

Devilletes Ride Emotions, Win Into State 2A Softball Playoffs

Though bats and gloves helped emotions may have played the biggest role in extending Mooreville's softball season into this week's state 2A playoffs.

For it was those emotions that allowed the Devilletes to lock up one of the Southern District

Conference's three available postseason invitations during the critical final week of regular-season play.

The Lady Devils, who in their last outing the previous week had snared a must-win that put them all alone in the pivotal last post-

season within conference standings, solidified that ranking with a determined and dramatic downing of regular-season champion West Lincoln, 10-9, early last week.

On the heels of those back-to-back emotional outpourings, ones

that assured the Devilletes of no worse than a third-place finish and the recipients of the SD-7's final available postseason perch, they understandably relaxed their feelings long enough to absorb a meaningless, 13-3 defeat to Bessemer City Thursday afternoon that served to bring them back to reality entering postseason play.

"Considering what we've been through emotionally over the last week," shrugged Nancy Dilks, Mooreville's head coach, "that last loss may be a blessing. We were able to relax, knowing that the outcome would have no bearing on the league standings. We had been on such an emotional high, we were headed for a let-down. It was better to have it then, than to wait and have it happen this week. I think this is a team that can get itself back up."

Mooreville proved that in its final week of regular season play, peaking with the homefield triumph over a West Lincoln squad already assured of the league championship and the number-one seed entering state postseason play.

"We knew we had to beat West Lincoln," offered Dilks. "It was the biggest game of our season. And it came after we had just beaten Maiden to get into third. It was tough, having those big games so close together, but the girls were ready."

After spotting the visiting Lady Rebels a 6-0 budge in the top of the first inning late Tuesday afternoon, the hostesses spent the next four innings battling from behind.

The Lady Devils scratched for three runs in their first at-bat in the second to cut the deficit to 6-4. After a scoreless third, Mooreville secured its first lead with a four-run shower in the fourth. West Lincoln responded with three in the fifth to regain the lead, at 9-8.

The Devilletes then tied the game in the bottom of the sixth and accounted for the game-winning run in the last of the seventh.

In the seventh, Denise Douglas reached first on a base hit and moved to third on an error. She then scored the winning run on Becky Park's base hit.

The tying run had scored when Linda Redfear opened with a single and raced home on Lailsha McLaughlin's triple.

Redfear finished with three hits, as did Douglas, while McLaughlin joined Park and Rochelle Gaston in collecting two hits each. Jennifer Rodgers and Heather Robertson both connected once each.

That left as undramatic the season finale at Bessemer City Thursday, played throughout in a rain shower that gradually turned

into a game-ending thunderstorm.

The game was halted after five innings by bad weather. By then, the guests were already trailing 13-3, having scored their three runs in the top of the first. DC's Lady Yellow Jackets, out of the running for the playoffs, scored four times in the first, added two runs in the third and then bunted loose with seven runs in the fourth to tie the issue.

McLaughlin added to her team's single-season record for home runs in a season with another one, while Redfear and Mindy Newton each belted a double. Gaston and Park added a base hit apiece.

In addition to McLaughlin's record-setting home run performance, Rodgers also established a new single-season school record for the highest batting average.

As a result of the final week trip, the Lady Devils completed regular-season play with a 10-4 conference mark, good enough for third place behind West Lincoln and Bandys.

Those three teams will now represent the SD-7 in this week's

S. Iredell Scores In 3A Meet

South Iredell did more than just participate in last week's North Carolina High School Athletic Association's state 3A track and field meet.

Both the Lady Vikings and Vikings scored in it.

South Iredell's boys, boosted by their showing in the relay races, collected 14 points in the day-long attraction in Chapel Hill Friday.

While the girls, who fielded the school's best overall showing, picked up eight points in the season finale.

Lady Viking Christie Hicks turned in the top showing of any South Iredell state meet participant. She did so with a runner-up finish in her specialty, the 3,200-meter run.

It was the best finish by any South Iredell entry.

Among the fellows, their best efforts were posted in the relay events, as the Vikings' 1,600 and 3,200-meter relay squads both posted third-place finishes.

In the boys division, High Point Andrews successfully defended its state 3A championship, while for the girls, Sun Valley captured its third straight crown.

Competition in the state 3A meet brings South Iredell's spring track and field season to a close.

