie Ellzy did what Katie Ellzy does — and then some.

The highly touted Harrison Central pitcher struck out 10 and walked two in the Huskies' 5-1 victory against Buckeye Local in an OVAC 4A semifinal Friday.

Ellzy reached base in all four of her plate appearances — with a single, double, walk and hit by pitch — and also stole a pair of bases.

"She's becoming more of a threat all-around," Huskies coach Donnie Bethel said. "She's a threat on the basepaths as she turned one into a double."

"She was on (Friday). She was bringing it and she wasn't going to be denied."

Ellzy, a junior, retired 11 of 12

Please See BUCKEYE, Page 11

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Photo by Tony Viola
John Marshall short-stop Sissy George fires to first against Wheeling Park.

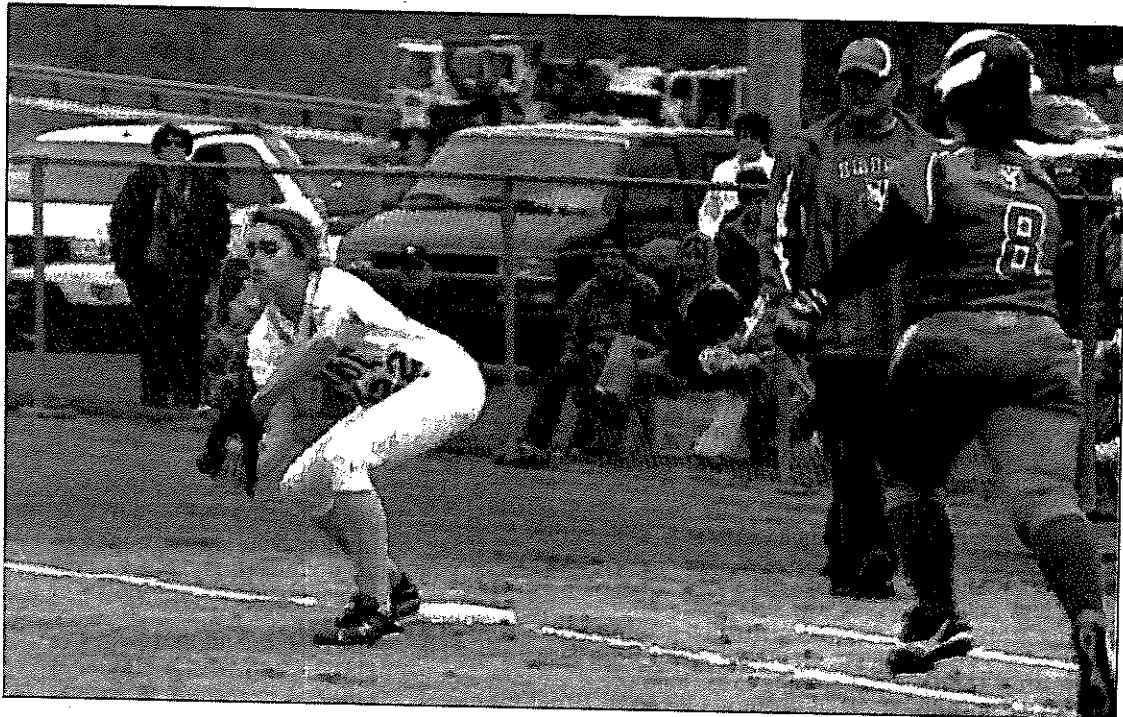


Photo by Tony Viola

Bishop Donahue first baseman Josie Bonar (22) takes a throw to retire St. John runner Sydney Helms during action of their OVAC Class 1A softball semifinal Friday in Wheeling.

St. John Gets By BD

Harris brings in Helms for winner

By **TONY VIOLA**
Staff Writer

WHEELING — Two weeks go, the St. John softball team ran right through Bishop Donahue in an afternoon doubleheader as it outscored the Bishops 23-1.

In an OVAC 1A semifinal Friday at Ben's Field, everyone expected the same result.

It almost didn't happen.

Cheyenne Harris drove in Sydney Helms for the game-winner

in the bottom of the eighth as the No. 1-seeded Irish survived a wild rally from No. 4 Donahue to come away with a 4-3 victory.

St. John advances to its third consecutive 1A championship game against No. 3 seed Paden City.

"I take my hat off to Bishop Donahue," Irish coach Jerry Magistro said. "They came to play. (Bishops coach) Curt (Mele) usually does a good job

with his team. They were fired up, ready to go."

Mele was pretty fired up himself after his Bishops (7-13) put together a three-run seventh inning to tie the game.

With one out and down 3-0, Donahue got hits from Josie Bonar, Jewel Purpura and Jen Little to load the bases before winning pitcher Hannah Absalom walked in a run.

Tess Fallova then doubled into left field to drive in Purpura and

Please See ST. JOHN, Page 10

ST. JOHN

(Continued from Page 9)

Little to tie the game.

St. John (14-1) had a chance to end it in regulation as it loaded the bases with back-to-back walks, but couldn't push across the winner.

Losing pitcher Abbey Mele hit a leadoff double in the eighth and stole third to put Donahue in an ideal situation.

Absalom, who finished with 13 Ks, retired the next two batters and Little flied out to center as Abbey Mele was left stranded.

Helms was walked to start the bottom of the frame and reached third on a hit into right field from Kate Loviski to set up Harris with the game winner.

"That's the way it goes sometimes," Coach Mele said. "We had the leadoff double and we stole her over to third and I was hoping for a passed ball. I told her we were going to take the chance and send her. Things just didn't go our way. I'm proud of the girls."

The Irish struck first in the third as Loviski scored on an error and Taylor Lowe plated Natalie Cerveli. Absalom hit a leadoff homer in the six to give St. John a 3-0 lead.

"I was concerned about the game," Magistro said. "When you have a prom the day before you're always concerned about your team. A lot of people have proms, you just have to come and be ready. Maybe this will give them a little bit of a wake up call

to know to come (today) and be ready to play."

REGULAR SEASON

Williamstown 9

Paden City 1

PADEN CITY — Despite Katie Shreves singling home a run, Paden City (10-13) fell to Williamstown in preparations for today's OVAC Championship Game.

Abby Still provided a double, the only other Wildcats hit.

River 10-10

Valley 0-0

HANNIBAL — Sophomore Rosey Romick tossed a no-hitter in her first career start as River swept Valley.

Bailey Caldwell, also in her first start, one-hit the Lumberjills in Game 2.

Monica Curtis had two hits and knocked in a run in the first game for the Pilots (21-3), while Hailey Bowers tripled twice, doubled and drove in three runs in game two.

BASEBALL

Frontier 8, Tyler Consol. 4

NEW MATAMORAS — Mitch Minder singled twice to drive in four while Drew Schneider drove in another as Frontier (6-9) beat Tyler Consolidated (7-10).

