

# The Gazette

AMERICAN LEGION

DIVISION I TOURNAMENT



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## Excelsior, Edina final unbeatens in tourney

And then there were six.

Excelsior walked off Tri-City Red 7-6 in the bottom of the seventh when Jarod Wandersee cracked a single off the mound and into center field to cap off of see-saw, hard fought game.

Excelsior took a 2-0 lead early, but Tri-City came back with three in the 4th and two more in the fifth to take a 5-2 lead. But Excelsior kept coming back, and trailed 6-5 going into the ninth setting up Wandersee's heroics.

Edina scored four in the second and held on to beat New Ulm 5-3 in the other winners' bracket game.

Lucas Flemming hit bases-clearing double to cap off the second inning.

Excelsior will now face Edina in the battle of the unbeatens on Saturday night at 6 p.m.

The winner of that game will advance to the championship game on Sunday and will automatically be one of Minnesota's two entrants into the regional tournament next week in Sioux Falls S.D.

In the losers' bracket, unheralded Buffalo won twice and will play New Ulm Gold at 12:20 p.m. Saturday. Woodbury also won twice and will play Tri-City at 10 a.m.

The winners will play each other at 3:30. All games are at Cold



Excelsior players chase down walk-off hitting hero Jarod Wandersee after his winning single in the bottom of the seventh

Spring Baseball Park.

In Division II play at Ely today, Wadena's Justin Dykoff pitched a no-hitter to defeat BOLD 2-0. Plato beat Breckenridge 4-3 and Caledonia topped Luverne 5-3. DGF defeated host Ely 9-0 in the final game, delayed by lightning.

## South Hennepin rivals in winners' bracket final

By John Sherman

South Hennepin rivals Edina and Excelsior will meet at 6 p.m. Saturday in the State Tournament winners' bracket final in Cold Spring.

Edina slipped past New Ulm Gold 5-3, while Excelsior scored twice in the bottom of the seventh to beat defending state champ Tri-City Red 7-6.

Drew Bishop, Edina's winning pitcher, said, "There isn't an easy out in New Ulm Gold's lineup, I'll tell you that. In the last inning I pitched to their 2-

3-4 hitters who are really tough."

Bishop threw a lot of four-seam fastballs to right-handed hitters and got some key outs against left-handed hitters with his two-seamer. He mixed in a handful of changeups and sliders.

Edina catcher Evan Brown said, "Drew always bears down and gets the job done, and tonight he was good at damage control.

Brown contributed offense.  
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Edina 6-7 righthander Drew Bishop brings the heat in Edina's 5-3 victory over New Ulm Gold Friday night at Cold Spring.

Lastest scores, stats, updates: Go to [legionbaseballhub.com](http://legionbaseballhub.com)

# Solfest makes history with tourney no-hitter

By John Sherman

No-hitters in the State Division I American Legion Baseball Tournament are rarer than most fans realize.

Waseca coaching legend Tink Larson, a man who keeps track of such things, thought that John Solfest's no-hitter in Tri-City's 1-0 win over Austin Thursday is only the fourth State Legion no-hitter since 1975.

Solfest was surprised to hear that.

"Austin put some good swings on the ball," he said. "As long as I mix speeds, I can usually keep hitters off-balance."

Solfest, the MVP of last year's State Legion Tournament, struck out 12 Austin hitters. In the 2018 State Tournament, he pitched a similar game, tossing a one-hitter to beat Edina 2-0.

"That is my high for strikeouts this season," he noted. "I had a couple other games with 11."

This is Solfest's third year with Tri-City Red and his third State Tournament appearance.

"Two years ago, I was mainly a pitcher," he said. "Then last year, I had a bigger role on the team."

Between baseball and



John Solfest

hockey, Solfest said he has played in seven or eight state tournaments.

"The guys on our team are all good friends, and we're having a blast this year," he said. "Everyone on the team knows his role."

Tri-City Red is bidding for a third consecutive state Division I title. The boys won in 2017, when they hosted state at CHS Field in St. Paul. In 2018, they repeated at Edina. Threepeats in State Legion are just as rare as no-hitters.

