

BLUE RAIDERS SPORTS REPORT WEEK OF MAY 10 TO 15

BY LARRY ETTER

The spring sports seasons have dwindled down to just a couple games as the Blue Raiders softball and baseball teams are looking to finish up their schedules this week. Other than a shutout victory over Steelton-Highspire for the boys' team on Monday, the Raider athletes had a rough week.

Following their win on Monday against the visiting Rollers the boys dropped a pair of close games to Trinity and Susquenita later in the week. For the girls there were just two games played and the Lady Raiders, too, came up short in contests at Trinity and West Perry. The girls' softball team had a chance to possibly make the post-season playoffs but those losses hurt in the district standings.

SOFTBALL

Trinity 9, Middletown 5

On Wednesday, May 12 the Lady Raiders came up on the short end of a 9-5 score against host Trinity, a team that is listed in first place in the District 3, AAA rankings. The Blue Raiders fell behind by a 5-0 score after three innings but scored two runs in the top of the fifth and one in the top of the sixth to make it a 5-3 game. The Shamrocks, however, collected 4 runs in the bottom of the sixth, keyed by a pair of homeruns, to forge ahead 9-3. The Raiders tried to rally in the top of the seventh and did pick up two runs but would get no more.

The Raiders scored their 5 runs on just 3 hits while taking advantage of a number of errors by the host Shamrocks. The Middletown defense turned in a flawless effort in the field with no errors in the loss. Jenna Alford, Cam Martinez and Luvi Balliet had the hits for the Raiders. Christine Miller pitched 6 innings and struck out 3, but gave up 10 hits in the loss. In the fifth inning Balliet singled with one out, Miller drew a base on balls and both scored on a passed ball.

In the sixth inning Chloe Kahler walked, Serena Gurm was safe on an error and Martinez singled to knock in Kahler for the Raiders' third run. Down 9-3 to start the 7th inning the Raiders tried to rally. With one out, Alford was safe on an error, advanced to third on another Trinity error and scored on a ground out RBI by Mehliia Rinesmith. With two outs Kahler was safe on another Shamrock miscue.

After advancing to second on a passed ball, Kahler scored the final run on yet another Trinity error.

West Perry 9, Middletown 8

At West Perry on Saturday the Lady Raiders rallied for 6 runs in the top of the seventh inning to give the host Mustangs a scare, but the rally ended just short in the 9-8 loss. After falling behind their hosts 9-2 after six innings the Raiders fought back with a strong finish, but it was not quite enough to pull out a win.

The Raiders scored a single run in the top of the second inning after West Perry had taken a 3-0 lead at the end of one. Balliet scored on a sacrifice fly by Alford for the run. The Lady Mustangs scored 4 runs in the bottom of the third for a 7-1 lead and added two more in the home half of the sixth to go up by a 9-2 count. In the top of the seventh Rinesmith led off with a single, Quinn Dworchak also singled and Delayni Landis was safe on an error that allowed Rinesmith to score.

With two outs Balliet was safe on an error that allowed another Middletown run to cross the plate. With the bases loaded Miller drove a long ball to left that cleared the fence for a bases clearing home run that pulled the visitors to within a run, 9-8. But a ground out ended the rally and the game allowing West Perry to hang on for the win.

BASEBALL

Middletown 18, Steelton-Highspire 0

Mike Tuffy started it, and A. J. Stains finished. The pair of pitchers collectively threw a no-hitter at Steelton-Highspire on Monday, May 10 as the Blue Raiders shut out the host Rollers 18-0. Tuffy went three innings and gave up just one walk and Stains had a 1-2-3 inning in the fourth in the short game at the Rollers' home field.

On the offensive side the Blue Raiders pounded out six hits and took advantage of 13 walks by a pair of Roller pitchers and several errors in the victory. And it started right from the top of the first inning when the Raiders scored 6 runs. With one out Ryan Souders and Gavin Hickoff walked. With two outs Jonah Troup doubled to left to knock in two runs. Two more walks to Jayden Benner and Caden Sweeney were rewarded on a 2-run single by Caden Paul. Paul scored on an error and Tyson Leach scored on a passed ball to put the Raiders up 6-0.

In the top of the second Hickoff walked, Tim Wagner was hit by a pitch and both scored on a double to right by Troup. Down 8-0 in the home half of the second the Rollers put their only runner of the game on base via a base on balls with one out. But Tuffy induced a foul out and struck out Taevon Legrande to keep the Rollers from scoring. The Blue Raiders added one run in the top of the third on an RBI single by Leach and put the game out of reach by scoring 9 runs in the top of the fourth for an 18-0 lead. Stains sat down the Rollers in order to end it early.

Trinity 8, Middletown 7

The visiting Shamrocks got off to a strong start on Wednesday at Middletown and held off a late charge by the Blue Raiders to claim their 8-7 win. After scoring one run in the first inning, four in the second and one in the third the visitors had what appeared to be a comfortable 6-0 lead. But the Blue Raiders finally got their bats going and plated six runs in the bottom of the third to tie the score and keep the game in doubt until the end.

In the home half of the third Sweeney led off with a single, Leach followed with a single to left and Souders walked to load the bases against Trinity starter Ethan Pfeffer. With one out Wagner drew a walk that forced in one run and another base on balls to Troup forced in a second one. With two outs Paul ripped a double to deep left to clear the bases and the home team now trailed 6-5. Next man up was Max Dupes who doubled to left to tie the score at 6-6.

The Shamrocks picked up the tie breaker on a sac fly in the top of the fourth, but the Raiders again knotted the score in the home half. With two outs following a leadoff single by Leach against new pitcher Ryan Ness, Wagner walked and Troup beat out a play at first for an infield single that loaded the bases. The tying run came in when Jayden Benner was hit by a pitch to force in the run.

In the top of the sixth Trinity scored on an RBI single by Josh McCombs. The Raiders left one man on base in the home half. Troup, who had taken over on the hill in the fifth sat down the Shamrocks in order in the top of the seventh and the Raiders had a chance, down by one. But Trinity relief pitcher Maika Niu induced a ground out and struck out the last two batters to save the game for the visitors.

Susquenita 9, Middletown 7

The Blue Raiders traveled to Susquenita on Saturday for a non-league contest and fell to the Blackhawks 9-7. The Raiders had jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the top of the second inning and stretched their advantage to 6-1 heading into the bottom of

the fourth. The Blackhawks scored two runs in the bottom of the frame and three more in the home half of the fifth to tie the score at 6-6. A single run by the Raiders in the top of the sixth gave the Middletown squad a 7-6 lead, but the hosts collected three more runs in the bottom to ease ahead 9-7. From that point on the Raiders came up empty in the top of the seventh and suffered the close defeat.

In the game Souders had two hits, Hickoff had 3 RBIs and Stains reached base twice on walks. Hickoff pitched 5 full innings and struck out 5 in the loss. The loss dropped the Middletown squad to an overall 5-13 record.