

Classifieds / C6-10

SPORTS

Thursday,
April 23, 2015

OVAC baseball tournament pairings set

• Semis set for Saturday at 10 diamonds across the Ohio Valley

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

The brackets for the first Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championship event of the spring sports season are set.

The annual OVAC Baseball Tournament gets underway Saturday on 10 diamonds across the Ohio Valley.

The top two seeds play host to the semi-final round with the winners advancing to the title game on May 1 or 2.

For the second straight season, the title games will be split. The two games scheduled for Friday night — Class 4A and 5A — will be played at the Chambers I-470 Complex at 5 and 7:30 p.m., respectively. The remaining three classes will be staged at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville, starting at 11 a.m.

The semi-final game times vary because the home school is responsible for setting those.

There's a new champion guaranteed in Class 5A, Class 4A and Class 1A.

Steubenville won the 4A title last season over Martins Ferry. Big Red has moved up to Class 5A, but hasn't missed a beat.

Fred Heatherington's club is the top seed in the big-school division. Steubenville is 13-2 on the season and will welcome 12-2 University to Vaccaro Field Saturday.

The other big-school semifinal pits second-seeded Morgantown welcoming Brooke. Both squads are 9-6. Defending big-school champion Wheeling Park failed to qualify for the tournament.

In Class 4A, St. Clairsville, which is a perfect 13-0 thus far, owns the top seed. The Red

Devils were eliminated in the semifinals a season ago, but will have a chance to avenge that when they welcome fourth-seeded Martins Ferry.

The Purple Riders dropped two to the Red Devils during the season's first week. Coach Anthony Reasbeck's squad is 9-6 on the season.

Edison, which had its streak of conference titles snapped at three last season, is the second seed. The 10-3 Wildcats will welcome Harrison Central (6-5) to Jefferson Lake State Park.

First pitch in both Class 4A games is slated for 11 a.m.

In Class 3A, perennial power Linsly is back in the mix, seek-

ing to run its streak of OVAC titles to four. Coach Jay Cartwright's team is 12-4.

If the Cadets are to get to Vaccaro Field, they'll have to get past Bellaire, which qualified at 4-6 as the fourth seed. This semifinal, which is slated to start at noon, is a rematch of last year's title game.

Shenandoah earned the second seed. The Zeps are 7-2 and will host 9-7 Fort Frye.

In Class 2A, Toronto is the top seed at 13-1. The Red Knights have been one of the area's premier teams all spring. They'll welcome fourth-seeded Bridgeport. The Bulldogs (10-4) have turned it on after a slow

start.

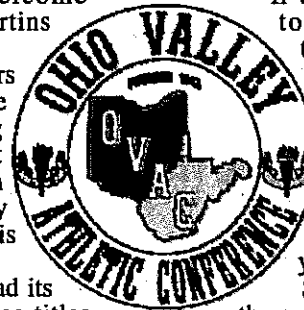
Second-seeded Steubenville Central enters with a 9-2 record and will host defending 2A champion Caldwell, which has won nine of its 10 games this spring.

A new champion is also promised in Class 1A with Madonna failing to qualify for the top four.

Paden City, which hasn't won an OVAC title since 1994, is the top seed in Class 1A. The Wildcats are 9-2 and will host Conotton Valley.

Bishop Donahue, which had its three-year reign in Class 1A snapped last season by Madonna. The Bishops, who are 9-3, will welcome St. John Central, which snuck in at 4-7.

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



Devils Rout Harrison 8-2

By SETH STASKEY
For the News-Register

STEUBENVILLE — Tom Sliva didn't exactly know how many years it had been since his St. Clairsville baseball program won an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championship.

He did, however, know it had been far too long.

There's a good chance he'll remember the next time he's asked because his Red Devils are making room for another conference banner.

Using their normal recipe of steady starting pitching, timely hitting and solid defense, St.

Clairsville cruised to an 8-2 victory against Harrison Central for the Class 4-A title at Vacarro Field on Saturday.

"It feels really good," Sliva said. "I hear coaches all the time talk about goals and this is definitely one of the big goals. I know the kids are excited. They were pumped up this morning, (Friday) at practice and throughout the game."

