

Rams drop pair to Mountain Cats

BY BEN GIBSON
FOR THE JOURNAL

SHEPHERDSTOWN — The Shepherd Rams dropped two games against the Pitt-Johnstown Mountain Cats on Sunday at Fairfax Field.

The Rams found themselves on the wrong end of the scoreboard in both games of the doubleheader, losing the first game 5-2 and losing a rain-shortened second game 3-1.

COLLEGE BASEBALL

PITT-JOHNSTOWN 5,3

MOUNTAIN CATS 11-9

SHEPHERD 2, 1

RAMS 10-12

"That's what baseball is, you got to get ready to play again after a day like today. We just got to get on the bus and get ready for Wesleyan on Tuesday," Shepherd coach Wayne Riser said.

The Rams found themselves down early, as Pitt-Johnstown's Matt Whiteman knocked in two runs with his single over second base in the top of the first inning.

The Rams quickly bounced back when Nathan Minnich hit a double to bring in Val Arduini and cut the lead to one.

Anthony Jackson followed with a single to left center, bringing in Minnich to tie the game at 2-2.

Pitt-Johnstown took the lead again in the top of the third inning as Drew Westover hit a sacrifice fly to score Dan Mangini for a 3-2 lead.

The Mountain Cats added another run in the fourth inning when Drew Shaulis grounded out, bringing in Demek to stretch the Pitt-Johnstown lead to 4-2.



Journal photo by Ron Aguir

Shepherd's Justin Byrd pitches against Pitt-Johnstown on Sunday during the first game of a doubleheader. The Rams dropped both games against the Mountain Cats.

Pitt-Johnstown added an insurance in the seventh inning as designated hitter Zach Martin laced a shot down the right field line run to bring in another run and give the game its final score of 5-2.

The Rams left seven runners on base in the losing effort, unable to string together enough hits to score.

Pitt-Johnstown's Matt Staub was the winning pitcher, allowing two earned runs on nine hits, while striking out five and walking one.

The Rams Paul Chenoweth was saddled with the loss, allowing four runs on six hits and striking out four.

"We just need to start playing better baseball. I don't have time to list everything that we are doing wrong," Riser said.

The Rams didn't fair much better in the second game, as the Mountain Cats jumped out to an early lead in the top of the first with Martin grounding out but scoring Nick Barbera.

Pitt-Johnstown added another run when Demek blasted the ball over the left field fence to give the Mountain Cats a 2-0 lead in the top of the second.

Shepherd cut the Mountain Cats' lead in half in the bottom of the third inning as a series of throwing errors allowed Chris Szafran to make his way to third base before Arduini hit a sacrifice fly to score Szafran.

Pitt-Johnstown extended its lead to 3-1 when Staub hit a single to bring in Seth

Roy.

The game was called in the top of the sixth inning as the rain picked up and quickly soaked everything at Fairfax Field.

Kody Reighand picked up the win for the Mountain Lions, allowing two hits and one run, striking out five and walking three.

Kyle Shifflette was the losing pitcher, allowing five hits and two runs before being relieved by Kenny Reisinger, who allowed one run on five hits and struck out one.

Lady Rams post important West Virginia Conference sweep of Wheeling

Shepherd took over leadership in the WVIAC softball standings when the Lady Rams swept a doubleheader on Saturday from Wheeling Jesuit.

Shepherd had 115 power rating with its 4-0 league record while perennial conference champi-

on West Virginia Wesleyan was also at 4-0 but had a power rating of 110.

In winning the opener 1-0 in eight innings, Shepherd received a route-going pitching performance from Tricia Bettura, who struck out nine, and walked only

two in going the distance and improving her record to 8-2 with her four-hitter.

Chelsie Oals singled home Biana Biordillo with the game-winning run in the Shepherd eighth.

In the nightcap, the Lady Rams

scored seven runs in the first inning to make pitcher Nichole Pitcock's job much easier.

Shepherd went on to win 11-2 in a game shortened because of the eight-run mercy rule.

Oals had two RBIs in the first inning and so did Allie Bram-

beck. Kris Durham was 3-for-3. Pitcock, Brambeck, and Amber Dudak all collected two hits for the Lady Rams, who were 16-4 overall following the sweep of the Lady Cardinals.

Pitcock struck out six and walked two in her four innings

of work to move her individual record to 7-2. She allowed four hits. Brook Stambaugh pitched the fifth inning, allowing two hits and Wheeling Jesuit's second run.

Wheeling Jesuit was 1-3 in the WVIAC and 3-14 overall.

