



American Legion Minnesota Division I Tournament

Gazette



Volume 19, No. 2

Chanhassen, Minn.

Saturday, August 1, 2015

12 teams play on into second day

Sixteen teams started. Four went home. Four went undefeated. Eight will play on through the losers' bracket.

Opening round action in the Minnesota American Legion Division I State Tournament at Chanhassen was played in nearly perfect baseball weather.

Wayzata, Austin, Eden Prairie and New Ulm went undefeated, winning two games on the first day.

Left fielder saves day for Wayzata

By John Sherman

It isn't often that a left fielder's defense puts his team in the win column, but Wayzata's Griffin Schneider did just that in a 5-4, 11-inning first-round State Legion Tournament victory over Chanhassen Friday afternoon at Chanhassen High School.

Schneider deflated Chanhassen with two spectacular plays in the bottom of the ninth with the game tied 4-4. Chanhassen loaded the bases with hits by Cullen McNeill and Nick Smith and a walk.

"With [Ty] Denzer coming up, no one out and bases loaded, it was hard to believe we'd get out of that," said Schneider after the game. But it was Schneider who made that possible. He caught a medium-deep fly ball and nailed McNeill at the plate with a perfect throw.

"I didn't think the fly ball was deep enough," said Wayzata head coach Adam Goethke. "I was thinking, please, Griffin, hit your target!"

The next Chan hitter ripped a sinking line drive to left, but with a well-timed dive, Schneider made a circus catch for the third out.

Wayzata scored the go-ahead run in the top of the 11th inning when catcher

Sartell, Grand Rapids, Maple Grove and Champlain lost both games, and dropped out of the double-elimination tournament. Tri-City Red (New Brighton), Woodbury, Prior Lake, North St. Paul, Princeton, Alexandria, Hutchinson and host Chanhassen split their first two games.

In action Saturday in the losers' bracket, Tri-City will take on Alexandria at 10

a.m. and Princeton takes on Hutchinson at 1 p.m. at Chaska. In early games at Chanhassen. Prior Lake will play North St. Paul at 10 a.m. and Chanhassen will play Woodbury at 1 p.m.

The contests between the undefeateds will feature some interesting matchups: Large and small, city and rural.

New Ulm will play Eden Prairie at 4 p.m. and Austin will take on Wayzata at 7 p.m.

Eden Prairie and Wayzata are two of the largest school districts in the state, while New Ulm and Austin are traditional baseball powers from outstate.

Austin has the longest playing American Legion team in the state.

In Division II pool play at Morris, Foley topped Dilworth 8-0, Jordan beat Wells 5-1, LaCrescent edged Moose Lake 3-2, BOLD beat Dilworth 5-0, LaCrescent beat Morris 4-0 and Minneapolis Giantvalley topped Wells 5-3.

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Baseball hurts

The ball skips by Wazata catcher Connor Olson after hitting Chanhassen batter Cullen McNeill. Wayzata won the opening round game 5-4.

Eden Prairie swings hot bats

By John Sherman

Jeff Athey of the Eden Prairie Legion team has had some big games this season, but he had his biggest when it counted most Friday at Round Lake Park.

Athey went five-for-five as EP out-slugged Woodbury Blue 18-12 in the winners' bracket game. Teammate Wesley Young also had a huge night, going five-for-six with six RBIs.

EP fell behind 8-3, and then the hit parade began.

"We showed some intensity at the plate," said Athey. "But we struggled a little bit with our defense. We have to clean that up."

Athey had a four-for-four game earlier this summer, but he topped it on Friday night.

EP coach Scott Hackett was pleased with his team's performance, but sees room for improvement, particularly on the defensive side.

"This was one of those war of attrition games," he said. "Obviously, we knew that Woodbury Blue can swing it. Jeff [Athey] and Wesley Young had big games, and we also had some big at-bats in the bottom of our order. Cal Lunde hit a triple and Josh Liberko had two hits."

With two wins the first day of the State Tournament, Eden Prairie improved to 33-6.



Errant throw

Eden Prairie's Josh Miller slides safely into second with a stolen base as Grand Rapids' second baseman Noah Johnson skies for the throw.

Left fielder saves day

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Chanhassen countered Wayzata's big hits with a pair of home runs, one each from Jack Mattson and Kevin Sampson.

"This has got to be the game of the tournament so far," said Goethke. "There were some big situations that came up for both teams."

Stars of the Day

Jayden Fleck of Hutchinson pitched 8 2/3 innings to of his team's 6-2 first-round victory over Champlin Park. He scattered five hits in Hutchinson's 20th victory of the season.

Gus Varland of North St. Paul struck out 15 Austin hitters, but lost an 8-7 decision in the first-round game.