The victory was especially important for St. C. because it was the Red Devils' first outing since they dropped their first decision of the

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Photo by Seth Staskey
St. Clairsville's Zuke Jacobs preps delivery for Harrison Central Saturday at Vacarro Field in Steubenville

DEVILS

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season, which came Thursday against Indian Creek.

"We talked about getting the good taste back in the mouth," Sliva said. "Our kids were able to re-focus and get the job done."

The idea of bouncing back wasn't aided by Harrison Central, which grabbed a 1-0 lead in the top of the first when Kalub Mitchell tripled home his brother, Brandon. On top of that, Harrison Central recorded the first two outs of the St. C. first with relative ease, but the Red Devils responded.

Cody Goletz singled and Daulton Freeman, who had a big game at the plate, fanned, but alertly got to

first on a wild pitch. Ryan Busby singled home Goletz.

Third baseman Tyler Blomquist continued the Red Devils rally when he ripped a line-drive single into left, bringing Freeman and Busby around.

"After they get (a run), I can't say enough about us putting a three spot on them in the first," Sliva said.

The two-out lightning didn't end there for St. C.

After allowing Brandon Ducker to reach on a free pass to lead off the second, Harrison Central starter Bryson Porter induced a pair of easy outs. Michael "Zuke" Jacob helped his own cause by lacing an RBI double to the fence in left.

Goletz reached on a fielder's choice in which no out was recorded and Freeman brought both home by doubling to the fence in center.

"When you get the next three on (the scoreboard) it can make it tough, but it's never over and we knew that," Sliva said. "We had some big hits in those innings. We've had a lot of games that have been 'team' wins and this was one of them."

With a five-run cushion, Jacob, who didn't have his top command, went to work.

"We knew coming in that for us to win it would probably have to be a low-scoring game," Harrison Central coach Mike Valesko said.

"We were feeling pretty good after the first, but we had chances to get out of innings and didn't make the play. Give St. Clairsville the credit because they made the plays when they needed them. That's what championship teams do."

Jacob fanned 11, allowed two hits and issued four walks. He got into a small jam in the sixth when St. C. committed a pair of errors.

"I think it was a 7-2 game and we had guys on second and third," Valesko said. "A hit in that situation puts (St. Clairsville) in a tough situation because Zuke's pitch count was up there. But we just couldn't get that hit."

The Huskies scored a run in the inning without the luxury of a hit.

"The competitiveness that Zuke has and brings to our team is awesome," Sliva said. "It's one of the things I love about him."

