Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
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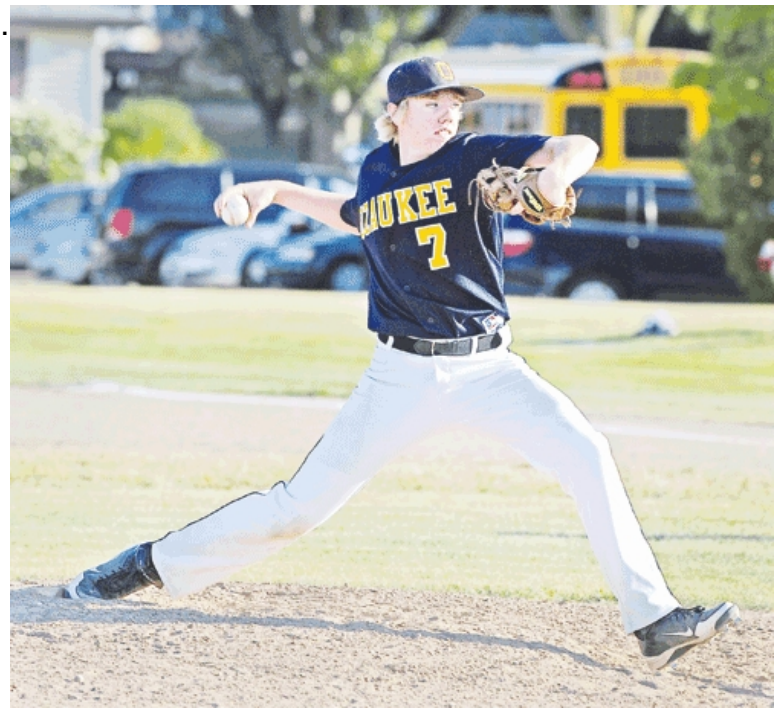
Rebound remedy sought by Ozaukee baseball team after rough loss to Oostburg tightens league title chase

After playing Oostburg tough in 7-5 and 7-4 losses earlier this season, the Ozaukee Warriors had every reason to believe they could pull out a win in a Central Lakeshore Conference baseball rematch at home last Friday.

First-place Oostburg had other ideas, though.



The Flying Dutchmen scored early and often, hitting the ball hard and cashing in on seven Ozaukee errors, to post a 19-8 victory in six innings.

“It wasn’t our night. Oostburg played well, we made some errors, and that was the ball game,” said Ozaukee coach Bob Kiefer, whose team saw its three-game winning streak end on Parents Night but remains in the thick of the CLC title chase.

The game was tied at 2-2 after one inning, but Oostburg steadily pulled away by scoring in each frame. After a three-run second, the Dutchmen used an eight-run third to build a 14-2 lead.

The Warriors made things interesting by collecting six runs in their half of the third but were unable to score the rest of the way against a pair of Oostburg relief pitchers.

Oostburg outhit the Warriors, 14-7. Ozaukee was led at the plate by Owen Miller and Patrick Kroening with two hits apiece.

Despite the loss, Ozaukee entered this week with a shot at the conference championship.

Starting Monday, four teams were within one game of the top spot. Cedar Grove-Belgium and Oostburg shared first with 9-5 records, followed by Ozaukee (9-6) and Howards Grove (8-6).

With several head-to-head games between the contenders remaining, a co-championship appears likely.

The Warriors faced Random Lake on Tuesday and will conclude the regular season with a 4 p.m. doubleheader at Cedar Grove-Belgium on Friday.

“It’s up for grabs, and we’re happy to be there,” Kiefer said.

“We’ve played well the last two weeks except for the Oostburg game, and we still have a shot.”

After helping answer the CLC title question, Ozaukee will open WIAA tournament play Tuesday, July 10.

Ozaukee 13, Sheb. Lutheran/Kohler 3 (6 inn.)

The Warriors pounded out 14 hits and scored in all but one inning of a conference home win June 27.

Miller went 4-for-4 and had three RBI for Ozaukee, which broke open a close game by scoring three runs in the fourth and five runs in the fifth.

The Warriors got two hits apiece from Zach Beck, Hunter Hess, Devon Linzenmeyer and Jeremy Wichmann.

Miller and Mitch McConnell each scored three runs.

Wichmann pitched a complete game for the win. The freshman allowed six hits, struck out five and walked two.

In winning all three games against Lutheran/Kohler this season, Ozaukee had a 46-7 cumulative scoring edge.

Image Information: FRESHMAN OWEN MILLER prepared to unleash a pitch during Ozaukee's Central Lakeshore Conference game against Oostburg last Friday. Ozaukee fell behind early on the way to a loss but remained in the hunt for the conference title entering this week.
Photo by Sam Arendt