Jacob Stackpole plated a run with a single for the Silver Knights, who were limited to three hits.

University 9, Brooke 0

WELLSBURG — Mario Lombardi and Chad Harper evenly divided four

Counsel / B5
Comics / B6
Scoreboard / B7-10

SPORTS

Friday,
May 2, 2014

OVAC Softball Championship Semifinals

Shadyside squeaks by No. 1 River in 2-A

By RICK THORP
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — Powerful pitching. Clutch hitting. Dynamic defensive plays.

Thursday evening's OVAC Class 2A softball semifinal had it all.

And when the dust settled on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex, it was the Tigers of Shadyside who were smiling.

Sarah Dierkes doubled home Lindsey Dunn with two out in the seventh and Shadyside

topped River, 1-0, in an edge-of-your-seat thriller between two Ohio 7 rivals. The Pilots won the teams' earlier meeting this season in Sardis.

"It was pretty nerve-racking, I'm not gonna lie," Dierkes said of her game-winning at-bat. "I just wanted to do anything possible."

What she did was send the Tigers into Saturday's final and a chance at the program's first conference crown in 20 years. Wheeling Central will be the opponent. The Maroon Knights thumped Bridgeport, 10-0, in the other semifinal.



SARAH DIERKES

Now, the Tigers will have a chance at attaining it. Standing in their way is a Wheeling Central program that has won 11

"We just came ready to play," Dierkes added. "We really wanted it. (The OVAC title) is really something we've wanted the past few years."

OVAC titles, second-most all-time.

"We saw them and they're a great team," Shadyside head coach Jillian Ongley said. "We'll have to prepare for them (today) and if we play like we can play we'll be in it."

The game featured a pair of commanding hurlers — River's Monica Curtis and Shadyside's Megan Heagney. And during the first four innings each were dominant.

Curtis allowed a pair of singles, while Heagney gave up one. In the fifth, though, the

Pilots (19-3) found a crack in Heagney's armor.

Rosie Romick led off the frame with a single and then moved to second when a Heagney pitch went into the dirt.

Mikayla Cieszeski and Emelie Heater struck out and flied out, respectively, but River still had a runner in scoring position.

And when Madi Taylor and Landyn Ramsey walked to load the bases that set the stage for Curtis to aid her own cause. But she flied out to center, ending the threat.

See, SHADYSIDE, Page B2

Motivated Big Reds win in 3-A

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — Motivation comes in a lot of different ways. Believing



Knights shut out Bulldogs in 2-A

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See, MOTIVATED, Page B2



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

BELLAIRE'S Dallas Messenger slides safely into home plate Thursday afternoon in a Class 3-A game as Shenandoah catcher Blair Brown awaits the throw. The Big Reds won, 7-4. Additional images can be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

Knights shut out Bulldogs in 2-A

By RICK THORP
Times Leader
Sports Writer

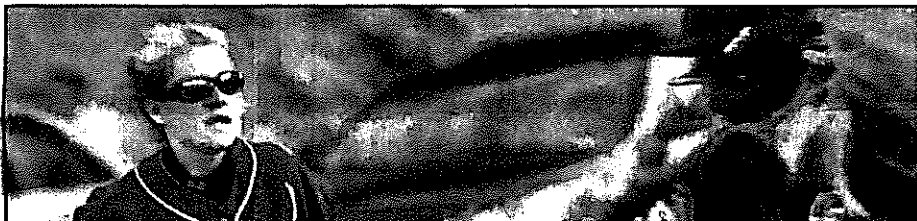
ELM GROVE — Hitting is contagious. Just ask Wheeling Central head coach Rick Magruder.

After recording just three hits during the first three innings against Bridgeport in their OVAC Class 2A softball semifinal Thursday afternoon, the Maroon Knights exploded for six in the fourth. That half dozen helped produce eight runs and the Maroon Knights went on to post a 10-0, five-inning triumph on Lisa's Field inside the J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex.

"We tell them that all the time," Magruder said, referring to his philosophy of how one hit can open the floodgates. "As a team we're playing well

Big Red rallies by Ferry in 4-A

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer



Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE -- It just wasn't meant to be for the Martins Ferry softball team Thursday night at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex.

The second-seeded Purple Riders held a 4-3 lead over No. 3 Steubenville entering the top of the seventh inning. However, Big Red erupted for three runs to claim a 6-4 Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 4A semifinal contest on Ben's Field.

"You've got to give credit to Steubenville," Martins Ferry head coach Paige Williams said. "They got us first and then we came back and took the lead, but they continued to battle. We couldn't come back in the seventh after they took the lead again.

"This loss hurts because the (the OVAC championship) was one of our goals," Williams added. "This is disappointing and I told the girls that they never want to feel this way again.

"We had the team to do it," she said in reference to making the championship game. "We had the talent to do it. I guess today just wasn't our day."

The Purple Gang took a 4-3 lead in the bottom of the fifth inning on a Krissy Hotlosz perfectly executed two-out suicide-squeeze bunt, which scored Shaye DeLeonardis.

However, Steubenville wasn't finished. Tenia Barker singled to center leading off the seventh. An infield single by Sierra Fields and a walk to Na

See, **BIG**, Page B2

referring to his philosophy of how one hit can open the floodgates. "As a team, we're playing well together."

Wheeling Central competes for its 12th OVAC title on Saturday, and third in the past four years, against Shadyside. The Tigers bested River, 1-0, in the other 2A semifinal.

"This is the second season right now," Magruder said. "The first part of the season is the regular season, and then the OVACs and the sectional are the second part.

"Hopefully, we're jelling at the right time."

The Maroon Knights (20-2) grabbed a 1-0 lead in the first on Sydney Bennington's solo homer to left. Bridgeport (13-4) bent, but didn't break, in the second and third, but, in the fourth, Wheeling Central erupted.

