

Publisher's Comments by Mark Linnemann

There was no shortage of controversy over Labor Day Weekend with the seedings in the USSSA Great Lakes Division National Tournaments. And with the proponents of the two schools of thought on how seedings should be done being sharply divided on the issue, the matter may not be resolved anytime soon.

Basically, the battle lines are drawn as follows. One side believes that teams should be seeded strictly based on USSSA National Ranking Points. The complaint about this method is that sometimes teams from the same area, and sometimes even the same league, will travel hundreds of miles to play each other in a first-round game.

The other side believes that teams should be seeded by points, but that teams from the same area should be re-seeded into different parts of the bracket. The downside to this is that some teams play all summer long to earn their points to improve their tournament seedings, and then a well-meaning tournament director intervenes and either doesn't give the team the seeding they've earned, or matches them up against a higher ranked team than they should be required to play.

Both sides make strong points in defense of their position.

Robert "Red" Moore, veteran manager-sponsor of Red's Boys/TPS/Classic/Boombah, a Northern Kentucky U-Trip "B" team, says it is a "letdown to play a hometown team when you travel far, and it seems unfair to the region they came from."

Indiana USSSA State Director Charlie Reinbold told the Cincinnati Softball News that he sent two teams to a Great Lakes "E" Nationals in Milford, Oh., and they wound up playing each other the first round. "To top that off, they are both from the same area and play in the same league. They called about it and I told them to play the game there and phone the score in," joked Reinbold.

Reinbold says he seeds by points, but then looks to see if teams from the same state are scheduled to play each other. "I never want to do this," says Reinbold. "I try not to play teams from the same state until the third round. So I switch teams close in points so teams from the same states won't play each in the first or second round if possible."

While it seems that USSSA is going to get complaints no matter what seeding method they use, the harshest criticism appears to come from teams who claim they were not seeded according to their National Ranking Points.

"My team played all year to get a solid seeding," says Brian Kane, the manager of an Illinois team who competed in the Great Lakes "D" National in Indianapolis. "We were ranked no lower than tenth and we had to play a team seeded in the mid-twenties for our first game in an 85-team tournament. That is not right."

Terris Allen, manager of Kentucky "D" State Champion Good Guys/GBI was also disappointed with the Indianapolis event. "Can anyone tell me how the number two and number three seeds in the Great Lakes Region play each other when there are 85 teams in the tournament? What is the purpose of posting points if we are not awarded the proper seed? We earned a number two seed, and got seeded in the number four spot. I'm not whining because we don't care who we play. I just don't like the fact that lower ranked teams have a better draw.

"My opinion is that the tournament should be seeded by points, and it shouldn't matter if you play someone from your backyard," continues Allen. "What is the use of having them (points) if they are not used in the second biggest tournament of the year outside of the World?"

Allen says that altering the seeding a team has earned through its national ranking changes the outcome of the tournament. "How fair is that," he asks? "If you earn it, you should be rewarded - point blank."

Homer Matheny, manager of Great Lakes "B" National Champion Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters, agrees that National Tournament seedings "should be done exclusively by points.

"Our seedings were posted in the tournament packet for all to see," said Matheny. "Once humans start touching the seeds and moving teams around, you have lost the basis for the point system. To start mixing and matching teams based on their location would just confuse things and compromise the system. It would be a nightmare."

Steve Floccari of Dixon Softball concurs.

"My philosophy on seeding is simple whether it be softball, football or baseball. The top-seeded teams should be rewarded," insists Floccari. "I have no problem with facing a familiar team, even after traveling a great distance if that is how it shakes out. Tournaments shouldn't be reshaped just because teams are familiar with each other or are from the same area."

Floccari does point out that there are apparent flaws with the point system. A high ranking actually backfired on his team last season.

"Last year I took OC Softball to the Nationals ranked in the top five of our division in points," he recalls. "We faced a team who at the time had very few points. Our reward was a twenty-plus run spanking."

The problem, explains Floccari, is that the team he played hadn't played much in the USSSA program. "Some teams play only enough USSSA sanctioned tournaments to qualify for the big tournaments," he says.

So in this case, a high ranking proved to be a curse rather than a blessing.

Kevin Henn, manager of Sentry/APEX/LBYC of Northern Kentucky, said he witnessed a similar occurrence in the Great Lakes "C" National earlier this month in Ft. Knox, Ky.

"The team that I believe was the lowest seed turned out to be a great team, but they had not played much USSSA, so they were a low seed, but ended up finishing 2nd. So right off the bat, one of the higher seeds got a rude awakening," says Henn.

While no system is perfect, it would seem that using the National Ranking Points exclusively is the lesser of two evils when you weigh the pitfalls involved with seeding teams against other teams from the same area versus having a tournament operator tamper with the brackets and thus determine the outcome of the event. One would think that most teams prefer a system that is accessible to everyone, and equally fair for everyone, and which enables the teams to determine the outcome of a National Championship on the field, rather than for a tournament director to shape the outcome by taking fate into his own hands and playing the Almighty.

In My Opinion by Ron Jeffers

ESPN just concluded an excellent documentary called "The Bronx Is Burning." It was about the era on the New York Yankees when Billy Martin was managing the team, and Reggie Jackson was one of their so-called super stars.

I really enjoyed the story told in the one hour segments, because it brought back memories of that period of my life that I had almost forgotten. Even being in the presence of Reggie Jackson is one experience I would love to forget. No, maybe I want to remember him for being the biggest jerk I ever met in baseball.

ESPN was in its first or second year of existence, the major league players were on strike, and consequently not playing. I had just returned from Israel where I completed my first term as the umpire in chief of the Macabiah Games (Jewish Olympics). I flew back from Tel Aviv to Syracuse, New York to be the umpire-in-chief of the softball games in the Olympic Festival, and it was there where I met the world's worst ambassador for baseball, one Reggie Jackson, or "Mr. October," as he fancies himself.

With baseball on strike ESPN was searching for something to air on their new television network, which brought them to the Olympic Festival to broadcast Womens Fast Pitch Softball. I was working the plate on the first game they televised, and it was your typical pitchers duel with no runs scored by either team after fourteen innings so they shut their cameras down and went looking for a game where there was more action. If only they had stayed. We finally get a run across home plate after eighteen innings.

This was our first experiment with starting with a runner at second base each half inning, and with the so-called "Safety Base" at first base, which was fifteen inches by thirty inches, half orange and half white, and half in fair ground and half in four ground. This was also the first fast pitch game I ever umpired. A lot of firsts that day.

The die-hard fast pitch people thought this was great softball, but Boomer, ESPN and I thought it was three boring hours. They turned their cameras off and left, but I had to stay and finish the fiasco. The game was about as exciting as watching paint dry or watching grass grow, but how excited can anyone get when the teams can't score a run even when you start with a runner on second base every half inning?

On the second day of competition we had a big rainstorm come up during the game, and the umpires suspended the game, and we quickly took refuge under ESPN's tent. It was there I had the opportunity to find out what kind of human being Reggie Jackson is. While we were under this tent a beautiful wide-eyed little boy, about eight or nine years-old, came over to Reggie and politely asked him for his autograph. "Mr. October," Reggie Jackson, told him "I'm not going to give you no f----- autograph. Go out and play in the f----- rain! This was the great Reggie Jackson. At least great in his own eyes, but not mine.

When I watched the "Bronx is Burning," and the multitude of problems Billy Martin and the rest of the Yankees had playing with this JERK, it brought back memories of that rainy day in Syracuse. I have forgotten a lot of experiences I have had in the games of baseball and softball, but I will never forget the JERK OF ALL JERKS, and I bet that beautiful young child won't forget that day either.

That is my opinion. What is yours?

What's Your Gripe? By Ron Jeffers

Q. Ron, for the past two weeks, on every sports show, I constantly hear about this NBA basketball referee, named Tim Donaghy, who is accused of betting on some of the games he was officiating. I know you know a lot of both amateur and professional officials in all sports, and I was curious to know if you knew him or any other officials who bet on their games.

A. I did not know Mr. Donaghy, and I sincerely hope the allegations that have been brought against him are proved to be false. Without integrity no official can survive in the amateur or professional arena in any sport. The players and fans, above all else, have to trust that all sports officials are fair and honest. Without integrity, we as officials have nothing, and now Mr. Donaghy is finished and ruined forever, even if he is found to be innocent. People will have a doubt and question the motive of every call he will ever make in the future, but that won't happen either because no one will ever hire him as an official again.

I preached for years that if you are going to be an umpire, you will be an umpire on and off the field. Umpires must always carry themselves in a way that no one could ever question their morals, honesty and integrity. That to me meant umpires should never ever drink a beer in uniform or at the park where they umpire. In the sight of the players and or fans, if they see an umpire drink one beer they will swear till their dying day he was

falling down drunk. I personally was good friends with two very successful college basketball officials who were addicted to gambling, and they bet daily on NFL games, horses and college basketball. They bet a lot of money with bookies, and they went to the track when they were out of town whenever possible. I never asked, but I always wondered if they ever bet on the games they worked. I really do hope they didn't, but I do know they bet hundreds of dollars on games every day, and they trusted me not to tell, and I never did. The one man is still working college basketball at the very highest level yet today. I see him on television all the time, and he is one of the highest regarded basketball referees in the world today. No, I will never, ever tell anyone who he is, and yes I do think he is honest in his officiating.

Professional sports have to be above reproach, and they will not tolerate anyone who bets on the games to play the game or officiate it. That is the reason Pete Rose will never, ever be in baseball's Hall of Fame. He was one of, if not the best position players I ever had the opportunity to umpire for or watch play the game. But when they had evidence he was betting on the game of baseball while he played and managed it, he was condemned for life to never, ever be in the Hall.

Q. In our tournament game recently, the score was tied and our team was batting in the top of the 7th. There were runners on 1st and 3rd with two outs. A ground ball was hit to the second baseman, who threw to first to record the final out. The first baseman clearly pulled his foot, but the base umpire called him safe. We went to the home plate umpire, who agreed that the batter was safe, but because the base umpire refused to ask for help, the play stood. What's the sense in paying for two umpires if one umpire won't ask the other umpire for help? Was this situation protestable? Under what circumstances can teams and umpires ask for help from another umpire? The other team ended up scoring a run in the bottom of the inning to win the game, by the way.

A. The plate umpire had a beautiful view of the play at first base, and had a much better opportunity to see if the first baseman did in fact have his foot off the base, but he should never have told any member of either team anything regarding this play. It was the base umpire's call, and from his position out near second base he could not get a good view of the pulled foot, and should have immediately asked the plate umpire for help.

You hire two umpires so you get these calls right, but the base umpire's pride must have gotten in his way, and from his position out near second base he could not get a good view of the pulled foot, and should have immediately asked the plate umpire for help.

You hire two umpires so you get these calls right, but the base umpires pride must have gotten in his way, and he was too bull headed to ask his partner for help.

The plate umpire was an idiot for telling you the runner was safe, even if he was. He should only share his opinion with the base umpire, and then only if and when he is asked by the umpire. Sometimes in the Cincinnati area you are better off with one umpire than you are with two who do not know the mechanics of the two umpire system. They

umpire by themselves so often they do not get enough experience working with another umpire to get good at it. In basketball and football you will oftentimes get multiple officials throwing a flag and or blowing their whistle on the same play, but not so in baseball and softball. In those sports only one person is supposed to be responsible for making almost every call. If you watch professional baseball you will notice the umpires do confer far more often now than they ever have in the history of the game, and this is good for everyone.

Q. Ron, we paid \$275 to play in a USSSA NIT at one of the local complexes last month, and we were supposed to have two umpires on each game. But very few games had two umpires, and it was embarrassing with the caliber of teams that were. There were out of town teams competing, and even a national sponsor was there attending the tournament. Shouldn't the teams who had one umpire per game at least get some sort of a refund?

A. If the complex that hosted this tournament can't provide two umpires per game, they should not be allowed to host another national or NIT tournament of any significance for at least one year. Any team that goes to the tournament director and complains about only getting one umpire should be refunded part of their entry fee. If you were told you would have two umpires you should get what was advertise. At least one umpire fee per each game played with only one umpire should be returned to the team. You paid for two umpires, and if he didn't provide two why would they not be willing to give part of the unused money back. To not do so would be dishonest, and they would be guilty of being a thief.

Q. Ron in the final game of the recent four game series between the Reds and the Pirates, the bases were loaded with two outs. Adam Dunn was trying to score from second base on a single to left field, and he was successful until the Pirates appealed he missed third base. The umpires allowed the appeal, called Dunn out, and said no runs could score. The FSN announcers said this was because Dunn missed third base before Griffey crossed home plate. Is this correct?

A. I just wish they could learn a few rules of the game they are paid to broadcast. All they do is confuse the listeners, because the people who are watching the game assume they know what they are talking about.

The rule is the same in softball as it is in baseball, and it is a simple force out play. Since Mr. Dunn did not legally or by rule (safely) reach third base, it caused the play to be a force out, and the rule states NO run can score when the third out of the inning is the result of a force out or failure of the batter/runner to reach first base safely. The umpires seemed confused by this play too, and this surprised me more than Chris Welch not having a clue.

USSSA News

Four USSSA "Fall State Tournaments" have been scheduled for men's C, D and E and mixed couples teams for September and October.

Each event will be co-sponsored by Worth Sports Co. and Bud Light.

The Men's Class C State Tournament will be held October 6th at Armco Park in Lebanon, Ohio. The tournament deadline is Wednesday, October 3rd, and the entry fee is \$195. The tournament is open to any USSSA sanctioned "C" team. A maximum of either one A player and two B players, or three B players, who competed on a USSSA A or B team, respectively, in 2007, may compete in the Ohio USSSA Men's Class C Fall State Tournament. EXCEPTION: Any player who competed on a USSSA A or B team in 2007 and was subsequently released and became frozen on a C team or below may compete in the Ohio USSSA Men's Class C Fall State Tournament.

For additional information or a tournament packet, call Don Keys at 513-727-3989.

The Men's Class D State Tournament will be held October 6th at Expressway Park in Milford. The deadline is Sunday, September 30th at 10 PM, and the entry fee will be \$150. The event is open to any Ohio USSSA men's class D team. A maximum of two players who competed on a USSSA C team in 2007 may compete in the Ohio USSSA Men's Class D Fall State Tournament. EXCEPTION: Any player who competed on a USSSA A, B or C team in 2007 and was subsequently released and became frozen on a D team or below may compete in the Ohio USSSA Men's Class D Fall State Tournament. Call Expressway Park at 831-2273.

The Men's Class E State Tournament will be held October 6-7 at Ogden's Softball Park in Mt. Orab. The deadline is Thursday, October 4th, and the entry fee will be \$160. A maximum of three players who competed on a USSSA C team in 2007 may compete in the Ohio USSSA Men's Class E Fall State Tournament. EXCEPTION: Any player who competed on a USSSA A, B, C or D team in 2007 and was subsequently released and became frozen on an E team may compete in the Ohio USSSA Men's Class E Fall State Tournament.

Call Perry Ogden at 937-444-2274.

July 21-22...

Pitt Ohio Express, Silver Towne 3-0 At Queen City

West Chester, Oh.--Solid defense carried the day as Pitt Ohio Express and Silver Towne each held three opponents to single digit scoring en route to a first place finish in their respective divisions of an eight team Sunday morning round robin July 22nd at Queen City Sports Complex.

Pitt Ohio drilled eventual division runner-up Pierre Foods (2-1) in a key first round match-up, then routed Milford Dairy Queen (3-0) 19-9 before polishing off Randy's (1-2) 9-6 in their finale.

While in division two, Silver Towne spanked Jazz In The Park (0-3) 13-3 in their opener, then brushed aside Peanut's Gang (1-2) 13-7 before flattening Plating Tech (2-1) 20-8 in the deciding contest.

August 4-5...

Pitching, Defense Carry Mazak In Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "D-E" Qualifier At Riverstar

Mazak capitalized on the pitching of veteran Kenny Clark and the double play combination of Bruce Nix, Brett Maddox and Shannon Cook to sweep past four opponents in a Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "D-E" State-National Qualifier on Sunday, August 5th at Riverstar Park.

Mazak outscored the Trailblazers 7-2 over the last four and a half innings of the championship game to pull out an 11-8 victory, as Kenny Clark held the 'Blazers to only two runs after the 2nd inning.

The winners qualified for the USSSA Great Lakes "D" National Tournament Labor Day Weekend in Indianapolis.

Player-manager Patrick Simpson credited his team's title to the pitching of Kenny Clark and an infield defense that tallied fourteen double plays.

"Kenny is a good pitcher," said Simpson. "He had two shutouts going into the last inning. And our defense was very good. We turned fourteen double plays with infielders Bruce Nix, Brett Maddox and Shannon Cook. The double plays killed the other teams."

Offensively, Mazak hit well throughout the line-up, with Nix and Rodney Miller leading the way at .750 and .714 respectively. Maddox and Cook followed at .692, Chris Kinman batted .667, Scott Osborne and Craig Bowling hit .642, Jerry Smith .600, Clark .555 and Simpson .500.

