

SPORTS

OVAC TOM BECHTEL SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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By KYLE LUTZ
For The Times Leader

ELM GROVE — The Wheeling Central and Shadyside Tom Bechtel OVAC Class 2-A semifinal game had drama written all over it. In the matchup that was played mostly under the lights at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, the fans saw a pitching duel where a regulation game wasn't enough to determine a winner.

In the eighth inning, the Tigers broke a 1-1 tie on a three-run triple by freshman Kayla Smith to run away with a 4-2 victory. Shadyside moves on to the Class 2-A championship game against Steubenville Catholic on Saturday.

Wheeling Central made things interesting with two outs in the bottom of the eighth. Riley Bennington, but the catcher couldn't control the pitch and

Bennington made it to first safely. The throw was late and Sydney Bennington, who got on base with a single earlier in the inning, took advantage and scored to make it 4-2. Tigers pitching held strong and got the last out on a strike-out.

"I just thought we came to play," Shadyside coach Jillian Ongley said. "Both teams were great teams and these girls, the seniors have gotten beat by them (Wheeling Central) for the last two years. They wanted it and you could tell. It was a total team effort and they picked each other up."



KAYLA SMITH



T-L Photo/RICK THORP

BELLAIRE'S Sarah McAninch fires a pitch plateward Tuesday afternoon on Ben's Field. The Big Reds upset No. 1 Buckeye Trail in Class 3A action.

Bellaire hikes Trail

• No. 4 Big Reds will meet MC-River winner in Saturday's 3A final

1A: Irish outscore



esting with two outs in the bottom of the eighth. Riley Bennington, but the catcher couldn't control the pitch and they picked each other up. but couldn't handle the ball and Wheeling Central took the lead, 1-0. See, TIGERS, Page B2

1A: Irish outscore Bishops



By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — St. John Central will be seeking its fourth consecutive Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Softball Class A Championship Saturday after outscoring Bishop Donahue Tuesday afternoon, 12-10, on sun-splashed Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex.

The third-seeded Irish (7-8) led 8-0 entering the bottom of the sixth before the No. 2 seed Bishops (9-8) scored six runs to make it a two-run game. However, not to be outdone, St. John Central tacked on four more insurance runs in the top of the seventh for a 12-6 advantage, only to see Bishop Donahue make it 12-10 and have the tying run at the plate as the game ended.

"I thought we were trying to
See, 1A, Page B2

ST. JOHN Central's Taylor Lowe (16) slides under the tag of Bishop Donahue's Sommer South during Class 1A action Tuesday on Lisa's Field. The Irish won, 12-10.

T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

One bad inning dooms Bulldogs in 2A

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — One bad inning spelled disaster for the No. 4 seed Bridgeport softball team Tuesday night on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex.

Leading top-seeded and defending champion Steubenville Catholic 4-1 after three-and-a-half innings, the Bulldogs (15-5) gave up four runs in the bottom of the fourth and could never catch up in dropping a 7-5 decision in an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 2A semifinal.

"I think we earned some respect today," Bridgeport head coach Tom Joseph said. "Steubenville Catholic came in as the defending 3A champ and we battled them right until the final out of the final inning.



T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

BRIDGEPORT shortstop Keri Renzler fields a throw to second as Steubenville Catholic's Alex McComb slides in safely during Tuesday's action on Lisa's Field.

"My girls never hung their heads," he continued. "I'm really proud of my girls for fighting like they did. They never gave up."

Keri Renzler gave the Bulldogs an early 2-0 lead when she homered to deep left with Caitlyn Kroll

aboard in the top of the first.

A pair of two-out errors in the bottom of the first allowed the Crusaders to cut the deficit in half, 2-1.

Two errors by Steubenville Catholic allowed Bridgeport to take a 4-1 advantage in the top of

the fourth. Shelby Matheny picked up an RBI.

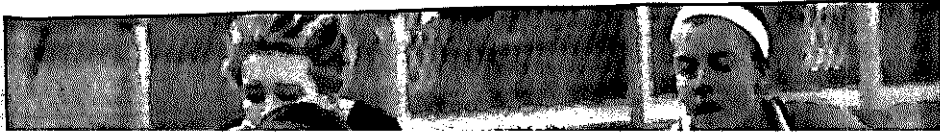
Fran Capaldi led off the bottom of the fourth with an infield single and Megan Lloyd lined a single to left. Designated player Torrie Grandinetti singled to load the bases. Pinch hitter Maddy Metcalf beat out an infield grounder as a run scored. Gabby Capaldi's slicer down the left field line skipped to the corner and cleared the bases for a 5-4 Crusaders lead.

Bridgeport loaded the bases with two outs in the top of the sixth against Alex McComb, but the Crusaders' hurler got out of the jam unscathed.

Her teammates rewarded her with a pair of insurance runs in the bottom of the inning on singles by McComb and Ashlynn Daley.

See, ONE, Page B2

e power



Indian Creek's lone winner was senior Tyler Gaydos in the 3200. He ran eight laps in 10:20.60.

Union Local senior Austin Kemp broke his own meet record by soaring over 13-ft-7 for the pole vault crown.

ON THE GIRLS' SIDE, the Purple Riders were once again led by junior hurdling ace Tyesha Allen.

After sitting out the Bellaire Relays, Allen returned to the track



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

MARTINS FERRY'S Hunter Hill sprints to a win in the 100-meter dash Tuesday.

and was a double winner once again. She won the high hurdles in a meet-record time of 15.43. She added the 300 lows in 47.57.

claimed the 800 in 2:31.17.

The Redskins' 4x4 team of Smith, Lewis, Spencer Neville and Jaid Bly posted a meet-record time of 4:18.91 to prevail.

Union Local's lone winner was sophomore Megan Bateman. She claimed the 3200 meters in 13:33.77.

Staskey can be reached at staskey@timesleaderonline.com

game. I'm proud of them. I'm happy we stayed up. We didn't falter."

Lahna said that upward trend on both sides of the ball will need to continue in order to hoist the OVAC hardware.

"Everyone is making contact," she said. "We're hitting the ball, we're fielding the ball, our attitudes are up.

"Things are coming together when they're supposed to."

Bellaire 8, Buckeye Trail 1

Bellaire 620 000 0 - 8 5 0
 Buckeye Trail 100 000 0 - 1 5 1
 Be - McAninch wp (6K, 2BB) and Messenger. Applegarth HR, 2rbi; Garloch S, 2rbi; Messenger S, 2rbi.
 BT - Smith lp (2K, 3BB) and Rippeth. A.Colvin 2S; Smith D.

Thorp can be reached at rthorp@timesleaderonline.com

● 1A

Continued from Page B1

give it away a few times," veteran St. John Central head coach Jerry Magistro said while shaking his head, "But the girls hung in there and got the job done."

Along with looking to 4-peat, the Irish will also be aiming for OVAC championship No. 11.

Kate Lovinski gave St. John Central a 2-0 lead with a double to deep left in the third inning. Sydney Helms' sacrifice fly made it 3-0.

The lead grew to 5-0 in the fifth when Rachael Zaccirey doubled home courtesy runner Jenna Sawinski. Zaccirey raced home on Natalie Cervelli's single up the middle.

St. John Central tallied three times in the top of the sixth to increase the margin to 8-0. Lovinski, Caitlin Sliva and Gill Johnson

picked up ribbies as the Irish looked to on cruise control.

"The good thing about today is that we hit the ball and when the girls got on, we got them in," Magistro noted. "That was huge for us."

Bishop Donahue, which had been held to three hits by Lovinski through five innings, broke out the bats in the sixth and seventh, only to come up short.

"There's no quit in these girls," Bishop Donahue head coach Curt Mele stressed. "I knew the game wasn't over. We've been down like this before and came back. I knew we could do it."

Sommer South's RBI triple started the six-run outburst. Pinch hitter Jamie Emery followed with a single to center to score South. One-out later Kat Polinski

drilled a two-run double to left, making it 8-4. Sam Zimla's two-out single cut the deficit to three, and South's infield single made it 8-6.

Taylor Lowe's RBI triple and Amber LaMotte's run-scoring double gave the Irish a 10-6 lead. Sliva made it 11-6 with a single and Johnson's groundout scored the final Irish run.

"Scoring those four runs was huge," Magistro said. "It turned out we needed them."

Lovinski retired the first two batters in the bottom of the seventh, but Zimla slapped a RBI double to left; Abbey Mele singled to center to score another; and Tess Fallova's single to center made it 12-10. A groundout to first ended the contest.

"We made a run at

them," Mele said. "We just came up a little short."

St. John Central cracked out a season-high 16 hits. LaMotte had three, while Lowe, Lovinski, Sliva, Johnson and Zaccirey all had a pair of safeties.

Bishop Donahue had 11 hits, with Fallova, South, L. Polinski and Zimla having two each.

St. John Central 12, Bishop Donahue 10

SJC 003 023 4 - 12 16 4
 BD 000 006 4 - 10 11 3
 SJC—Lovinski wp (6K, 3BB) and Harris; Lowe S, T, rbi; LaMotte S, 2D, rbi; Lovinski S, D, 3rbi; Sliva S, D, rbi; Johnson 2S, 2rbi;

BD—Mele lp (OK, 3BB), Ruza (7), (OK, 1BB) and South; Mele 2S, rbi; Fallova 2S, 2rbi; South S, T, rbi; Emery S, rbi; E. Polinski D; K. Polinski S, D, 2rbi; Zimla S, D, 2rbi

North can be reached at knorth@timesleaderonline.com

● One

Continued from Page B1

The Bulldogs didn't go quietly as Renzler bunted for a single leading off. Miranda Bowers legged out an infield bouncer and Justine Schell walked to load the bases. Julie Nowakowski's sharp one-hopper to third resulted in a 5-2-3 double play as Daley took the throw at the plate from Brittany Bertoia and rifled a relay throw to first baseman Lloyd to complete a rally killing double play.

Bridgeport did get a run when Bowers scored on a

wild pitch, but they could get no closer.

"We've come a long way in four years," Joseph noted. "We'll be back."

Steub. Cath. 7, Bridgeport 5

Bridge. 200 200 1 - 5 8 3
 SC 100 402 x - 7 10 2
 B—Bowers lp (OK, 3BB) and Kroll; Renzler S, HR, 2rbi; Wilson S, rbi; Matheny S, rbi; Cargnel 2S

SC—McComb wp (5K, 5BB) and Daley; G. Capaldi S, D, 3rbi; McComb S, rbi; Daley 3S, rbi; Metcalf S, rbi

North can be reached at knorth@timesleaderonline.com

● Tigers

Continued from Page B1

The momentum seemed to be on the Maroon Knights' side as JaiEhr Jackson singled nexy. However, the Shadyside defense held strong.

Bennington pitched all but one out of the eight-inning game as she fired 12 strikeouts. Heagney matched her pitch for pitch as she recorded 11 strikeouts in a complete-game victory.

Not only was the pitching good, but the fielding was as well. After Heagney got a hit, Kenzie Fielding hit a line shot to first base, but Wheeling Central's Olivia Carpenter snagged it and touched first base for a double play. However, after an error that put Shelby Benedetta on base, Sarah Dierkes hit an RBI double to tie the game, 1-1.

"After the first few innings we started hitting the ball and they got the momentum going, and our freshman (Smith), who hit that triple, she stepped up big," Ongley said.

