

Never-say-die effort saves Port

Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
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Down to their last out, Pirates rally for victory in regional softball opener

It was better late than never for the Port Washington softball team in a WIAA tournament opener last week.



Down to their last out in a battle against Kettle Moraine Lutheran, the host Pirates rallied to pull out a 4-3, nine-inning win in a Division 2 regional quarterfinal game May 16.

After tying the game with a run in the bottom of the seventh, Port secured the victory on an errant throw in the ninth.

With the score tied at 3-3, Sam Wagner reached second base on a error. Mikayla Hilton then hit a grounder to the shortstop, whose overthrow to first base allowed Wagner to race home with the decisive run.

The win gave the Pirates a measure of revenge against a team that beat them on a throwing error in a regional game two years ago.

“The last three times we’ve faced Kettle Moraine Lutheran in the regionals, it’s been the same thing. The games have gone right down to the wire,” Port coach Steve Schmidt said.

“We’ve come to expect that when we play each other.”

A defensive miscue also helped Port escape defeat in the seventh.

The Pirates trailed, 3-2, when Wagner drew a two-out walk. Hilton followed with a grounder, but an error on an attempted force play left two runners on.

Stephanie Volesky’s single drove home Wagner to deadlock the score.

“We were down to our last out, but we had the heart of our lineup coming up, so I thought we had a chance,” Schmidt said.

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Volesky, a senior, finished 2-for-4 to lead Port.

The win went to Maggie Schmit, who outdueled Angela Wezyk in a pair of complete-game performances.

Schmit allowed only four hits and struck out nine but walked nine. Wezyk gave up 10 hits, walked one and struck out none.

“Maggie had some control problems but made the pitches when she had to,” Schmidt said. “When (Lutheran) had runners in scoring position, we did a good job of stranding them.”

Schmit helped her cause by going 2-for-5 at the plate, including a solo homer in the fifth.

Lutheran finished the season 6-8.

The victory improved the Pirates to 9-7 heading into a regional semifinal game against top-seeded Mayville on Tuesday, May 21.

The winner will face the winner of a semifinal contest between Grafton and Kewaskum for the regional title Thursday, May 23. The game will be hosted by the highest-seeded team.

Image Information: A DUSTY SLIDE brought Port Washington's Sam Wagner home with the tying run in seventh inning of her team's WIAA regional game against Kettle Moraine Lutheran. Port continued its rally by scoring in the ninth to pull out a 4-3 win. Photo by Sam Arendt