

SPORTS

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WEST FINALS

Warriors, Rockets set for Game 7

By KRISTIE RIEKEN
 Associated Press

HOUSTON — When the Golden State Warriors lost Game 5 of the Western Conference finals to the Rockets on Thursday night to send them to the brink of elimination they vowed to be back in Houston for Game 7.

After a resounding win in Game 6 that's exactly where the defending champions are, preparing for a winner-take-all game tonight for a spot in the NBA Finals.

"It's going to be fun," Stephen Curry said. "It's what you play for, to be in a situation where you're one win away from going to the finals. Pressure both ways because of how big the moment is, and you've got to want it."

The Warriors trailed by as many as 17 points in the first half Saturday night before using a splendid second half to roll to a 115-86 victory. Curry knows that if the Warriors hope to return to the finals for the fourth straight year they'll have to get off to a better start in Game 7.

"I guarantee if we start the game out like we did (Saturday) and they jump out to the lead, it's going to be 10 times harder to make it a game," Curry said. "So for us that's our challenge to have the same mentality we had for the last 36 minutes of (Game 6) and bring that from the jump in Game 7."

Kevin Durant is excited about helping the Warriors return to the finals, but he got a little confused on when Game 7 was on Saturday night.

"I can't wait 'til Tuesday," Durant said.

Curry quickly jumped in to correct his teammate.

"Monday," he said. "Please don't miss a game."

The Rockets aren't dwelling on their missed opportunity to close out the series as they get ready for Monday's game where they'll try to punch their ticket to finals for the first time since winning back-to-back titles in 1995-95.

They might have to do it without star Chris Paul, who is dealing with a strained right hamstring that kept him out of Game 6. Coach Mike D'Antoni said Sunday that he's continuing to receive treatment and his status for Game 7 will likely be a game-time decision.

James Harden, who had 22 points in the first half on Saturday night but just 10 the rest of the way, insists that the Rockets remain confident despite the blow-out loss and are up to Monday's challenge.

"There's no pressure. It's an opportunity, an opportunity that we all are excited to be a part of," he said. "Game 7 at our house, that's what we've worked the entire regular season for (is) to get home-court advantage. So we're going to come out and be ready."

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE

TUESDAY

Baseball — 2A/1A semifinal: Kennedy at Knappa, 4:30 p.m.

BASEBALL

Knappa 2, Monroe 0
 Monroe 000 000 0—0 1 2
 Knappa 000 002 x—2 3 0
 Teran, Warden (6) and Crowson; E. Takalo, D. Takalo (5) and Miller. W: D. Takalo. L: Teran. RBI: Kna, Lackey 2. 2B: Kna, Weirup. HBP: Kna, Saito, Sutton. LOB: Monroe 4, Knappa 10.

Friday's scores
4A Quarterfinals

Junction City 11, Henley 8
 Gladstone 12, North Bend 5
 La Grande 10, Banks 2
 North Marion 5, Madras 0

3A Quarterfinals

Taft 5, Joseph 1
 La Pine 5, Pleasant Hill 4
 Santiam Chr. 1, Cascade Chr. 0
 Horizon Chr. 13, Stanfield 12 (12)

2A/1A Quarterfinals

Knappa 2, Monroe 0
 Kennedy 6, Oakland 3
 Pilot Rock 4, Sherman 2
 Bandon 2, Reedsport 0



Photos by Gary Henley/The Daily Astorian

Knappa's Dale Takalo and Ryker Coffey, No. 2, celebrate following the final out.

Late Knappa rally slays the Monroe Dragons

By GARY HENLEY
 The Daily Astorian

KNAPPA — There were no lopsided, video game numbers on the scoreboard Friday at Teevin Field, where the Knappa baseball team found itself in a good ol' fashioned low-scoring, defensive playoff thriller.

And, like all the other games they play, the Loggers can win those, too.

A pair of doubles in the bottom of the sixth inning broke open a scoreless game, and helped the Ax Men defeat Monroe, 2-0, in a Class 2A/1A quarterfinal, securing Knappa's fifth straight trip to baseball's version of the Final Four.

Knappa's brotherly pitching duo of Eli and Dale Takalo combined on a one-hit shutout in the rematch of the 2015 state championship game (also won by Knappa, 3-0).

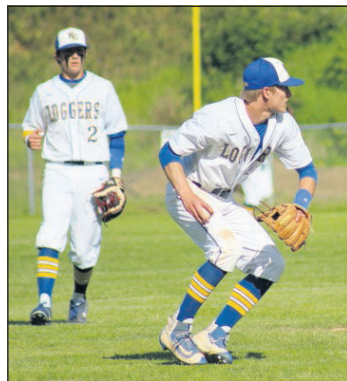
"It's a Bill Crowson-coached team," Knappa coach Jeff Miller said of the Dragons. "They're not going to sit there and beat themselves. The longer it stayed 0-0, the pressure mounts a little. We're not used to having zeroes on the board. At the same time, we've been through a lot of different situations, and we remained confident. But we had to respect everything Monroe was doing. They made plays."

Meanwhile, the rematch of the 2017 championship that everyone was counting on — No. 2-ranked Reedsport vs. No. 1 Knappa — is no longer a possibility, as Bandon upset Reedsport in another Friday quarterfinal, 2-0.

The Loggers will host Kennedy in a state semifinal game Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. The winner will face either Bandon or Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii, June 1 at Volcanoes Stadium in Keizer.

And the Loggers are fully expected to be there, as they improved to 22-0 overall, following their 10th shutout victory (and sixth in the last seven games) of the season.

Knappa's starter in Friday's game, Eli Takalo, gave up a two-out single to Mason Crowson in the top of the first inning. That



Logger shortstop Mason Hoover fields a grounder and makes the throw to first base for an out in Friday's win.

would be Monroe's first, last and only hit of the day.

