

Season In Devilettes' Glove In Last Shot At Playoff Payoff

At long last, the fate of the season is now in the glove of Mooreville's softball team.

Battling themselves as much as their opponents within the Southern District Seven Conference, the Devilettes posted a pair of crucial wins last week—the second being the most critical—and moved into line for the league's third and final postseason berth entering the final week of regular-season play.

The Lady Devils, who a month ago were longshots at prolonging their campaign into the playoffs, have bucked the odds thanks to a five-game winning streak that was extended both on the road and at home last week.

The second part of that progress report came on their home field Thursday afternoon, where the hostesses maintained their torrid offensive display of late to charge past visiting Maiden, 13-2, and break the tie that had existed between the two for third place in the league standings.

Earlier in the week, and this time away from home, the Lady Devils protected their share of third and set the stage for the showdown with a similar, 14-5 dousing of host Cherryville.

Combined, the two wins pushed the Devilettes to the 9-5 level against league opposition, good enough for outright third-place honors as the season dwindles to a close this week.

"It's really amazing that we've come this far," shrugged Nancy Dilks, Mooreville's head coach, citing team injuries and early-season defeats as hurdles her club has successfully cleared in order to put itself in postseason position. "This team has overcome a lot. It says a lot for the desire of the players. Position for position, when we've had everyone healthy, this may be one of my best teams yet. A lot of what has happened to them would cause other teams to give up hope. They're stuck with it. And now, finally, we've got our fate in our own hands."

As a result of last week's wins, with the win over Cherryville completing that season series sweep and the one against Maiden earning it a split, Mooreville moved to within one more win of assuring itself no worse than a share of third place.

Two wins in as many final week games will guarantee the Lady Devils a fourth straight playoff appearance.

"When we first started thinking about the playoffs," said Dilks, whose thoughts turned to such matters at the beginning of the second half of league play. "We kind of felt our role would be that of spoiler for other teams. Now, we're in a position to get ourselves in. We've still got a big week ahead of us, but it looks better now than at any other point in the season."

Mooreville's turn toward the offensive has keyed the late-season charge, as evidenced by the evening of the season series against Maiden that took place at Moor Park Thursday afternoon. Needing a win to break the tie and move into sole possession of third, the hostesses did just that, rushing out to a 10-0 lead through three innings and increasing the lead to a game-best 11 runs by game's end.

"We're really starting killing the ball," complimented Dilks, "and we're hitting with runners on base. That's our game, scoring runs. We set the tone with our bats. As long as we're hitting and scoring, we're at our best."

The Devilettes were primed Thursday, scoring twice in the first inning and once more in the second before erupting for seven runs in the last of the third. Two scoreless frames were busted up when Maiden tallied twice in the top of the sixth, only to watch as Mooreville responded with three runs in the bottom of the inning.

Latisha McLaughlin established a new school single-season record for home runs with her 12th, one of two hits she picked up in the romp.

Jennifer Rodgers also clubbed a home run, one of her three hits that helped pad an already surging school-record best hitting average of well over .600. Should

she stay at that mark, she would finish as the first Lady Devil to do so.

Denise Douglas, Amy Bentley and Heather Robertson all added two hits to the one-sided assault. It was nearly the same kind of display at Cherryville earlier in the week.

There late Tuesday, Mooreville opened matters with a six-run second, added to them with a two-run fourth and then closed them with another six-run uprising in the seventh.

Those rallies offset a four-run Cherryville second and a single run by the Lady Ironmen in the fourth.

McLaughlin spanked two homers and finished with a game-best three hits, while Rodgers belted two hits. Linda Redfear, Bentley and Rochelle Gaston each added a double.

Mooreville entered its final regular-season week with a pair of games on tap. The Lady Devils were to open the stand with their final home game against frontrunning West Lincoln, whose Lady Rebels have already locked up the league championship and its number one playoff seed, before closing it by traveling to Bessemer City tomorrow (Thursday).

Two wins will put the Devilettes in the playoffs, no questions asked.

A split could put them back into a third-place tie with Maiden, and force a draw to determine which set of Devilettes will represent the SD-7 as the third and final playoff-bound crew.

A third-place postseason berth will place the Lady Devils on the road for next week's opening round of the state 2A softball playoffs, set to take place as early as next Tuesday afternoon.