"When you're facing a team like Wheeling Central they put the pres- See, **KNIGHTS**, Page B2



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

MARTINS FERRY third baseman Morgan Stalder, left, forces out Steubenville's Sierra Fields during a 4-A game Thursday night. The Big Reds rallied for a 6-4 victory. Additional images can be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

BUCKEYE 8 TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

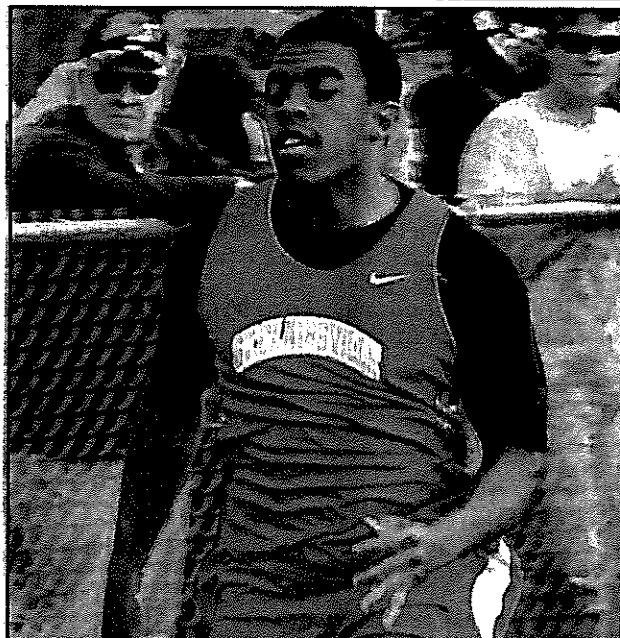
St. C. boys; Ferry girls win

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

MARTINS FERRY — The Buckeye 8 Track and Field Championship was delayed by 48 hours, but it still boiled down to a two-horse race.

The host Martins Ferry Purple Riders and St. Clairsville Red Devils waged an all-out battle for 18 events on the boys' side. When the dust settled, however, the Red Devils' depth and ability to rack up victories and plenty of seconds and thirds proved too much for the Riders to overcome.

St. Clairsville finished with 181 points, which was two more than the Riders. The title is Red Devils' fifth straight.



Whg. Park dominates Dave Ice Invitational

• Bridgeport's Massey wins high-point award

By **MIKE PALMER**
Times Leader Sports Writer

BELLAIRE — Wheeling Park used gold medals in the sprint relays and field events to win the Dave Ice Girls Invitational, which is sponsored by Burger King and the Bellaire Sports Foundation, at Nelson Field Thursday afternoon.

Bridgeport junior Brianna Massey had a strong meet, winning a pair of golds and claiming the high-point field award. She got her afternoon started with a mark of 16-ft-11.75 in the long jump. Later, she captured the 200-meter dash in a time of 27.25, pulling away from Steubenville's Lysaih Rice and Knisha Sanders.

Wheeling Park dominated, rolling up 127.33 points to win the meet title in what is, for most, the final girls'

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE SOFTBALL

Wheeling Central Rolls Over Bridgeport 10-0

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — By the time the OVAC softball tournament rolls around every season, Wheeling Central is usually just about hitting its stride. Thursday Coach Rick Magruder's Maroon Knights again showed they will be primed and ready for what lies ahead.

Madison Basinger allowed two hits, Joni Zavolta chased home three runs, Sydney Bennington homered and Central broke open a close game with an eight-run fourth in rolling to a 10-0, five inning, victory against Bridgeport in a Class 2A semifinal on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Sports Complex.

Magruder's 20-2 squad, which is the top-ranked team in W.Va. Class A, moves into Saturday's championship game against Shadyside, which defeated River.

"We told the girls before the game that this is the second season now," Magruder said. "There is the regular season, then you

(Please see WHEELING, Page 10)



Wheeling Central's Cara Stahl heads toward home during the Class 2A semifinal against Bridgeport Thursday at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Sports Complex in Wheeling. The Maroon Knights won 10-0.

Photo by Rick Thorp

Steub Central Beats Magnolia

By TRACY WATSON
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — Beating Steubenville Catholic's softball team normally comes down to nothing more than scoring some runs and keeping the Crusaders off the base paths.

Thursday night in an OVAC Class 3A semifinal, Magnolia could do neither, and because of that Coach Jim DiCarlo's squad will be looking to repeat as champions Saturday.

Winning pitcher Alex McComb scattered several hits and Steubenville Catholic continually took extra bases and turned them into runs, posting a 6-1 victory against the Blue Eagles on Lisa's

(Please see STEUB, Page 10)

Ferry Falls To Big Red 6-4

By KIM NORTH
For The Intelligencer

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The second-seeded Purple Riders held a 4-3 lead on No. 3 Steubenville entering the top of the seventh inning. However, Big Red erupted for three runs to claim a 6-4 OVAC Class 4A semifinal contest on Ben's Field.

(Please see FERRY, Page 10)

Teamwork Pushes Paden City Past Weirton Madonna 5-4

By MATTHEW PEASLEE
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — Paden City's run production in the seventh and eighth inning of Thursday's OVAC 1A softball semifinal against Madonna has been a microcosm of its season as a whole.

"It's teamwork," Wildcats coach Janie Fox said after her team topped the Blue Dons, 5-4. "It's everybody doing their part and stepping up. That's what makes the difference and it definitely did in this game."

Megan Pierce plated Hannah

Stanley for the go-ahead run in the top of the eighth. Then, Paden City pitcher Taylor Cosper sent Madonna down in order in the bottom half to win it.

It improved the Wildcats' record to 10-12, while advancing them to their first OVAC title game.

"We're starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel," Fox said. "The girls have grown a lot over the past two seasons and I think everything is starting to come

(Please see PADEN CITY, Page 10)

Tigers Top Pilots 1-0

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(Please see TIGERS, Page 10)

Bellaire shortstop Elisha Gillespie Bell attempts to make a play during the OVAC Class 3A



Bellaire Dispatches Shenandoah

By KIM NORTH
For The Intelligencer

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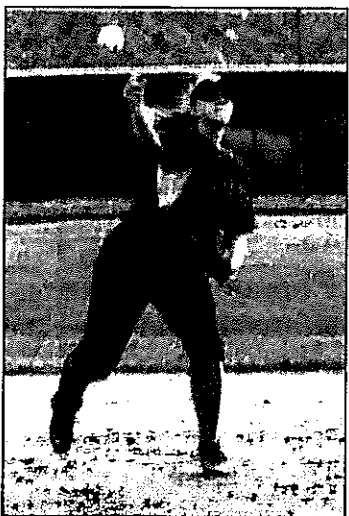
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Bellaire shortstop Elisha Gillespie Bell attempts to make a play during the OVAC Class 3A softball tournament game against Shenandoah Thursday at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Sports Complex in Wheeling. Bellaire won 7-4.

Photo by Kim North



Complex in Wheeling. The Maroon Knights won 10-0.

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Bellaire came out swinging as it scored three runs on as many hits. Daphne Clark's leadoff bloop double ignited the outburst.

After Clark went to third on a wild pitch, Dallas Messenger followed with an RBI single and promptly

swiped second. Mackenzie Conroy's single up the middle plated Messenger and Conroy crossed the plate on an error, making it 3-0.

Shenandoah answered with two runs of in the bottom of the first as one scored on Jenna Cowgill's single and the other on an error.

It was at that point Bellaire coach Melissa Lahna made a pitching change.

(Please see **BELLAIRE**,
Page 10)

AP Photo

McCutchen leads off of third base in the first inning in the first game of a doubleheader against Baltimore Thursday in Baltimore.

