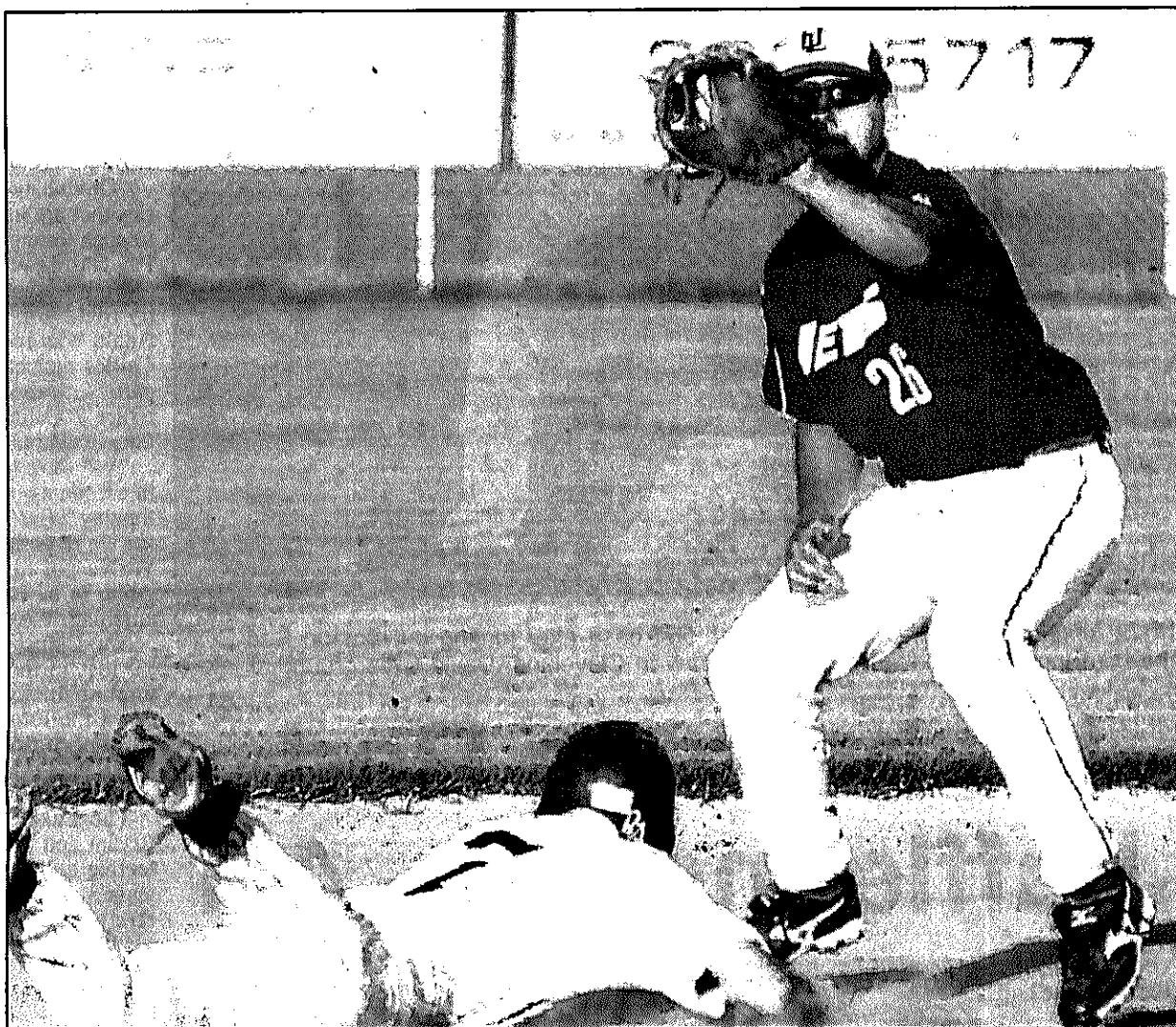


## SPORTS

## B

Tuesday,  
June 8, 2010

**UNION LOCAL'S**  
Andrew Barbina awaits a throw as Bishop Donahue's Andrew Smith dives back into second base during Monday's George Kovalick OVAC All-Star Baseball Classic at Steubenville's Vaccaro Field. West Virginia prevailed, 10-3.