"John has been lights-out all year," Tri-City head coach Nik Anderson said. "This is his second no-hitter of the year. One of John's strengths is the way he keeps hitters guessing. We give him the ball and watch him put on a show."

# Seven-inning games make days shorter

By John Sherman

Long days at the ballpark have become shorter at the 2019 State American Legion Tournament, thanks to a rules amendment that allows Legion to play seven innings instead of nine. Effective this year, Legion Tournament games will be seven innings at the State, Regional and World Series levels.

The first day of the tournament, Aug. 1 reflected the impact of seven-inning games.

"I realized last night that we were going to be done by 8:30 instead of 10:30," said District 6 American Legion Baseball Director Wes Thompson of Sartell. "I think it's great we made the change. Everybody likes it better. Shortening the games makes it easier when you're playing four games a day."

Thompson added, "With a 105-pitch limit and nine innings, you don't see many complete games. With seven innings, the chances are much better one pitcher can go the full game."

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Baseball Vice Director Mike Gort of Marshall said, "Seven inning games make it easier to keep the tournament on schedule. The coaches like seven innings better because it saves on pitching. It's a better deal all-around."

District 4 American Legion Baseball Director Gail Kalata of St. Paul said, "I prefer seven-inning games because we're coupling with pitch limits, which make it difficult to get through a tournament like this. Another benefit is having shorter days. If there are rainouts or other weather considerations, it is easier to make adjustments."

Lastly, Kalata said, "Seven inning games make a shorter day for volunteers, the host committee staff and the State American Legion Baseball representatives."

Wes Thompson concurred. Instead of spending 14 hours at the park the first day of the State Tournament, he finished his duties at the ballpark in just under 12 hours.

## \*\*\*Stars of the Day\*\*\*

**Jackson Hauge** of Anoka hit a three-run home run in the top of the second inning during an 11-1 win over Minneapolis Southwest Friday morning at Paynesville.

**Luke Paulson** hit an RBI triple during Woodbury Blue's 4-2 victory over St. Cloud Chutes Friday morning at Cold Spring Baseball Park. Later in the day, he had two doubles in a 4-2 win over Anoka.

**Joey Maurer** of Woodbury Blue went two-for-four with an RBI and a run scored in a 4-2 win over St. Cloud Chutes.

**Noah Christenson** of Buffalo pitched a complete game, allowing six hits and striking out four in a 2-1 win over Eastview at Paynesville Friday afternoon.

**Joseph Vos** went two-for-two with a triple and a single in Duluth Lakeview's 5-4 win over Ham Lake at Cold Spring Baseball Park Friday afternoon.

**Andrew Grindahl** hit a triple for two RBIs as Duluth Lakeview eliminated Ham Lake 5-4 Friday afternoon in Cold Spring.

**Drew Bishop**, Edina's 6-foot-7 righthander, was in control in a 5-3 win over New Ulm Gold in the winners' bracket semifinals at Cold Spring. He had five strikeouts and allowed eight hits.

**Lucas Flemming** hit a three-run double in Edina's 5-3 victory over New Ulm Gold.

**Jared Wandersee** had the game-winning RBI with a two-out single in the bottom of the seventh as Excelsior topped Tri-City Red 7-6 in a winners' bracket semifinal game in Cold Spring.

**Christopher Knowles** of New Ulm Gold had two hits and two RBIs in a 5-3 loss to Edina Friday night.

**Calvin James** of Buffalo went two-for-three and drove in two runs in an 8-1 victory over Duluth Lakeview Friday night in Paynesville.