AP Photo

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winning pitcher Alex McComb scattered seven hits and Steubenville Catholic continually took extra bases and turned them into runs, posting a 6-1 victory against the Blue Eagles on Lisa's

(Please see **STEUB**,
Page 10)

Tigers Top Pilots 1-0

By **RICK THORP**
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — Powerful pitching. Clutch hitting. Dynamic defensive plays.

Thursday's OVAC Class 2A softball semifinal had it all.

When the dust settled on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex, it was Shadyside that was smiling.

Sarah Dierkes doubled home Lindsey Dunn with two out in the seventh and Shadyside topped River,

(Please see **TIGERS**,
Page 10)

rearc had three hits and two RBIs in his return to the Orioles, who got a home run from Nick Markakis in a 5-1 win.

The single-admission doubleheader followed consecutive rainouts on Tuesday and Wednesday. The rain lingered long enough to delay the fifth inning of the opener by 21 minutes, and the start of the nightcap was stalled 46 minutes by rain.

The second game marked the season debut of Orioles third baseman Manny Machado, who had left knee surgery in October. After sitting out the opener, Machado received a warm ovation from the crowd of 28,290 before the second game and went 0 for 5.

Baltimore trailed 4-0 in the nightcap before rallying with a four-run sixth. Adam Jones doubled in a run and scored on a single by Wieters before Pearce chased starter Brandon Cumpston with a double to right. Bryan Morris entered and yielded a two-run double to J.J. Hardy.

Starling Marte countered with an RBI single in the seventh for Pittsburgh, but Markakis tied it in the bottom half with a solo shot off Morris.

(Please see **PIRATES**,
Page 11)



AP Photo

FERRY

(Continued from Page 9)

"You've got to give credit to Steubenville," Martins Ferry coach Paige Williams said. "They got us first and then we came back and took the lead, but they continued to battle. We couldn't come back in the seventh after they took the lead again.

"This loss hurts because the (the OVAC championship) was one of our goals. This is disappointing and I told the girls that they never want to feel this way again."

The Purple Riders took a 4-3 lead in the bottom of the fifth inning on a Krissy Hotlosz two-out, suicide-squeeze bunt, which

TIGERS

(Continued from Page 9)

1-0, in an edge-of-your-seat thriller between two Ohio rivals. The Pilots won the teams' earlier meeting in Sardis.

"It was pretty nerve-racking, I'm not gonna lie,"

scored

DeLeonardis.

However, Steubenville wasn't finished. Tenia Barker singled to center leading off the seventh and an infield single by Sierra Fields and a walk to Na Banks loaded the bases. Mytia Barker's chopper to short was mishandled as a run scored and the bases remained full. Rhiannon Petrisko then lined a 0-1 pitch back up the middle to score a pair.

Steubenville plays the winner of today's other Class 4A semifinal between two-time defending champion and top-seeded Buckeye Local and Harrison Central.

Shaye

WHEELING

(Continued from Page 9)

get to the OVAC Tournament and then the sectionals.

"It seems like everything is coming together for us, and hopefully we can continue to gel. This is a real good group of kids and that makes things a lot easier."

After the Bulldogs stranded runners at first and third in the top of the first, Central got the big hit in the bottom half on a two-out bomb off the bat of Bennington that sailed over the left-field fence for a 1-0 lead.

Looking to manufacture a run or two in the fourth, Wheeling Central took advantage of Bridgeport's mistakes to break the game open. The Knights pushed across eight runs thanks to five singles, a double walk and two Bulldog errors.

The big hits were a two-run Basinger double, a two-run single by Zavolta and run-scoring singles off the

Prep Roundup

seven as Brooke (11-11) topped Toronto.

Brette Geary paced the offense with two hits and three RBI, while Taylor Simala and Isabella Preston drove in one run apiece.

BASEBALL

St. Clairsville 3

Indian Creek 2

WINTERSVILLE — Ben Coleman and Dylan Busby each singled home a run and St. Clairsville edged Indian Creek in nine innings.

Tommy Stewart relieved in the seventh to earn a victory, striking out a pair. Malik Gummer singled and doubled for the Red Devils.

Cole Yeater took a hard-luck no decision. He went eight and struck out 10, while also singling in a run. Jimmy Bolyog also singled one home.

Brooke 7

Harrison Central 4

route and struck out four while Vinnie Merico double in a run for the Blue Dons.

Collin Wilson singled twice and had an RBI for the Shamrocks (5-10).

Steubenville 5

Steub. Catholic 4

STEUBENVILLE — Dimitri Collaros, Anthony Pierro and Anthony Zorne drove in one run each as Steubenville (15-4) scored four times in the seventh to edge rival Steubenville Catholic (14-2).

Devin Ferguson struck out three in relief to earn a victory.

Tony Barber, Taylor Clark and Josh Merriman had an RBI each to pace the Crusaders. Stone Romano and Brenton Colabella doubled.

Toronto 8, Weir 0

TORONTO — Jarin McIntosh struck out 10 in a three-hitter and singled twice to drive in two runs as Toronto (10-9) blanked Weir (2-0).

STEUB

(Continued from Page 9)

Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Sports Complex.

Making matters even worse for first-year coach Dillon Mangino's unit, was Magnolia's inability to get the third out in the initial three innings. That is when the Crusaders scored all of their runs, five coming with two down.

"This is very nice for us," a smiling DiCarlo said. "We had to go on a streak and beat some pretty good teams to even get into the tournament, but I also think maybe that pressure has helped us.

"It is three straight trips to the finals for us now, and we were fortunate enough to win it all last year."

The first inning could not have been more opposite for the two teams as the Blue Eagles put together three consecutive two-out singles but did not score a run while the Crusaders had just one hit but put up a pair of runs.

After Fran Canaldi was

McCord Lifts Central In Final

Center fielder's sac fly wins it

By DAVE MORRISON
Staff Writer

WHEELING — Wheeling Central endured the storm.

When Mother Nature did not provide a rainbow as the sun reappeared, the Maroon Knights provided their own.

Cassidy McCord delivered a clutch sacrifice fly in the sixth and Madison Bassinger (20-2 with one save in the circle) shut the door on Shady-side in the seventh in a 5-4 victory.

The pot of gold at the end of Central's rainbow?

An Ohio Valley Athletic



Photo by Dave Morrison

Wheeling Central's Jai'Ehr Jackson slides home during the Knights' 5-4 victory against Shadyside at Ben's Field.

Conference Class 2A championship, the school's 12th.

"All I was thinking was put the ball in play and try to get it to the outfield somewhere," McCord, the Maroon Knights' No. 8 hitter, said. "I knew if I could hit it anywhere in the outfield (Allie Cook) was going to score. I don't think I've ever been so happy to know a ball was going to get caught."

Not that the pot of gold was easy to obtain.

