

Ross beats Ashland in Class AAA sectional opener

News-Messenger Reports

It was the end of four years of futility for Darrell Stein.

The St. Joseph Central Catholic baseball coach basked in the reality of his first coaching victory over Sandusky St. Mary's 7-3 at Anderson Field Tuesday.

"That is the first time in four years," he affirmed, "and it was nice to open up the game with a home run."

Brad Young produced that grand opening, smashing the first pitch in the bottom of the first inning over the rightfield fence to pull St. Joe even at 1-1. Kevin Yeckley, Tony Lupica and Grant Beckley followed with consecutive doubles to put St. Joe on top 3-1, a lead the Streaks never lost.

In other area games, Ross avenged a tournament loss last year by defeating Ashland 5-2 in the Class AAA sectional at Wynford, Eastwood won a slugfest from Gibsonburg 27-20, Genoa thrashed Oak Harbor 15-2, Lakota upended Otsego 12-2, Woodmore lost to Elmwood 27-15, and Old Fort defeated Wynford 14-7.

Ryan Gabel gave up just three hits and one earned run for St. Joe. The senior lefthander fanned 10 and walked three.

St. Mary's threatened in the third inning, but after one run had scored, St. Joe rightfielder Steve Gabel came up with a big defensive play.

Gabel, fielding a single to right, threw to second baseman Yeckley, who relayed to catcher Beckley to cut a runner down at the plate for the third out. That killed the rally and St. Joe took control of the game with two runs in the bottom of the inning.

Yeckley, Lupica, Beckley, Gabel and Dean Linke had two hits apiece for St. Joe with Lupica getting a pair of RBI.

St. Joe is 8-6 and 2-3 in the Sandusky Bay Conference and St. Mary's is 6-9 and 0-4 in the SBC race.

Ross.....5
Ashland.....2

"They beat us last year in the tournament 3-2," Ross Coach Dan Fought recalled, "so that pays them back."

Ross, 7-7, rode the two-hit

pitching of junior John Stierwalt, 5-1 this season. Ashland slipped to 15-8.

Ross had only four hits, two of them doubles by Scott Weber and Gregg Gallagher. Stierwalt and Shawn Overmyer had the other Little Giants hits with Gallagher and Overmyer getting an RBI apiece.

Ross took a 1-0 lead in the second, scoring on a walk to Overmyer, two wild pitches and a balk. Ashland took the lead with two runs in the third, but the Little Giants tied it at 2-2 in the third and put the game on ice with three runs in the fifth. Gallagher doubled in a run and Overmyer singled in one in the inning.

Ross will play in the sectional finals May 15 at 4:30 p.m., against the winner of the Mansfield Senior and top-seeded Mansfield Madison game.

Eastwood.....27
Gibsonburg.....20

Eastwood slammed five homers, two by Daren Colfield, in a game that had 43 hits.

Eastwood trailed 7-4 heading into the bottom of the second but erupted for 10 runs and followed that up with seven more in the third for a 21-7 lead.

Dave Hankins had a triple, double and three singles for five RBI for the Eagles. Brian Krotzer had four hits and four RBI for Gibsonburg with teammate Kevin Diekman adding three hits and four RBI. Craig Balsizer had two hits, also for the Golden Bears. Colfield drove in five runs for Eastwood.

Gibsonburg slipped to 9-9 and 6-4 in Suburban Lakes League race.

Elmwood.....27
Woodmore.....15

Elmwood scored 17 runs on only five hits in the wild fifth inning to wipe out a 11-5 deficit.

Seven walks, one hit batter and five Woodmore errors produced the big inning. The Royals sent 21 batters to the plate during the rally.

Steve Schmeltz had five hits in five at-bats for six RBI for Woodmore. He belted two homers and scored four runs.

Old Fort.....
Wynford.....

Old Fort weathered a six-seventh inning to post its 14th victory in 14 games.

Mark Miller hit for the cycle single, double, triple and home run — and drove in six runs to lead the state's 10th-ranked team. He homered with a man aboard in the five-run third inning. Dave Shelton added a solo homer in the same inning and Matt Hiestand had a two-run blast.

Miller was also the winning pitcher, hurling the first four innings.

Hiestand had two hits and three RBI for Old Fort. Shelton and Bob Copley had two hits and two RBI each, also for the Stockaders. Todd Hull, Shelton and Kevin Guth doubled and Copley tripled for Old Fort.

Lakota.....
Otsego.....

Lakota knocked Otsego out of a tie for first in the SLL with a victory.

Winning pitcher Nestor Hernandez tossed a five-hitter, striking out six and walking four.

Nick Gabel doubled and singled to drive in four Lakota runs and Greg Kemenah had a double and three RBI. Greg Richards added a pair of hits for two Raiders runs.

Lakota is 8-11 and 2-7 in the SLL while Otsego is 7-2 in the league race and 8-7 for the season.

Genoa.....
Oak Harbor.....

Genoa used a nine-run fourth inning to roll to its 13th victory against six losses while raising its SLL record to 8-1.

Eric Wolfe homered and doubled to drive in three runs and Brooks Baird had two hits for three Genoa runs to pace the 14-hit Comets attack.

Winning pitcher Eric Torgerson tossed a six-hitter and had two hits. Eric Hanely also had a single and double and Todd Wolfe a double for Genoa.

Rick Ferguson had a pair of hits and Dan Rife doubled for Oak Harbor.