

Loggers back in the semifinals, 6-4

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

KNAPPA — In Oregon 2A high school sports, it's pretty much the same cast of characters in the Final Four, every season, in every sport.

Knappa, Monroe, Regis, 2A newcomer Burns ... those four schools just have a way of showing up in the semifinals, no matter the season.

Monroe is the defending state champ in baseball; Burns won the title in football; Regis showed up in the Final Four in both football and basketball; and Knappa is a state playoff regular in everything.

When it comes to baseball, the Loggers have a lifetime pass to the Final Four.

They've been there three of the last four years, they're back again, and they'll be there next year.

With a 6-4 victory over Dufur Friday at Teevin Field, the Loggers clinched their latest trip to the semifinals.

Justin Dragoo drove in three runs and Dufur committed two huge errors in the fifth inning, as Knappa eliminated the Rangers.

On the mound, Logger starter Chase Rusinovich pitched six solid innings, allowing four hits with four strikeouts and five walks.

"It wasn't my best outing," Rusinovich said. "I got a little rattled and wasn't as accurate as I'd like, but I battled back and we got 'er done."

And now there's only two games left for Class 2A baseball to come up with a team that can beat Knappa. It hasn't been done, yet.

With Friday's win, the Loggers are now 25-0 and the only unbeaten team in Oregon high school baseball.

Regis will visit Knappa Tuesday, with the first pitch scheduled for 4:30 p.m.

The Loggers are closing in on their first trip since 2010 to Volcanoes Stadium, where Tuesday's winner will face either (guess who?) Burns or Monroe in the state championship Friday.

It would be hard to imagine Knappa not being there. The Loggers are playing flawless defense, they have the deepest pitching staff, and the Loggers have yet to face a pitcher who can slow their 14 runs-per-game attack.

Although the Rangers came close Friday.

Starter Trevor Tibbets and reliever Bryson Caldwell held Knappa to just six runs on seven hits — almost unheard of numbers for the Loggers, who had scored over 10 runs in 22 of their previous 23 games.

"They're a great team,

they made us play well," Knappa coach Jeff Miller said of the Rangers. "Two good teams had a good high school baseball game. In moments, they brought out the best in us. Hats off to coach (C.S.) Little and their seniors."

Meanwhile, Knappa's key plays and key hits came from the Logger seniors.

Dragoo had the first big hit, a two-run single in the first inning; and Tyson Burnard had an RBI single in the second, scoring freshman Dale Takalo.

Dragoo — who had two triples and a home run in a playoff win earlier in the week — had an RBI double in the fifth to score Jason Miller.

But the two biggest plays of the game may have been miscues by the Dufur defense.

After Jason Miller drew a leadoff walk in the fifth, Andy Miller followed with a grounder to shortstop. The ball was fielded cleanly, but the Rangers couldn't make the tailor-made double play, as the toss from Dufur's shortstop to second base ended up in right field, putting Jason Miller at third and Andy Miller at first.

Dragoo followed with his run-scoring double, and after an out, Knappa's Nate Truax lifted a routine fly ball to center, where the Dufur outfielder dropped the ball, allowing two more runs to score.

Two errors, three runs, and the Loggers had a 6-3 lead.

"Obviously a game-changer there," Jeff Miller said. "They had the double play, but nothing's a given. It's high

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— Jeff Miller
Knappa baseball coach

school baseball. We missed opportunities today, and they missed opportunities."

Rusinovich walked two and gave up a hit in the sixth inning, when the Rangers loaded the bases with one out.

On a trip to the mound, Miller told Rusinovich, "just to be an ace. We know he's a good pitcher, but it's in moments like these where you become an ace, and he is."

Rusinovich gave up one run on a fielder's choice, but he was able to get Connor Uhalde to fly out to center to end the threat.

Burnard pitched the seventh to get the save, striking out two.

