

# Despite losing, Sweet Home baseball sees improvement

by **PATRICK J. NAGY**  
Reporter

It didn't show on the scoreboard too much last week, but Sweet Home coach Derek Zgodas saw improvement of his team from the first to second games of the season.

The Panthers, which have 15 new players to the lineup, lost 7-0 to Clarence on April 2 and 5-2 versus Williamsville East on April 3.

"You could tell after the East game that we took a couple of steps forward from the Clarence game," said Zgodas. "With such a young group, all you can hope for is that you are better at the end of the season than now."

Clarence's Lance Roe threw a no-hitter and 10 strikeouts against the Panthers. Sweet Home's Brian Pappagallo and John Graziano reached base on errors in the first and seventh innings, respectively.

Clarence's bats backed up Roe, scoring runs in the first, third, fourth, fifth and seventh innings. The Red Devils one through five hitters combined to go 8 of 17. Chris Gentzke was 2 for 4 and scored three

runs. Justin Urschel was 4 for 4 and scored a run.

"They're a real veteran team that won a league championship as juniors," said Zgodas. "They're every bit as good as advertised."

Travis Denman gave up three earned runs, five hits and struck out two through four innings. When Denman left, Sweet Home trailed 3-0.

"He kept us in the game," said Zgodas. Zgodas also lauded the defensive work of sophomore shortstop Casey Kacz.

Zgodas said the Williamsville East final score does not indicate his team's performance.

"We trailed 3-2 going into the sixth and left the bases loaded with one out and they tacked on two more runs," said Zgodas. "It was a nip-and-tuck game the whole way."

Sweet Home scored both of its runs in the second. Maxwell, who reached base on a fielder's choice, and Derek Wisner, who walked, converted a double steal and reached home after a two-RBI triple from Denman. Denman also doubled.

With the bases loaded in the sixth, East's

Zach Miller struck out Kacz and Graziano and threw a perfect seventh with three groundouts to pick up the win in relief.

East got two insurance runs in the seventh. Nick Kanutsu doubled in Matt Graci, who had walked and was sacrificed to second by Gary Styn. Mike Ferguson then singled in Kanutsu.

Josh DiMarco, Justin Andreozzi and Miller limited Sweet Home to four hits, but Zgodas felt his team hit more balls in play than the Clarence game, giving his team a chance to win.

Sophomore left fielder Mike Wolcott had Sweet Home's first hit of the year with a base hit in the third.

Maxwell allowed two unearned runs, five hits, and struck out five through six innings. He also singled at the plate.

Sweet Home (0-2, 0-1), weather permitting, is scheduled to host Baldwinville at 11 a.m. on Saturday. The Panthers return to league play at 5 p.m. on Monday, April 16, when they host West Seneca West. East (3-0, 1-0) hosts Amherst at 4:30 p.m. the same day.

**Amherst Central**

The Tigers' only game last week was one

they would like to forget.

Amherst dropped its home opener, 11-2, against West Seneca East on April 3. The Tigers trailed 10-0 after the third inning.

Amherst coach Brian Davis said mental mistakes defensively led to his team's downfall.

"I expected us to play better defensively," said Davis. "In the second inning, we dropped a couple of routine flyballs. West Seneca East also bunted a couple of times, and we didn't know which base to throw to."

Davis said his team loaded the bases in the fourth and fifth with one out but could not come up with a hit.

Tom Ponticelli pitched three scoreless innings, allowing two hits and striking out five in relief of Mike Yanity. Shaun Garus allowed two hits and a run in two innings. Garus and Ponticelli had two of the team's five hits. Garus had the team's only RBI.

Amherst (0-1) is scheduled to host Wilson, weather permitting, at noon on Thursday. A home game last Wednesday versus Hamburg and a non-league game with Grand Island, scheduled for April 10, was cancelled.

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# North loses playoff rematch with Niagara-Wheatfield

by **PATRICK J. NAGY**  
Reporter

Niagara-Wheatfield eliminated Williamsville North by a run in last year's Section VI Class AA semifinal. Fast forward a year later and the Falcons beat the Spartans again by a run to hand North its first loss of the season.

Niagara-Wheatfield, who beat North, 5-4, in the playoffs, defeated the Spartans, 8-7, in a non-league home game on April 3.

"I could see us playing them in the playoffs again," said North coach Jerry Scarcella.

Niagara-Wheatfield jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the top of the second inning before North answered with two runs of their own. Pat Dwyer and Austin Benschadle singled and were brought home by singles from Taylor Gahagen and John Ticco, respectively. Benschadle added

a run for North in the fifth when he scored after a sacrifice fly to left field from Nick Fronczak. North scored three times in the sixth, two courtesy of a towering over-the-fence home run from Max Zimmerman, his second of the year, and a RBI single from Jared Fabian which scored Ticco from second.

North had the tying run (Ticco) on second but the Spartans grounded out to the Niagara-Wheatfield shortstop and flew out to left field to end the game.

Dwyer (3 for 5, double, two singles, RBI) and Benschadle (3 for 4, double, two singles, walk, RBI) led the North hitting. Besides Zimmerman's homer, Scarcella lauded his defensive work behind the plate.

"He did a good job blocking the ball and stopping their runners on base from advancing," said Scarcella.

