

Trivette Sparks Huge WHS Rally

Written by Mike Kelly
Tuesday, 03 April 2012 08:55

Watauga High senior first baseman Clint Trivette made the play of the game Monday night against Fred T. Foard. With the Pioneers trailing 5-3, Trivette made a diving stop on a hard-hit ball by Carson Bryant of the

Tigers with runners at second and third and two outs in the top of the fifth inning. That play saved the Pioneers from a huge upset loss.

In turn, the Pioneers erupted for a season-high 12 runs in the bottom of the fifth and clobbered Fred T. Foard 15-5 in five innings down in Newton. The game, which was originally scheduled to be played at WHS, changed venues because of poor playing conditions, thanks to heavy rains in Boone.

It was WHS's (5-2 Northwestern 3A/4A Conference; 7-5 overall) third win by the ten-run mercy rule this season; it was also WHS's sixth straight win against the Tigers since the teams became conference members in 2009-10; and the win also allows WHS to maintain its grip on second place in the NW3A/4A Conference standings.

"That was the play of the game in my mind," said WHS coach Pete Hardee. "And I told Clint that after the game. If he doesn't make that play, we're down 7-3, and it would have made tough on us to come back. That's why we feel so confident with Clint at first base. He makes big defensive stops like that."

And the Pioneers, who were held in check by Bryant for four innings, finally broke through in the fifth. WHS sent 15 men to the plate. Ethan Critcher did most the damage as he doubled twice and drove in four runs in the frame. His two-run double to right-center field scored David Martin and Tyler Jones to end the game.

"I knew it was just a matter of time before they started hitting," said Fred T. Foard coach Channon Vogel. "They almost look like a junior college team. They're big guys compared to my team. But we just fell apart in the fifth inning. We should have come out of there down by one run. But things started going wrong and it avalanched on us."

The Pioneers made 13 hits. Critcher and Tyler Jones, who made an over-the-shoulder catch in deep center field in the second inning, paced the offense with three hits apiece. Jones also drove in two runs. Max Linville had two hits, drove in three, scored twice and had a stolen base; Ryan Turner had two hits, including a double, and drove in two runs.

"It took us a while to get adjusted," Martin said. "You're in school all day, and you're expecting to play at home. Then you get a text message that you're getting out of school early because we have to travel. It's tough on you mentally. But it all worked out in the end."

"I hated doing that to my guys," Hardee said. "But we had our first hard rain of the year, and the field did not drain well at all. We really should have played this game Saturday. But the forecast was calling for rain all day, and it turned out that we could have played. Then Monday's forecast was calling for a nice day, and it rained like heck. Welcome to Boone."

Tripp Taylor picked up the win in relief of Matt Proffitt, who got the start, but labored into the fourth inning. Proffitt gave up five earned runs on seven hits with four walks and nine strikeouts. He also hit two batters.

"And Matt really had good stuff," Hardee said. "But he struggled with his location at times, and I guess he lost his confidence a bit. But he toughed it out and got us into the fifth inning."

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Aaron Mahnke was Poffitt's biggest adversary Monday night. He was 3-3 with a double and three RBI. His run-scoring single gave Foard a 1-0 lead in the third; his two run double in the fourth capped off a four-run rally and gave the Tigers a 5-3 lead. Bryant had two hits, Justin Wike walked three times and scored twice. The Tigers (4-10; 1-6) made eight hits.

"It's always a struggle down here," Martin said. "They never make it easy on us. But we finally got the bats going, and we pulled it out."

The Pioneers return home to play Hickory tonight. Ethan Greene is the scheduled starter. Our coverage begins at 6 p.m. on Oldies 100.7 FM.

NOTES: The WHS JV team defeated Fred T. Foard 11-1 Monday night. The Pioneers scored five times in the fourth inning and five more times in the fifth.....Hibriten defeated East Burke 14-13 in a non-conference game Monday night. The Panthers, who scored the winning run in the bottom of the seventh, made 15 hits, but they also committed 10 errors.....The Pioneers will also have a dedication before tonight's game with Hickory. The home dugout on the third-base side will be named after WHS coach Pete Hardee.

NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A BASEBALL SCOREBOARD

MONDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

WATAUGA 15, FRED T. FOARD 5 (5 INNINGS)
HIBRITEN 14, EAST BURKE 13

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TUESDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

HICKORY @ WATAUGA

FRED T. FOARD @ ALEXANDER CENTRAL
ST. STEPHENS @ SOUTH CALDWELL
HIBRITEN - BYE

WATAUGA SCHEDULE FOR TUESDAY, 4/3/12

BASEBALL v. HICKORY, 4:30 P.M.
SOFTBALL v. HICKORY, 4:30 P.M.
WOMEN'S SOCCER v. HICKORY, 5 P.M.
MEN'S GOLF @ ST. STEPHENS
MEN'S TENNIS v. ALEXANDER CENTRAL (DH), 4:30 P.M.