**Evan Soeffker** pitched a complete game, allowing only four hits, in Buffalo's 8-1 victory over Duluth Lakeview.

# Stats for the first two days

## Average

Calvin James	Buffalo	.625
Nicholas Thimsen	Excelsior	.600
Johnathan Bunce	Edina	.571
John Solfest	Tri-City Red	.571
Hunter Ranweiler	New Ulm Gold	.500
Caden Espinada	Eastview Thun-	.500
Joseph Vos	Lakeview	.500
Damien Biegert	Buffalo	.500
Sam Malec	Woodbury Blue	.462
Chrisopher Knowles	New Ulm Gold	.455
Wilson Wilson	Ham Lake	.455

## OPS

Calvin James	Buffalo	1.750
Joseph Vos	Lakeview	1.645
John Solfest	Tri-City Red	1.442
John Hanson	Excelsior	1.434
Jackson Hauge	Anoka	1.371
William Sturek	Excelsior	1.295
Damien Biegert	Buffalo	1.292
Evan Glunz	Woodbury Blue	1.205
Hunter Ranweiler	New Ulm Gold	1.183
Jack Puder	Ham Lake	1.139

## Hits

Name	Team	Hits
Nicholas Thimsen	Excelsior	6
Sam Malec	Woodbury Blue	6
Chrisopher Knowles	New Ulm Gold	5
Hunter Ranweiler	New Ulm Gold	5
Adam Mazur	Woodbury Blue	5
Dylan Wilson	Ham Lake	5
Joseph Vos	Lakeview	5
Calvin James	Buffalo	5

## RBI

Chrisopher Knowles	New Ulm Gold	6
Lucas Fleming	Edina	5
Nicholas Thimsen	Excelsior	5
Isaac Mezzenga	Tri-City Red	5
Johnathan Bunce	Edina	4
John Hanson	Excelsior	4
Michael Sturek	Excelsior	4
Hunter Wehling	Excelsior	4
Andrew Grindahl	Lakeview	4
Jackson Hauge	Anoka	4
Bryant Peeler	Buffalo	4

## Home runs

Nicholas Thimsen	Excelsior	2
Johnathan Bunce	Edina	1
John Hanson	Excelsior	1
Hunter Wehling	Excelsior	1
Evan Glunz	Woodbury Blue	1
Adam Mazur	Woodbury Blue	1
Kyle William	Eastview Thunder	1
Joseph Vos	Lakeview	1
Christopher Sampson	Lakeview	1
Jackson Hauge	Anoka	1
Earl Michael	Mpls SW Lakers	1
Jackson Trousil	East Grand Forks	1
Calvin James	Buffalo	1

## Strikeouts

John Solfest	Tri-City Red	12
Adam Mazur	Woodbury Blue	10
Jaxon Edwards	Lakeview	10
Lucas Fleming	Edina	8
Michael Sturek	Excelsior	8
Michael O'Connor	Austin	7
Dallas Carey	Ham Lake	7
Cam Kramer	Anoka	7

## Innings pitched

Cam Kramer	Anoka	9 2/3
Quinn Kruger	Woodbury Blue	8
Aaron Portne	New Ulm Gold	7
Tanner Hopkins	Edina	7
Drew Bishop	Edina	7
John Solfest	Tri-City Red	7
Dallas Carey	Ham Lake	7
Evan Soeffker	Buffalo	7
Noah Christenson	Buffalo	7
Rudy Notch	Cold Spring	7

## WHIP

Tri-City Red	John Solfest	0.286
New Ulm Gold	Aaron Portner	0.571
Buffalo	Evan Soeffker	0.714
Ham Lake	Matthew Richmond	0.750
Austin	Michael O'Connor	0.833
Lakeview	Jaxon Edwards	0.833
Edina	Tanner Hopkins	0.857
Ham Lake	Dallas Carey	0.857

# Complete summaries for Friday

## GAME 17

ANOKA 240 23 11 3 1  
MPLS. SOUTHWEST 100 00 1 1 5

WP Barker, LP Vallone, HR Hauge, Anoka, 2B Lake, Anoka.

Anoka got mileage out of Jackson Hauge's three-run homer in an 11-1 victory over Minneapolis Southwest at Paynesville. Although Anoka had only three hits, it was a productive offensive game, thanks to walks and five Southwest errors. Anoka improved to 33-6 with the win.

## GAME 18

WOODBURY BLUE 002 020 0 4 6 2  
ST. CLOUD CHUTES 000 001 1 2 3 2

WP Malec, LP Schneider, 3B Paulson, Woodbury Blue, 2B Glunz, Woodbury Blue, Maurer, Woodbury Blue.