McLaughlin hits the dirt in bang-bang play at second

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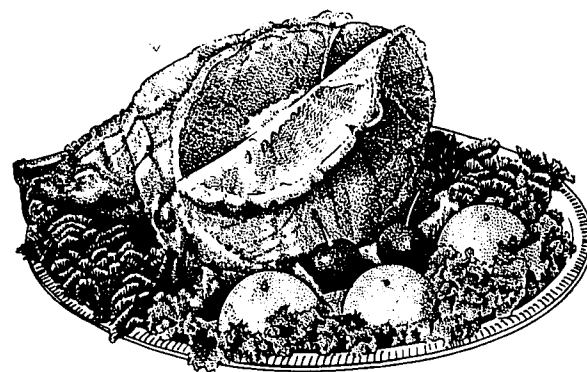
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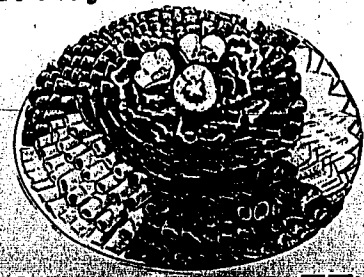
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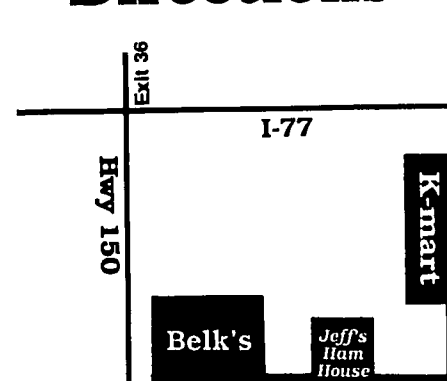


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T-Ball's Trio Win Twice Each

The opening week of the Mooreville T-Ball Baseball League season was twice as nice for three league members.

That was so as the Athletics, Brewers, and Cubs all snatched a pair of wins without suffering a loss to get the most out of the season's initial week.

That same three also enter the second week with equal shares of the circuit's top bragging honors.

The Mets stayed the closest to the leaders among the rest of the league, playing in and winning just a single game.

Meanwhile the Phillies and Yankees both split opening-week action.

The Dodgers were denied a win in their only scheduled outing, while the Braves, Astros, and Pirates were all dealt a pair of losses.

With home runs being the rule instead of the exception, the Brewers' Josh Halro earned highest batting honors by belting a league-best trio of dingers in a single game. That contributed to his week-high total of four home runs.

The Met's Tyler Meadows, Shannon Grady and Joseph Kar-

Smith Jumps

Into State

Track Finals

Sally Smith never worries much about practicing the high jump, her track and field event specialty.

Smith, a Mooreville Senior High senior, simply waits her turn to jump, jumps, and then waits for her turn again.

And while there are others who may take a more determined approach, it's Smith who will take hers to the state 1A-2A high school track and field finals this week.

That's the case as Smith, one of the premier high jumpers in the Southern District Seven Conference but who carried only the third best seasonal clearance height into last week's Midwest Regionals, posted an upset to win the event at Ledford Senior High Thursday afternoon.

As a result, Smith easily advanced into the final leg of the prep track season. The top four finishers in each event make it to this week's state finals.

Smith didn't even need her season best of jumping over five feet, two inches to top the Midwest field and captured the gold. Smith made the height of clearing five feet, one inch good enough to finish first.

In so doing, Smith becomes Mooreville's only qualifier advancing into the state finals this spring.

She will be accompanied by girls head track team coach Sandy Sullivan to the grand finale, set to take place tomorrow (Thursday) on the University of North Carolina campus in Chapel Hill.

Mooreville's girls and boys track team personnel competed in last week's regionals at Ledford, with only Smith making the grade to graduate to the state finals.

iker all wound up sharing honorable mention honors after each tagged two home runs in a single game.

Others with roundtrippers last week included: Bowles, Athletics Chris Songer, Kim Jones, Dewey Hunt and Michael McClain, Astros Jesse Karriker, Cubs Jeremy Graham and Morgan Bentley, Brewers Zack Thompson and Josh Stewart, Yankees Jody Medlin, Cubs Bear Bryant and Carson Tucker, and Phillies Ryan Smith, Daniel Sherrill, Skyler McCombs and Ray Rogers.

T-Ball League games are staged on Tuesday and Thursday even-

ings, and Saturdays, all on the Edgemoor Park field.

Players in the league, conducted through the Mooreville Recreation Department, are those boys and girls born between Aug. 1, 1984 and July 31, 1986.

T-Ball League Standings
Athletics 2-0
Brewers 2-0
Cubs 2-0
Mets 1-0
Phillies 1-1
Yankees 1-1
Dodgers 0-1
Braves 0-2
Astros 0-2
Pirates 0-2

Phillies Top Broncos

The Phillies have more to show for their unbeaten record within the boys' Bronco Baseball League than just their unbeaten record.

They also have secured sole possession of first-place because of it.

The Phillies, with a pair of wins last week, improved to 3-0 overall and entered this week's play with the circuit's only undefeated mark.

As a result, the Phillies nail down lone honors atop the eight-team standings.

Holding down second place are the Dodgers, who split last week's action to fall to 3-1.