Rams find no hitting remedies or solutions

BOB MADISON Sports Editor

When college baseball teams reach into the heart of their weekend conference schedules they use mid-week, non-conference games to try to find solutions to areas where they are weak.

They give new faces a first look. They try a batter-abused pitcher one more time. They juggle their batting order, trying to squeeze another run out of an underachieving group. They look for a way to alleviate the loss to injury of a key performer.

When Shepherd went against visiting Millersville last Wednesday at Fairfax Field, both teams came in with recent disappointments riding with them.

The Rams had been forced to settle for a split of four WVIAC games in West Liberty the weekend before -- scoring few runs and actually wasting an opportunity against a team that limped in with a 1-12 overall record.

Millersville came to Fairfax Field with a 6-13 record and the tarnished memories of losses to West Chester the day before.

Not many solutions were to be found.

The two teams would divide their two games. Millersville cruised to an 8-3 win in the opener. And Shepherd rode the long, two-run home run of Brian Collins to a 3-2 win in the nightcap.

In the first game, Shepherd's Wayne Riser tried Bryan Wolfe -- again. Wolfe had been hammered in non-conference games in North Carolina where the Rams had been thrashed by national power Mount Olive and ordinary Barton.

Wolfe lasted four innings, allowing four earned runs on three hits, walking or hitting four, and leaving with the memory of Kent Gerdes' two-run homer in his rearview mirror.

Wolfe had faced 19 batters in a mid-week Millersville lineup and saw seven of them reach base and four of them score.

Shepherd reliever Shawn Wiles didn't improve his stock, allowing four more runs in 2.1 innings. . . and Adam Lauer yielded Scott Stevens' two-run double that

capped the Marauder scoring.

Riser, missing freshman outfielder Michael Lott to injury, saw his run-starved team get 15 men on base . . . and leave 11 of them stranded there.

Clutch hits or two-out hits with runners in scoring position have been practically nonexistent for Riser's Rams of late.

Tried at first base for the first time was freshman Brian Milburn, a Jefferson High grad. Milburn was on base three times, getting a single and two walks.

But at least one Ram runner was left on base in every inning.

Riser then gave his usual weekend, conference-game pitchers an inning each in the second game -- but only after little-used Kyle Shifflette had burdened them with a 2-0 deficit after his two innings.

Gerard Sokolis, Pat Smith, and Paul Chenoweth all pitched a scoreless inning . . . and it was still 2-0 when the Rams batted in the fifth.

Millersville had followed the same pitching routine for a few innings and then turned to Aaron

Wilkins to carry them on through until the end.

Wilkins couldn't make it all the way to the end.

Pat Aragon singled to begin the fifth. Val Arduini got his third hit of the game to drive in Aragon. Then it was Collins who gave Shepherd a split of the games when he crashed a long homer to the brambles beyond the fence in left.

Kenny Reisinger, who had pitched a complete-game win over West Liberty the Sunday before, came on to try his pitching luck in the seventh.

Reisinger was greeted by consecutive singles from Stevens and Adam Boyd. After a sacrifice bunt moved both runners along, Reisinger fanned Gerdes on a called third strike on a 3-2 pitch. Pinch-hitter Keith Spencer flew out to left . . . and Shepherd's three-run inning had been enough to gain it a split on an afternoon where few -- if any -- solutions were found by either side to the holes they had been showing in conference games.

Shepherd rallies late to beat Mountain Cats

BOB MADISON Sports Editor

Just when it looked like Shepherd was going to see its game-long lead trumped by a three-run Pitt Johnstown rally, the Rams used a seven-hit, nine-base runners inning themselves to beat the Mountain Lions, 9-4, in the first game of a chilly Saturday afternoon conference doubleheader.

Trailing, 4-3, after the Mountain Cats had chased Rams' starter Gerard Sokolis, there came Shepherd's most successful inning of the season.

The Shepherd sixth began when Tyler Beard singled through the middle. And when it finally was ended after first-time stater Bryan Milburn flew out, the Rams had sent 11 batters to the plate and scored six times to wrangle a 9-4 lead out of what was once a one-run deficit.

Following Beard, Milburn lined a single to left and Chris Szafran bunted safely to load the

bases. Pinch-hitter Tylor McCain (who entered with a .186 batting average), had an RBI single over shortstop.

Val Arduini drove in a run with a single on the ground into right . . . and Brian Collins was hit by a pitch.

Nathan Minnich collected three RBIs when his double reached the base of the fence in dead center.

Anthony Jackson drove in the inning's sixth run when he doubled home Minnich.