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DID WE GO?

THINK RENT-TO-OWN BUILDINGS

didn't do anything tonight," Hurdle said. "We've been playing in streaks. We continue the game's contagious. We've had some contact on the other side."

Cubs jumped on top three runs in the second. Russell drove in the lead with a double, and it followed with a single.

Cubs added another run in the third. Two outs and none on, reached on a throw or by third baseman Harrison and scored a double by Lake to 4-0.

Over two-out runs, Cubs manager Joe Maddon said.

Pirates cut the lead in half on Marte's solo left field, but they got the runs right in the bottom of the

Montreal Expos on Aug. 23, 1997.

It was just the third time Chicago had four steals in an inning.

HEAVY HEART

Hurdle said he wasn't aware that Kirk Gibson had been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease before he was asked about it prior to Tuesday's game. After taking a moment to process the news, a clearly affected Hurdle praised Gibson, saying "he's always been up for a challenge." "What a competitor. What a good man. Good man to have in the game," Hurdle said.

GETTING BETTER

OF Andrew McCutchen was only 1 for 4 to raise his average to .179 but he showed improvement from his recent form, making strong contact three times. "Andrew looked much better tonight," Hurdle said.

seven innings in a rehab assignment Saturday with Class A Bradenton.

Cubs: RHP Hector Rondon has been bothered by a sore foot of late, but Maddon said his closer was fine after not being used on Monday. OF Chris Denorfia, who began the season on the disabled list with a left hamstring injury, was held out of the lineup.

UP NEXT

Pirates: RHP Gerrit Cole (3-0), who pitches the finale of the three-game series tonight, is coming off a strong effort against Arizona. He is 5-0 with a 3.48 ERA in five career starts against the Cubs.

Cubs: RHP Kyle Hendricks is still looking for his first win of the season. His first three starts were in day games, so this will be his first outing under the lights.

nate bounce came right to him with Walleye starter Jeff Lerg (33 saves) out of position.

● Bellaire

Continued from Page B1

"To not even be in Sunday morning and then to squeak in on a mistake someone made and then come out and start like this was huge," she said smiling. "I know they were excited."

With the first three Big Red batters on base via two walks and a hit batter, Mary Garloch stepped to the plate and sent a shot toward Smith just to her right. She tried to field the ball and, in doing so, made it ricochet into the outfield past the location of the shortstop. De'Asia Burney and Abbey Cusick scored on the play, giving Bellaire a 2-0 lead.

Smith then walked Elisha Gillespie, loading the bases again. And, again, Bellaire took advantage. This time, Dallas Messenger sent a shot to right, plating Hannah Applegarth and Garloch, upping the lead to 4-0.

Moments later, with Morgan Runyan batting, a passed ball allowed Messenger to score, making the count, 5-0. Messenger moved to third on the play. That set the stage for the game's only error.

Runyan popped up to Smith, just outside the circle. The ball fell out of her glove, however, and Messenger scored, giving Bellaire its sixth run of the inning.

The beneficiary of the Big Reds' early offensive explosion was pitcher Sarah McAninch (six strikeouts, two walks). The sophomore scattered five hits, including just one extra-base knock.

The Warriors gained a run back in the bottom of the first when Amber Colvin scored on a passed ball, but that's all the offense they got.

Buckeye Trail recorded a hit in five of the seven innings, but every time it threatened either McAninch, or the defense behind her was up the challenge of snuffing it out.

"She's young and she struggled at the start of the season and she came in on fire (Tuesday)," Lahna said of McAninch. She knew what she had to do."

Not taking any chances, McAninch's teammates gave her more offensive support in the second inning.

After Cusick led off with a single to center, Applegarth sent a shot over the fence in left, giving the Big Reds what would be the final margin.

"I wanted to see more," Lahna said laughing about the final run tally. "But, I'll take an 8-1 win in a semifinal game. I'm proud of them. They came in up and we stayed up. We didn't falter."

Lahna said that upward trend on both sides of the ball will need to continue in order to hoist the OVAC hardware.

"Everyone is making contact," she said. "We're hitting the ball, we're fielding the ball, our attitudes are up."

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● One



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

MARTINS FERRY'S Hunter Hill sprints to a win in the 100-meter dash Tuesday.

and was a double winner once again. She won the high hurdles in a meet-record time of 15.43. She added the 300 lows in 47.57.

Senior Jamie Truchan continued her solid campaign in the 1600 meters. She won with a time of 5:44.60.

Martins Ferry's 4x1 team of Dalethia Johnson, Malyah Coleman, Ashley Griffith and Allen posted a 52.41 for the gold medal. The 800 team, which was comprised of Johnson, Lauryn Walker, Griffith and Coleman posted a 1:54.35 for the title.

The Riders' shuttle team of Walker, Griffith, Hayley Sutton and Chloe Sutton skimmed 40 timbers in 1:16.74 for the shuttle relay crown.

St. Clairsville, which was third overall, had just one champion. Junior Valerie Dobbs cleared 9-feet to capture the pole vault.

Indian Creek sophomore Madison Smith pulled the sprint triple. She won the 100 (12.94), 200 (26.68) and 400 (60.54).

Redskins freshman Kelsey Lewis claimed the 800 in 2:31.17.

The Redskins' 4x4 team of Smith, Lewis, Spencer Neville and Jaid Bly posted a meet-record time of 4:18.91 to prevail.

Union Local's lone winner was sophomore Megan Bateman. She claimed the 3200 meters in 13:33.77.

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St. John Central cracked out a career high 16 hits

ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Ryan Busby is hugged at the plate after scoring a run by Cody Goletz (17) and Zuke Jacob (3) during the first inning of Saturday's OVAC Class 4A championship game in Steubenville.

T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

...victory against Harrison Central for the Class 4A title at sun-splashed Vacarro Field Saturday afternoon.

"It feels really good (to win this)," Sliva said. "I hear coaches all the time talk about goals and this is definitely one

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

See, ST. C., Page C2

Harrison captures 4A softball title

By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE – The third time was definitely a charm for the Harrison Central senior softball players, especially Katie Ellzy.

The third-seeded Huskies had been to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Class 4A championship game in each of the past two seasons, only to see their bid for a title squelched by Buckeye Local and Steubenville, respectively.

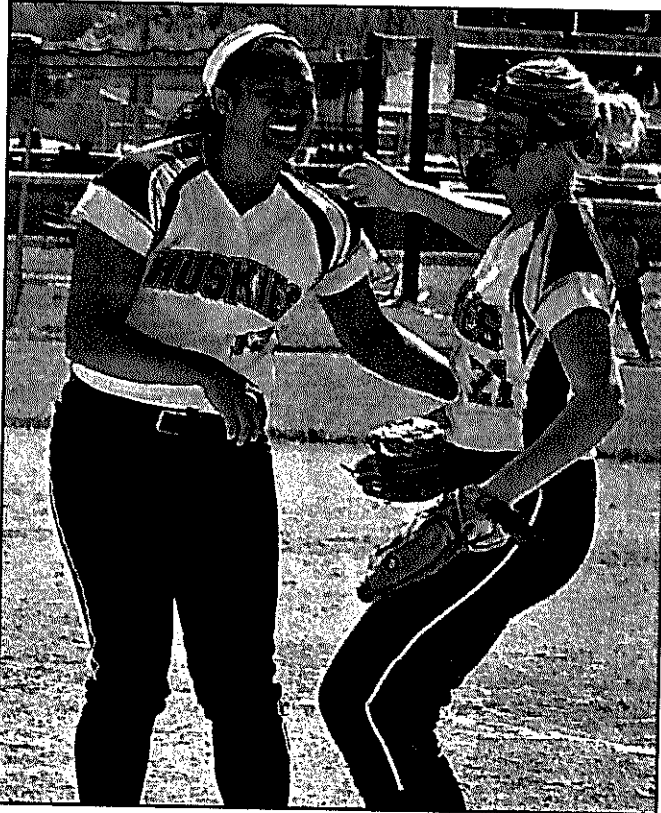
"IT'S A good day for Harrison Central softball.

*- Donnie Bethel
Harrison Central Head Coach*

Saturday morning on sun-splattered Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, Harrison Central (13-5) finally opened the door to the championship trophy by rallying past No. 4 seeded Martins Ferry, 4-1, before a huge turnout.

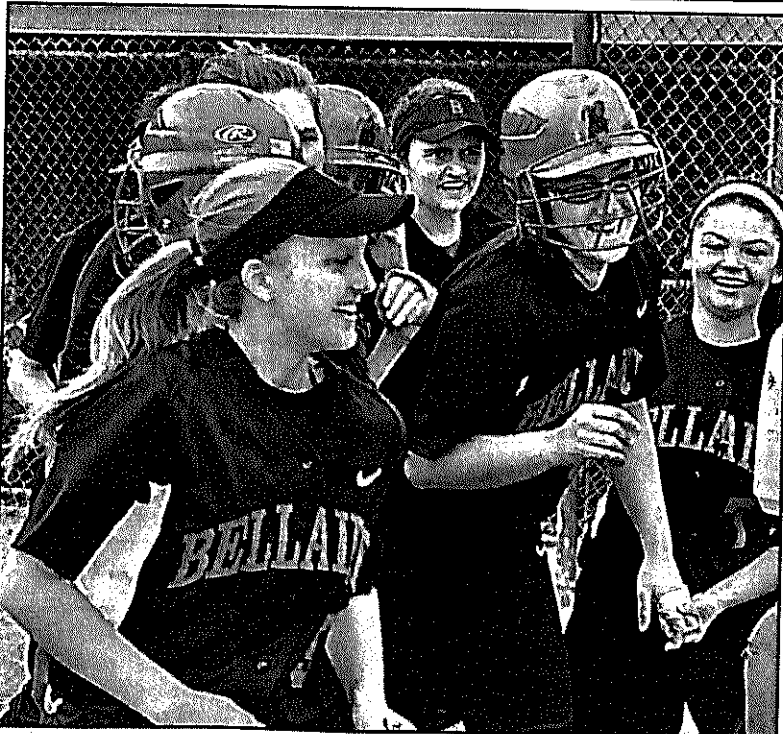
"It's a good day for Harrison Central softball," veteran head coach Donnie Bethel said. "I thought we played a really good game today. We got a strong pitching effort from Katie, like always. We got some timely hits and we played solid defense."

See, HARRISON, Page C2



HARRISON CENTRAL pitcher Katie Ellzy and Shianna Nameth celebrate the OVAC Class 4A softball title Saturday on Lisa's Field at the Chambers I-470 Complex in Elm Grove. The Huskies edged Martins Ferry, 4-1.

T-L Photo/KIM NORTH



T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

BELLAIRE'S Hannah Applegarth (second from left) is congratulated at the plate after connecting on a solo home run in the fourth inning of the OVAC Class 3A championship Saturday on Lisa's Field at the Chambers I-470 Complex. Bellaire won, 1-0.

Bellaire captures first softball title since '03

By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE – Cinderella danced her way to an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 3A championship for the second time in as many days.

On the heels of the fourth-seeded Big Reds winning the baseball title Friday night, the No. 4 softball team duplicated the fete Saturday afternoon at the sun-baked J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex with a 1-0 on a jam-packed Lisa's Field.

