Rams manage doubleheader sweep of Battlers

Struggling Alderson-Broaddus puts up fight against streaking Shepherd in WVIAC contests

By MATT POLING
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SHEPHERDSTOWN — Alderson-Broaddus had just one win in 21 games heading into Friday’s doubleheader at Shepherd University’s Fairfax Field.

A brutal schedule and injuries to key players are the key factors in the Rams’ dismal season.

But at least A-B’s players are living up to the school’s nickname. The Battlers came up short again, but made Shepherd’s 6-3, 8-6 sweep a lot tougher than the Rams expected.

The 11-6 Rams, winners of seven straight, will go for the three-game sweep and a 6-0 West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference record at 1 p.m. today.

“It’s tough to lose, they played well,” Shepherd coach Wayne Riser said. “They made plays when they had to. They kept coming at you.”

After dropping the first game, A-B appeared headed for a blowout loss in the eighth until Shepherd errors in the sixth inning allowed the Rams to rally for six runs and tie the game at 6.

Much like A-B’s season, especially last week when many of the losses have been close, the opposition came through down the stretch.

Northplace hitter Ryan Harju got a two-out single in the sixth inning and went to third on Eric Christians single. Nicky Brown, who was having a tough day at the plate, having already hit into two double plays, smacked a two-run double to right field for the final margin.

Despite some control problems, Scott Kocian, who pitched in relief and may be today’s starter, hurled 1 1/3 innings to get his third win against one loss.

“We’ve just got to get the breaks,” A-B coach Karl Laidt said.

Despite the sweep, Riser was hardly pleased with his team’s performance.

“We did not play very well, didn’t play very good fundamental baseball,” Riser said. “We made several mental errors. Today was just not a good day. We’re fortunate to come out with two wins.”

Shepherd played better in the first game, but the Rams still left seven runs on base. The Rams used the long ball to break open a 3-3 game in the fifth inning. Joe Cook led off the inning with a double, but didn’t score until two outs later when David Tost, who hit a three-run homer in the second game, came through with a blast to right field.

A Josh Bowers line-drive solo homer to lead off the sixth gave Shepherd reliever Austin Brown another run to work with as he pitched a scoreless seventh for his first save. Tony Magnaniello (2-2) got the win after six innings of four-hit ball.

Outside of the wins, Shepherd got some good and bad news. Leading hitter Collins Brown left the second game injured with what Riser calls a “sweated” leg. He didn’t want to risk hurting it further.

On the other hand, freshman first baseman Dirk Webbe broke out of his hitting slump. Webb came into the game hitting just .183, but he went 2 for 4 with a double and home run in the first game and had a double and two walks in the second contest.

Cook had two doubles and two runs in the first outing, while Christians went 3 for 3 with three runs after replacing Brown in the second game.

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COLLEGE SOFTBALL

Shepherd 5-8, Glenville 2-0

SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va. — Jamie Griffin homered in each game and Karen Burnette pitched a three-hit shutout in the nightcap as Shepherd University (8-5, 2-0) swept Glenville State in a WVIAC doubleheader.

Shepherd 6-8
Alderson-Broaddus 3-6

SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va. — Nicky Brown hit a two-run double in the bottom of the sixth inning to lift Shepherd to a victory over Alderson-Broaddus in the nightcap to give the Rams WVIAC doubleheader sweep.

Eric Chrisman went 3-for-3 for Shepherd (11-6, 5-0) for Shepherd in the nightcap, while David Toth hit his second homer of the day with a three-run shot in the second inning.

Dirk Webb and Josh Bowers also homered for the Rams in the first game.
GRAHAM homers Rams to sweep

SHEPHERDSTOWN — Shepherd University swept Glenville State in softball action Friday.

The Rams (8-5, 2-0 West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference) won the first game 5-2 and the second game 8-0.

Freshman outfielder Jamie Griffin hit a two-run home run in the fifth inning of game one to give the Rams a 3-2 lead. Freshman third baseman Stephanie Sims hit a solo home run in the sixth inning and outfielder Jenn Canby (2 for 4) tripled home freshman outfielder Bridget Merceruio, who had walked, for the game’s final runs.

Megan James went 2 for 3 for Glenville (3-21, 3-5).

Sophomore pitcher Mia Zappacosta struck out four and evened her record at 2-2. Amanda Wayne took the loss for Glenville.

In the second game, Karen Burnett tossed a three-hitter in a five-inning game. She struck out six in winning her third game.

Griffin, freshman outfielder April Przgocki and freshman shortstop Charla Wacker each had two hits to lead the Rams. Griffin hit a home run in the fifth.

Crystal Marvin went 2 for 3 for Glenville. Jessica Sacra took the loss.

The Rams host Bluefield at noon today in a doubleheader.
Rams save best for last ... at-bat

Shepherd sweeps WVIAC softball doubleheader against Bluefield

By MATTHEW TABEEK
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SHEPHERDSTOWN — For as well as Shepherd played in the first game of its doubleheader with Bluefield State on Saturday, the Rams were far worse in the latter game.

For the first six innings, that is.

Facing a six-run deficit in their final at-bat, the mistake-prone Rams rallied behind freshman Jamie Griffin’s hit for a dramatic 7-6 victory over the Lady Blues.

Down 6-3 with the bases loaded and no outs, Griffin tripled to deep right field and then scored the game-winning run on an error to end the game and clinch Shepherd’s 10th win of the year.

“A lovely win,” Shepherd coach Dave Trail said.

The Rams (10-9) are a perfect 4-0 in the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Bluefield State fell to 6-7 and 2-7 in the WVIAC.

The Rams blanked Bluefield State 6-0 in the first game.

Trail said Griffin’s triple and eventual score should have been ruled a home run because the ball that Griffin would have hit the throw to home. Regardless, Griffin — The Journal’s 2004 high school softball player of the year — has been a welcome addition to the second-year coach’s lineup.

Griffin, who batted back from a serious elbow injury and was the catalyst for a Martinsburg High School team that advanced to the state softball tournament in 2004, currently leads the Shepherd in home runs (4) and runs scored (10).

“I followed Jamie at least the last three years of her career,” Trail said. “She’s just starting to relax and calm down here. When she got here, I think she felt she had to show everybody how good she was. And now she is.”

Before her seventh-inning heroics, however, Griffin was a combined 0-for-5 at the plate in both games. Griffin’s teammates also struggled in the second game, committing five errors while failing behind 5-0 after five innings.

Bluefield State pitcher Katie Kelly held the Rams’ batters in check — allowing just two hits — before her seventh-inning collapse.