Wheeling Central (21-1), which had led 3-0, had to weather the storm of a strong rain in the top of the fifth.

Shadyside came back to tie the score in the driving rain. Sam Rosser started it with a one-out walk and she scored on an error. After Katie Heath walked Lindsey Dunn laced a

See, Central, Page B5

Big Red Wins Their First Crown

By MATTHEW PEASLEE
For the News-Register

WHEELING — April 14 through April 19 was a stint the Steubenville softball team would like to forget.

"Two weeks ago we were dead in the water," Big Red coach Gus DiMarzio said.

It had lost five straight games, being outscored 47-19, in those five days.

"What could we do?" DiMarzio said. "We just kept pushing and practicing hard and it turned around into this."

The first OVAC 4A title in program history.

Steubenville beat Harrison Central, 4-2, in the conference championship game on Saturday at Wheeling's I-470 Youth Sports Complex.

"It's a testament to our kids," DiMarzio said. "No coach can do that. I didn't field a ball, none of us guys in the dugout got a hit.

"I got to give props to my six seniors and their leadership abilities. They brought us back from the dead."

See, Big Red, Page B7

JM Pockets Third Straight Championship

By MATTHEW PEASLEE
For the News-Register

WHEELING — As soon as the soaking-wet Indian Creek and John Marshall softball teams broke from their postgame handshakes, they posed for pictures with plaques and trophies.

After, they bolted to the dugouts to dry off from the torrential rain that dampened the I-470 Youth Sports Complex in Wheeling.

At that exact moment, the sun came out.

"It would've been nice to have that earlier," John Marshall coach Ed West said.

What he did have earlier, though, was timely hitting and clutch defense from his Monarchs.

John Marshall built an early lead on Indian Creek and held on for a 6-4 victory in the OVAC 5A championship game.

"I thought it was a really good game,"



Photo by Matthew Peaslee

John Marshall's Sissy George slides into second base and evades the tag by Indian Creek shortstop Bethany Davis.

West said, despite the rain that fell for the duration, causing a 20-minute delay in the third inning. "I thought both teams played well. There were some big hits on each side and there were some great defensive plays on each side.

See, JM, Page B7

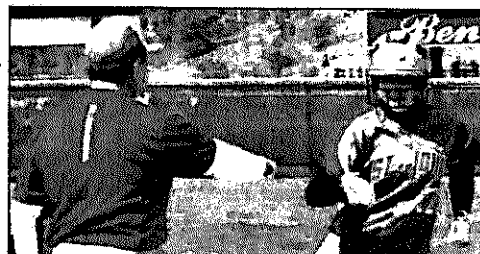
Crusaders Claim 3A Softball Title

By SETH STASKEY
For the News-Register

WHEELING — For the second straight season, the Bellaire softball team reached the OVAC Class 3A title game.

However, it also came up short of its goal once again.

Top-seeded Steubenville Catholic scored four runs in the bottom of the



Absalom, SJC Top Wildcats In 1A Finale

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Top-seeded Steubenville Catholic scored four runs in the bottom of the first and never looked back en route to an 8-0 victory on Lisa's Field during at the OVAC Tom Bechtel Softball Championship Saturday morning.

While the Crusaders, who now own six conference titles, got seemingly big hit after big hit, Bellaire couldn't get untracked at the plate against sophomore hurler Alex McComb.

"We just didn't hit the ball," Bellaire coach Melissa Lahna said. "We played pretty well defensively, which is great, but to win games, we have to hit the ball. We've been up and down a lot."

See, Crusaders, Page B4

sac fly wins it

By **DAVE MORRISON**
Staff Writer

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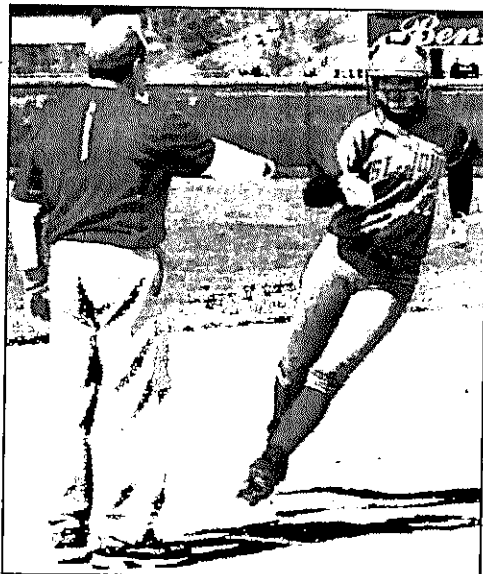


Photo by Dave Morrison

St. John's Hannah Absalom taps knuckles with Coach Jerry Magistro.

Absalom, SJC Top Wildcats In 1A Finale

By **DAVE MORRISON**
Staff Writer

WHEELING — Another game at Ben's Field, another gem by Hannah Absalom.

The St. John senior fired a 13-strikeout, two-hit masterpiece and then did the job at the plate, with a home run (her sixth) and three RBI as the Fighting Irish defeated Paden City 5-1 in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Class 1-A softball championship game Saturday at the I-470 complex.

In the circle, she never really gave the Wildcats a chance, retiring 11 of the first 12 hitters by strikeout.

See, Absalom, Page B2

CENTRAL

Continued from page B1

shot toward second base that resulted in an error, allowing Carly Klug, who had reached on an error and Heath to even the score at 3-3.

That's when the game was halted, when thunder was heard in the distance.

When play resumed, 35 minutes later, Megan Heagney doubled to score Dunn with the go-ahead run.

"I thought the weather put a damper on our run," Shadyside coach Jillian Ongley said. "You can't help the weather."

It was during the delay that Wheeling Central's Bassinger, the staff ace, made a no-holds-barred speech to her teammates.

"She basically gave us a little talk and told us to get our heads out of our butts," McCord said, laughing.

"I just told them that we had already scored three runs and there was no reason that we couldn't score three more," Bassinger said. "We knew we could score, we just had to go out and do it. It was frustrating in the fifth inning but there is nothing you can do but fight through it."

The comeback started in the fifth, when Jai'Ehir Jackson reached on a single and stole second. She slid across home plate on a single by Joni Zavolta.

In the bottom of the sixth, Cook led things off by reaching on an error, Ashley Gast walked and Hannah Mazingo singled to load the bases.

After Heagney induced a

strikeout, McCord came to the plate and calmly lofted a fly to right field, enabling Cook to score with ease.

"We were just looking to put the ball in play," Wheeling Central coach Rick McGruder said. "When Cassidy hit that fly, we were sending (Cook) regardless."

All that was left was for emotional leader Bassinger to get through the seventh inning.

She did. After Kenzie Fielding drew a leadoff walk, she calmly set down the top of the order in order, which included a fine running catch by right fielder Zavolta for the second out.

