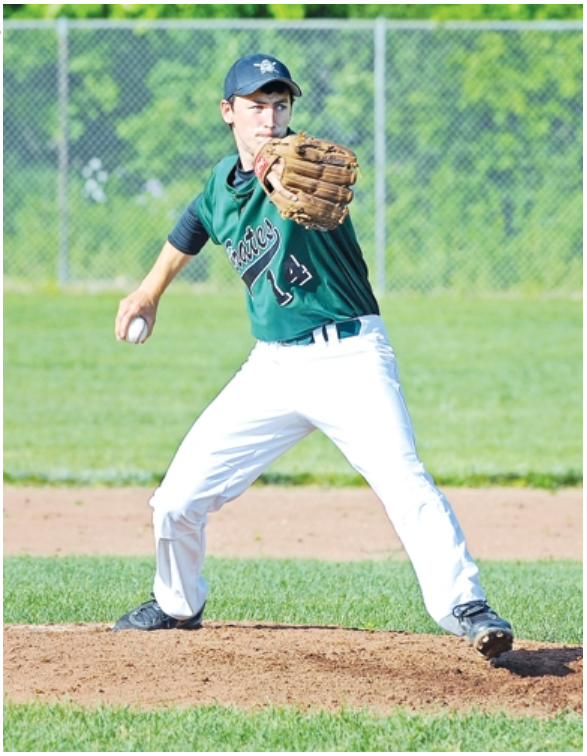
High-scoring games leave Port baseball team with string of hard-luck losses

Scoring runs wasn't a big issue for the Port Washington High School baseball team last week.

Holding foes in check was another matter.



Although the Pirates got their bats warmed up enough to score 21 runs in three games, they surrendered 29 runs and couldn't find the win column.

On Friday, host Port couldn't protect an early seven-run lead and fell to South Milwaukee, 13-12, in nonconference play. The loss was the Pirates' sixth straight and dropped them to 2-7 overall.

"We've played well in every game so far, but we're just coming out on the wrong end of the stick," Pirates coach Nicholas Wycklendt said.

"We've showed that when we have to hit the ball, we can. But we just need to do a better job of avoiding mental mistakes."

Bolstered by a six-run second inning, Port raced to a 7-0 lead against South Milwaukee. However, the cushion was deflated almost as quickly, with the Rockets scoring four runs in both the third and fourth.

With the game tied at 8-8, South Milwaukee moved ahead for good with a five-run sixth inning.

“I think we got a little bit too content with a big lead early in the game and started thinking about winning it on the 10-run rule,” Wycklendt said.

“We didn’t have a lot of errors (two), but we made some mental mistakes like missing the cutoff man on throws. That hurt us.”

The Rockets also collected 11 hits off three Port pitchers. Alex Cramer led the assault with a 2-for-3 effort that included two triples and three RBI.

Trailing, 13-10, the Pirates were poised for a comeback win when they scored twice in the bottom of the seventh. But with the tying run at third base, reliever Taylor Johnson retired the final batter to seal the outcome.

“We’re really close to winning,” Wycklendt said. “We just have to keep our hopes up and play hard, and it will come.”

Mitch Bartlein took the loss after working 1-2/3 innings in relief of starter Taylor Devenport. However, Bartlein was perfect at the plate with a 4-for-4 performance that included two doubles and three RBI.

Teammate Max Kaske was 2-for-4 with a homer and three RBI.

Homestead 11, Port Washington 7

A late rally in a slugfest couldn’t spare the Pirates a North Shore Conference loss at home June 7.

Port trailed by only 4-3 after three innings but saw the Highlanders score seven runs in the next three innings.

After falling behind, 11-3, Port showed its fight by scoring four times, including three runs in the seventh. A two-out RBI triple by Devenport sparked the final-inning comeback before reliever Austin Ralph ended the threat with the bases loaded.

Devenport and Nick Godersky each went 2-for-3. Devenport drove in three runs, and Godersky had two RBI.

Homestead’s 12-hit attack was led by Joe Stadler, who was 3-for-3 with two RBI. Jake Erfourth had a two-run homer for the Highlanders.

Port took an 0-5 conference record into play this week.

The Pirates were scheduled to face Grafton on Monday (see related story) and Nicolet on Tuesday and play 5:30 p.m. home games against West Bend West on Thursday and Greendale on Friday.

On Saturday, Port's busy week will conclude with an 11 a.m. home doubleheader against Menomonee Falls.

The Pirates will then play 5:30 p.m. games June 18 at home against West Bend West and at Cedarburg on June 19.

Image Information: PORT JUNIOR Derek Haley delivered a pitch during a North Shore Conference game last week. Photo by Sam Arendt