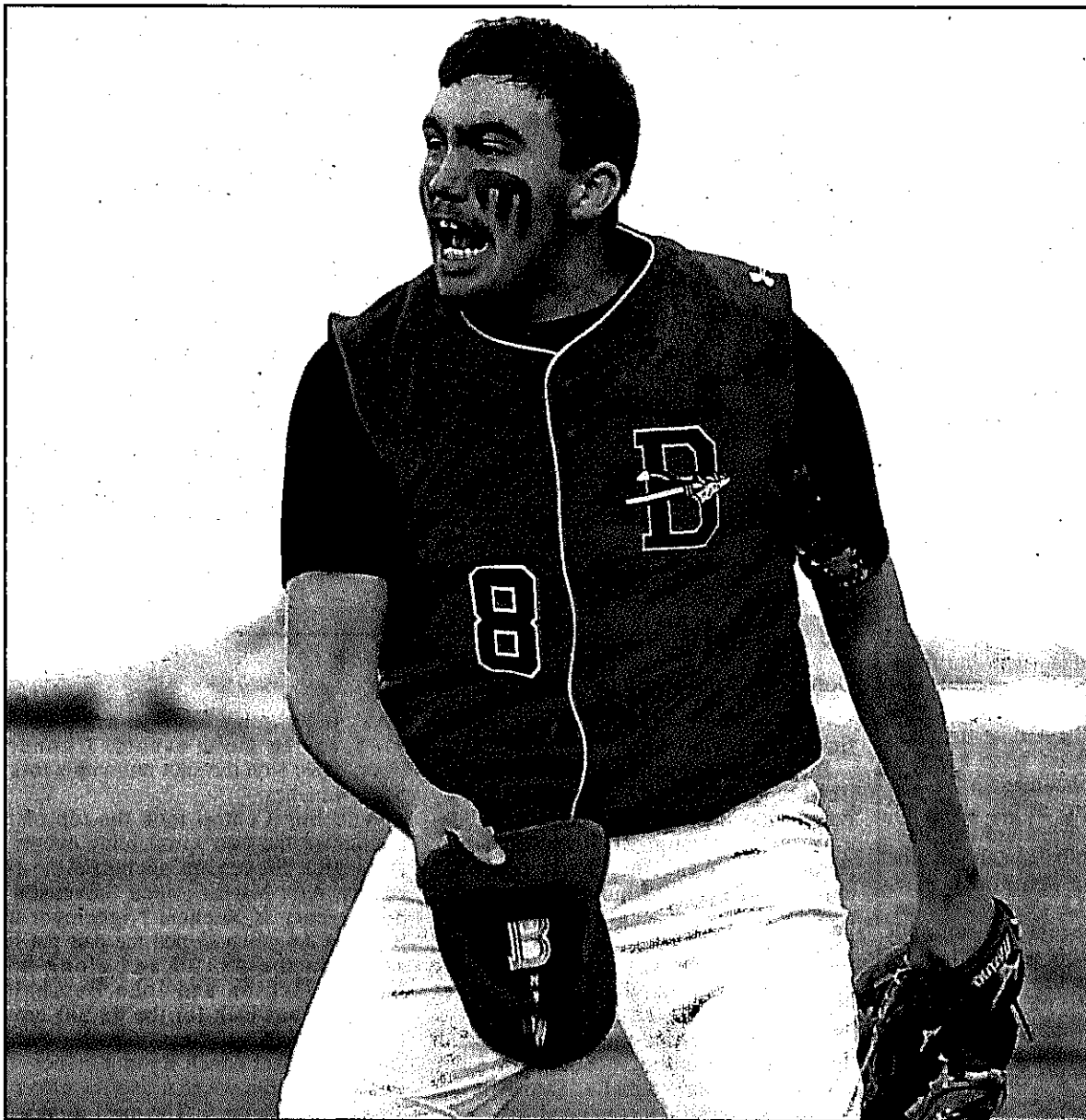
St. C. added a single run in the fifth on a RBI groundout by Luke Slavik, which scored Busby. Patrick Buchanan scored in the sixth on a RBI single by Freeman.





SPORTS SATURDAY

THE PULSE



BELLAIRE PITCHER Bear Cumberlidge reacts after striking out the final Fort Frye batter Friday night in the OVAC Class 3A Championship game at the J.E. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex in Elm Grove. The Big Reds earned their title, 8-5, over the Cadets.

T-L Photo/RICK THORP

Bringing it home

• Bellaire wins second OVAC Class 3-A baseball crown in 4 years

By RICK THORP
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — If a clutch play needed to be made Friday evening, Bellaire made it

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like winning a conference title in his first season at the helm.

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As a result, the Big Reds are OVAC Class 3A baseball champions for the second time in four years.

Tyler West slapped four singles, Bralen Snell laced three, and Bear Cumberlidge worked a complete game as Bellaire topped Fort Frye, 8-5, in a rematch of last spring's Ohio Division III

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district championship game.

"I don't think this is how it's supposed to work is it?" Bellaire head coach John Poilek joked at the J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex when asked what it was

like winning a conference title in his first season at the helm.

"But, it's really good. Fortunately have a really great group of kids. They battlers. They're fighters.

"They earned it. They didn't deserve it. They earned it. And that's important

The fourth-seeded Big Reds jump ahead early and then matched third-seeded Cadets almost run for run the rest of the way — just like Poilek knew they have to do to win.

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● Home

Continued from Page D1

he said. (Fort Frye head coach) Sonny (Bidwell) will bring a good team every time they show up to play.

"We knew they could score in bunches. So, we knew it was important that we got off to a strong start."

In almost a carbon copy of last Saturday's semifinal triumph against top-seeded Linsly, Bellaire (8-8) scored two in the top of the first. A Nick Hall RBI single in the second increased the lead to 3-0.

Fort Frye (10-10) got one back in the third, but the Big Reds bounced back with another run in the fourth.