"We were happy where we were at in the (batting) order," Ongley said. "We tried to kill a couple of pitches and hit pop ups in places where we are usually a good-hitting team."

Wheeling Central took a 2-0 lead in the second, when Mazingo had a sacrifice fly to plate Cook, who had singled and McCord had an RBI single.

In the third Central pulled out the stops on a trick play, when Cook, who had walked, intentionally got caught in a rundown, allowing Sydney Bennington to score.

It was a satisfying end for Central, which had lost in the OVAC tournament last year.

"We just went out and made our own rainbow," Bassinger said.

With an OVAC title the pot of gold at the end.

and it could have been a much higher disparity. Nearly all of Creek's outs were hard hit to the deep outfield or stingy liners that just happened to be caught on diving attempts from the John Marshall infield.

The Redskins only struck out four times, while flying out 10 times.

"We hit the ball squarely and probably better than they did," Indian Creek coach Angie Penner said.

The Monarchs had planned for that, however.

"We made several really nice defensive plays and that's really been the secret to our success all year," West said. "Our pitchers keep us in the games, our hitters come through, but when our defense stops the other team we have the best chance at winning."

The Monarchs had three singles in the second inning and scored one run. They added two more in the third — thanks in part to three errors by Creek in the frame.

"The moral of the story is, our errors came back to hurt us," Penner said. "That took us out of the game. You can't have that and win a championship game against a good team like John Marshall."

"You have to be on all cylinders."

BIG RED

Continued from page 13

Big Red, now 17-7, collected seven hits off Huskies pitcher Katie Ellzy and scored in the first, fourth and sixth innings.

Steubenville was swift on the basepaths — stealing a total of five bases as a team.

"Before the game, coaches told us that we should not be put down by anyone," Big Red senior catcher Mytia Barker said. "And that we had to be as aggressive as we can."

Sierra Fields was Steubenville's first baserunner in the bottom of the first inning, reaching on an infield hit. The junior stole second and third base, before scoring the game's first

run. She saved a run in the first inning by lunging to tag out Jackie Gellner on a close play at the plate.

"That was a courageous play and fired everybody up right away," Penner said. "We were proud that Paige kept one of the top-ranked softball programs in the state of West Virginia to four hits."

"She, like the rest of the team, was focused and came to play."

Geanangel's bat kept the Redskins (12-2) in it as she belted a two-run homer in the bottom of the sixth inning, which made the score 3-2.

She was a strike away from keeping the Monarchs at bay in the top of the seventh, but with two outs Sissy George delivered a two-RBI hit that sailed to the right-field fence.

"Had things went a little bit differently there," Penner said, "we may end up with the victory."

That's because Geanangel came through again. The junior brought home Sidney Karis and Abby Orr on a hard-hit single up the middle in the bottom of the seventh.

Another hard-hit ball by Bethany Davis nearly brought in the tying and go-ahead runs, but it was snared by the right fielder

played the full seven innings and kept fighting."

With the win, John Marshall clinched its third straight OVAC crown and ninth in program history.

"I don't know if it's an expectation but we certainly knew that we had the team this year to compete," West said. "We're playing really well right now."

Gellner, Rogerson and Blake recorded the other hits for the Monarchs. Mallorie Sullivan, Orr and Karis added singles as Alexis Monroe ripped a double for the Redskins.

REGULAR SEASON

Barnesville 4, Caldwell 1

CALDWELL — Avery Hanlon struck out six en route to a two-hitter as Barnesville (6-10) knocked off Caldwell.

Emily Sleeth paced a six-hit Shamrocks offense with a pair of singles.

Brooke 2-9

Magnolia 1-0

NEW MARTINSVILLE — Michaela Hinerman tripled among three hits and knocked in a run as Brooke swept Magnolia.

Katie Castellucci earned a victory for the Bruins (13-12) as she retired seven on strikes, while Brette Geary had a hit and two RBI.

Game 1 loss for the Blue Eagles, fanning nine batters.

Union Local 8-9

Weir 10-8

WEIRTON — Union Local scored the winning run in extra innings in Game 2 to salvage a split with Weir.

Cori Medley doubled twice among three hits and plated two runs for the Jets (8-11) and Alli Delaney had an RBI single.

Abby Collins had a two-run hit in Game 1 and Amanda Swallie added two hits.

Ashlyn Drizake tripled among three hits and drove in four runs for the Red Riders (5-14) in Game 1, while Samantha Tate doubled twice among four hits and plated two in the nightcap.

Madonna 9-10

Clay-Battelle 1-12

WEIRTON — Amanda Pulice tossed a four-hitter in Game 1 as Madonna split with Clay-Battelle.

Brianna Fierro doubled among two hits for the Blue Dons (12-7) and Becca Holt had two hits.

In Game 2, Taylor Thompson took the loss and Sara Travaglino had two hits.

BASEBALL

Indian Creek 8

Buckeye Local 2

WINTERSVILLE — Aaron Crawford struck out nine and

Tanner Wade, Cole Yeater, Adam Freshwater and Mason Gibbons plated a run each for the Redskins.

Josh Figurski singled and drove in both Panthers runs. Eric Williams added a double.

Brooke 6, Magnolia 3

NEW MARTINSVILLE — Mario Lombardi tossed a three-hitter as Brooke handed Magnolia its third straight loss.

Heath Hildreth and Kellan Welch doubled twice and each drove in two runs for the Bruins (13-8) and Chad Harper added a double.

Zack Willhoite took the loss for the Blue Eagles (9-6) and Derek Blain had two hits and an RBI.

Valley 10-4

Trinity 9-3

PINE GROVE — Petyon Palmer retired 13 on strikes in Game 1 as Valley swept Trinity.

Brandon Stoneking was a triple shy of the cycle as he homered twice, doubled and drove in five runs for the Lumberjacks (5-9), while Palmer added three hits and plated three runs.

Stoneking came on in relief in Game 2 and fanned 14 and Tristan Kocher doubled among two hits.

run.

Fields rushed home on a wild pitch and evaded a tag by Joelle Jones.

"Anytime you can get a run on Ellzy, it's huge," DiMarzio said. "She gets up on you and she starts mowing people down, then you feel that you're in a bad spot."

"Luckily we didn't get down to that. It's a big deal anytime you can score first."

After the wild pitch, Barker doubled into the right-center field gap.

"I was pretty pumped," she said. "It was exciting to hit a double off such a talented player like Katie.

"That built my personal confidence for the rest of the game."

Barker was on the receiving end of freshman pitcher Hayley Stamps. She tossed 17 first-pitch strikes and only allowed two runs — both driven in by Ellzy.

Stamps struck out two and allowed five hits. She sent the Huskies down in order three times.

