



July 24, 2015 www.plaintalk.net

Post 1 Powers Through 3B Region Tournament



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK
The Vermillion Post 1 Legion baseball team poses for a team photo after winning the 3B Region tournament last weekend at Prentis Park. Post 1 travels to Salem Friday, July 24 for the state tournament. Top Right: Vermillion's Carter Kratz slides safely into home during Post 1's 11-4 win over Dakota Valley last Friday.

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
elyse.brightman@plaintalk.net

Vermillion Post 1 Legion baseball won three games in three days and outscored their opponents 35-8 for the Region 3B title last weekend at Prentis Park. Post 1 faced off against familiar teams in Elk Point-Jefferson, Dakota Valley and Beresford in the tournament to earn a spot at the state tournament in Salem beginning Friday, July 24.

Vermillion 10, Elk Point-Jefferson 0

Seven runs in the fifth inning gave Vermillion Post 1 the 10-0 edge over Elk Point Jefferson Post 134 in the first day of the Region 3B Legion baseball tournament at Prentis Park Thursday afternoon.

A two-hour rain delay where coaches, players, parents and officials helped drain the field after a brief, but intense storm, put the start time back to 9 p.m. from the original 7 p.m. scheduled start.

"We saw 45 people out on the field shoveling off the water so we could get that game in," said Vermillion head coach Jason Gault.

In the first two innings, Vermillion scored three runs off a total of one hit, six drawn walks and a wild pitch to take an early 3-0 lead.

The bats went quiet for the next two innings, but in the fifth, Joe Miller lined a single that stretch into a double on a throwing error. Ethan James then drew the ninth walk of the game to get on base. Nate Robertson reached base on an Elk Point Jefferson error that scored Miller.

Cole Anderson and Carter Kratz hit back-to-back RBI singles for a 6-0 lead.

The home plate umpired called a balk on Elk Point Jefferson's Jarod Mao that allowed Kratz to score from third followed by an RBI triple to deep left field from Jack Brown. The next batter, Hunter Christopherson, brought Brown home from an RBI single.

Joe Miller, with his second at-bat of the inning, lined another single to drive home Christopherson for the walk-off run in five innings.

"(We) started off slow," Gault said. "I think we had some guys that lost a little bit of focus because they had some bad at-bats against a good pitcher and the fifth inning kind of came together. We had a little talk as a team and decided we were going to play like a team instead of a bunch of individuals and they score seven runs in the fifth and we get out of there early."

James pitched a complete game for the win going five innings with two hits, two strikeouts and two walks.

"It's always nice to have a short game just to be able to hold on to some pitching and relax the bodies a little bit," Gault said.

Vermillion 11, Dakota Valley 4

After Thursday's rainstorm put the field temporarily underwater, Friday's game saw temperatures soaring well into the 90's where Vermillion battled heat, sun and a challenging Dakota Valley team.

"They played with their hearts today in some kind of scary weather conditions," Gault said. "The parents and community members brought over coolers. I can't even remember how many dozens of water we went through, but that's just the way it is here with legion baseball and baseball in Vermillion in general."

Vermillion had a 3-2 lead going into the third inning when they scored five runs and increased the lead to 8-2.

"We talked a lot about how we were going to approach Dakota Valley and we tried to be overly aggressive on the bases," Gault said. "We figured we could get them to throw the baseball around and that happened and that got us those three runs early."

Weber's sacrifice bunt advanced Miller to second and brought up James, who lined a two-out double to right field driving in Miller from second. A few batters later with three runners on, Kratz hit a single to leftfield that cleared the bases on a throwing error by Dakota Valley.

Anderson then drove in Kratz with a single.

"We had some big hits in the bottom half of our line-up," Gault said. "Travis Weber started off that five-run inning with a sacrifice bunt with one out that ends up scoring the guy at second after the next guy hits a shot and it just seemed like it all kind of fell together."

The final three runs came off RBIs from



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK
Vermillion's Jack Brown went 8-for-13 at the plate with two doubles and a triple in three games during Post 1's Region 3B Legion baseball tournament last weekend at Prentis Park.

Christopherson, Miller and another from Anderson.

Christopherson had three RBIs off two hits in the game. Miller and Brown each went 4-for-5 and Jefferson Galvin was 1-for-1 with a walk.

Odens pitched the first five innings to earn the win and Christopherson came in to start the sixth to finish out the game.

"I thought (Odens) did a heck of a job," Gault said. "He got a little overheated in the fifth and gutted it out and then Hunter came in and really shut the door on them."

Vermillion 14, Beresford 4

Friday's win put Vermillion through to the championship game Saturday night where they powered past Beresford for a 14-4 win.

Post 1 was down 4-1 in the sixth inning when Travis Weber's two-run single started an offensive surge.

"He sparked it and everything else kind of followed suit," said Vermillion head coach Jason Gault.

Post 1 had eight hits and went on to score eight runs in the inning to take the 9-4 lead.

"We're pretty fortunate to be in a situation where we had some guys get contagious hitting," Gault said.

Carter Kratz lined a double to right field for three runs and Jack Brown doubled to center-field to tack on another two.

In the seventh, Vermillion scored two more off hits from Kratz, Anderson and a Beresford error.

The game ended in the eighth when the 10-run rule came into effect after Christopherson scored on a wild pitch and Odens singled to score Miller.

"That was just an incredible team effort and I'm just fortunate to be a part of it," Gault said. "It's so fun to watch them play the game when they do it right."

Kratz drove in four runs in the game off two hits. Anderson and Weber each had two RBIs. Brown went 3-for-5 with one RBI.

Kratz picked up the win by pitching five innings giving up no runs off one hit with three strikeouts and three walks. Anderson started the game on the mound and pitched three innings giving up four runs, six hits and two walks with two strikeouts.

"That's what we have to work on this week, having those later inning approaches at the plate earlier," Gault said. "We'd like to put it all together early and jump on people quick because I think we got the pitching to shut some teams down."

Vermillion travels to Salem for the Legion B state tournament and is scheduled for a 10 a.m. start on Friday, July 24. Post 1 will face off against Garretson Post 23, the Region 2B winner.

"It's the state tournament and we've got some great baseball," Gault said. "It's a great experience for these guys and they deserve it."



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