Ben Zwierchowski picked up the loss on the mound, allowing four earned runs on six hits, and striking out 11 in 5.1 innings of work.

Matt Fleming, a JV call-up, threw one inning, and allowed a hit, struck out one, and got the next two to ground out.

"I wanted to win the game but my plan was to find out about the guys who I brought up from JV (like Fleming)," said North coach Jerry Scarcella.

Niagara-Wheatfield first baseman Kyle Smith hit 3 for 4 with a walk, double, two singles, scored three times and had three RBIs.

North's home game with Frontier last Wednesday was cancelled. No makeup date has been announced. The Spartans (1-1) are supposed to play, weather permitting, at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday at Bishop Timon-St. Jude.

North returns to league action at 4:45 p.m. Monday at ECIC Division I powerhouse Clarence, who edged the Spartans for the division crown last year.

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# Amherst softball opens season with non-league wins

by **PATRICK J. NAGY**  
Reporter

It's early in the high school softball season, but Amherst showed no signs of rust in its first two games.

The Tigers (2-0) picked up road wins at Niagara Falls, 6-4, and Niagara-Wheatfield, 3-0, on April

2 and 3, respectively.

"We have some things we need to clean up defensively and our hitting has to stay consistent, but I thought we did a nice job," Amherst coach Mike Chatelle said.

The Lady Tigers got strong pitching from eighth-grader Jessica Banning and juniors Katie

Tirella and Alana Madrid. Banning earned a complete game win versus Niagara Falls, tossing a three-hitter, striking out seven. Tirella pitched a three-hitter over four innings with three strikeouts against Niagara-Wheatfield. Madrid allowed two hits for the save.

The Amherst offense supported both pitchers but especially Banning. The Lady Tigers crossed the plate six times and left 12 runners on base, including the bases loaded in the first and third innings.

"Usually the pitchers are ahead of the hitters out of the gate in a season, but we kept getting on base and pushing runs across," said Chatelle.

Amherst got the scoring going when Katie Bardak scored on an

error early. She scored again in the fifth on an Eva Lankes single.

In the third, Kelly Dixson tripled to bring home Becca Masters.

Amherst brought home its last three runs in the seventh. Liz Reid doubled to drive in Madrid and Lankes. Masters singled home Mollie Lang.

Masters and Bardak also hit.

Amherst's offense was also helped in both games by their opponent's pitching. Niagara Falls walked seven Lady Tiger batters. Niagara-Wheatfield walked eight batters.

Amherst only hit five times versus Niagara-Wheatfield, but their hits were timely. In the first, Lang reached on a single and scored on an error. In the seventh, Reid

reached on an error while Masters was at the plate and scored after a Jenny Newhouse single. Carolyn Trabert scored Masters with a single. Trabert finished with two singles. Masters and Tirella also singled.

The Amherst defense was strong against Niagara-Wheatfield, committing no errors. Chatelle lauded the outfield glove work of Trabert, Reid and Julie Halm.

Amherst's scheduled game last Wednesday with Williamsville South was cancelled. No makeup date has been announced.

Amherst returns to league play at 4:30 p.m., Monday, April 16 against Williamsville East.

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# South softball opens with shutout victory

Williamsville South opened the 2007 softball season with a convincing 11-0 shutout over Hamburg on April 2. It was South's 48th straight league win.

Defensively, the Lady Billies were led by two-time All-American pitcher and tri-captain, Chelsea Plimpton, who recorded 14 strikeouts, no walks, and allowed only two infield bunts.

South scored three runs in the first inning on a three RBI triple by junior Carolyn Schaus. The Lady Billies added five runs in the third inning. Senior Claire Gerlach led off with a single and was brought home with an RBI triple by tri-captain Lisa Fronczak. Plimpton followed with an RBI single. Schaus

added a monster triple and was plated by a Robin Donovan single.

South added to its lead when Gerlach led off the fourth with a solo home run. Singles by Plimpton and sophomore Sam Strapason accounted for South's tenth run.


South's final hits were recorded by Lauren Falzone, a Fronczak double and a Nicolette Neenos single.

South's home game with Amherst last Wednesday was cancelled. No makeup date has been rescheduled as of press time.

South (1-0) returns to action at 4:30 p.m., Monday, April 16 versus Iroquois.

**Williamsville Jr. Football**

## Cheerleading Tryouts!



- Three competition teams (Grades 2-4), (Grades 5-6) & (Grades 7-8)
- Girls must be able to dedicate 3-4 days/week to practice.
- Previous experience is not required.
- **Clinic/Tryout Days:**
  - Monday - May 21st 4:30-6:30 (Clinic Day)\*
  - Tuesday - May 22nd 4:30-6:30 (Clinic Day)
  - Wednesday - May 23rd 4:00-5:30 (Clinic Day)
  - Thursday - May 24th 4:00-8:00 (Scheduled Judging Tryouts)
- Tryouts at Forest Elementary School
- \$15.00 MANDATORY Clinic Fee

Any questions  
e-mail:  
[wjfcbeerleading@yahoo.com](mailto:wjfcbeerleading@yahoo.com)

\*A parent must attend a short informal meeting @ 4:30PM, 5/21/07 at which time a release form must be completed. Girls will not be able to try out without a signed release form.