Freshman Hannah Applegarth was three years old the last time Bellaire won an OVAC softball title in 2003, but it was the 15-year-old freshman that accounted for the lone run with a home run leading off the fourth inning.

"It feels really great," Applegarth said. "We haven't given up on each other all year. That has been our key."

The roundtripper, Applegarth's fourth of the season, broke up a pitching duel between River's Rosey Romick and Bellaire's Sarah McAninch. The two hurlers had posted four shutout innings each until the blast that just cleared the fence in left field.

"I got lucky when Hannah walked through the doors of Bellaire High School," Bellaire head coach Melissa Lahna said. "She's a hitter and she's all game."

"I've never been more proud of a group of girls," Lahna stressed. "Our record (10-11) is a little deceiving. We went from being fifth

See, BELLAIRE, Page C2

Ellzy, who suffered the loss in the two previous title tilts, did her best to not let it happen again. The Robert Morris University recruit struck out eight, walked one and allowed just two hits. She threw 95 pitches, 68 of which were strikes.

"This feels really good," Ellzy said of the championship. "We've been here three times and it feels good to finally get the job done."

The contest, which served as the rubber game between the Buckeye 8 rivals (each team won on the others home field earlier in the season), started off as many had thought it would — as a pitcher's duel between Ellzy and Martins Ferry's Shaye DeLeonardis.

The two aces had put goose eggs on the scoreboard through four innings before Purple Rider sophomore Mercedes McLeod took Ellzy deep to left field for a home run leading off the top of the fifth.

"It was a good pitch," Ellzy said of the 1-1 offering to McLeod. "She was ready for it. She's a good hitter. You can't take that away from her. It was my mistake. I should've pitched around her."

One run looked good at that point as DeLeonardis, the Purple Riders' junior hurler, had allowed just one hit and three baserunners (she walked Ellzy twice) through the first four frames.

However, the Huskies broke through in the fifth.

With two outs, leadoff hitter Alexia Dowdle doubled to the left field corner. Ashley Heavilin followed with a single to center to tie the contest as Lindsey Dowdle raced home. Shianne Nameth found herself in an 0-2 hole after her towering foul popup fell untouched behind the plate. The junior made the Purple Riders pay dearly as she smacked the next pitch to deep left-center for a double as Alexia Dowdle and Heavilin scored easily for a 3-1 advantage.

She said winning the title for her senior teammates was a really good feeling.

"It means a lot because I

..

● **Bellaire**

Continued from Page C1

(last) Sunday morning and not even being in the tournament to winning it all.

"The three seniors set a goal last year after we sat in the parking lot and said goodbye to (then-senior) Mackenzie Conroy when our season ended," Lahna recalled. "They made a goal there that they weren't going to stop until they got a banner.

"Obviously, they came through on their promises."

However, it was underclassmen that did the damage. While Applegarth had the game-winning hit, McAninch, just a sophomore, did the damage inside the circle. She scattered four hits, struck out five and walked none.

"Sarah pitched a heckuva game," Lahna praised. "She was on her 'A' game today and we played well behind her."

River had only two baserunners get to second base. Haylee Bowers singled leading off the second and was sacrificed to second by Emelie Heater. However, she would advance to further as McAninch toughened up and retired the next two batters.

The Pilots threatened again in the sixth as Mackenzie Marshall and Bowers rapped back-to-back singles with two outs. McAninch ended that with an inning-ending groundout.

Romick pitched well enough to win. She fanned half-a-dozen, walked one and spaced out five hits.

"They outgunned us today. Give them all the credit," River head coach Dave Wright allowed. "The River Pilots wish them congratulations."

Elisha Gillespie singled twice for Bellaire. Bowers had two singles for River.

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"It means a lot because I know Katie and the other girls had been here for three years," Nameth added. "I knew she (Katie) wanted it really bad. Her pitching has got us through the worst times, so I just wanted to make this memorable for her."

Ellzy had all the confidence in her teammates.

"We had to score a run to win anyway," she admitted. "I knew we could come back. I had faith in them."

Shadyside comes up short in Class 2A softball final

By RICK THORP
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — They say you can't judge a book by its cover. Well, the story Steubenville Central wrote en route to capturing its third straight OVAC crown Saturday was defined by the book's front and back.

The Crusaders scored four runs in their first time at-bat and six runs in their last in besting Shadyside, 10-3, in the Tom Bechtel Softball Championship 2A title tilt.

"I wish we were a little better in the middle, though," Steubenville Catholic head coach Jim DiCarlo said smiling as his players posed with the championship hardware on Ben's Field.

"Our kids, they battle. They never make it easy (for the other team), no matter what."

The championship — the seventh in school history — goes along with the Crusaders' regular-season crown.

"We feel good because we earned what we we have," DiCarlo lamented. "The two teams we beat (in the OVAC Tournament) had a combined record of 28-7."

"So, I couldn't be more prouder of our kids for beating two good teams."

Shadyside head coach Jillian Ongley was left to wonder what might had been for her squad, which entered the game winners of nine straight.

"We hung with them," she said. "Until the last inning it was still a close game."

Lindsey Dunn singled in Kaitlyn Weaver in the top of the first giving the Tigers (12-4) an early advantage. The Crusaders (17-2), however, turned the tide quickly in the bottom of the inning.

With one out, Brittany Bertoia reached second on an error. The next batter, Alex McComb reached on another miscue. AshLynne Daley then walked to load the bases.

A wild pitch by Shadyside starter Megan Heagney allowed Bertoia to score, tying the game.

Then, a bunt single by Shayna Mirabella knocked in pinch runner Maddy Metcalf, giving SCC a 2-1 lead.

With ducks on the pond, and still one away, Fran Capaldi lofted a shot to shallow center. Shadyside center fielder Kenzie Fielding, shortstop Karly Klug and Weaver, playing second all came in to try to make a play. The ball fell, however, allowing Daley to score, making the score 3-1.

Making matters worse for the Tigers, Weaver was hurt on the play. She laid on the field for almost 15 minutes being attend to before being carried off. She didn't return.

"I think it affected them," Ongley said of Weaver's injury. "We put another freshman (Alyx Baker) in there and she played hard



T-L Photo/RICK THORP

SHADYSIDE'S Shelby Benedetta rounds third base in the second inning of the Tigers OVAC Class 2A final against Steubenville Central.

knocked on the left field door three times, only to be denied all three times by Benedetta, who made three excellent catches one made with a leaping grab above the fence.

"We couldn't have hit the ball any harder than we did in that inning," DiCarlo said. "Their center fielder did a heck of a job. Sometimes you just hit it at people. We were happy with that inning, even though didn't score. We were hitting the ball. I was really happy with that."

Fielding led off the Shadyside sixth by sending a shot to center. Mirabella made a spectacular catch, though, saving a probable double.

Two batters later, Sarah Dierkes hit a shot to left no one caught. It cleared the fence, bring the Tigers to within one, 4-3.

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They had six hits and scored all of their runs with one out. Bertoia and Daley both knocked in two with their base knocks.

Despite the loss, Ongley believes her team is playing soundly as the tournament nears. It begins next weekend at the Mead Township fields. The statewide draw is

ELM GROVE — They say you can't judge a book by its cover. Well, the story Steubenville Central wrote en route to capturing its third straight OVAC crown Saturday was defined by the book's front and back.

The Crusaders scored four runs in their first time at-bat and six runs in their last in besting Shadyside, 10-3, in the Tom Bechtel Softball Championship 2A title tilt.

"I wish we were a little better in the middle, though," Steubenville Catholic head coach Jim DiCarlo said smiling as his players posed with the championship hardware on Ben's Field.

"Our kids, they battle. They never make it easy (for the other team), no matter what."

The championship — the seventh in school history — goes along with the Crusaders' regular-season crown.

"We feel good because we earned what we we have," DiCarlo lamented. "The two teams we beat (in the OVAC Tournament) had a combined record of 28-7."

"So, I couldn't be more prouder of our kids for beating two good teams."

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"We hung with them," she said. "Until the last inning it was still a close game."

Lindsey Dunn singled in Kaitlyn Weaver in the top of the first giving the Tigers (12-4) an early advantage. The Crusaders (17-2), however, turned the tide quickly in the bottom of the inning.

With one out, Brittany Bertoia reached second on an error. The next batter, Alex McComb reached on another miscue. AshLynne Daley then walked to load the bases.

A wild pitch by Shadyside starter Megan Heagney allowed Bertoia to score, tying the game.

Then, a bunt single by Shayna Mirabella knocked in pinch runner Maddy Metcalf, giving SCC a 2-1 lead.

With ducks on the pond, and still one away, Fran Capaldi lofted a shot to shallow center. Shadyside center fielder Kenzie Fielding, shortstop Karly Klug and Weaver, playing second all came in to try to make a play. The ball fell, however, allowing Daley to score, making the score 3-1.

Making matters worse for the Tigers, Weaver was hurt on the play. She laid on the field for almost 15 minutes being attend to before being carried off. She didn't return.

"I think it affected them," Ongley said of Weaver's injury. "We put another freshman (Alyx Baker) in there and she played hard."

"If that doesn't happen maybe we have a different outcome. Who know?"

The Tigers got a run back in the second. With one out, Kayla Smith doubled to center, driving in Shelby Benedetta from second.

In the fifth, Steubenville Catholic



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SHADYSIDE'S Shelby Benedetta rounds third base in the second inning of the Tigers OVAC Class 2A final against Steubenville Central.

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Despite the loss, Ongley believes her team is playing soundly as the tournament nears. It begins next weekend at the Mead Township fields. The statewide draw is today.

"We need to get to work on the things we messed up on and see how Kaitlyn is doing," she said. "I feel we'll come into the sectional strong. We have some strong teams in there. And, we might even face (Steubenville Catholic) again."

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Monarchs Seize Crown

Kaylor, Blake lead JM to 4th straight 5-A title

By SHAWN RINE
Sports Editor

WHEELING

Steubenville certainly packed a lunch. The problem for Big Red, is that Maggie Kaylor stole it.

Already trailing 2-0 in the fourth inning and with Steubenville threatening to break this Tom Bechtel OVAC Class 5-A Softball Championship wide open, John Marshall needed a hero Saturday on Ben's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex.

Enter Kaylor.

The right fielder turned away Rhiannon Petrisko at the plate to save one run, and then fired to first to beat Tay-



John Marshall's Jackie Gellner awaits the pitch at the plate during Saturday's OVAC Class 5-A Championship tilt against Steubenville at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex in Wheeling. Catching for Big Red is Bobbie Hall.

Photo by Shawn Rine

See, MONARCHS,
Page 3

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 fielding,

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



Photo by Seth Staskey
St. Clairsville's Zuke Jacobs preps a delivery for Harrison Central Satur-

Dons Hoist 1-A Title

By TRACY WATSON
For the News-Register

WHEELING — In win-

ning three consecutive Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 1-A softball titles St. John had relied on good pitching, outstanding fielding and plenty of hitting.

Saturday those three things all avoided the Fighting Irish as Madonna made its way to the throne.