"Bruce is a veteran player with great bat control," said Simpson of his team's hitting leader. "And Miller is an excellent young talent who hits the ball hard."

"Normally, any time we get people on base we hit well," added Simpson.

Mazak used a five run 1st and an eight run 3rd to jump out to a 13-0 lead over Tru-Staff in game and never looked back in an 18-3, five inning route. Jerry Smith's two-run double highlighted the 1st, and Scott Osborne delivered a three-run double in the 3rd. Chris Kinman collected four hits, and Shannon Cook, who contributed a big two-run

triple in his club's eight run 3rd, shared a dozen hits with Osborne, Bruce Nix and Craig Bowling.

Mazak held off a late rally by JB's to escape with a 12-11 victory in game two. After overcoming a 2-0 deficit with seven runs in the bottom of the 2nd, Mazak spent the next five innings fending off their challengers, who outscored them 9-4. Scott Osborne's two-run double knotted the score in the 2nd, then Jerry Smith put his team ahead for good at 3-2 with an rbi single. Brett Maddox added a big two run triple to extend the lead to 5-2. JB's cut the lead to 8-7 with three in the 3rd and two in the 4th, but Mazak answered with three in the bottom of the 5th to go ahead by four. JB's rallied for two in the 6th and two in the 7th before succumbing 12-11. Bruce Nix and Rodney Miller banded out four hits each, and Osborne, Maddox, Chris Kinman and Craig Bowling combined for twelve hits.

Mazak never trailed in the winners' bracket finals, building a 7-0 lead after four, then fending off a 7th inning rally by the Trailblazers to win 7-3. Scott Osborne had an rbi single to put his club on the board in the 1st. Craig Bowling's sac fly made it 2-0. A four run 6th finally gave Mazak some breathing room. Kenny Clark's two-run double ignited the rally. The Trailblazers plated three runs in the top of the 7th to spoil Clark's shutout bid.

The Trailblazers bounced back to oust Groundtexx in the losers' bracket finals, then grabbed an early 6-3 lead over Mazak in the 2nd. But Mazak outscored the 'Blazers 8-2 over the final four and a half innings behind the pitching of Kenny Clark to nail down an 11-8 victory and the title. Jerry Smith's rbi single in the 4th gave his club the lead for good at 8-7. Mazak scored a pair of insurance runs in the bottom of the 6th on rbi singles by Bruce Nix and Tim Thompson to close out the scoring.

Nix, Rodney Miller and Shannon Cook had three hits each to lead the champions.

Mazak's Patrick Simpson said that great field conditions at Riverstar were instrumental in his team's strong infield play.

"Riverstar maintained their fields very well," said Simpson. "We didn't get one bad hop in the whole tournament. They kept really good care of the field after two rain delays. We got good hops the whole tournament.

"We're looking forward to the state to see how we shake out," concluded Simpson. "We're kind of making a late run."

August 11-12...

Steve's/Jeds/R & L Concrete Surge Falls Short In 23-20 Finals...

Gruber Pitches Blitz/Watanabe/TTP/Wessel/A & K/Easton To Worth- Bud Light-USSSA "B" State Title At Expressway Park

Milford, Oh.--Frank Gruber may not want to pursue a career as a pilot. His take-offs are rough and his landings can be nearly disastrous.

But then again, everything in between is smooth sailing.

Gruber shook off a bad start and survived a calamitous finish to pitch Blitz/Watanabe/TTP/Wessel/A & K/Easton to a four game sweep of the Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "B" State Tournament August 11-12 at Expressway Park.

Blitz/Easton staved off Steve's Drywall/Jeds/R & L Concrete 23-20 in the finals after blowing a 22-5 lead in the last four innings. Steve's outscored Blitz 16-1 after giving up eleven runs in the top of the 4th.

The Blitz also survived a rocky start, as Loveless Hardwood/Conveyor Solutions jumped out to a 13-5 lead after two innings, but used up their home runs and only scored two runs the rest of the game and fell 20-15.

But in between, it was all Gruber. Gruber stifling eventual Great Lakes national champion Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters 7-2. Gruber squashing a hot Mike Foulks Auto Body/Team Insanity 14-2 in the winners' bracket finals. Gruber pitching his team to a 22-5 lead through five innings of the finals over Steve's. And Gruber hitting .714 and knocking in the go-ahead runs in each of the first two contests.

"He was the key to our winning the tournament," summed up Blitz/Easton manager Terry Walton. "In the early games he did an excellent job on the mound as usual and held our opponents down. And he had a good tournament hitting."

Billy Burdine led Blitz for the weekend with a .778 performance. Jason Roesch followed at .750, Gruber batted .714, Tony Huston hit .688, Brian Alexander .647 and Brad Tabler .600. Blitz hit .608 as a team.

Roesch, Huston and Alexander were named to the All-State team.

"Jason didn't hit a lot of home runs, but he hit a lot of gaps and had a lot of extra base hits, and he was second on the team in rbi's," said Walton.

"Tony made a big catch in the Freeze game to get us out of an inning when they had two runners on with two outs and their four hitter Mike Canupp at the plate in the 5th inning. He hit a foul ball down the right field line and extended to catch the ball and flipped over the fence and held on for the out," recalled Walton. "That was a big play to get us out of the inning, especially being the heart of their line-up, and at the time it was only 5-2.

"Tony also did a great job rolling the line-up over throughout the tournament from the eleven hole," noted Walton.

Brian Alexander also brought his complete game, said Walton.

“Once again he did a great job for us in centerfield. He’s our leadoff hitter and he started a lot of innings for us.”

Blitz’s infield defense - led by Kevin Birkofer, Carey Taylor, Kelly Haiber and Billy Burdine - was also stellar, said Walton.

“Our infield did a nice job for us this weekend, turning some double plays at some big times in the tournament.

“For the most part, we stayed away from the big innings,” commented Walton.

One of two exceptions to that came early, as Loveless Hardwood scored seven runs in the bottom of the 1st and six in the 2nd to grab an early 13-5 advantage in game one. But Gruber limited Loveless to a meager two runs over the next five innings, while Blitz outscored their challenger 15-2. Blitz finally overcame a 13-11 deficit with three runs in the top of the 4th, taking a 14-13 lead on an rbi single by Gruber. The lead swelled to 18-13 in the 5th on the strength of a Brian Alexander solo and a two-run shot by Jason Roesch. Roesch collected five hits, and Brian Alexander socked two home runs and shared eight safeties with Brad Tabler.

Game two pitted Blitz against four-time state champion Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters, who scored lone runs in the 1st and 2nd to take an early 2-0 lead. Blitz’s offense finally came to life in the 4th, mustering two runs to knot the score, then taking the lead with three in the 5th. Once again Frank Gruber struck the big blow, doubling in two runs to put his club ahead for good at 4-2. Kelly Haiber’s sac fly made it 5-2. Blitz added two runs in the 6th on a solo home run by Jeff Edington and an rbi double by Carey Taylor. Gruber paced the offense with three hits.

In the winners’ bracket finals Blitz met a red-hot Mike Foulks club that had scored 33 runs in their first two games, including a 20-6 rout of eventual runner-up Steve’s. But Gruber quieted Team Insanity, giving up only two runs to help Blitz roll to a 14-2 victory. The winners plated three in the 1st and 2nd, one in the 4th, two in the 5th and five in the 6th to invoke the mercy-rule. Jason Roesch put his team on the board with an rbi single in the 1st. Kelly Haiber cracked a three-run homer in the 2nd. Gruber had an rbi single to cap off the scoring in the six-run 5th.

Carey Taylor banged out four hits, and Roesch, Billy Burdine, Tony Huston and Jeff Edington combined for a dozen.

Meanwhile Steve’s was sending teams packing, ousting E Z Cash 28-16,, Freeze 14-2 and Mike Foulks 12-9 to avenge their only setback.

The three-game run appeared to exhaust the Perrysburg club, as Blitz used a ten run 1st and an eleven run 4th to take a commanding 22-5 lead. But Steve’s came storming back, plating four in the 4th, two in the 5th and eight in the 6th to chase Gruber. Billy Burdine

then came on to hold Steve's to two runs in the 7th and enable his team to escape with a 23-20 victory.

Blitz opened the game with a ten-run outburst, jumping out to a 4-0 lead on Brian Alexander's leadoff homer and a three-run blast by Steve Bosch. Billy Burdine contributed a three-run triple to make it 9-0. In their eleven-run 4th, Tony Huston had a two-run triple, Jeff Edington a two-run homer, and Carey Taylor an rbi triple to cap off the inning.

Edington clubbed a pair of home runs and went 4-for-5 along with Brian Alexander and Steve Bosch. Larry Wert, Frank Gruber and Tony Huston chipped in with three hits each.

Blitz/Easton's Terry Walton said Steve's showed "a lot of heart and determination" in the finals.

"When a lot of teams get down, they have a tendency to not answer back. But they have a lot of veterans and softball experience in the dugout, and you can never count those guys out," said Walton.

"They really fought hard in that last game," he continued. "I'm glad they didn't force an 'if' game. They grabbed the momentum away from us and that last game would have been a real battle."

Walton said that making a pitching change in the 6th appeared to be the perfect RX to help silence Steve's.

"They started hitting Frank and we brought Billy Burdine into pitch, and he held them to three runs the rest of the game," said Walton.

Walton then thanked Expressway Park manager Bob Owens "for once again running a class tournament," and team sponsors Dave Watanabe, Kevin Bullock of Tiny Town Pizza, A & K Tile, Dave Maury of Wessel Sports and Easton Sports for backing the team.

WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA MEN'S CLASS B ALL-STATE TOURNAMENT TEAM

Robert Noeth Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters
T. J. Thompson Mike Foulks/Team Insanity
Mike LaDuke Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Brian Cannon Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Dave Eberflus Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Steve Dickinson - Co-MVP Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Brian Alexander Blitz/Easton
Carey Taylor Blitz/Easton

Jason Roesch Blitz/Easton
Tony Huston Blitz/Easton
Frank Gruber - Co-MVP Blitz/Easton

WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA MEN'S CLASS B STATE TOURN. FINAL STANDINGS

1. Blitz/Watanabe/TTP/Wessel/AK/Easton, Cin., OH 4 0
2. Steve's Drywall/Jeds/R & L, Perrysburg, OH 4 2
3. Mike Foulks/Team Insanity, Covington, KY 2 2
4. Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
5. E Z Cash, Columbus, OH 2 2
Team Chaos, Franklin, OH 2 2
7. Barille Scalpers, Cleveland, OH 1 2
Dawg Pack/Wessel/A-1 Fab, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
9. Loveless Hardw./Conveyor Sols., Cincinnati, OH 1 2
PRI/Easton, Milford, OH 1 2
Design Concepts, Cincinnati, OH 0 2

Winners Outlast Hill & Griffith 9-7 In Finals...

Graham Powers Ty-1-On To Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA Women's "B-C" State Title At Queen City

West Chester, Oh.--Sharon Graham batted a sizzling .833 to power Ty-1-On to a first place finish in the Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA Women's "B-C" State Tournament August 11-12 at Queen City Sports Complex.

Graham went 5-for-6 to pace the champions, who mercy-ruled Hill & Griffith 17-7 in their opener, then held them off 9-7 in the finals of the three-team affair.

Lisa Tyler's rbi single produced the eventual game-winner, plating Theresa Hirschauer with the go-ahead run in the bottom of the 5th. Erin Engelkamp followed with a sac fly to score Lori Wilp with an insurance run.

Hirschauer (.714), Tyler (.667), Wilp, Lisa Richter (.600) and Karen Kron (.500) were named to the All-Tournament team. Graham was selected the Most Valuable Player.

"She made only one out all day and played 1st base in the first game, and 2nd in the second game, so she was very versatile and she hit," summed up Ty-1-On manager Colleen Needham. "Also she had two extra base hits among her five hits."

Infielder Karen Kron also helped anchor the defense along with Graham, said Needham.

"Karen played 2nd and short and we're very blessed to have somebody who can play either spot equally as well," said Needham.

Needham said her team “hit throughout the line-up, and hit behind the runner when we needed to, or had a sacrifice fly if we had a runner on third and needed that run.

“We did all the fundamentals,” said Needham. “And we played good defense. M. J. (M. J. Ranz) pitched the first game, and Brenda the second, and everybody was in a game-like situation. So when it comes down to the World Tournament, we’ll be prepared.”

Using the state tournament as a springboard for the USSSA “B” World, where Ty-1-On finished third in 2006, was the primary function of the tournament, explained Needham.

“We just went about it very business-like, and talked before our first game like it was the start of our World Tournament,” said Needham. “First it’s the state, then the national, then the world. We challenged our players to take a business-like approach. We want to win from this point on.”

Hill & Griffith battled Ty-1-On to a 7-7 standstill through three and a half innings of game one. But in the bottom of the 4th, Ty-1-On plated three runs, taking the lead for good at 8-7 on Shelly Cummins rbi single. Ty-1-On broke the game open in the following inning, exploding for seven runs on the strength of a three-run triple by Sharon Graham and a two-run triple by Shelly Cummins.

Sharon Graham, Lisa Richter, and M. J. Ranz combined for nine hits, and Lisa Tyler and Jane Eltzroth chipped in with two apiece.

Hill & Griffith disposed of the Shooters in the losers’ bracket finals to earn a re-match with Ty-1-On in the finals, where they battled the eventual champions to a 7-7 stalemate through four and a half innings. But in the bottom of the 5th, Theresa Hirschauer singled, moved into scoring position on Lori Wilp’s base hit, then raced home with the go-ahead run on Lisa Tyler’s single. A sac fly by Erin Engelkamp plated Wilp to close out the scoring.

Hirschauer collected four hits, and Engelkamp and Sharon Graham shared four to power the champions.

Ty-1-On’s Colleen Needham said Hill & Griffith always plays her team tough.

“They always give us a good game,” said Needham. “It would have been nice play the Shooters, but that just didn’t work out.”

WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA WOMEN'S CLASS “B-C” STATE TOURN. FINAL STANDINGS

1. Ty-1-On, Cincinnati, OH 2 0
2. Hill & Griffith, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
3. Shooters, Dayton, OH 0 2

**WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA WOMEN'S
CLASS B-C STATE ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**

Heide Gildow Shooters
Misty Sellars Shooters
Carrie Williams Hill & Griffith
Missy Moon Hill & Griffith
Kristy Booher Hill & Griffith
Tracey Wharf Hill & Griffith
Lisa Richter Ty-1-On
Theresa Hirschauer Ty-1-On
Lori Wilp Ty-1-On
Karen Kron Ty-1-On
Lisa Tyler Ty-1-On
Sharon Graham - MVP Ty-1-On

Ulland Single Lifts Champions In 8th...

**D & S Engineering Outlasts Pelle's 15-12 In Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA
Women's "D" State Finals At Queen City**

West Chester, Oh.--D & S Engineering scored three runs in the top of the 8th inning of the second championship game to claim an eventual 15-12 victory over Pelle's and claim first place in the Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA Women's "D" State Tournament August 11-12 at Queen City Sports Complex.

Tournament MVP Liz Ulland's two-run, two-out triple gave D & S the lead in the 8th. Ulland then scored the game's final run on an rbi single by Theresa Hickey.

Ulland was almost unstoppable in leading D & S to the title, as she posted a near perfect .920 batting average for the weekend. D & S went 5-1 en route to the championship.

D & S player-manager Kim Wilson said Ulland contributed on both sides of the lines.

"She batted 23-for-25 and played excellent defense in left field," said Wilson.

Also named to the All-Tournament team were Christy Craig (.680), Wilson (.625), Amy Schweinefus (.600), Tonya Woodruff (.555) and Emily Cannady.

"Christy hit well and played outstanding defense," remarked Wilson. "I was selected for my hitting, and Amy for a combination of her outstanding defense and hitting. She brings a lot to the table at short. Tonya was named for her hitting, plus she had a pretty good defensive tournament. And Emily was selected for her defense. She was a 'hoover' at 2nd base. She had an excellent defensive tournament.

“But everybody contributed, and that’s why we won,” stressed Wilson. “It was a team effort. Everybody did their part. We had several a couple of extra inning games and we stayed focused and played as a team.”

D & S needed twelve innings to outlast Pete’s Pack 8-7 in their opener. With the score tied at 7-7, Emily Cannady tripled with one out in the bottom of the 8th, then scored the game winner on Theresa Hickey’s two-out, rbi single. Liz Ulland collected six hits, Christy Craig added four and Tonya Woodruff went 3-for-5 to pace the offense.

D & S disposed of their next two victims via the mercy rule, exploding past James Harrison Concrete 22-10 in six, then routing Crosley’s Sports Bar 16-6 in five.

Against James Harrison, D & S used a seven run 4th to break open a 6-5 contest. An rbi single by Amy Greene capped off the inning. Greene, Amy Schweinefus, Christa Brinker, Tonya Woodruff and Liz Ulland combined for twenty hits.