Shepherd’s Jennifer Canby, who went 2-for-4 and scored a pair of runs, led the final inning off with a single to left field. After Megan Zahnow reached on an error, Kelly walked the next two Shepherd batters — Mia Zappacosta and Brooke Small — for a run.

Then, on the first pitch, Griffin belted the ball to right field for the win.

“They said, ‘Wait till you get a strike’ and I love hitting the first pitch,” Griffin said. “If the first pitch is a strike, I always hit it. I never hit right field, so that’s a good thing.”

Griffin’s game-winning hit was the lone highlight of an otherwise forgettable performance for the Rams. Shepherd struggled on the mound, at the plate and committed five errors.

“The cold weather definitely affected us some today,” Trail said.

After Stephanie Sims bunted through a good portion of the first five innings on the mound for the Rams, former Berkeley Springs standout Maggie Smith pitched the final two and gave up just one hit in the process. Smith, also a member of The Journal’s All-Panhandle softball team in 2004, also registered two strikeouts.

In the first game, Shepherd sophomore Shannon Leigherty earned her second win of the year after surrendering just three hits in the complete-game effort. Leigherty had one strikeout.

Zahnow, another Berkeley Springs product, went 2-for-3 and scored three runs. The junior, who is third on the team with her .300 batting average, has three doubles this season.

“We didn’t play too well, but we pulled it out,” Zappacosta said. “We were getting some hard hits, but they were right at people. We just got a little bit lucky there toward the end.”

Zappacosta said the future looks bright for the young Rams.

“We are coming together a lot faster than last year’s team,” said Zappacosta, who now has 14 hits for the Rams this season. “We’re just going to go one game at a time. Our pitching needs to get a little better.”

Shepherd will host Columbia Union on Tuesday and Charleston on Thursday.

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Shank made his mark for Shepherd

By TIM KOELBLE
koelble@herald-mail.com

Among the many Tri-State area athletes who played college basketball during the 2004-05 season, Danley Shank posted the highest scoring average during his junior season at Shepherd University.

The 6-foot-5 small forward and Chambersburg High School graduate finished the season with a 20.6 average and was named to the West Virginia Conference second team as the Rams finished 12-16.

"Shank, who elevated his status when he became a star at Chambersburg during his senior season, scored 20 or more points in 17 contests for Shepherd and is currently 24th on the all-time scoring list with 1,073 career points.

Shank hit 45.5 percent of his field goal attempts, including 42 percent from 3-point range, and made 80 percent from the free throw line. He also averaged 4.8 rebounds and led the team in steals with 1.5 per game."
Shepherd rallies to sweep Bluefield State

- **COLLEGE SOFTBALL**

  SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va. — Jamie Griffin belted a three-run triple and scored the winning run an error as Shepherd University rallied for five runs in the bottom of the seventh inning to beat Bluefield State 7-6 in the nightcap of the Rams' WVIAC doubleheader sweep Saturday.

  Shannon Leighty pitched a three-hit shutout to lead Shepherd (10-5, 4-0) to a 6-0 victory in the first game.

  Megan Zahnau went 2-for-3 with three runs scored for the Rams in the first game. Jenn Canby had two hits and two runs for Shepherd in the first game.

- **COLLEGE BASEBALL**

  Shepherd 4, Alderson-Broaddus 1

  SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va. — Nicky Brown went 3-for-5 to pace Shepherd University's 12-hit attack against Alderson-Broaddus in the WVIAC matchup.

  Joe Cook, Dirk Webb and Phillip Powell each added two hits for the Rams (12-6, 6-0), while Chris Anderson pitched two innings of hitless relief for the win.
Shepherd extends win streak to eight games.

By MATT POLING
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SHEPHERDSTOWN — When Shepherd opened its week-long homestand last weekend, on paper the Rams were just another sub-.500 baseball team.

Seven days and eight wins later, Shepherd is pointed to enter the North Atlantic Region's first set of rankings as a contender for a top-four spot.

Shepherd completed a three-game sweep of West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference foe Alderson-Broaddus with a 4-1 win Saturday at Fairfield Field.

The 12-6 Rams improved to 6-0 in the conference, although like the first two wins over A-B, this one wasn't easy either.

Shepherd led just 2-1 from the third inning on. It wasn't until Cole Cook, who went 2 for 4, doubled home Josh Bowers in the eighth that the Rams had any breathing room. Dick Webb's RBI-groundout provided the final margin as Austin Bowie, Shepherd's fourth pitcher of the game, hurled a scoreless ninth for his second save.

Scott Kostuchinski started, but only lasted four innings after tightening up. He pitched one on Friday.

Shepherd coach Wayne Riser then got a stellar performance from his bullpen and a key defensive play to preserve the game.

Chris Anderson, who got the win, and Todd Coder hurled two scoreless innings apiece to set up Bowie's save.

"I was very encouraged that they came in and threw strikes, let the defense make plays," Riser said.

The defense made quite the play for Coder in the seventh with the Rams still clinging to their 2-1 cushion. Justin Torek led off with a single and tried to score all the way from first two outs later on Matt Abbott's double off the right-center-field fence.

Shepherd's Ryan Harju got to the ball quickly and got the relay throw to Bowers at second. He then fired a strike to catcher David Tobin for the out at the plate.

It was a play that proved key in a game where the Rams had numerous opportunities to blow it open against A-B starter Wes Callow. Shepherd, however, left the bases loaded twice and stranded 12 runners in all.

"I wish I had the answer for it," Riser said of the lack of timely hitting. "I just got to tip my cap to (Callow). He threw well. Callow's mates couldn't get him any run support, however. The Battlers' only run came on a long solo homer by Ray Gill in the second inning. Gill finished with three of A-B's six hits.

Shepherd's eight-game winning streak is the Rams' longest since an eight-game run in the 2002 season. That was also the last time Shepherd was invited to the four-team regional tournament.

Regardless of what the rankings say on Monday, Riser is just happy his team has turned its season around this early compared to years past.

"The bottom line is in other years we never got above .500 until April," Riser said. "It's encouraging we're playing this way this early in the season. The challenge is can we continue to play this well, more consistently and get better with the little things?"

The Rams will likely get one of their biggest challenges of the season on Tuesday when they head to Slippery Rock for a doubleheader. The Rock (15-1) had a strong case for the region's No. 1 ranking.

Both schools possess a sweep of Mansfield so far.

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CHIPSHOTS

Three diamond Rams honored

PRINCETON — Two Shepherd softball players and one baseball player earned West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference weekly honors for last week.

