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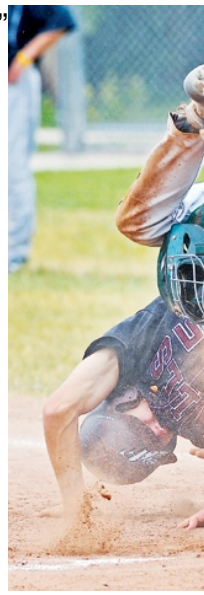
Local teams learn tough lessons in recent defeats, gain confidence

Port Washington's baseball team has been on both sides of a few close calls in the past week, including a walk-off and an extra-inning thriller.

"We're in every one of 'em. That shows the fight," said coach Nicholas Wycklendt. "I think we'll have a very dangerous team if we keep hitting this way and playing defense like we have."



On Monday, the Pirates couldn't hang on to leads of 4-1 and 5-3 against North Shore Conference rival West Bend West and lost, 6-5, in eight innings.

The Spartans used two slow-moving ground balls past the pitcher's mound before a two-out single to right field gave them the lead for good in the eighth.

Pirate Derek Haley pitched the first six innings before getting into a little trouble in the seventh.

At the plate, Nick Godersky had two hits and four RBIs. All but one player in the lineup got a hit.

The Pirates put one runner on in the seventh but couldn't get him around.

"We hit the ball really well today. The hitting was really spread out tonight," said Wycklendt.

Monomonee Falls 9, Port 7;

Falls 20, Port 8

The stage was set for a dramatic finish in the first game of a doubleheader between Port and Menomonee Falls on Saturday, June 16.

The Pirates had runners on second and third with two outs in the last inning and Taylor Devenport smacked a line drive to left center that looked to tie the game. But the Indians' centerfielder made a diving catch to end it, showing why Falls is ranked No. 1.

Devenport started "and pitched a great game. Kept us in it," Wycklendt said.

Godersky was 2-for-3 with a double and RBI. Mitchell Schmidt was 1-for-2 with a double and two RBIs.

In the second game, Aaron Brockman allowed seven runs in the first inning and the Pirates couldn't catch up.

But down 14-1, the Pirates fought back to get to 14-8. Mitch Bartlein was 4-for-4 with a double and Andrew Wood 2-for-4 with a double.

"I truly loved the fight. Our players never gave up," Wycklendt said.

Port 12, Greendale 10

The Pirates fell behind, 5-0, in the first inning of a June 15 game against Greendale, before battling back, scoring seven in the second.

Brockman was 2-for-3 with a triple and three RBIs. Kiley Prellwitz was 3-for-3 with a triple and one RBI.

"The defense finally settled in. Everybody hit the ball," said Wycklendt.

Godersky went the distance, allowing 15 hits, three walks and whiffing one.

Port 4, West Bend East 3

Godersky had a walkoff single to end a June 14 showdown with West Bend East, completing a rally that started with No. 8 hitter Zach Hauser, another senior.

"I was happy to see Nick get the game-winning hit there," said Wycklendt. "One of our six seniors – it was fitting – we were getting great leadership all that game."

Haley went the distance, allowing a three-run homer in the first inning and nothing the rest. He allowed seven hits and two walks while whiffing four.

Brockman was 1-for-3 with a double and three RBIs.

Port 21, Nicolet 9

Port scored seven in the fourth and six in the fifth to blow out Nicolet on the road on June 12.

Devenport, Nick Kaiser and Max Kaske each had four hits and one home run, driving in 15 of the Pirates' runs.

Godersky went the distance, allowing 16 hits and whiffing two.

Port, 3-5 in the North Shore Conference and 6-9 overall, was scheduled to play at Cedarburg on Tuesday, host Slinger on Thursday, at Waukesha West on Saturday, at home against Germantown on Monday and at Homestead on Tuesday.

Grafton 6, Whitefish Bay 4

Grafton's baseball team survived five errors and came back to beat Whitefish Bay 6-4 on Monday, bringing its winning streak to three.

Nate Lukas went the distance, talking Coach Brian Durst into letting him stay in when things got hairy in the seventh.

Down 1-0, Beau Benzschawel hit an opposite field, two-run homer in the third "with the jet stream," said Durst. "It was a towering flyball to right and it just kept drifting over the fence. That's a poke at our place."

After allowing two unearned runs in the fifth and another run in the sixth, the Black Hawks came back with four in the bottom of the sixth.

No. 6 hitter Kevin Scholz walked, and Zach Michalowski-Cline singled for his first varsity hit. After a failed bunt and a flyout, leadoff hitter Robbie Doring clocked an RBI double. Choo Weisflog reached on an error, triggering Whitefish Bay to change pitchers.

Alex Nennig greeted the reliever with a single, and Benzschawel had an infield hit. An errant throw on the play allowed Grafton's sixth run to score.

After a diving catch in right field by Bryan Sternig started the seventh, Whitefish Bay put two runners on. A relief pitcher was warmed up, but Lukas didn't want to leave.

"He just looked at me and said 'Coach, I want to finish this thing,'" said Durst.

Lukas struck out the last hitter on three pitches.

"It was a great game," said Durst.

Benzschawel was 1-for-4 with the homer and two RBIs. Weisflog was 2-for-3 with a double. Scholz was 1-for-1 with two walks. Lukas whiffed seven and walked nobody.

Whitefish Bay had beaten Grafton, 11-0, in the first meeting of the season.

Grafton 8, Cedarburg 7

The Black Hawks scored two in the top of the seventh for a dramatic victory on the road June 15.

Scholz led off with a walk and was forced out on a bunt. Sternig, a freshman, hit an 0-2 pitch for a single to right center. No. 9 hitter Will Burch came up with his third hit of the game to load the bases with one out.

Doring rocketed a ball down the third base line to score the tying and go-ahead runs.

Brett Rasmussen, in his first action since a rugby injury, got the save in the seventh.

“Unbelievable,” Durst said of the game.

Grafton 14, Nicolet 3

“That was just a very special night for us all together after a couple of tough losses,” Durst said of the June 14 tussle with Nicolet.

Doring led off with a hard single to set the tone, then stole second and took third on a wild pitch. Weisflog knocked him in with a single, followed by base hits from Nennig and Benzschawel. The Black Hawks sent seven batters to the plate in the inning and scored three runs.

A key moment came in the bottom of the first when freshman Bryce Fisk got in a jam. He walked the leadoff hitter, gave up a hit-and-run double for a run and walked the next batter. But then he got a fly out, strikeout and fly out to end the rally and keep a 3-1 lead. Durst said he settled into a groove and only allowed three hits in five innings, whiffing two and walking two.

“It was a well-pitched game which can be overlooked in a 14-3 game,” said Durst.

Nennig was 3-for-3 with a double and two RBIs, Sternig 1-for-2 with a double and three RBIs and Scholz 1-for-3 with a double and four RBIs.

Homestead 2, Grafton 0

Lukas took the tough-luck loss June 12, allowing seven hits, whiffing six and walking none.

Weisflog was 2-for-3 with a double. Austin Ralph scattered five hits and struck out four for Homestead.

The Black Hawks, 4-5 in the North Shore Conference and 7-7 overall, were scheduled to take on West Bend West on Tuesday, host Cedarburg on Thursday, play at Germantown on Friday, at Slinger on Monday and host Germantown next Thursday.

Image Information: LEGS WERE FLYING in a close play at the plate during one of Port Washington's games Saturday against Menomonee Falls. Photo by Sam Arendt