

Loggers 'Cruz' past the Oakers, 10-4

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Knappa's Reuben Cruz celebrates after hitting an RBI triple in the third inning as the Knappa Loggers faced off against the Oakland Oakers on Wednesday at Knappa High School. Knappa defeated Oakland 10-4.



Knappa's Jason Miller celebrates with teammates after scoring in the fifth inning against the Oakland Oakers on Wednesday at Knappa High School.

KNAPPA — They may not be the No. 1 seed, but it's pretty clear to see who the No. 1 target is...

It's that team up in the Northwest corner of Oregon — the one with a 49-1 record over the last two years.

And from all indications, taking that trophy away from the Knappa Loggers over the next week and a half is going to be next to impossible.

The Loggers posted another state playoff win Wednesday at Teevin Field, 10-4, over the Oakland Oakers.

Knappa rallied from a 4-0 deficit and pounded the Oakers with 10 runs in their final five at-bats, led by a 4-for-4 effort from sophomore Reuben Cruz.

Sophomore pitcher Dale Takalo entered in the top of the third, and kept Oakland scoreless the rest of the way.

For the ninth year in a row, the Loggers are on to the quarterfinals, where they will host North Douglas Friday, time to be announced.

The Loggers also won their 24th straight game at Teevin Field, where — in addition to being 53-2 since 2012 — the Loggers will stay as long as they keep winning, before a June 3 trip to Volcanoes Stadium.

"Our kids like to play here, and I appreciate the crew getting it ready," said Knappa coach Jeff Miller, whose last home loss was to Weston-McEwen, June 3, 2014.

"It's great for our younger kids and our fans to be able to come and watch, and it's easier on the parents. For those reasons, I love playing here," he said.

To their credit, the Oakers built a 4-0 lead in the top of the second inning, taking advantage of three hits, two walks and two Logger errors.

But despite the deficit, everyone in the ballpark — with the exception of a few Oakland fans — knew Knappa was going to rally.

The most confident people on the field were the Loggers themselves.

"The tremendous part of it was, our guys fell down 4-0, and you couldn't tell it in here (the dugout)," Miller said.

"They were calm, cool, and had confidence that they could chip away, start winning innings, and things would break our way," he said.

The Loggers indeed chipped away at the lead, an inning at a time.

Logan Bartlett's single to

center scored Andrew Goozee in the second inning; a triple by Cruz plated Takalo in the third, with Cruz scoring on a grounder by Noah Kinney; and Knappa took the lead with five runs in the fifth.

Jason Miller had a lead-off double and scored on a single by Takalo; Cruz drove in his teammate for the second time with another extra base hit; Cruz scored on a bunt, and Michal Goodman capped the inning with a two-run double.

The Oakers did their part, with a few physical errors and a few more mental errors. Oakland passed up a chance to get Cruz in a rundown between third and home in the fifth inning, instead throwing to first base (late), allowing Cruz to score. Cruz had another single in

the sixth for his fourth hit of the day, Miller scored on a wild pitch, and Kinney capped the scoring with a sacrifice bunt that scored Cruz.

"All I know is, we need him," coach Miller said of Cruz.

Meanwhile, Takalo entered in the third inning and struck out the first three batters he faced.

He gave up leadoff doubles in both the fourth and fifth innings, but easily worked his way out of the jams.

"I was pleased with this group, because they showed so much growth and maturity today," said coach Miller, who scored career coaching victory No. 300.

"Again, for a young team to get out of jams and fight through an early deficit ... and that's a good team," he said of Oakland.

No. 10-seed North Douglas — a 1A school which finished third in Special District 3 — will be huge underdogs when they arrive at Teevin Field.

They could end up facing Takalo, who hasn't lost a game on the mound in over two years, and never as a high school player.

"Dale didn't throw a lot of pitches today, and we have five pitchers we're prepared to throw," Miller said, "and I and the team have confidence in them. We'll figure out a way to scrap through the next one."

Astoria advances with 7-6 road win over North Bend

The Daily Astorian

NORTH BEND — Three Astoria pitchers and more power hitting from Carter Wallace helped the Fishermen post a 7-6 win Wednesday at North Bend, in a first-round state playoff game at Clyde Allen Ballpark.

No. 12-seed Astoria moves on to the 4A state quarterfinals, where the Fishermen will play Friday at Cottage Grove.

Astoria nearly let a 4-0 lead slip away, as the No. 5-seed Bulldogs rallied with three runs in the fourth, and later scored two in the seventh.

By that time, Astoria had seven runs of its own, thanks in large part to a two-run homer by Wallace in the top of the seventh.

Wallace also had a run-scoring double in the fifth, and finished with four RBIs to lead the Fishermen.

Fridtjof Fremstad pitched four innings and picked up the victory, with Tyler Lyngstad and Wallace throwing in relief.

Fremstad allowed just three hits, with five strikeouts and no walks.

North Bend pitcher Tyler Laskey took the loss, despite striking out nine with two walks.

Astoria's top three hitters in the lineup — Kyle Strange, Fremstad and Wallace — all had two hits apiece.

The Fishermen committed six errors, but the Bulldogs countered with four of their own.



SCOREBOARD

Table containing Prep Schedule (Baseball, Basketball), Astoria 7, North Bend 6, and State Playoff Scores for Class 4A and Class 2A.

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