Rams sophomore third baseman Mia Zappacosta and junior pitcher Karen Burnette were named the softball player and pitcher of the week, respectively, by the league.

Zappacosta notched seven hits, six for extra bases, as the Rams went 6-0. She also accounted for eight RBI and six runs scored.

Burnette fired a pair of shutouts against Columbia Union at Glenville State. Burnette struck out 12 in a one-hitter against CU and fanned six more in a shutout of Glenville.

Travis Mumaw was tapped as the league's pitcher of the week in baseball. Mumaw, a junior, yielded just two hits in an 11-2 win against Mansfield.

Shepherd rises in baseball poll

SLIPPERY ROCK, Pa. — Shepherd rose to seventh this week in the National Collegiate Baseball Writers of America Division II North Atlantic Regional Poll.

First in the poll is Slippery Rock, which the Rams (12-6) visit today for a doubleheader. The Rockets are 15-1.

Following Slippery Rock is Kutztown (18-8), West Virginia State (15-9), West Chester (10-7) and Shippensburg (14-12) tied, Pitt-Johnstown (12-4), Shepherd, Davis & Elkins (16-9), Indiana, Pa. (7-3) and Mansfield (9-9).

— Staff reports

Shepherd golf

PIPESTEM — The Shepherd golf team finds itself in first place at the Concord Invitational after Tuesday's first-day action left the Rams and host Concord tied at the top with team scores of 295 at Pipestem State Park.

Shepherd's David Bradshaw shot the lowest round, firing a 2-under 70. He and teammate Bryan Snow (71) are two of the three golfers who shot under par. Concord's Dorsey Donaldson (71) is the third.

For Shepherd, Trevor Hedges and Chip Clusman each added 78s, while Jason Ferguson shot a 76. Final-round action starts today at 10:30 a.m.

— Staff reports
Nicky Brown sparks streaking Rams

Transfer manages nine hits as Shepherd goes 6-0.

Name: Nicky Brown  
Class rank: Junior  
School: Shepherd University  
Sport: Baseball  
Position: Third base

Accomplishment: Brown was key in Shepherd's 6-0 week. He helped the Rams score four wins over West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference foes Salem International and Alderson-Broadus, while also helping the team to a doubleheader sweep of Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference power Mansfield — a Northeast Region rival of Shepherd's.

Brown batted .360 from the No. 2 spot in coach Wayne Riser's order, going 9 of 25 with seven runs scored, five RBI and a home run.

He scored four runs and drove in a pair in a one-run win over Mansfield and had the game-winning hit in the second game against Alderson-Broadus, a two-run double that broke a 6-6 tie in the sixth.

Brown, a 2001 graduate of Hedgesville who played two years at Potomac State College in Keyser, is second on the team in hitting with a .373 average. He's scored 13 runs and driven in eight, maintaining an on-base percentage of .434.

Brown: "I feel better every day, getting the timing down. The more at-bats I get, the better I feel at the plate.

"(On the game-winning hit against Alderson-Broadus), I got up in the count. It was 3-1, so you know a fastball is coming. You gotta be on it.

"I had a couple (game-winning hits) for Potomac State. That was my first one for Shepherd. It's always good to help the team win a game."

Riser: "There's no doubt that Nicky's done a very nice job for us from the first day he set foot on the campus. We're glad to have him here, and he's definitely been a spark here for us.

"He makes a lot of things happen for us by getting on base. He handles the bat real well, which makes him a good hit-and-run guy.

"Every time I saw him play (at Potomac State), I never saw him not make the routine play. I never saw him make any defensive mistakes, and that interested me a great deal.

"He has the talent to play college shortstop, and that allows him to play any infield position. We're ecstatic to have him."

What the future holds: After a 4-6 start, the Rams take an eight-game winning streak into today's doubleheader with Slippery Rock, which has been the Northeast Region's dominant team so far this year. The trip is part of a seven-game road trip that includes three against WVUAC Northern Division foe West Liberty.

Brown expects the team to keep its hot play going.

"Everybody on this team gets along," he said. "When I came over and started playing, we've had fun ever since. And now we're starting to win."

Player FROM PAGE D1

we're starting to win."

Other top performances:

Shepherd's Collin Brown was 8 of 14 with four RBI and seven runs in four games. He missed the Rams' last two with a leg injury. Against Salem last Sunday, he had two hits and earned a save on the mound, then had a pair of home runs in Shepherd's doubleheader sweep of Mansfield. ... Shepherd softball freshman Jamie Griffin was 4 of 17 with eight RBI and four runs scored in the Rams' 6-0 week. She had a pair of home runs, as well as a three-run, game-winning triple against Bluefield State. ... Musselman sophomore Mark Darlington allowed three hits in six innings of a 7-1 win over Loudoun County, Va. ... Jefferson senior Mike Myers allowed five hits and struck out nine in a complete-game win, 6-2 over Thomas Johnson, Md. He threw 128 pitches. ... Martinsburg junior D.J. Porter won the 100-meter, 200-meter and 400-meter races in a tri-meet with Hedgesville and Musselman.

— Compiled by John O'Brien

Do you want to recommend someone for The Journal's athlete of the week award? Call sports editor Matthew Tabeek at 263-8931, Ext. 134, or e-mailJO-brien@journal-news.net.
AREA ROUNDUP

Slippery Rock sweeps Rams

SLIPPERY ROCK, Pa. — Slippery Rock swept Shepherd in a key North Atlantic Regional doubleheader Wednesday, 3-0 and 2-1.

The Rock, ranked seventh in the latest Collegiate Baseball Division II poll, was led by Chase Row’s two-run single to key a three-run third inning in the first game. He went 2 for 3 in the game.

Derek Blyzwick (2-1) went the distance, allowing five hits, to outduel Rams starter Steve Kozak (0-2), who gave up all three runs and seven hits in 4 1/3 innings. Todd Coder pitched hitless ball the rest of the way for naught.

Slippery Rock (18-2) got two runs in the third inning on a Matt Messer Single and a sacrifice fly from Matt Kuzusko in the night cap. Shepherd (12-8) out-hit Slippery Rock 6-4, but could only manage one run in the fifth when Nicky Brown singled home Jerry Jubb. Brown finished 2 for 4.

Slippery Rock starter Jeremy Becker (2-0) gained the win, while Dan Herisko (5) picked up the save. Travis Mumaw (1-1) suffered his first loss for the Rams.

Shepherd returns to action this weekend for a three-game road series against West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference foe West Liberty.