With one out, leadoff batter Tyler West singled to right. The ball was misplayed by the Fort Frye right fielder, allowing West to get to third. Bralen Snell knocked him in next with his third hit of the day giving Bellaire a 4-1 lead.

The Cadets scored two in the bottom of the fourth. And it looked like it might be a big inning for the Cadets. But, just like it had in the third, Bellaire slammed the door. In the third, it was a Cumberlidge strikeout that left the bases loaded. In the fourth, a double play ended the threat.

"Another great game for him," Poilek said of Cumberlidge, now 4-1 on the season. "He came into this game with the mindset that this was

going to be his game.

"He wasn't coming out. He was going to do whatever he could to get out of every jam."

With the Cadets creeping closer, Bellaire's offense gave Cumberlidge a little breathing room in the fifth with a three-run outburst. With two away, Nathan Steele, Bellaire's No. 9 hitter, doubled, knocking in Hall and Cumberlidge, making the score 6-3.

"That was really important for us," Poilek said of Steele's blast. "I think, 1-9, we did a great job. We did a great job of putting the ball on the bat and making plays."

West drove in Steele moments later, increasing the lead to 7-3.

Fort Frye loaded the bases again in the bottom of the inning. And, again, Cumberlidge shut the door. Just like he'd done in the second, Cumberlidge recorded a strikeout to end the threat, pumping his fist in excitement as he left the field.

If there was a hallmark of this victory it was hustle. And the Big Reds showed more of it in the sixth.

Leading off the inning, Hunter Westlake popped up near the pitcher's mound. Confusion ensued as to which Cadet would attempt the catch the ball and it eventually fell to the ground. While the play was being

made, Westlake, a senior was chugging into second. In an attempt to get him out there, a throwing error allowed him to get to third.

"Those are hustle plays," Poilek noted. "Stuff like that doesn't show up on a stat line anywhere. But those are important things that our leaders do for us to keep our momentum going."

Westlake scored when the next batter, Ty Ramsay, flew out.

The Cadets had no more momentum, as Cumberlidge retired five of the final six batters, striking out Terren Huck to end things.

"We're starting to heat up," he said.

"We've beaten four quality opponents in a row, and two in tournament settings.

"So, we're starting to roll and maybe, get hot at the right time."

Bellaire 8, Fort Frye 5

Bellaire	201	131	0	-	8	15	1
Fort Frye	001	220	0	-	5	9	3

B — Cumberlidge wp (5K, 5BB) and Steele. West 4S, rbi; Snell 3S, rbi; Westlake S, rbi; T.Ramsay T, S, rbi; Ha 2S, rbi; Steele D, S, 2rbi.
F — Layton 1p (1K, 1BB), Rice (7) (OK 0BB) and Isner. Klinger 2S, rbi; Layton S rbi; Bidwell S, rbi; Huck S, rbi.

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OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Bishops Capture Title



Photo by Rick Thorp

Bellaire 'Big Reds' hoist the hardware after winning the OVAC Class 3-A championship Friday in Wheeling.

Big Reds Clutch All the Way, Roll to Another Championship

By RICK THORP
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — If a clutch play needed to be made Friday evening, Bellaire made it. As a result, the Big Reds are OVAC Class 3-A baseball champions for the second time in 10 years. Tyler West slapped four singles, Bralen Hill laced three, and Bear Cumberlidge pitched a complete game as Bellaire topped Paden City, 8-5, in a rematch of last spring's Division III district championship game. "I don't think this is how it's supposed to

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"But, it's really good. Fortunately, I have a really great group of kids. They're battlers. They're fighters.

"They earned it. They didn't deserve it. They earned it. And that's important."

(Please see BELLAIRE,
Page 10)

Donahue blanks Paden City 11-0 in Class 1-A final

By KYLE LUTZ
Staff Writer

WHEELING — Bishop Donahue got things going right away. The Bishops made their way through their entire lineup in the first inning and scored four runs as they defeated Paden City in the Class 1-A OVAC championship game at I-470 Field, 11-0 Friday night.

Not only was the hitting helpful, the fielding was just as good. Behind a one-hitter from Jesse Padlow, the Bishops (16-4) were never threatened.