A nine-run 2nd broke a 3-3 tie and helped carry D & S past Crosley’s. Amy Schweinefus drew a bases loaded walk to force in the go-ahead run. Sharon Singleton’s two run single was the big hit of the inning. Singleton, Theresa Hickey and Liz Ulland were all perfect in three at bats.

D & S scored four runs in the 5th and three in the 6th to shake free from Fruth Pharmacy and forge a 10-3 lead in the winners’ bracket finals, then held on for a 10-6 victory. Liz Ulland’s two-run home run highlighted the 5th, while Amy Schweinefus delivered the big blow in the 6th with a two-run triple. Ulland continued to ravage opposing pitchers with a 4-for-4 performance. Schweinefus and Emily Cannady added three hits apiece.

In the first finals, Pelle’s ambushed D & S 9-1, then forced extra innings in the second finals before D & S used a three-run outburst in the top of the 7th to tame their challenger. Kelly Campbell and Emily Cannady singled, setting the table for Liz Ulland, who connected for a two-run triple to put her club ahead 14-12. Theresa Hickey then singled home Ulland to make the final 15-12.

Ulland pounded out five more hits, Christy Craig chipped in four, and Sharon Singleton and Kim Perreault each went 3-for-4.

D & S manager Kim Wilson called Pelle’s a “tough competitor.

“We’re very evenly matched and equal in talent,” said Wilson, “and they played very well. It’s fun to play teams who you don’t know who is going to win every time.”

WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA WOMEN'S CLASS “D” STATE TOURN. FINAL STANDINGS

1. D & S Engineering, Loveland, OH 6 1
2. Pelle’s/BW3, Silver Grove, KY 6 2

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 3. | Fruth Pharmacy, Wellston, OH | 3 | 2 |
| 4. | Pete's Pack, Fleming, OH | 4 | 2 |
| 5. | Crosley's Sports Bar, Cincinnati, OH | 2 | 2 |
| | Intimidators, Batavia, OH | 1 | 2 |
| 7. | James Harrison Concrete, Hamilton, OH | 2 | 2 |
| | Meissner's Insurance, Cincinnati, OH | 2 | 2 |
| 9. | James Arnold, Cincinnati, OH | 1 | 2 |
| | Yada Club/Premier ONW, Milford, OH | 1 | 2 |
| | Ohio Cardinals, Cincinnati, OH | 0 | 2 |
| | Dirt Devils, Hamilton, OH | 0 | 2 |
| 13. | Columbus Jams, Columbus, OH | 0 | 2 |
| | Milford Hit-Hers, Milford, OH | 0 | 2 |

**WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA WOMEN'S
CLASS D STATE ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**

Jessie Trippett Pete's Pack
 Stephanie Cochran Pete's Pack
 Nicole Nelson Fruth Pharmacy
 Karen Lee Fruth Pharmacy
 Heather Dickinson Pelle's/BW3
 Kassie Brock Pelle's/BW3
 Beth Fields Pelle's/BW3
 Stacy More Pelle's/BW3
 Christy Craig D & S Engineering
 Amy Schweinefus D & S Engineering
 Emily Cannady D & S Engineering
 Tonya Woodruff D & S Engineering
 Kim Wilson D & S Engineering
 Liz Ulland - MVP D & S Engineering

Plating Tech, TNT Softball Outslug Queen City Field

West Chester, Oh.--Plating Tech averaged seventeen runs per game, and TNT Softball 15, en route to a first place finish in their respective divisions of an eighty team Sunday morning round robin August 12th at Queen City Sports Complex.

Plating Tech slugged their way past Coach's Bar & Grille (2-1) 17-8, Pacific Bombers (0-3) 18-14 and Rounding 3rd (1-2) 15-4 to claim the division one title.

While in division two, TNT drilled Ten Run Rule (0-3) 15-3 and U. A. W. (2-1) 12-1 before out-dueling Realty Solutions (1-2) 19-13.

Angry Beavers Rallies Past Expressway Mini Field

Milford, Oh.--The Angry Beavers rallied from a first round setback to win their next two games and capture first place in a four team mini round robin on Sunday, August 12th at Expressway Park.

After a humbling 15-0 setback at the hands of the Little Leaguers in their opener, the Beavers rallied to nudge past Snap It Off (1-2) 8-7, then knocked off Wolfpack/Bad Habits/BW3 (2-1) in their finale.

August 18-19...

**Tournament MVP Holds Four Opponents To Five Runs Or Less...
McKinney Pitches PRI/Easton Past Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "C" State Field At Expressway Park**

Milford, Oh.--The one game tournament pitcher Tony McKinney couldn't dominate from the mound, he won with his bat.

McKinney, who led PRI/Easton to a first place finish in the Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "C" State Tournament August 18-19 at Expressway Park, held four of his five opponents to five runs or less.

But in the third round, Elk & Elk/Crete/Easton of Geneva, Oh. jumped on McKinney for eight early runs, then carried a 12-9 lead into the bottom of the 7th. There, Elk & Elk retired two of PRI's first three batters, and stood one out away from reaching the winners' bracket finals. But back-to-back rbi doubles and an rbi single by Chris George set the table for McKinney, who promptly drove a gabber into right center-field to plate George with the game winner.

From there, McKinney took control from the mound, shutting down eventual Great Lakes National Champion EZ Cash 15-5 in six innings before polishing off Elk & Elk 10-4 in the finals.

Previously in the tournament, McKinney and PRI had mercy-ruled Game Time Softball 14-4 in five innings and House Rules 14-3 in six. Overall PRI's five challengers scored only 28 runs, Making McKinney a no-brainer for MVP honors.

"He stopped everybody with his pitching and defense," said player-manager Dan Feichtner. "He never gave up more than five runs to any team in the tournament except Elk & Elk. He kept hitters off-balance."

Feichtner said PRI gave McKinney plenty of defensive support as well.

"We only had one bad inning the whole tournament when we made two errors against Elk & Elk. Besides that, we played pretty much flawless defense," said Feichtner.

Offensively, PRI was paced by All-Tournament selections Nick Mazur, Terry Rosenbalm and Nick Selonke.

“Nick hit .650 for the tournament and played a solid shortstop, and he set the tone as our leadoff hitter,” said Feichtner. “Terry batted clean-up and hit .625 and had some timely home runs, and he played a great middle. And Rick had big games against Elk & Elk, hit .625 for the tournament and played solid defense.”

Feichtner also credited PRI’s success to “timely hitting from the middle of the order, which was Rosenbalm, Smyth, Hibbard and myself. We didn’t hit a home run for an out the whole tournament.”

Hibbard was second on PRI in hitting with a .640 performance.

PRI never trailed in their first two games. In their opener they jumped out to an 8-0 lead in the bottom of the 1st and never looked back in a five inning, 14-4 rout of Game Time Softball. Terry Rosenbalm got his club on the board with a two-run double, then later in the inning Dan Feichtner launched a two-run home run. PRI put the game away with five runs in the 4th, building a 13-3 advantage with the help of a two-run shot from Rosenbalm. Feichtner, Everitt Hibbard and Nick Mazur each went 3-for-4 to pace the offense.

Next PRI scored three in the 1st and five in the 3rd to grab an 8-1 lead, then used a six run 6th to seal a 14-3 six inning drubbing of House Rules. Terry Rosenbalm continued to spearhead the offense, cracking a three-run homer in the 1st. Nick Selonky had a key two-run double in the 3rd, and closed out the scoring for his club with a solo shot in the 6th. Rosenbalm, Selonke and Nick Mazur banged out three hits each for the winners.

PRI’s run through the winners’ bracket almost came to an abrupt end in game three at the hands of Elk & Elk/Crete II/Easton, which jumped out to an 8-0 lead, and carried a 12-9 advantage into the bottom of the 7th. But after retiring two of PRI’s first three batters, Elk & Elk yielded back-to-back rbi doubles to Everitt Hibbard and Rick Selonke, then Scott George singled home Selonke to knot the score. That set the stage for Tony McKinney, who promptly plated George with an rbi double in the right centerfield gap. Chris Smyth and Dan Feichtner collected three hits apiece, and Selonke added two and drove an five runs.

McKinney was almost untouchable in the winners’ bracket finals and finals. After giving up four runs in the top of the 1st to E. Z. Cash, he held the Columbus team to a lone run over the next six innings, while PRI quickly reclaimed the lead with eight runs in the bottom of the 1st. Nick Mazur’s rbi single put his club ahead for good at 5-4. Terry Rosenbalm followed with a three-run bomb to cap off the inning. The lead swelled to 13-5 in a three-run PRI 5th highlighted by an Everitt Hibbard two-run double. Mazur, Rosenbalm and Hibbard combined for nine hits in the win.

PRI was never challenged in the finals. With Tony McKinney holding Elk & Elk at bat until the 7th, PRI scored four in the 1st, two in the 2nd, three in the 4th and one in the 6th to forge a 10-0 lead before Elk & Elk finally put up four runs in the 7th to make the final 10-4. Dan Feichtner's three-run double capped off the 1st. Nick Mazur made it 6-0 with a two-run double in the 2nd. Everitt Hibbard, Chris Smyth and Tony McKinney delivered rbi singles in the 4th, then Sean Melampy closed out the scoring for PRI with an rbi single in the 6th. Hibbard and Rick Selonke shared six hits for the champions.

PRI's Dan Feichtner said getting past Elk & Elk in the third round was pivotal.

"We trailed 8-0 before we even blinked our eyes," said Feichtner. "This was the first time we had played them...we didn't know what to expect. We knew we had to come back and score some runs. We knew our defense would come back and make the plays we didn't make in the 1st and we'd be alright. And we felt Tony would hold them. He had been pitching pretty good all day. If he shows up, you know what you're going to get from McKinney.

"We want to thank our sponsors - they're one of the top sponsors in the area," added McKinney. "And we want to thank Easton for all their help with our equipment."

BUD LIGHT-WORTH SPORTS-OHIO USSSA MEN'S CLASS "C" STATE TOURNAMENT FINAL STANDINGS

1. PRI/Easton, Milford, OH 5 0
2. Elk & Elk/Crete II/Easton, Geneva, OH 5 2
3. E. Z. Cash, Grove City, OH 3 2
4. HLS Bonding/Big Sonny's, Columbus, OH 3 2
5. Goodfellows Pub, Butler, OH 4 2
- Shelly Materials, Zanesville, OH 4 2
7. Brock Restor./Hotwings/Schmoe's, Cinti., OH 2 2
- Xtreme/Moose/Shirtworks/Fent, Springfield, OH 2 2
9. Game Time Softball, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
- M. J. Lowe, Columbus, OH 1 2
- Chico's/Fox Premier Hardwood, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
- House Rules, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
13. SOS Electric/S & S Mowing, Chillicothe, OH 1 2
- Triple L, Columbus, OH 1 2
- DeClaire Insurance, Sardinia, OH 0 2
- Team Chaos, Franklin, OH 0 2
17. BCP Associates/Mr. Tint/TPE, Columbus, OH 0 2
- Design Concepts, Cincinnati, OH 0 2
- Team Bring It/Mad Max, Cincinnati, OH 0 2
- Tilton Trucking, Springfield, OH 0 2

BUD LIGHT-WORTH SPORTS-USSSA MEN'S CLASS "C" ALL-STATE TOURNAMENT TEAM

Brian Pierce Shelly Materials
Donald Tollison Goodfellows Pub
Cory Hogle HLS Bonding/Big Sonny's
Jay Woodward EZ Cash
Mark Jones EZ Cash
Montgomery Taylor Elk & Elk/Crete II/Easton
Keith McCloskey Elk & Elk/Crete II/Easton
Rick Selonke PRI/Easton
Nick Mazur PRI/Easton
Terry Rosenbalm PRI/Easton
Marcellino Porcello - Co-MVP Elk & Elk/Crete II/Easton
Tony McKinney - Co-MVP PRI/Easton

Central Ohio Club Holds Five Of Six Opponents To Single Digits...
Pitching, Defense Lead Ufax To Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "D" State Title At Pastime Park

Harrison, Oh.--Tournament MVP Mark Vaughn held six opponents to under six runs per game to lead Ufax to a six game sweep of the Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "D" State Tournament August 18-19 at Pastime Park.

Only one team - winners' bracket finalist Team Audacity in a 12-11 contest - scored more than eight runs against Vaughn and the Ufax defense. The champions mercy-ruled three of their six challengers en route to the title, including Cooper Auto/Tanel 18-8 in the championship game.

"That was probably some of the best defense we played all year," commented player-manager Mark Vaughn, Ufax's pitcher. Vaughn was voted tournament MVP by his teammates.

"They were a big part of my getting MVP," said Vaughn. "I pitched really well, but they backed me up a lot if you look at those scores. We probably only gave up six or seven runs per game.

"It was one of those weekends where I kinda had it on the mound and we just played really solid defense behind that."

Vaughn said he was "grateful" to be named MVP.

"I pitched all six games and pitched well and hit over .600, and that was their way of showing their appreciation," said Vaughn.

Vaughn also credited the title to "some really timely hitting.

“We had innings where we put up a run here or there, but every game we had one or two innings where we really broke out and strung five or six hits together.”

Kevin Cannon hit .680 with a dozen rbi's to lead the champions. Brian Hoy followed with a .650 weekend, Vaughn batted .610 and led his team in rbi's with sixteen, and Tony Pritchard chipped in with a .600 effort.

“As a team we only hit .530, which to win a state tournament is probably not that high,” observed Vaughn. “But our defense made up for a lot of that.”

Also named to the All-State team were Dusty Hall, Kevin Cannon, Brian Hoy, Matt Maynard and Tony Hooker.

“Dusty had a really big weekend hitting .750 with fourteen rbi's,” remarked Vaughn. “And that was with a pulled hammy from early on in the first game on Sunday. He played the rest of the day that way and still hit the ball really well.”

Vaughn said Cannon, Ufax's centerfielder, and infielder Chris Hoffman anchored the defense.

“Kevin made some tremendous catches running balls down in the gaps and taking what we thought were sure hits away. And as his name implies, he has a cannon for an arm. He kept runners honest. Nobody was going to run on him. He can really bring it.”

Hoffman, who played short and 2nd in Ufax's five-man infield, “made all the routine plays and a couple of really nice plays,” said Vaughn. “He knocked a lot of balls down and kept them in the infield and played really solid. He didn't make any real mistakes or errors. He made all the right plays and all the right throws.”

Ufax reached the winners' bracket finals without allowing a single opponent to score more than five runs, steamrolling Southwest Bombers 6-4, Backyard Boys 9-3, TPE/Backstabbers 17-5, and Cooper Auto/Tanel 18-2.

Against Southwest, Ufax scored a run in the top of the 5th to break a 2-2 tie and take the lead for good, then pulled out to a 6-2 lead with three runs in the 7th. Brad Leach's rbi triple put his club on top to stay in the 5th. Kevin Cannon's two-run triple was the big blow in the 7th. Southwest made it interesting in the bottom of the 7th, rallying for three runs to make the final 6-4. Cannon went 3-for-5 to pace the offense.

Next Ufax used a three-run 4th to overcome a 2-1 deficit against the Backyard Boys, taking a 3-2 lead on Mark Vaughn's rbi single. The central Ohio team broke the game open in the 6th with four runs to open up a 9-2 advantage. Dusty Hall's two-run double highlighted the inning. Kevin Cannon collected three more hits for the winners.

In game three Ufax exploded for five runs in the top of the 4th and six in the 5th to break erase a 5-3 deficit and take a commanding 14-5 lead over TPE/Backstabbers in an

eventual 17-5 rout. Chris Hoffman's sac fly broke a 5-5 tie in the 4th. Mark Vaughn had a key two-run single in the 5th and Kevin Cannon capped off the inning with a two-run triple. Brian Hoy and Tony Pritchard were both perfect in four at bats. Hoffman, Vaughn and Cannon were each 3-for-4.

Ufax rolled over Cooper Auto/Tanel 18-2 in six innings in game four, jumping out to a 9-1 lead with three runs in the top of the 1st and six in the 2nd. Kevin Cannon put his team on the board with an rbi single in the 1st. Kenny Muck and Brad Leach each delivered a two-run double to account for four of their team's six runs in the 2nd. Ufax sealed the win with a seven run outburst in the 6th. Tony Hooker's two-run single closed out the scoring. Dusty Hall banged out four hits, and Kenny Muck added four in the victory.

That pitted Ufax against Team Audacity, a surprise entry from Pennsylvania, in the winners' bracket finals. They proved to be a worthy challenger, forcing extra innings before Ufax strung together four consecutive singles in the bottom of the 8th to pull out a narrow 12-11 victory. Singles by Mark Vaughn, Tony Hooker and Chris Hoffman juiced the bases for Matt Maynard, who calmly plated Vaughn with the game winner. Vaughn, Hooker and Hoffman shared nine hits for the winners.

Cooper Auto then ousted Team Audacity 11-1 to earn a re-match with Ufax, and promptly drew first blood with a run in the top of the 1st. But it was a short-lived lead. Ufax answered with six runs in the bottom of the inning with the help of a two-run double by Mark Vaughn. Cooper hung close until the 4th, when Ufax put up seven runs to break open an 8-6 game and forge a 15-6 lead. Kenny Muck's two-run single was the big blow of the inning. Ufax finally invoked the run rule with three runs in the bottom of the 5th. An rbi single by Chris Hoffman brought down the curtain.

