

Wadowski's big day key to CC victories

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BASEBALL

Mike Wadowski sat down in the dugout, wiped the sweat off his shaved head, stopped picking his equipment in his bag, sighed, then tried to sum up the kind of day he and his Catholic Central baseball team had on Saturday.

The condensed version was a pretty good one.

The Shamrocks, defending champions in Division I, rallied past No. 7-ranked Southgate Anderson in the opener, 3-2, then disposed of Garden City in the regional final, 14-4.

"To tell you the truth, we had the same mindset for both games," Wadowski said. "We were confident because we knew what we had to do, I just tried to smooth out my swing and shorten up my stroke."

It paid off for Wadowski, who was 2-for-3 against Southgate, with a homer in the second inning to tie the score and a single in the sixth to take the lead.

Against Garden City, Wadowski was 3-for-4 with four RBI, a two-run homer, two runs scored and came on in relief to pitch 2¹/₂ innings of one-hit ball.

"Wadowski had a great day," CC coach John Salter said. "His homer in the first game allowed us to tie, and his homer in the second game gave us a comfortable margin. And he came in and

closed to give us another arm with playoff experience."

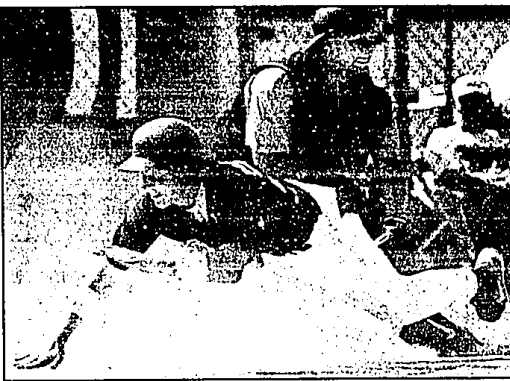
It was a tough way for the Cougars (23-5) to end their season.

"We hadn't won a district in 16 years and had never been to a regional final," coach Steve Herman said. "You learn by inches. Last year, we went to the district final; this year, we went to the regional final. You have to take things step-by-step."

After Wadowski's RBI single scored Dave Tovey in the second inning of the championship game, CC went to town in the third inning, sending 12 batters to the plate in an eight-run, five hit frame.

Starting pitcher Robbie Hudson (6-4), who got the win in relief of Justin Ockerman in the first game, took the loss in the second game — giving up five runs on five hits, with three walks and two strikeouts. Ryan Krol came on in relief and didn't fair much better, giving up six runs on four hits and three walks in 1¹/₂ innings.

"We gave them too many opportunities to score, and they took advantage of them," said Herman. "I thought when we pulled to within five runs, we could have had a chance. Then



STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HARTLEY

when they got it back to eight runs, it took the wind out of our sails."

The Cougars did fight back in the fourth with four runs, keyed by a two-run homer by designated hitter Brent Pelz to chase CC starter Kevin Entsminger. But CC came right back in the bottom of the inning, manufacturing three more runs on just two hits and an error.

"The biggest thing was that we made sure we swung at strikes," Salter said. "I thought if we were disciplined at the plate, we would have a good chance."

In all, the Shamrocks banged out 12 hits. John Hill was 2-for-3

with a pair of doubles and three RBI. Brian Williams was 3-for-5 with an RBI and a run scored. Ryan Rogowski was 2-for-4 with two runs scored. Dave Tovey was 0-1, but walked three times, was hit by a pitch and scored three runs. Adam Kline was 2-for-3 with an RBI and two runs scored and Matt Lorida and Charlie Heeger had RBIs.

CC 3, SOUTHGATE 2: Pitching kept Southgate off stride, even though the Titans (24-6) took a 2-1 lead in the top of the sixth inning.

Southgate took a 2-1 lead in the top of the sixth when Bobby Garza scored on a throwing error. After Joe Goins doubled to put runners at second and third

with none out, Salter pulled Kline and replaced him with Heeger, who set down the side — striking out two.

Then, CC came back strong in the bottom of the inning as Heeger led off with a walk, stole second, went to third on a ground out by Kline and scored when Wadowski singled.

Wadowski went to second on a wild pitch by Ross Williams (11-1) and was lifted for pinch runner Mike Greis. Tovey singled to left, scoring Greis with the winning run.

Southgate opened the scoring when Tommy Garza, who was hit by a pitch, scored on a passed ball. Wadowski evened the score when he took a 1-0 pitch over the fence in right-center field. Williams took the loss, despite giving up just four hits, one walk, two hit batters and 10 strikeouts.

Mahoney and Hill all walked, with Smith scoring on a wild pitch and Mahoney scoring on a sacrifice fly by Entsminger.

"We had a lot of things go our way," Salter said. "If Brian hadn't caught the homer, they would have tied it and it would have pumped them up. Then we got momentum back with five runs. (Novi) hit balls hard, but we caught them and ours fell in. Sometimes it happens that way."