Shepherd golf

PIPESTEM — Concord’s Darcy Donaldson fired a 70 for a two-day total of 141 to lead the Mountain Lions to a victory in the Concord Invitational Wednesday at Pipestem State Park.

Concord and Shepherd were tied after the event’s first day, but Concord bested the Rams by six strokes, 588-594. Ohio Valley also tied the Rams for second. Fairmont was fourth with 595.

David Bradshaw led the Rams overall with a 144, but only posted a 74 on Wednesday. Bryan Snow joins Bradshaw on the all-tournament team after firing a 145 over two days.

Players whose scores also counted for the Rams were: Trevor Hedges 78-73-151; Jason Ferguson 76-78-154 and Chip Clusman 78-78-156.

Shepherd returns to action this Sunday and Monday in the Northeast Regional Tournament at Speidel Course at Oglebay Park.
COLLEGE BASEBALL

Slippery Rock 3-2, Shepherd 0-1

SLIPPERY ROCK, Pa. — Slippery Rock used a pair of third inning spurts to notch a doubleheader sweep of Shepherd University.

Chase Rowe hit a two-run single in third inning of the opener and Slippery Rock, ranked seventh in Division II, blanked the Rams, 3-0. Derek Blyzwick allowed five hits — none for extra bases — in the complete-game victory.

Matt Messner had an RBI single and later scored on a sacrifice fly by Matt Kozusko in the third inning of the second game and Slippery Rock (18-2) held off Shepherd, 2-1, for the sweep.

The Rams (12-8) got on the board in the fifth when Nicky Brown singled to drive in Jerry Jubb. Brown led Shepherd with two hits.
Comeback Victory
Moves Streak to 10;
Ladies 4-0 in WVIAC

Shepherd’s current win streak grew to 10 games when the Lady Rams were able to post a fifth-straight doubleheader sweep.

The latest Shepherd successes came in a WVIAC twinbill against Bluefield.

Shepherd posted wins of 6-0 and 7-6 to elevate its WVIAC record to 4-0 and its overall mark to 10-4.

Shannon Leighty had the shutout win in the conference opener. Leighty (2-0) had a route-going three-hitter and struck out just one.

Shepherd made two errors behind Leighty . . . but Bluefield made eight errors to help cause its downfall.

Megan Zahnow went 2-for-3 and scored three of Shepherd’s six runs.

The Lady Rams were held to only four hits, but the eight Lady Big Blue errors paved the way to a number of unearned runs.

Shepherd scored twice in the first and had another run in the third to give pitcher Leighty a 3-0 lead.

The Lady Rams struggled through much of the nightcap and were behind, 6-2, going to the last of the seventh.

Shepherd’s starting pitcher Stephanie Sims had been replaced by Maggie Smith in the Bluefield sixth.

Smith inherited a four-run deficit . . . but Shepherd’s five-run seventh inning rally made her a winner.

Bluefield had a 2-0 lead against Sims and her fielders when it rallied for another four runs in the fifth.

Trailing, 6-0, Shepherd got two runs back in its half of the fifth. The Lady Rams had only two hits before their gamewinning rally in the seventh.

With only three outs left, Shepherd managed to stay out of the loss column by plating five runs in its half of the seventh.

Jennifer Canby began the rally with a single for her second hit. Megan Zahnow was safe on an error, Bluefield’s second of the game.

Mia Zappacosta coaxed a walk off Bluefield pitcher Katie Kelly.

Kelly then walked in a run when she passed Brooke Small.

Shepherd still trailed, 6-3. But there were no outs and the bases were loaded.

Jamie Griffin, who was hitless in the combined games, drilled Kelly’s first pitch to a gap in rightfield.

As the three baserunners screamed around the bases, each one scoring in front of Griffin, the Bluefield rightfielder missed the cutoff man . . . allowing Griffin to score behind the runs of Zappacosta, Zahnow, and Small.

The three RBIs by Griffin and her run gave the Lady Rams a come-from-way-behind victory.

Bluefield was 0-2 after dropping its first two WVIAC games of the season and was just 8-21 overall.

Shepherd actually committed more errors in the nightcap (five), than it had hits (just four).

Smith’s win was her first decision of the season.

Shepherd is scheduled to face conference opponent Charleston today at 2 p.m. in another home-field doubleheader for the Lady Rams.
Shepherd Sweeps; Streak Goes to Six

TAKOMA PARK (Md.) -- Shepherd swept its third consecutive women's softball doubleheader when it dumped Columbia Union, 14-6 and 7-0.

The Lady Rams were 6-5 overall and Columbia Union was 1-14 overall.

Lady Rams' pitcher Megan Hall benefitted from Shepherd's scoring spurt in the first game. Mia Zappacosta and Brooke Small each had three of Shepherd's 13 hits.

Julie Scherpf contributed two hits and drove in four runs. Zappacosta had three RBIs and Small drove in two more runs.

Megan Zahnow collected two hits and Jamie Griffin slugged a two-run homer.

Shepherd made five errors behind pitchers Hall and reliever Stephanie Sims, who came on in Columbia Union's three-run fifth inning rally.

In the nightcap, Karen Burnett fired a one-hitter and fanned 12 in posting her shut-out win. Burnett improved her record to 2-1.

Zahnow had a solo homer and Charla Wacker drove in two runs with a triple.

Shepherd had only four hits but did play errorless softball behind Burnett.

The score was 3-0 when Shepherd erupted for four runs in the top of the seventh.

Columbia Union committed three errors in the second game and helped Shepherd take a 3-0 lead in the first inning.

The Lady Rams are scheduled to play at home this afternoon at 2 p.m. when WVIAC rival Charleston visits for a doubleheader.
Ladies Begin WVIAC; Winning Continues