Katie Gasvoda fired a four-hitter, fanning 10 along the way. Courtney Kaczmarek chased home four runs with a pair of singles and Madonna took advantage of numerous Fighting Irish errors en route to an 11-2 victory in the Tom Bechtel OVAC small-school title tilt on Lisa's Field at the

See, DONS,
Page 2

Bellaire Captures Softball Honors

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See, **DEVILS**, Page 2



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

Third Time the Charm for Huskies

By **KIM NORTH**
For the News-Register

WHEELING — The third time was definitely a charm for the Harrison Central senior softball players, especially Katie Ellzy.

The third-seeded Huskies had been to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Class 4-A championship game in each of the past two seasons, only to see their bid for a title squelched by Buckeye Local and Steubenville, respectively.

Saturday morning on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, Harrison Central (13-5) finally opened the door to the championship trophy by rallying past No. 4 Martins Ferry, 4-1, before a huge turnout.

See, **HUSKIES**,
Page 3



Photo by Kim North
The Harrison Central Huskies softball squad celebrates after winning the Class 4-A Championship Saturday.

Crusaders Charge To Championship

By **RICK THORP**

For The News-Register

WHEELING — They say you can't judge a book by its cover. Well, the story Steubenville Central wrote en route to capturing its third straight OVAC crown Saturday was defined by the book's front and back.

The Crusaders scored four runs in their first time at-bat and six runs in their last in besting Shadyside, 10-3, in the Tom Bechtel Softball Championship 2-A title tilt.

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See, **CRUSADERS**,
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See, **DONS**,
Page 2

Bellaire Captures Softball Honors

By **KIM NORTH**
For The News-Register

WHEELING — Cinderella danced her way to an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 3A championship for the second time in as many days.

On the heels of the fourth-seeded Big Reds winning the baseball title Friday night, the No. 4 softball team duplicated the fete Saturday afternoon at the sun-baked J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex with a 1-0 victory on a jam-packed Lisa's Field.

Freshman Hannah Applegarth was three years old the last time Bellaire won an OVAC softball title in 2003, but it was the 15-year-old freshman that accounted for the lone run with a home run leading off the fourth inning.

"It feels really great," Applegarth said. "We haven't given up on each other all year. That has been our key."

See, **BELLAIRE**,
Page 2

HUSKIES

Continued from page B1

"It's a good day for Harrison Central softball," veteran coach Donnie Bethel said. "I thought we played a really good game. We got a strong pitching effort from Katie, like always. We got some timely hits and we played solid defense."

Ellzy, who suffered the loss in the two previous title tilts, did her best to not let it happen again. The Robert Morris recruit struck out eight, walked one and allowed two hits. She threw 95 pitches, 68 of which were strikes.

"This feels really good," Ellzy said. "We've been here three times and it feels good to finally get the job done."

The contest, which served as the rubber game between the Buckeye 8 rivals (each team won on the other's home field earlier in the season), started off as many had thought it would — as a pitcher's duel between Ellzy and Martins Ferry's Shaye DeLeonardis.

The two aces put goose eggs on the scoreboard through four innings before Purple Riders sophomore Mercedes McLeod took Ellzy deep to left field for a home run leading off the top of the fifth.

"It was a good pitch," Ellzy said of the 1-1 offering to McLeod. "She was ready for it. She's a good hitter. You can't take that away from her. It was my mistake. I should've pitched around her."

One run looked good at that point as DeLeonardis, the Purple Riders' junior hurler, had allowed one hit and three baserunners (she walked Ellzy twice) through the first four innings.

However, the Huskies broke through in the fifth.

With two outs, leadoff hitter Alexia Dowdle doubled to the left-field corner. Ashley Heavilin followed with a single to center to tie the contest as Lindsey Dowdle raced home. Shianne Nameth found herself in an 0-2 hole after her towering foul popup fell untouched behind the plate. The junior made the Purple Riders pay as she smacked the next pitch to deep left-center for a double as Alexia Dowdle and Heavilin scored easily for a 3-1 advantage.

"I just knew I needed to be clutch," Nameth said of her game-winning hit. "A base hit is what I was going for at least, but I got lucky and hit a gap."

She said winning the title for her senior teammates was a really good feeling.

"It means a lot because I know Katie and the other girls had been here for three years," Nameth added. "I knew she (Katie) wanted it really bad. Her pitching has got us through the worst times, so I just wanted to make this memorable for her."

Ellzy had all the confidence in her teammates.

"We had to score a run to win anyway," she admitted. "I knew we could come back. I had faith in them."

The championship was the Huskies' second. Their first came in 2009.

For Martins Ferry, which was trying to claim its fourth crown and first since 2011, the setback temporarily halted a streak in which the Purple Riders (12-9) had won 11 of 13 games after starting 1-6.

"We weren't hitting the ball real well and we couldn't get a bunt down," Martins Ferry coach Paige Williams said. "We made some mistakes in the field and you can't do that against a quality team like Harrison Central."

Both teams resume regular-season action this week before Division III sectional tournament action begins.

"We could see them again down the road," Bethel noted.

MONARCHS

Continued from page B1

lor Lane who looked like she had a sure RBI single to cut off another. That gave the Monarchs the life they needed.

Top-seeded John Marshall turned that momentum in four fifth-inning runs and ultimately a 4-2 victory that represents its fourth consecutive conference crown.

"She's a very good player for us and she made a couple really nice plays," JM (21-6) coach Ed West said. "I've got four outfielders I think are as good as any in the valley and I can put any of them out there and they will do a good job."

"Maggie did it two times and that's two runs they didn't get."

"Huge plays."

Big Red (14-7) starter Hayley Stamps had held the Monarchs scoreless through four, but the bats came alive in the fifth. Coupled with four errors, it spelled doom.

Jess Kinnick led off with a single but was erased on a force play. Steubenville tried to turn two on batter Bobbie Hall and threw the ball away, allowing her to advance to second.

Carli Lightner's high pop into shallow right field was misplayed, allowing courtesy runner Morgan Vucelik to score and cut the deficit to 2-1.

Jackie Gellner followed with a hard-hit, run-scoring single that scooted past the Big Red center fielder and rolled to the wall and tied the game. Kaylor then got in the act with a run-producing hit, but the damage was compounded when the ball raced under the glove of the left fielder and also went to the wall, putting the Monarchs ahead 3-2 and permitting her to go all the way to third. Alyssa Blake grounded to third and was retired, but Kaylor sped home and got under

CRUSADERS

Continued from page B1

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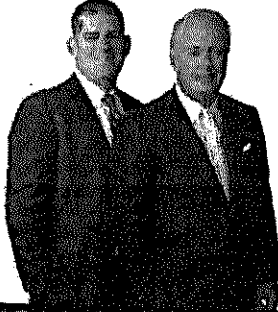
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DONS

Continued from page B1

J.B. Chambers I-470 Sports Complex.

"Bellaire St. John is a very good team and Jerry (Magistro) does a great job with them and to beat them to win a championship is a special thing," Madonna coach Cris Conti said. "This team has worked very hard to accomplish this and I am very proud of them."

The Blue Dons got the scoring started in the second with the benefit of one base hit. Aubrey Platek kicked it off with a single to left, stole second and went to third on a sacrifice bunt.

After Kaczmarek was hit by a pitch and took second, Sarah Travglino chased home the first run with a sacrifice bunt, with Kaczmarek coming around to score as Travglino reached on an error for a 2-0 lead.

St. John mistakes paved the way for more Madonna runs in the third with a leadoff walk and an error leading to a two-run Platek double to deep left that made it 4-0.

A sacrifice bunt, another error and two wild pitches added to the misery for the Fighting Irish as the lead grew to 6-0 after three. For the second consecutive inning Platek's hit was the only one of a big uprising.

"Coming in we knew that Madonna had a good pitcher and could hit the ball and that we were not going to be able to make errors," Magistro said. "We have been battling errors and mental mistakes all season long, and it's hard to win when you are jittery going onto the field."

Madonna got the bats going in the fourth, pushing across three more runs with five hits, including doubles by winning pitcher Taylor Thompson and Montana Mascio. Gasdova chased home a run with a fielder's choice while two more came around on Kaczmarek's base hit that made it 9-0.

Magistro's Irish finally made a little noise in the fifth, using a walk, an error and a passed ball to put runners at second and third with one out. However, Gasvoda fanned the next two hitters to end the threat.

St. John got on the board in the sixth thanks to its first three hits, back-to-back doubles off the bats of losing pitcher Kate Lovinski and Caitlin Sliva and a run-scoring single from Gilli Johnson that trimmed the deficit to 9-2.

Another two-run single by Kaczmarek in the sixth followed a pair of hit batters, an error and a pair of passed balls for an 11-2 upperhand.

"We did the little things and we hit the ball very well," Conti added. "The girls did an outstanding job running the bases, Katie pitched the ball very well and we made plays on defense. You can't ask for much more than that."

"This is a very nice win for us. Along with winning a championship it gives us a little momentum heading into the sectionals next week."

Magistro was pleased with how his kids did not give up and battled late.

"I felt like we were pretty well prepared for them after a few days, but we just could not get anything going early on and made too many mental mistakes," he said. "But the girls did not give up when it was 9-0 and we got some solid hits late."

"It was just a shame we didn't hit the ball like that earlier. But hopefully the way we played late will carry over a little bit into tournament time."

BELLAIRE

Continued from page B1

The roundtripper, Applegarth's fourth of the season, broke up a pitching duel between River's Rosey Romick and Bellaire's Sarah McAninch. The two hurlers had posted four shutout innings each until the blast that just cleared the fence in left field.

"I got lucky when Hannah walked through the doors of Bellaire High School," Bellaire coach Melissa Lahna said. "She's a hitter and she's all game."

"I've never been more proud of a group of girls.

Our record (10-11) is a little deceiving. We went from being fifth (last) Sunday morning and not even being in the tournament to winning it all.

"The three seniors set a goal last year after we sat in the parking lot and said goodbye to (then-senior) Mackenzie Conroy when our season ended. They made a goal there that they weren't going to stop until they got a banner. Obviously, they came through on their promises."

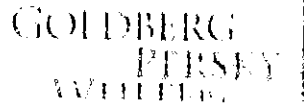
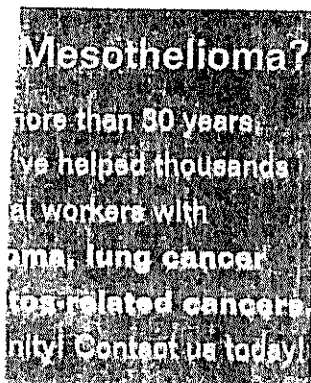
However, it was underclassmen that did the damage. While Applegarth had the game-winning hit, McAninch, just a sophomore, did the damage inside the circle. She scattered four hits, struck out five and walked none.

"Sarah pitched a heckuva game," Lahna praised. "She was on her 'A' game today and we played well behind her."

River had only two baserunners get to second base. Haylee Bowers singled leading off the second and was sacrificed to second by Emelie Heater. However, she would advance no further as McAninch toughened up and retired the next two batters.

The Pilots threatened again in the sixth as Mackenzie Marshall and Bowers rapped back-to-back singles with two outs. McAninch ended that with an inning-ending ground-out.

Romick pitched well enough to win. She fanned half-a-dozen, walked one and spaced out five hits.



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The Times Leader

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Thursday,
April 30, 2015

Tom Bechtel OVAC Softball Championship

Martins Ferry rallies to stun St. C. in 4A

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

ELM GROVE – Martins Ferry hasn't won an OVAC softball title since 2011.