Rusinovich "made pitches when he had to, and we lim-



Photos by JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Knappa's Justin Dragoo, No. 3, hits a RBI double in the fifth inning of the playoff game against Dufur Friday at Knappa.

ited the big innings," Miller said. "They had a couple chances at big innings and we were able to stop the bleeding in those innings."

"Chase stayed out there and gave us six strong innings. He left with a two-run lead, and that's what we ask for. Aces are big in big moments, and that's what he was today."

The Loggers also realize that it's no longer the league season, when they can score at will and take turns throwing no-hitters.

"We were under pressure, and our kids responded," Miller said. "That's a great sign for a team that hasn't had a lot of pressure this year."

"This is the third time in the semifinals for the seniors, so even if they haven't been challenged too many times this year, they've been there," he said. "And in our two playoff games, our seniors have come up huge."

Hidden Valley 12, Astoria 10

GRANTS PASS — The Astoria baseball team nearly overcame an 11-2 deficit Friday, but Hidden Valley ultimately came away with a 12-10 win over the Fishermen in a Class 4A quarterfinal.

The Mustangs scored nine runs in the third inning to grab the nine-run lead, before Astoria rallied with four runs in the sixth inning and four in the seventh.

Six Hidden Valley hitters combined for 16 hits, 11 RBIs and eight runs scored.

The nine-run rally in the third was highlighted by an RBI double from Jarid Norberg and a three-run homer



Knappa's Dave Takalo, No. 5, is late to tag Dufur's Trevor Tibbets during a pick-off attempt in the fifth inning of their playoff game.

by Michael Hults.

Zachery Morris got the win in relief for Hidden Valley, despite allowing six runs over five-and-a-third innings. He gave up 11 hits with two strikeouts.

Fridtjof Fremstad and Bronson Holthusen had RBI hits for Astoria in the sixth inning rally, along with a two-run double from Cade O'Brien.

O'Brien had another two-run double in the seventh, before Norberg was able to strike out the final batter and tying run.

Fremstad had a triple in the third inning and doubled in the sixth. He finished 3-for-3 with two runs scored, and O'Brien was 2-for-4 with four RBIs.

Three Astoria pitchers allowed 19 hits with one strikeout and no walks.



Knappa's Chase Rusinovich, No. 10, pitches in the second inning of the playoff game against Dufur.

Knappa's Dale Takalo, No. 5, tags out Dufur's Nick Little in the fourth inning of their playoff game.



SCOREBOARD

BASEBALL

HIGH SCHOOLS

Class 4A Quarterfinal
Hidden Valley 12, Astoria 10
Astoria 002 004 4—10 13 2
H.Valley 110 901 x—12 19 1
Wallace, Fremstad (3), Brown (6) and Helmersen; Morris, Hults (6), Norberg (7) and Bennett. W: Morris. L: Fremstad. S: Norberg. RBI: Ast, O'Brien 4, Fremstad 2, Helmersen, Holthusen, Scott; HV: Hults 4, Norberg 2, Fretz 2, Munoz 2, Bennett, Kissell. 2B: Ast, O'Brien 2, Scott 2, Tuimato, Fremstad; HV, Bennett 2, Norberg. 3B: Ast, Fremstad; HV: Morris, Munoz. HR: HV, Hults. LOB: Astoria 7, Hidden Valley 8. DP: Hidden Valley.

Class 2A Quarterfinal
Knappa 6, Dufur 4
Dufur 002 011 0—4 5 3
Knappa 210 030 x—6 7 1
Tibbets, Caldwell (3) and Kortge; Rusinovich, Burnard (7) and Truax. W: Rusinovich. L: Caldwell. S: Burnard. RBI: Duf, Tibbets 2, Kortge, Crawford; Kna, J.Dragoo 3, Burnard. 2B: Duf, Kortge; Kna, J.Dragoo. HBP: Duf, Uhalde, Little; Kna, Cruz. LOB: Dufur 6, Knappa 5. DP: Knappa.