Shepherd ventured into conference play for the first time this ladies softball season.
The Lady Rams had reeled off six straight wins after opening the season with five consecutive losses.
Shepherd’s first WVIAC games were at home last Friday against invading Glenville.
When the Lady Rams had taken both games of their conference doubleheader, winning 5-2 and 8-0, they were 8-5 overall, had posted eight consecutive wins, and had opened the conference portion of the schedule with a 2-0 record.
Pitcher Mia Zappacosta had a route-going win in the opener. She fanned four and limited the Lady Pioneers to just five hits.
Shepherd actually spotted the Lady Pioneers a 2-0 lead in the top of the fourth before rallying for three runs in the fifth and two more in the sixth.
Jamie Griffin drilled a two-run homer in the Shepherd fifth to overcome the Glenville two-run lead.
Stephanie Sims slugged a solo homer in the two-run Shepherd sixth and Jennifer Canby drove in Bridget Mercuro with an RBI triple for the Lady Rams’ final run.
Zappacosta was 2-2 with the victory.
The nightcap saw Shepherd flood the Lady Pioneers with three runs in the second and a four-spot in the fifth inning.
The game was halted after five innings by softball’s eight-run mercy rule.
Karen Burnette had the five-inning shutout, limiting Glenville to just three hits in her shortened complete game.
Burnette fanned six and improved her record to 3-1.
Griffin, April Przgocki, and Charla Wacker all had two hits for the Lady Rams. Shepherd had 10 hits in the nightcap win.
Shepherd had not lost since coming back north from a season-opening tournament in North Carolina.
Mumaw Two-Hitter Paves Way For Sweep of Mansfield

By Bob Madison

Tall left-hander Travis Mumaw left a favorable and lasting first-impression when his initial pitching start as a Shepherd baseball sophomore ended only after six innings of two-hit work against highly-regarded Mansfield University.

Shepherd thumped the Mountaineers, 11-2, in the second game of a mid-week doubleheader . . . but it was the 6-foot-6, 190-pound Mumaw whose emergence as a possible stopper that overshadowed much of the post-game adding of numbers and figuring of records.

The victory was Shepherd's fifth straight . . . leaving the Rams with a 9-6 record to take into a scheduled Easter Weekend, three-game series with conference rival Alderson-Broaddus.

Mumaw lost his shutout and no-hitter in the third when he surrendered one of his three walks and was solved for Kevin Rollins' RBI double.

When D.J. Hoshauer homered to deep left in the fourth, it was the second and last hit Mumaw would allow.

Hoshauer's blast brought a temporary 2-2 snarl to the outfield scoreboard.

But Shepherd had other hitting plans in mind.

In its half of the fourth, Shepherd shortstop Ryan Brady rammed a one-out double to the fence in rightcenter. Brady reached third on David Toth's ground single to left.

Josh Bowers drilled a double beyond the rightfielder that rolled to the fence and provided Brady and Toth with the avenues to Shepherd's third and fourth runs.

Mumaw had a 4-2 lead after four. He made good use of his provisions (runs).

The Shepherd hitters made sure Mumaw's sterling effort was not wasted.

In the fifth, Collin Brown (who would finish with three hits, three RBIs, and two runs scored) began what would blossom into a three-run inning with a single.

Brown advanced to second on a hit-and-run ground out.

Joe Cook's single, his stolen base, and a poor throw on Brady's infield grounder got the Rams another two runs. Matt Noll walked and Toth bounced a run-scoring single to center. Toth's RBI made it 7-2.

In the Shepherd sixth, Ryan Harju doubled against the wall in leftcenter to begin a productive four-run inning.

Collin Brown followed with a two-run homer that took all the air out of the Mountaineers.

A hit batter, Cook's double, and a walk brought in another

See Mumaw on page 16

Mansfield pitcher.

Shepherd continued to score, finally reaching double figures as Brady got an RBI on a sacrifice fly and Matt Noll scored the 11th run with a ground single by the second baseman.

Mumaw's afternoon was complete. He had permitted only five base runners -- the sixth being prevented by Collin Brown's diving catch in left that ended the Mansfield sixth.

There were two strikeouts to be added to Mumaw's pitching line. The Mountaineers went 2-for-20 (.100 batting average) against the lanky left-hander.

Shepherd banged out 13 hits against four mostly ineffective Mansfield throwers.

Nicky Brown reached base three times, Cook had two hits and scored twice, Toth reached base three times and had two RBIs, and Bowers drove in two more runs.

The Mumaw-authored win was Shepherd's fifth consecutive success. And the doubleheader sweep of a regional giant was the most meaningful of this season's successes.

Harju, Collin Brown, Brady, and Nicky Brown have given Shepherd some shining defense . . . and a leak-proof Division II defense is a rare sight in today's aluminum bat world.

Shepherd is due to return its two home games against Mansfield when it travels the considerable distance (on April 12) to Mansfield on the Tugca River in Tioga County, about 15 miles south of the New York border in Pennsylvania's silk and beer country.
Late-Game Rally Keeps Rams Unbeaten In WVIAC Games

By Bob Madison

The forecasted showers for Friday afternoon never materialized. So, Shepherd and Alderson-Broaddus moved to the second game of their WVIAC doubleheader knowing that any early-game runs might eventually prove to be definitive late-game runs if the predicted rain ever came.

It was Shepherd that scored the early runs, taking a four-run lead after three innings behind the pitching of Scott McCormick, who had authored a shutout in his previous game.

It never rained. And Shepherd had built a six-run lead before Alderson-Broaddus helped itself to Shepherd mistakes and some hits of its own to bring the count back to 6-6 in its half of the sixth.

But the Rams had a two-out, nobody-on-base rally waiting in the bottom of the same sixth inning.

Ryan Harju lined a single past the midpoint of Battler pitcher Chad Southern to begin a two-run rally that would give the Rams an 8-6 win and a perfect 5-0 WVIAC record.

After Harju's single, Eric Chrisman dumped a single in front of the rightfielder to give the Rams two baserunners.

Nick Brown sent a long fly over the head of the slowly retreating rightfielder ... and both Harju and Chrisman fled around the bases, staking the Rams to an 8-6 lead.

Scott Koscielniak, usually one of Shepherd's starting pitchers, had gotten the last out in the sixth in relief of McCormick, who deserved a better fate.

When he returned to the mound in the seventh, Koscielniak could be the winning pitcher if he retired the Battlers again.

After an out, Koscielniak walked two straight batters to jeopardize his potential four-out win.

Ronnie Combs then fanned for the second out and pinch hitter Rossi Gaudio lofted a harmless fly to leftfielder Chrisman to close out the newly-minted Shepherd win.

Shepherd's eight runs came because of 10 hits, four walks, and 13 baserunners in its six turns.

David Toth's second homer of the two games provided McCormick with a three-run lead in the second.

Toth had three RBIs in all.

Ryan Brady, Joe Cook, and Nicky Brown had the other Shepherd RBIs with Brown's two-out double in the sixth doing the late-game damage.

When outfielder Collin Brown left with a minor leg injury, Chrisman supplanted him and went 3-for-3 and scored three runs.

Brown had two hits. Dirk Webb reached base safely three times. Brady was aboard twice and Harju was also on base twice with his sixth-inning rally-igniter and an earlier bunt safety.

