

Aggressive Bulldogs Win Cal Ripken Regional

BY KEITH A. BROCKBERG
P&D Correspondent

The Sikeston Bulldogs out of Missouri used an aggressive approach on the base-paths to set up their bats as they won the Cal Ripken U9 Midwest Regional Tournament Championship held on Yankton Sertoma's 1st Dakota Field. The Bulldogs beat the Rattlers of Cimarron River, Kansas.

"We wanted to put pressure on them and see what kind of arms they had," said Sikeston coach Vince Howard of the Bulldog strategy. "Once everybody figured out what we were doing, I took the gloves off and told them to just swing it."

The Bulldogs' Malcolm Howard laid down a bunt to open the game and scored on the play as Cimarron River couldn't keep the throws ahead of Howard.

That play applied the pressure and opened the door for 13 more hits for the Bulldog offense.

Sikeston added three more runs in the top half of the first as Clark Steward did his job in the cleanup spot with a 2-RBI single and Bryant Avery added an RBI single. Preston Alexander also singled in the inning.

The Rattlers bounced back with a pair of runs in the home-half of the first as Brody Sumner led off with a single and scored on an RBI groundout from Rodney Pando. Braxton Hyde singled and scored on an RBI double from Syris Dunlap.

The Rattlers had some momentum in the second as Hunter

Hatcher made a great catch at second base to rob Harrison Moore of a hit.

However, Howard led off the inning with a walk and again worked himself around the bases to score Sikeston's fifth run.

Seth Spraggs settled in on the Sikeston mound to shut down Cimarron River in the second and third innings while benefitting from three more Bulldog runs in the third for an 8-2 lead.

Avery and Sam Bledsoe had singles and Kaden Wilburn drove in Avery with an RBI single. Trace Wheelley brought in Bledsoe with a perfectly-placed suicide-squeeze bunt, and Wilburn eventually scored in the inning as well.

The Rattlers and starter Braxton Hyde finally kept Sikeston off the board in the fourth, but the Bulldogs went to Malcolm Howard to relieve Spraggs.

Howard struck out five batters in the fourth and fifth innings, including the side in the fifth inning.

The Bulldogs added six more runs in the fifth and sixth innings as Wilburn had a 2-RBI single in the fifth. Steward tacked on an RBI double in the sixth and Avery had an RBI double in the inning.

Moore and Avery each pitched in the sixth to finish off the 14-2 Sikeston win.

Avery was 4-4 with three singles, a double and an RBI.

"He hadn't hit the ball like that yet, but I gave him a game ball

RIPKEN | PAGE 8



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Brynt Avery of the Sikeston Bulldogs jumps over Simeron River second baseman Hunter Hatcher during the first inning of their championship game in the Cal Ripken Midwest Plains Regional U-9 Baseball Tournament, Sunday at Yankton's Sertoma Park.

Tappers Advance To State Tourney With 2-0 Shutout

MITCHELL — Mike Thunker pitched seven innings of two-hit ball as the Yankton Tappers advanced to the State Class A Amateur Baseball Tournament with a 2-0 shutout of the Vermillion Red Sox on Sunday afternoon in Mitchell.

Rand Thygeson allowed one hit in two innings of scoreless relief for Yankton, which was playing with just nine available players.

The Tappers scored one run an error and another on RBI from Mathias Godsil. Andy Turbak also doubled in the win.

Yankton will face Brandon Valley in the first round of state next Saturday at 5 p.m. in Pierre.

Neb. Class C Seniors

CREIGHTON, Neb. — Ty Uhing's first-inning grand slam helped Hartington eliminate host Creighton 7-3 in losers bracket action Sunday afternoon at the Nebraska Class C Senior Legion State Tournament in Creighton, Neb.

Aaron Steffen went the distance on the mound for Hartington as he limited Creighton to five hits.

Becker Wetzler doubled for Creighton and Klay Fuchtmann got the loss.

Hartington will play Shelby-Osceola-Stromsburg today (Monday) at 2 p.m. in an elimination game.

PENDER 4, S.O.S. 1: Eric Browning struck out 18 batters in a three-hitter as Pender defeated Shelby-Osceola-Stromsburg on Sunday evening.

Anthony Bonneau and Jalen Flock doubled for Pender, which scored three runs in the top of the sixth.

DAVID CITY 8, ADAMS/STERLING 5: Back-to-back RBI hits from Jordan Vavrina and Michael Buresh in the seventh inning sent David City past Adams/Sterling 8-5 in Sunday's losers bracket contest.

Adams/Sterling pitcher Colin VanGronigen was perfect through four innings until David City broke through with five runs in the top of the fifth. The game was then tied at 5-5 entering the seventh inning.

Grant Moravec got the win for David City, while Jimmy Seward got the loss for A/S.