"We got off to a good start and we played some defense," Bishop Donahue coach Bob Kleeh said. "We were finally solid in the field, which we had been up until the last two games.

(Please see BISHOPS,
Page 10)



Photo by Kyle Lutz

Bishop Donahue's Jesse Padlow prepares a delivery during Friday's OVAC Class 1-A championship tilt against Paden City in Wheeling. The Bishops won the Class 1-A title.

CINCINNATI (AP) — he's done. I want to become First things first: Bengals the next great player with coach Marvin Lewis wants coach Alexander."

BELLAIRE

(Continued from Page 9)

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BISHOPS

(Continued from Page 9)

"We made some nice plays. That's (Paden City) a good baseball team. We may seem them down the road. If we win our sectionals and they win theirs, we could possibly see them, and we'll have our hands full. It was just our night."

Andrew Cunningham led off for the Bishops with a walk and Padlow followed with a single. Matt Vucelik brought in the first run with an RBI hit. With the bases loaded and one out, Zak McCoy increased the lead to 4-0 after a two run single.

The Bishops tacked on two more runs in the top of the third inning where both hits were in field singles in which Logan Wells and Brett Moore beat the throw at first base.

"I tried to talk to my kids about not being nervous for this game because we have never been in this situation before," Paden City (14-5) coach Brent Croasmun said. "You got to give Bishop Donahue a whole lot of credit. They've been here before, they've won some championships here. They know what it's all about."

"Padlow was great tonight, he had great command of the game from the beginning to the end and I think we were a bit nervous, and we just didn't anything well."

Padlow had a great game indeed. The senior went the distance on the mound striking out six and only allowing one hit. Padlow also led the way for Bishop Donahue at the plate with three singles and two RBI.

"We just came out with a strong attitude, especially because we didn't play our best game last game so we knew we had to come out and prove some people wrong," Padlow said. "They beat us early in the season and we had to come out and play our A game and I think that's what we did." It has certainly been a great year for Padlow not just in baseball, but in football and basketball as well. With the championship tonight, he, Moore and Vucelik completed the hat trick as all of them were on all the three OVAC championship winning teams this school year.

Prep Roundup

"It's just a privilege to be able to play with such a special group of guys and I really couldn't say more about them," Padlow said.

At their final at bats, the Bishops put together a five-run fifth inning that started with a Wells single followed by a Stocklask hit. McCoy was walked then J.C. Custer reached base on an error which scored a run. After a Moore strikeout and a Andrew Cunningham walk, Padlow drove home two more runs. Alex Riedel drove in the final run of the game with a sacrifice fly.

"This is probably our most complete game of the year," Kleeh said. "We've got a good record, but we have some bumps where we had to reel them back in, especially out in the field this week. We were terrible against Clarksburg Notre Dame in the field and we were mentally terrible against Clay-Battelle. So this was good to see at the right time."

Wells finished with two singles while Custer tallied two RBI. Moore, Stocklask and Vucelik finished with a single and RBI.

Luke Cooper stated the only hit for the Wildcats.

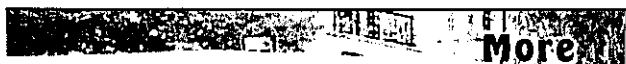
"We are not going to lay down and die," Croasmun said. "I told them that we are going to erase this from our memory bank and we are going to come out Monday because we have games every day next week. We are going to try to build some momentum back up to go into the sectional tournament. We're going to expect of ourselves to win the thing. By no means we are going to let this slow us down. That's the great thing about baseball, you get to play every day weather permitting and we'll learn from this experience."

Buckeye Local 4

Beaver Local 3

RAYLAND — Dalyn Grubb had two singles including the game winning hit in the bottom of the seventh for Buckeye Local (2-16).

Eric Banal scored the game winning run and also collected four hits and got the win while striking out one.



● St. C.

Continued from Page C1

outs of the St. C. first with relative ease. The Red Devils responded, however.

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Third baseman Tyler Blomquist continued the Red Devils' rally when he ripped a line-drive single into left, bringing Freeman and Busby around.

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St. C. added a single run in the fifth on a RBI groundout by Luke Slavik, which scored Busby. Patrick Buchanan scored in the sixth on a RBI single by Freeman.