Shepherd had beaten Salem three times and owned victories over the Battlers in both ends of Friday's doubleheader.

Alderson-Broaddus had a 1-22 record after visiting Hawaii and several southern states before coming to Shepherdstown to open its conference schedule.

The Rams had played their first seven home games ... and they had won them all, giving themselves a boost in the North Atlantic Region rankings and keeping them unbeaten in WVIAC play going into Saturday's series-closing game against the Battlers.
Shepherd Defense, Rallies Defeat Mansfield

By Bob Madison

Home runs. Hits that totaled 12 in number. Excellent fielding that belies a Division II moniker. And it all ends when Shepherd shortstop Ryan Brady sends a sacrifice fly to medium centerfield that scores Nicky Brown with an extra-inning run that gives the Rams an 8-7 win over always-accomplished Mansfield University.

The home runs were two-run and solo jobs from the run-producers, Nicky Brown and Ryan Harju.

The 12 hits helped to overcome Mansfield's 6-3 lead in the fifth inning.

The fielding gems that began during Shepherd's three-game sweep of conference games against Salem were repeated when rightfielder Ryan Harju threw out a runner at second base, continued on when Brady made an over-the-shoulder catch of a twisting popfly, and ended in extra innings when Harju made a full-out, diving catch of a solidly struck line drive for the first out in the eighth inning.

Brady's sacrifice fly that plated Brown with the game-deciding run made Shepherd a winner over a team that historically has success against the Rams.

Mansfield had beaten Shepherd four times in six games since the 1998 season.

And Mansfield is a constant in post-season North Atlantic Region tournaments, usually securing one of the four bids to that precursor to the Division II World Series.

Mansfield brought a 9-5 record to sunny Fairfax Field. All of its games had been on the road or on neutral fields. The Mountaineers, often victims of lake-effect snow in their home near the New York border, were the victims of a Shepherd comeback in the opening game of a doubleheader.

Nicky Brown's two run homer had given the Rams a quickly-erased 2-0 lead.

Mansfield scored single runs off Shepherd starter Steve Kozak in both the second and third.

Harju's third homer in the last five games lifted Shepherd to a temporary 3-2 lead.

But some shoddy fielding by Kozak, his balk, a bunt single, and two-run double by J.D. Druckenmiller provided the Mountaineers with a 6-3 lead in the fifth.

Mansfield brought on one of its front-line pitchers after Collin Brown homered to leadoff the Shepherd fifth and was followed by Nicky Brown's scratch single and Dirk Webb's ground single to center.

Colby Rickabaugh was brought in to quell what could have been a rally worth enough runs to at least get the Rams even.

Rickabaugh brought his 85-mph fastball. But Shepherd tied the game at 6-6 anyway when the Mansfield reliever walked Brady and couldn't handle his first baseman's throw when he covered first after a grounder by Eric Chrisman.

Nicky Brown and Webb scored in the inning and Shepherd Coach Wayne Riser turned the pitching chores over to Austin Bowie.

Bowie blanked the Mountaineers in the sixth and had a 7-6 lead when he went back out for the seventh.

Shepherd had taken a 7-6 lead when Harju singled, was sacrificed to second but then made a base running gaffe by getting thrown out at third by 15-feet when Nicky Brown grounded to short.

With Brown at first, Joe Cook sent an opposite field grounder toward the foul line in left. Cook's hot-shot went all the way to the equipment building in foul territory.

Brown was sent flying around third but the relay throw from the outfield to the shortstop was going to reach the Mansfield catcher in time to get him.

The throw was off-line and couldn't be handled by the catcher. Brown scored and Bowie had a 7-6 lead to protect.

Mansfield evened the score on two singles and line drive to center that went for a sacrifice fly.

In the Shepherd seventh, the Rams had the bases loaded after Brady's single, an infield error on David Toth's grounder, and a two-out walk to Harju.

Rickabaugh fanned Collin Brown . . . calling for extra innings.

Todd Coder, with the considerable help from Harju's diving catch, had an three up, three down inning.

Rickabaugh was gone in the Shepherd eighth.

Nate Jones from Horseheads, New York brought his out-of-the-strike-zone pitches.

Jones walked Nicky Brown and Cook dumped a soft single into shallow center.

Webb sacrificed both runners along a base.

And then Brady lofted his sacrifice fly to center . . . giving the Rams an 8-7 win in one extra inning.

The Rams had won for the fourth straight time . . . and they had made some noise in the North Atlantic Region against a team that annually makes its own noise.
Runners Were Stranded, But Rams Move to 6-0

By Bob Madison

With its seven-game win streak there for all to see, Shepherd faced Alderson-Broaddus for the third time in two days. The Rams needed another conference win to stay even in the WVIAC power ratings with upstart Davis & Elkins.

The day before, Shepherd had taken both ends of a runny-nose, bees-in-the-bat-handles doubleheader from the Battlers.

Shepherd could go to 6-0 and have one-third of its conference games in the win column if it could master Alderson-Broaddus a third straight time.

Scott Koscielnik, already a four-game winner who had pitched 1.2 innings the previous day, got the Shepherd start.

Collin Brown, who had a problem with leg tightness, didn't make a start for the first time this season. Brown is Shepherd's leading hitter at .450.

But Alderson-Broaddus had just one win to show for its 23 starts. And would be using its third-best starter.

Koscielnik rode his two-hitter through four swiftly-paced innings. He had a 2-1 lead because the Rams had trumped Ray Gill's long solo homer to center with RBIs from David Toth and Philip Powell.

But a trend was developing. Shepherd was leaving men on base at an alarming rate.

The Rams left two men stranded in the first and by the third had already left five men on base.

Shepherd's five hits, two walks, and a hit batter hadn't been utilized at all well. And the Battlers were still in the game.

Koscielnik left after four innings. He was relieved by Chris Anderson. Anderson blanked Alderson-Broaddus on no hits in innings five and six.

But Shepherd was powerless to score any more runs itself.

The "left on base" category numbers were adding up . . .

The Rams stranded a runner at third in the fifth, but that was mild when compared with the Shepherd sixth.

Dirk Webb had a leadoff single. But he was erased when Toth grounded into a double play.

With two outs, Ryan Brady singled and Powell drilled a line single to left.

When Eric Chrisman was walked, the Rams had the bases loaded. There had been three singles and a walk in the inning, yet the scoreboard was still stuck at 2-1.

Josh Bowers grounded into a force play to end another threat . . . and give Shepherd nine runners left stranded in five turns.

Anderson was replaced by Todd Coder as the Battler seventh opened.