Photo/ASHLEY  
NEWMAN

George Kovalick OVAC All-Star Baseball Classic

# Late uprising lifts W.Va.

• Mountaineers rally from three-run deficit to capture OVAC game

By RICH GIBSON  
Times Leader Sports Writer

STEUBENVILLE — West Virginia had shown few signs of life through six innings of Monday night's annual OVAC All-Star Baseball Game.

In fact, the Mountaineers were being shut out on one hit by their Ohio counterparts as the top of the seventh arrived.

The tables would take a dramatic turn from that point. Ten unanswered runs later, W. Va. had roared back to inflict a 10-3 beatdown on the Buckeyes under ideal weather conditions at Vaccaro Field.

Behind a trio of effective pitchers, Ohio had methodically mounted a 3-0 upper-hand before West Virginia erupted.

Fort Frye righthander Chad Stengel was the unfortunate victim during a five-run, bat-a-round seventh frame which helped elevate the Mountaineers to victory in front of a nice turnout.

There was little to suggest a W. Va. uprising was imminent following strong mound outings from Toronto's Dave Porter, Edison's Sean Connelly and Zanesville Rosecrans' Michael Reef.

But Magnolia's Mason Rine greeted

Stengel with a base hit to begin the seventh. Parkersburg South's Bryan Hooper then induced a base on balls.

Stengel battled back to record consecutive outs before surrendering four consecutive hits.

Weir High's Chris Bittinger belted a run-scoring hit putting West Virginia on the board.

Linsly's Ben Weimer followed with a double to the centerfield fence, plating two teammates for a 3-3 lighting.

Magnolia's Seth Pay then accounted for the go-ahead tally with a base knock to centerfield. Paden City's Malakai Anderson capped the uprising with a two-bagger which plated Pay and it was 5-3.

Ohio was unable to solve Wheeling Park's Korey Walters in either the seventh or eighth frames. W. Va., meanwhile, added to its lead.

Facing Union Local's Andrew Barbina in the top of the eighth, the Mounties scored three more times.

Madonna's Lou Comis worked a bases-loaded walk; Tyler's Zack Minger was hit by a pitch for a second RBI, and Madonna's Ed Nogay delivered a sacrifice fly.

A wild pitch unleashed by River's Devan Potts and bases loaded walk following a Buckeye error led to the game's final two runs.

Ohio was an early leader when Toronto's Mike Garman scored Connelly via a first inning ground ball.

An opposite field solo home run off the bat of Cambridge's Tyler Hardesty in the second made for a 2-0 reading.

Barbina's base hit up the middle plated Steubenville's Caleb Westlake in the fifth.

However, Minger, Walters and Bittinger teamed to blank the Bucks on two hits for the duration.

Minger recorded the mound decision. He was proceeded to the hill by Weimer and Eddie Nogay. They totaled seven Ks and two walks. Ohio's mound corps compiled 13 strikeouts and eight walks. Line score:

