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Cedarburg completes perfect Lakes campaign, leaving battle for second

The Cedarburg Mercs capped off an undefeated season in Land O' Lakes baseball Saturday, and in the process forced a two-way tie for second place in the Northern Division standings.

The host Mercs had wrapped up the divisional title weeks ago, but faced second-place Saukville in the regular season finale. The determined Saints took an early lead, but eventually fell to Cedarburg, 7-4.

Saukville scored three runs in the first inning, thanks to a two-run triple by Josh Hein followed by a single by Kyle Dieringer.

Cedarburg answered the scoring in the bottom of the first, keyed by four straight hits. John Vanden Berg and John Regnitz each collected RBI singles, and the final tally of the frame came home on a sacrifice fly by Ross Zahour.

The Mercs took control of the game from that point, scoring a single run in the second inning and three more times in the fourth.

Nolan Gilbertson had three hits for the victors, while Hein and Ian Tucker had two hits each for Saukville.

The win went to pitcher Zach Lauterbach, whose Mercs finished the season with a perfect 18-0 record.

The loss forced Saukville into a two-way tie with Grafton for second place in the standings.

As an undefeated team, the Mercs automatically qualify to represent the Northern Division in the LOL Grand Championship playoff.

Highlights of other local Northern Division games follow:

Grafton 4, Plymouth 3

The Grafton Express grabbed a share of the runner-up position in the division, thanks to some late game heroics in topping Plymouth, 4-3.

For the second straight game, Grafton got a game-winning RBI by Max Pruefer in the bottom of the ninth inning.

With the game tied 3-3, the first two Express batters were retired and the prospect of extra innings loomed.

Jordan Clark then singled for the Express and promptly stole second base. A single by Joey Thome set the stage for Pruefer's game winning hit.

Clark, Dustin Kesner and Pruefer each had two hits for Grafton. Dusty Medved led Plymouth with two hits.

Port Washington 11, Thiensville-Mequon 9

The Port Washington Lakers also moved up in the final standings after holding off the Thiensville-Mequon Twins, 11-9

The visiting Lakers scored eight times in the top of the sixth inning to take control of a tight contest, collecting six hits, three walks and a hit batsman.

Ed Kozlowski and Ryan Romans each had two hits in the fateful inning.

The Twins opened the game with four runs, with key singles by Jordan Rennicke and Chris Gallun.

After Port took its commanding lead, Thiensville-Mequon battled back, late in the game. Colten Poellinger doubled in two runs in the ninth, but Port withstood the last-gasp rally.

Romans had three hits and three RBI for the Lakers, with Kozlowski, Mick Borchardt and Josh Stanisch each getting two hits.

Rennicke had three hits for the Twins.

Image Information: THE GRAFTON EXPRESS hung tough during Land O' Lakes play, finishing in a two-way tie for second place in the standings with the Saukville Saints. A 4-3 win over Plymouth on Saturday locked up the runner-up position. Photo by Sam Arendt