"It feels pretty amazing," Stamps said of not only earning the win in Steubenville's first OVAC title game, but gaining the trust of coaches and teammates in her first varsity season. "It's meant a lot and shows that they all have confidence in me to pitch

well on the mound."

Harrison (10-6) tied things at 1-1 in the fourth inning as Ellzy plated Shianne Nameth on a single to center field.

Steubenville responded with a pair in the bottom half when Carmie Biasi drove in Keshia Barz on a one-out double. Biasi then stole third and Abby Taylor followed by beating out a bunt single, bringing in another run.

"We just tried to move runners up by stealing bases and bunting," DiMarzio said. "We got a great bunt from Abby that went for a hit and we were scoring runs off that."

"We capitalized on anything

we could. We played the game hard."

Harrison cut the deficit to one in the sixth inning on a solo homer over the left-field fence by Ellzy. Big Red got insurance when courtesy runner Janae Snyder scored on a wild pitch in the bottom of the sixth.

Stamps escaped the top of the seventh, which featured a Kara Dunfee double and Ellzy taking a four-pitch walk, to seal the victory.

"I just put in my head that we were up," Stamps said. "It was nice playing with a lead. I had faith in myself and hope in my teammates."

Continued from page B1

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Cori Medley doubled twice among three hits and plated two runs for the Jets (8-11) and Alli Delaney had an RBI single.

Abby Collins had a two-run hit in Game 1 and Amanda Swallie added two hits.

Ashlyn Drizake tripled among three hits and drove in four runs for the Red Riders (5-14) in Game 1, while Samantha Tate doubled twice among four hits and plated two in the nightcap.

Madonna 9-10

Clay-Battelle 1-12

WEIRTON — Amanda Pulice tossed a four-hitter in Game 1 as Madonna split with Clay-Battelle.

Brianna Fierro doubled among two hits for the Blue Dons (12-7) and Becca Holt had two hits.

In Game 2, Taylor Thompson took the loss and Sara Travaglino had two hits.

BASEBALL

Indian Creek 8

Buckeye Local 2

WINTERSVILLE — Aaron Crawford struck out nine and

scattered four hits to lead Indian Creek to a victory against Buckeye Local.

Tanner Wade, Cole Yeater, Adam Freshwater and Mason Gibbons plated a run each for the Redskins.

Josh Figurski singled and drove in both Panthers runs. Eric Williams added a double.

Brooke 6, Magnolia 3

NEW MARTINSVILLE — Mario Lombardi tossed a three-hitter as Brooke handed Magnolia its third straight loss.

Heath Hildreth and Kellan Welch doubled twice and each drove in two runs for the Bruins (13-8) and Chad Harper added a double.

Zack Willhoite took the loss for the Blue Eagles (9-6) and Derek Blain had two hits and an RBI.

Valley 10-4

Trinity 9-3

PINE GROVE — Petyon Palmer retired 13 on strikes in Game 1 as Valley swept Trinity.

Brandon Stoneking was a triple shy of the cycle as he homered twice, doubled and drove in five runs for the Lumberjacks (5-9), while Palmer added three hits and plated three runs.

Stoneking came on in relief in Game 2 and fanned 14 and Tristan Kocher doubled among two hits.

run.

Fields rushed home on a wild pitch and evaded a tag by Joelle Jones.

"Anytime you can get a run on Ellzy, it's huge," DiMarzio said. "She gets up on you and she starts mowing people down, then you feel that you're in a bad spot."

"Luckily we didn't get down to that. It's a big deal anytime you can score first."

After the wild pitch, Barker doubled into the right-center field

"That built my personal confidence for the rest of the game."

Barker was on the receiving end of freshman pitcher Hayley Stamps. She tossed 17 first-pitch strikes and only allowed two runs — both driven in by Ellzy.

Stamps struck out two and allowed five hits. She sent the Huskies down in order three times.

"It feels pretty amazing," Stamps said of not only earning the win in Steubenville's first OVAC title game but gaining the

well on the mound."

Harrison (10-6) tied things at 1-1 in the fourth inning as Ellzy plated Shianne Nameth on a single to center field.

Steubenville responded with a pair in the bottom half when Carmie Biasi drove in Keshia Barz on a one-out double. Biasi then stole third and Abby Taylor followed by beating out a bunt single, bringing in another run.

"We just tried to move runners up by stealing bases and hunting" DiMarzio said. "We got

we could. We played the game hard."

Harrison cut the deficit to one in the sixth inning on a solo homer over the left-field fence by Ellzy. Big Red got insurance when courtesy runner Janae Snyder scored on a wild pitch in the bottom of the sixth.

Stamps escaped the top of the seventh, which featured a Kara Dunfee double and Ellzy taking a four-pitch walk, to seal the victory.

"I just put in my head that we

Lady Bobcats KO'd by Indian Creek in OVAC semis

JEFF HARRISON
THE DAILY JEFFERSONIAN

ELM GROVE, WV — Facing Indian Creek's talented Paige Geanangel, there weren't going to be a lot of scoring opportunities for the Cambridge High softball team in Friday's OVAC Class 5A semifinal game.



The Lady Bobcats squandered a trio of early chances and Geanangel did the rest as the top-seeded Lady Redskins capitalized, scoring a 6-0 victory at the I-470 Complex.

Cambridge made its first bid right from the get-go,

with freshman Audrey Tingle drilling a double to open the game, but Geanangel shut the door with three consecutive strikeouts.

After The Creek left runners on second and third in the bottom of the first (Mallory Sullivan and Geanangel had both singled), the Lady 'Cats had another scoring threat when Bre Tetrick laced a one-out single to left, and when the ball was misplayed she raced all the way to third.

Again, however, Geanangel rose to the challenge with back-to-back whiffs.

In the CHS third, Alyssa Williams singled and then Tingle reached on a bunt single, but two Ks and a flyout again left the 'Cats empty.

Indian Creek broke the ice in the bottom of the third, capitalizing on Cambridge's lone error of the contest to tally three unearned runs.

Abby Orr got things started with a one-out single, advancing to second on a one-out single by Geanangel.

Both runners moved up a base on a wild pitch, and then an infield error on what would have been the third out allowed two runs to score.

Alexis Moore followed with an RBI single to widen The Creek's lead to 3-0.

The Lady Redskins (12-1) used four consecutive hits in the fourth inning to put some space between themselves and the Lady Bobcats.

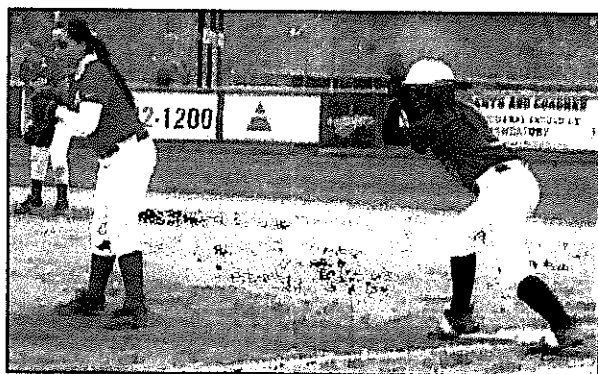
Hannah Webb, Sydney Karas and Marissa DeFallo all single to load the bases before Orr unloaded the key hit of the game — a bases-clearing double which pushed the lead to 6-0.