Hoffman, Kevin Cannon and Brad Leach pounded out three hits each to power the champions.

The victory gave Ufax a paid berth into the USSSA "D" World Tournament September 20-23 in Sterling Heights, Mi.

Maxed Out Claims Kolping Round Robin

Mt. Healthy, Oh.--Maxed Out went 2-1 en route to a first place finish in a four team Saturday round robin August 18th at Kolping Park.

Maxed Out routed A-Team (2-1) 14-4 to open play, then stumbled in a 13-9 setback to eventual runner-up H & L Softball (2-1) before thrashing Buckeyes (0-3) 14-2 in the finale.

Playmakers/Lightningwear/Our Place Outlasts Diamondbacks 8-7 In Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA "E" State Finals At Kettering

Dayton, Oh.--Playmakers/Lightningwear/Our Place held off the Cincinnati Diamondbacks 8-7 in the second championship game to capture first place in the Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA "E" State tournament August 25-26 at Kettering Fields.

The Diamondbacks had forced an "if" game by scoring a run in the bottom of the 8th in the first finals, winning 12-11 on a dramatic play at the plate.

But the Playmakers never trailed in the second finals after taking a 5-0 lead in the top of the 1st. Playmakers added three in the 4th to build their lead back to five at 8-3, then fended off the Diamondbacks over the final innings behind the pitching of tournament MVP Charles McCormick to escape with an 8-7 victory.

The champions wound up with a 6-1 mark, winning the tournament with "pitching and defense," according to player-manager Brandon Runk. Only one team - the Diamondbacks in the first finals - scored more than four runs against the Playmakers.

"We couldn't have done that without the pitching and defense of Charles McCormick," said Runk. "He kept us in games by keeping the other teams off-balance and he didn't allow many walks. That was key, because we didn't hit. We scored 17 runs in one game, but the rest of our games were fairly low scoring."

Fittingly, McCormick made a huge play up the middle for the final out of the championship game to stop a Diamondbacks' rally, said Runk.

"There were two outs and a runner on base, and a guy hit a shot up the middle and he fielded it to end the game."

Also named to the All-State team were Justin Runk (.818), Jamison George (.640), Adam Connor (.619) and Shad Bartruff.

"Justin was awesome," said older brother Brandon Runk. "It was his best tournament offensively and defensively. He's only 20-years old and he's been coming along real well the last couple of years. It's only his second year of playing shortstop."

Runk said Jamison was "8-for-8 on the the first day of the tournament.

"The kid also has a great arm," said Runk. "He played left field for us and threw a runner out at the plate against the Diamondbacks.

"Nobody runs on him," said Runk.

Runk said All-State pick Adam Connor "hit real well and played good defense in right-centerfield and threw out a runner against OC Softball.

"And Shad Bartruff played solid all weekend," added Runk.

The Playmakers' defense was virtually impregnable as they allowed only 17 runs while disposing of five winners' bracket opponents.

In game one Playmakers overcame 3-0 deficit with a five run 3rd, then added a run in the 5th and four in the 6th to nail down a 10-4 victory over Showtime Video. A two-run double by Charles McCormick put his club ahead to stay at 4-3. Jamison George had a big rbi double in the four run 6th. George collected four hits in the game, and Cameron Quigley and Justin Runk added three each.

Next the Playmakers needed four runs in the top of the 7th to shake off Team Midnight 8-6. With one out, Charles McCormick singled, moved into scoring position on Justin Runk's base hit, then raced home with the go-ahead run on Cory Ward's single. Then Jamison George delivered the knock-out punch with a two-run double to increase the lead to 7-4. Josh Morton followed with an rbi single to plate George.

George ran his hitting streak to 8-for-8 with another four hit performance, and Josh Morton chipped in with three hits.

In game three the Playmakers used a five-run 5th to break open 3-2 contest and went on to dispose of Team CI 10-3. Mark Merriman's two-run single sparked the rally in the 5th. Adam Connor followed with a two-run double to make it 7-2. Merriman, Jason Havens and Charles McCormick combined for nine hits.

The Playmakers' offense, which had been quiet in the first three games, aired it out against JB's in a 17-3, five-inning rout. An eight-run 2nd broke open a 4-3 game. Jason Havens three-run triple and a two-run single by Cory Ward highlighted the inning.

Ward, Josh Morton, Mark Merriman and Justin Runk shared a dozen hits to pace the offense.

Playmakers scored three in the 3rd and four in the 4th to build a 7-0 lead over OC Softball in the winners' bracket finals then eased to a 7-1 victory. Cory Ward's rbi single put his team on the board in the 3rd, and Jason Havens capped off the inning with a two-run single. Justin Runk contributed a two-run double in the 4th. Ward,, Runk and Adam Connor had three hits each for the winners.

Cincinnati Diamondbacks then ambushed the Playmakers in the first finals, scoring the winning run on a play at the plate in the bottom of the 8th to win 12-11.

But in the championship game the Playmakers scored five in the 1st and three in the 3rd to take an early 8-3 lead, then hung on for an 8-7 win on the strength of Charles McCormick's pitching. The Diamondbacks scored three in the bottom of the 4th and one in the 5th to cut the deficit to one, but McCormick held the challengers scoreless over the final two frames to preserve the win. An rbi single by Mark Merriman put his club on the scoreboard in the 1st. Cameron Quigley followed with a big three-run triple, then scored on Shad Bartruff's base hit. The 3rd featured a two-run single by Justin Runk.

Brandon Runk came off the bench to pound out four hits for the champions.

**WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA MEN'S CLASS
"E" STATE TOURNAMENT FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Playmakers/Lightningwear/Our Place, WCH6 1
2. Cincinnati Diamondbacks, Milford, OH 8 2
3. OC Softball, Cincinnati, OH 4 2
4. JB's, Cincinnati, OH 4 2
5. HPS, Dayton, OH 5 2
- GFY Softball, Riverside, OH 3 2
7. Pitt Ohio Express, Cincinnati, OH 4 2
- Team CI, Brookville, OH 3 2
9. Team Certified, Kettering, OH 4 2
- Dixon Softball, Milford, OH 3 2
- Fayette Anesthesia, Wilmington, OH 2 2
- Hawks, Piqua, OH 2 2
13. Barnstormers/RE Digital, Lebanon, OH 3 2
- Burro Bozs, Hilliard, OH 3 2
- Express/Tital Healthcare, Sardinia, OH 3 2
- Shags Tavern, Fairborn, OH 3 2
17. Eagles 423, Washington Court House, OH 3 2
- Win-Place-Show/Old Spice, Cincinnati, OH 3 2
- Diamond Freaks, Wilmington, OH 2 2
- Pamco/ECC, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
- Showtime Video, Sunman, IN 1 2
- Team Midnight, Washington Court House, OH 1 2
- The Mound Cafe, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
- Plastipak Packaging Inc., Jackson Center, OH 0 2
25. Castle Bail Bonds, Xenia, OH 2 2
- Budweiser Select/Red Owl/ Payne, OH 1 2
- Bombers, Washington Court House, OH 1 2
- Champion Cleaner, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
- Jet/Goof Troop, Goshen, OH 1 2
- Smokin' Guns, Washington Court House, OH 1 2
- Stamped Concrete, Eaton, OH 1 2
- Nighthawks, Hillsboro, OH 0 2
33. D & S Engineering/Greenies, Milford, OH 1 2
- Players, Franklin, OH 1 2
- American Home Realty, New Leganon, OH 0 2
- Angry Beavers, Wilmington, OH 0 2
- ATE Excavating-Villains, Mason, OH 0 2
- Big Orange II, Hamersville, OH 0 2
- Dawg Pound Lounge, Sidney, OH 0 2
- Down-N-Dirty, Kettering, OH 0 2

J & M Softball, Dayton, OH 02
Realty Solutions, Carlisle, OH 02
Regulators, Washington Court House, OH 02
Sibcy Cline, Cincinnati, OH 02

Porter Homer Lifts Lindenwald's Finest Past Team Ramrods In Worth-Bud Light-USSSA "E Rec" State At Expressway Park

Milford, Oh.--Josh Porter's three-run inside-the-park home run broke an 8-8 tie and lifted Lindenwald's finest to an 11-8 victory over Team Ramrods in the championship game of the Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA "E Rec" State Tournament August 18-19 at Expressway Park.

Pitcher Mike Botkins shut down Team Ramrods in the top of the 7th to preserve the win. The victory capped off a 4-0 weekend for the champions.

Lindenwald's Finest won behind Botkins' pitching and a staunch defense that combined to hold four opponents to only sixteen runs. Botkins held all four of his team's victims to single digit scoring, tossed a shutout in the second round and held Team Ramrods to only two runs in the winners' bracket finals.

Botkins joined teammates Doug Webb and Bob Hensley on the all-tournament team. Josh North, who led Lindenwald's offensively with an .800 weekend, was named tournament MVP.

"Josh deserved the MVP award," said Lindenwald manager Bobby Lindenwald. "He hit the ball real hard and he's a quality player for being only 22-years old. I can just see where he's going to be in ten years."

Lindenwald said Botkins was named to the all-state team "for his pitching and .714 batting average

"He only gave up sixteen runs in our four games," said Lindenwald.

Webb was named all-tournament "for his outstanding hitting.

"He had three doubles and three triples and batted .615 with seven rbi's," said Lindenwald.

Hensley also turned in a big weekend.

"We also picked him (to the all-tournament team) for his hitting," said Lindenwald. "He went 9-for-13 (.692) with two doubles and six rbi's."

Lindenwald called his team's championship a "team effort.

“We went in there as a team and we played hard together and communicated well on the field and made our plays when we needed to,” said Lindenwald. “And we definitely got a strong pitching performance from Mike Botkins.”

Defensively, Lindenwald cited the glove work of Dan Ballinger and Jason Mendez.

“They were our defensive stars at 3rd base and shortstop. Both made several good diving catches,” said Lindenwald.

Lindenwald’s used a three-run 5th and a two-run 6th to break open a 7-6 contest and went on to best High & Outside 12-6 in game one. Mike Botkins’ two-run single capped off the 5th, and Bobby Hensley had a big two-run single in the 6th. Josh North banged out four hits, including an inside-the-park home run and a pair of doubles, and Botkins drove in four runs and went 3-for-4 along with Wes Weinel.

Next Botkins tossed a 24-0, five inning shutout victory over Diamond Jaxx as Josh North collected four more hits and his second home run. Botkins, Jason Mendez, Doug Webb, Bobby Hensley and Wes Weinel combined for fifteen hits. Lindenwald’s exploded for sixteen runs in the top of the 2nd to take a commanding 20-0 lead and never looked back. North and Dan Ballinger each had an inside-the-park home run, Mike Gray added a two-run single and Josh Porter contributed a two-run double to pace the offense.

Lindenwald’s never trailed in the winners’ bracket finals, taking a two run lead in the 1st on a Josh North rbi double and an rbi single by Wes Weinel. Nick Inman singled home a third run in the 2nd, then Josh Porter connected for a two-run double as Lindenwald’s lead swelled to 6-0 in the bottom of the 6th. Team Ramrods finally spoiled Mike Botkins’ shutout bid with two runs in the 7th to make the final 6-2. Jay Hook went 4-for-4 and Mike Gray chipped in with three hits.

Team Ramrods bounced back to send Weezin Skeezerz packing 9-3 in the losers’ bracket finals, then battled Lindenwald’s to an 8-8 stalemate through five and a half innings in the championship game. But in the bottom of the 6th, back-to-back doubles by Doug “Wheels” Webb and Jason Mendez set the table for Josh Porter’s three-run inside-the-parker, then Mike Botkins held the Ramrods scoreless in the 7th to preserve an 11-8 victory.

Josh North went 3-for-4 to lead the champions. Mendez, Porter, Dan Ballinger, Bobby Hensley and Mike Botkins shared ten hits.

Lindenwald’s manager Bobby Lindenwald said his team has no intention of stopping with their state championship.

“We qualified for the ‘E’ nationals at Expressway Park and we hope to win it,” said Lindenwald.

Lindenwald concluded by thanking his sponsors,, Hudson & Associates and Waddel & Reed Financial Advisers.

WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA MEN'S E REC STATE TOURNAMENT FINALS STANDINGS

1. Lindenwald's Finest, Hamilton, OH 4 0
2. Team Ramrod, Milford, OH 3 2
3. Weezin Skinners, Cincinnati, OH 4 2
4. Buffalo Joe's, Fairfield, OH 3 2
5. East End Softball, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
Diamond Jaxx, Middletown, OH 1 2
7. Car-X, Cincinnati, OH 0 4
High & Outside, Cincinnati, OH 0 3

WORTH-BUD LIGHT-OHIO USSSA MEN'S E REC STATE ALL-STATE TOURNAMENT TEAM

Don Gabbard East End
Jason Hudson Buffalo Joe's
Matt Klausing Weezin Skinners
Ryan Britton Weezin Skinners
Ray Philhower Team Ramrods
Jason Daus Team Ramrods
Mike Botkins Lindenwald's Finest
Doug Webb Lindenwald's Finest
Bob Hensley Lindenwald's Finest
Mark Bardon - Co-MVP Team Ramrods
Josh North - Co-MVP Lindenwald's Finest

Walker Singles Sentry/Apex/LBYC Past Bandits In Kentucky USSSA "D" State Finals At Northern Kentucky Sports Park

Taylor Mill, Ky. -Brian Walker's bases loaded single in the bottom of the 7th lifted Sentry/Apex/LBYC to 13-12 victory over NKY/Cincy Bandits in the championship game of the Kentucky USSSA "C" State Tournament August 18-19 at Northern Kentucky Sports Park.

The victory wrapped up a three-game sweep of the seven team affair for Sentry, which previously had mercy-ruled Brooks Sports 18-4 in their opener, then disposed of the Base Bandits 18-12 in the winners' bracket finals.

Adam Visnic (.857), Tim Barker (.818), and Mike Scuglik (.727) paced the offense and were named to the All-State team along with Joey Ellis (.667), Danny Cahill (.667) and Jason Bach (.637). Craig Piper and Brian Walker pitched in with a .667 performance. Sentry batted a hefty .635 as a team.

“We’d be pretty successful if we could do that in every tournament,” remarked Sentry manager Kevin Henn.

Henn cited “timely home runs, good defense and solid bench play” as the keys to winning the tournament - along with the veteran leadership of tournament MVP Timmy Barker.

“Mike Scuglic hit a grand slam against the Base Bandits in the top of the 7th in the winners’ bracket finals that was large,” said Henn. “And Jason Bach hit one in the first game and one in the second that very very timely. And Craig Piper hit a three-run home run in the 1st inning of the last game that gave us a lift.”

Defensively, Henn noted that “Mike Scuglic played a great centerfield, Joey Ellis was cutting a lot of balls off in the gaps in right field, and Adam Visnic was phenomenal at short.”

Henn said that leadoff hitter Tim Barker “never goes out there on the field and gives you less than a hundred and ten percent.

“At one point in our second game, looking back he was 25 for his last 25,” said Henn. “He came out in this tournament and was 7-for-7 in the first two games and hustled on every play and gave a hundred and ten percent.”

Sentry scored three in the top of the 1st, three in the 2nd, and four in the 3rd to go up 8-0 on Brooks Sports in game one, then sealed an 18-4, five inning victory with an eight run explosion in the 5th to take a commanding 16-4 lead. An rbi double by Mike Scuglik and a two-run Craig Piper single accounted for Sentry’s three runs in the 1st. A two-run, inside-the-park home run by nn capped off the 2nd. Then Jason Bach smacked a two-run homer in the 3rd. Brian Walker’s two-run double, a two-run Adam Visnic shot and Mike Clos’ rbi triple highlighted the 5th.

Timmy Barker collected four hits, and Visnic and Walker shared six for the winners.

A five-run 3rd put Sentry ahead to stay at 7-5 against the Base Bandits in the winners’ bracket finals. Craig Piper’s two-run double knotted the score at 5-5, then Jason Bach launched a two-run homer to give his team the lead. Sentry added two in the 4th and four in the 5th to improve their lead to 13-8. A two-run Mike Clos double capped off the inning. Base Bandits answered with four in the bottom of the 6th, but Sentry put up five unanswered runs in the top of the 7th to slam the door their challengers. Mike Scuglik put an exclamation point on the win with a slammer to close out the scoring.

Piper, Bach, Timmy Barker and Adam Visnic combined for a dozen hits.

The Base Bandits then clipped the Good Guys 13-12 to earn a re-match with Sentry, and battled to a 12-12 stalemate through six and a half. But in the bottom of the 7th, Jeremy

Bach doubled to lead off the inning, Jason Bach singled, Dan Cahill drew an intentional walk, then Brian Walker singled home Bach with the game winner.

Mike Scuglik pounded out three hits to power the champions. Joey Ellis and Roger Dunn chipped in with two apiece.