There were multiple points of this season and even during Wednesday afternoon's game where it looked like the drought would be extended.

But, as they've done many times over the last few weeks after a slow start to the season, the Purple Riders simply found a way.

By scoring all four of their runs in their final two at-bats, Martins Ferry avenged two early season losses, knocked top-seeded St. Clairsville from the ranks of the unbeaten and positioned itself to end its conference title drought thanks to a cherished 4-3 victory on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex during the Tom Bechtel OVAC Softball Championship Class 4A semifinal

"It was a total team effort against one heck of a team," Ferry head coach Paige Williams said. "We had to fight all the way to the end for this one."

Meanwhile, St. Clairsville head coach Rachel Duncan was left to deliver her first post-game speech after a loss this season and wonder what might have been.

"We definitely weren't dominating today and didn't show our potential on the field, in any regard, really," Duncan said. "We left

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*- Paige Williams
Ferry Head Coach*



MARTINS FERRY'S Tyrah King slides into second base ahead of the tag of St. Clairsville shortstop Michaela Miller during Wednesday's OVAC Class 4A semifinal. Umpire Randy Whitlatch is looking on. The Purple Riders rallied with three runs in the seventh to beat St. C., 4-3.

T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

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See, FERRY, Page C2

River tops Monroe in 3A semi

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE – For the first time in Dave Wright's 12-year tenure as head coach of the River softball team, the Pilots have navigated their way to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 2A championship game.

Wednesday afternoon on sun-baked Ben's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, River (17-4) spotted Monroe Central a 3-0 lead before rallying for a 5-3 victory.

With the come-from-behind triumph, the third-seeded Pilots will now meet No. 4 Bellaire (9-10) Saturday for the title. The Big Reds upset No. 1 Buckeye Trail Tuesday afternoon, 8-1.

Erin Miller gave the Seminoles their 3-0 margin when she blasted a drive well over the left-center fence with two runners aboard and two out. However, Monroe Central would only have one other baserunner – that being Miller who doubled with one out in the seventh – as Rosey Romick retired 17 straight batters.

"Rosey pitched a whale of a game," Wright praised. "She kept the ball down and did everything we asked of her."

"Erin really tattooed that ball and when you spot a team three runs, it's



T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

RIVER'S Rosie Romick (14) is mobbed by teammate Emelie Heater (with mask) as shortstop Haylee Bowers joins the celebration following the Pilots' 5-3 victory over Monroe Central Tuesday night on Ben's Field.

tough, but we stuck with it."

River got two of those runs back in the bottom of the first inning when Romick and Monica Curtis collected back-to-back leadoff doubles. Curtis would score on Madi Taylor's two-out infield single.

The Pilots took the lead for good in the second as Curtis chased one

home on a groundout and Mackenzie Marshall singled in the other for a 4-3 edge.

River tacked on an insurance run thanks to some shoddy fielding by the Seminoles in the fifth inning.

"Errors hurt us very badly,"

See, RIVER, Page C2

Harrison reaches 4A title game, 5-1

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE – Harrison Central has been knocking on the door to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 4A championship for three straight years. The Huskies hope to knock it down on their fourth attempt.

Wednesday night on Ben's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, third-seeded Harrison Central upset No. 2 Meadowbrook, 5-1, to advance to Saturday morning's 10:30 encounter with Buckeye 8 rival Martins Ferry, which ended St. Clairsville's unbeat-

See, HARRISON, Page C2



T-L Photo/KIM NORTH

HARRISON CENTRAL'S Katie Ellzy pulls into third base with a stand-up triple during Wednesday's OVAC Class 4A semifinal against Meadowbrook. The Huskies prevailed, 5-1.

Five things to look for in draft's first round

CHICAGO (AP) – Commissioner opening round.

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● Harrison

Continued from Page B1

en run in the other semifinal. "I'm proud of the girls," Harrison Central head coach Donnie Bethel said. "This is the third straight year we've made the championship game. Hopefully, this year will bring something we'll remember for a long time."

The Huskies have lost title tilts to Buckeye Local twice and Steubenville last season.

In moving to the championship for the fourth consecutive season, the Huskies (12-4) rode the hot arm and bat of senior Katie Ellzy.

The Robert Morris University recruit struck out a dozen Colts — including the first five — and walked just one, that being intentional. She scattered half-a-dozen hits, with half of them being of the infield variety.

"Katie was dominant early on and then they started getting to her a little," Bethel noted. "Then she was dominant at the end."

She also helped herself at the plate with three hits. With Harrison Central holding a slim 1-0 edge in the top of the fifth, Lindsey Dowdle and Alexia Dowdle drew back-to-back leadoff walks. Ashley Heavilin sacrificed both up a base and Shianne Nameth's solid single up the mid-

● Bridgeport

Continued from Page B1

we'll come back and try to start getting things in order for the tournament."

The same holds true for Patrick Wells. The Beallsville head coach, too, is eyeing postseason play, though Wednesday's game didn't do much to help in preparations. Dyson had plenty to do with that.

"We just have to put the ball in play and try to build on that," said Wells, whose team welcomes Frontier on Friday.

"We've been playing fairly decent lately. Our defense hasn't hurt us. But if you don't put the ball in play, you're not going

dle plated Lindsey Dowdle. After Nameth swiped second with no throw, Ellzy rifled a two-run triple to the right field corner as the margin grew to 4-1.

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"I'm not sure why they pitched to her in that situation with an open base, but thank you."

Joelle Jones' single in the seventh made it 5-1.

Nameth and Ellzy teamed for six hits between them.

"They are our two big guns and we expect that out of them," Bethel added. "We got some key contributions from others though."

Ellzy lost her shutout bid in the sixth when pinch-hitter Taylor DeLong singled in a run with two outs.

Harrison Central and Martins Ferry split their two-game regular season, with each winning on the other team's home field.

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Meadowbrook 000 001 0 — 1 6 0
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The Bulldogs (14-7) blew things open with a 5-run second.

Bass and McGrath reached base with one out. Then, with Bass having stole second and third, QJ Williams flew out to left scoring Bass. Dyson, Andrew Hadzima, Jeremiah Booker, Patrick Britton and Chance Watson all laced consecutive singles which helped result in three more runs and an 8-0 Bridgeport lead.

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● Ferry

Continued from Page B1

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Next up for Ferry is a rubbermatch with Harrison Central, which ousted Meadowbrook in the second 4A semifinal. That game is scheduled for Saturday morning at 10:30.

"The last time we got in (the OVAC tournament) and won the (semifinal) we had to fight tooth and nail for that, too," Williams said. "Apparently, we're slow starters."

As has been the case time and time again this season for the Riders, they dug themselves an early hole.

After St. C. ace Adrian Smith pitched around a Tyrah King single in the first by fanning the side, the hard-hitting Red Devils went to work.

They scored three runs in the home half, which normally is more than plenty for Smith, who is committed to St. John's University.

But, the Red Devils missed an opportunity for more when they left two in scoring position. Stranding runners became a theme of the game for the Red Devils.

"We didn't put our heads down and kept playing," Williams said. "Shaye (DeLeonardis) hung in there on the mound for us."

Though the Riders failed to score until the sixth, they only went in order in the fifth. They had runners in scoring position in the first four innings and multiple runners aboard in every inning except the third.

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● Draft

Continued from Page B1

mature and they become great people, great citizens, great husbands and great players. Some don't.

"Some that were very clean the whole time in college and had no issues at all, all of a sudden they make some bad decisions. We're still talking about human beings. We're very thorough in what we're doing, collecting information and then you make decisions. Any time you're dealing with human beings there is a margin for error that has to be understood."

QUARTERBACKS: Winston and Oregon's Marcus Mariota, the two most recent Heisman Trophy winners, by far are the top-rated players at the key position. They easily could go first to Tampa Bay and second to Tennessee — or some team that trades up.

Beyond them, any QBs going early would be a reach. Ranked next are Brett Hundley of UCLA, Bryce Petty of Baylor and, well, who knows? Not exactly the 1983 or 2004 crop.

POTENTIAL TRADES: Several personnel people quietly say they expect lots of bartering in this draft, particularly in the first two rounds. Teams dealing from strength would be Cleveland (12th and 19th) and New Orleans (13th and 31st). The Browns have

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Bridgeport

Continued from Page B1

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"I just have to put the ball in play and build on that," said Wells. "The game welcomes Frontier on Friday."

"I've been playing fairly decent lately. My offense hasn't hurt us. But if you get the ball in play, you're not going to get anybody. We hit about five or six times and that's it."

Three — five. Of the 16 batters who were fanned, two flew out, one out and one lined out. The lone home run hit came on a bunt single to the fifth.

"It happens," Downing shrugged. "The game was long over by then. The coach took care of that with a 3-run homer by a 2-run homer by Bailey that drove in Kylil Bass, the transfer who's provided a spark to Downing's lineup. "I'm certainly given us a lot of flexi-

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Hadzima and Booker drove in runs in the third, making the score 10-1. Then, in the fourth, Bass slapped an RBI single scoring Watson to cap the scoring.

"We have a couple of guys banged up, but other guys are stepping in," Downing said. "That's what we have to do."

"We're just going to try and keep hitting."

Linescore:
Beallsville 000 00 — 0 1 2
Bridgeport 352 1x — 11 15 0
Be — Sylvis lp (1K, 2BB), L.Goddard (2) (0K, 0BB), Taylor (4) (0K, 3BB) and Mercer.
Br — Dyson wp (11K, 0BB) and Booker. Saldana S, rbi; McGrath HR, S, rbi; Williams 2S, rbi; Dyson 2S, rbi; Hadzima 2S, 2rbi; Booker 2S, rbi; Britton 2S, rbi; Watson S, rbi.

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Though Ferry had the lead, the game proved to be far from over.

Talented St. C. freshman Madison Vickers singled and was promptly sacrificed to second by catcher JoLynn Shunk. Smith then looped a ball into shallow rightfield. She hustled into a double, but Vickers had to put the brakes on third after having to make sure the ball wouldn't be caught.

Mackenzie Otto, who had a two-run hit in the first inning, dropped down a bunt, but Ferry put the ball in its hip pocket and conceded the base. DeLeonardis then posted her fifth strikeout.

On the ensuing pitch, Amaya Smith hit a sinking liner to right, which Jacob raced in to catch, setting off the Purple celebration.

"We have to deal with what this (loss) is and we have to rely on what we have on this team," Duncan said. "We have the ability, we have good team unity and the talent."

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"We have to deal with what this (loss) is and we have to rely on what we have on this team," Duncan said. "We have the ability, we have good team unity and the talent. We can't let this (loss) defeat us eternally. We have to have confidence in ourselves and bounce back."

Adrian Smith finished with 14 strikeouts. Kaley Garloch had a single, double and a RBI for the Red Devils.

King had three of the Riders' seven hits. St. Clairsville will attempt to bounce back today against Harrison Central in a make-up game.

Linescore:
 Martins Ferry 000 001 3 — 4 7 0
 St. Clairsville 300 000 0 — 3 8 5
 MF: DeLeonardis wp (5K, 3BB) and Hotlosz. Bridges T, rbi; King 3S, rbi; McLeod S, rbi; Jacob S, rbi.
 StC: Smith lp (14K, 3BB) and Shunk. Miller D; Vickers T, 2S; Smith D; Otto S, RBI; Garloch S, D, 2rbi.

