

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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A7

5A STATE PLAYOFFS

Bucks rally to quarterfinals

Pendleton softball, baseball teams claim round one of 5A state tournament

By BRETT KANE
East Oregonian

Thurston tried, but they could hardly keep Kirah McGlothan's bat silent on Wednesday.

The Bucks second baseman hit a two-RBI double and a three-run dinger mid-game to help bury the visiting Colts for a 12-7 victory in round one of the 5A softball state playoffs.

Before McGlothan brought the firepower, the Bucks were grasping to a 1-0 advantage for two innings.

"It changed our mojo a little bit," McGlothan said of her home run. "As soon as anyone hits a home run, everyone on the team gets excited."

The Bucks, ranked fifth in the 5A division, got on the board in the bottom of the second inning when Sam Spriet sent a 3-2 pitch over the center field fence for a solo homer.

After a runless third inning, Spriet doubled and scored again on Carissa Coooley's sacrifice fly on the next at-bat. McGlothan doubled and reached third on an error, driving in two runs for a 4-0 lead.

"My first couple of at-bats weren't very good," McGlothan admitted, "but Sami's homer got us going."

Freshman Sauren Garton held strong in the circle, collecting five strikeouts to keep the Colts without a run for the opening four innings.

Thurston couldn't manage a base hit until the top of the fourth, when Olivia Jegtvig singled. She would steal second and take third on a sacrifice bunt with just one out on the board, but the Bucks knocked down the last two outs to strand her.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Sami Spriet, of Pendleton, bumps fists with head coach Tim Cary after hitting a home run during Wednesday's state playoff game against Thurston.

"They're a never-say-die team," Pendleton coach Tim Cary said of Thurston. "They certainly weren't going to give up, and they showed that with their bunts. They made it tough for us to get our outs."

The Colts swiftly put up three runs with Harmony Stevens' three-run homer in the top of the fifth, narrowing the gap that the Bucks had opened.

Pendleton was quick to remedy the issue — Josie Wilson hit a two-RBI double in the bottom of the inning, and Elli Nirschl drove a runner home on her single during the next at-bat.

With Wilson and Nirschl on base and in scoring position, McGlothan homered over left field on a 1-2 count to round out the seven-run inning.

"That was gigantic," Cary said. "That opened the game up."

The Bucks wouldn't score another run for the remainder of the game, but no matter. They had already put up enough distance to survive four more Colts runs, and punch their ticket to Friday's state quarterfinals.

McGlothan's 2-for-4 perfor-

mance at the plate brought in one run and five RBIs to lead Pendleton's offense. Spriet went 3-for-4 with three runs and an RBI, and Nirschl hit 2-for-4 with two runs and a pair of runners driven in.

"You can never overlook anyone," McGlothan said. "You could be playing a No. 20 team who happens to have a really good game, while you have a bad one."

On Friday, the Bucks will hit the road to West Albany for the 5A quarterfinals.

"We still have some things to clean up, but we'll be ready to roll on Friday," Cary said. "We're going to give 'em heck."

Baseball

When the Bucks were down 3-2 in the bottom of the seventh inning on Wednesday's state playoff game, Ty Beers knew it was a live-or-die situation.

The sophomore first baseman had just singled to score Gabe Umberger and tie with the visiting Wilsonville Wildcats. He then took advantage of three critical Wilsonville errors to clinch a 4-3 victory.

"There was no room to hes-



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Ryan Stahl, of Pendleton, pitches during Wednesday's state playoff game against the Wilsonville Wildcats.

itate," Beers said. "I just had to make the decision and go."

Pendleton held a 2-0 lead until the top of the fifth, when Wilsonville's Cole Kleckner singled to right field and drove in two runs to even things out.

Kleckner drove another runner home in the top of the seventh to pull ahead.

"Wilsonville has a quality program," Pendleton coach TJ Haguewood said. "They do every year. Any team in the playoffs is going to be good. You have to play with your emotions under control in games like this. During the playoffs, emotions are running high."

After Umberger scored for the game's second tie, Beers took second on a wild pitch, and stole third on the following at-bat. He scored

on an error at third base to slip past Wilsonville once and for all.

"This was a team win," Haguewood said. "We had a lot of guys doing great things. We executed beautifully."

Intermountain Conference Pitcher of the Year Ryan Stahl may have only benched two Wilsonville batters, but scattered just three runs across six innings on the mound.