W. Va. 000 000 532 — 10 8 3

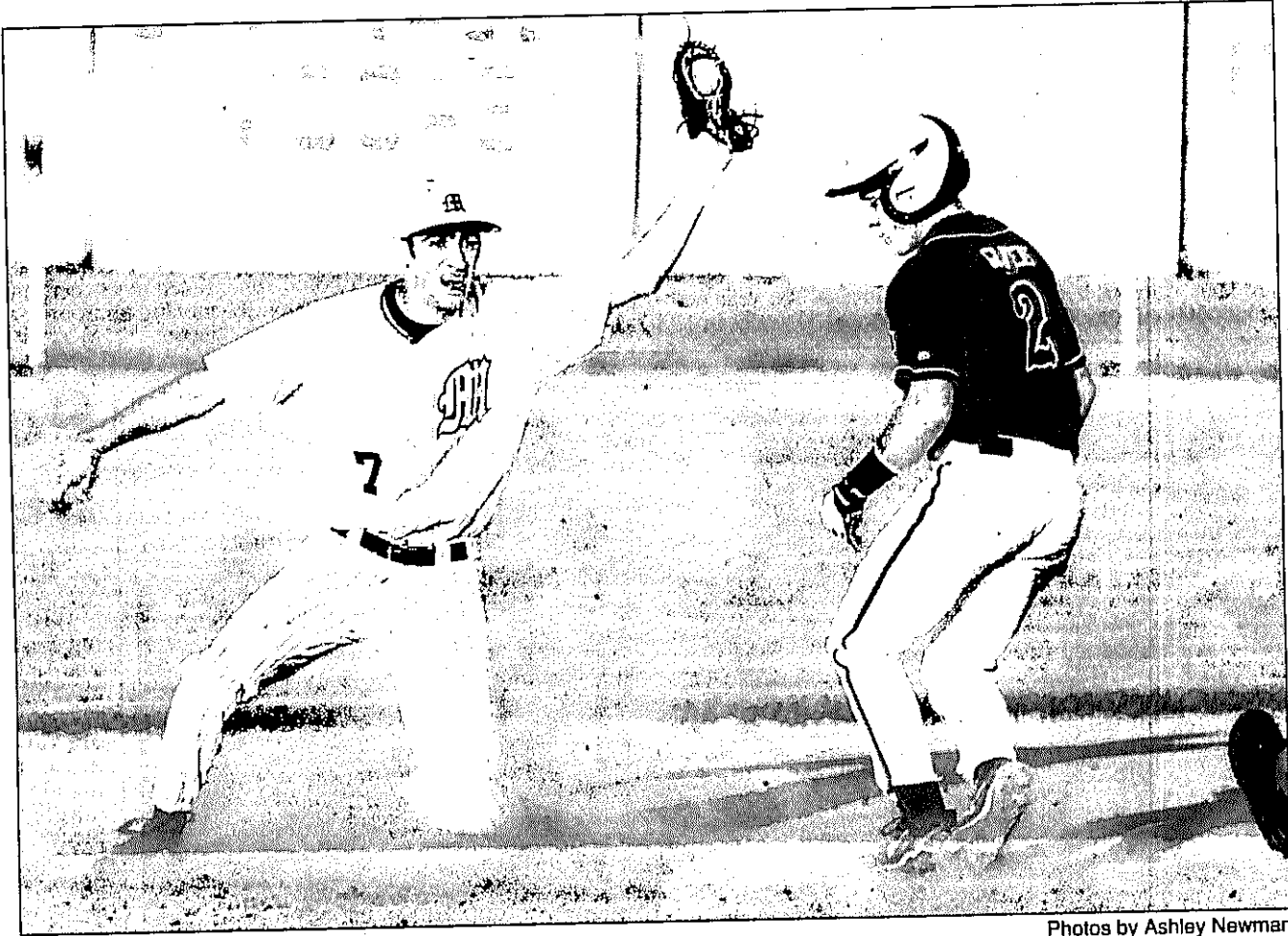
Ohio 110 010 000 — 3 7 3

BATTERIES: Weimer, E. Nogay (3), Minger (5), Walters (7), Bittinger (9) and Troy, Comis (3), Troy (5), Comis (7) and LeMasters. Porter, Connelly (3), Reef (5), Stengel (7), Barbina (8), Potts (9) and Machovina, Grafton (3), Machovina (5), Grafton (7), Machovina (9).

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OVAC ALL-STAR BASEBALL GAME: DOWN 3-0 IN THE TOP OF THE SEVENTH ....

# West Virginia Rallies Past Ohio



Photos by Ashley Newman

Top: Magnolia's Mason Rine reacts after he put a late tag on Buckeye Trail's Peter Gravens on a stolen base in the seventh inning of the OVAC All-Star Baseball game Monday in Steubenville. Below: Tyler Consolidated's Zack Minger winds and deals. Minger emerged as the game's winning pitcher.

## Park's Walter Comes on to Slam Door

By NICK BEDWAY  
For The Intelligencer

STEUBENVILLE — Limited to one single during the first six innings by a trio of Ohio pitchers, West Virginia's bats banged out four straight hits with two outs in the top of the seventh to score five runs and the Mountaineers went on from there for a 10-3 victory in Monday night's OVAC All-Star Baseball Game at Vaccaro Field.

The victory ended a six-year dry spell for West Virginia in the snappily played clash that took just 2 hours and 10 minutes to complete.

"This one was for fun but we definitely wanted to win and snap West Virginia's losing streak," said a smiling Lou Comis, the stellar catching standout who went through a pressure-packed weekend while leading Weirton Madonna to the state Class A championship in Charleston.