● River

Continued from Page B1

Monroe Central head coach Missy Hooper said. "You take away those errors, they don't get those girls on and they don't score those runs."

Romick finished with 11 strikeouts and no base-on-balls. She allowed four hits in the 1-hour, 16-minute contest. She also rapped a pair of doubles.

"I watched Bellaire play against Buckeye Trail and they impressed me," Wright noted. "They hit the ball really well and their pitcher did a good job."

River has never won an OVAC softball title. Bellaire has five, the last coming in 2003.

Linescore:
 Monroe Central 300 000 0 — 3 4 4
 River 220 010 x — 5 6 0
 MC — Logston lp (6K, 1BB) and Kuhn; Miller D, HR, 3rbi
 R — Romick wp (11K, OBB) and M. Marshall; Romick 2D; Curtis D, 2rbi; M. Marshall S, rbi; Taylor S, rbi

● Pirates

Continued from Page B1

striking out eight and lowering his ERA to 1.76. The right-hander is 6-0 in Chicago's lone run. Chicago's Kyle Hendricks (0-1) allowed

reach. Ranked next are Brett Hundley of UCLA, Bryce Petty of Baylor and, well, who knows? Not exactly the 1983 or 2004 crop.

POTENTIAL TRADES: Several personnel people quietly say they expect lots of bartering in this draft, particularly in the first two rounds. Teams dealing from strength would be Cleveland (12th and 19th) and New Orleans (13th and 31st). The Browns have their own pick and Buffalo's, the Saints own theirs and Seattle's for Jimmy Graham.

Speculation on possible dealers has centered on Philadelphia's Chip Kelly, who coached Mariota in college; San Diego, which can't seem to get quarterback Philip Rivers interested in a contract extension; and the Seahawks, who would like to climb back into the opening round.

RUNNING ON EMPTY: Running backs have not been a top commodity in recent drafts as the NFL has gone pass crazy. Teams tend to look for ball carriers in later rounds, but this draft has a strong group.

Will Todd Gurley of Georgia break into the Thursday festivities now that he has a clean bill of health after a major knee injury? Will 2,000-yard man Melvin Gordon go on opening night?

Other names to think about as the draft goes deeper: Miami's Duke Johnson, Indiana's Tevin Coleman, Boise State's Jay Ajayi, Nebraska's Ameer Abdullah, Alabama's T.J. Yeldon, and Michigan State's Jeremy Langford.

DEFENSE, DEFENSE: A high priority almost certainly will be placed on the defensive side of the ball in the first round, even if Ray and Gregory plummet. Such standouts as linemen Leonard Williams of Southern Cal, Danny Shelton of Washington, Arik Armstead of Oregon, and Malcom Brown of Texas should go.

McCutchen, who was batting .171 before he broke open a 3-1 game with the

Player of the WEEK

Honor Roll

BRALEN SNELL, Bellaire — Snell homered, singled and finished with two RBI in an OVAC semifinal against Linsly.
BRENNON CONROY, Bellaire — Conroy doubled and knocked in two runs in the OVAC win against the Cadets.
KALEB BAIRE, Martins Ferry — Baire homered, sliced three singles and had four RBI against Barnesville.
HUNTER WESTLAKE, Bellaire — Westlake had a solo homer and a single against Linsly.
MATT WITHROW, Union Local — Withrow tripled, singled and had two RBI against Buckeye Local.
BRANDON PANEPUCCI, Buckeye Local — Panepucci had two singles and an RBI against Union Local.
LOGAN STARR, Harrison Central — Starr shined with three singles and two RBI vs. Indian Creek.
CHAD ALLEMAN, Monroe Central — Alleman singled and drove in three in the Seminoles' victory at PNC Park against Kennedy Catholic.
TYLER REDISH, Harrison Central — Redish laced two singles and knocked in three against Indian Creek.
TREY DUFFY, Duffy had two single and three RBI against Kennedy Catholic at PNC Park.
LUCAS ROBB, Union Local — Robb laced three singles against Martins Ferry.
TJ JACOB, Martins Ferry — Jacob had a triple and two RBI vs. Union Local.
BRADY TREHERNE, Barnesville — Treherne tripled, singled and plated a run vs. Meadowbrook.
NATHAN STEELE, Bellaire — Steele tripled and singled vs. Harrison Central.
DUSTIN REDISH, Harrison Central — Redish tripled, singled and drove in three against Bellaire.
BRENDAN BAIRE, Martins Ferry — Baire had two singles and an RBI vs. Barnesville.

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The Times Leader

SPORTS

SECTION

B

Monday,
April 27, 2015

OVAC softball tournament pairings set

• Semifinals to be played Tuesday, Wednesday at J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex

By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

WHEELING – Some things never change. Take for example, the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Softball Championships.

When the final regular-season standings were released late Sunday night, five defending champions were among the play-off field. They include John Marshall (Class 5A); Steubenville (Class 4A); Steubenville Catholic (Class 3A),

Wheeling Central (Class 2A) and St. John Central (Class 1A). However, two new champions are assured in Class 4A and Class 3A as Steubenville has bumped up to Class 5A and Steubenville Catholic dropped back down to Class 2A.

Semifinals in all five divisions will be contested Tuesday and Wednesday on Field 3 (Lisa's Field) and Field 4 (Ben's Field) at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex in Elm Grove. Five games will be played each night. The championship games



are scheduled for Saturday at the same site with times to be deter-

mined.

In Class 5A, the three-time defending champion Monarchs (19-6) are the No. 1 seed and will meet fourth-seeded Wheeling Park (12-11) at 7:45 p.m. Wednesday in the nightcap of a tripleheader on Lisa's Field. The other semi has Jefferson County rivals – No. 2 Indian Creek (9-4) and No. 3 Steubenville (11-6) – squaring off just prior to the JM-WP game at 6.

St. Clairsville (16-0) earned the top seed in Class 4A, and deservedly so as head coach

Rachel Duncan's Red Devils have steamrolled through the competition thus far. They are paired with Buckeye 8 rival Martins Ferry (9-8), which slipped past Oak Glen and Edison for the final spot after starting the season at 1-6. The two will kick off Wednesday's three games on Lisa's Field at 4:15 p.m. The other Class 4A semi is set for 7:15 Wednesday on Ben's Field and pits No. 2 Meadowbrook (13-2) and third-seeded Harrison Central (10-4).

See, **OVAC**, Page B2

● OVAC

Continued from Page B1

In Class 3A, Buckeye Trail (12-2) topped the field and will play No. 4 Bellaire (8-9) at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday on Ben's Field. The Big Reds edged past Shenandoah for the final playoff spot. Monroe County rivals River (15-4) and Monroe Central (10-5) meet in the other semi at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday on Ben's Field. The Pilots are the No. 2 seed. The Seminoles No. 3.

Steubenville Catholic (14-2) captured the No. 1 seed in Class 2A and will play fourth-seeded Bridgeport (14-4) Tuesday at 6 p.m. on Lisa's Field. The other semifinal — between second-seeded Wheeling Central (17-5) and No. 3 Shadyside (10-3) — will follow at 7:45.

In Class 1A, top-seeded Madonna (11-5) faces No. 4 Paden City (8-10) at 7:15 p.m. Tuesday on Ben's Field, while No. 2 Bishop Donahue (9-6) tangles with third-seeded St. John Central (6-8) Tuesday on Lisa's Field at 4:15 p.m.

Also this weekend, the OVAC Baseball Championships will be contested at two sites.

On Friday at the I-470 J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex in Elm Grove, No. 3 Fort Frye and fourth-seeded Bellaire — both upset winners last weekend — kick off a doubleheader in the Class 3A game at 5 p.m. The Class 1A game between No. 1 Paden City and second-seeded Bishop Donahue is set for 7:30.

On Saturday at Vaccaro Field in Steubenville, Class 4A rivals St. Clairsville and Harrison Central open a three-game set at 11 a.m. The Red Devils are unbeaten and the No. 1 seed, while the third-seeded Huskies knocked off No. 2 Edison to advance.

The Class 2A contest between No. 1 Toronto and second-seeded Caldwell follows at 1:30 p.m. Top-seeded Steubenville and No. 3 Brooke conclude the day with the Class 5A game at 4.

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

Big Red Floods Creek

Steubenville will play for a crown

By **MATTHEW PEASLEE**
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — Gus DiMarzio isn't a plumber by trade and his Steubenville softball team likely doesn't have experience with bathroom construction, but they fixed a clog in the seventh inning of Wednesday's OVAC 5-A semifinal with county rival Indian Creek.

Hayley Stamps, pitching in relief of Hannah Westlake, had just walked two batters after recording the first two outs. DiMarzio then gathered his infielders to the circle where he delivered a message that was received loud and clear.

"Our big saying is, 'Flush it,'" DiMarzio said. "Flush the bad one, get the good one. And she did."

Stamps struck out the final batter to preserve an 8-6 victory and send Steubenville to a second straight Tom Bechtel OVAC championship game.

"I told her to battle and be a bulldog," DiMarzio said. "She went out there and did just that."

Last year, Big Red beat Harrison Central in the OVAC 4-A title tilt. This year, Steubenville has moved up a classification.

"We're one of the smallest 5-A schools with just 485 kids," DiMarzio said. "Were going up against schools with over 1,000 and up to 1,200 kids. When you're out here and you play like this, with five sophomores and three freshmen, you have to be proud of what you're getting."

Please See **BIG RED**, Page 16



Photo by Shawn Rine

John Marshall starting pitcher Alyssa Blake settles under a first-inning popup by Wheeling Park No. 4 hitter Morgan Karnell during their game Wednesday night in Wheeling.

John Marshall Rallies By Wheeling Park in Sixth

Monarchs can win fourth straight title

By **SHAWN RINE**
Sports Editor

WHEELING — The celebration was going to be sweet.

After losing a pair recently to its top rival, Wheeling Park had John Marshall right where it wanted it late Wednesday night during a Tom Bechtel OVAC Class 5-A softball semifinal on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex. Leading 6-1 after a three-run fifth, the Patriots (12-12) were in control against a Monarchs (20-6)

team that had shown little offensively and at times seemed without emotion.

That changed in the bottom of the sixth inning.

John Marshall sent 11 batters to the plate including seven of the first eight and scored six times, capped by a monster three-run homer by Ravyn Shultz to dead-center field to emerge with a 9-6 victory. The Monarchs will go for their fourth straight OVAC crown at 11:30 on Saturday when they meet Steubenville.

"I thought we picked up a couple runs in the fifth and that kind of lifted our spirits a little bit," JM coach Ed West said. "You're going to have to pack a lunch to

beat us. We're going to play seven innings and whatever comes, comes. That's all we can do.

"(Schultz) is a fun kid to be around all the time. She's had some big hits for us this year, but that's the first time she's crushed it like that over the fence, and what a time to do it."

Reliever Lauren Garcia kept the Monarchs in it with a huge strikeout of Kat Donzella with two on and two out in the top of the sixth with the Patriots holding a 6-3 advantage. Donzella had two doubles and two RBI to that point to go with an intentional

Please See **JM**, Page 16



Ferry Stops St.C.'s Run

Purple Riders are seeking first softball trophy since '11

By **SETH STASKEY**
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — Martins Ferry hasn't won an OVAC softball title since 2011.