Judd Davis, the lead-off hitter for New Ulm Gold, went three-for-five in an 8-7 victory over Alexandria.

Jeff Athey of Eden Prairie went five-for-five in his team's 18-12 victory over Woodbury Blue.

Wesley Young of Eden Prairie had six RBIs and five hits in the Eagles victory over Woodbury.

Alec Abercrombie of Tri-City Red went five-for-five in a 12-11 loss to Austin.

Brendan Broady of Wayzata pitched a complete game to beat Hutchinson 12-1 in seven innings.

Jim Larson of Prior Lake hurled a two-hitter in a 3-0 victory over Sartell.

Max Meyer, Woodbury Blue, struck out seven in seven innings in an 8-2 win over Princeton.



Hutch Honchos

Past American Legion Department Commanders Roger K. Olson and Don Pankake from Hutchinson came to Chanhassen to follow their team.

Game summaries for Day One

Game 1

Alexandria 500 110 000 7 12 5

New Ulm Gold 051 000 20X 8 9 6

Kuhn, Gessell (8) and Hammerback. Kluis, Batt (8), Knowles (9) and Kannegieser. WP Kluis, LP Kuhn. Save Knowles. Hitting ultimately decided this first-round game, however, neither team fielded flawlessly. There were a total of 11 errors in the game, almost equally divided. Judd Davis and Grant Kannegieser came up with key hits to help New Ulm Gold score two runs in the seventh inning. Davis had three hits for the winners. Grant Toivonen, Brayden Amundson, Travis Krueger and Casey Hammerback had two hits apiece for Alexandria.

Game 2

Sartell 000 000 000 0 2 1

Prior Lake 000 001 02X 3 8 0

Grohl and Dykhuizen. Larson and Keating. WP Larson, LP Grohl. Pitcher Jim Larson of Prior Lake dominated with a two-hitter as Prior Lake shut out Sartell 3-0 in a first-round ballgame at Chaska Athletic Park. Austin Grohl of Sartell matched Larson's complete game. Tommy Keating, Jakob Eitrem and Lucas Pumper each had two hits for Prior Lake. Keenan Lund and Isaac Damenn had the hits for Sartell.

Game 3

Grand Rapids 600 010 010 8 10 2

Eden Prairie 062 310 01X 13 14 5

Stram, Bachmann (5), Rajala (6) and Shepard. Swanson, Kaufman (8) and Safgren. WP Swanson, LP Safgren. Two hits and three RBIs by Joe Fahning lifted Eden Prairie over Grand Rapids 13-8 in a free-swinging tournament opener at Eden Prairie's Round Lake Stadium. Colton Simmer had three hits and two RBIs for the winners. Nick Johnson and Gunnar Harris had two hits apiece for Grand Rapids. The win raised Eden Prairie's season record to 32-6.

Game 4

Princeton 200 000 000 2 8 2

Woodbury Blue 100 102 22X 8 11 0

Hallbeck, Larson (7) and Archer. Meyer, Mundahl (8), Glunz (9) and Holte-Mancera. WP Meyer, LP Hallbeck. Woodbury Blue opened State Tournament play with a solid win at Eden Prairie's Round Lake Stadium. Starting pitcher Max Meyer struck out seven in seven innings. Lead-off batter Nick Yan was the catalyst for Woodbury Blue's offense with three hits. Jake Dickmeyer added three more hits for the winners. Tanner Kinney and Nick Zeroth each had two hits for Princeton.

Game 5

North St. Paul 000 300 300 6 12 3

Austin 000 100 06X 7 8 1

G. Varland and Foote. N. Gasner, Conner (7) and D. Gasner. WP Conner, LP G. Varland. Pitcher Gus Varland of North St. Paul had 15 strikeouts in a 7-6 loss to Austin in a first-round game at Edina's Braemar Park. When Austin did put the ball in play against him, there were some clutch hits. Austin scored six times in the bottom of the eighth, when Varland walked four and hit a batter. Dylan Gasner and Dan Bollingberg added hits in that big inning.

Game 6

Maple Grove 000 000 2 2 5 3

Tri-City Red 215 (13)23 X 26 17 3

Gaworski, Schmidt (5) and Meyer, Hronski (4), Horton, Marshall (2), Kmiec (4), Kivi (4), Vogl (6) and Lewis. WP Gaworski, LP Horton. Tri-City Red pounded out 17 hits for 26 runs in a 26-2 first-round victory over Maple Grove. Ben Mezzenga, Alec Abercrombie and Charlie Callahan led the onslaught with four RBIs each. Twins Nick and Bo Lovdahl each had three hits for the winners.

