

## **BLUE RAIDERS SPORTS REPORT WEEK OF MAY 3 TO 8**

**BY LARRY ETTER**

Wins, losses and postponements again highlighted the past week of varsity action for the Middletown Area High School varsity softball and baseball teams.

### **SOFTBALL**

#### **Middletown 10, East Pennsboro 7**

The big news of the week came on Monday when the Lady Raiders traveled to Enola and promptly handed the host Panthers their first loss of the season. Entering the game, the Lady Panthers owned a perfect 9-0 record and, rightfully so, were heavily favored against the visiting Blue Raiders. But Mike Thomas's determined squad surprised everyone by claiming the 10-7 victory.

The Raiders collected 10 runs on 12 hits on offense and turned in a perfect, errorless effort on defense to key the win. Middletown scored 2 runs in the second inning, 2 in the third and 4 more in the fourth to take a shocking 8-0 lead before the hosts scored their first run in the bottom of the fifth. The Raiders plated two more runs in the top of the sixth stanza to climb to a 10-1 advantage. East Pennsboro did manage to make a charge in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> by scoring 6 runs, but that was all the Panthers would get and the Raiders held on for the big victory.

Christine Miller went the distance in the pitcher's circle for the winners, going 7 full innings while recording 5 strikeouts and yielding 5 walks against the 10 hits she allowed. East Pennsboro's Jackie Capers had 9 strikeouts and 4 walks while giving up 12 hits in the loss. Cam Martinez got the scoring started in the second inning with an RBI single. Sara Dintiman, Miller and Chloe Kahler had RBI hits in the fourth frame.

Carly Dupes went 3 for 5 at the plate with a double and triple and a run batted in, Dintiman had a double for an RBI on her one hit and scored a run. Martinez and Kahler each had 2 RBIs for the Raiders who also got an RBI from Serena Gurm. Miller scored three runs for the winners while Dupes, Dintiman, Luvi Balliet, Jen Alford, Martinez and Gurm also scored in the game.

#### **Donegal 17, Middletown 12**

On Thursday, the Lady Raiders ventured into Lancaster County to take on the Donegal Indians and the game turned into a real slugfest. The two teams combined

for 29 runs on 35 hits as pitching on both sides struggled. The Blue Raiders scored 12 runs on 19 hits while the Indians collected 17 runs on 16 hits in the inter-league contest.

The Raiders scored 3 runs in the top of the first inning, but the Indians answered with 7 of their own to take the lead. At the end of two innings the host team led 11-4 and, after three innings, the lead stood at 14-5. The Raiders kept hitting, however, and plated four runs in the top of the fifth to stay in contention. But Donegal kept hitting as well and led 17-9 after six complete. The Middletown side struck for 3 runs in the top of the seventh but could not keep the rally going as the Indians held on for the win.

Among all of the hits for the Middletown squad, Dupes, Dintiman and Balliet each smashed home run balls. Balliet homered in the first inning, and Dupes and Dintiman hit round trippers in the 4-run fifth. Dupes also ripped a pair of doubles in the game. Dupes led the way with 4 RBIs, Balliet and Alford each had two and Dintiman, Kahler, Gurm and Mehliia Rinesmith each had one.

Alford pitched 2.1 innings and was relieved by Miller in the third. Miller yielded 5 earned runs on six hits.

## **BASEBALL**

### **East Pennsboro 14, Middletown 5**

There was some real excitement flowing through the Middletown dugout on Monday after the Blue Raiders jumped out to a 5-1 lead over unbeaten East Pennsboro in the game's second inning. The excitement and dreams of a major upset were still alive at the end of the fourth inning as the Blue Raiders led the Panthers 5-3.

But East Pennsboro showed why its unbeaten record was no joke. With a 5-run fifth inning to take the lead and another 6 runs scored in the top of the 7<sup>th</sup>, the Panthers ran away with their 12<sup>th</sup> win of the season and dashed all those upset hopes emanating from the home team.

The Panthers scored one run in the top of the first inning for the early lead and held the Raiders scoreless in the home half. Starting Middletown pitcher A. J. Stains had a 1-2-3 inning in the second to keep the visitors from adding runs. For the Raiders Cam Wegert led off the bottom of the second with a walk and went to third on a double to left by designated hitter Jayden Benner. With one out Nick Crognale

walked to load the bases. Tyson Leach followed with an incredible at-bats against East Penn lefty Brady Swenson, fouling off 8 pitches while working a full count. The 12<sup>th</sup> pitch was also a ball that forced in Wegert from third. With the bases still loaded Ryan Souders ripped a single up the middle scoring two more runs. With two outs Tim Wagner beat out an infield single that drove in the fourth run and Souders then scored on a passed ball for run number 5 before the inning ended on a groundout.

The Panthers led off the third with a triple, and a fielding error, followed by a sacrifice fly drove in a run. Leach replaced Stains on the mound with one out and yielded an RBI single before ending it with his team holding onto a 5-3 lead. That score remained unchanged until the top of the fifth after the Raiders left two runners on base in the bottoms of the third and fourth. In the top of the fifth a walk, a double, a hit batsman, a single and a pair of sacrifice flies scored 3 runs, Later a wild pitch and an RBI double by Aiden Fickes plated two more as the Panthers jumped ahead 8-5.

Five East Pennsboro hits, a trio of Middletown errors and a couple walks resulted in 6 more Panther runs in the top of the seventh that put the game out of reach. Braelen Huber's double with one out, followed by Benner getting hit by a pitch, put two runners on base in the home half but both were left stranded and the Panthers claimed yet another win.

### **Kennard-Dale 12, Middletown 6**

On Thursday, visiting Kennard-Dale from York County jumped out to a 4-0 lead on a grand slam homer by Jason Williams in the first inning and added three more runs in the top of the second for a 7-1 lead that put the Blue Raiders into an early hole. The Raiders scored one run in the bottom of the second on an RBI single by Souders and added 3 more in the bottom of the fourth to get into a better frame of mind.

In the fourth Caden Paul and Leach led off with a pair of singles and both scored on a clean double to left by Gavin Hickoff. An error then allowed Hickoff to score the third run as the home team made it a 7-5 game. But the Rams plated three runs in the top of the fifth on a bases-clearing double by Koy Swanson.

Down 10-5 the Raiders picked up single run in the home half on an error that allowed Paul to score. But the Rams scored twice more in the top of the seventh and the Blue Raiders came up empty in the bottom as Kennard-Dale secured the 12-6 win.