There were multiple points of this season and even during Wednesday's game where it looked like the drought would be extended.

But, as they've done many times the last few weeks after a slow start to the season, the Purple Riders found a way.

Clairsville from the ranks of the unbeaten and positioned itself to end its conference title drought thanks to a 4-3 victory on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex during the Tom Bechtel OVAC Softball Championship Class 4-A semifinal.

"It was a total team effort against one heck of a team," Ferry coach Paige Williams said. "We had to fight all the way to the end for this one."

Meanwhile, St. Clairsville coach Rachel Duncan was left to deliver her first postgame speech after a loss this season and wonder what might have been.



Photo by Seth Staskey

Martins Ferry's Mercedes McLeod stares down a runner after recording an out.

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But, as they've done many times the last few weeks after a slow start to the season, the Purple Riders found a way.

By scoring all four of its runs in its final two at-bats, Martins Ferry avenged two early season losses, knocked top-seeded St.

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"We definitely weren't dominating and

Please See **FERRY**, Page 16

River Downs Monroe

By **KIM NORTH**
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — For the first time in Dave Wright's 12-year tenure as coach of the River softball team, the Pilots have navigated their way to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tom Bechtel Class 2-A championship game.

Wednesday at Ben's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, River (17-4) spotted Monroe Central a 3-0 lead before rallying



Photo by Kim North

River's Kirsten Brown slides into the tag of Monroe Central catcher Allison Kuhn.

for a 5-3 victory.

With the come-from-behind triumph, the third-seeded Pilots will meet No. 4 Bellaire (9-10) on Saturday for the title. The Big Reds upset No.

1 Buckeye Trail Tuesday afternoon, 8-1.

Erin Miller gave the Seminoles their 3-0 margin when

Please See **RIVER**, Page 16

Huskies Take Down Colts

By **KIM NORTH**
For The Intelligencer

WHEELING — Harrison Central has been knocking on the door to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 4-A championship for three straight years. The Huskies hope to knock it down on their fourth attempt.

Wednesday night on Ben's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, third-seeded Harrison Central upset No. 2 Meadowbrook, 5-1, to advance to Saturday morning's 10:30 encounter with Buckeye 8 rival Martins Ferry, which ended St. Clairsville's unbeaten run in the other semifinal.

"I'm proud of the girls," Harrison Central coach Donnie Bethel said. "This is the third straight year we've made the championship

Please See **HISKIES**, Page 16

intermission.

The Nailers picked things up in the second, outshooting Toledo 13-9 in the frame, but were unable to come up with the equalizer.

Sahir Gill nearly provided it around six minutes into the third when his rebound try went up in the air and just missed dropping in by landing on top of the net.

The Nailers kept pushing, and Torquato, who was coming off a hat trick the previous night to help force the seventh game, was finally able to even things up with 7:23 left in regulation, putting his fourth of the series high glove side on Walleye starter Jeff Lerg (31 saves) after Riley Brace took advantage of a Toledo player breaking his stick to get Torquato the puck in the high slot. Gill had the secondary assist.

Brace had a glorious chance to give Wheeling its first lead with a little more than a minute left in regulation, getting stopped on and odd-man rush then nearly knocking his own rebound home, but Lerg kept it out and the game went to OT for a second time in the series.

The puck got past Morgan Ellis at the right point leaving Bonis and AJ Jenks on a 2-on-1, and Bonis kept it himself and did not miss to end the series at the 2:54 mark OT.

Toledo will play the Fort Wayne Komets in the second round.

ON THE LINE

Today's Results:

Q. Do you plan to attend any OVAC championships this week?

Yes: 5%

No: 95%

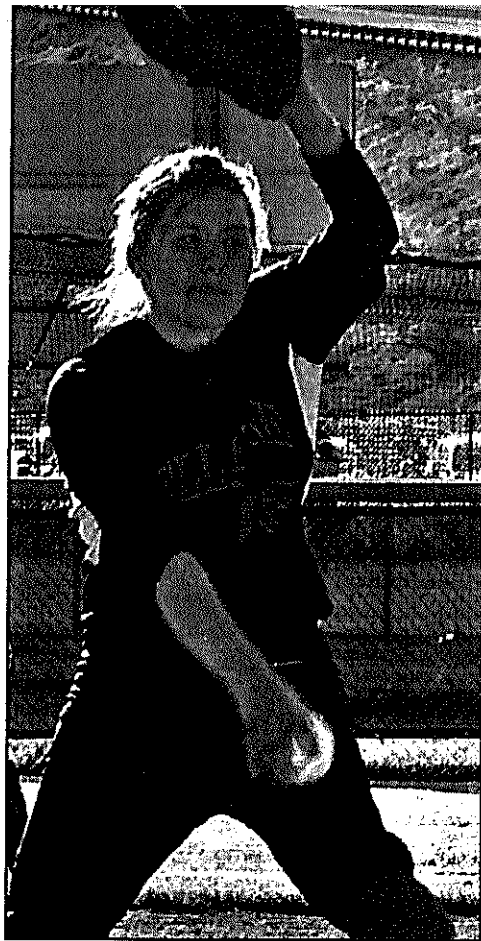
Tomorrow's Poll:

Q. Will you watch more than just the first round of the NFL Draft?

Tell us what you think.

Register your answer at www.theintelligencer.net

(The results of this poll are not scientific and represent only the opinions of Internet users who have chosen to participate.)



T-L Photo/RICK THORP

BELLAIRE'S Sarah McAninch fires a pitch plateward Tuesday afternoon on Ben's Field. The Big Reds upset No. 1 Buckeye Trail in Class 3A action.

Bellaire hikes Trail

• No. 4 Big Reds will meet MC-River winner in Saturday's 3A final

By **RICK THORP**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — Buckeye Trail pitcher Hannah Smith finished with a flourish Tuesday, retiring the final 16 batters she faced.

It was the first seven she came up against that proved fatal, though.

Bellaire got to Smith for six runs before the Warriors could record an out in the opening inning en route to an 8-1 triumph in an OVAC Tom Bechtel Softball Championship 3A semifinal on Ben's Field at the J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex.

"It was impressive," Bellaire head coach Melissa Lahna remarked about her team's strong start. "(My team) was ready to play. "You always want your team to come on at the end of the season and we're coming on so that's a good thing."

Bellaire (9-10) returns to the hillside at 2:30 p.m. Saturday to face the winner of today's other semifinal between River and

Tigers dance in

By **KYLE LUTZ**
For The Times Leader

ELM GROVE — The Wheeling Central and Shadyside Tom Bechtel OVAC Class 2-A semifinal game had drama written all over it. In the matchup that was played mostly under the lights at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex, the fans saw a pitching duel where a regulation game wasn't enough to determine a winner.

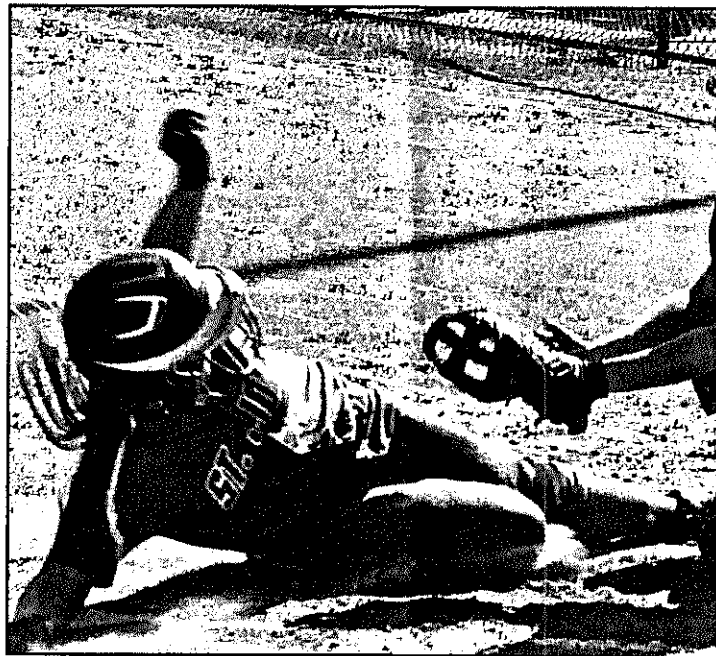
In the eighth inning, the Tigers broke a 1-1 tie on a three-run triple by freshman Kayla Smith to run away with a 4-2 victory. Shadyside moves on to the Class 2-A championship game against Steubenville Catholic on Saturday.

Wheeling Central made things interesting with two outs in the bottom of the eighth. Riley Bennington, but the catcher couldn't control the pitch and

Bennington made it to first safely. The throw was late and Sydney Bennington, who got on base with a single earlier in the inning, took advantage and scored to make it 4-2. Tigers pitching held strong and got the last out on a strike-out.

"I just thought we could win," Shadyside coach Jillian Bennington said. "Both teams were great girls, the seniors have been here for two years. They wanted to win. It was a total pickup game. They picked each other up

1A: Irish outscore



ST. JOHN Central's Taylor Lowe (16) slides under the tag of Sommer South during Class 1A action Tuesday on Lisa's Field 12-10.

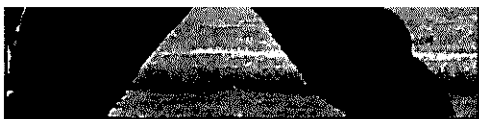
One bad inning doom

By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — One bad inning spelled disaster for the No. 4 seed Bridgeport softball team Tuesday night on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers I-470 Youth Sports Complex.

Leading top-seeded and defending champion Steubenville Catholic 4-1 after three-and-a-half innings, the Bulldogs (15-5)





T-L Photo/RICK THORP

BELLAIRE'S Sarah McAninch fires a pitch plateward Tuesday afternoon on Ben's Field. The Big Reds upset No. 1 Buckeye Trail in Class 3A action.

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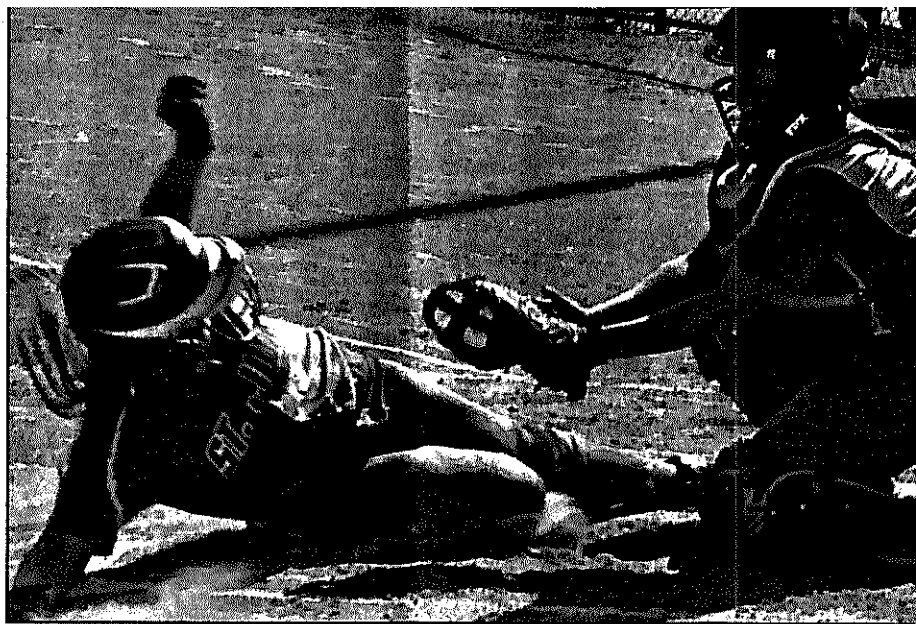
"It was impressive," Bellaire head coach Melissa Lahna remarked about her team's strong start. "(My team) was ready to play. 'You always want your team to come on at the end of the season and we're coming on so that's a good thing.'"