Sentry's Kevin Henn said that the Base Bandits "gave us all we wanted.

"We were kind of shocked to be playing them," said Henn. "But they're a great bunch of guys and a class team, and we enjoy playing against them anytime."

KENTUCKY USSSA MEN'S CLASS "C" STATE TOURNAMENT FINALS STANDINGS

1. Sentry Fire/Apex/LYBC, Erlanger, KY 3 0
2. NKY/Cincy Bandits, Florence, KY 3 2
3. Good Guys/GBI Cincinnati, Edgewood, KY 3 2
4. JLC/Legends/Countrywide, Elsmere, KY 2 2
5. Brooks Sports/Beef O'Brady's, Louisville, KY 1 2
NKY Ballers, Union, KY 0 2
7. Pipefitters Trade 502, Louisville, KY 0 2

KENTUCKY USSSA MEN'S CLASS "C" ALL-STATE TOURNAMENT TEAM

Brent Hopkins Good Guys/GBI Cincinnati
Adam Carr Good Guys/GBI Cincinnati
Davey Iles NKY/Cincy Bandits
Kevin Lareson NKY/Cincy Bandits
Brandon Lightner NKY/Cincy Bandits
Joey Ellis Sentry Fire/Apex/LBYC
Mike Scuglik Sentry Fire/Apex/LBYC
Jason Bach Sentry Fire/Apex/LBYC
Danny Cahill Sentry Fire/Apex/LBYC
Adam Visnik Sentry Fire/Apex/LBYC
Jay Rhoden - ODP NKY/Cincy Bandits
Timmy Barker - MVP Sentry Fire/Apex/LBYC

Vandergriff Double Lifts Barnstormers To Kentucky USSSA "E" State Title At Northern Kentucky Sports Park

Taylor Mill, Ky. - Brett Vandergriff doubled home Dale Schneider with the eventual winning run in the top of the 7th inning to lift the Barnstormers a 12-10 victory over Old School in the championship game of the Kentucky USSSA "E" State Tournament August 18-19 at Northern Kentucky Sports Park.

Schneider had singled to lead off the inning. Dave Bells later plated Vandergriff with an insurance run. Pitcher Jeff Darling held Old School at bay over the final four innings to preserve the win.

The victory capped off a 5-0 weekend for the champions, who won behind the pitching and hitting of All-State selection Jeff Darling.

Darling pitched in three of his team's five wins and led the Barnstormers in hitting with a .722 mark. Other hitting leaders included Drew Lantry and Brady Webster at .688, Dave Bells at .636, Brett Vandergriff at .615, and Mike Boggs at .600.

The Barnstormers batted .550 as a team.

"We hit with the bats and played team team defense when we needed to," summed up Barnstormer manager Shawn Haley. "And we turned a lot of double plays."

Haley said his team was forced to use three pitchers.

"We were short players and we had to play our pitcher at 3rd the first game, and then he AH'd in the second game. Dale Schneider pitched in the first game, Mike Boggs in the second and Jeff Darling pitched the rest of the games."

Haley said Darling was selected to the All-Tournament team because "he pitched three of our wins and only gave up 32 runs." Drew Lantry was also named for "his clutch hitting and having the second highest batting average on the team." Ricky Arnold "made good plays at shortstop and had some timely hits to drive in runs," added Haley. Josh Sullivan rounded out the Barnstormers all-state selections. "He made several good plays in the outfield and had some timely hits," said Haley.

The MVP award was presented to the entire Barnstormers team "because it was a team effort.

"The key to winning the tournament was consistent team play," said Haley.

In game one, the Barnstormers quickly overcame a 4-1 deficit with six runs in the top of the 2nd, then used a three run 3rd, six run 5th and five run 6th to pull away to a 21-11, six inning win. A two-run single by Jeff Darling broke a 5-5 tie in the 2nd and put his club ahead to stay at 7-5. A two-run single by Ricky Arnold was the big blow in the six run 5th. Tyler Jasper contributed a two-run double in teh 6th and Drew Lantry a two-run single.

Darling collected five hits in the game, and Jasper and Brady Webster were both perfect in four at bats.

Next the Barnstormers broke open a 3-3 contest with four runs in the top of the 3rd. Drew Lantry led the inning off with a triple and scored the go-ahead run on a Ricky Arnold single. The winners added lone runs in the 4th and 6th to make the final 9-6. Lantry banged out three hits, including a pair of doubles, and Mike Boggs and Dave Bells added two hits each.

The Barnstormers' offense exploded for 32 runs in only four at bats en route to a 32-16, five inning drubbing of the Chimney Doctors in game three. The 'Stormers jumped out to a 16-5 lead after two innings and never looked back, padding their advantage to 22-5 in the 3rd and 32-9 in the 4th. A two-run single by Tony Storer highlighted a nine run 1st. Josh Sullivan's rbi single capped off the inning.

Storer drove in eight runs in the game, and went 4-for-4 along with Drew Lantry. Sullivan, Brian Crafton, Jeff Darling and Josh Sullivan chipped in with three hits each.

In the winners' bracket finals, the Barnstormers erupted for five runs in the top of the 5th to break a 5-5 tie and shake off challenger Old School in an eventual 11-6 victory. Jeff Darling's rbi single put his team on top for good at 6-5. Brian Crafton went 3-for-4 to pace the offense.

Old School bounced back to oust Miller Imprints 9-7 in the losers' bracket finals, then battled Barnstormers to a 10-10 stalemate through six innings in the championship game. But in the top of the 7th, Dale Schneider singled and scored on Brett Vandergriff's double, then Dave Bells singled home Vandergriff to close out the scoring and give the 'Stormers a 12-10 victory. Vandergriff, Balls and Ricky Arnold combined for nine hits to power the champions.

**KENTUCKY USSSA MEN'S CLASS "E"
STATE TOURNAMENT FINAL STANDINGS**

- 1. Barnstormers Softball, Independence, KY 5 0
- 2. Old School, Taylor Mill, KY 4 2
- 3. Miller Imprints, Newport, KY 5 2
- 4. Renegades, Erlanger, KY 3 2
- 5. Longhorn, Florence, KY 3 2
- Chimney Doctors, Florence, KY 2 2
- 7. Fat Batz/Team Xplosion, Walton, KY 2 2
- Lat Big Sticks, Covington, KY 2 2
- 9. Jug House, Newport, KY 1 2
- Outkasts, Independence, KY 1 2
- Dino's/Young Guns, Florence, KY 0 2
- Kentucky Chiropractic 0 2
- 13. Avalanche Softball, Independence, KY 0 2
- Bulldog Tech, Covington, KY 0 2
- Fly Boys, Dayton, KY 0 2

Jamison Powers Cincinnati Local No. 392 Blue Repeat In U. A. “King Of The State”

Marietta, Oh.--Jim Jamison batted .789 and cracked six home runs to enable Cincinnati Local #392 Blue to defend their title in the U. A. “King of the State” softball tournament August 18-19 in Marietta, Oh.

Cincinnati Blue swept past six opponents in the annual seven team, round robin affair to determine Ohio bragging rights among United Association members.

A narrow 11-9 win over Portsmouth #577 in game five proved to be the deciding game, as both teams entered into the Sunday morning showdown undefeated. Local #392 polished off Cleveland #120 to complete the sweep.

Solid hitting from throughout the line-up and a strong pitching performance from Andy Neal carried Cincinnati Blue to the title, according to manager Rich Brandenburg.

“The number one key was hitting,” said Brandenburg, whose club hit .625 as a team and boasted a line-up with nine players who hit .600 or better. “When somebody didn’t hit, somebody picked them up every time. If somebody made a mistake, the next guy picked him up the whole weekend long.”

Jim Jamison stood head and shoulders above his teammates with a .789 performance.

“What a crusher. He can make your team,” commented Brandenburg.

Brandenburg, Jamie Buschman and Keith McKenna followed at .667, Andy Neal clubbed four home runs and batted .632 along with Keith Witsken, Tom Kafel hit .625 and Steve Hurrelbrink and Tom Bittner chipped in with an even .600 average.

Andy Neal’s pitching and stellar defensive performances from Tom Kafel and Jaime Buschman also proved big, said Brandenburg.

“Andy did all the pitching and was very consistent,” said Brandenburg. “Tom started five double plays at short and only made one error in his last chance in the sixth game. It was the only one he missed all weekend, and that was out of probably fifteen to twenty chances.”

Brandenburg said that Buschman “ran a lot of balls down in right field.

“They were big outfielders,” pointed out Brandenburg.

After receiving a 7-0 forfeit victory over Akron #219 in their opener, Cincinnati Blue mercy-ruled arch-rival Cincinnati Local #392 Red 17-5 in five innings. The winners broke open a 4-4 contest with a five run outburst in the top of the 3rd. Keith Witsgen’s rbi single put his club ahead for good at 5-4. Keith McKenna’s two-run single capped off the inning. Blue sealed the win with a six run 5th that featured a Jim Jamison three-run

blast and a solo shot by Steve Hurrelbrink. Hurrelbrink collected four hits altogether, and Jamison and Jason Zwick added three each.

Next Local #392 outslugged Sprinklefitters #669 17-14. The Cincinnati entry never trailed after jumping out to an 11-4 lead in the top of the 2nd. Blue plated seven runs before making an out in the top of the 1st, with Jim Jamison launching a three-run bomb to put his team on the board. Andy Neal had a two-run inside-the-park home run to cap off a four run 2nd. Local #669 answered with three in the 2nd and three in the 3rd to cut the deficit to 11-10, but Cincinnati took back control with four runs in the top of the 4th. Back-to-back rbi triples by Keith Witsgen and Andy Neal capped off the inning. Jamison, Neal, Todd Bittner and Rich Brandenburg each went 3-for-4 to pace the offense.

In their final contest on Saturday, Cincinnati steamrolled host Marietta #168 in four innings, 23-7 behind Jim Jamison's 4-for-4, two home run performance. Jamie Buschman also banged out four hits, and Andy Neal and Tony Riehle were both 3-for-3. Local #392 blew open an 8-1 contest with a fifteen run explosion in the bottom of the 3rd. A pair of three-run blasts by Jamison and Neal highlighted the inning. Buschman and Tom Kafel each contributed a two-run double.

Sunday morning Cincinnati built a 10-2 lead after four and a half innings, then fended off a late charge by Portsmouth #577 to preserve an 11-9 victory. Andy Neal's slammer accounted for four of his club's five runs in the top of the 1st, then added a two-run swat in the 2nd to make it 7-0. Jim Jamison went solo in a three-run 5th.

Keith Witsken was perfect in four at bats for the winners. Andy Neal and Rich Brandenburg shared six hits.

Cleveland #120 threatened to spoil Cincinnati Blue's perfect record in the finale, scoring three runs in the top of the 4th to take a short-lived 8-6 lead. But Local #392 took the wind out of #120's sails with eight runs in the bottom of the inning. Jason Zwick knotted the score with a two-run, inside-the-park homer, then Andy Neal continued his late-tournament onslaught with a three-run inside-the-parker to put his team ahead to stay at 11-8. Cincinnati added one in the 5th, then Cleveland closed out the scoring with two in the top of the 7th to make the final 15-10.

Steve Hurrelbrink pounded out four hits, and Jim Jamison cracked two home runs and combined with Tom Kafel, Todd Bittner, Keith McKenna and Rich Brandenburg for fifteen hits.

"Our team finally jelled," summed up player-manager Rich Brandenburg after the tournament. "Our middle infielders only made one error the whole weekend. Our young kids are finally learning how to play."

Brandenburg said his team will wrap up the season with a trip to the USSSA Corporate World in Columbus, In., and the NSA World in Indianapolis.

August 25-26...

Winners Claim Third National Title In Five Years...

Jamison, Barth Lead Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters To Great Lakes "B" Title At Liberty Park

Sterling Heights, Mi.--Jon Jamison hit .788 with four home runs, and Trevor Barth pitched Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters to three of their four victories to lead Freeze to a first place finish in the USSSA Great Lakes Division National Championship August 25-26 at Liberty Park.

After surviving a first-round 12-11 scare from K. A. Softball, Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters mowed down Team Bud Light/Easton 24-14, Blitz/Watanabe/TTP/Wessel/A & K/Easton 18-10, and Steve's Drywall/Jeds/R & L/Concrete 22-13.

Freeze picked up \$600 travel expense and 1500 national ranking points with their victory.

Jamison was named the tournament's Offensive MVP and Barth the Tournament MVP.

"We're finally starting to get some guys on base for him," remarked Freeze manager Homer Matheny regarding Jamison's performance. "This was the first time all season that the top of the line-up got on in front of him and he hit a three-run home run. Two years ago that was a regular occurrence, but this year we've been struggling hitting together."

Matheny called Jamison a "special hitter.

"He doesn't have to hit home runs to contribute, and that's what makes him special. He was 5-for-5 against Steve's Drywall and only hit one home run."

Matheny said Barth was named the overall MVP due to his "great pitching.

"He pitched three of our four games and just did a great job," said Matheny. "I don't think Blitz or Steve's has beaten him all year. He only gave up ten or twelve runs each game. With the atmosphere up there with the temperature being 75 degrees and the balls flying out, and holding the best teams in the region to ten or twelve runs, that's a great job."

Defensively, Matheny lauded the efforts of middle infielder Rob Menke and centerfielder Richie Jones.

"Rob did a great job this weekend as always," said Matheny. "He controls the defense in the infield and really helps to keep us out of jams by making good plays.

"And considering it's his first year playing there and he's not a true centerfielder, Richie has done a great job out there," added Matheny.

Freeze/Arnold barely got past their first opponent, rallying for three runs in the bottom of the 7th to stun defending National Champion K. A. Softball of Illinois. Jon Jamison and Mike Canupp led off the bottom of the 7th with singles, then scored on a Richie Jones triple with one out to tie the game at 11-11. Then, after K. A. Softball issued a pair of intentional walks to load the bases, Rob Menke delivered a sac fly to plate Jones with the game winner.

Jones banged out four hits, including a pair of home runs, and Menke and Jamison chipped in with three hits each.

A thirteen-run 3rd overcame a 5-3 deficit and helped carry Freeze/Arnold past Team Bud Light/Easton in game two. A three-run blast by Jon Jamison put his club ahead to stay at 6-5. Freeze then put up eleven runs with two outs sparked by solo shots by George Farris and Richie Jones. Team Bud Light answered with seven runs to cut the deficit to 16-12 in the bottom of the 3rd, but pitcher Bobby Noeth held the Michigan club to two runs over the next four innings to preserve the win. Freeze added lone runs in the 4th and 5th, two in the 6th and four in the 7th to make the final 24-14.

Jones, Noeth and Homer Matheny each went 4-for-5 to pace the offense.

Freeze/Arnold never trailed in the winners' bracket finals, using a six run 1st and a nine run 3rd to build a 15-1 lead and ease past Blitz/Easton 18-10. Jon Jamison launched a three-run homer to put Freeze on the board, and Homer Matheny followed with a two-run double to make it 5-0. Richie Jones and Rob Menke each contributed a two-run shot in the 3rd. Jamison, Jeff Click and Trevor Barth combined for nine hits to lead the winners.

Early scoring was also the modus operandi in the finals, as Freeze/Arnold erupted for four runs in the top of the 1st and six in the 2nd to forge a 10-0 lead over Steve's Drywall. Trevor Barth's three run swat accounted for the first three runs in the 1st. Rob Menke went solo, Scott Stigers, Don Sikora and Jon Jamison doubled, and Bob Noeth tripled to highlight the 2nd. Freeze didn't shake free of Steve's until the 4th, when they padded their lead to 14-7 on consecutive rbi doubles by Jeff Click, Jamison, Mike Canupp and Richie Jones. A five-run 5th featuring a Jon Jamison three-run belt increased the lead to 19-8 and sealed an eventual 22-13 victory.

Jamison pounded out five hits, Click added four, and Canupp and Don Sikora shared six.

Getting past K. A. Softball in the first round "kickstarted out team," said Freeze manager Homer Matheny.

"To beat the team that finished second in the 'B' World last year...that was definitely big. I think that had a lot to do with the way Trevor pitched. We didn't hit well that game, but by winning in the bottom of the 7th, that kick-started our weekend," said Matheny.