Cambridge went quietly over the final four frames, with only a fourth inning single by Tetrick.

INDIAN CREEK 8, CAMBRIDGE 0.
Cambridge 000 000 0 — 0 5 1
Indian Creek 003 300 X — 6 10 1
Justine Lowe (LP 8-7, 2 Ks, 1 BB) and Bre Tetrick, Paige Geanangel (WP, 13 Ks, 0 BB) and Abby Orr.
RECORDS—Cambridge 10-7; Indian Creek 12-1.
STAT LEADERS—For Cambridge, Audrey Tingle, double, single; Tetrick, 2 singles; Alyssa Williams, single. For Indian Creek, Orr, double, single, 3 RBI, run; Geanangel, 2 singles; Sydney Karas, 2 singles, run; Mallory Sullivan, single; Alexis Monroe, single, RBI; Hannah Webb, single, run; Marissa DeFallo, single, run; Samantha Byrd, run.



Jeff Harrison/The Daily Jeffersonian
Veteran Cambridge High softball coach Bob Shepard attempts to fire up the troops during Friday's OVAC Class 5A semifinal game against Indian Creek.



Jeff Harrison/The Daily Jeffersonian
Cambridge High's Lexy Baker is ready for takeoff at first base during Friday's OVAC Class 5A semifinal game against Indian Creek. The Lady Bobcats lost, 6-0.

"That's probably one of the best pitchers in the Eastern District," Cambridge coach Bob Shepard said of Geanangel, "but we gave ourselves an opportunity with a leadoff double and then the first two baserunners on in the third, but we've got to be able to get them in and we weren't able to do that today.

"It comes down to situational hitting and if you don't execute, you put yourself in a bad place," the Lady Bobcats' boss continued. "You have to put the ball in play. We had too many strikeouts and called third strikes."

Geanangel finished the day with 13 strikeouts and no walks while Cambridge's Justine Lowe (8-7) took the loss with one strikeout and no walks.

"Defensively, we only had one breakdown," said Shepard, "but it gave them three runs. Justine did a great job pitching and deserved better."

Orr's double and single led Indian Creek while Geanangel and Karas both had two singles.

Tingle topped CHS (10-7) with a double and single while Tetrick had two singles.

"We're glad we got here this year," Shepard said of playing in the OVAC Tournament. "We have a good nucleus returning so hopefully we'll be here again next year."

"We have to shore some things up and get ready for sectional," added. "We've got a good team, but we just faced a better team today."

NEXT — Cambridge visits Zanesville on Monday at 5 p.m.



Lady Zeps fall to Bellaire in OVAC 3A semis again

JEFF HARRISON
THE DAILY JEFFERSONIAN

ELM GROVE, WV — For the second year in a row, Bellaire High jet-tisoned the Shenandoah Lady Zeps from the OVAC Softball Tournament, this time by a 7-4 count in the Class 3A semifinals on Ben's Field at the I-470 Complex on Thursday.

Shenandoah miscues resulted in a 5-2 deficit after an inning and a half, and things settled



down until both teams tallied twice in the seventh inning with the Lady Zeps' late offensive burst coming up short.

Bellaire (12-5) tallied three runs in the first frame.

Daphne Clark led off with a double, followed by an RBI bunt single from

Dallas Messenger.

Mackenzie Conroy then delivered an RBI single to plate Messenger, and she eventually scored on a Shenandoah error.

The Lady Zeps (10-5)

BELLAIRE 7, SHENANDOAH 4
Bellaire 320 000 2—7 11 3
Shenandoah 200 000 2—4 8 5
Daphne Clark (0 Ks, 0 BB); Sarah McAninch (1st, WP, 7 Ks, 1 BB) and Dallas Messenger, Jenna Cowgill (LP 7-4, 8 Ks, 0 BB) and Blair Brown.
RECORDS—Bellaire 12-5; Shenandoah 10-5.
STAT LEADERS—For Bellaire, Clark, double, single, run; Messenger, 2 singles, RBI, 2 runs; Mackenzie Conroy, 2 singles, RBI, run; Kelsey Jarvis, single, run; Kattie Zeller, single; Mary Garloch, single, run; Elisha Gillespie, run; Marisse Dippel, single. For Shenandoah, Cowgill, 2 singles, RBI, run; Kelsey McKinzie, 2 singles, RBI; Jessica Long, 2 singles, 2 runs; Taylor Arick, single; Sierra Kirby, single; Brown, single; Mallory Roe, run.

quickly responded and cut Bellaire's lead to 3-2 in the bottom of the first.

Junior Jessica Long



Jeff Harrison/The Daily Jeffersonian
Shenandoah High third baseman Taylor Arick (2) fields a bunt by Bellaire's Mary Garloch and prepares to throw to first over the head of Alix Seevers to Brooke Arick covering during Thursday's OVAC Class 3A semifinal game at the I-470 Complex in Elm Grove, W. Va.



Jeff Harrison/The Daily Jeffersonian
The Shenandoah Lady Zeps received plenty of support from their fans who came equipped with a plethora of signs for Thursday's OVAC Class 3A semifinal game against Bellaire. The Lady Big Reds beat the Lady Zeps for the second year in a row, this time by a 7-4 score.

opened with a single; advanced to second on a groundout and scored on an RBI single by sophomore Jenna Cowgill.

After Cowgill stole second, junior Blair Brown reached on an error which allowed Cowgill to score from second base.

Bellaire extended its lead to 5-2 in the top of the second, combining a single by Kelsey Jarvis and two Shenandoah errors into a pair of runs.

"It really takes the wind out of you when you give them that many runs early," said Shenandoah coach

Stacey Trenner. "Too many errors...it's as simple as that."

Over the next five innings, the Lady Zeps' best scoring chance came in the third frame when Brown reached on an error; stole second and moved to third on a single by senior Taylor Arick, but a line drive to the shortstop ended the threat.

The Lady Reds, who had left the bases loaded in the sixth inning, tacked on two insurance tallies in the top of the seventh by putting "small ball" into play.

Bellaire combined three singles; a fielder's choice where no out was recorded and an error to boost its lead to 7-2.

Shenandoah's bats finally woke back up in the seventh, but it proved to be too little, too late.

Long singled to start the inning, and she scored on an RBI single by Cowgill.

Brown and Kelsey McKinzie followed with base hits, with the latter driving in Cowgill to cut

