

CLASS 2A/1A SOFTBALL STATE SEMIFINALS

Kennedy's rally falls short in semis

GARY HOROWITZ
STATESMAN JOURNAL

MT. ANGEL - A matter of inches was the difference for No. 1 seed Kennedy in a 3-2 loss to No. 5 seed North Douglas on May 30 in the OSAA Class 2A/1A softball state semifinals at Kennedy High School.

Trailing 3-2 with a runner on third and two outs in the bottom of the seventh inning, Kennedy junior first baseman Molly Jaeger hit a liner down the third base line that landed just outside of the third base bag in foul territory. Two pitches later she struck out swinging to end the game.

Kennedy (19-6) found itself down 3-0 in the bottom of the sixth inning, but rallied for two runs off North Douglas freshman pitcher Nicki Derrick, who went the distance.

Jaeger and junior shortstop Hannah Arritola opened the sixth with back-to-back singles, and junior pitcher Tressa Riedman followed with a two-run double to the fence in right center.

The Trojans were in position for a big inning, but a diving catch by freshman center fielder Joanna Alcantar on junior catcher Abby Frey's sinking fly ball helped North Douglas maintain a one-run lead heading to the seventh.

Alcantar came through again in Kennedy's final at bat, robbing senior third baseman Rheannon Hernandez of extra bases on a diving catch in right center to lead off the inning.

"I don't get that one last game with my teammates," Hernandez said. "It hurts



The Kennedy softball team meets after a 3-2 loss to North Douglas in the OSAA Class 2A/1A state semifinals at Kennedy High School.

GARY HOROWITZ/STATESMAN JOURNAL

really bad. We did so good. I'm proud. I'm mad. I'm sad. A lot of emotions."

It was pitcher's duel for most of the game between Derrick and Riedman. North Douglas took a 1-0 lead in the third inning, and added two runs in the sixth off freshman pitcher Grace Schaecher.

Riedman returned to the hill with two

outs in the sixth, and kept the Warriors of the scoreboard in the seventh, keeping Kennedy within striking distance.

In the end, Kennedy's final rally fell short.

"We're very resilient and we didn't give up. I thought it was a great team effort," Riedman said.

North Douglas (21-4) advances to the state championship game against No. 2 seed Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii on Friday at the Oregon State softball complex.

Kennedy lost in the state semifinals for the second year in a row.

"They're center fielder made some amazing plays out there," Kennedy coach Walt Simmons said. "That was good for them."

And perhaps the difference between victory and defeat for the Tri-River Conference champion Trojans.

Simmons was pleased with his team's resiliency, and outstanding play throughout the season.

"They tried to get better every game, every practice, and that showed from the defensive side," Simmons said. "They worked extremely hard."

The Trojans lose just three seniors off this year's team, making another state tournament run likely next season.

"I think we definitely can. We have a lot of returners," Riedman said. "We have some eighth graders coming up that I think will improve our team. I think we just need to keep battling like we did this year."

ghorowitz@StatesmanJournal.com,
or Twitter.com/ghorowitz

North Douglas 3, Kennedy 2

N. Douglas - 0-0-1-0-0-2-0 - 3-6-0
Kennedy - 0-0-0-0-0-2-0 - 2-5-1

Riedman, Schaecher (6), Riedman (6) and Jaeger. Derrick and Toy. WP: Derrick. LP Riedman.

CLASS 5A SOFTBALL STATE SEMIFINALS

SILVERTON FALLS TO DALLAS



PETE MARTINI / STATESMAN JOURNAL

The Dallas softball team celebrates beating Silverton to reach the OSAA Class 5A state championship game.

After early deficit, the Dragons scored 10 unanswered runs

PETE MARTINI
STATESMAN JOURNAL

DALLAS - The Dallas softball team hasn't lost a game since March, and now the Dragons are one win away from a state championship.

Dallas rallied from an early 2-0 deficit May 30 to beat Silverton 10-2 in the OSAA Class 5A state semifinals and advance to Saturday's championship game at Oregon State.

"It's amazing. Unreal," Dallas senior Ashlee Lichtenberger said. "I think we were nervous in the first two innings. We just took a step back and took a deep breath. We just needed to relax. And then in the third inning is when we just relaxed and started hitting."

Dallas will face Marist in the state championship game. The game time has not yet been determined.

"We need to come out with energy," Dallas senior Olivia Nelson said about the title game. "We need to be relaxed and just play our game."

The Dragons scored two runs in the third inning to tie the game, and then Jordan Dippel had an RBI triple in the fifth inning to give Dallas the lead. The Dragons tacked on two more runs in the fifth and five runs in the sixth to put the game away.

"We obviously like to make it hard on ourselves," Dallas coach Brandi Jackson said, with a laugh, about the early deficit. "It's huge for this team. It's huge for this community, and obviously you see the

support we get. You couldn't ask for a better home crowd."

Silverton was playing without Mid-Willamette Conference co-player of the year Maggie Buckholz. Silverton coach Ralph Cortez declined to comment on Buckholz's situation, but her name was not on the team's roster May 30.

"I cannot comment. The kids that were here with us came through like we wanted them to," Cortez said. "Today was a game where I thought we had them nervous and on the run."

The Foxes end the season with a 19-9 overall record.

"I think we're a different team from the beginning of the season to right now," Cortez said. "The kids came through. Man, they stepped up. We knew it was go-

ing to be tough. But we thought we had their number. We thought we could get this one from them. I don't think anybody saw us getting as far as we did."

Dallas enters the June 30 title game on a 23-game winning streak.

"At the beginning of the year, you always talk about it as a goal," Jackson said about reaching the championship game. "And now that it's finally reality, I just want them all to take it in. It's something that they'll never forget."

Jackson said the Dragons are excited about the opportunity to bring a state championship home to Dallas. "It makes it easy to come out and play when we have so much support," she said. "I couldn't be more proud of these kids. Nobody deserves it more than they do."