Scores
2A Quarterfinals
Monroe 6, Pilot Rock 2
Burns 8, Reedsport 6

Regis 25, North Douglas 2
Knappa 6, Dufur 4
3A Quarterfinals
Cascade Christian 9, Stanfield 6
Glide 3, Horizon Christian 1
Clatskanie 6, Rainier 2
Santiam Christian 5, St. Mary's 1
4A Quarterfinals
Henley 6, North Bend 0
Hidden Valley 12, Astoria 10
Gladstone 15, North Marion 8
Scappoose 13, Molalla 2

SOFTBALL

HIGH SCHOOLS
Class 2A Quarterfinal
Pilot Rock 1, Knappa 0
Knappa 000 000 0—0 8 3
Pilot Rock 000 000 1—1 3 0
W: Kacie Ostrom (9 K's, 0 walks).
L: Kacie Cameron (10 K's, 3 walks).

Scores
4A Quarterfinals
Banks 4, Scappoose 1
Mazama 5, Newport 4
Yamhill-Carlton 4, Henley 1
McLoughlin 4, Douglas 0
3A Quarterfinals
Dayton 12, Echo/Stanfield 2
Pleasant Hill 1, Taft 0
Scio 12, Vale 0
Rainier 2, Harrisburg 1
2A Quarterfinals
Union/Cove 3, North Douglas 0
Weston-McEwen 7, Bonanza 3
Pilot Rock 1, Knappa 0
Central Linn 8, Gold Beach 1

Lady Loggers lose a heartbreaker

The Daily Astorian

PILOT ROCK — When you lead the state in runs scored and haven't lost in 23 games, any loss is going to be a disappointment.

That's what the Knappa Lady Loggers were feeling Friday afternoon at Pilot Rock, where the Rockets managed to upset the Loggers, 1-0, Knappa's first loss since March 24.

Scoreless through 6 1/2 innings, Pilot Rock's Bailey Weinke walked with the bases loaded in the bottom of the seventh, forcing in Jacey Wilson with the game's only run.

Pilot Rock sophomore pitcher Tehya Ostrom allowed eight hits with nine strikeouts and no walks, while Knappa senior Kacie Cameron countered with a three-hitter, with 10 strikeouts and three walks.

Two of Pilot Rock's hits came in the seventh inning. The Loggers were in posi-

'We had 24 wins and only four losses, so I'm not going to complain.'

— James Nichols
Knappa softball coach

tion to take control in the top of the fourth, as they had three straight hits with just one out.

But Ostrom knocked down a hard-hit comebacker to get an out at home, then fielded a grounder back to the circle for the final out.

Pilot Rock improves to 24-2, while the season comes to a close for Knappa at 24-4.

"We had 24 wins and only four losses, so I'm not going to complain," said Knappa coach James Nichols. "I feel sorry for our seniors, who gave a lot over the last three or four years."

"We had two losses to (the Rockets) this year by a combined 4-1, so I know we're

as good as they are," he said. "Kacie had a good game — we just couldn't get the hits behind her."

Pilot Rock coach Darin Fitzpatrick said, "I knew we were going to have to find a way to manufacture runs. They have a really good pitcher (Cameron) and, sadly, we haven't seen good pitching since the Athena game a couple weeks ago. So I knew it was going to be tough."

Most of it had to do with Cameron. The Rockets had seen Cameron before, both this season and last, so they knew what they were up against. But that didn't help much. Rocket leadoff batter

Bekkah Roe started with a single in the first, stole second and moved to third on an error, but was left stranded.

For six innings, Cameron and Ostrom traded bars. A couple times Knappa had runners on, including the bases-loaded jam in the fourth, but both pitchers found ways to get outs.

After an out to start the bottom of the seventh, Wilson singled on a bloopier up the third base line that Cameron tried to snag with a dive, but was just late and the ball bounced off her glove into foul territory, providing ample time for Wilson to reach first.

Kayla Deist was safe on a bunt single. Rhyanne Oates reached on an error to load the bases with two outs, bringing Weinke to the plate, and the senior walked on five pitches.

Sam Barbee of EO Media Group contributed to this story