"Eddie, Max (the Nogay brothers) and I really were excited about playing in this game. We're still kind of on cloud nine after winning downstate," Comis said.

It was the hard-hitting Comis who finally came up with the Mountaineers first hit. Leading off the top of the fifth, he whistled a single into left field off Zanesville Rosecrans' Michael Reef, the third of five Ohio pitchers. Comis later drew a bases-loaded walk to pick up an RBI in the top of the eighth when West Virginia added three more runs to



open an 8-3 lead.

The Mountaineers go-ahead seventh inning started when Magnolia grad Mason Rine lined a sharp single to left. Fort Frye pitcher Chad Stengel, who started the seventh inning on the mound, then walked Bryant Hooper from Parkersburg South to put runners at first and second still with nobody out.

Stengel nearly got out of the jam

unscathed, retiring the next two hitters on a strikeout and a popup to third base. However, Weir High's Chris Bittenger's single into center scored Rine, cutting West Virginia's deficit to 3-1 as Hooper raced to third base. Linsly's Ben Weimer nearly hit the right field fence on the fly with his long double that drove in two runs and tied the score.

Magnolia's Seth Pay then knocked across the go-ahead run with his single, stole second and also came around after Paden City's Malaki Anderson dropped a double along the left-field line.

"It took our offense a while to get started but it was good to see our guys bunch together some clutch hits," said Paden City's Brent Croasman, who coached the victorious West Virginia squad along with D.J. Cunningham of Tyler Consolidated, Weir's Bill Magnone and Wheeling Central's Jimbo Wodusky.

"I was also happy to see Malaki get one of those hits," added Croasman about the four-year standout he had the pleasure of coaching. "He's a talented kid and we're going to miss him next year."

Looking to protect the lead, the Mountaineers coaching staff sent Wheeling Park's ace pitcher Corey Walter out to pitch the seventh and eighth innings.

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## OVAC

(Continued from Page 15)

After yielding a leadoff single to Buckeye Trail's Pete Gravens who reached across the plate and flicked the ball into right field, Walter dominated the Buckeye State hitters.

Along with throwing heat, Walter used his dazzling curve ball and just as sparkling slider to set down the final six batters he faced. He struck out three, got two other outs on weak balls hit to first and got another batter on a fly ball to left.

"I felt strong," Walter said about his first pitching performance in nearly two weeks. He last toed the rubber during Wheeling Park's loss to Morgantown in the Region One Class AAA semifinals. "It was disappointing to lose that

game. It wasn't our day. But I'm looking forward to playing legion baseball this summer."

Although yet to decide on his college destination, Walter will be back at Vaccaro Field this evening as Wheeling Post 1 begins its season against Steubenville-Termana Post 33.

Once in front Monday night, West Virginia had no problem collecting some insurance runs.

The Mountaineers scored three times on just one hit, a single by Parkersburg South's Matt Emerick in the eighth.

The base knock was sandwiched about a walk and error, which loaded the bases. The walk to Comis forced in one run, Zack Minger of Tyler Consolidated picked up an RBI as he was hit by a pitch

and Ed Nogay's sacrifice fly brought in the third run.

Tyler Consolidated's Brody Northcraft's single was West Virginia's only hit in the ninth but a walk to Park's Scott Castilow, an error and free pass to Hooper with the sacks jammed, accounted for two more runs.

Weimer, Ed Nogay, Minger, Walters and Bittenger, who pitched the final inning, combined to limit Ohio to just seven hits. The only two walks were issued by Bittenger in the final inning.

The Buckeye pitchers, however, were just as sharp during the first six innings as Toronto's Dave Porter, Edison's Sean Connolly and Reef permitted just one hit and three walks. Connolly, who pitched

the third and fourth innings, struck out four.

Ohio had just two extra base hits. Jarrod Falasca of Edison doubled into left center in the opening inning, sending Connolly to third. Connolly scored as Mike Garman bounced out to second base.

Cambridge's Tyler Hardesty homered in the second inning, blasting a Weimer pitch over the fence in right center; the blast traveling at least 340 feet. Ohio's other run came in the fifth inning on a single by Big Red's Caleb Westlake, a passed ball and Andrew Barbina's (Union Local) single up the middle.

Minger was credited with the pitching victory, while Stengel took the loss.