The Cubs, who also split decisions, moved to 2-1 to occupy a share of third with the Yankees, who moved there by also winning and losing last week.

The Braves slipped to 1-3 and tied the Mets for seventh place, while the Brewers dipped alone in eighth at 0-3.

The Phillies protected their top perch with a pair of wins, thus becoming the only league member to win both contests last week.

Among the players, a couple of Phillies were also among the leaders, as teammates Kyjuan Beatty and Bradley Byers were among players who collected as many as three hits in a single

game.

Others with that feat included the Mets Ray Winford.

It was the Cubs' Brandon Potter who headlined at the plate, collecting a week-best four hits in one game.

Among Potter's hits was a home run enabling him to join the Phillies Beatty, Met's Winford, Randy Sumrow of the Cubs, Clint Ployd of the Dodgers, Brad Miller, Laron Caldwell and Johnathan Chambers of the Brewers, and the Braves' Jim Donaldson in spiking a home run apiece.

Play in the Bronco League, conducted through the Mooreville Recreation Department, takes place on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and Saturday mornings, with all games being staged on the Magia Park field.

The league caters to boys born between Aug. 1, 1976, and July 31, 1978.

Bronco League Standings
Phillies 3-0
Dodgers 3-1
Cubs 2-1
Yankees 2-1
Astros 2-2
Braves 1-3
Mets 1-3
Brewers 0-3

Brewers Tame Ponies

The Brewers were brewing during the opening week of the Mooreville Pony Baseball League season.

The Brewers, one of five area teams competing in the circuit, cooked up a pair of wins to top the local group heading into the season's second full week.

The best any of the remaining squads could do was fashion 1-1 marks, identical records posted by both the Cardinals and Pirates.

As for the Phillies and Yankees, they were each denied wins in their first week of action.

The Brewers posted their wins in different fashions, first weathering a 5-4 victory over the Cardinals before smothering the Yankees, 20-2. That latter output was the week's highest in runs for a single game.

Leading the way for the front-runners were a pair of players who enjoyed multiple hit games.

Pacing the performances were the four hits bunched up by Jason Meadows in the win over the

Yankees.

In the victory over the Cardinals, Scott Hager led the way with a perfect, three-for-three showing.

Other players who enjoyed multiple-hit games during the first week included the Pirates Ryan Whittington, and teammates Jeremy Smith and Darryl Stutts of the Cardinals, all three who gathered in three hits in a single contest.

Play in the split Pony League, which also involves team from the Davidson, Cornelius and North Mecklenburg areas, takes place at Moor Park.

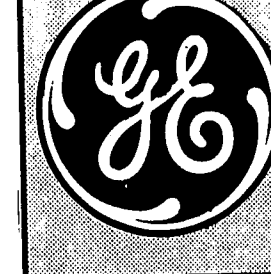
League play is being conducted through the Mooreville Recreation Department.

Players on the teams are those boys born between Aug. 1, 1976 and July 31, 1978.

Pony Baseball League Standings
Brewers 2-0
Cardinals 1-1
Pirates 1-1
Phillies 1-1
Phillies 1-1
Phillies 0-1
Yankees 0-1

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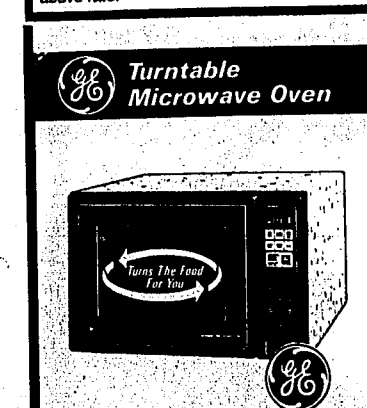
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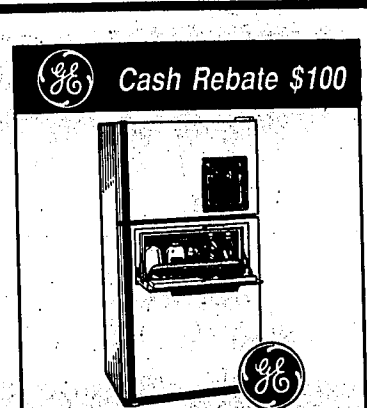
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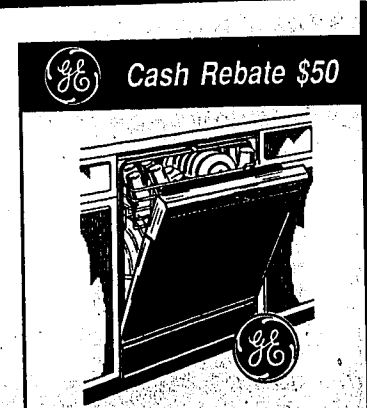
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