Bellaire (9-10) returns to the hillside at 2:30 p.m. Saturday to face the winner of today's other semifinal between River and Monroe Central.

The Big Reds were originally on the outside looking in when the championship pairings were announced Sunday afternoon. It wasn't until officials learned of a discrepancy in Shenandoah's results that the point totals were changed and the Big Reds finished in the Top 4 and qualified for the tournament.

Lahna said her team gladly accepted the turn of events and was ready to show it belonged against the top-seeded Warriors (12-4).

See, BELLAIRE, Page B2



T-L Photo/KIM NOF

ST. JOHN Central's Taylor Lowe (16) slides under the tag of Bishop Donahue Sommer South during Class 1A action Tuesday on Lisa's Field. The Irish won 12-10.

One bad inning dooms Bul

By KIM NORTH
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — One bad inning spelled disaster for the No. 4 seed Bridgeport softball team Tuesday night on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers 1-470 Youth Sports Complex.

Leading top-seeded and defending champion Steubenville Catholic 4-1 after three-and-a-half innings, the Bulldogs (15-5) gave up four runs in the bottom of the fourth and could never catch up in dropping a 7-5 decision in an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class 2A semifinal.

"I think we earned some respect today," Bridgeport head coach Tom Joseph said. "Steubenville Catholic came in as the defending 3A champ and we battled them right until the final out of the final inning.



T-L Photo/KIM

BRIDGEPORT shortstop Keri Renzler fields a third second as Steubenville Catholic's Alex McComb in safely during Tuesday's action on Lisa's Field.

"My girls never hung their heads," he continued. "I'm really proud of my girls for fighting like they did. They never gave up."

Keri Renzler gave the Bulldogs an early 2-0 lead when she homered to deep left with Caitlyn Kroll

aboard in the top of the first. A pair of two-out errors at the bottom of the first allowed the Crusaders to reduce the deficit in half, 2-1.

Two errors by Steubenville Catholic allowed Bridgeport to take a 4-1 advantage in the

Purple power

• Martins Ferry sweeps Buckeye 8

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — The track and field season is entering the championship portion of its season.

Martins Ferry started it off impressively at Red Devil Stadium Tuesday evening

Senior speedster Hunter Hill led the attack with a sprint sweep. He won the 100 (11.36) and 200 (23.18).

Sophomore distance dandy Jacob Bishop produced a pair of victories. He won the 800 in 2:06.90 and earlier had captured the 1600 meters in 4:42.69.



SPORTS

Wednesday,
April 29, 2015

OVAC TOM BECHTEL SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Tigers lance Knights in 2A

By **KYLE LUTZ**
For The Times Leader

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In the eighth inning, the Tigers broke a 1-1 tie on a three-run triple by freshman Kayla Smith to run away with a 4-2 victory. Shadyside moves on to the Class 2-A championship game against Steubenville Catholic on Saturday.

Wheeling Central made things interesting with two outs in the bottom of the eighth. Riley Bennington, but the catcher couldn't control the pitch and

Bennington made it to first safely. The throw was late and Sydney Bennington, who got on base with a single earlier in the inning, took advantage and scored to make it 4-2. Tigers pitching held strong and got the last out on a strike-out.

"I just thought we came to play," Shadyside coach Jillian Ongley said. "Both teams were great teams and these girls, the seniors have gotten beat by them (Wheeling Central) for the last two years. They wanted it and you could tell. It was a total team effort and they picked each other up.



**KAYLA
SMITH**

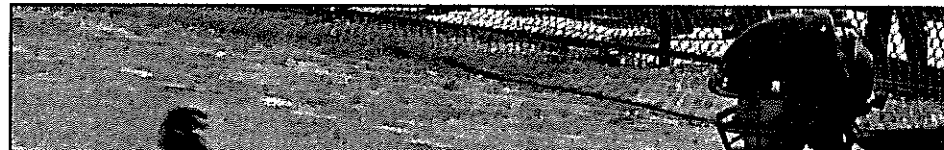
"We had that blooper and we threw the ball around, but it didn't get to them, which is a plus because we tend to do that sometimes. But they picked each other up and turned it around."

One of the first mistakes made by the Tigers was in the bottom of the third inning. The Maroon Knights' Hannah Mozingo was walked and stole for second. Lindsey Dunn, Shadyside's catcher, threw to pick her off, but no one was covering second base and the ball went into the out field as Mozingo ran to third.

A fielder threw the ball to third, but unfortunately for the Tigers their third baseman fell down. Mozingo rounded third and went for home, and the third baseman had a chance to make a play but couldn't handle the ball and Wheeling Central took the lead, 1-0.

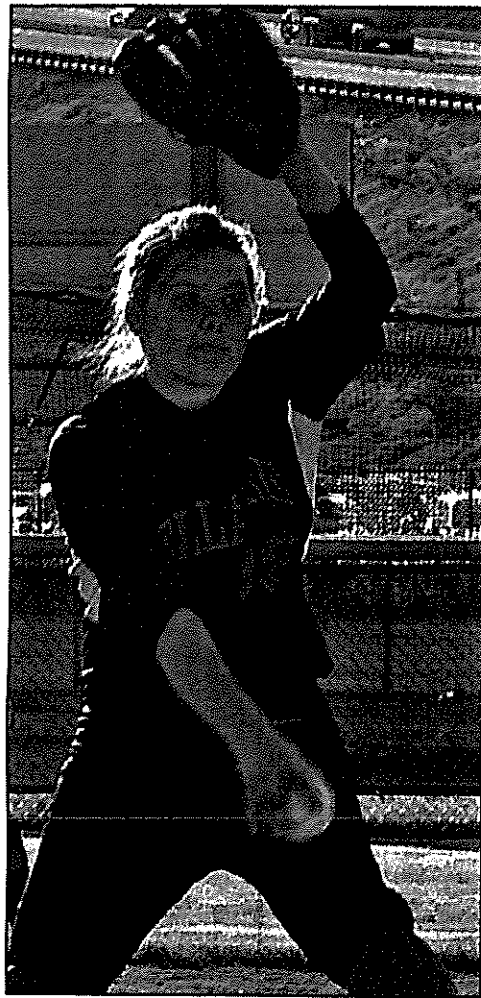
See, **TIGERS**, Page B2

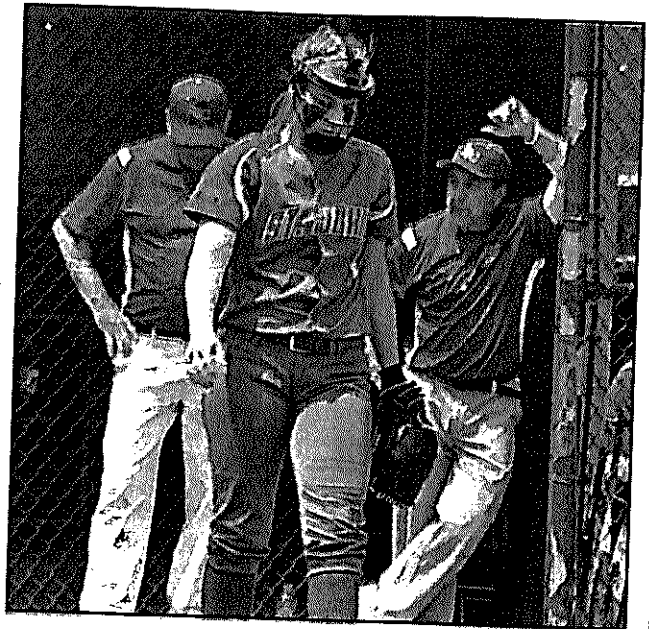
1A: Irish outscore Bishops



By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ELM GROVE — St. John Central will be seeking its fourth consecutive Ohio Valley





Photo/SHAWN RINE

ST. JOHN'S Kate Lovinski walks to the circle during the OVAC Class 1A softball championship game on Lisa's Field in Elm Grove. Madonna won the title, 11-2.

SJC falls in Class 1A softball final

By TRACY WATSON
For The Times Leader

WHEELING — In winning three consecutive Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class A softball titles, St. John had relied on good pitching, outstanding fielding and plenty of hitting.

Saturday afternoon, those three things all avoided the Fighting Irish as Weirton Madonna made its way to the throne.

Katie Gasvoda fired a four-hitter, fanning 10 along the way, Courtney Kaczmarek chased home four runs with a pair of singles and Madonna took advantage of numerous Fighting Irish errors en route to an 11-2 victory over St. John in the small-school title tilt on Lisa's Field at the J.B. Chambers Youth Sports Complex.

"St. John is a very good team and Jerry (Magistro) does a great job with them and to beat them to win a championship is a special thing," Madonna Head Coach Cris Conti said. "This team has worked very hard to accomplish this and I am very proud of them."

The Blue Dons got the scoring started in the second with the benefit of

Kaczmarek coming around to score as Travglino reached on an error for a 2-0 lead.

St. John mistakes paved the way for more Madonna runs in the third with a lead-off walk and an error leading to a two-run Platek double to deep left that made it 4-0.

A sacrifice bunt, another error and two wild pitches added to the misery for the Fighting Irish as the lead grew to 6-0 after three frames. For the second consecutive inning Platek's hit was the only one of a big Blue Dons frame.

"Coming in we knew that Madonna had a good pitcher and could hit the ball and that we were not going to be able to make errors," Magistro commented. "We have been battling errors and mental mistakes all season long, and it's hard to win when you are jittery going onto the field."

Madonna got the bats going in the fourth, pushing across three more runs with five hits, including doubles by winning pitcher Taylor Thompson and Montana Mascio. Gasdova chased home a run with a fielder's choice while two more

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The Blue Dons got the scoring started in the second with the benefit of just one base hit. Aubrey Platek got things started with a single to left, stole second and went to third on a sacrifice bunt.

After Kaczmarek was hit by a pitch and took second, Sarah Travglino chased home the first run with a sacrifice bunt with

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Magistro's Irish finally made a little noise in the fifth, using a walk, an error and a passed ball to put runners at second and third with just one out. However, Gasvoda fanned the next two hitters to end the threat.

St. John got on the board in the sixth thanks to its first three hits of the game, back-to-back doubles off the bats of losing pitcher Kate Lovinski and Caitlin Sliva and a run-scoring single from Gilli Johnson that trimmed the deficit to 9-2.

Another two-run single by Kaczmarek in the sixth followed a pair of hit batters, an error and a pair of passed balls for an 11-2 upper hand.

"We did the little things and we hit the ball very well (Saturday)," Conti added. "The girls did an outstanding job running the bases, Katie (Gasvoda) pitched very well."

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