USSSA GREAT LAKES DIVISION MEN'S CLASS B

CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FINAL STANDINGS

1. Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters, Cincinnati, OH 4 0
2. Steve's Drywall/Jeds/R & L, Perrysburg, OH 5 2
3. Blitz/Watanabe/TTP/Wessel/Easton, Cin., OH 2 2
4. Mike Foulks/Team Insanity, Covington, KY 3 2
5. Loveless Hardwood/Conveyor, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
Team Bud Light/Easton, Canton, MI 1 2
7. Dawg Pack/Wessel/A1 Fab, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
DO/Butch's/Tarz Nation, Melvindale, MI 0 2
9. Red's/TPS/Classic/Boombah, Verona, KY 0 2
K. A. Softball, Chicago, IL 0 2

USSSA MEN'S "B" GREAT LAKES NATIONAL ALL-TOURN. TEAM - STERLING HEIGHTS, MI

Roger Drake Mike Foulks/Team Insanity
Jason Murphy Mike Foulks/Team Insanity
Brian Alexander Blitz/Watanabe/Easton
Jason Roesch Blitz/Watanabe/Easton
Tony Huston Blitz/Watanabe/Easton
Jason Hensley Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Brian Farrar Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Don Delker Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Ronnie Fields Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Tommy Thompson Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Homer Matheny Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters
Jeff Click Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters
Robert Noeth Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters
Michael Canupp Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters
Richard Jones Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters
Daniel Almester - ODP Steve's/Jeds/R & L
Jon Jamison - OOP Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters
Trevor Barth - MVP Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters

Winners Claim Three Of Six Games In Final At Bat... **11th Hour Rallies Lift Indian Creek To 33rd Annual Corn Boil Title At Central Turners**

Mt. Healthy, Oh.--Indian Creek Tavern rallied to win three of their six games in their last at bat to capture first place in the 33rd Annual Corn Boil Tournament August 24-26 at Central Turners.

The three come-from-behind wins included a two-run rally in the bottom of the 6th to knock off Cornfused 8-7 in game one, a six-run rally in the bottom of the 6th to overtake

E-Ballers 18-17 in game two, and an amazing nine-run rally to stun CWP 19-18 in the bottom of the 6th in the winners' bracket finals.

And in each game, pitcher Chris Wessel shut down Indian Creek's opponent in the top of the 7th to preserve the win.

Wessel also delivered some clutch hits, including a two-run double to tie the score against the E-Ballers, and a game-winning three-run homer versus CWP.

Wessel's heroics earned him a share of tournament MVP honors.

"Chris had the most amazing tournament I've ever seen as a pitcher," lauded Indian Creek player-manager Joey Wilke. "They were hitting balls at his face at 150 miles per hour and he was snapping 'em off the whole tournament. His defense was impeccable."

Wessel also batted a solid .522.

Hitting leader Daniel Tolbert was Indian Creek's other MVP selection.

"He was non-stop hitting the whole weekend," said Wilke. "He was 19-for-26 (.731) and 14 rbi's and four home runs. He was lights out."

Other batting leaders for Indian Creek included Steven Tolbert at .700, Wilke at .667, Robbie Garrett at .652, Ryan Kirby at .636, Gary Thomas at .619, and Randy Harrison and Shane Wilke at .545.

Garrett led the team in rbi's with 15. Tolbert added 14, Joey Wilke 12 and Ryan Kirby 11. Wilke also belted three home runs. Garrett and Kirby chipped in two apiece.

"We had good hitting and a lot of power from the top of the order," remarked Wilke. "And we had great chemistry. A lot of guys know each other from playing with each other off and on."

"Great pitching and play up the middle with Chris (pitcher Chris Wessel), Daniel (shortstop Daniel Tolbert) and Steven (2nd baseman Steven Tolbert) were keys for us," added Wilke. "Steven was amazing at 2nd base, and Gary (Thomas) was stellar at 3rd."

Left-centerfielder Matt Witt anchored the outfield, said Wilke.

"He had four or five assists where he threw people out at 3rd and at home and stopped teams from having big innings."

Indian Creek rallied for two runs with two outs in the bottom of the 6th, then held Cornfused scoreless in the top of the 7th, to escape with an 8-7 victory in game one. Randy Harrison singled, moved into scoring position on a Matt Witte base hit, then scored on Shane Wilke's rbi single to knot the score at 7-7. Eddie Glaser then singled

home Witte with the game winner. Daniel Tolbert homered and went 2-for-3 along with Robbie Garrett to pace the offense.

Things went from desperate to nearly hopeless for Indian Creek in game two, as they entered the bottom of the 6th this time trailing E-Ballers by five at 17-12. Not to worry. Back-to-back singles by Steve Tolbert and Joey Wilke set the table for a two-run Robbie Garrett double that cut the deficit to 17-14. Gary Thomas followed with an rbi single to narrow the lead to one. Then, after a Ryan Kirby base hit, Chris Wessel delivered a two-run double to knot the score, then raced home with the eventual game winner on a Randy Harrison base hit. Tolbert, Wilke, Garrett and Gary Thomas combined for a dozen hits.

Indian Creek never trailed in their next two games, as they jumped out to an 8-0 lead in both contests and never looked back.

Robbie Garrett's slammer put Indiana Creek on top of Top Value 4-0 in game three. Shane Wilke added a key two-run single in the inning as the lead swelled to 7-0. Joey Wilke cracked a two-run homer in the 2nd to make it 10-1, and Daniel Tolbert added a two-run shot in the 4th to give his club a 13-4 advantage. Top Value rallied in the late innings before succumbing 15-11. Tolbert banged out four hits, and Ryan Kirby Chipped in three.

A pair of two-run doubles - one by Ryan Kirby and the other by Randy Harrison - highlighted Indian Creek's eight run 1st against Creekside in game four. Creekside never recovered, as Indian Creek rolled to a 14-4, six inning drubbing. Daniel Tolbert collected three hits for the winners.

CWP appeared poised to end Indian Creek's run through the losers' bracket in the winners' bracket finals, as they held a commanding 18-10 with only an inning and a half to go. But in the bottom of the 6th, Indian Creek's offense came to life once again as it had in games one and two. Joey Wilke and Chris Wessel each connected on a three-run home run to account for six of the their club's nine runs. Wessel sealed MVP honors by launching a three-run blast to put his team ahead to stay at 19-18, then shutting down CWP in the 7th. Wilke, Daniel Tolbert, Robbie Garrett, Ryan Kirby and Steven Tolbert had three hits each in the victory.

That lifted Indian Creek into the finals against a spartan Team Spanho, which had erased eight straight opponents after falling to the E-Ballers in their opener. But Indian Creek jumped out to a big lead early on the strength of home runs by Robbie Garrett, Daniel Tolbert, and Ryan Kirby, then fended off a late Team Spanho charge to pull out a 17-12 win. Daniel and Steven Tolbert and Joey Wilke pounded out three hits apiece to lead the champions.

CLIPPARD BEACHES WINS CORN EATING CONTEST - Clippard Beaches won what would be the final corn eating contest in the 33rd annual event to earn half off their entry fee for 2008. Tournament officials have announced that future tournaments will not

include a corn eating contest, and that a drawing would be held to award a participating team half off the next year's entry fee.

**33RD CENTRAL TURNERS CORN BOIL TOURN.
MEN'S CLASS C/D DIVISION FINAL STANDINGS**

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|-----|
| 1. | Indian Creek | 6 0 |
| 2. | Team Spanhos | 8 2 |
| 3. | CWP | 4 2 |
| 4. | E-Ballers | 6 2 |
| 5. | JTM | 3 2 |
| | Creekside | 2 2 |
| 7. | The Shoot | 4 2 |
| | Kahoots | 3 2 |
| 9. | EST | 2 2 |
| | Heartland Kennels | 2 2 |
| | Table Top Cornhole | 2 2 |
| | Top Value | 1 2 |
| 13. | Black & Blue | 1 2 |
| | Clippard Beaches | 1 2 |
| | Guido's | 1 2 |
| | Team Vengeance | 1 2 |
| 17. | Always Truckin' | 1 2 |
| | Da Boyz | 1 2 |
| | EMR | 1 2 |
| | Headshop | 1 2 |
| | Kenny's Sports | 1 2 |
| | Rick's Tavern | 1 2 |
| | T-N-T | 0 2 |
| | Team Angilo's | 0 2 |
| 25. | Cornfused | 0 2 |
| | Don't County Us Out | 0 2 |
| | Loving Insurance | 0 2 |
| | Rib City | 0 2 |

Francis, Sharp, Walker Lead Champions To Title...

**Bases Loaded Levels J & M 21-1 In Worth-Bud Light-CRC Mixed "D" State Finals
At Riverstar**

Will the "real" Bomb Squad softball team please stand up?

That's what participants in the class "D" division of the Worth-Bud Light-Cincinnati Recreation Commission Mixed Couples "D" State Tournament must be asking after the Columbus team won the fifteen-team event August 25-26 at Riverstar Park.

In five of their nine games, Bomb Squad hardly looked like a team that carried a 17-2 record and five championships into tournament. After all, they got drubbed 9-2 in their opener, and rallied for two victories in the 5th and two in the 7th. In their two come-from-behind wins in the 7th, they needed six runs in one contest, and three in another. Anything less, and they're out of the tournament instead of standing in the winners' circle.

But in their other four games, Bomb Squad mercy-ruled their opponents, looking every bit like the number three ranked USSSA "D" team in the nation and two-time NIT winner.

Bomb Squad double-dipped Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove Lanes 13-3 and 19-18 to complete an eight game trek through the losers' bracket and claim the title, their sixth of the year in as many tries.

A 9-3 setback to Golden Jersey Inn/Mader Electric in game one set the tone for the tournament, said Bomb Squad player-manager Chris Rowe.

"We're not used to losing, so it was kind of a wake-up call when we lost our first game. So everybody pulled together and collected ourselves and went about our business," said Rowe. "We knew we had to win a lot of games and that it was going to be an uphill battle to dig ourselves out of the hole we put ourselves in."

All-State selections for Bomb Squad included Mike Rizzo (.741), Chea Romine (.718), Leeanna King and Tammy McCune. Matt Thompson chipped in with a .680 performance and Tracy McLaughlin batted .523.

"Matt is normally one of our subs, but he filled in and did a great job for us," said Rowe.

Rowe (.767) and Kim Riley (.586) were named co-MVP's.

"I led our team in hitting and the team voted me MVP," said Rowe. "It seemed like I started many of our rallies and got our momentum back several times. But the MVP award could have easily gone to Chea or Mike. They both had just great tournaments.

"Kim was our highest hitting girl at .586 and it seemed like she made a huge play for us in about every game in right field to save runs."

After getting stunned by Golden Jersey/Mader Electric 9-3 in their opener, Bomb Squad came within three innings of elimination when they fell behind 2006 "E" State Champion Weavers 7-5 after four and a half innings. But in the bottom of the 5th, Bomb Squad exploded for six runs to grab an 11-7 lead, then held on for a 14-10 victory. Chea Romine's two-run double cut Weaver's lead to 7-6, then Tammy McCune followed with a two-run single to put her club ahead to stay at 8-7. McCune and Chris Rowe banged out three hits each for the winners.

Next Bomb Squad scored three runs in the top of the 1st, eight in the 2nd, five in the 3rd and nine in the 4th en route to a 25-6, four inning pounding of Bullit Proof/Team Drama. Kim Riley put the winners on the board with an rbi single in the 1st. Chea Romine's two-run double was the big blow in the 2nd. Matt Thompson's rbi single capped off the inning. Romine and Leanna King were perfect in four at bats, Riley, Thompson, Chris Rowe and Tracy McLaughlin shared a dozen hits.

The Bomb Squad had their second brush with being eliminated in game four, as they entered the top of the 7th trailing Two Brothers 12-7. But Bomb Squad rallied for an amazing six runs, finally taking a 13-12 lead on Chea Romine's two-out, two-run double. Pitcher Mike Rizzo then shut down Two Brothers in the bottom of the inning to preserve the win. Romine collected four hits, and Rizzo, Chris Rowe and Leanna King chipped in three apiece.

Bomb Squad's next two opponents were disposed of via the mercy rule, as they ousted Fun Bunch 11-1 and Golden Jersey 10-0 behind the pitching of Mike Rizzo. Bomb Squad exploded for nine runs in the top of the 4th to blow open a 1-0 contest against Fun Bunch. Rizzo's two-run triple highlighted the inning. Chea Romine, Tammy McCune and Chris Rowe each went 3-for-4.

Then in game six, Bomb Squad used a six-run 3rd to forge an 8-0 lead and went on to avenge their first round loss with a 10-0 shutout of Golden Jersey. The inning featured a two-run, inside-the-park home run by Kim Riley. Mike Rizzo paced the offense with three hits to go along with his shutout pitching.

That lifted Bomb Squad into the losers' bracket finals against Slice of Stainless/Venom, where they pushed across two runs in the bottom of the 5th to break a 5-5 stalemate, then held on for a 7-5 victory as Mike Rizzo shut down Venom over the last two innings. Chea Romine went 3-for-3 to lead the offense.

Bomb Squad's defense, which had limited its three previous opponents to a combined six runs, proved nearly impregnable again in the first championship game, as they mercy-ruled Brady's Bunch 13-3 in five. Bomb Squad overcame a 1-0 deficit with an eight run outburst in the 3rd and never looked back. Matt Thompson's two-run single broke a 1-1 tie and put his club ahead to stay at 3-1. Leanna King's rbi single capped off the inning. Kim Riley led her club with three safeties.

The championship game was a knock-down, drag-out. Brady's erupted for eight runs in the top of the 1st before making an out. But Bomb Squad kept its composure, battling back to take a 14-8 lead after five and a half. But Brady's roared back with eight runs in the bottom of the 6th to regain the lead at 16-14. Unfazed, Bomb Squad answered with five runs in the top of the 7th to take a 19-16 lead. Mike Rizzo tripled and scored on Jen Tracy's single to make it 16-15. Dave Dever then plated Tracy to knot the score at 16-16. Leanna King then singled in Dever to put Bomb Squad on top 17-16. Matt Thompson followed with an rbi double and Chea Romine single home Thompson to increase the lead to 19-16.

Brady's Bunch wouldn't go down without a fight in the bottom of the 7th, scoring two runs before a 6-4-3 double play brought down the curtain.

Mike Rizzo and Tracy McGlaughlin pounded out four hits each for the champions. Dever, Thompson, Romine and Chris Rowe combined for twelve hits.

"We never quit," Bomb Squad manager Chris Rowe proudly proclaimed after the tournament. "In the 13-12 game we could have packed it in, but we stepped it up and scored six runs in the 7th and shut down a very good offensive team in the bottom of the 7th to win the game."

Rowe said his club also stepped up big in the top of the 7th in the second finals.

"We had just given up ten runs in the bottom of the 6th. Mike Rizzo had walked three men in a row to put six base runners on. But he didn't let that get to him and he hustled out a triple to lead off the the 7th and that got our momentum back," said Rowe.

Rowe said it seemed like his team "came out really flat" in their first two games.

"We really didn't wake up until the 4th inning of the Weavers game," said Rowe. "Then things started to click a little better for us.

"Then once we got past the Two Brothers game, we got back in the right frame of mind and we got on a roll and started playing like we're used to playing," said Rowe. "That was a pivotal game for us."

Rowe attributed his club's title to "guts and chemistry.

"We like to see our team as an extended family. It makes it easier when your backs are against the wall and you know you can rely on the person next to you," he said.

Rowe said his team could not have won the tournament without a strong bench.

"Playing so many games in a row, we had a few subs who came in and spelled the starters and held it all together while everybody rested up a little bit," said Rowe. "They were Maria Dorn, Diana Ackley and Kevin Ackley."

Rowe concluded with high praise for two of the tournament's officials.

"The umpires in the championship game were by far the best we've had in the whole tournament," said Rowe.

**WORTH SPORTS-BUD LIGHT-CRC-USSSA MIXED
COUPLES CLASS D STATE TOURN. FINAL STANDINGS**

1. The Bomb Squad, Grove City, OH 8 1
2. Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove Lanes, Batavia, OH 4 2
3. Slice of Stainless/Venom, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
4. Golden Jersey/Mader Electric, Springfield, OH 4 2
5. Buckeye Softball, Lebanon, OH 2 2
Fun Bunch, Maineville, OH 2 2
7. Froggy's, Urbana, OH 2 2
Two Brothers, Columbus, OH 2 2
9. Action Special Tees, Pickerington, OH 1 2
Bullit Proof/Team Drama, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
Final Score, Columbus, OH 1 2
Medicap, Eaton, OH 0 2
13. In House, Piqua, OH 0 2
Sizzle Softball, Mt. Orab, OH 0 2
Weaver's, Wilmington, OH 0 2

**WORTH SPORTS-BUD LIGHT-CRC-OHIO USSSA
MIXED COUPLES "D" STATE ALL-STATE TEAM**

Dale Berger Buckeye Softball
 James Angel Fun Bunch
 Jerome Knard Golden Jersey/Mader Electric
 Jodi Noffke Golden Jersey/Mader Electric
 Sean Emmitt Slice of Stainless/Venom
 Dana Hott Slice of Stainless/Venom
 Larry Prine Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove
 Steve Ogden Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove
 Emily Cannady Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove
 Shelly Chisman Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove
 Chea Romine Bomb Squad
 Mike Rizzo Bomb Squad
 Leeanna King Bomb Squad
 Tammy McCune Bomb Squad
 Nikki Ogden- ODP Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove
 Jonathon Bonham - ODP Brady's Bunch/Cherry Grove
 Chris Rowe - MVP Bomb Squad
 Kim Riley - MVP Bomb Squad

**Tournament MVP's Farmer, Sheridan Lead Winners To Title...
 Nine Run 9th Carries Double Rounders Past Midland Title, 14-7, In Worth-Bud
 Light-CRC Mixed "E" State Finals At Riverstar**

The Double Rounders exploded for nine runs in the top of the 9th to spank Midland Title West 14-7 in the championship game of the Worth-Bud Light-Cincinnati Recreation Commission Mixed Couples "E" State Tournament August 25-26 at Riverstar Park.