Kenny Reisinger staggered through the final two innings to get the win. Reisinger allowed three hits and a walk and couldn't hold Sokolis' lead in the sixth. Even though he was no mystery to the Mountain Cat hitters, Reisinger had to be credited with the win.

After Matt Staub reached Sokolis for a first-inning home run, the senior left-hander settled in and blanked the visitors for four

straight innings before faltering the sixth.

Three straight Mountain Cat singles when the Rams were literally clinging to a 3-1 lead brought in Reisinger, who struck out the first two batters he saw but then then yielded a walk and two-RBI single by Justin Demek to send Pitt Johnstown to a 4-3 lead.

Shepherd rallied back.

Reisinger was on the ropes again in the seventh, but after permitting two more hits, he was extricated from his expanding hole by a line drive double play begun by shortstop Pat Aragon.

There were 16 hits from the Rams -- three by Arduini and two each by Jackson (who was on base three times), Beard (also on base three times), Milburn, Szafran, and Aragon.

The WVIAC baseball weekend had begun well enough. However, the beginning to the four-game series was the only game

that would be a prosperous one for the Rams.

Shepherd names AD

B. J. Pumroy, currently employed as the athletic director at Valley City State University in North Dakota, will become Shepherd's new athletic director on June 30, 2010 when current SU athletic director Karl Wolf assumes other duties at the university.

Pumroy's appointment was announced by Richard Helldobler,

vice president for academic affairs at Shepherd.

Pumroy had previously been employed at Truman State in Missouri, where he coached baseball and was an assistant athletic director.

He has served on a number of NCAA Division II national boards.

Late lapses costly to baseball Rams

BOB MADISON Sports Editor

Pat Smith was winging right along with his five-inning shut-out when he had a little hiccup after retiring the first man in the Pitt Johnstown sixth. He walked only his second man . . . to bring up Drew Westover.

Smith had a precarious 2-0 lead he was zealously protecting. His margin for error could have been a little more roomy except the Rams had stranded two base runners in the first, two more in the third, and six altogether through five turns.

Shepherd had taken the opener of the Saturday conference doubleheader and was in need of winning both games to stay near the top of the Northern Division race.

After Smith walked Matt Staub (four hits in the first Saturday game), he peered into the Shepherd dugout. There was no movement there.

When Westover hammered a game-tying, two-run homer, Smith backed off the mound and took a longer look into the Shepherd dugout.

After a visit by Rams' Coach Wayne Riser, it was Smith's duty to keep the game tied. But after an infield error and a single from Justin Demek, Smith was replaced by Kenny Reisinger.

Reisinger got out of the inning without further damage.

In the last of the sixth, Shepherd outfielder Tyler Beard hit an opposite-field home run just inside the foul pole in left.

Reisinger went out to the seventh to protect his one-run lead.

He walked ninth-place batter Andy Rubal on a 3-2 pitch after a sacrifice bunt, Reisinger walked Staub on four pitches. With runners stationed at first and second, Zach Martin flew to Tylor McCain in center for the inning's second out.

However, McCain missed the cut off man on his throw back to the infield . . . and both runners moved up a base.

There were two out. There was the tying run on third and the go-ahead run on second after McCain's poor throw.

Westover was walked intentionally to load the bases.

Reisinger and batter Matt Whiteman waged a silent war.

When the count on Whiteman went to 2-2, the Mountain Cat outfielder poked an opposite field single in front of Beard in left.

The hit was going to score Rubal from third, but when it bounced belt-high right to the forward-moving Beard it appeared that Staub -- running from second -- would be an easy out at the plate.

But Beard had to catch the routine hopper. And he didn't as it glanced off his glove and went behind him as he slid and stumbled going back after it.

Pitt Johnstown had a 4-3 lead.

It would keep it . . . and win the game and get an unlikely split of Saturday's games when route-going Drew Shaulis wriggled out

of a two-on, two-out situation in the Shepherd seventh.

The Ram seventh began when Michael Lott was hit by a pitch and was sacrificed to second by Val Arduini. After Brian Collins went out on a routine fly to center, Nathan Minnich was hit by a pitch.

That brought in the highly reliable Anthony Jackson. Jackson had been denied by Shaulis, facing him a fourth time with an 0-for-3 collar around his neck.

Jackson swung weakly at the first pitch, hit it off the end of his bat and watched helplessly as the Mountain Cat second baseman tagged pinch-runner Jake Cook as he ran straight to him.

Shepherd was forced to swallow a 1-1 split of the doubleheader. It had managed seven hits, two of them homers (Arduini and Beard). It had been caught in the sixth inning and passed in the seventh.

And its all-important WVIAC record was a skimpy 3-3.