"Wilsonville is a tough team," Stahl said. "They know the game really well; we just played better. It was exciting to see kids step up in tough situations like this."

On Friday, Pendleton will travel to Crescent Valley for a 5A state quarterfinals contest. The Raiders are coming off a 10-2 win over Crook County.

CLASS 3A PLAYOFFS

Taft knocks Irrigon out in the first round

Knights finish the season with a 20-5 record

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

One bad inning derailed Irrigon's season Wednesday.

The Knights gave up five runs in the top of the fifth inning as Taft rallied for a 5-3 victory over Irrigon in the first round of the 3A state baseball playoffs at Henrichs Field.

"I'm proud of them no matter what," Irrigon coach Randy Henrichs said. "I just want them to walk away with their heads up. I hope they know this isn't the end of the world."

The Tigers (17-10) move into the quarterfinals, where they will face

Santiam Christian on Friday.

"We just had to stay with it," Taft coach Matt Hilgers said of his team's early deficit. "We knew we would break through and do what needed to be done."

The Knights (20-5) opened the scoring in the first inning as Matthew Moreno scored on a Zack Henrichs' double.

Irrigon added two more runs in the bottom of the third. Moreno scored on an RBI single by Keith Fleming, while Fleming was sent across the plate on a Lino Covarrubia double down the third-base line.

While the Knights were putting runs on the board, Zack Henrichs was keeping the Tigers at bay.

He allowed two hits and three base runners over the course of three innings, striking out five.

Henrichs reached 42 pitches at the end of three innings, and if the Knights needed him Friday, he could not go past 45.

Moreno came on in the fourth and promptly sat down all three

Taft lead.

"Matthew came in and did good," coach Henrichs said. "I feel for him; he's such a competitor. He came in and did well the one inning, then lost control."

*"I'M PROUD OF THEM
NO MATTER WHAT."*

Irrigon coach Randy Henrichs

batters he faced.

The fifth inning was different story. Moreno struggled with his control, walking two to start the inning. Of the six batters he faced, four scored before Henrichs went back to the mound.

A misplayed ball allowed one more run to score for a 5-3

back in, we had our runs, and I'm glad we did."

Despite the loss, Zack Henrichs said there is much to celebrate. "It was a fun season," he said. "We had the best record in school history, we were league champs and district champs. We would have liked to walk away with a (championship) ring, but it is what it is."

Rangers complete 3-game sweep of slumping Mariners



AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez

Seattle Mariners starting pitcher Marco Gonzales throws to the Texas Rangers in the first inning of a baseball game in Arlington, Texas, on Wednesday.

By STEPHEN HAWKINS
AP Baseball Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas — Hunter Pence homered, Adrian Sampson had another impressive long outing for a victory after not starting, and the Texas Rangers beat the slumping Seattle Mariners 2-1 on Wednesday to complete a three-game sweep.

The Mariners have lost 27 of 37 games to fall to the bottom of the AL West standings since starting the season 13-2.

Seattle lefty Marco Gonzales (5-4) limited the Rangers to one earned run over seven innings, but dropped to 0-4 with a 4.56 ERA in five starts in May. He was 5-0 after his first seven starts this season.

Sampson (2-3) went 5½ innings and gave up one earned run after the Rangers used a reliever to start the game, the same as the right-hander did when he got his first big league victory in his last appearance last Friday against St. Louis.

Jesse Chavez got the first five outs against the Mariners.

Shawn Kelley worked the ninth for his fourth save in five chances, his second in less than 24 hours since coming off the injured list following the removal of two lumps from his throat that were determined to be benign.

In his five actual starts this season, Sampson is 0-2 with a 7.66 ERA and hasn't gone more than five innings. Pitching in relief, he

is 2-1 with a 1.48 ERA.

Pence put the Rangers up 2-0 in the sixth with his solo homer, his 10th of the season.

Texas got an unearned run in the first when Pence reached on an error by first baseman Edwin Encarnación and scored on a double by Nomar Mazara.

Jay Bruce had a double and scored on J.P. Crawford's single in the Seattle seventh.

UP NEXT

Mariners: Seattle will be in Oakland on Friday night for the opener of a weekend series against the A's.

Rangers: Texas starts a series Friday night at the Los Angeles Angels.