

## **‘Everyday Porten’ lifts Red out of losers’ bracket**

### **Team advances to district championship game for 10th time in 11 seasons**

By Greg Schmidt

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After a frustrating loss to Hamline the night before, Tri-City Red turned to Brandon “Everyday” Porten and he delivered yet another clutch, not to mention outstanding performance July 28 in a 9-5 win over host North St. Paul in the losers’ bracket final to keep the Red’s state tourney hopes alive for another day.

“I know I can’t overpower anybody so I just try and throw strikes and put the defense to work. Added manager Jeff Larsen: “That’s Port’s style — making the defense work. We needed that and it was just like [pitcher Joe Colwell’s] job last night . . . Two kids that didn’t pitch much in high school and they come out and pitch strikes and use the defense and they played hard. You can’t ask for anymore than that.”

The only item in question was whether or not the Red could provide some offense or at least a bit more than the paltry hit total the Red managed against Hamline.

After a scoreless first that stretched the team’s hitless streak to eight innings, the Red erased a 1-0 second inning score with three in the bottom of the frame on back-to-back doubles by Joe Colwell (1 for 4, 2B, 2-RBI) and Bjorn Anderson (1 for 3, 2B, HBP, RBI).

Tri-City stumbled a bit defensively in the top of the third with two additional errors to bring the game even at 3-3, but once again the Red stormed right back with another scoring trifecta on consecutive run-scoring singles by Blake Searles (2 for 4, BB, RBI), Erik Anderson (2 for 4, BB, RBI) and Chase Traeger (1 for 4, RBI).

After registering their lowest hit total of the season in the Hamline loss, the Red returned to double digits led by Brady Field (3 for 4, BB, 2B, RBI).

It was the fourth win in as many meetings for the Red (30-9) against North St. Paul (24-21). Not including Hamline, the Red has a 19-0 overall record in the Fourth District. The Red and Hamline have alternated victories in their four tilts. However, on championship Saturday Tri-City must defeat Hamline two times in-a-row or the 2006 season will cease to exist. “It’ll be good to get another shot at those guys,” said Porten.

Added Gazich: “Hamline is bringing more college players than any other team we’ve played, but we know that we have more depth at pitching and hitting. If we bring our bats, we’ll be fine.”

The stats agree: Red pitching has been dominant against Hamline this summer. In the four meetings, Hamline has scored only nine runs. Said Larsen: “We just got to hit the ball.”

**Fourth District losers' bracket final, July 28, 200t**  
**Tri-City Red 9, North St. Paul 5 (Game 39)**

NSP	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	—	5	9	3
TCR	0	3	3	0	0	1	0	2	x	—	9	12	4

Hubbard, Holmberg (2) and Adams; Porten, Rosin (9) and Field. W-Porten (6-1). L-Holmberg (8-2).