The last three men in its lineup -- Bryan Milburn, Chris Szafra, and Pat Aragon -- were a combined 0-for-9 and had gotten only one ball out of the infield.

Sunday's doubleheader awaited. If it didn't rain as predicted. The Rams were short on arms to pitch. They were short on batters to get hits or even get on base.

And Saturday's loss after leading for five innings was going to rankle Riser for more than just the rest of the weekend.

Blazers pull Hood over Rams

BY ANDREW R. FULTZ
FOR THE JOURNAL

SHEPHERDSTOWN — The Shepherd Rams and the Hood Blazers were each looking for their third victory of the year in lacrosse action Thursday at Ram Stadium.

The Rams dressed in pink for breast cancer awareness during warmups before changing into their normal blue-and-white attire.

A quick score seemed to follow suit with Shepherd's quick change.

Thirty seconds into the game, the Rams got off to 1-0 lead on a goal by sophomore Kaitlin Drake.

Shepherd's lead grew to 4-0, but Hood eventually managed a 16-14 victory.

Early on, the Blazers seemed not to have an answer for a fired-up Ram squad playing its final home game of the season.

The Blazers finally got going, stringing together an attack and cutting Shepherd's lead to 8-6 at halftime. The Rams held the lead the entire first half.



Journal photo by Ron Aguir

Shepherd midfielder Carly Jones exploits a seam in the Hood defense between Lauren Perzan, left, and Julia Banks during the second half of their game.

During the second half, Shepherd seemed to be tiring as the Blazers climbed to within one at 10-9. The Blazers, who had been losing the entire game, finally went ahead at 13-12 with 15:56 to go.

LACROSSE
HOOD 16
BLAZERS 3-8
SHEPHERD 14
RAMS 2-8

We didn't take advantage of opportunities that were given

to us. We just came up a little short today," Shepherd coach Tammy Butler said.

Butler's first year as head coach began with an all new team. She came from Hood, where she was an assistant before taking the head coaching job for Shepherd.

When asked how it was to play her old team, Butler came up with only one word: "Weird."

"I wanted to beat them," Butler said. "It was important to me to beat them."

Instead, Brandi Noel's five goals and three apiece by Julie Banks and Kelsey Blackwell paved the way to victory for Hood.

Nicole Ruane tallied eight goals for Shepherd, while Carly Jones and Nikki Fusco had a pair apiece.

Four of Shepherd's final five games are in Ohio.

"I think we will definitely be competitive with the games in Ohio," Butler said, "gonna hit those games hard."

The Rams are off until April 11 when they visit Lake Erie College.



Journal photo by Ron Aguir

Shepherd goalkeeper Emily Rachel, left, and midfielder Lindsay Russell (22) work to stop a shot from Hood midfielder Lauren Perzan (8) during the second half of Hood's lacrosse victory on Thursday.

Bettura helps Rams to best softball start

By ERIC JONES
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SHEPHERDSTOWN — Shepherd's Tricia Bettura has a week any pitcher would dream of and that most pitchers never experience. The Rams' sophomore starting pitcher was unstoppable last week as she helped Shepherd go 6-0 and complete a sweep of doubleheaders against West Liberty, Wheeling Jesuit and Shippensburg, Pa.

In her three starts, which included 20 innings pitched, Bettura allowed nine hits,

struck out 24 batters and compiled an ERA of 0.00. The only run allowed during that stretch was an unearned



BETTURA

run in the Rams' win over West Liberty in Game 1.

Bettura was named the West Virginia Conference's Co-Pitcher of the Week with the University of Charleston's Steffanie Rossman and has also been named Gold's Gym/The Journal Athlete of the Week (March 21-27).

It's no coincidence that Bettura's superb effort on the mound coincides with the Rams' best-ever start of 18-4, putting them in the regional rankings at No. 6.

Bettura started her week out with a strong outing against West Liberty, where she pitched five innings, giving up just two hits, walking one and striking out five. She gave up no earned runs as she and Brooke Stambaugh combined for a two-hitter in a 7-1 win by Shepherd.



In her next start, against Wheeling Jesuit, she pitched a complete game and battled with Olivia Wamsley in a pitcher's duel. Bettura won that battle, picking up her eighth win of the season as the Rams scored in the bottom of the eighth to take the game. She allowed four hits and struck out nine.

Bettura capped the week with a win in Game 1 of a doubleheader with Shippensburg, the school's first over the Red Raiders. In that game, she pitched all seven innings, allowing just three hits and fanning 10 batters.

Bettura's week improved her already solid stats for the season. She improved to 9-2 and lowered her ERA to 1.72. She also struck out 65 hitters.