Coder was greeted by Justin Torok single. Two outs later, Torok tried to score when Matt Abbott sent a double to the base of the fence in rightfield.

Shepherd outfilder Ryan Harju sent an on-line relay throw to Bowers who fired his throw toward the Rams' catcher, Toth.

Toth made a one-hand grab of the short-hop throw and quickly swung his body into position to tag the hook-sliding Torok for the inning's third out.

The play preserved Shepherd's 2-1 lead.

Coder stranded a runner in the eighth and Shepherd, which had stranded 11 runners in its first seven at-bats tried again to increase its slender one-run advantage.

Bowers doubled into center. He was sacrificed to third by Harju. Joe Cook then produced an RBI double to leftcenter that scored Bowers.

Cook then reached third on Nicky Brown's swinging bunt single on a hit and run.

Cook scampered home as Webb dribbled a soft grounder back toward the pitcher.

Coder turned over a 4-1 lead to Austin Bowie, who was pitching in his fifth straight game.

Bowie registered his third save of the eight-game homestand when he got three of the four men he saw in the ninth.

Shepherd was 12-6 and a perfect 6-0 in the WVIAC. The Rams were scheduled to travel to western Pennsylvania to face Slippery Rock in a doubleheader on Wednesday, March 30.

The Rams return to Fairfax Field on Thursday, April 7 and Friday, April 8 to play rugged Mt. Olive from North Carolina.
Magnanelli, Homers Enough to Tame Battlers

By Bob Madison

When Shepherd’s Tony Magnanelli pitches, you know what is in store for the afternoon. He won’t get rocked. He won’t pitch a shutout, either. His walks and a possible hit batter or two will cause a little heartburn.

But Shepherd, if it shows any offense at all, will be in the game. Magnanelli and his teammates faced Alderson-Broaddus in the first game of a planned, three-game, weekend series of WVIAC games.

Magnanelli allowed three runs in his six innings... for which he was rewarded with a win as the Rams defeated the Battlers, 6-3.

It was six innings with four Alderson-Broaddus hits, four Magnanelli walks and six strikeouts, one hit batter, three earned runs and six Battler runners left stranded.

The Shepherd win wasn’t finalized until reliever Austin Bowie got a save with a scoreless seventh inning of pitching.

Unbeaten in the WVIAC, Shepherd improved to 4-0 in the conference and 10-6 overall.

Magnanelli wasn’t scored on until the Alderson-Broaddus third. And by that time he had a 1-0 lead courtesy of Dirk Webb’s RBI double in the first that scored Joe Cook, who had also doubled.

When the Battlers, who were playing their first conference game, scored their first run in the third, Shepherd had two quick runs in the bottom of the same inning take a 3-1 lead.

Webb hit his first homer of the season to get the first run and then Ryan Brady was credited with a triple when his fly to right was badly misjudged and he was able to score on David Toth’s infield ground out.

Magnanelli struggled through innings four and five, yielding two more runs on three hits, two walks, and a hit batter.

But the Battlers left three runners aboard in those two combined innings... and Shepherd was still even at 3-3.

In the Rams’ fifth, Cook doubled off the fence in right and Toth hammered a two-run homer to left to boost his RBI total for the dank and dreary afternoon to three and give Shepherd a 5-3 lead.

Josh Bowers drilled Shepherd’s third homer of the day in the next inning and Magnanelli departed after six innings on the long end of a 6-3 score.

Bowie had no problems in the Battlers’ seventh as he retired all three men he saw.

The Rams had produced nine hits, the first seven of which went for extra bases.

Cook and Webb had two hits and Cook scored two runs.

Magnanelli was 2-1 and Shepherd had won its sixth consecutive game -- four of which were WVIAC successes.

All but forgotten was the Shepherd second inning where it loaded the bases with no outs and still couldn’t score.

Magnanelli had survived rather than prospered. But surviving with only three runs charged against your pitching record isn’t a bad way to go.
First-Year Players Already Making Marks

By Bob Madison

To look at Shepherd’s 2005 baseball hitting and pitching statistics, it’s not difficult to see why the Rams have won all eight of their home games and have gotten off to a 6-0 start in WVIAC games.

When the Rams came back from 10 games that were played in North Carolina and South Carolina they were 4-6.

And few players had sparking statistics, neither 24-carat gold nor pyrite, sometimes called “Fool’s Gold”.

First baseman Dirk Webb had missed almost two weeks of playing time with a leg injury and his limited at-bats had led to a .185 batting average.

After playing in eight home games where the Rams swept Salem in three games, took a doubleheader from well-regarded Mansfield, and then swept three more games from Alderson-Broadus, Webb has raised his average to just under .300.

After 17 games (and not including a 4-1 win over Alderson-Broadus), the Rams had eight regulars with batting averages ranging from leftfielder Collin Brown’s .460 to second baseman’s Josh Bowers .303.

Shortstop Ryan Brady was at .314 and centerfielder Joe Cook had raised his lowly southern swing average to .322.

Cook, who started slowly in both his freshman and sophomore seasons, batted over .300 in both those campaigns as he hit well in April and May.

Catcher/designated hitter David Toth was at .333 and second baseman Nicky Brown was at .365.

Rightfielder Ryan Harju had lifted his average from .167 to .367 in the team’s eight-game winning streak.

Designated hitter/catcher Matt Noll was at .364 in his 11 starts in the team’s 17 games.

Most of the Shepherd lineup is filled with players new to the team in 2005.

Webb is a freshman from Hedgesville High and Nicky Brown is a junior transfer from Potomac State in Keyser.

Shortstop Brady is another junior transfer and he played at Hagerstown Community College in 2004.

Second baseman Josh Bowers is another freshman and played at Williamsport High in 2004.

Collin Brown was at North Carolina State last season and Harju is still another junior college transfer, coming from Hagerstown Community College.

The “everyday” lineup has been fitted with six of eight new players to Shepherd.

When freshman Philip Powell is inserted as the designated hitter as he has been recently, Coach Wayne Riser has seven of eight new “position player” faces in his lineup.

Powell played at South Hagerstown High and is still another freshman.

There are a sprinkling of new faces in Shepherd’s pitching rotation.

Scott McCormick (2-1 with an earned run average of 2.41) has been the Rams’ second starter in their rotation.

McCormick came from Potomac State and is a junior right-hander.

Travis Mumaw had a two-hit effort in a win over Mansfield.

Mumaw is a sophomore from Potomac State.

The other new-to-the-team in 2005 pitchers are junior Chris Anderson from Hagerstown Community College and Collin Brown.