Crystal Hitchcock's two-run single put the Rounders ahead to stay at 7-5 in the 9th. Daren McCord and Angie Sheridan followed with two run singles to increase the lead to 11-5 and secure the win.

The victory capped off a 4-0 weekend for the champions. Double Rounders had previously knocked off Travel Specialties 10-7 in their opener, then mercy-ruled Buckeye Ford/Takacs Ice Cream 21-0 and Midland Title West 23-3.

"We kept our heads up," said player-manager Crystal Hitchcock. "We didn't come out and hit like we're capable in our first game, but we just got the runs back inning by inning. We didn't let each other get down and we eventually came out on top."

Hitchcock added that Double Rounders played "phenomenal defense, but hitting was the main key" to winning the tournament.

Indeed. The Rounders averaged over seventeen runs per game, while holding all five opponents to single digit scoring behind the pitching of co-MVP Kevin Farmer.

Hitchcock said Farmer "didn't give up many walks and fielded the ball well up the middle.

"He made a key snag for us while covering home plate in the finals that sent us into extra innings, and he was on base constantly," added Hitchcock.

Angie Sheridan was selected the tournament's female MVP.

"She had lots of key hits and made lots of big catches in left-centerfield," said Hitchcock. "She ran down a lot of short fly balls that you wouldn't think someone would get to, but she did. She's a phenomenal outfielder."

Also named to the All-Tournament team were Daren McCord (1f), Steve Thurber (2b), Lyndsay Allen (1b) and Hitchcock (AH).

"Daren made a few key plays, including one in the championship game that kept us from having to play another game," said Hitchcock. "They had a runner going from 3rd to home on an overthrow, and if he would have scored, they would have won. But Daren threw the ball to our pitcher, who was covering home, and he tagged the guy out so the game would go to extra innings.

"He also hit well and had an all-around good tournament both offensively and defensively," said Hitchcock.

Hitchcock said that Thurber "turned quite a few double plays at 2nd base and made several diving stops to prevent runners from getting doubles, and he kept runners from advancing from 3rd to home on hits to the right side."

Lyndsay Allen “had several keyhits and was involved in helping us turn a triple play,” noted Hitchcock. “She played 1st base and dug out a lot of ground balls on bad throws.”

Hitchcock said she was voted to the All-State team “for key hits in the championship game and moving base runners.

“I went 4-for-4 in the championship game. It was a team vote..”

Hitchcock delivered one of the biggest hits of the tournament, singling home two runs to break a 5-5 tie in the top of the 9th in the finals.

After falling behind Travel Specialties 4-0 in the top of the 1st, Double Rounders battled back to teak an 8-5 lead with three runs in the bottom of the 3rd in game one. Steve Thurber put his team ahead to stay at 7-5 with a two-run single. Crystal Hitchcock followed with an rbi single to make it 8-6. Travel Specialties answered with two in the 4th, but pitcher Kevin Farmer shut down Travel Specialties over the final three innings to preserve the win. Farmer was aided by a 6th inning triple play. Kyle Bonner picked off a low liner in right center, then doubled a runner off 1st for the second out. First baseman Lyndsay Allen threw to 3rd baseman Jess Spain, who tagged out a runner attempting to get back to 3rd to complete the triple play.

Farmer and Daren McCord combined for six hits to lead the winners.

Next the Rounders used a twelve-run 3rd to blow open a 6-0 game and went on to overpower Buckeye Ford/Takacs Ice Cream 21-0. Kyle Bonner’s two run double ignited the 3rd. An rbi single by Angie Sheridan capped off the inning. The Rounders were aided by five bases on balls. Bonner, Sheridan, Lyndsay Allen and Chrystal Hitchcock shared a dozen hits to pace the offense.

A ten-run 1st and a nine-run 4th carried Double Rounders past Midland Title West 23-3 in the winners’ bracket finals. Daren McCord doubled to lead off the game, then scored on Angie Sheridan’s base hit. A pair of two-run doubles by Jamie Coulter capped off the scoring in both the 1st and the 4th. McCord, Coulter, Kevin Farmer, Stephanie Brown, Kyle Bonner and Matt Kelly collected three hits each in the contest.

Midland then bounced Salon 122 from the tournament in a 21-4 blowout in the losers’ bracket finals to earn another shot at the Rounders. The two finalists battled to a 5-5 stalemate through eight, then in the top of the 9th the Rounder erupted for nine runs with two outs to claim the title. Jessica Spain singled to lead off the inning, then moved to 3rd on a Steve Thurber double. Crystal Hitchcock then singled to right to score both runners and give her club the lead for good at 7-5. Chris Banks and Jamie Coulter singled to juice the sacks for a a two-run Daren McCord base hit. Then Angie Sheridan singled home two runs to make it 11-5. Midland never recovered, scoring two runs in the bottom of the 9th to make the final 14-7.

Hitchcock and Kevin Farmer pounded out four hits each, and Thurber and Banks chipped in with a 3-for-4 effort.

**WORTH SPORTS-BUD LIGHT-CRC-USSSA MIXED
COUPLES CLASS E STATE TOURN. FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Double Rounders, Newark, OH 4 0
2. Midland Title West, London, OH 4 2
3. Shooters, Cincinnati, OH 4 2
4. Salon 122,, Marysville, OH 2 2
5. BBC, Marysville, Oh 2 2
7. Buckeye Ford/Takacs Ice Cream, London, OH 2 2
7. Agri-Scapes, Dayton, OH 2 2
- Travel Specialties, Springfield, OH 2 2
9. B & B Landscaping, Pleasant Plain, OH 0 2
- Brewmasters, Washington Court House, OH 0 2
- Sherwin Williams, Eaton, OH 0 2
- Sweeney Services, Cincinnati, OH 0 2

**WORTH SPORTS-BUD LIGHT-CRC-OHIO USSSA
MIXED COUPLES "E" STATE ALL-STATE TEAM**

Samantha Wolfe BBC
Tim Little Buckeye Ford/Takacs Ice Cream
Kelly Reed Salon 122
Kelly Strayer Salon 122
Tracy Kump Shooters
Kenny Greer Shooters
Kim Roberts Midland Title West
Molly Pickens Midland Title West
Kevin Flax Midland Title West
Aaron Flax Midland Title West
Daren McCord Double Rounders
Steve Thurber Double Rounders
Lindsay Allen Double Rounders
Crystal Hitchcock Double Rounders
Whitne Hodge - ODP Midland Title West
Justin Collins - ODP Midland Title West
Kevin Farmer - MVP Double Rounders
Angie Sheridan - MVP Double Rounders

Francis, Sharp, Walker Lead Champions To Title...

**Bases Loaded Levels J & M 21-1 In Worth-Bud Light-CRC Mixed "E Rec" State
Finals At Riverstar**

After needing eight innings to survive a first round 12-11 scare against BIR, Bases Loaded mercy-ruled two of their next three victims, mercy-ruling J & M Outcasts 21-1 in the finals, en route to a first place finish in the Worth-Bud Light-Cincinnati Recreation Commission Mixed Couples "E Rec" State Tournament August 25-26 at Riverstar Park.

Bases Loaded posted a 4-1 record in the inaugural affair, suffering its only loss in a 13-9 setback to J & M in the first finals. But the champions exacted quick and conclusive revenge in the second finals, crushing J & M 21-1.

The winners won behind the defense of tournament Co-MVP Dustin Francis, the hot bat of female MVP Angie Sharp, and the all-around sensational play of leading hitter Willie Walker.

But perhaps more importantly, they were a team on a mission.

"We had a goal here," pointed out player-manager Angie Sharp. "I lost my son, Aaron Humble, in a motorcycle accident last summer, and winning the state is something we've always wanted to do. We had good attitudes and we were ready. He was our leadoff hitter and left fielder. Last year was the first time we made it til Sunday. This year we said we were going to complete the job, since we didn't do it last year."

Sharp's selection as MVP, however, didn't appear to be based on sentimental reasons.

"I led the girls in hitting with a .588 average and I'm a pretty good defensive catcher. Also, I'm the oldest one on the team," she chuckled.

Dustin Frances was only fourth on his team in hitting with a .647 average, but turned in one circus play after another at shortstop to earn his MVP nod.

"He made some awesome plays," said Sharp. "In our first game, he dove for the ball and was sitting on his butt and still made the putout."

Willie Walker led the team in hitting with a near perfect .947 performance. Plus, noted Sharp, Walker's strong arm from right field proved invaluable.

"He covered a lot of ground on the right side, but the big thing is his arm," said Sharp. "He made at least three or four putouts from right-centerfield to 2nd base.

"He's just an all-around player," added Sharp. "He was excellent. He led the guys with a .941 average. There's nothing you can say bad about Willie."

Sharp said her team also got a big boost from its' unusual three-person pitching rotation of Shane Riesinger, John Nichols and Brian Clemens. The trio held three of Bases Loaded's four victims to single digit scoring.

“They were great,” said Sharp. “We change pitchers every other inning to throw people off.”

“We played together as a team, never got down when we got behind, and really stuck it out,” summed up Sharp.

Bases Loaded barely survived its opener, escaping with 12-11, extra inning victory over B. I. R. After finishing seven innings with the score tied at 11-11, Bases Loaded held B. I. R. scoreless in the top of the 8th, then won the game on a Michael Landon rbi double in the bottom of the inning. Shane Riesinger, who scored the game winner, collected four hits along with Landon, Willie Walker and Angie Sharp.

Next Bases Loaded used a six run 3rd to break open a 4-4 contest and help overpower Tim Horton’s 19-8 in six innings. Willie Walker’s two-run double put his club ahead to stay at 6-4. The winners batted around in the inning. Walker added another four hit effort to his resume. Jon Nichols and Michael Landon chipped in with three hits each.

In the winners’ bracket finals, Bases Loaded scored four runs in the bottom of the 4th to overcome a 5-4 deficit in the first of three match-ups with J & M Outcasts, then put the game away with a five-run 5th. Shane Riesinger doubled home Dustin Francis with the tying run in the 4th, then scored the go-ahead run on a Coushatta Fitzgerald single. Walker stretched his hitting streak for the weekend to a perfect 11-for-11, sharing nine hits with Michael Landon and Brian Clemens. April Weese and Angie Sharp each went 2-for-3.

J & M rallied to battle past B. I. R. 14-13 in the losers’ bracket finals to earn a re-match with Bases Loaded, then stretched the tournament to its limit in a 13-9 decision.

But Bases Loaded stormed back in the second finals with an overwhelming 21-1 rout of the Outcasts. The champions erupted for eight runs in the 1st, then added four in the 2nd, three in the 3rd and six in the 4th to squash the challengers. The first seven batters scored in the 1st, which was sparked by Mark Easton’s leadoff double. Willie Walker’s two-run double put his club on the board. J & M never recovered.

Easton, Walker, Dustin Francis, Danica Anderson and Brian Clemens combined for fifteen hits to pace the champions.

WORTH SPORTS-BUD LIGHT-CRC-USSSA MIXED COUPLES E REC STATE TOURN. FINAL STANDINGS

1. Bases Loaded, Marysville, OH 4 1
2. J & M Outcasts, Hamilton, OH 4 2
3. B. I. R., Hamilton, OH 4 2
4. Crossroads, Lebanon, OH 3 2
5. Flip Squad, Trenton, OH 1 2
Tim Horton’s, New Carlisle, OH 1 2

- 7. Beercats, Cincinnati, OH 0 2
Deuces, Marysville, OH 0 2
- 9. Michael's Insurance, Morrow, OH 0 2

**WORTH SPORTS-BUD LIGHT-CRC-OHIO USSSA
MIXED "E REC" STATE ALL-STATE TEAM**

Vanessa Cochran Tim Horton's
 John Crabtree Flip's
 Eric Schmidt Crossroads
 Theresa Boone Crossroads
 John Miller B. I. R.
 Katie Brinkman B. I. R.
 Josh Eversole J & M Outcasts
 Josh Timler J & M Outcasts
 Tracy Brewster J & M Outcasts
 Sarah Powell J & M Outcasts
 Michael Landon Bases Loaded
 Willie Walker Bases Loaded
 Danica Anderson Bases Loaded
 April Weese Bases Loaded
 Tom Huiet - ODP J & M Outcasts
 Jennifer Rutherford - ODP J & M Outcasts
 Angie Sharp - MVP Bases Loaded
 Dustin Francis - MVP Bases Loaded

Meatball Revenge, Diamond Freaks Perfect In Expressway Minis

Milford, Oh.--Meatball Revenge and the Diamond Freaks each recorded a perfect 3-0 record on their way to a first place finish in an eight team, two division Sunday morning round robin August 26th at Expressway Park.

Meatball Express escaped with an 11-10 victory over eventual runner-up Vineyard Print (1-2) in a key first-round match-up, then rolled past Easterday (1-2) 12-8 and Suburban Bears (1-2) 19-14 to complete the sweep of division one.

While in division two, the Diamond Freaks allowed only ten runs in overpowering eventual division runner-up Wolfpack/Bad Habits (2-1), Snap It Off (1-2) 14-4 and Fat Daddies (0-3) 18-2.

**It's An All-Expressway Park Championship Game In U-Trip Nationals...
 Cincinnati Diamondbacks Edge O. C. Softball 12-10 In Worth-Bud Light-USSSA
 Great Lakes "E" Finals**

Milford, Oh.--It looked like a recipe for a disaster.

August 18-19 in the Ohio USSSA "E" State Tournament, Cincinnati Diamondbacks' centerfielder Jeremy Dick pulled his hamstring and wouldn't be able to play the outfield in the Great Lakes National Tournament Labor Day Weekend.

Then things went from bad to worse.

Friday morning before the Nationals, the Diamondbacks' starting pitcher, Kenny Throckmorton, woke up with a swollen knee and couldn't walk.

Most teams might have thrown in the towel at this point.

But as the old axiom goes, "winners never quit and quitters never win."

And September 1-3 in the 75-team USSSA Great Lakes National Tournament, the Cincinnati Diamondbacks proved they weren't quitters.

Behind the pitching of back-up Brian Richardson, a make-shift line-up, and a "never say die" attitude, the Diamondbacks battled past seven opponents to capture the National Championship at Expressway Park.

The winners survived one close call after another, winning two of their first three games in extra innings, and winning three of their seven games in their final at bat. They only outscored their opponents by seventeen runs, for an average margin of victory 2.42. Had they not won their opener by scoring five unanswered runs in the top of the 8th, it would have been even less. Five of their seven games were decided by two runs or less.

"We just showed a lot of heart," summed up team spokesman Steve Sliter. "We really didn't have our most talented team out there. But we never gave up, and we kept finding ways to win."

Overall, Sliter credited the D-Backs' title to "consistent hitting and great defense. Every player but two hit over .500."

Jason Watson paced the champions with a .615 average. T. J. Carty followed at .609, Matt Wallar batted .593, and Steve Sliter and J. C. Clutter .565.

Watson and Waller made the All-Tournament team along with Steve Norman.

"Jason led the team in hitting and he was our most consistent hitter," said Sliter. "We had great guys leading off in Jeremy and Justin Dick, and they got on most of the time, and Jason was always there to hit 'em in."

Sliter called Wallar the Diamondbacks' "team leader.

"He always gets on base and he batted over .600," said Sliter.

Sliter said Norman “has been doing it all year” for the Diamondbacks.

“Whenever we needed a hit, Steve was there,” said Sliter. “I’ve never seen anybody hit as consistently as Steve and he’s been doing it all year long. This was just an extension of the kind of year he’s been having at the plate.”

The defense was led by the tournament’s defensive MVP, right fielder Justin Dick.

“He played outstanding out there,” said Sliter. “He made multiple diving catches that gave our team some energy coming to bat and gave us something to build on.”

The Diamondbacks also got some surprising help on defense from two positions they didn’t really expect it from.

“Jeremy Dick is normally our centerfielder, but he hurt his hamstring in the state tournament, so we moved him to short. And we moved our shortstop, Donny Taylor, to centerfield. Neither one has played their all year and they played outstanding,” said Sliter.

But their success paled in comparison to that of Brian Richardson, said Sliter.

“He was the biggest surprise of the tournament. Our starting pitcher woke up Friday morning and his knee was swollen and he couldn’t walk. So our back-up pitcher, Brian Richardson, came in and did a heckuva job pitching and playing defense.”

Despite Richardson’s heroics, Sliter said his teammates decided to name the Diamondbacks’ team as the tournament MVP.

“It was hard to pick any one player,” explained Sliter. “Everybody played great at certain times. Everybody came up with a clutch hit or when we needed to make a play on defense, somebody was there to make a diving catch or turn a double play.”