Saturday

ALMA 3, CREIGHTON 1: Max Boehler tossed a two-hitter and struck out 10 Creighton batters in Saturday night's first-round victory.

Alma turned four walks, a hit batter and an error into two runs to break a 1-1 tie in the fifth inning.

Teran Boyer took the loss for Creighton.

MOUNT MICHAEL 11, HARTINGTON 0: Jake Rayterkuf threw a one-hit shutout, facing just two batters over the minimum, in Saturday's five-inning win.

Rayterkuf also doubled twice and had five RBI. Mitchell Bruening got the loss on the mound for Hartington.

PENDER 11, ADAMS/STERLING 3: Zach Johnson hit a three-run homer as part of Pender's five-run top of the first inning on Saturday.

Jalen Flock got the win for Pender, while Jordan Pella took the loss for Adams/Sterling.

S.O.S. 6, DAVID CITY 5: Mitch Walkup's RBI single in the bottom of the eighth inning sent Shelby-Osceola-Stromsburg past David City in Saturday's first-round matchup.

Darin Wright got the win for SOS, while Michael Buresh took the loss for David City, which had two home runs in the game.

VFW Teener

Class B 13-14

SCOTLAND — Flandreau's Michael Nelson pitched a five-inning no-hitter to lead his team to the championship over Gregory in the S.D. State Class B 13-14 VFW Teener Tournament on Sunday in Scotland.

Jim Parsley and Ted Slattery added two hits apiece in the victory.

THIRD: HUMBOLDT 8, MOUNT VERNON 7: Dylan Masterson had three hits and Jonathan Rectenbaugh picked up the victory for Humboldt in Sunday's third-place game of the Class B state tournament.

Bryce Erickson took the loss for Mount Vernon, which got two hits apiece from Tate Diner and Jonathan Linke.

FIFTH: GARRETSON 8, SCOTLAND 3: Matt Johnson had a pair of hits and Cole Fiegan got the victory for Garretson in Sunday's fifth-place game win over host Scotland.

Josh Vaith took the loss for Scotland, which got doubles from Shaye Bloch, Alex Kotalik and Austin Fischer.

Baseball: Vanacek Leads Tabor To District Title

BY KEITH A. BROCKBERG
P&D Correspondent

LESTERVILLE — The Tabor Bluebirds scored five runs in the seventh inning and got an MVP performance from American Legion player Doug Vanacek to win the District 6B amateur baseball title with an 8-5 win over the Wynot Expos Saturday night in Lesterville.

The Expos had led 4-1 and 5-3 before the Bluebirds were able to put Wynot starter Seth Doxey on ice and take advantage of the Expo bullpen.

"We're pretty sure he's their best pitcher," said Tabor acting manager Greg Rothschadl of Doxey. "We were glad that we finally got him a bit."

Logan Kortan led off the Tabor seventh with a walk off of Doxey, went to second on a passed ball and stole third. Steve Fejfar lined a single to left to score Kortan, pulling the Bluebirds to within 5-4.

Fejfar's RBI single chased Doxey and brought on Wynot reliever Brett Wiebelhaus, who walked his first man, Cory Uecker. Wes Kloucek, a courtesy runner for Fejfar, scored

the tying run when Rob Keppen singled to left. Wiebelhaus added fuel to the Bluebird fire by



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Tabor fans celebrate a home run by the Bluebirds' Rob Keppen (21) during the championship of the District 6B amateur baseball tournament Saturday night at Lesterville.

other night with two home runs and four RBI against Crofton," said Rothschadl of Vanacek. "He played with us last year a little, and he's been playing since the high school in the spring; he's played in a lot of games, so we weren't nervous to have him out there."

The hitting performance against Crofton and the shut-down

first three innings.

Tabor scored their first run of the game in the fourth as Logan Kortan ripped a leadoff double into the leftfield corner and scored quickly on a Fejfar single.

Wynot led 4-1 after the fourth as Steve Heimes singled home Heine. Ryan Eskens, Heimes' courtesy runner, worked his way around the bases and scored on a

get to the final.

Both teams entered the game assured of representing the South Central League in the State B Amateur Baseball Tournament, beginning this week at Mitchell's Cadwell Park.

"The seeding for the state tournament is just luck of the draw, but we haven't won this tournament since 2000," said Rothschadl

of the game's meaning. "This is a big win to our older guys and nice for our younger guys; we're happy to win it."

Tabor plays Platte on Sunday at 1 p.m. and Wynot plays Alexandria on Friday at 11 a.m.

Crofton as Irene also made the tournament field as representatives two and three from the league.

Freeman earned the fourth and final representative slot by topping the Avon Bards 7-4 earlier Saturday.

Brett Scherschligt picked up the win for Freeman on the mound and Eric Hortness shut the door on a late Avon uprising to earn the save.