In an elimination game Friday morning at Cold Spring Baseball Park, Woodbury Blue took down St. Cloud Chutes 4-2. Extra-base hits helped give Woodbury the edge, with Luke Paulson hitting a triple and Evan Glunz and Joey Maurer adding doubles. Sam Malec was the winning pitcher and Maurer recorded the save. Sam Schneider of Chutes limited Woodbury to six hits in five innings in the loss.

## GAME 19

EASTVIEW 000 000 1 1 6 1  
BUFFALO 000 001 1 2 7 0

WP Christenson, LP Decker, 2B Owen Dauk, Eastview.

Buffalo scored the winning run in the bottom of the seventh inning to eliminate Eastview 2-1. Winning pitcher Noah Christenson allowed six hits in seven innings, while mound opponent Kathan Decker scattered seven hits. Ethan Hansen led Buffalo with a two-for-four performance.

## GAME 20

DULUTH LAKEVIEW 003 200 0 5 7 2  
HAM LAKE 001 020 1 4 8 1

WP Edwards, LP Robinson, 3B Grindahl, Duluth Lakeview, Vos, Duluth Lakeview. 2B Wilson, Ham Lake, Edwards, Duluth Lakeview.

The Tropics of Lakeview had two hits each from Tyler Wapola and Joseph Vos in an exciting 5-4 win over Ham Lake. Starting pitcher Caden Edwards went four and 1/3 innings to record the win for Lakeview. Kyle Doup came on in the seventh inning for the save. Patrick Perreault and Dylan Wilson had two hits each for Ham Lake.

## GAME 21

WOODBURY BLUE 100 012 0 4 7 1  
ANOKA 000 000 2 2 3 2

WP Krueger, LP Kramer, 2B Hauge, Anoka, Paulson, Woodbury Blue (2).

Woodbury Blue sent Anoka home 4-2 in a game played Friday afternoon in Paynesville. Pitcher Quinn Krueger had four strikeouts in pitching a three-hitter for Woodbury Blue. Luke Paulson sparked Woodbury Blues offense with two doubles.

## GAME 22

DULUTH LAKEVIEW 001 000 0 1 4 2  
BUFFALO 010 002X 8 10 0

WP Evan Soeffker, LP Zeman, 2B Ethan Soeffker, Buffalo, Buscher, Buffalo.

Calvin James led Buffalo's offense with a two-for-three performance and two RBIs. Braynt Peeler added two hits for the winners, who got four-hit pitching from Evan Soeffker.

## GAME 23

TRI-CITY RED 000 321 0 6 11 2  
EXCELSIOR 011 021 2 7 10 1

WP Will Sturek, LP Stenstrom, 2B Ike Mezzenga, Tri-City Red, Jack Hanson, Excelsior, Nick Thimsen, Excelsior.

A single by shortstop Jarod Wandersee in the bottom of the seventh gave top-ranked Excelsior its 50th win of the season, 7-6, over Tri-City Red. Wandersee, Thimsen, Hanson and Hunter Wehling each had two hits for the winners. Mezzenga, Robert Hogan and Carter Traczyk had two hits each for Tri-City Red.

## GAME 24

NEW ULM GOLD 200 010 0 3 6 1  
EDINA 140 000 X 5 8 0

WP Bishop, LP Marotz, 2B Bunce, Edina, Flemming, Edina, Teagan Kamm, New Ulm Gold, Hunter Ranweiler, New Ulm Gold.

## South Hennepin rivalry spills over into Legion tournament

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sively with what he described as "two lazy singles and a line-out."

Excelsior captain Jarod Wandersee was the right man at the right time in delivering the

key hit against Tr-City Red.

"Jarod is our heart and soul," said Excelsior head coach Rob Hager. "He's such a clutch player. I knew in that situation he would put the ball in play."

The game-winning hit with

bases loaded was a sharp grounder up the middle that eluded a diving Tri-City Red shortstop, John Solfest.

"It was a crazy back-and-forth fight," Coach Hager said.

Wandersee said. "My team-

mates did a great job in the last inning, laying down two great bunts. I loved watching them execute, they put me in that situation."