The Diamondbacks barely survived their opener, needing eight innings to pull out a 10-5 victory over Marysville Moose. Marysville proved to be its own worst enemy, allowing the first two batters to reach base on an error and a base on balls. Steve Sliter took made Marysville pay quickly, singling home Taylor with the eventual winning run. Rbi singles by J. C. Clutter, Brian Richardson, and Jeremy and Justin Dick closed out the scoring, as Marysville failed to answer in the bottom of the inning.

Justin Dick went 4-for-5, and Taylor, Sliter and Jason Watson chipped in with three hits each.

After brushing aside Team C. I. 12-10, the Diamondbacks found themselves on the brink of entering the losers’ bracket in a big third round match-up with nationally ranked Itex. The Columbus club took a comfortable 12-6 lead into the top of the 7th. Things looked even better for Itex after yielding a run to make it 12-7, but with two outs. Then the

wheels fell off the wagon. The Diamondbacks rallied for five runs, then held Itex scoreless in the bottom of the 7th to force extra innings. Then in the top of 8th, Donny Taylor doubled and scored the go-ahead run on a Steve Sliter double, and Sliter scored an insurance run on T. J. Carty's single. Pitcher Brian Richardson mopped up in the bottom of the 8th to preserve the win.

Sliter, Jeremy Dick and Jason Watson combined for a dozen hits, and J. C. Clutter added three.

In game four the Diamondbacks used a three-run 4th to break a 3-3 tie and went on to ease past the Dawgs 7-4. T. J. Carty doubled and scored on Brian Richardson's single to put his club on top for good at 4-3. Rbi singles by Jeremy Dick and Matt Wallar capped off the inning. After the Dawgs cut the lead to 6-4 in the 5th, the Diamondbacks answered with an rbi single by Justin Dick in the 6th to make the final 7-4.

Jason Watson collected four hits, and Steve Norman and J. C. Clutter went 3-for-4.

The Diamondbacks dodged another bullet in game five, as they entered the bottom of the 7th trailing Pamco/ECC 12-9. But once again they rose to the occasion. With one out, singles by T. J. Carty, J. C. Clutter, Brian Richardson and Justin Dick cut the lead to 12-10, then Jeremy Dick doubled in two runs to knot the score at 12-12. Steve Norman followed with a base hit to plate Dick with the game winner.

Matt Wallar pounded out five hits, Steve Norman added four, and T. J. Carty three for the winners.

That lifted the Diamondbacks into the winners' bracket finals, where they used a five run 3rd to break open a 2-2 stalemate with O. C. Softball. Jason Watson's two-run, bases loaded single put his club ahead to stay at 4-2. T. J. Carty's two-run single capped off the inning. O. C. cut the deficit to 7-5 in the top of the 5th, but the Diamondbacks answered with a run on a Brian Richardson sac fly in the bottom of the inning for a three-run cushion. O. C. mustered one more run, making the final score 8-6.

Jeremy Dick and Steve Norman shared six hits.

The Diamondbacks never trailed in the finals after jumping out to a 6-0 lead in the bottom of the 1st. But opponent O. C. Softball outscored the eventual champions 10-6, and including the last four runs of the game, to make it interesting until the end. The Diamondbacks batted around in the 1st, taking the lead on Matt Wallar's rbi single. Rbi singles by Jason Watson, Steve Sliter, Brian Richardson and J. C. Clutter, and a sac fly by Donny Taylor, made it 6-0. Justin Dick's two-out, two-run single in the bottom of the 3rd put the Diamondbacks back up by six at 10-4 after O. C. had cut the deficit to two. O. C. responded with three in the 4th to make it 10-7, but once again the Diamondbacks had an answer, scoring their final two runs on a Brian Richardson single and a fielder's choice. O. C. rallied for one in the 6th and three in the 7th before succumbing 12-10.

Wallar, Richardson and T. J. Carty shared nine hits for for the champions.

The extra inning, come-from-behind victory over ITEX proved to be the pivotal game of the tournament, said the Diamondbacks' Steve Sliter.

"We've played them in the past, and we knew they were the team to beat," said Sliter. "We figured if we could get past them, we'd be okay. And beating them in the 8th inning gave us a lot of confidence."

Sliter said he was "glad to see another Cincinnati team represented in the championship game.

"It was great to play O. C. Softball, another Expressway Park team, in the finals," said Sliter. "It was really cool that they made it to the end."

Sliter concluded by thanking the Diamondbacks' sponsors and Expressway Park "for a very well-run tournament."

WORTH-BUD LIGHT-USSSA MEN'S CLASS "E" GREAT LAKES NATIONAL ALL-TOURN. TEAM

Ryan Brady Pamco/ECC
Brad Turner Dawgs
Jim Cook Vaughn Communications
Marcus Johnson Dino's/Young Guns
Adam Green Dino's/Young Guns
Derrick Lemox Dino's/Young Guns
Jason McCarthy OC Softball
Dusty Bargo OC Softball
Adam Ausman OC Softball
Jason Watson Cincinnati Diamondbacks
Matt Wallar Cincinnati Diamondbacks
Steve Norman Cincinnati Diamondbacks
Justin Dick - ODP Cincinnati Diamondbacks
Ricky Spivey - Co-MVP OC Softball
Team - Co-MVP Cincinnati Diamondbacks

BUD LIGHT-USSSA GREAT LAKES DIVISION MEN'S CLASS "E" CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FINAL STANDINGS

1. Cincinnati Diamondbacks, Milford, OH 7 0
2. OC Softball, Cincinnati, OH 6 2
3. Dino's/Young Guns, Florence, KY 6 2
4. Vaughn Communications, Elwood, IN 8 2
5. Dawgs, Floyd Knobs, IN 5 2
Pamco/ECC, Cincinnati, OH 4 2

7. Sceifer's & Associates, New Albany, IN 6 2
 Southgate Merchants, Dayton, OH 4 2
 9. Team CI, Brookville, OH 5 2
 ITEX, Columbus, OH 4 2
 Team Certified, Kettering, OH 3 2
 Playmakers/Lightn./Our Place, WCH, OH 2 2
 13. Barnstormers, Independence, KY 4 2
 Dirty Dawgs, Evansville, IN 4 2
 Team Evansvl./Sloan Appr., Evansville, IN 4 2
 Dixon Softball, Milford, OH 3 2
 17. John Sauber Promotions, Cincinnati, OH 5 2
 Jet/Goof Troop, Goshen, OH 4 2
 Big Hogz, Grove City, OH 2 2
 DDI, Bloomington, IN 2 2
 Diamond Freaks, Wilmington, OH 2 2
 Loaded Bases, Louisville, KY 2 2
 Renegades, Erlanger, KY 2 2
 25. JB's, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
 Caribbean/Gioffre/Absolute, Sunbury, OH 2 2
 Hawks, Piqua, OH 2 2
 Joe's OK Bayou, Louisville, KY 2 2
 Lights Out/Easton, Lawrenceburg, IN 2 2
 Pistol City Bandits, Austin, IN 2 2
 Tygart Valley, Kingmont, WV 2 2
 Eco Tech, Louisville, KY 1 2
 33. Highview Barber, Louisville, KY 3 2
 Nolan's Cleaning, WV 3 2
 Vintage Lanes, Lumberport, WV 3 2
 Cols Kings/Wanner Metal, Hilliard, OH 1 2
 Crush, Waterloo, IL 1 2
 GFY Softball, Riverside, OH 1 2
 Hit-N-Run, Shepherdsville, KY 1 2
 HPS, Dayton, OH 1 2
 Longhorn, Florence, KY 1 2
 Louisville Sliders, Louisville, KY 1 2
 Marysville Moose, Marysville, OH 1 2
 Outkasts, Independence, KY 1 2
 Pitt Ohio Express, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
 Portland, Louisville, KY 1 2
 Urbana Merchants/Bandits, Urbana, OH 1 2
 The Mound Cafe, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
 49. Castle Bail Bonds, Xenia, OH 1 2
 Fat Batz/Team Xplosion, Walton, KY 1 2
 Skullbusters, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
 Taylor Made Concrete, Vienna, WV 1 2
 Uncle Tubby's/Rustic Frog, Jeffersonvl., IN 1 2

| | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|--------------------|
| | Brew Crew, Charlestown, IN | 0 | 2 | |
| | Budweiser, Springfield, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Down-N-Dirty, Kettering, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Express/Titan Healthcare, Sardinia, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Ft. Knox, Ft. Knox, KY | 0 | 2 | |
| | Goodfellas, Jeffersonville, IN | 0 | 2 | |
| | Hurricane Softball, Oakland City, IN | 0 | 2 | Mabe's, London, OH |
| | Milestone/Parttimers, Shelbyville, IN | 0 | 2 | |
| | Miller Imprints, Newport, KY | 0 | 2 | |
| | Shag's Tavern, Fairborn, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| 65. | Big Show, Louisville, KY | 1 | 2 | |
| | Domino's, Geneva, OH | 1 | 2 | |
| | Lindenwald's Finest, Hamilton, OH | 1 | 2 | |
| | D & S Engineering/Greenies, Milford, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Gregory Electric, Grove City, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Lucky's Bar, Lancaster, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Oops Towing/12 Angry Sluggers, Cin., OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Real Estate Plus, Fairmont, WV | 0 | 2 | |
| | Triple L, Columbus, OH | 0 | 2 | |
| | Johnson's/Sparky's, Urbana, OH | | | Disqualified |

D & S Engineering Second In USSSA Great Lakes Women's "D" Nationals At Kilianski Sports Complex

Ft. Knox, Ky.--D & S Engineering battled back from a second round 9-3 setback to eventual champion Bedrock Tanning to mow down four straight opponents and earn a runner-up finish in the USSSA Great Lakes Women's "D" National Tournament Labor Day Weekend at Kilianski Sports Complex in Ft. Knox, Ky.

After sending three teams packing from the losers' bracket, D & S out-slugged Bedrock 20-19 in eight innings to avenge their 9-3 loss and force an "if" game. But Bedrock prevailed 12-7 to claim the title.

"We played together as a team and never gave up," said D & S manager Kim Wilson, whose team rallied from a 12-0 deficit to win their first game and an 8-0 hole to win the first finals. "We kept a positive attitude and played with determination."

Wilson said her team fell behind home town rival Crosley's Sports Bar 12-0 "before we even batted" in game one.

"We came back and chipped away at the lead and never gave up," said Wilson.

"It was the same way in our 20-19 game. We fell behind 8-0 in the 1st inning and came back and got seven in the bottom of the inning and just tried to stick with it," she said.

Amy Schweinefus turned in a robust .710 average for the holiday weekend to pace the offense. Amy Greene followed at .670, Kim Wilson batted .640 and Theresa Hickey .610.

Liz Ulland was named the Outstanding Defensive Player in the tournament, and Schweinefus, Greene and Hickey were selected to the all-tournament team.

“Liz played multiple positions throughout the tournament, including left field, third base and right-centerfield, and didn’t commit any errors,” commented Wilson. “She did everything we needed her to do and played an all-around good tournament.”

Wilson said that Schweinefus “went 20-for-28 and led our team in hitting, and played a good defensive tournament at shortstop.” She said Greene was picked to the All-Tournament team because she “came up with several key hits and was one of our hitting leaders for the tournament.” And Theresa Hickey “hit very well and had some key defensive plays in left-centerfield,” said Wilson.

After spotting Crosley’s Sports Bar a twelve run lead in the top of the 1st, D & S chipped away at the lead, finally knotting the score with five runs in the bottom of the 5th. Back-to-back two-run doubles by Tonya Woodruff and Theresa Hickey cut the deficit to one at 17-16, then Liz Ulland singled in Hickey with the tying run. D & S then pushed across the eventual game winner in the bottom of the 6th on a bases loaded sac fly by Tonya Woodruff.

Amy Schweinefus collected four hits and five rbi’s, and Woodruff and Hickey chipped in with three hits each. Pitcher Christa Brinker held Crosley’s scoreless over the final two innings.

After Bedrock Tanning relegated D & S to the losers’ bracket in a 9-3 rout, the Cincinnati club stormed back to reel off four straight victories to reach the championship game.

First they battled past the Enforcers 9-7, using two runs in the bottom of the 2nd to overcome a 7-6 deficit then adding two in the 5th to improve their lead to 9-6 before the Enforcers closed out the scoring with a run in the top of the 7th. Theresa Hickey’s two-run triple put her club ahead to stay at 7-6 in the bottom of the 2nd. Christa Brinker limited the Enforcers to a lone run over the final five innings of the game to preserve the win. Hickey and Emily Cannady combined for six hits.

Next D & S scored four runs in the top of the 3rd and four in the 4th to break open a 2-2 contest, then fended off a late charge by the Intimidators to pull out a 12-9 victory. Amy Schweinefus doubled home the go-ahead run in the top of the 3rd, then added a two-run double to cap off the 4th. Schweinfus banged out four hits altogether. Emily Cannady and Tonya Woodruff were both perfect in three at bats.

D & S capitalized on a four run 1st and two seven run innings - one in the 4th and one in the 7th - to overpower Pelle’s 23-5 in the losers’ bracket finals. Rose Chatman’s two-run

home run put her club on the board in the 1st. Christa Brinker's two-run single highlighted the 4th as the lead swelled to 14-2.

Sharon Singleton pounded out five hits, Kim Wilson and Amy Schweinefus each went 4-for-5, and Tonya Woodruff added three.

In the first finals, D & S exacted sweet revenge over Bedrock in a 20-19, eight-inning slugfest. D & S finally pulled the game out in the bottom of the 8th, as Sharon Singleton singled, went to second on a walk to Mary Neuman, then advance to third on Amy Greene's base hit. That set the stage for Tonya Woodruff, who singled home Singleton with the game winner.

Greene, Theresa Hickey, Christa Brinker and Liz Ulland shared sixteen hits.

That proved to be the last gasp for D & S, however, as Bedrock prevailed 12-7 in the finals.

USSSA GREAT LAKES DIVISION WOMEN'S CLASS D CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FINAL STANDINGS

1. Bedrock Tanning, Ravenna, OH 5 1
2. D & S Engineering, Loveland, OH 5 2
3. Pelle's, Cincinnati, OH 3 2
4. Intimidators, Batavia, OH 3 2
5. Enforcers, Sterling Heights, MI 3 2
- Yadda/Premium East, Milford, OH 2 2
7. Crosley's Sports Bar, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
- Ron Pfaff Electric, Strongsville, OH 2 2
9. Champs, Sheboygan, WI 1 2
- James Arnold, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
- Culvers, Brownstown, IL 0 2
- Pete's Pack, Fleming, OH 0 2
13. Kentucky Ballers, Ft. Knox, KY 0 2
- Wilson Concrete, North Vernon, IN 0 2

BUD LIGHT-USSSA GREAT LAKES DIVISION WOMEN'S CLASS "D" ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Susan Mattes Intimidators
Amy Steele Intimidators
Elizabeth Fields Pelle's
Laura Mitchell Pelle's
Amy Greene D & S Engineering
Amy Schweinefus D & S Engineering
Theresa Hickey D & S Engineering
Holly Richards Bedrock Tanning

Tracy Gartman Bedrock Tanning
Lisa Golgosky Bedrock Tanning
Liz Ulland - ODP D & S Engineering
Stephanie Wolf - MVP Bedrock Tanning

- 7. Crosley's Sports Bar, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
 Ron Pfaff Electric, Strongsville, OH 2 2
- 9. Champs, Sheboygan, WI 1 2
 James Arnold, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
 Culvers, Brownstown, IL 0 2
 Pete's Pack, Fleming, OH 0 2
- 13. Kentucky Ballers, Ft. Knox, KY 0 2
 Wilson Concrete, North Vernon, IN 0 2

**BUD LIGHT-USSSA GREAT LAKES DIVISION
WOMEN'S CLASS "D" ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**

Susan Mattes Intimidators
Amy Steele Intimidators
Elizabeth Fields Pelle's
Laura Mitchell Pelle's
Amy Greene D & S Engineering
Amy Schweinefus D & S Engineering
Theresa Hickey D & S Engineering
Holly Richards Bedrock Tanning
Tracy Gartman Bedrock Tanning
Lisa Golgosky Bedrock Tanning
Liz Ulland - ODP D & S Engineering
Stephanie Wolf - MVP Bedrock Tanning

Big Guns, Little Leaguers, Team Bring It Claim Expressway Mini Titles

Milford, Oh.--Big Guns and Team Bring It posted 2-1 marks, while the Little Leaguers swept to a 3-0 record en route to their respective division titles in a twelve team, three division round robin on Monday, September 3rd at Expressway Park.

The Big Guns rallied from a 13-10 setback to Easterday (2-1) in their opener to drill Kings Toyota (0-3), then spanked runner-up Brew Crew (2-1) 15-5 in the deciding contest.

Team Bring It also lost their opener, falling to eventual runner-up Cope Sports (2-1) 13-6. TBI bounced back to rout 40 Oz. of Softball (0-3) 11-4, then leveled All Net (2-1) 19-8.

Meanwhile the Little Leaguers romped past Black Gold (1-2) 17-4, B. T. Express (2-1) 17-10 in a key match-up with the eventual second place team, and Hi Rollers (0-3) 17-7.