Outstanding members of both the girls and boys teams will be recognized at the school's annual spring sports awards program tomorrow (Thursday) night.

Mooreville's making its third straight appearance in the state playoffs, entered the week with away game at East Surry on tap for Tuesday afternoon. The winner of that game advances into second-round play Friday.

Moors Open Exhibition Play Sun.

Mooreville's Post 66 American Legion baseball team opens its season, sort of, Sunday.

The Gresham-Baker Moors do so in unofficial fashion when entertaining Denver in a non-league, exhibition contest at 3 p.m. on the Mooreville Senior High field.

It marks the first of two straight home pre-season appearances for the Post 66 squad, which enters the 1991 season as reigning Southern District and Area III champions as well as a defending state league semifinalist.

Mooreville is coming off a record-setting season in which it established a new single-season high for wins, with 29, and advanced farther than any other previous Post 66 unit by making it to the state semifinals.

The Moors, no longer the only team in the county, continues to pull players from Mooreville and South Iredell high schools as well as those from West Rowan and other county schools meeting player requirements.

As of early this week, the Moors, who opened practice the middle of last week, were still missing key returning players from both Statesville Senior High and Mooreville High due to those teams' involvement in statewide postseason play.

Mooreville, regular-season and tournament champions of the Southern Division who went on to claim the program's first-ever Area III title last summer, again enters the season under the guidance of veteran manager Whitely Meadows, who begins his 20th year in the dugout.

Mooreville opens its exhibition season with Sunday's game against Denver, marking the squad's only afternoon appearance of the season.

The following Wednesday evening, also at home, Post 66 plays host to Kernersville in a second and final home exhibition affair. That game, like all remaining on the team's schedule, features a 7:45 p.m. starting time.

Then on Thursday night, the Moors officially open defense of their conference championship when visiting Concord to open SD-Area III play.

The magic of an undefeated season is still alive for Magic Rental of the Men's Open Softball League.

That's so after Magic Rental won its only scheduled game last week to surface as the circuit's last remaining undefeated squad.

With last week's win, Magic Rental improved its record to 4-0. Universal Maintenance, which entered last week's action also undefeated, offered its first setback and, coupled with two wins by Randy Marlon Chevrolet, fell into a two-way tie for second.

Both Universal and Randy Marlon share the same, 5-1 records.

Also with a single loss, but with only three wins, are the Hurricanes, who occupy fourth place as a result.

Greenfield Market, with a loss in its only appearance last week, fell to 4-2 as a result. Brinton's Bombers endured through a one-win, two-loss win to slip to 4-3 overall and into sixth place.

Mooreville Ford, boosted by a sweep of its two games last week,

crept back over .500 and to the 3-2 mark.

Burlington, with a split week of play, stayed at the break-even level, carrying a 2-2 mark into this week's play.

That's the same record owned by Lakeside Cable, which also split decisions last week. Rounding out the list of teams playing below break-even finds MCCA, at 1-4 after splitting decisions last week. NGK Ceramics at 0-4 after a two-loss week. Lake Norman Regional Medical Center at 0-5, and the

Brew Dogs dragging bottom, at 0-6.

A new twist to home run hitting attacked the league last week, as four players — three off the same team — accumulated inside-the-park homers.

The rarities belonged to teammates Roger Beatty, Steve Freeman and Billy Ray Williams, all of Burlington, and to Mooreville Ford's David Van Aulken.

Universal's Ed Isonhour padded his league lead in the homer run department with a total of three, including two in one game. That tied him with Randy Marlon's Tony Hager for the top single-game accomplishment.

Others with a home run to the credit included NGK's John Williams, LNRMC's Bennie Woodward, and Burlington's Ricky Gallmon.

Of them, Williams slapped single round trippers in a pair of games.

Play in the Men's Open League is conducted through the Mooreville Recreation Department. Games are held on Monday through Thursday nights, with all action held on the field behind Woods School.

Mooreville Softball League Standings

Magic Rental 4-0
Randy Marlon Chevrolet 5-1
Universal Maintenance 5-1
Hurricanes 4-2
Greenfield Market 4-2
Brinton's Bombers 4-3
Mooreville Ford 3-2
Burlington 2-2
Lakeside Cable 2-2
MCCA 1-4
NGK Ceramics 0-4
LNRMC 0-5
Brew Dogs 0-6



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