Errors cost Trojans win in regional

It's an old bugaboo for any baseball team: errors. And Clarencville couldn't stand prosperity in a Division III regional game Saturday at Lake Fenton.

After taking a 4-0 lead with four runs in the top of the fourth inning, state-ranked Madison Heights Madison capitalized on three errors in the bottom half of the inning resulting in five runs and eventually an 8-4 victory.

Madison went on to win the championship against Harper Woods, 17-7, to improve to 21-3 on the year. Harper Woods advanced in the other semifinal with an 8-3 triumph over the Blue Devils.

"We were right there ready to win and then we couldn't catch the easy ball," said Clarencville coach Steve Gentile, whose team bowed out 7-14 overall. "It was a situation where we were in a big game and we got a little nervous. We could have gotten out of the inning. We had two outs and missed a pop-out in foul territory."

Clarencville, starter Kevin Silve yielded eight walks and seven hits in five innings before giving way to reliever Joe Kooch.

Down 3-0 after three innings, Clarencville got back in it on a 420-foot homer by Scott Carr, an RBI single by Eric Elmore and an RBI walk to Rey Gutierrez with the bases loaded.

Kooch and Elmore combined for four of Clarencville's eight hits.

But the Trojans could not overcome the old bugaboo — six total errors.

Shamrocks from page C1

pitch. Designated hitter Aaron Rowe, who was a 48th-round pick of the Milwaukee Brewers in last week's amateur draft, hit a rocket to straightaway center field.

Williams went back to the fence, put a hand up on the fence to brace himself, leaped and turned what would have been the tying run into just another out.

"If that had gone out, it would have been 3-3 and anything could have happened," said Williams. "I went back, felt the fence and got it. I was kind of surprised."

So was Novi.

"That was the turning point of the game," agreed Novi coach

Rich Green. "At that point, we'd started to rally a little bit. But that was the breaking point."

If there was any doubt, it was erased in the top of the fourth.

Phil Marrone led off with a single. Williams grounded to third but was safe when second baseman Matt Gorman dropped the high throw and Ryan Rogowski singled to chase starter Brendan Watson (4-3). Josh Sabol came in and gave up an RBI single to John Hill, a sacrifice fly RBI to Heeger and got Dave Tovey to fly out.

Rowe, who earned the win against Pinckney on Saturday and is the ace of Novi's staff, came into pitch against Mike Wadowski. Rowe's first pitch

was a ball. The second was a three-run homer — Wadowski's third home run in as many games — that gave CC an 8-1 lead.

"That helped us a lot, and Brian came up big all day as well," said Heeger, who was counted on at the beginning of the year to be the ace of the staff before shoulder problems kept him off the mound, for the most part, until Saturday's regional against Southgate.

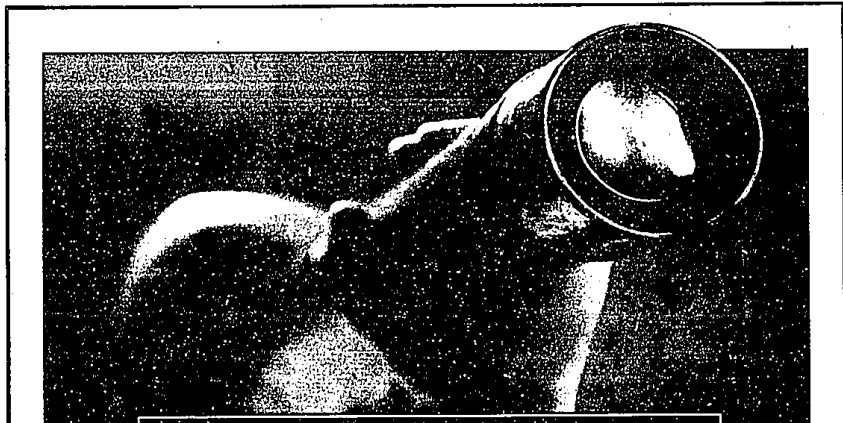
"Brian's catch was crucial. I didn't think (Rowe) hit it well, but it carried far. Then Mike slammed his homer."

In his six innings, Heeger gave up Cervi's homer as the only hit, while walking just one, hitting

one batter and striking out four. Kevin Entsminger pitched the last inning, recording one strike out.

CC took a 2-0 lead in the second inning, after loading the bases in the first. Marrone singled, then scored on a Williams single and a Novi error that put Williams at second. Rogowski doubled to score Williams. It was 3-0 in the third as Wadowski was hit by a pitch and scored on a double by Adam Kline.

The Shamrocks added two more in the sixth as Wadowski's single scored courtesy runner Anthony Coratti and Entsminger scored on a ground out by Kline. CC grabbed two more in the seventh as Andy Smith, Sean



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