Jake Weier and Hortness each doubled and singled for Freeman as Dustin Tschetter had three hits and Alan Scherschligt homered and singled.

Avon, playing in the tournament for the first time since 1993, got three hits from Jesse Hajek and two singles from Matt Yost.

Joe Sees, Logan Tycz and Matt Dykstra each doubled for the Bards.

Sees took the loss on the mound.

Freeman plays Humboldt/Hartford/Montrose Friday at 5:30 p.m.

Brickyard 400: Paul Menard Pulls Off Upset Win At Indianapolis

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Daddy's Boy. Silver spoon with secure sponsorship. Talentless hack.

Paul Menard has heard all the jealous jeering throughout his unremarkable racing career.

On Sunday, he added a new name to that list: Brickyard 400 winner.

Menard became NASCAR's newest first-time winner Sunday with an upset victory at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, a track steeped in tradition for his family.

Yes, it came in a car sponsored by the hardware chain owned by his billionaire father. But nobody dared to deny that Menard earned the win and had worked hard to finally make it to Victory Lane in his 167th start at NASCAR's highest level.

True to his low-key and reserved personality even as he crossed the finish line, Menard had no desire to shove the win in the face of his critics.

"We're winners in Sprint Cup. That's the big deal. To do it at Indy, even bigger deal," he said. "Can't change people's opinions. They're going to say what they want to say. That's fine with me. We'll celebrate this. We'll enjoy it. Whatever they say, they say. Can't control it."

"I know what I'm capable of." Menard has bounced around NASCAR the past few years as teams were eager to land John Menard's sponsorship money but failed to spend it on winning race cars. Going into this year, Menard's only victory was in 2006 in the second-tier Nationwide Series.

Richard Childress was another car owner willing to cash the checks from the Menard's chain, and he signed both driver and sponsor for this season. But Richard Childress Racing was on an upswing, and the owner believed his new driver just needed a competitive car to prove his worth.

Although Sunday was Menard's first win, he and crew chief Slugger Labbe had been steadily improving all season and his four top-five fin-

ishes this season double the amount he had in his first four seasons in Cup.

"I caught a lot of flak back early last year when we decided to (hire Menard)," Childress said. "I've been watching Paul ever since he won the Nationwide race. He doesn't tear equipment up. He's consistent. He's really good. Got a cool head on him in all situations. I knew if the right situation come along, we'd win."

It came Sunday in a race that was at first dominated by drivers with the strongest cars. But when debris cautions jumbled up the pit cycles, the Brickyard 400 turned into a race of pure strategy.

Menard and his RCR team played it brilliantly, as crew chief Slugger Labbe had Menard give the lead up to defending race winner Jamie McMurray in an effort to save fuel. Certain McMurray didn't have enough gas to make it to the finish, Labbe then turned his attention to Jeff Gordon, who fell 12 seconds behind after a late fuel stop but was slicing his way through the field.

Labbe gave Menard the green light with just over three laps to go. He passed McMurray for the lead, and was silent as he circled the track with Labbe giving constant updates on Gordon's lap times. Gordon ran out of time, and Menard cruised to his first career victory in his 167th career start.

Menard's only other victory came in the second-tier Nationwide

Series in 2006. Quiet and reserved by nature, that didn't change as Menard crossed the finish line. As his team screamed over the radio, Menard quietly asked, "that's the checkered, right?"

Atop the pit box, his billionaire father was far less reserved. "I've been waiting to kiss these bricks for such a long time. I'm ready!" John Menard yelled.

John Menard, owner of the family's Midwest-based hardware chain who has a decades-long involvement in racing, was ecstatic and seemingly near tears. He fielded cars for years in the IndyCar Series, and suffered his own Indianapolis 500 heartbreak as a car owner. He entered 34 cars in the Indy 500 from 1982 through 2003, won three poles but never finished higher than third, in 1992 with Al Unser driving.

"I've been coming here since I was a little kid, my dad tried to win this race for 35 years, so this is for my dad," Menard said. "A lot of emotions right now. I went to every Indy 500 from 1989 to 2003, I was here for the inaugural Brickyard 400 in '94, for my family and for myself, Indianapolis is a very special place."

"He's a good boy," John Menard said before racing to Victory Lane to embrace his son.

Menard's victory Sunday continued the trend of first-time winners this season in NASCAR's crown jewel events. Trevor Bayne won the

NEED Fast Cash... NOW?

\$100 to \$3000
CALL TODAY - We want to Make You a Loan!
• Help Build Credit • No Checking account required

CONVENIENT LOAN
1818 Broadway Suite D-1, Yankton, SD 57078
605-665-1640

Water Damage?
We Offer 24 Hour Emergency Service
Call The Professionals at 605-665-4839

FloorTec
PROFESSIONAL Cleaning Services