Game 7

Champlin Park 010 000 001 2 4 1

Hutchinson 002 101 200 6 12 6

McGill, Sedlezky (8) and Smith. Fleck, Kurth (9) and Arlt. WP Fleck, LP McGill. Jayden Fleck of Hutchinson pitched 8 2/3 innings to win the game for Hutchinson. Josiah Van De Stein sparked Hutch's offense with a single, a double and three runs scored. Noah Corrow added two hits for the winners.

Game 8

Wayzata 000 101 002 01 5 8 2

Chanhassen 001 010 020 00 4 7 2

Skoro, Marsh (8) and Olson. Bonk, Even (7) and Kressler. WP Marsh, LP Even. Home Runs: Goedderz (Wayzata), Mattson and Sampson (Chanhassen). Wayzata scored the go-ahead run on Connor Olson's fielder's choice ground out in the top of the 11th inning and held on to defeat the host team, Chanhassen, 5-4. Both teams exhibited power. Jack Mattson and Kevin Sampson hit home runs for Chan, while Cody Goedderz hit a home run for Wayzata. The key hit of the game for Wayzata was a two-run triple by Connor Trygstad that tied the score 4-4 in the top of the ninth.

Game summaries for Day One (Cont.)

Game 9

Sartell 000 000 0 0 5 2

Alexandria 012 023 2 10 15 0

Dammen, Rose (3), Rickers (5), Baggenstoss (6) and Dykhuizen. Drew and Hittle. WP Drew, LP Dammen.

Alexandria made quick work of Sartell, winning the losers' bracket game 10-0. Jake Drew pitched a five-hitter for Alexandria and teammates Danny Kuhn and Travis Krueger went three-for-four.

Game 10

Prior Lake 110 000 000 2 9 1

New Ulm 000 002 14X 7 9 1

Hanson and Keating. Peterson and Kannegieser. WP Peterson. LP Hanson.

New Ulm Gold's Wyatt Peterson pitched a complete game to beat Prior Lake 7-2 in a winners' bracket game. New Ulm was held scoreless for five innings, before piling up seven runs in the late innings to pull away.

Game 11

Grand Rapids 000 021 020 5 13 2

Princeton 201 100 20X 6 12 2

Johnson and Shepard. Kinney, Larson (8), Zeroth (9) and Archer. WP Kinney, LP Johnson.

Tanner Kinney was the winning pitcher for Princeton with late help from two relievers.

Nick Zeroth was three-for-four to lead Princeton's attack and Luke Hallbeck added two hits.

Game 12

Eden Prairie 300 200 453 19 24 5

Woodbury Blue 035 002 200 12 15 5

Dickmeyer, Mundahl (7), Glunz (9) and Holte-Mancera. Divinski, Larson (6), Sheehan (7) and Safgren. WP Larson, LP Mundahl.

Eden Prairie won a slugfest over Woodbury Blue Friday night at Eden Prairie's Round Lake Stadium. The two teams combined for 39 hits. Eden Prairie's leaders were Jeff Athey, who went five-for-five, and Wesley Young, who went five for six with six RBIs.

Ronnie Sweeny led Woodbury Blue with a two-run homer.

Game 13

Maple Grove 300 000 101 5 8 2

North St. Paul 530 500 00X 13 12 2

McMahon, Collins (4), Schulze (4) and Lewis. Lauzon, Keenan (7) and Foote, Baumann (7). WP Lauzon, LP McMahon.

Sam Farley and Gus Varland of North St. Paul drove in three runs each as their team jumped to a 13-3 lead after three innings.

Game 14

Tri-City Red 100 500 113 11 14 2

Austin 000 250 32X 12 11 1

Holloman, Gran (4), Callahan (6), Indlecoffer (8) and Meyer. Reinartz, Kemper (6), Conner (6), Bollingberg (8) and D. Gasner. WP Bollingberg, LP Callahan.

Tri-City Red's Alec Abercrombie went five-for-five, but it wasn't enough to lift his team past Austin, which won its second game of the day. Dylan Gasner had four RBIs for the winners.

Game 15

Champlin Park 101 010 00 3 6 2

Chanhassen 103 030 15 13 12 0

Duane, Schmidt (6) and Smith. Schnettler, Tirevold (8) and Pharis.

Chanhassen rebounded from its first-round loss to Wayzata by routing Champlin Park 13-3. Jack Schnettler was the winning pitcher. Zach Smith went three-for-three with two walks and scored four runs.

Game 16

Wayzata 402 130 2 12 11 0

Hutchinson 000 000 1 1 5 1

Broady and Olson. Baumetz, Theis (3) and Ross. WP Broady, LP Baumetz.

Wayzata jumped on Hutchinson early with a four-run first inning. After that Wayzata's 6-foot-6 right-hander Brendan Broady held Hutch in check until the 10-rule kicked in. Cam Keenan led Wayzata with a home run and a single and two RBIs. Connor Trygstad also had two hits for the winners.