Brown has pitched only two innings in two brief appearances.

The holdover pitchers from the 2004 season, which was ended only with Riser’s first-ever WVIAC tournament championship, are Tony Magnanelli, Scott Koscienlka, Austin Bowie, Todd Coder, and Steve Rosak.

Magnanelli started the first game of both three-game conference series versus Salem and Alderson-Broadus.

He is 2-2 and has been steadily lowering his earned run average from his mediocre games on the southern swing.

Koscienlka, like Magnanelli, was pounded in his early-season outings on the road, has started the third game of the series against Salem and Alderson-Broadus.

Koscienlka is 4-1 overall.

Bowie has become the Shepherd closer and appeared in five consecutive games to end the eight-game home stand. Bowie has two saves and has lowered his earned run average to 1.68.

Coder has been a reliever in three games, has a 1-1 record, and a 3.38 earned run average in just 2.2 innings of work.

Rosak has started two games and lost his only decision. He has pitched eight innings overall and the Rams won the second game he started, an 8-7 decision over Mansfield.

The Rams have 12 conference games remaining.

Shepherd is at West Liberty for three games this weekend, travels to Fairmont for three games the weekend of April 8-10, faces Davis & Elkins in a three-game set at home on April 16-17, and closes out its WVIAC schedule on April 23-24 at Salem.

The corps of new faces have blended their talents well as the Rams try for another Northern Division title.
Calm, cool and collected
Shepherd beats Charleston, runs winning streak to 12 games

By RICK KOZLOWSKI
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SHEPHERDTOWN — Stephanie Sims needed a bag of ice to ease some swelling near the palm of her left hand after taking a ball off it during pregame warmups Thursday.

The Shepherd freshman pitcher proved cooler than that ice moments later, however.

Two times, in fact. Sims tied the game with a single to right field in the sixth inning and then won it with a drive down the left-field line in the seventh, giving the Rams a 4-3 victory and a sweep of a West Virginia Inter-collegiate Athletic Conference doubleheader against Charleston.

The Rams, who have won 12 games in a row and are leading the WVIAC, claimed the first game 8-3 in five innings as Karen Burnette tossed a three-hitter and earned her team-best fourth win.

Sims won the second game on the mound, but not until she turned to her offense to overcome a two-run deficit by the Golden Eagles that gave them a 3-2 lead.

After Julie Scherpf singled to begin the sixth, April Przygozki pinch hit and promptly stole second base. She moved to third as Alyssa Rowe grounded out. Sims then lashed a shot to right field to score Przygozki.

"It was a changeup, and I hate them," Sims said. "I knew I had to hit it or I would’ve struck out." The Rams wound up loading the bases with one out against Charleston pitcher Michelle Sabellhaus, who had used that slow-slow change-up to baffle Shepherd hitters at various times. Shepherd couldn’t push across the go-ahead run, however.

It was up to Sims again in the seventh after Janie Griffin lashed a one-out single up the middle and stole second. Scherpf walked, but Rowe struck out for the second out.

Sims hit a shot over the third baseman’s head and Griffin chugged home from second, with a wide turn around third, and still well ahead of a throw to the plate.

"There was a little bit of pressure there," Sims said. "I was trying to get a run in." It’s not so much praying anymore for the Rams (12-5, 6-0).

Shepherd’s April Przygozki drives the ball during the first game of a doubleheader against Charleston in Shepherdstown.

WVIAC during this win streak. They areordaing a belief they can’t be beaten and now have swept consecutive conference doubleheaders by winning the second games in their last at-bat.

"I think there’s a lot of confidence the way this team has come together so well," Sims said. "We have confidence in the field and at the plate."

Coach Dave Traill sees a conscious command among the players on his 17-player roster that includes 12 freshmen and sophomores.

"After 12 wins in a row, you’d think they’d be more cocky, but they just go out and play the game," he said. "It’s confidence. As long as they keep winning, they think they can do it."

That was particularly true when, after breathing through the opener by scoring a pair of runs in each of their four at-bats, they encountered resistance in the nightcap — partially through Shepherd’s own undoing.

The Rams went ahead 2-0 as Jen Cauthy launched a laser that hit Charleston shortstop Lauren Newton below the throat for a single and then scored on Brooke Smith’s groundout in the first, and Scherpf singled and scored later on an error in the second.

But the Golden Eagles pulled to within 2-1 in the fourth as Newton doubled and scored on a single by Andrea Gregory. Charleston (5-10, 6-4) went ahead the next inning.

Annie Yost walked and was sacrificed to second. She moved to third as Krystal Robertson bunted, a ball that appeared ready to spin foul, and beat Mia Zappacosta’s throw to first base. Then Sabellhaus loaded the bases on a short grounder up the first base line on which Smith looked only to keep the runner at third and disregarded the out.

Newton produced a run with a wind-sided bloop over second base and Amber Snyder followed with a similar hit that scored Charleston’s third run.

"The infield’s drawn in there with a runner at third," Traill said. "If (Megan) Zathan’s a playing routine, it’s a routine pop-up.

But the Rams stayed undeterred, and won in the seventh.

"Missakes are going to happen," Sims said. "We just have to collect ourselves and pick each other up and know we can do it and not be down on ourselves."

Sims, the designated hitter in the opener, had one of five Shepherd doubles in that game and drove in two runs and scored twice.

Zappacosta doubled twice and knocked in two runs. Zathan, going 3 for 3 with a double, scored twice, including Shepherd’s first run. Charis Wacker also had a double.

Burnette fanned five hitters in the opener, pushing her strikeout total to 32.

The Rams visit West Virginia University-tecH and West Virginia State for a pair of weekend doubleheaders and then visit Vermont Stateburg, which played in the national playoffs last season.

"That’ll be a big test," Traill said. Right now, Shepherd is passing its exams, though.
COLLEGE SOFTBALL
Shepherd 8-4, Charleston 0-3

SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va. — Karen Burnette fired a three-hit shutout with five strikeouts to lead Shepherd University past Charleston in the opening game of a WVIAC doubleheader sweep.

Megan Zahnow had three hits and Mia Zappacosta added two in the first game for the Rams (12-5, 6-0). Zappacosta and Stephanie Sims each drove in two runs.

Sims had the game-winning hit in the bottom of the seventh to lift Shepherd in the nightcap. Sims, also the winning pitcher, finished with two hits, while Brooke Small and Julie Scherpf each added two hits.

Andrea Gregory and Lauren Newton each had two hits for Charleston (15-10, 6-4).