The Dragons had three other baserunners (one walk and two hit batters), but Monroe runners never advanced past second base, as the Takalo brothers threw a combined 92 pitches and made quick work of the Dragons in every inning.

On the other side, Monroe starter Eric Teran was equally effective through five-and-a-third innings.

The junior struck out just three and walked six, but the only hit he gave up was a single to left field by Kaleb Miller to start the bottom of the third.

Miller was thrown out at second moments later on a fielder's choice grounder by Dale Takalo, in the second of four straight innings in which Knappa had the leadoff batter on base, but failed to score.

"Obviously our pitchers had things in control, but as long as it stays 0-0, there's some nerves that go around," said coach Miller, whose team averages over 12 runs per game. "Our pitchers did a great job, and (Teran) did a great job, keeping us off balance. He's a really good pitcher. By that I mean, every delivery has a different timing, and a little different look. He had us out on our front foot all day long, mixing things up and hitting his spots."

That all changed in the bottom of the sixth.

Colton Weirup — two days after belting an inside-the-park home run in a first-round win over Riddle — doubled to deep center

field with one out.

"Big hit, changed the atmosphere," Miller said. "We hadn't hit anything on the barrel all day. And we just couldn't get the hit that would bring anybody in. So you hear a ball hit the barrel, and the whole dugout just kind of got excited. That was a huge hit by Colton. He's done that for us all season."

Cameron Miethe reached on a fielder's choice when the Dragons failed to make the tag on Weirup on a play at third, and Ryker Coffey drew a walk to load the bases.

Junior Shaun Lackey followed with the big, and only run-scoring hit of the day, a sharp double down the third base line that scored two runs.

Monroe made a pitching change and got out of the inning, but the damage had been done.

Dale Takalo retired the Dragons in order in the top of the seventh to pick up the win.

"The one that busted it open was Shaun," Miller said. "He had been a little bit frustrated earlier, but he's a guy who almost always makes contact. You can count on him for that."

"It tells you how much we thought of our pitching — we 'busted it open' at 2-0. But Eli and Dale were in charge," he said. "They were very efficient. Dale threw three innings, and no more than 30 pitches. That's Dale, and that's what he does."

"Both guys threw strikes and challenged their hitters. So we were in control defensively. But baseball's a scary sport sometimes, and all it takes is one swing."

Kennedy will make its second trip to Knappa in 11 days. The Loggers defeated the Trojans 10-0 in a nonleague game May 18. Neither team threw its top pitcher.

"They've been here, and they've seen us," Miller said of Kennedy. "And they didn't throw their top pitchers that day. So they will be primed and ready to challenge us. And they've had a great season, relying on young kids who are really good baseball players."

"You're not going to get better coaching than Bill Crowson today and Kevin Moffatt next week."

SPORTS IN BRIEF

LeBron's 35 help Cavs beat Celtics, reach NBA Finals

BOSTON — With another Game 7 victory at stake, LeBron James would not sit out.

He would not say goodbye to Cleveland again — not yet, anyway.

And he would not be denied an eighth straight trip to the NBA Finals.

The four-time league MVP scored 35 points with 15 rebounds and nine assists on Sunday night, leading the Cleveland Cavaliers to an 87-79 win over the Celtics and eliminating Boston from the Eastern Conference finals in the decisive seventh game.

"He's had a lot of gaudy games," Cavaliers coach Tyrone Lue said. "But I just think Game 7, in Boston, all the circumstances that surround Boston, the history ... to come here in a hostile environment: (it's) right there."

In the first close game, the lowest-scoring and the first victory for a road team in the series, James played all 48 minutes, scoring 12 of his points in the fourth quarter for his sixth straight Game 7 win. Lue used his timeouts to get his star an extra few minutes of rest when he could, and James didn't warm up at halftime to conserve his energy.

Healy, newcomer Colome help M's beat Twins 3-1

SEATTLE — Before speaking to reporters after a 3-1 victory over the Twins, Seattle manager Scott Servais sat down, smiled and turned his cap slightly to the side. Just a little sign of the respect for the fashion style of his new reliever Alex Colome, who pitched a perfect ninth to earn a save in his first day as a Mariner.

"Colome is a serious dude," Servais said. "He's all business."

Colome arrived in Seattle on Saturday night, a day after the Mariners got him and outfielder Denard Span in a trade with Tampa Bay.

Ryon Healy doubled home two runs in the eighth inning, then Colome made his Seattle debut with a three-up, three-down ninth.

"Different team, same baseball," Colome said after earning his 12th save of the season. "It was great to get the opportunity. We're going to win a lot more games here."

Defending champ Oklahoma, top seed Oregon head WCWS field

OKLAHOMA CITY — Two-time defending champion Oklahoma and No. 1 seed Oregon highlight the Women's College World Series field.

The top eight seeds qualified, including four teams from the Pac-12. The

games begin Thursday at ASA Hall of Fame Stadium in Oklahoma City.

No. 4 seed Oklahoma (55-3) will face No. 5 Washington (49-8). Oklahoma features pitcher Paige Parker and power hitter Jocelyn Alo. Parker has been Oklahoma's ace the past two seasons. Alo, a freshman, leads the nation with 28 home runs.

Oregon (52-8) will play Pac-12 rival Arizona State (48-11). Oregon and Oklahoma could meet Friday.

In the other bracket, No. 2 Florida (55-9) will play No. 7 Georgia (48-11) and No. 3 UCLA (56-5) will face No. 6 UCLA (52-11). Georgia's Brittany Gray leads the nation with a 0.48 ERA.

Florida won national titles in 2014 and 2015 and is expected to be a threat again with pitcher Kelly Barnhill in the circle.

— Associated Press